

## **TRANSLOCATING GIR LIONS IS DANGEROUS**

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- The news that the Honorable Supreme Court has accepted in principle the translocation of Gir's Asiatic lions came as a shock-wave for the wild life lovers of Gujarat.
- **Supreme Court is understood to have formed a committee to recommend the number of lions to be shifted within six months from the date of the order.**
- Whereas the wisdom and Jurisprudence of the highest court of our land is unquestionable and beyond doubt, the order is unfortunate for the state of Gujarat.
- **Gir lions are the pride of Gujarat; The several centuries old habitat of this rare specie in Gir has been the most appropriate location because of its geographical, climatical, environmental and bio-diverse peculiarities. Gir's characteristics are unique and rare; there is no parallel to Gir in the country or the world. There is every possibility that the new habitat may prove unsuitable to the translocated lions because of a variety of reasons, the main being that they are shifted and made to live in a new area, where everything from climate, vegetation, land and water would be different. Their food which they get by hunting the animals would be changed.**
- We should not forget that this specie has survived only in Gir all these years. Wild life experts still believe that translocating or shifting the lions would tantamount to make them more 'endangered' a specie than what it is to-day.
- **Exposing matured lions or even the cubs to alien and unfamiliar locations is less-likely to suit this rare animal which has found abode in Gir since several centuries and have sustained so far.**
- Many a times it has been noticed that translocation and changed habitat do not suit the animals, impacting upon their mental and

physical health. It is also noticed, worldwide that the animals do not mate and procreate progeny in changed habitat or environment. This is especially true and correct in case of rare specie like lions. If this apprehension comes true we may see a fall in Lion population which would be an irreversible phenomina.

- **The apprehension that the huge forest-fire or an epidemic would completely finish the specie is unfounded as nothing of such things happened in known history of Gir and Gir lions. The numbers are on increase. The human being- maldharis and their animals cohabitate with lions since their generations without any difficulty.**
- The honorable Apex Court which directed the centre not to import cheetahs from Africa to Kuna sanctuary in the humble opinion of mine and others, should have been pleased to refuse translocations of Gir Lions also.
- **The honorable Supreme Court must have surely considered all the aspects fully and wholly; but as a lion-lover and one who has taken the cause of Gir lions so fondly, it is unconvincing to think of shifting of lions.**
- In my humble opinion the future of Gir Lions could have been more secured by ensuring that they continue to live at Gir. The union and the State Government can invite the best of the experts from the world and obtain their recommendations for making the Lions more safe and free from any possible hazard, while allowing them to continue to stay in their own habitat.

*- Parimal Nathwani  
Member (Rajya Sabha) &  
Lion lover*