

Abused elephant Sunder on road to rescue centre

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Vijay Singh | TNN

Navi Mumbai: Young Sunder was on Thursday morning placed onto a truck by experts who travelled to Kolhapur to work with the Maharashtra forest department, and is on his way to a 49ha forested care centre in Bangalore, where he will have the company of 13 other elephants, as per a Supreme Court order.

The team faced many setbacks, including their truck tyres being punctured by persons who wanted to keep Sunder on MLA Vinay Kore's property, where he allegedly suffered months of abuse.

Sunder was with the Jyotiba temple in Kolhapur in 2007, but after the use of spiked chains and beatings came to light, Maharashtra minister of forests Dr Patan-grao Kadam on August 21, 2012, and the Project Elephant division of the ministry of environment & forests on November 9, 2012, issued orders for his rescue. But Sunder was spirited away and hidden in an old poultry shed, where he continued to be beaten and was so heavily chained that he recently sustained a serious leg injury.

"Despite obstacles, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) rejoices that this abused young elephant is on his way to safety," said PETA India director of



END OF MISERY: Sunder will have the company of 13 other elephants at a centre in Bangalore

veterinary affairs Dr Manilal Valliyate. "Sunder has known cruelty, misery and neglect. The day that Sunder will be able to roam, bathe in ponds, and be in the company of other elephants is near," he added.

Celebrities Paul McCartney, Amitabh Bachchan, Celina Jaitly, Madhuri Dixit, Pamela Anderson, Arjun Rampal, R Mad-

havan, Gulshan Grover and many others took to twitter; met with government officials and helped in other ways with the campaign for Sunder's release.

PETA had petitioned the Bombay high court for Sunder's release. But the matter went to the Supreme Court, which ruled that the elephant be shifted to a sanctuary.