

# Indian sloth bear *Melursus ursinus shaw*- conflict with humans: a case study at Kadekolla village, Ballari district, Karnataka State

**Authors:**

**Abdul Samad KS<sup>1</sup> and Hosetti BB<sup>2</sup>**

**Institution:**

1. Department of Wildlife and Management, Kuvempu University, Shankaraghatta-577 451, Shimoga, Karnataka, India.

2. Department of Wildlife and Management, Kuvempu University, Shankaraghatta-577 541, Shimoga, Karnataka, India.

**Corresponding author:**

**Abdul Samad**

**ABSTRACT:**

A field study was carried out to decipher the root cause of conflict between Indian Sloth Bear (*Melursus ursinus*) and men at Kadekolla cluster villages in Ballari district of Karnataka state. It was observed that there were no reports of man-bear conflict in this region till 1990 AD, however drastically increased in the last 15 years. Data was collected through interviews with the 46 of 47 victims living in six villages who survived serious injuries during 2000 to 2015. It was found that the local farmers of surrounding villages on the other side of bear habitat adopted modern horticultural practices to grow orchard plants. Attracted by the new delicious crop the bears began passing through the study area to reach the orchards about 4-7 KMs away from their dens. While returning from orchards in the morning hours, bears encounter people going to their farmlands, thus conflict occurs. 66 % of the bear attacks occurred in farmlands. 58 % of the victims of attack were in the age group of 31-50 years. Most of the attacks happened between 6 A.M and 4 P.M. 47 % of attacks were made by solitary bears and 40% of attacks by mother bear and cubs. 41 % of the victims received serious head injuries. 2 % of the victims succumb to the fatal injuries. 82% of the attacks occurred within 1 kilometer distance from the villages. 51 % of the victims felt that the change of crop pattern was the root cause of man-animal conflict in this area. It is also realized that the excessive human activities, deforestation and non-availability of water were the causes for the conflict. It is recommended to consolidate fragmented bear habitat, in order to support natural regeneration of flora in the forest, taking up soil and moisture conservation (S.M.C) activities in the bear habitat in order to reduce and avoid the above said conflict.

**Keywords:**

Indian sloth bear, Kadekolla, Orchards, Sloth bear-man conflict, Change of crop pattern, Victims of sloth bear attack.