



Press Note

World Lion Day

10th August 2023



The Saurashtra region in the Gujarat state harbours a thriving population of Asiatic lions. Through a series of initiatives spearheaded by the Gujarat Forest Department under the aegis of the Government of Gujarat and with unwavering support from local communities, the population of Asiatic lions has undergone a notable resurgence. As of June 2020, their numbers have surged to 674 individuals. This surge has facilitated the movement of Asiatic lions across an expanse of 30,000 sq. km in nine districts in Gir and Greater Gir Landscape (collectively known as the Asiatic Lion Landscape). This region boasts a rich diversity of flora and fauna.

Annually, on the 10th of August, the world comes together to celebrate World Lion Day. This day holds the purpose of fostering awareness regarding the imperative need to safeguard and preserve the majestic Asiatic lions for the prosperity of generations to come. The celebration serves as a powerful reminder of the crucial role that lions play on a global scale. The genesis of World Lion Day can be traced back to 2013, when it was initiated by the African Lion Environment Research Trust (ALERT). In India, the Gujarat Forest Department, Government of Gujarat, with the support of local people, has been actively observing World Lion Day since 2016.

The World Lion Day celebration brings together a diverse array of participants, including students, teachers, members of NGOs, nature enthusiasts, public representatives, villagers, and various officials and employees from different departments of the Gujarat Government, as well as the forest department's staff. This united effort underscores the shared commitment to Asiatic lion conservation and demonstrates the collective dedication to safeguarding these magnificent creatures for future generations. The celebration includes speeches by dignitaries, including the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Gujarat and others dignitaries, gatherings in schools, participants wearing lion-engraved face masks, rallies on pre-decided routes, distribution of awareness materials such as pamphlets, screening of wildlife documentary films, speeches, and pledge-taking by stakeholders. In 2020 and 2021, virtual celebrations were held due to COVID-19 restrictions, with increasing participation on digital platforms.

This year World Lion Day will be celebrated physically and virtually. In the physical realm, the celebration will extend to over 8,500 educational institutions, including schools and colleges, spanning ten districts in Saurashtra: Junagadh, Amreli, Gir-Somnath, Bhavnagar, Botad, Porbandar, Rajkot, Surendranagar, Devbhumi-



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Dwarka, and Morbi. To facilitate this, a comprehensive celebration kit has been prepared and delivered in educational institutions, comprising approximately 18.50 lakh lion-engraved face masks, 10,000 banners sized 4x3 feet, 200 banners sized 10x8 feet, 10,000 wildlife documentary CDs, 400,000 informative pamphlets, 200 selfie standees, 100,000 round stickers, and 20,000 A4 stickers. Various stakeholders, including public representatives, education department personnel, students, NGOs, citizens, and government officials, will enthusiastically partake in activities such as school gatherings, rallies, speeches, and pledge-taking, all aimed at supporting the conservation of the Asiatic lion. The apex state-level event will be hosted in Gandhinagar, presided over by the Honourable Chief Minister of Gujarat.

In the virtual realm, individuals will be engaged remotely through digital media platforms to disseminate awareness about the Asiatic lions. An array of digital assets, including banners, punchlines, text messages, greetings, emails, graphics, reels, and short videos, have been meticulously crafted and circulated to encourage widespread participation. Additionally, individuals are encouraged to contribute their own content using the hashtag “#WorldLionDay2023” across various digital platforms. Influential figures in the realm of social media will play a pivotal role in amplifying this message. Notably, a designated hashtag, “#WorldLionDay2023,” will serve to magnify the impact of the initiative and monitor virtual engagement. As part of this endeavour, a special radio program will be broadcasted on All India Radio Rajkot on World Lion Day. Furthermore, around 65 lakh text messages (SMS) containing World Lion Day greetings will be sent to mobile subscribers in Gujarat. Likewise, more than 150,000 meticulously crafted email greetings will be dispatched to email subscribers. Under the gracious presence of the Honourable Chief Minister of Gujarat, the grand state-level celebration will be live-streamed to over 8,500 educational institutions *via* SatCom, YouTube, and other media channels.

The World Lion Day celebration showcases the collective commitment to the conservation of Asiatic lions. This collective commitment is driven by the shared purpose of championing the conservation of Gujarat and India’s pride – the majestic Asiatic lions.



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AUGUST 10TH #WorldLionDay2023

HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE ON
WORLD LION DAY

- Join the nearest school/college in the Asiatic Lion Landscape.
- Join the rallies while it proceeds through the route in the Asiatic Lion Landscape.
- By posting/sharing of videos/photos/texts related to Asiatic lion conservation on various social media platforms with hashtag **#WorldLionDay2023**.
- By sending/sharing World Lion Day greetings and messages through various platforms.
- By writing an article/blog about Asiatic lions on various platforms.
- As a responsible citizen, you can also organise an event for awareness creation regarding the conservation of Asiatic lions.

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