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WILD LIFE EMERGENCY RESPONSE: A CASE STUDY

In the evening (on 19-03-2013) we received a news that a leopard has entered a house in village Harra of Ranchi Forest Division.

The village Harra is about 70 Km from Ranchi. Since the area in and around the village, is highly infested with left wing extremism, it was very difficult to decide immediately whether to move to the spot in the evening or not. However, considering that the press may give a very negative picture if the rescue is not done immediately by the forest department, it was decided that a Forester who is a local guy will first move to the spot with his staff and will give the report and in the meantime, the rescue team will be organized and as per the advice of the Forester, the team will move to the spot.

As per the planning the Forester reached the spot in an hour and informed that at around 12.00 PM, a leopard chased a herd of goat, injured two villagers and had entered a house where door was slightly open. The villagers had locked the house from the outside and the roaring of the leopard was coming from the house. Hundreds of villagers had gathered with traditional weapons.

On receiving the information, the team left for village and reached there by 7.00 P.M. The DFO, A.C.F, R.F.O and the veterinary Doctor of the zoo were also in the team. The team was equipped with tranquilizing gun, a cage, torch light, crackers, ropes, gunny bag, sticks etc. There were thousands of people and 20 press photographers alert with their camera to capture the photograph.

The house was having 4 rooms, which were interconnected and the divider wall had enough space between the wall and roof, where the leopard can easily pass from one room to other. The R.F.O. along with one villager climbed the roof of the house and removed two tiles and tried to locate the leopard in side the house. Even after a lot of effort, they could not locate the leopard in any of the room. The R.F.O was really astonished where the leopard had gone. No roaring of leopard was coming from the house. After half an hour the R.F.O located the leopard in a wooden beam of the house. It was very close to the roof. Immediately the R.F.O covered the tile. Now it was confirmed that the leopard was there in that house. A cage was fitted in one of the doors and covered with cloth. Water was thrown

to disturb the leopard so that the leopard will move and finally reach the cage. Blasting of the crackers and throwing of water did not pay any dividend. It was 9 PM. The rescue team thought that because of the shouting of the villagers the leopard was in panic and not moving.

The Forest Officials tried to persuade the villagers to vacate the place. But the villagers did not move. Finally the rescue team decided to stop the operation and pass the message that the operation will resume next morning. The rescue team moved to a nearby place 100 m. away from the house. The villagers remained gathered there till 11.30 PM. After the crowd moved out of the spot, the rescue team again started the operation. Watering followed by blasting of crackers was done intermittently. All of a sudden the team heard the roaring of the leopard coming from the cage. The rescue team than had a normal breathe. It was 1.00 AM. The team



waited till 4.00 AM there. By 6 AM the leopard was brought to the Birsa Biological park Ormanjhi, Ranchi. Hence, a full grown adult male leopard (later named Hari) was rescued without any injury. Now Hari and Sita (a female leopard of the zoo) are good friends and living together in one enclosure peacefully. The Director of the zoo is very optimistic of their off springs in the near future.

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