World Elephant Day

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India is home to between 50 and 60% of all of Asia's wild elephants and about 20% of the domesticated elephants.

Wild elephants in India are facing a variety of problems, but most focus around the usual issues of habitat loss and human-elephant conflict. These have been on the increase since the middle of the 20th century as the explosion of the population and the demands of economic development led to the clearing and cultivation of former elephant habitat.

In **1992** the government started the "**Project Elephant**" to save and preserve the elephant population. Project Elephant was first initiated by the **Government of Karnataka** in 1992 with the objective of ensuring the long-term survival of elephant tribes in their natural habitats.

Aim of the Project: Prevent illegal trade of ivory and ensure elephant protection from hunters and poachers. Develop strategies to prevent unnatural causes of elephants' death in India. Ensure ecological restoration of the natural elephant habitats and their migratory routes.

There are **32 notified Elephant Reserves (ERs)** in the country spread over 15 states as of 2022.

The **Asian Elephant** has been given the highest level of protection in India by its inclusion in **Schedule 1 of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972**. They are also included in **Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora.**

As of 2021, the **Karnataka** has the highest no of elephant population followed by Assam, Kerala and Tamil Nadu.