

Tribals of Nagarahole call for continuing safari ban, condemn International Big Cat Alliance

The adivasis allege that the forest department has been clearing grasslands and trees to improve animal sighting, forcing the animals to move and eventually wander into human habitations.

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Nagarahole Adivasi Jamma Paale Hakku Sthapana Samithi has condemned the Big Cat Summit to be held in Nagarahole and Bandipur, terming it yet another effort to occupy and exploit indigenous lands | Photo Credit: The Hindu

The adivasis of Nagarahole have demanded that the **temporary ban on wildlife safari in Nagarahole**, recently imposed by the Karnataka government, must continue.

Addressing mediapersons, J.S. Ramakrishna, a member of the Jenu Kuruba community from Nagarahole, claimed that safaris were the “root cause” of several recent instances

of human-animal conflict.

Ramakrishna, who is also a member of the Nagarahole Adivasi Jammaale Hakku Sthapana Samithi (NAJHSS), a federation of grama sabhas in Nagarahole forests, alleged that the Forest Department was clearing trees to improve sighting of animals.

“They say they are clearing grasslands, but they go deep into the forest, and clear trees. This is done to improve sighting of animals, but it forces animals to move and they wander into human habitations resulting in conflicts. Hence, the ban on safaris must continue,” he said.

‘Extractive agendas’

Members of the Jenu Kuruba, Betta Kuruba, Paniya and Yerava communities also **condemned the International Big Cat Alliance** and called it a tool to legitimise extraction of forests, people and animals.

“Decisions of grama sabhas are ignored. Instead, the government brings in people from outside in the name of conserving forests. Their conservation methods are based on exclusion and extraction. The Nagarahole forests have been our homeland for 160 years. Do we not know how to protect our forests?” questioned Manjula from Golur Hadi near H.D. Kote.

J.A. Shivu of the NAJHSS alleged that the member organisations of IBCA push “false and extractive agendas such as biodiversity offsetting, eco-tourism and green credits” which he called “greenwashing schemes in the guise of conservation.”

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