

a new locality within their former range. It was never intended to re-introduce the lion into an area unless there was an adequate *natural* food supply to enable it to survive without *necessarily* having to prey on domestic cattle.

If lions are ill-treated by keepers in the Junagadh Zoo, this should be speedily reported to the appropriate State authorities, possibly with a copy to the Secretary, Indian Board for Wild Life.

It is a fact that the Indian lion is *at present* not only safe but actually on the increase in the Gir; but in addition to the danger of diseases, droughts, famines and other *natural* calamities, there is also the risk of *un-natural* calamities such as wars, civil commotion, total deforestation, uncontrollable killing etc. which have to be guarded against. Moreover, there appears to be a genuine desire on the part of certain other States in India to re-introduce a valuable, important and interesting animal into their forests.'—Eds.]

4. WILD ELEPHANTS IN THE UNION OF BURMA

CENSUS

A careful census made in 1935 put Burma's elephant population at about 10,000 head. Reckoning on 6,000 of these being females, and half of these being of breeding age, and at the rate of one calf in four years, the average annual birth-rate would be 750. From this subtract 125 natural deaths each year, which leaves the average of annual increase of 10,000 animals at 625.

WILD ELEPHANT CONTROL SCHEME

A comprehensive scheme of wild elephant control in which game rangers worked in conjunction with kheddah operators was sanctioned in 1935. A number of permanent blocks were selected and the objective of the scheme was the extermination of elephants living outside these blocks. Very considerable damage to crops was done by wild elephants, which would in future be confined to areas as remote from cultivation as possible. It was estimated that a stock of between 4,000 to 5,000 wild elephants would be retained in the permanent blocks. The game rangers were employed chiefly on crop protection up to 15th January, after which most of them were engaged in extermination operations.

PLAN OF KHEDDAH OPERATIONS

All licences for capture of elephants were issued under the elephant control scheme. Under this plan certain areas were closed to operations as elephant sanctuaries, others were classified as areas in which the extermination of elephants was desirable in the interest of the country's development, and the greater part of the forests in which wild elephants occurred was divided into a number of kheddah blocks to be worked over in rotation by kheddah licensees.

Destruction of elephants resulting from the elephant control scheme and other agencies.

	1935-36	to	1940-41	
<i>Burma</i>				
Killed			2,810	
Captured in kheddahs			1,262	
Total	...		4,072	4,072
<i>Federated Shan States</i>				
Killed			419	
Captured in kheddahs			24	
Total	...	443	...	443
Grand Total				4,515

In justification of the large number of elephants deliberately killed, the Chief Conservator of Forests wrote: 'The elephant control measures adopted in 1936 have produced good results and should prove of lasting value. Further extensive operations should not be necessary. During the period 1935-36 to 1939-40, 2,131 elephants have been destroyed by game rangers, 277 elephants have been destroyed by other agencies, and 911 elephants have been captured in kheddahs. During the coming year, operations will be continued on a reduced scale. It is almost certain that a small staff of game rangers will have to be maintained permanently for crop protection work around permanent elephant blocks.'

The Annual Report on Forest Administration in Burma 1939-40. 'Elephant control scheme in the Mongmit Division (Federated Shan States) was abandoned shortly after the beginning of the year owing to the shortage of ammunition. The abandonment of the scheme has not seen any increase in destruction by wild elephants and it is probable that the villagers would be freed from serious trouble for a number of years to come after the destruction of 179 elephants during the three years in which the control scheme was under operation.' Annual Report on Wild Life Preservation in the Federated Shan States for the year ending 31st March 1941.

In 'Wild Life Protection in Burma' published during World War II by the Public Relations Department, Government of Burma, Simla, H. C. Smith writes:

'Conducting Kheddah Operations: Some years ago it was estimated that there were about 5,000 wild elephants. As many as 500 have been captured in a year but in future about 200 will probably be the number that can be captured annually without detriment to the stock that it will be deemed advisable to maintain.'

Figures of elephants killed and captured in 1941-42 are not available. During the War period kheddah operations were

suspended. The number of wild elephants shot illicitly must be negligible. Adopting the 1935 formula the increase during the war period 1942-43 to 1944-45 would be about 1,250.

The number of wild elephants in 1945-46 would be about 5,000 + 1,250 = 6,250.

In 1947-48 kheddah operations were conducted in Maritime, Sittang, Hlaing and Northern Circles. From 1949-50 to 1950-51, kheddah operations were confined to Maritime and Northern Circles. In 1951-52 kheddah operations were confined only to the Northern Circle.

The number of elephants shot from 1945-46 to 1951-52 is 29.

The increase from 1945-46 to 1951-52 would be about 2,750.

PRESENT POLICY OF GOVERNMENT

In order to build up the present inadequate elephant power for the timber extraction industry to its pre-war strength, the Government encourages kheddah operations whenever possible and issues kheddah licenses liberally to those who want to capture wild elephants. Such licenses are issued to cover an area of sufficient extent where elephant herds are seen to forage more or less regularly. The area is properly defined, and within such area a few kheddahs, up to 4 generally, are built in places most likely to be used by elephants in their runs during beats. The license fee is just a nominal sum, but on each captured elephant the Forest Department levies royalty at rates depending on the height of the elephant. The only condition upon which the Forest Department insists is that the area to which the license applies should be possible for Forest Officers to inspect. In other words licenses are given only for those areas where there is sufficient security.

At present such licenses are issued in Maritime Circle and Northern Circle, that is to say in the forests of Arakan, Tenasserim along the coast, and also in the Kachin State. The yearly average of elephants captured is 150.

The total number of elephants captured in Burma and the Kachin State from 1945-46 to 1951-52 is as follows:

Number captured	Number died, released or escaped	Balance
909	140	769

Number of elephants killed in Burma and the Kachin State from 1945-46 to 1951-52 is 29.

Kachin State.

Large herds including many tuskers cause considerable damage to taungya cultivation in the Suprabum and Putao sub-division. In 1952, a rogue elephant was shot to protect the timber elephants of

the State Timber Board. The number of elephants captured during the last three years 1952-53 to 1954-55 is as follows:

Number captured	Number died, released or escaped	Balance
129	28	101

Total number of elephants killed from 1952-53 to 1954-55 is 9.

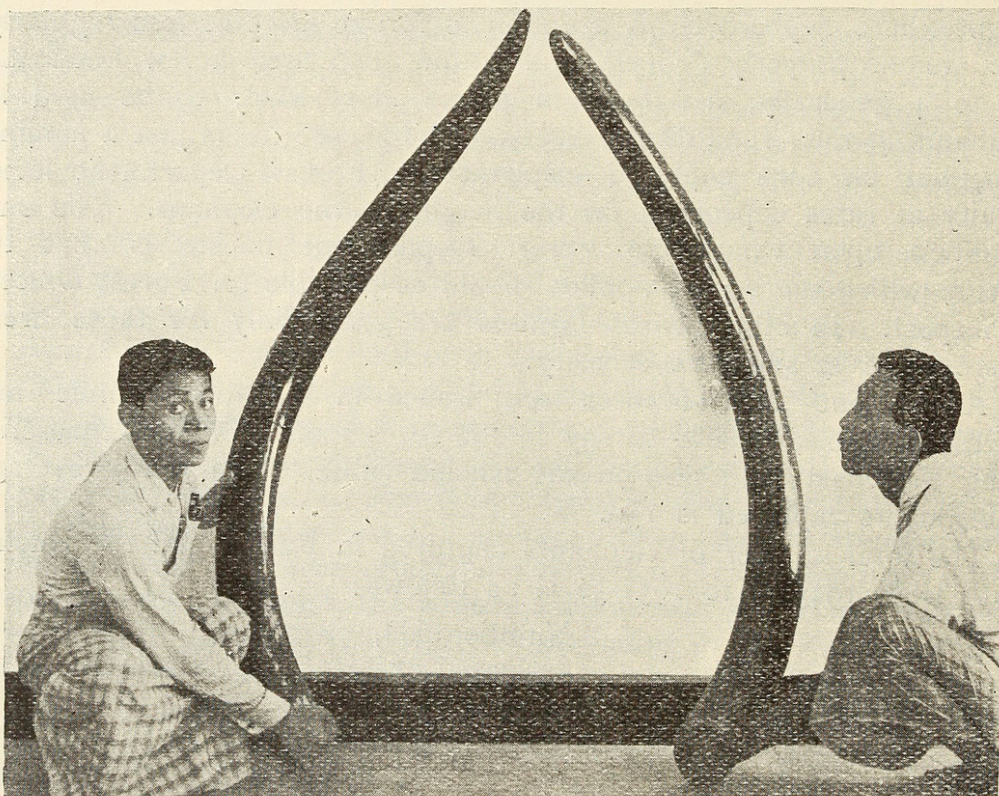
25 INYA MYAING ROAD,
UNIVERSITY P.O.,
RANGOON,
August 23, 1956.

TUN YIN,
B.C.S. (Retd.)

5. A LARGE PAIR OF ELEPHANT'S TUSKS FROM BURMA

(With a photo)

In the Society's *Journal* 37: 468, J. K. Stanford has given a description of a large pair of elephant's tusks which he saw at Lonkhin, in the house of Kansi Duwa. He did not get the opportunity to weigh the tusks then.



This pair was brought down to Rangoon recently and were found to weigh 180 lb., when weighed at the air strip, Myitkyina.

The measurements and weight of these tusks therefore are:

Length	Girth	Weight	Remarks
R-6'-5½	17½"	180 lb.	Owner—Kansi Duwa.
L-6'-7½	17"		

For comparison, measurements and weights of some other large pairs of Burmese tusks are given below.



Tun Yin, U. 1956. "Wild Elephants in the Union of Burma." *The journal of the Bombay Natural History Society* 54, 175–178.

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