

Press Release

VANTARA AND PROJECT ELEPHANT ORGANISE COUNTRY'S LARGEST ELEPHANT CAREGIVER TRAINING

Jamnagar, Gujarat: Vantara, India's pioneering wildlife rescue, care, and conservation initiative founded by Mr. Anant Ambani, in collaboration with Project Elephant, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, is currently hosting the *Vantara Gajsevak Sammelan*, a landmark five-day training programme bringing together over 100 mahouts and elephant caregivers from across India. All participants will be awarded a certificate upon successful completion of the training programme.

This national-level capacity-building initiative aims to enhance professional expertise, raise care standards, and promote best practices in the welfare of elephants under human care. The programme commenced with a ceremonial welcome and *maha aarti* at the Radhe Krishna Temple, setting the tone for a spiritually and professionally enriching experience.

"This *Sammelan* is more than a training programme, it's a tribute to those who dedicate their lives to elephant care," said Vivaan Karani, Chief Executive Officer, Vantara. "Our aim is to unite traditional wisdom with modern science to build a stronger, more compassionate foundation for their wellbeing. It reaffirms that the future of elephant conservation in India depends not just on policy or habitat—but also on the empowered hands and hearts of their caregivers."

Hosted at the state-of-the-art facility in Jamnagar, managed by the Radhe Krishna Temple Elephant Welfare Trust, a nonprofit under the Vantara initiative, the *Sammelan* offers a dynamic blend of field-based exposure, scientific instruction, and peer-to-peer learning. Participants are grouped and rotate through dedicated elephant care zones such as the *Gajwan*, *Gajraj Nagari*, and *Ganesh Nagari*, where they receive hands-on training in daily husbandry routines, foot care, bathing protocols, positive reinforcement techniques, musth management and traditional Ayurvedic therapies.

Complementing the practical modules, expert-led scientific sessions delve into vital subjects such as elephant biology, stress identification, common ailments, and emergency care for recumbent elephants. A dedicated segment also focuses on the occupational health, safety, and well-being of caregivers, acknowledging their central role in long-term elephant welfare.

To foster knowledge exchange and regional collaboration, the *Sammelan* features structured reflection sessions and discussion forums that bring together elephant caregivers from across the country to share experiences, address common challenges, and learn from one another. Rooted in the spirit of cross-learning, the event seeks to build a nationwide community of skilled and compassionate elephant caregivers, united by a shared commitment to advancing elephant welfare through both scientific progress and traditional wisdom.

Home to over 250 rescued elephants and supported by a dedicated team of more than 500 caregivers, many of whom were once in distressed or marginalised conditions, Vantara stands as a testament to how enriched and compassionate care can transform lives. Committed to advancing global standards in animal welfare, Vantara continues to invest in capacity building at both national and international levels. In collaboration with relevant authorities, it is hosting a series of landmark events, including the ongoing international training programme for wildlife officials from Congo, the National Veterinary Training on *Introduction to Conservation Medicine* in August, and the National Zoo Directors' Conference in October. These platforms bring together experts, practitioners, and policymakers to foster collaboration, share knowledge, and promote best practices in wildlife conservation and care.

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