

Camera : V.PARKASH
STORY : KHEDDA IN MYSORE
LOCATION : MANATODY JUNGLES IN MYSORE STATE.
DATE : 19th & 20th December 1960
RAWSTOCK : AGFA PAN KIN K . AFTER NOON & EVENING LIGHT.

The last of the world famous Mysore KHEDDA OPERATIONS began on December 19th when Dr. Rajendra Prasad, the President of India had flown from Delhi to Mysore (nearly 1700 miles) to witness the catching and the roping of wild elephants.

The curtain will drop on the spectacular 'game' started as early as 1874 by Mr. G.P. Sanderson, the then superintendent of Khedda operations, Mysore state as the scene of the operations, the entire area of the KAKANAKOTE forest will be submerged when the Kabini project (a dam) is completed.

Apart from providing thrills to the adventurous, this costly and unique operation, conducted according to the ancient but scientific methods, gives relief to cultivators in the forest areas for whom the rogue elephant is an unmitigated terror.

The Mysore state is on an elevated plateau 2,000 to 3,000 feet above sea level. Some parts of the state are thickly forested where wild elephants roam in large herds. Khedda is a 'V' shaped trench ten feet wide and eight feet deep, enclosing an area of three to ten acres of forest located on the bank of the river.

In a convenient spot along the trench, where the ground is level a strong circular stockade of sturdy wooden posts is built with a radius of about 40 feet. (This is called the roping stockade and in shape it resembles like well of death used by the motor cycle scrobats.)

As soon as a herd is located , the labour force is moved up and placed at strategic points. A careful programme is chalked out to drive the herd towards the river bank, on which the Khedda and roping stockade are built. The work is done with the help of trained elephants and expert trackers. KUMKIS (tame trained elephant) and trained trackers produce the sounds of shrieking horns, yells, shouts and the terrific clapping noise produced by bamboo rattles.(By cutting

the bamboo in two pieces). All this helps in puzzling the elephant herd which finally finds rescue in water.

As the elephants approach the river bank, the river drive begins. In this drive the wild elephants have to swim up the river for a few furlongs. The river drive offers thrilling and often touching scenes. Of all the animals in the world, elephants are the most gregarious and have a real family or herd life. The young calves never leave the protective vicinity of the mother elephants. The older elephants are very solicitous of the welfare of the young. Whenever a panicky calf breaks away the others rally round to get it back into the herd.

Once the wild elephant has been enclosed inside the roping stockade, the difficult task of fettering the animal begins. Three ~~rocks~~ 'Kumkis' (tamed and trained elephants) are required to overpower a single prisoner struggling for its freedom. The strong 'Kumkis' with 'Mahout' (elephant riders) astride, squeeze the prisoner, one from either side while from the front a third thrusts him back so that the rear legs are as close to the stockade as possible. Thus the newly captured wild elephant is prevented from moving sideways backward or forward. In this position an expert roper approaches the wild elephant under the cover of a 'Kumki' elephant and slips a noose over one of the hind legs and tightens it while the loose end of the rope is fastened to a stanchion fixed firmly to the ground outside the stockade. The other hind leg is also tied similarly. After this is done a neck rope is slipped on by the men on the kumki elephants. After roping the tame elephant is moved away from the roping stockade and he is then tied to a big tree where hunger and thirst play their part in subduing the animal. Here the animal struggles for its freedom but the thick and tight ropes don't let him move away. The elephant tries to bite the ~~xx~~ rope with its trunk and it is a scene to watch the mighty animal of jungle completely helpless.

Roll. I.

Long shot of the forest. At distance can be seen one elephant.

Long shot of a herd of wild elephants being chased by tame elephants on which are sitting the forest rangers etc. Thousands of labourers producing shrieking sounds are following. (Sounds of people producing shrieking sounds, firing of crackers, rifle shots and clapping with the split bamboos-- high pitch)

Several more shots of chasing the herd. Shots of trained elephants and the hawkers. The dash from the trained elephants and loud sounds chase away the herd from the jungle. The wild herd is forced towards the river.

Various shots of the wild elephants swimming the deep river. Many more shots of the wild herd going through the river drive.

(These shots had to be made through the ~~ramifications~~ the branches of trees which served as a camoufluge)

More shots of the hawkers (Long shots with tele)

Close up of a bamboo stick clapper. BCU his head study while clapping.

Shots of the Khedda with fire burning on different spots. The wild elephant dare not come near the fire and he thereby remains in the protected area.

Few more shots of the fire and the kheda trench.

Shot of a Khedda spectator with gun on his back.

Shot of the roping stockade.

Shot of President Prasad arriving.

Shot of President Prasad and the Maharaja of Mysore watching the Kheda operations. Close ups of the two while watching.

Roll. 2

Shots of roping the wild elephant. The captured animal stands between the three Kumkis who are surrounding it. Various shots of roping the animal, the struggle by the captive, fixing up of rope, small shot of the President watching. More shots of roping and finally the tied up captive being led away by the trained Kumkis. (These shots were made under shade.)

Shot of the wooden barricade ~~not~~ preventing the escape of the wild elephant. Shots of trench and burning fire outside. Another shot of wooden barricade and the trench.

Close up of a native shaping the bamboo clapper. He is blapping with the bamboo made clapper.

Shot of the roping stockade. Shot of thick rope and the stanchion used for roping the wild elephant.

Shot of the tame elephant which had helped in the capture of the wild ones coming from the river and he gives salute.

Shot of the newly captured wild elephant tied to the tree struggling for his freedom. He is helpless, he falls on the ground and moves his legs and twists the rope with its trunk. (several shots)

Shot of the elephant catchers preparing their meal after the operation. Close up shots of two elephant catchers.

Shot of elephant going through the jungle. The ~~mahawat~~ 'Mahawat' is on top.

Shots of two elephant being fed. Row of elephants being fed. (trained ones)

Shot of big one with tuskers and a small one together at feed time.

(Shade evening)

END.