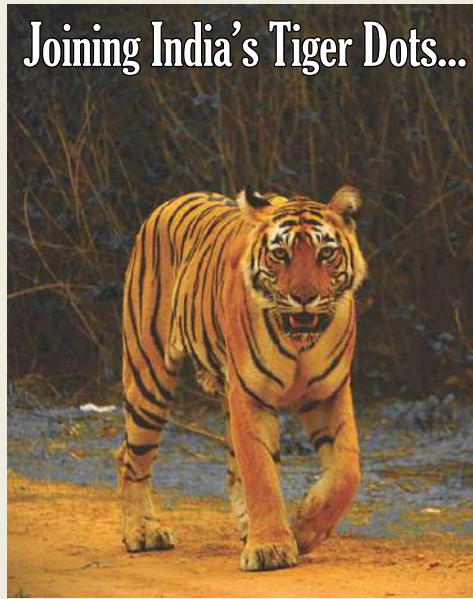




75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

Commemoration of 75th year of India's Independence

Joining India's Tiger Dots...



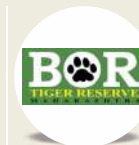
India for Tigers 'A Rally on Wheels' 2nd-8th October 2021

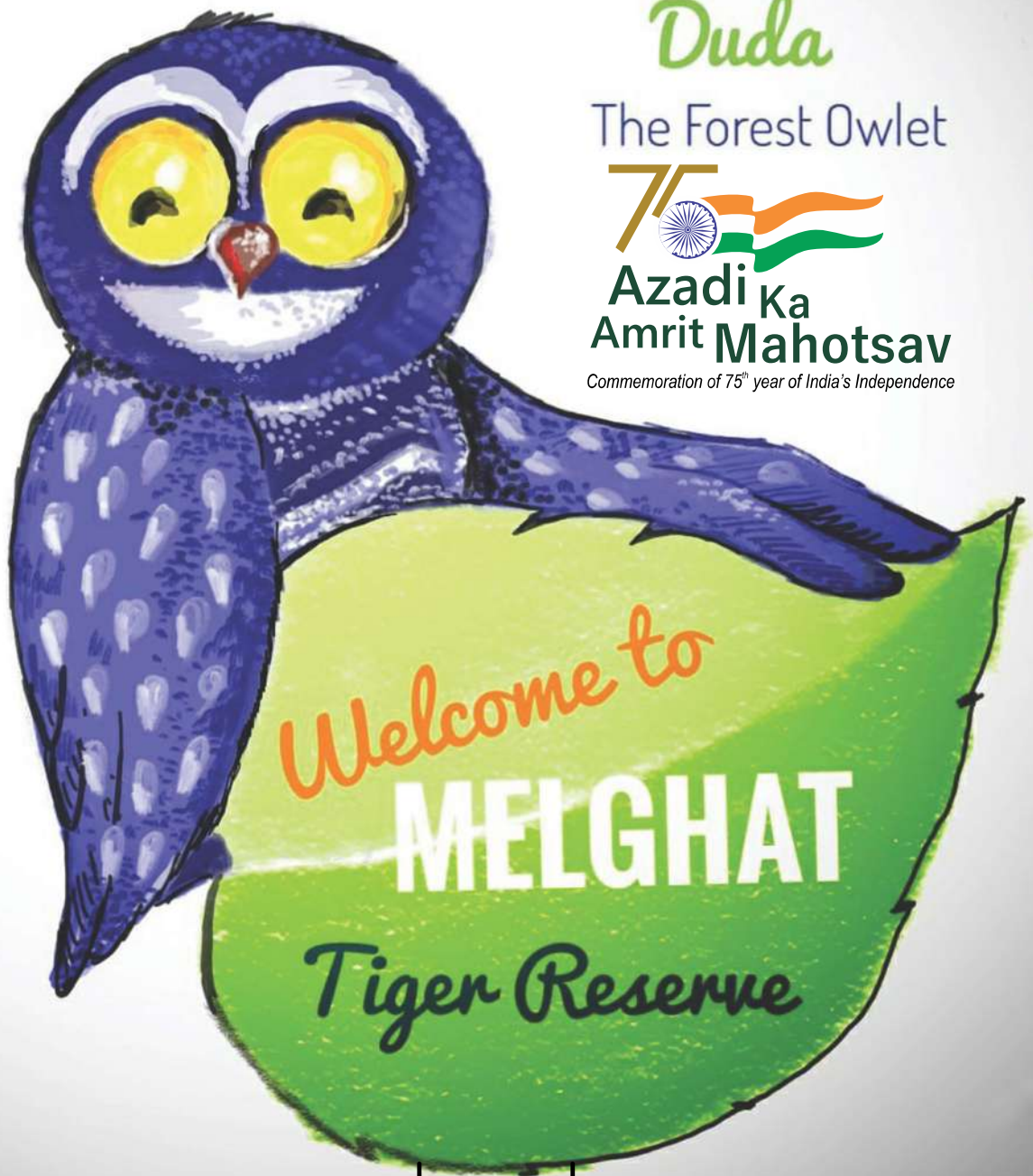
Edition for Melghat



On the occasion of Wildlife Week 2021

WILD MELGHAT e-Magazine





Duda

The Forest Owlet



Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav

Commemoration of 75th year of India's Independence



India for Tigers

A rally on wheels

Editors for Melghat
On the occasion of Wildlife Week 2021
WILD
MELGHAT
e-Magazine

75 Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

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Wild Melghat



Edition for Melghat



On the occasion of Wildlife Week 2021

WILD MELGHAT e-Magazine

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Commemoration of 75th year of India's Independence



Edition for Melghat



On the occasion of Wildlife Week 2021

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WILD MELGHAT e-Magazine

1

Editorial



Jayoti Banerjee IFS

Chief Conservator of Forests
and Field Director,
Melghat Tiger Reserve, Amravati



Dear Reader,

Greetings from Melghat!!!

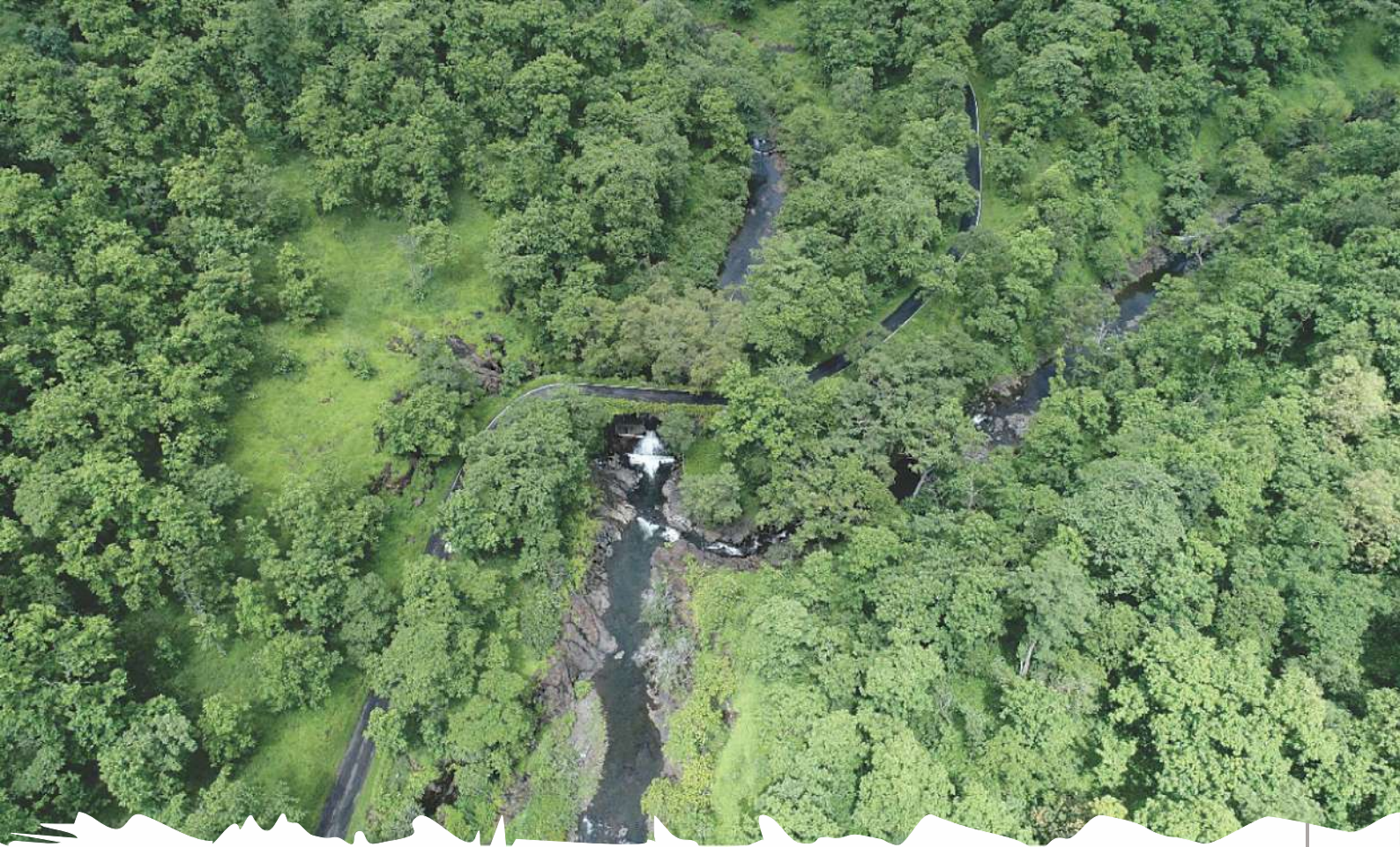
It gives me immense pleasure to bring up this special edition of 'Magical Melghat' which coincides with the commemoration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and celebrations of Wildlife Week.

As you are aware, Melghat Tiger Reserve is one of the first nine tiger reserves of the country which was declared as a part of 'Project Tiger' with a vision to conserve the National animal in its habitat. The 1500 sq.km area consists of 5 protected areas namely, Gugamal National Park, Melghat Sanctuary, Narnala, Ambabarwa and Wan Sanctuaries. Nestling in the Satpuda hill ranges, Melghat Tiger Reserve is enriched with floral biodiversity of 769 plant species and faunal biodiversity of Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians and Insects. The rich Avi-fauna includes 265 bird species including the flagship Forest Owlet, which is endemic to Melghat.

Being the largest Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra, Melghat's complex landscapes

are intertwined with huge number of villages present inside the core and buffer areas of the Reserve. Conservation efforts made in Melghat has always been and continues to be in harmony with the coexistence of people. This edition has articles which highlights our 'Inclusive





Conservation Strategy' which brings together the Tribals of the 'Danas' and Tigers of the 'Ghats' benefitting each other. Also, the write-ups on Grassland Development and Tourism explain the win-win situation created by the Department with community participation for conservation.

This edition also brings articles highlighting the efforts of Wildlife Crime Cell and Melghat Fire Cell in the conservation of Wildlife and our Precious Forests. There are stories authored by one of our

own tourist guides and tourist on their experiences in interacting with the 'Wagh'. We also present you an inquisitive fiction on Melghat, written by our officer, Ms. Piyusha Jagtap. I also take this opportunity to appreciate the efforts of our frontline personnel-'the Green Soldiers of Melghat' who work tirelessly for the cause of Wildlife Conservation. I would like to thank the Editorial Team who has come up with this wonderful documentation of Melghat.



Happy Reading!
Regards,

Ms. Jayoti Banerjee IFS
Chief Conservator of Forests
and Field Director,
Melghat Tiger Reserve,
Amravati





Eyes In The Woods

Piyusha Pramod Jagtap *IFS*
Divisional Forest Officer,
Melghat Wildlife Division, Partawada

An olive green open Jypsy entered Semadoh *Sankul*. One of the Ecotourism sites located deep into the forests of Melghat Tiger Reserve. A cluster of neatly aligned huts and bungalows nestled amidst the towering teak trees looked mesmerising. It was quite a dark by now. Lingering dusk and incandescence from the path lights refracted by the misty winter evening created a slight haze. Quietude reigned over the facility. Except for the singing cicadas everything else was silent. The Jypsy came to halt with a slight jerk and the engine sound died within next few moments. Rishi and her family had just returned from the evening safari from the nearby core forest. They had planned to stay at the *sankul* for next three days.

Rishi's father owned a shop and her mother worked with a bank, both in the city of Pune. This was their first visit to the forests of Melghat. Despite of being far away from the untouched

wilderness and forests, they had liking for nature and respect for the wild. They had made it a point to inculcate this respect in their only daughter's upbringing as well. Rishi was turning eleven after two days. She looked ahead to it eagerly since almost all her birthdays were celebrated in the wild, the tour being her birthday gift!

An elderly fellow named '*Bajilal*' came out at the doorstep. He was holding a flash light in his hand. Hiding behind him was a thin dark boy. It was evident from their tough gait that they belonged to the *korku* tribes settled in Melghats. Bajilal welcomed them warmly. His boy, a year or two younger than Rishi was named '*Bodha*'. No sooner did the initial reticence vanish, Rishi and Bodha became friends. After some steaming hot, sumptuous dinner in the canteen, sleep took over Rishi as she dreamed of the upcoming jungle visit the very next morning.

They started at the dawn. It was quite cold but refreshing. Soon the Jypsy took a sharp turn leaving the main road behind. The safari gate was opened by a sleepy watchman. Forests at early morning looked mystic. Temperatures dropped even more as the sun rose. Clad in the

camouflaged jackets and mufflers, Rishi was excited to feel the awakening forest. She peeped out of the jypsy to check the *PIPs* i.e. the Pug-mark Impression Pads laid on the road. These are patches of soft dry soil on the dirt roads used to record the impressions of wild animals as they walk over it. Rishi was very much excited to find huge and fresh pug-marks on one of the *PIPs*. They were accompanied with little ones of the same shape following and sometimes encircling the bigger ones. A tigress with a cub must have taken the same path a few hours ago. Next *PIP* confirmed their assumptions. And then again, the next one! The local guide who sat in the front seat was providing information on the various aspects and biodiversity of the area. That tigress must have had a long walk with her cub along the road the previous night. They also spotted a group of *sambhar* deers nibbling on the browning grasses. Sun had brightened by now, pushing the entire gathering to life. Water flowing in the *nalla* beds, ponded behind the cement bunds exuded vapour where it touched the cold air around. Bird activity suddenly took pace as



Author belongs to the 2014 batch of Indian Forest Service and working in the Melghat Tiger Reserve. The story is strictly a matter of fiction. Only for entertainment purpose.

different winged species took to their morning songs and chirps.

Rishi was enthralled at the entire experience. As everyone else got busy spotting different birds and the herbivores, she suddenly noticed that the tigress pug marks had vanished in the grasses. But her curious eye didn't miss one more unusual detail on the same *PIP*. Ashoe mark! Rather it must have been a trail of shoe marks! As if someone has walked carefully on the sides of the smooth dust road, over the grass, making it a point to avoid the *PIP*! However, in hurry, the person's last step must have got imprinted over the dusty soft soil. Rishi's subconscious clicked and saved the peculiar design, hexagonal grooves with number nine, embossed in the soil. Rishi wondered for a moment lost in her own thoughts. The guide called out to her attracting her attention as he spotted a huge male bison having its morning breakfast on the banks of the river *Sipna*. Everyone was excited to see that huge muscular animal. Its lower limbs were exceptionally clean white as if it was wearing stockings over all four of them! Rishi's mother, fond of photography, clicked its numerous pictures. Suddenly a huge *crested hawk eagle* with its mighty

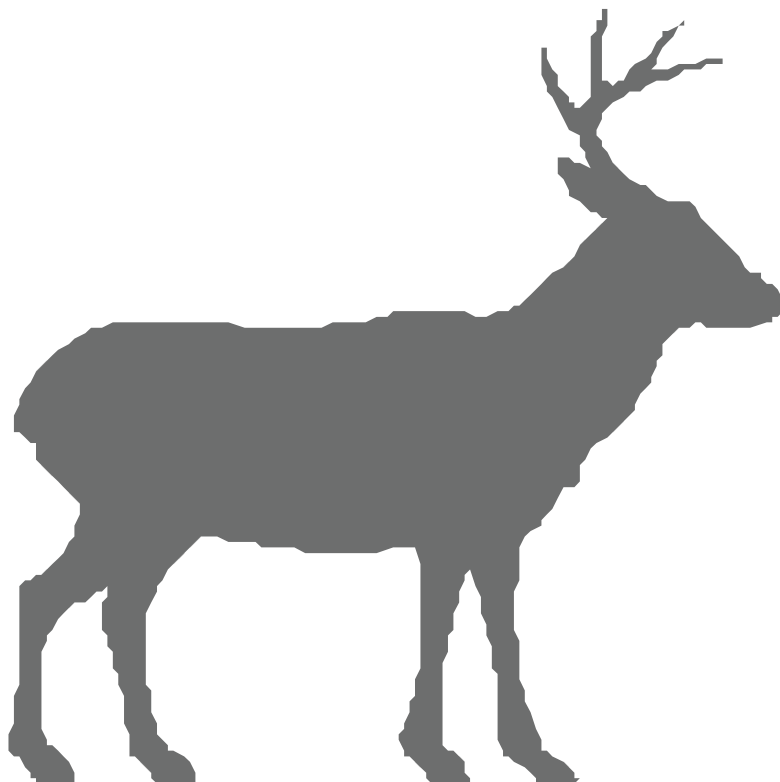
crest and predatory looks, settled on the branch running horizontally across the road. The vehicle stopped for some time. As the engine sound stopped, jungle sounds deepened. Calls from several birds near and far were intermixed with the crackling of fallen teak leaves being crushed under the bison's hoofs. There was some rustle at a distance which faded away hurriedly. Enchanted by the entire milieu, anyone there could have hardly noticed this unusual rustle...

Entire safari was an extraordinary affair. The dirt road was parallel to the banks of river *Sipna* and its banks and crossed numerous *nallas* and waterholes both natural and specially made for the summers when the rivers dried. They could spot many diurnal animals including a hairy *sloth bear* carrying her cubs on her back as she headed towards the river. Spellbound by the experience, everyone fell silent on the way back to the *sankul*. An early morning ride and winter appetites culminated in a heavy brunch at the canteen. Enjoying the local delicacies including jackfruit *sabjee* and local millets combined with thick *rabree* and curds to satisfy the sweet tooth, Rishi kept raving about her experience. She spotted Bodha

and was extremely happy to have an audience. Bodha was indeed a good listener. Rishi kept evangelising in her urban Hindi about the forests and Bodha gave a patient ear to her expression. Suddenly as she narrated about the pug-mark trail they saw, she remembered the foot mark...

Bodha brushed away her detective curiosities exclaiming in his *korku* accented Hindi, that it might have belonged to the forest guard who must have went foot patrolling at the dawn. Whereas Rishi, very much convinced of her intuitions, insisted that Bodha finds out the reality. It was no difficult a job for him since he stayed in the same campus where the forest staff incharge of the area stayed. Rishi asked her parents permission to explore the campus as they relaxed on the hammocks in front of the cottage they had pre-booked. Her mother agreed with little hesitation giving a few safety instructions not new for Rishi. She slipped away with Bodha straight towards the staff quarters.

In no time they were at the forest guard's quarters and encountered him as he was opening the lock of his front door. His wife too accompanied him. *Pravin Belkar* was a young man, local



from the Melghat. He chose to work as a forest guard in his late teens and had joined the department at an early age, immediately after completing his twelfth class in science subjects. He was holding charge for the beat from which the safari route meandered. Being a forest guard he had to foot patrol the area minimum 30 kms, at least four times a week. That too at different times of the day and night to ensure the safety of the inviolate forests. Pravin was enthusiastic about his work. He loved to be in the forest and ensured that he gave his best for the job. He listened carefully to what Rishi and Bodha had to say. He knew from his patrols and the data he recorded that the tigress identified as T-7 is residing in the said area along with her cub. But he too was taken by surprise to know about the foot mark that Rishi mentioned. He hadn't been to the forest since last three days since he had been on leave to visit his parents. His concerns grew as Rishi kept confirming confidently about the freshness of the foot mark and the hexagonal grooves with number nine embossed in the soil.

Noodling around the story that Rishi had narrated, three of them sat

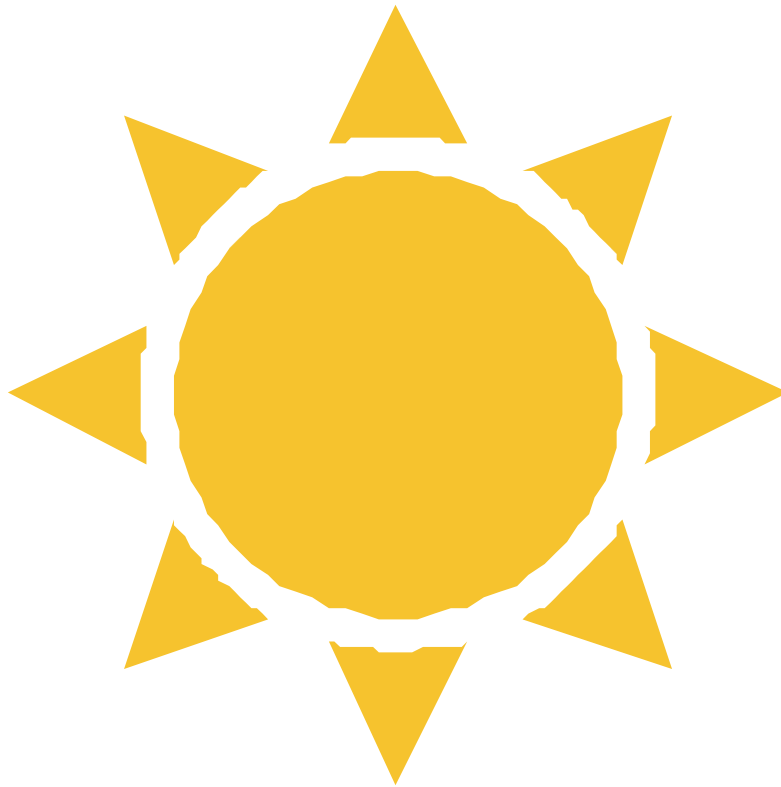
over a cup of black tea brewed out of the local aromatic *tikhadi* grass leaves, sweetened with jaggery. On the spur of moment, Pravin remembered the camera traps he had installed three weeks before to record the wild animals in the area. Camera traps have automatic trigger mechanism and capture any moving object that passes in front of them.

In no time all three of them jumped over his *hero honda* motorcycle and drove straight towards the jungle right upto the point. Rishi only realised later that she had absolutely forgotten to inform her mother about the adventure that was to come!

Pravin guided Bodha and Rishi towards the trail that went straight uphill. After an hour of a hectic afternoon climb, they reached the spot where he had installed the traps. It was a narrow pathway cutting into the ridge. Probably the only pass for any animal or human to pass. They were extremely relieved to spot the pair of cameras from distance, secured with a string to two *Sterculia* trees that looked over the pass. Both the *sterculias* also called the 'Ghost trees' shone white in the afternoon sun, were

devoid of any leaves. They rushed to the traps almost cutting into the thick *lantana* bushes around with excitement. However as Pravin unscrewed the data card slot, fear gripped him. Bodha and Rishi looked equally perplexed. They were bewildered to find both the data card slots empty! The data had been stolen!

Rishi's suspicions were now confirmed. They searched for and saw the same foot mark on the scarce coarse soils the rocky terrain could afford. All three rushed back to the *sankul* as dusk fell. Rishi's parents were already on a lookout and were relieved to see her safe. Soon they found themselves discussing the entire issue over a cup of black tea. Pravin by now had informed his superiors. The Range Forest Officer along with his team of twenty people and a sniffer dog were on the place. They had planned a combing operation overnight. Rishi narrated the entire sequence of events again to the combing team and they left the campus without wasting any time further. Rishi and Bodha both high on adrenalin, wanted to accompany the team, but were denied permission



since the forests were quite treacherous at night and both of them too young for the expedition.

Little disappointed that they couldn't participate in the search, Bodha and Rishi sat on the reception stairs spread out centripetally. The *flying squirrels*, residing in the canopies leapt gracefully from tree to tree. Their silhouettes were seen against the darkening skies. But Rishi, otherwise extremely passionate about the wildlife, looked impassive and lost in her thoughts. Bodha equally worried for the tigress and her cub, tried to cheer her up. To initiate some conversation, he asked her about the photos her mother had clicked. Somewhat nonchalantly Rishi opened the camera bag lying beside. It made a distinct beep sound as she put the digital screen on and started scrolling through the pictures. There were several pictures of different animals, landscapes, portraits and people from last two days. Bodha watched them with enthusiasm and attention. Suddenly a photo with a blurred crested hawk eagle attracted Rishi's attention. Mistakenly instead of the intended subject, the camera must have auto-focused on the background. Sharp eyed Rishi was

smart enough to pick up every little detail in that photo. It struck her instantly that it was the same place where the foot mark was observed. She almost jumped out of her seat when she zoomed in over one of the corners of that photo. There was clearly a person hiding behind a tree. He wore a green jacket and biscuit coloured pants which camouflaged with the surroundings. His face couldn't be seen though. He must have been hiding from the safari vehicle and waiting it to pass. Rishi knew what to do next. She almost ran to the wireless base station in the campus to contact Pravin. Message was passed through the wireless network to his walkie talkie deep in the jungle.

Pravin and the RFO both entered the campus hurriedly over a bike. Rest of the team was left behind to continue the search. Information was passed in code language alerting all the check posts of the tiger reserve. By midnight the search team returned with four snares recovered from strategic locations. But they couldn't find any trace of the tigress or her cub. No doubt that the snares were placed for the tigress which must have been observed by the poachers for some

time. Rishi dozed off out of the exertion as all of them awaited any further developments. No information came from the wireless about any such person leaving or entering the tiger reserve.

Rishi's parents had planned to visit the hill station of *Chikhaldara* and the mighty *Gavilgad* fort nearby, the very next morning. They went ahead with the plan. Bodha, by now a good friend to Rishi, also accompanied them. But the usual Rishi bubbling with enthusiasm and curiosity was missing. She had become a bit draggy. They visited all the view points. A beautiful forest garden and nature interpretation centre along with the fort in the morning. But Rishi's heart went out to the tigress and her cub that she hadn't even seen! They stopped over at one of the local restaurants for lunch. Sun was overhead by now and was burning bright. Still Chikhaldara weather carried some chill. They sat on the veranda where tables and chairs were arranged neatly.

As they were having lunch, a white bolero camper pulled in. Its back carriage or the boot was closed with a camouflage print tarpaulin. The one which is commonly used in the



forest department vehicles in the tiger reserve. However, Rishi's sharp eye noticed the fact that it did not carry the usual '*Maharashtra Government*' etched on the front glass. She noted that the number plate bore MP i.e. initials from the neighbouring state of Madhya Pradesh. As her mind registered the sequence of number, her face turned pale instantaneously. A bearded man with green jacket and biscuit coloured pants jumped out of the driver seat. His clothes bore stark resemblance with the one who was photographed in the forest!

They were a gang of five men together in the vehicle. They came and sat very next to their table. Very well within an ear shot. Bodha, who was sitting opposite across the table noticed Rishi's expressions. He immediately understood that something was wrong. He signalled Rishi's parents. They too became alert. Those men ordered tea. Which clearly meant that they had no plans for a longer break. Rishi, now in full control of the situation, grabbed a piece of tissue from the table and wrote something for Bodha and her father. While she whispered something in her mother's ear, Bodha

had left to wash his hands. Her father was the next to leave. He went straight to the *paan* stall outside to enquire about the nearest forest office. Fortunately it was just close by. He speeded towards the chikhaldara forest range office on foot to avoid any suspicion.

Tea had been served. Rishi observed them carefully. Specially the person with green jacket and shoes sitting just diagonally opposite to her. She had to confirm if he was the same person she had seen. Rishi's mother started pouring water in the transparent empty glass in front of her. Suddenly, the bunch of the keys lying close to the edge of the table tumbled over straight on the floor after an inconspicuous push given by Rishi. Almost instantly she knelt down to pick them up. In a moment or two a glass full of water fell from Rishi's mother's hand. Splash of water intermixed with the pieces of glass scattered all over the floor. Reflexively, the neighboring person on the adjacent table lifted his leg up with a faint swearing remark. In a moment Rishi's eyes confirmed the expected design on his outsole! The same hexagonal grooves with number nine!

Her mother apologised to their neighbours and also to the hotel owner who had rushed towards them from the counter. Everything seemed very inadvertent.

Ignoring the situation as if nothing happened, all five men rose to leave immediately. Rishi's heart raced as they walked towards their vehicle. Bodha was nowhere to be seen. Rishi heard one of the men cursing loudly and banging his foot against the bolero's tyre! She was relieved momentarily. Bodha must have done his job correctly! He had somehow managed to puncture one of the rear tyres. The hotel owner who also happened to be a native, was taken in confidence by Bodha. Ecotourism was the major employment activity for the place. People knew the fact well that if Tigers and forests survive, local economy will flourish. Needless to say, they took conservation efforts very seriously. The hotel owner was no exception to it and helped Bodha without any hesitation. All of them tried collectively to buy some time here and there so that the poacher's gang delayed their departure.

Rishi waited desperately for her father to arrive with some help. Her



All images sourced from internet.

fears were alleviated only when the RFO vehicle with uninformed forest staff gushed into the parking lot blocking the entrance. In no time all five men were nabbed and taken into custody. A frisson of anxiety shot through Rishi as they uncovered the boot of the vehicle. To their delusion it was empty. But a careful examination revealed cured *spotted deer* skins tucked carefully under the mattresses. Only consolation they had was that the tigress and her cub were totally absent from the scenario. Both living or dead!

The poachers were taken to the forest office for further investigations. Rishi, Bodha and her parents came back to Semadoh *sankul* all overwhelmed due to the series of events they had witnessed and were part of. All of it was no less than living a thriller film! They all slept early out of exhaustion and tiredness, but with a certain calm. However, the tigress and her cub lingered in Rishi's mind. What would have happened to them? Did the poachers kill them? Or they just managed to escape? Sleep came to her only out of exertion.

Late night around 11.00 pm there was a knock at their cottage door. Pravin, the forest guard, clad in his winter wear was standing at the porch.

Excitement was overflowing from his face and a jypsy was standing right next to him waiting for them to climb in. Wearing their winter outfits, with a bit of reluctance and sleepy eyes all three of them packed themselves in the rear seat of the jypsy. On the way as they left the campus gate, Bodha jumped in the front seat. Rishi, still very sleepy didn't ask any questions where they were proceeding to. Pravin too no intention to reveal it to them.

They entered the safari gate and stopped at the very first PIP. Just in front was a pool of water as still as a mirror, reflecting the starry sky and white trunks of the mighty *Arjun trees* lining the *nalla* bed. The moonlit forests were ethereal. The vehicle engine silenced. Suddenly right in front of them a magnificent striped beast walked out of the bush. Her tiny cub, almost the size of a big cat came out behind her playfully. The tigress sat over the pool side without any hesitation in her own might. The cub played with her tail dangling over the rock, equally unaware of the dangers from the human race. The pond reflected this most ecstatic picture with slight waves moving it intermittently. Everyone in the jypsy was tongue tied and witnessed the

most beautiful of the nature's creation for ten long minutes. It was the best sighting one could ever have.

As the queen walked away as if she came out only to thank the crew, they left the forest immediately. Exhilarated, all of them returned back to the *sankul* immediately. Pravin had gone out of the way to take these tourists to the forest late at night, the time when they are not generally allowed and had no regrets about it. The Range Officer and his team waited for them at the reception. It was five minutes to the new day when they brought in the birthday cake specially ordered for Rishi. It read '*thank you from T-7!*' Rishi's birthday was celebrated in the *sankul* with singing cicadas, flying squirrels, shining stars and flowing gratitude from everyone around.

Bodha gifted her a beautiful bamboo pen-stand he himself had made. Rishi promised to write to him and stay in touch with Pravin after going back. Having had the best birthday of her life, Rishi with her parents, left for their home town early next morning. Everyone back at the Sankul realised what this small intervention of ecotourism activity had brought to them!

Conservation & Protection of Tiger & Tiger Habitat with Communities Participation of Melghat Tiger Reserve of Maharashtra State of India

Prafulla Sawarkar

Livelihood Expert,
MTR, Amravati.



Introduction:

Melghat was declared a Tiger Reserve on 22/02/1974. It is amongst one of the first nine tiger reserves of India created under the Project Tiger Mission. Initially it was over an area of 1571.74 sq.km. This was the first tiger reserve in the state of Maharashtra.

Melghat Tiger Reserve is one of the largest tiger reserves of India, which is geographically spread over the 2768 sq.km. in four wildlife

divisions. The critical tiger habitat and core area of tiger reserve is 1500.50 sq.km. and buffer zone is 1268.3 sq.km.

The mystic landscape of Melghat has vast tracts of inviolate natural forests consisting of unique and representative ecosystem with rich floral and faunal biodiversity and varied habitats. Melghat is a home to 300 birds species, 88 species of mammals and 700 species of flora. Melghat has a very undulating area through which many rivers crisscross the landscapes roamed

by the tigers. 5 rivers originate from Melghat. They are Sipna, Gadga, Dolar, Khapra and Wan. Apart from these thousands of streams link up to the above rivers. All these rivers are tributaries of Tapi River which flows through the western part of Vidharba and Khandesh. From Maharashtra it flows into the state of Gujarat before draining into the Arabian Sea.

According to the report of NTCA in 2018 more than 50 tigers are present in Melghat. It is possible due to the hard work to undertake various conservation activities such as protection, livelihood management, research, awareness and most importantly, resettlement of the





villages from core area of the tiger reserve. Rehabilitation is a voluntary decision taken by the people according to the policies of Government.

Community based activities:

Sustainable Livelihood:

Providing sustainable livelihood to local communities is an important part conservation forest and wildlife. Melghat is not only the land of beautiful wildlife but also the home of different tribal communities. It includes Korkus, Gonds, Nihals & Balais which are the other lesser inhabited tribes. Socially developed grazer castes of Gavalis are also migrants of these regions. These

tribal communities directly or indirectly depend on the forest and forest products. Presences of traditional farming inhabitants who cultivate land are marginal and limited. For survival, many are dependent upon MRGS work and other works from the forest department. Education system a challenge in Melghat. Infrastructural limitations and remoteness of Melghat added with poverty leads to high rate of dropouts after completing schooling. This increases unemployment which is the greatest bane of these forests. This unemployment affects the forest ecosystem through various demagogy activities.

To overcome these challenges and reduce their dependency on forest and to involve them in protection & conservation of forest wildlife, the administration of Melghat Tiger Reserve runs various skill development and job oriented programme.

Melghat Tiger Reserve has joined hands with various skill development institutes of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

These institutes teach them various courses and provide employment. Institute like Confederation Indian Industry, Chindwada, teaches youths the skills of being a JCB operator, two wheeler repairing & servicing course, and masonry and bar bending skills. Ashoka Driving Institute Chindwada imparts four wheeler driving training to youths and provide them opportunities as drivers. Pratham Hospitality Training Centre, Sillari, imparts hospitality training and after completion of the training youths are placed in three star and five star hotels. Montfort Training Centre, Patansawangi provides various courses such as, welding, tailoring, motor vehicles repairing and provides related





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opportunities for placement to the youth. Melghat Tiger Reserve has established three computer training centres in various villages which impart MH-CIT certified courses of Government of Maharashtra. These courses are very important for government and semi government jobs. Melghat also imparts four wheeler driving courses for youths in respective villages. This helps the youths to start self employment driving ventures and get certain jobs. For the development of local women, Melghat administration has established sewing machine centres in various villages under the jurisdiction for making cloths bags, masks and dresses. Such livelihood

opportunities provided by Melghat Tiger Reserve helps maintain good relations with communities which are beneficiary for protection and conservation of the land of the Tiger.

Voluntary rehabilitation:

Melghat has undertaken some pioneering work in rehabilitation of villages from forest area which in the due course has resulted in freeing and rewilding of vast areas of land from the influence of humans. Today tigers and other animals roam these stretches of land. Nature is gradually regaining its long lost glory in these places. Bori was the first village to be rehabilitated in 2001-2002 followed by the rehabilitation of the villages Koha and Kund in 2002-2003. After that during 2011-12 sixteen villages were relocated successfully from the critical tiger habitat of Melghat. Between 2018-20, six villages viz. Mangiya, Rora, Pastalai, Memana, Dolar and Malur in Gugamal Wildlife Division were resettled in Achalpur & Chandur Bazaar tehsil of Amravati district. From Sipna Wildlife Division the village of Pili was resettled. All villages are now settled very well in

alternate land away from the forests. The lands of these relocated villages are much more productive and closer to all amenities. Employment opportunities for such villagers are also many compared to what they would get inside the forests. At the same time tigers roam the regained forests which look greener than ever before. The prey of the carnivores i.e. the herbivores are also found in abundance on these once village farmlands which have become good grasslands. Melghat Tiger Reserve has developed basic amenities in such resettled villages by helping in getting electricity, making roads and basic infra structure, building schools completing proper





documentation and providing trainings to the local youth which is supported by tribal research and training center in Pune. Melghat administrations have also helped youths of resettled villages purchase 4 wheelers for livelihood ventures. For this purpose a soft loan of maximum rupees 5 lakhs has been given to the youths.

Tourism for conservation:

Eco tourism plays a vital role in conservation and protection of forest and wildlife by involving local communities in various tourism activities. Through the various activities more than two hundred local youths have been benefited financially to develop their standard

of living. Local youths are involved as eco guides, gypsy drivers, canteen operators, room attendants. These local youths support to protect the wildlife with forest department in various aspects, such as awareness, controlling forest fire, reducing man animal conflict, etc.

Eco Development Committees:

Under the scheme of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Jan-Van Yojana Melghat Tiger Reserve have established Eco development committees in 132 villages of four wildlife divisions. The main aims of these committees are to reduce the man animal conflict and involve local community in forest conservation. Through this scheme Melghat administration provides LPG gas to villagers, solar fencing to farmland, protects farm wells by fencing, provides solar lamps, agriculture equipment and other things which are important to forest conservation.

Awareness and education with Non government organization:

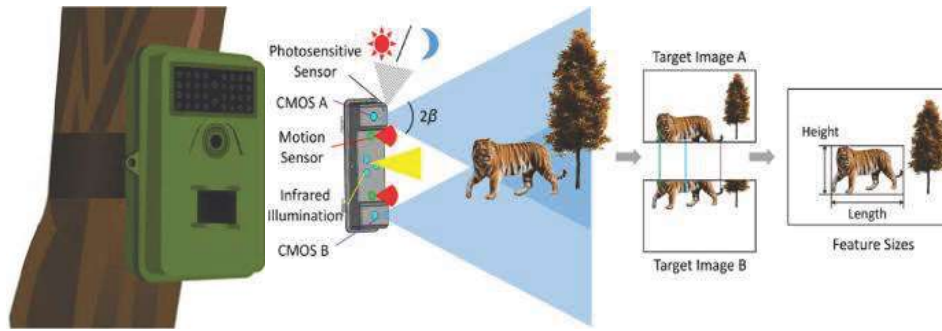
Melghat Tiger Reserve has arranged nature awareness education camps with the

involvement of Non government organization in villages, periphery schools. Such camps raise awareness amongst local communities about forest and wildlife conservation as well as involve them in forest and wildlife protection.

Melghat Tiger Reserve through such activities has won the strong support from local a community which involves local citizens in conservation and protection of tiger and tiger habitat. It has resulted in survival and presence of more than 50 tigers roaming freely in the protected areas of Melghat.



Melghat through a Camera Trap



Jaydeep Patil

JRF,
Wildlife Institute of India

treasure trove of picturesque landscapes and diverse wildlife. From rugged, untamable mountains to lush, fertile meadows; from mighty, unstoppable rivers to elegant, ephemeral pools; from giant, towering teaks to tiny, creeping mosses; and from royal, majestic tigers to mysterious, elusive owlets; Melghat is home to it all. Hidden between these bountiful mountains and valleys are wonders that few are privy to.

Fellow for Wildlife Institute of India in Melghat Tiger Reserve. Under the purview of the project titled “Long-term monitoring of tigers, co-predators and prey in Vidarbha, Maharashtra”, I have had the chance to study Melghat TR and its wildlife



*Photo Credit: Noor Sayyed
(Field Assistant, WII-Melghat)*

The word Melghat means “meeting of the ghats”. In the northern part of Amravati District, lies one of the most unique and mesmerizing forest. Nestled between the River Tapi the Satpuda ranges of Central India, Melghat is a



*Photo Credit: A. Sajid A. Wahid
(Forest Guard, Melghat TR)*

For the past few years, I have had the opportunity to experience Melghat through a very unique lens: the Camera Trap. Since 2019, I have been working as a Jr. Research



Young Nilgai bull (right) trying to overpower the dominant Nilgai bull (left) to win over the females



Sambar deer expertly traversing the rocky riverbeds of Melghat



A tigress curiously noticing a camera trap on her way



A Sloth bear female (right) with a very unique colour variation (leucism) along with a normal coloured male (left)



A sizeable population of Striped Hyenas also reside Melghat

through the use of camera traps (special cameras equipped with motion sensors). Nearly 1200 camera traps (in 2020) and 1900 camera traps (in 2021) were placed spanning almost 2800 sq. km. of

Melghat's wilderness. This monumental feat of camera trapping the largest Tiger Reserve in Maharashtra has been made possible with the support & motivation from the administrators and field staff of Melghat Tiger Reserve. Based on the 2020 camera trapping effort, about 50 tigers and 130 leopards have been reported from Melghat. The numbers for the 2021 report are being compiled.



Langurs enjoying by the artificial waterholes on a hot summer day

Apart from wildlife estimation and monitoring, camera traps also help capture some rare and exclusive moments in the forest. In the lakhs of photos captured by the camera traps, there are numerous interesting moments that offer incredible insights into the behaviour of the wild residents of Melghat.



Honey Badgers are one of the most elusive and ferocious inhabitants of Melghat



A leopard takes a moment to look over the cliff at his territory

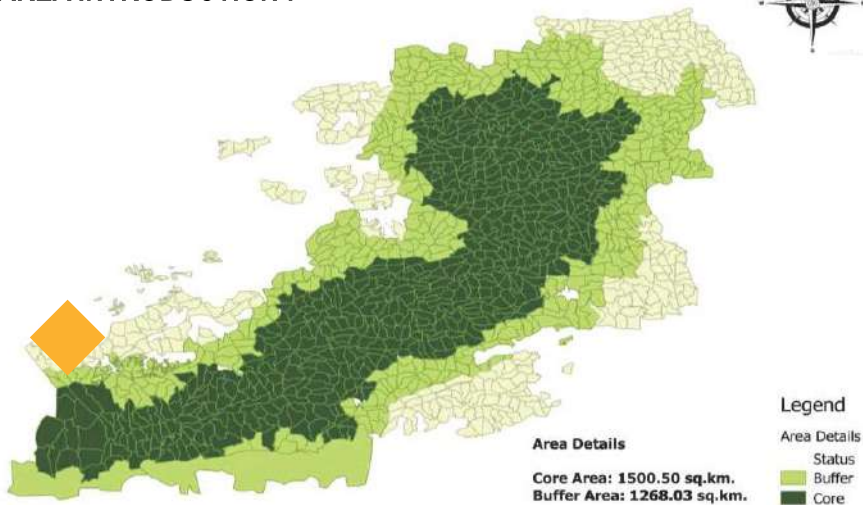
On the other hand there are some photos that are thoroughly entertaining and an overload of cuteness. Every camera trap tells a new story and gives me a chance to catch a glimpse of the *wild* life in the jungle.



Role and Responsibility of Fire Cell of Melghat Tiger Reserve

● Fire Cell Unit
MTR, Amravati.

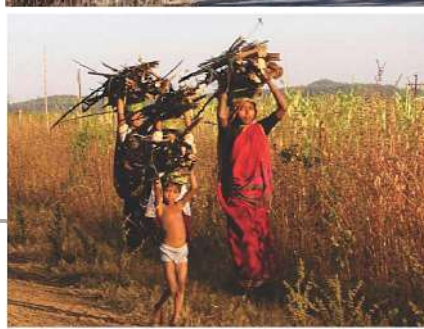
AREA INTRODUCTION :

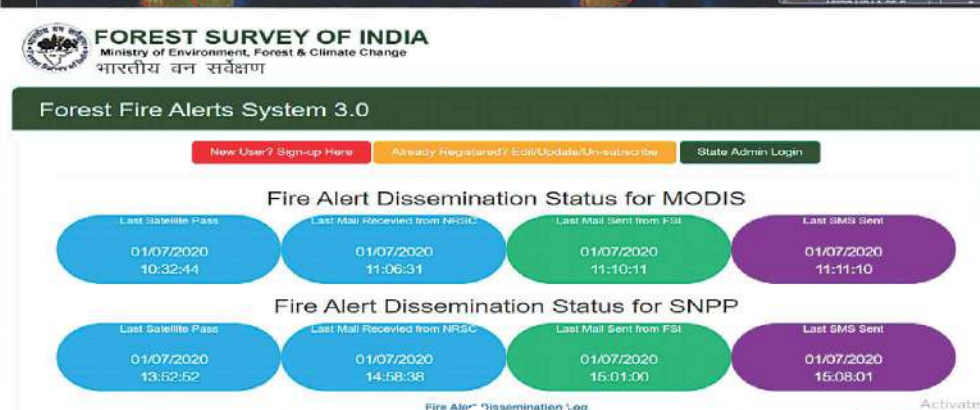


Melghat : One of the largest Tiger Reserves in India: 2768 sq.km

REASONS OF FOREST FIRES:

- Tendu collection
- Mahuwa flower collection
- Illegal cattle grazing
- Retaliation against lawful activities of forest department
- Vandalism by local goons
- Negligence and human error





ESTABLISHMENT OF FIRE CELL:

- Fire Cell was well equipped with 2 Computers, 2 laptops. A broad band internet connection and 2 internet Dongles is also at service.
- Fire Cell is equipped with wireless to communicate with field staff.
- Fire cell works for 24 X 7 during fire season.
- 6 Forest Guards (FG) were registered at NASA FIRMS and FSI for Melghat specific fire alert.
- On the receipt of data, FG creates a Forest Fire Map which shows exact location of fire in relation to Forest Administrative boundaries.
- This map is made available to field staff on a WhatsApp group which was created for dedicated dissemination of fire alerts.
- In this WhatsApp group right from Field Director to Range Officer are members. Wireless Duty Officers are also included in this group.
- *Field director, Melghat Tiger Reserve and DFO, Research personally monitor fire cell operations on day to day basis*

FLOWCHART OF ACTION TAKEN AFTER DETECTION OF FIRE:

- Detection of forest fire
- Analysis (Identification of spot)
- Communication with frontline staff
- Staff mobilisation
- Dousing fire
- Assessment of burnt area with the help of Drone
- Assessment of burnt area with the help of GPS

REPORTING TO FIRE CELL

DETECTION OF FIRE :

Early detection of forest fire is very important to reduce damage Melghat Tiger Reserve uses dual system to detect forest fire ie.

A. Traditional forest fire watch towers.

B. Satellite alerts.

DETECTION OF FIRE:

- Satellites were developed by advances in science and technology. These satellites revolve around Earth and take photos simultaneously. **Sometimes they have thermal cameras which can sense difference in temperature of Earth surface caused due to forest fire.** Such anomalies are spotted and exact

locations of such probable fires are sent to Control Centre on Earth. These Centre send the location data to User agencies like us Forest Department (FD).

● There are 2 such known Control Centre who cater forest fire data. **One is Forest Survey of India (FSI). Other is National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).** The exact location of fire in form of Latitude and Longitude is shared by these Centre to FD. Maps showing fire are also shared. Online active fire maps are available and can be seen as it is free and open to all.

● This fire information is real near time. That means as soon as satellite receives data it is processed and sent to earth and later to user agencies within **short period of time like 15 minutes.**

● This method of fire detection is also not free from errors. Cloud cover, dense vegetation and deep gorges may obstruct satellite view and not report a fire. But such dark patches in relation to satellite are small. Clouds can play tricky role sometimes in summer and

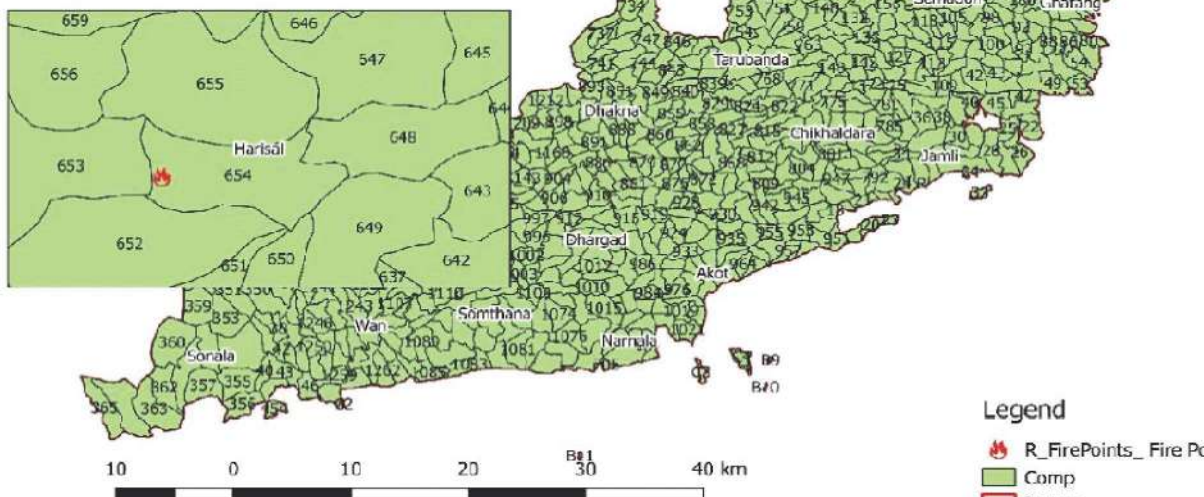


MELGHAT TIGER PROJECT FIRE MAP 2020



01 Forest Fire Detected On Date-11.04.20
time 4.00am

Fire no.	Range Name	Comp.No.
01	Harisal	654



generates temperature anomaly creating a pseudo fire alert.

ANALYSIS (IDENTIFICATION OF SPOT):

Once Fire cell recieved fire alert from NASA or FSI they start analysis of that alert without any delay

- Fire locations are analysis in GIS software to find out administrative details.
- Fire locations are also analysis in google earth to analysis to photography of that area.

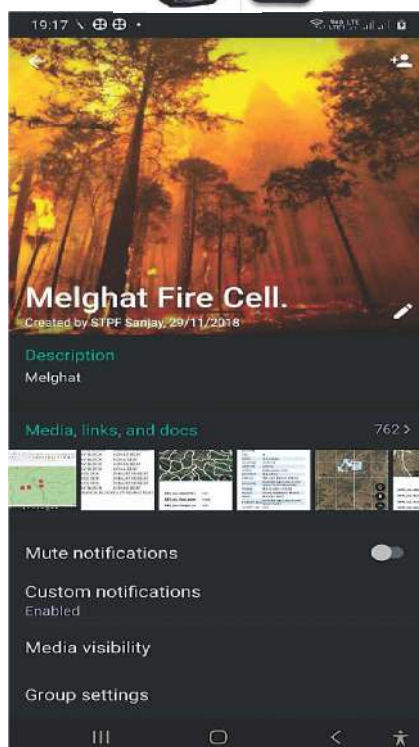
- Fire cell team generate maps with the help of GIS software.

COMMUNICATION WITH FRONTLINE STAFF:

- After generation maps of forest fire the information of forest fire is disseminate among concern forest officers.
- Maps and KML files are shared on dedicated whatsapp group where all concern forest can access the information.
- The GPS location of forest fire is communicated to concern forest staff through wireless network.
- Fire cell members also call the concern forest officers and inform

them about forest fire incident.

- Fire cell keep monitoring forest fire incident till that fire is completely doused by staff.



involvement of Non government organization in villages, periphery schools. Such camps raise awareness amongst local communities about forest and wildlife conservation as well as involve them in forest and wildlife protection.

Melghat Tiger Reserve through such activities has won the strong support from local a community which involves local citizens in conservation and protection of tiger and tiger habitat. It has resulted in survival and presence of more than 50 tigers roaming freely in the protected areas of Melghat.

DOUSING OF FIRE:

Movement of fire protection staff/squad/labors to the fire-spot:

- Swift movement of staff
- Optimum distance of staff headquarter from fire
- Quick availability of vehicle, fuel, blower, waterman to staff
- Map to guide way showing compartments and roads



Dousing of forest fire:

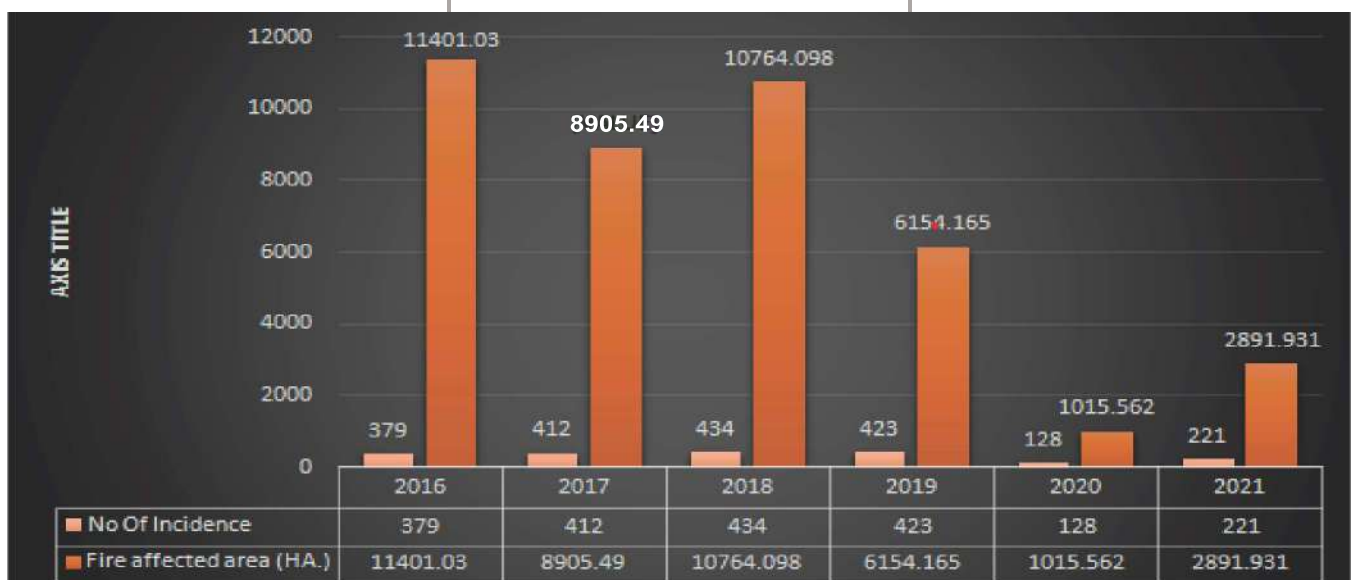
- a. Frontline staff uses fire blowers for dousing fire.
- b. Sometime they also uses locally made broom.



ASSESSMENT OF BURNT AREA:

Assessment of burnt area is done with the help of drones. The pictures taken by drones gives us idea about damaged area and gives us assurance that fire has been completely douse. The GPS polygon is taken to calculate damage area.

FOREST FIRES IN MELGHAT 2016 - 2021:





A short report on Wildlife Crime Cell, Melghat Tiger Reserve

Team Wildlife Crime Cell
MTR, Amravati.



Most of the poachers and smugglers used mobile phones for coordination. These mobile numbers were tracked with the help of police and that was a humble beginning of wildlife cyber operations. Later in 2015 Government of Maharashtra came out with notification vide: CDR-0615/CR-51/spl-9, dated: 02/07/2015 which empowered 6 Nodal Officers of Forest Department from Maharashtra to withdraw Cyber Data directly for the purpose of investigation.

Wildlife Crime Cell (W.C.C.) was established directly under Field Director and Chief Conservator of Forest, Melghat Tiger Reserve, Amravati. Now, it consists of a dedicated team which includes a Divisional Forest Officer and 4 Forest Guards. It has a separate office which functions under the supervision of Field Director, Melghat Tiger Reserve. W.C.C. has been equipped with full of cyber equipments and technology. The team of W.C.C. has been also been imparted training of cyber data operations. It has 2 work stations, 2 laptops, Cyber tool kit, 1 Map plotter

Wildlife Crime has wide impact on society in terms of ecology and economy and in recent years it has been an increase. According to a survey it is the third largest smuggling business after drugs and arms. Recent news claimed that ULFA (Asom). Indian Mujahideen (Uttarakhand have entered in wildlife crimes to get easy capital for terrorist activities.

Wildlife Crime has trans-

state and trans-nation nature. Few tiger poaching cases of Maharashtra that were investigated in 2013 have long reaching implications. There were many gangs who were involved in pouching and smuggling of the tiger body parts. The poachers that killed tigers were from Madhya Pradesh. The smugglers that bought tiger body parts were from Haryana and Punjab. The smugglers who further bought the parts were from Delhi. Later chain consisted Tibetan and Chinese smugglers.



and two sets of softwares of cyber data analysis. W.C.C. also maintains a 3 drone squad for areal inspection, follow up of accused and for landscape photography and videos. One dedicated Mahindra Thar Jeep has been allotted.

W.C.C. takes follow up of Wildlife Cases of Melghat Tiger Reserve and maintains detailed account (All case papers, Bio data of accused) of these cases. W.C.C. also peruses the absconding accused and is planning to take court cases follow up. W.C.C. is creating a graded information network in Melghat which will provide secret information of poachers and smugglers in advance and offenses can be prevented. W.C.C. provides cyber data in important forest and wildlife cases all over Maharashtra. A formal, written request from in charge of Forest Division is taken with regard to particular offence and Cyber data and analysis is provided. W.C.C. also maintains a wide database which includes Cyber data related to Forest Offences, Bio data of accused (including digital

fingerprint) and trap camera data of All India Tiger Census of Melghat.

W.C.C. provides various kind of cyber data such as Call Details Record (C.D.R.) subscriber Detail Record (SDRI). Live Tower location to the Investigation of on demand

W.C.C. has registered with NASA FIRMS satellite in the fire of 2019. This helped in early identification of Forest Fires. A real time message and map where fire is active was generated and sent to respective DCF, ACF and RFO from dedicated Whatsapp group as well

as from wireless. Follow up of each fire was taken till dousing of it.

After dousing. It was reported to Field Director. GPS in each govt. vehicle: were installed and their real time online locations were also tracked. At the time of fire locations of respective RFO, ACF vehicles were also taken and posted in group. This resulted in reduced response time in fire dousing. Forest officers where readily inform and rushed the fire spot resulting less burned area.

WCC also trained Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve, Pench Tiger



W.C.C. team has been provided with Air gun and they are frequently trained for aiming practice. W.C.C. team has also taken initiative in installing PTZ and CCTV cameras at several locations of Melghat. Semadoh, Kolkhas has been connected with Wi-Fi facility. So live feed of these cameras can be seen from designated computers



and mobile phones.

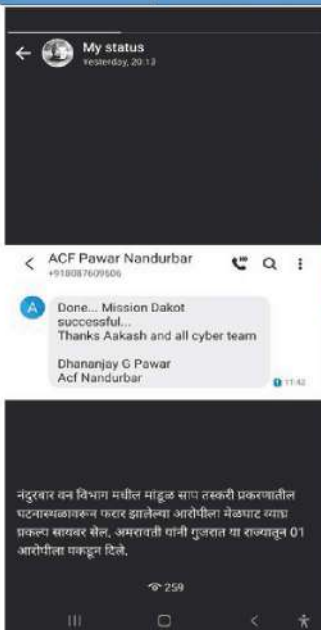
The WCC has succeeded in arresting several hundred of accused of tiger poaching cases of 2013. The prosecution of accused also led to conviction of many tiger poachers and smugglers. W.C.C. have also co-ordinate investigation of Indian Gaur Poaching Case of Sipna Division in 2017 which also led

to fastest conviction of accused in eight months of trial period.

In a recent brain storming session at Mahabaleshwar, decision to strengthen W.C.C. and create one cyber cell for Maharashtra at Melghat was taken.



POR No. 01 Date- 04/01/2021 Sand Boa Case Nandurbar T. Division, Cyber Cell MTR Provide Live Location & Gujarat State 02 Accuse Arrested.





पर्यटनातून वाघाचे संवर्धन

स्वप्निल बांगडे

पर्यटन व्यवस्थापक,
मे.व्या.प्र. संवर्धन प्रतिष्ठान, अमरावती.



चौशिंगा, मसण्या उद, उडती खार, रान डुक्कर, चांदी अस्वल, सायळ, खवले मांजर यांचा अधिवासाचे क्षेत्र आहे. १९७२ मध्ये मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्पात २७ वाघांचे अस्तित्व होते. जे आज वाढून ५० इतकी झाली आहे. असून या प्रकल्पाची १०० वाघ सांभाळण्याची क्षमता आहे.

निसर्ग सौंदर्य व विविध पर्यटन स्थळे यामुळे मेळघाट मध्ये पर्यटन मोठ्या प्रमाणात आकर्षित होत आहेत. पर्यटनाच्या दृष्टीने महत्वाचे स्थळ जसे सेमाडोह, कोलकास, हरिसाल, चिखलदरा, आमझरी, शहानुर यांचा समावेश होतो. पर्यटन अंतर्गत निवास व्यवस्था, जंगल सफारी, रात्र सफारी, मचाण मुक्काम, साहसी खेळ, कायाकिंग, हत्ती सफारी, फुल डे सफारी इत्यादी उपक्रम पर्यटकांना उपलब्ध करून देण्यात आलेली आहे. या पर्यटनावर मेळघाटातील स्थानिक आदिवासी यांचे रोजगार अवलंबून असते. जंगल सफारी मध्ये पर्यटकांना मार्गदर्शक सोबत घेऊन जाने अनिवार्य असते. त्यासाठी वनविभागातर्फे मेळघाटातील युवकांना विशिष्ट प्रशिक्षण

मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्प हे भारतातील ४ थे सर्वात मोठे व्याघ्र प्रकल्प असून १९७४ मध्ये घोषित केलेल्या पहिल्या ९ व्याघ्र प्रकल्पांपैकी एक आहे. मेळघाट शब्द हा घाट आणि मेळ असे दोन शब्द मिळून म्हणजे घाटांचा मेळ असा त्याचा अर्थ होतो. उंच डोंगर, खोल दऱ्या, घनदाट जंगल व त्यामधील विविध वन्यजीव चा येथे अधिवास आहे. मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्प सातपुडा पर्वत रांगेत वसलेले सुक्ष्म पाणमळीचे जंगल आहे. मेळघाट हा

एकूण २७६८ चौ.कि.मी. क्षेत्रात पसरलेल असून त्यामधील १५००.५० हा गाभा क्षेत्र असून १२६८.०३ चौ.कि.मी. हा बफर क्षेत्र आहे. या व्याघ्र प्रकल्पामध्ये ५ महत्वाच्या नद्या वाहतात. सिपना, खापरा, खंडू, गडगा आणि डोलार या सर्व नद्या तापी नदीला जाऊन मिळतात.

मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्प हे वाघ, बिबट, रानकुत्रे (सोन कुत्रे), अस्वल, लांडगा, तडस, जंगली मांजर, रान गवा, सांभर, चितळ, भेकर, निलगाय,



देण्यात येते. त्यांना पर्यटकांसोबत जंगल भ्रमंती मध्ये दिसणारी जैव विविधता बदल ओळख व त्याबद्दलची रूची निर्माण करण्याची जबाबदारी देण्यात येते. जंगल म्हणजे फक्त वाघ नसून इतर बरेच सुक्ष्म जीव यांचे निसर्ग चक्रातले महत्व पटवून देण्याचे काम मार्गदर्शक करतात. या कामासाठी त्यांना पर्यटकांतर्फे प्रति ट्रीप रु. ३५० मानधन स्वरूपात दिली जाते. मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्पात सेमाडोह, चिखलदरा, हरिसाल, शहानूर, वसाली, चौराकुंड व ढाकणा या ठिकाणी जंगल भ्रमंतीकरिता परवानगी देण्यात येत असून एकूण १२० मार्गदर्शक उपलब्ध असतात. या १२० स्थानिक युवकांचा रोजगार हा येथे राबविण्यात येणाऱ्या पर्यटनवर अवलंबून आहे. या रोजगारामुळे त्यांचे व त्यांच्या कुटुंबाचे आर्थिक विकास होऊन जंगलावर अवलंबून राहणे कमी होत जाते. त्यामुळे एका प्रकारे जंगलाचे व त्यातील वाघांचे संरक्षण व संवर्धन होण्यास मदत होते.

तसेच जंगल सफारी करिता पर्यटकांना विविध ठिकाणी उपलब्ध असलेले वाहनावरील चालक असे ६५

स्थानिक युवक व त्यांचे कुटुंब या पर्यटनावर अवलंबून असल्यामुळे त्यांना पर्यटनातून आर्थिक लाभ प्राप्त होतो. त्यामुळे प्रत्यक्षरित्या त्यांचे व त्यांच्या कुटुंबाचा जंगलावरील उदरनिर्वाह चा प्रश्न सुटल्यामुळे त्यांचा जंगलावर येणारा भार कमी होऊन त्यांचे सुध्दा वन्यजीव संवर्धनात मोलाचे योगदान प्राप्त होत आहे.

वाढत्या पर्यटकांमुळे तेथील स्थानिक नागरिकांना विविध प्रकारच्या रोजगाराच्या संधी उपलब्ध होत आहेत जसे कि उपहारगृहे, बांबू हस्तकला, होम स्टे, वस्तू विक्री केंद्र इत्यादी च्या माध्यमातून येथील स्थानिक लोकांना चांगल्या रोजगाराच्या संधी उपलब्ध होत आहे. व्यवसाय चालकांच्या सोबतच तेथील कामगारांना हि पर्यटनामुळे रोजगार प्राप्त होत आहे.

मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्पात सुरू करण्यात आलेले अन्य उपक्रम जसे साहसी खेळ, कायाकिंग, झोबी बॉल या प्रकारचे साहसी क्रीडा प्रकार च्या सोयी मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्पात उपलब्ध असून त्या त्या ठिकाणच्या स्थानिक युवकांना त्याबाबत विशेष प्रशिक्षण देऊन त्यांना

ते चालवण्यास देण्यात आलेले आहे. या उपक्रमातून तेथील स्थानिक युवकांना रोजगाराच्या संधी उपलब्ध होत आहेत. मेळघाट म्हटले कि येथील प्रसिध्द असे सांस्कृतिक नृत्य (कोरकू नृत्य) मेळघाट मधील स्थानिक संस्कृती ला जवळून पाहण्याकरिता येणारे पर्यटक हे आवर्जून या नृत्याचा आनंद घेतात व त्यातून स्थानिक आदिवासीना आर्थिक लाभ मिळतो.

मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्पातील अश्या विविध पर्यटन उपक्रमातून येथील स्थानिक लोकांना रोजगार प्राप्त होत असून दिवसेंदिवस त्यांची आर्थिक परिस्थिती सुधरून त्यांचे जीवनमान नक्कीच उंचावत आहे व त्यामुळे जंगल व वन्यप्राणी यांचे संवर्धनाला व संरक्षणाला पर्यटनाच्या माध्यमातून नक्कीच फायदा होत आहे.

चला तर मग!!! जाऊया मेळघाट फिरायला व त्यामधून आपण सुध्दा स्थानिक लोकांना पर्यटनातून रोजगार उपलब्ध करून अप्रत्यक्षरित्या जंगल व वन्यप्राणी यांचे संरक्षण व संवर्धनात हातभार लाऊया.



वाघ आणि मी (मेळघाटातील डरकाळीवाला कुला)



सौरभ जवंजाळ

वन्यजीव व पर्यावरण संवर्धन संस्था,
अमरावती.



आज ही आठवतो, मला तो दिवस, तो क्षण, ती वेळ. अंगावर शहारे आले होते. मन आणि मेंदू पूर्णपणे निपचित झाले, जेव्हा मी माझ्या समोर अगदी ५० मीटर अंतरावर एक दृश्य पहिले, ते दृश्य बघण्याची आस माझ्या मनात लहनापानासून होती, ते अनुभवण्याकरिता मी अनेकदा पायदळी कधी गाडीने जंगल फिरलो होतो पण आज तो योगायोग आला होता, पट्टेवाला वाघ माझ्या डोळ्यासमोर ५ ते १० मिनिट मला दर्शन जणू माझी आराधना पूर्ण झाली होती, तो माझ्यावर प्रसन्न झाला असावा.

बुध्द पौर्णिमेची ती अविस्मरणीय रात्र होती. चंद्राचा दुधाळ प्रकाश संपूर्ण जंगलावरती पडलेले होते. माझी व्याघ्र गणनेत व मचानावरील बसण्याची पहिलीच रात्र होती आणि या व्याघ्र गणनेत सहभागी होण्याची सुरुवात काही दिवसांपूर्वीच झाली होती. जेव्हा मला कळले की, दरवर्षी बुध्द पौर्णिमेला व्याघ्र गणना होते. माझ्या मनातही ह्या गणनेत सहभागी होण्याचे अंकुर फुटले. कधी तो दिवस उजाडतो आणि कधी मी या साहसी प्रक्रियेमध्ये सहभाग घेतो, असे व्हायला लागले. म्हणून आजही आठवतो मला तो दिवस.

आज मी महाराष्ट्र व भारतातील बहुतांश जंगलामध्ये पक्षी अभ्यास तसेच शास्त्र शुध्द पध्दतीने वाघाच्या अभ्यास कारिण्याकरिता व संशोधन करण्यात येत असलेल्या प्रचलित स्वयंमचलित कॅमेरा ट्रॅपच्या माध्यमातून फिरलो, निरीक्षण केले. हे सर्व करतांना मला मानधन तर मिळतच होते त्यापेक्षा समाधान व जंगल व वन्यजीव संरक्षण व संवर्धनासाठी माझे ही काही प्रमाणात योगदान देता येत असल्याचा आनंद

मला मिळत असे. असाच आनंद मला पाहिल्यादा मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्पामध्ये आला आणि त्या आनंदाची मुहूर्त वेळ होती १४ मे २०१४ या दिवसाची, रात्री ०८.०९ मिनिटाची. ती एक पर्वणी होती माझ्यासाठी, जो आनंद शोधण्यासाठी, उपभोगण्यासाठी मी विविध मार्ग शोधण्याचा प्रयत्न करत होतो, तो आनंद या रात्री मला मेळघाटच्या जंगलात मिळाला. हा दिवस माझ्या आयुष्याला समाधान व आनंद देणारा ठरला. ती रात्र, तो दिवस, ती वेळ माझ्या आयुष्यामध्ये समाधानाची, आनंदाची वेळ घेऊन आली आणि आता लिहितांना आज ही आठवतो तो दिवस.

जंगल भ्रमंती आणि फोटोग्राफी-करित असतांना माझ्या सहकारी मित्राने मला बुध्द पौर्णिमेच्या दिवशी होणाऱ्या व्याघ्र गणनेबद्दल सांगितले. माझा आनंद गगणात मावेनासा झाला मी सहभाग घेण्याकरिता काय प्रक्रिया असते ती विचारली व त्या प्रक्रियेनुसार फॉर्म भरून फॉरेस्ट ऑफीसला जमा केला.

१४ मे २०१४ बुध्द पौर्णिमेचा दिवस



आला. सकाळीच सहकारी मित्रासोबत अमरावतीवरून निघालो व परतवाडा मधील गुगामल वन्यजीव विभागाच्या कार्यालयात पोहचलो तिथे कळले की, आम्हांला चिखलदरामध्ये येणाऱ्या वैराट पॉईंट संरक्षण कुटीला जावे लागेल. आम्ही पोहचताच तिथे समजले की माझे व्याघ्र गणनेत मचाणावर बसण्याच्या यादीत नाव नाही. माझी निराशा झाली पण इच्छा शक्ती दुर्दम्य होती, कहते है, अगर किसी चीज को दिल से चाहो तो पुरी कायनात उसे तुमसे मिलाने कि कोशिश मे लग जाती है, आणि असेच झाले माझ्या सोबत तिथे त्या क्षणी गुगामल वन्यजीव विभागाचे उप-वनसंरक्षक श्री. रविंद्र वानखडे सर पोहचले होते आणि त्यांच्याकडे नवीन यादी होती. त्यामध्ये माझे नाव होते. माझ्या चेहऱ्यावरील निराशेचे रूपांतर आनंदात झाले होते. मला सरांनी एक मचाण नेमून दिले व मी त्या मचाणीवर जायची तयारी केली. माझ्यासोबत एक वनरक्षक येणार होते. त्यांना घेऊन मी साधारणतः ८ कि.मी.चा पायी प्रवास केला. दुपारचे ३ वाजले, आम्ही मचाणीवर भर मे महिन्याच्या उन्हात

पोहचलो. मचाणीवर बसतासं मन प्रफुल्लती झाले. आज मी मचाणीवर बसून जंगल अनुभवणार होतो, प्रत्येक क्षणाचा आनंद घेणार होतो. पण मन हे उडान वाऱ्यासारखे असते कारण काही वेळ बसल्या नंतर निराशा तेवढीच वाढत होती, एक ही प्राणी आमच्या दृष्टीस पडत नव्हता, टकाचोर पक्ष्याच्या आवाजा व्यतिरिक्त काहीच आवाज येत नव्हता व काही हालचाल सुध्दा होत नव्हती. वेळ जात होती. मी जंगल पाहत होतो. साधारणतः संध्याकाळी ६ च्या दरम्यान काही गवे व रानडुक्कर पाणवठ्यावर पाणी पिण्याकरिता आलेत, त्यावेळी माझी उत्सुकता वाढली आणि आम्हाला दिलेल्या माहिती पुस्तकात आम्ही काय काय बघितले व किती प्रमाणात आणि कुठल्या वेळेला ते नमूद करत गेलो परत काही वेळ गेला व काळोखाला सुरुवात झाली बुध्द पौर्णिमेच्या त्या चंद्र प्रकाशाने जंगल प्रकाशमय झाले जणू काही कोणी लाईट लावला असावा. काही वेळाने मला आलेल्या प्रातविधीमुळे मला मचाणा खाली जावे लागले. मी गेल्याच्या पाच मिनिटांनी पाणवठ्यावर काही रानगवे आले मी घाबरून लगेच मचाणावर परत

आलो. ते गवे पाणी पिऊन वरच्या दिशेने जात होते. तर अचानक एका रानगव्याने जोरात शिंकल्यासारखा आवाज काढला मी दचकून घाबरलो, तो परत आवाज काढत गेला आणि एका क्षणी त्याचे आवाज करणे अचानकपणे बंद झाले. त्यानंतर हळूच व हलकासा एक वेगळा आवाज आला आणि ते रानगवे दबकून दुसऱ्या मार्गाने जाऊ लागले. त्यानंतर सुध्दा परत तसाच आवाज आला, आम्हाला वाटले की, लांडगा किंवा जंगली कुत्र्यांचा आवाज असेल. तोच आवाज परत वाढत गेला आणि काही क्षणाने "डरकाळी" कानावर ऐकू आली, मी खूप आनंदी झालो पण सोबतच घाबरत ही होतो, एकीकडे जंगलाच्या राजला बघण्याची लालसा तर होती आणि दुसरीकडे मनामध्ये भीतीसुध्दा वाढत होती कारण हा माझा पहिलाच अनुभव होता आणि मला कळत नव्हते काय करावे व आता काय होईल याची. थोड्या वेळानी अचानकपणे सगळ्यांच्या डोळ्यांचे पारणे फेडणारा क्षण आला, ज्या क्षणाची, वेळेची मी भावविवश होऊन वाट पाहत होतो तो क्षण माझ्या डोळ्यासमोर प्रत्यक्षात उभे



होते, अगदी माझ्यासमोर मेळघाटा "कुला" (वाघ) पुढल्या काही अंतरावर असलेल्या टेकडीवर ऐटीत उभा होता आणि त्याच्या साम्राज्यवर तो नजर फिरवत उभा होता, त्याला पहिल्यांदाच बघून माझ्या हृदयाची स्पंदने वाढली. काही क्षणासाठी समोर येऊन तो आजूबाजूनी बघत होता आणि परत चंद्राचा दुधाळ प्रकाशात वाघाचे देखणे सौंदर्य खुलून आले होते आणि सतत डरकाळी देत असतांना सर्व जंगल शांत, निपचित झाले होते, त्याच्या श्वास घेतांनाच आवाजही माझ्या पर्यंत पोहचत होते एवढी मी शांतात होती.

तो आजूनही उभा त्याच जागेवर उभा होता. त्याला काय करायचे होते हे काही कळत नव्हते. कदाचित मला दर्शन दयला तो आला असावा. त्याचे ते अवाढव्य शरीर बघून मी आश्चर्यकित झालो. त्याला कदाचित आम्ही दिसलो असू ही किंवा आम्ही असल्याचा भास त्याला झाला असावा, अस ऐकला आहे की, प्राण्यांना आपण त्यांच्या आजूबाजूनी आहे ह्याचा भास होतो व त्यांना मानवी शरीराचा किंवा त्यांच्या घामाचा वास येतो, काही वेळ तो तिथेच

थांबून निघून गेला. बहुदा तो पाणी पिण्याकरिता आला असावा नक्कीच, पण आम्ही तिथे असल्याचा त्याला भास झाला असावा किंवा त्याला आम्ही दिसलो म्हणून तो पाणी न पिता तेथून निघून गेला ह्या गोष्टीचा खंत खूप वाटते आणि अजूनही जाणवते. त्यानंतर मी आणि फॉरेस्ट गार्ड दोघांना पण काहीच नव्हते. आम्ही खूप वेळ एकमेकांना सोबत बोललो सुध्दा नाही.

त्याच वेळी मनात विचार असा आली की, या नंतर कधीच बुध्द पौर्णिमेला जंगलात मचाणावर बसण्यासाठी सहभाग घेणार नाही. पण काय करावे जंगलाचे मोह आवरत नाही. त्यानंतर कशीबशी रात्र वेगवेगळ्या पक्ष्यांची व वन्य-जीवांची आवाज ऐकून काढली. सकाळी परतीला जातांना वन विभागाची गाडी आली त्या गाडीतून परत जात असतांना अचानकपणे आणखी एक रोमांचकारी प्रसंग घडला, गाडी वैराटकडून चिखलदराकडे परत येत असतांना अचानकपणे आणखी एक रोमांचकारी प्रसंग घडला, गाडी वैराटकडून चिखलदराकडे परत येत असतांना आमच्या गाडीसमोर

अनपेक्षित पणे एक मादी अस्वल रस्त्यावर आले आणि रोमांचकारी गोष्ट म्हणजे त्या अस्वलीच्या पाठीवर पिल्लू बसले होते. बॅगेत गुंडाळून ठेवलेला कॅमेरा मी जरा ही वेळ न दवडता बाहेर काढून झटक्यात रेडी केला आणि समोरचे ते दुर्मिळ दृश्य कॅमेरात टिपले. जे रोमांचकारी बघायला मिळाले ते कॅमेरात सुध्दा टिपता आले त्यामुळे माझा आनंद दुगुणित झाला. असा प्रसंग मी पहिल्यांदा बघत होतो आणि अनुभवतही होतो आणि विशेष म्हणजे फोटो सुध्दा बऱ्यापैकी चांगली आला होता.

माझी इच्छा सुध्दा वाघाचे छायाचित्र घेता आले नाही मात्र माझ्या मनात ते कायमचे कोरल्या गेले आहे. मी अजून सुध्दा बुध्द पौर्णिमेला व्याघ्र गणानेला जातो आणि वन विभागाच्या विविध उपक्रमात नियमित सहभागी सुध्दा होत असतो.





9

वैविध्यपूर्ण “नर्सरी निर्माण” - वन संवर्धनाचे आणि जंगला लगतच्या गावाच्या समृद्धीचा मार्ग...

धनंजय सायरे

टीम अंगार मुक्त जंगल,
निसर्गा फाँडेशन...



मोठा प्रवास झाला. व्याघ्र प्रकल्पामा फर्त वेगवेगळ्या विभागात नर्सरी निर्माण केली जाते, त्यामुळे अनेक गावातील नर्सरीला भेट दिली. त्यातील ढाकणा विभागातील भांडूम गावाची नर्सरी विविध प्रजातीची विविधता दिसून आली. मागील दोन वर्षांपासून कर्तव्यदक्ष वन परिक्षेत्र अधिकारी श्री. हिरालाल चौधरी व वनरक्षक श्री. किरण पेंढारकर आणि यांच्या टीमने विशेष मेहनत घेऊन ही नर्सरी आज उभी केली आहे. तत्कालीन अपर प्रधान मुख्य वनसंरक्षक तथा क्षेत्र संचालक, मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्प, अमरावती श्रीनिवास रेड्डी सर यांनी या नर्सरीला भेट दिली. मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्प मार्फत आर्थिक बाजू भक्कम केली आणि २६३५७ रोपांची ही नर्सरी अत्याधुनिक शेड नेट उभारून जास्तीत जास्त झाडे दीड-दोन वर्षाची रोपे लागवडी साठी निर्माण झाली. शिरीष-१२६६, वड-३६, आवळा-३९७२, कवठ-३४०, बेल-६४५, बांबू-६४५, बसई-३९०, सीताफळ-११०४, जांब-१९५६, कडुनिंब-

२४९६, उंबर-२१०, आपटा-११८८, चिंच-२४२४, अमलताश-१६८, मोहा-२२५०, बेहळा-४८६, कडई-८८८ अशा संख्येत ही झाडे आहेत.

गुगामल वन्यजीव विभाग चे क्षेत्र हे १५२६१.१३ हेक्टर एवढे विस्तीर्ण क्षेत्रात पसरलेले आहे. यातील अर्धेअधिक क्षेत्र हे ढाकणा परिक्षेत्राचे आहे. या वर्षी जास्तीत-जास्त झाडे ही गुगामल वन क्षेत्रात लागवड झाली आहेत आणि अंगार मुक्त जंगल उपक्रमात सहभागी गावातील शेतकऱ्यांना देण्यात आली. ६ गावातील २३२ शेतकऱ्यांनी एकूण २३२० अशा विविध प्रजातीची मोह, बास, सीताफळ, पेरू, आवळा, चिंच अशी रोपे शेतीच्या बांधावर लावली आहे काही लोकांचे म्हणणे आहे की झाड लावल्याने शेतीचे पिकांचे नुकसान होईल. त्यांनी मेळघाटातील शेतकऱ्यांची “पगार देणारं शेत” ही फिल्म अवश्य पहावी.

गावातील लोकांना त्यांचे उपयोगाचे झाड त्यांच्या शेतीच्या बांधावरच उपलब्ध झाले तर शेतीला

मेळघाटात मागील ५ वर्षांपासून पानी फाँडेशनच्या नोकरीच्या निमित्ताने निरंतर प्रवास सुरू आहे. या वर्षी मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्प आणि प्रादेशिक वन विभाग बरोबर अंगार मुक्त जंगल स्पर्धा अभियानाच्या माध्यमातून



Latitude: 21.433407
Longitude: 77.015525
Elevation: 435.43m
Accuracy: 2.2m
Azimuth: 166° (S)
Pitch: -6.4°
Time: 18-09-2013 13:25



Latitude: 21.433407
Longitude: 77.015525
Elevation: 435.43m
Accuracy: 2.2m
Azimuth: 166° (S)
Pitch: -6.4°
Time: 18-09-2013 13:25

अनेक पर्यावरणीय फायदे होतील. जसे की माती संवर्धन, पाणी संवर्धन होईल. शेतीला अनेक पर्यावरणीय फायदे होतील. जसे की माती संवर्धन, पाणी संवर्धन होईल. जैवविविधता वाढेल. वादळ वारा, अतिवृष्टी, पूर, पीक नुकसान करणाऱ्या किडींचा हल्ला या पासून पिकांचे नुकसान थोडेसे होईल. शेतकऱ्यांना रोजगार उपलब्ध होईल. उत्पादन वाढेल. निरस्तार करिता लागणारे लाकूड शेतातूनच मिळेल. जंगलात जाण्याचे प्रमाण कमी होईल. मानव वन्यजीव संघर्ष कमी होईल. असे सर्वांगीण उद्देश या वन महोत्सवाचे होते.

ढाकणा परिक्षेत्रातील भांडूम गावासारखी हे वैविध्यपूर्ण नर्सरी निर्माण सर्व विभागात व्हावी. या माध्यमातून

गावानजीक गावाच्या गरजेसाठी लोकांच्या मदतीने रोप लागवड होईल. शेतकऱ्यांना त्यांना लागणारी झाडे उपलब्ध करून देता येईल. त्यातून निश्चितच शेती क्षेत्रावर मोठे वन क्षेत्र निर्माण होईल. त्यातून त्यांना उत्पन्नाचे साधन उपलब्ध होईल. लोकांचे वन अवलंबून कमी होईल.

वन समृद्ध होतील. मेळघाटातच्या चार ही विभागातील या वर्षीचा लोकांचा वन महोत्सवाचा उत्साह पाहता, प्रतिसाद पाहता. मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्पाने ही परंपरा सुरू ठेवावी असे वाटते. या वर्षी मेळघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्पातील ५४ गावातील २३०० शेतकऱ्यांना प्रति शेतकरी १० प्रमाणे २३००० रोपे देण्यात आली.

या वन महोत्सवात काही गावांनी त्यांचे रोपे नर्सरी ते त्यांचे गावापर्यंत वाहून नेण्याचा ट्रान्सपोर्ट खर्च २०-३० रु. प्रति व्यक्ती जमा करूनही केला आहे. गावागावातून वृक्षदिंडी काढण्यात आली. पारंपरिक गादली सुसून करण्यात आले. कार्यक्रमाला उपस्थित अधिकारी लोकांचे कुमकूम तिलक लावून स्वागत

झाले, घरा समोर रांगोळी, गाव स्वच्छ करण्यात आली. प्रत्येक गावातून शेतकरी या कार्यक्रमाला उपस्थित होते. सर्व धर्मातील लोकांनी या वन महोत्सवात उत्साहाने सहभाग घेतला. वरिष्ठ अधिकारी लोकांनी कुठे गादली सुसून नृत्यामध्ये सहभाग घेतला, नृत्य केले. तर कुठे क्षेत्रिय कर्मचारी लोकांनी वृक्ष दिंडी खांद्यावर घेतली. काही गावात पारंपरिक बैलगाडीचा वापर करून झाडांची दिंडी काढली. गावातील लहान मुले, स्त्रिया सुंदर सुंदर पोशाख घालून सहभागी होते. उपस्थित लोकांनी श्रमदान करून शेतीच्या बांधावर झाडे लावली. प्रत्येक गावात अंगार मुक्त जंगल स्पर्धे समनव्यय यांनी वन शेतीचे मॉडेल उभे करणारे श्री. मौजीलाल भिलावेकर यांचे शेतीची माहिती व झाड लावण्याचे फायदे पोस्टरच्या आधारे समजावून सांगितली. लोकांनीही आता या गोष्टीत आवड निर्माण झाली आहे. अंगार मुक्त जंगल स्पर्धांमध्ये चांगले काम करणाऱ्याला बक्षीसही आहे आणि जंगल जळणाऱ्याला कायदा आहे दंड ही आहे. या गोष्टी रुज आहेत.

Latitude: 21°25'35"
Longitude: 76°59'52"
Elevation: 457.03±4 m
Accuracy: 16.1 m
Azimuth: 175° (S)
Pitch: -3.4°
Time: 07-05-2021 11:42

लोकमत

New Delhi
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मेळघाटातील ५४ पाड्यांमध्ये शेताच्या बांधावर २३ हजार झाडे शेतकऱ्यांना अनेक फायदे, जंगलाची वृक्षतोड थांबणार

नरेंद्र जावरे

लोकमत न्यूज नेटवर्क

परतवाडा (अमरावती) : मेळघाटच्या जंगलातील हजारो वृक्षांची दरवर्षी कत्तल होते. त्यावर उपाय म्हणून आदिवासी शेतकऱ्यांच्या बांधावर जाऊन विविध प्रकारचे उत्पन्न व जलतन देणारे वृक्ष लावण्याची मोहीम १ ते ७ जुलै दरम्यान मेळघाटातील ५४ पाड्यांमध्ये राबवून वनमहोत्सव साजरा करण्यात आला. प्रत्येकी दहा याप्रमाणे २ हजार ३०० शेतकऱ्यांसाठी २३ हजार झाडे यात लागणार आहेत. त्यामुळे मेळघाटातील वृक्षतोडीला आळा बसण्यासह शेतकऱ्यांना अनेक फायदे यातून होणार आहे. मेळघाटचा उपक्रम राज्यातील इतरही वन्यक्षेत्रांसाठी मार्गदर्शक ठरणार आहे.

राज्यभर दरवर्षी वन महोत्सव १ ते ७ जुलै दरम्यान साजरा होतो. परंतु, मेळघाटात यावर्षी महोत्सव वेगळ्या पद्धतीने साजरा झाला. वनजमिनीसोबतच शेतकऱ्यांना सहभागी करून घेण्यात आले आणि शेताच्या बांधावरचा वन महोत्सव उत्साहाने साजरा झाला. पानी फाउंडेशनचे अविनाश पोळ.



मेळघाटातील व्याघ्र प्रकल्प अंतर्गत येणाऱ्या गावांमध्ये यंदा वेगळ्या पद्धतीने वन महोत्सव साजरा करण्यात आला. त्यामध्ये बांधावर झाडे लावून आदिवासी शेतकऱ्यांना त्याचे महत्त्व पटवून देण्यात आले. त्यामुळे जंगलतोड वाचण्यासाठी अनेक फायदे त्यांना होणार आहे. राज्यातील इतर भागासाठी हा प्रेरणादायी उपक्रम ठरणार आहे.

- धनंजय सायरे, कार्यकारी संचालक निसर्ग फाउंडेशन, मेळघाट

मेळघाट वन्यजीव विभागाच्या उपवनसंरक्षक पीयूषा जगताप, सिपनाचे उपवनसंरक्षक अविनाश कुमार, अकोटचे उपवनसंरक्षक नवलकिशोर रेड्डी, गुगामलचे उपवनसंरक्षक निरंजन विवरेकर यांच्यासह एसीएफ, बीडीओ, तहसीलदार, विविध विभागांचे अधिकारी वनपरिक्षेत्र अधिकारी, वनपाल, वनरक्षक निसर्ग फाउंडेशन कार्यकारी संचालक धनंजय सायरे, स्वप्निल सोळंके, गीता वेलपत्रे, क्षेत्र समन्वयक पंढरी हेकडे, नागोराव सोलकर, सुरेश सावलकर आदींचा सहभाग महत्त्वपूर्ण होता.



मेळघाटातील दाभिया शिवारात साजरा करण्यात आलेल्या वनमहोत्सवात सहभागी अधिकारी व आदिवासी ग्रामस्थ.

शेतीच्या बांधावरची झाडे अतिउपयुक्त

उपयोगाची झाडे बांधावरच उपलब्ध झाली, तर शेतीला अनेक पर्यावरणीय फायदे होतील, असे याप्रसंगी शेतकऱ्यांना पटवून सांगण्यात आले. धारणी तालुक्यातील मान्सुधावडी येथील पौजीलाल भिलावेकर यांचे शेती करण्याच्या अभिनव पद्धतीचे प्रशिक्षणही देण्यात आले. बांधावर झाडे लावल्याने मृदा व जल संवर्धन होईल. जैवविविधता वाढेल. वादळ, अतिवृष्टी, पूर, नुकसानकारक किडींचा हल्ला यापासून पिकांचे नुकसान थांबेल. शेतकऱ्यांना रोजगार उपलब्ध होईल. उत्पादन वाढेल. लाकूड शेतातूनच मिळाल्याने जंगलात जाण्याचे प्रमाण कमी होईल आणि महत्त्वपूर्ण मानव वन्यजीव संघर्ष कमी होणार आहे.



वाधाने जंगल राखला

अविनाश काळबांडे

निसर्ग मार्गदर्शक

मन्याळी, पैनगंगा अभयारण्य



माझ गाव मन्याळी, पैनगंगा अभयारण्यांच्या पायथ्याशी वसलेले छोटेसे गाव. चार ही बाजूने घनदाट जंगल. पूर्वी पासून प्राणी, पक्ष्यांची विविधता आहे. वाघाचे अस्तित्व तेवढ मागील वीस वर्षात नव्हते. त्यामुळे जंगल परिपूर्ण नव्हतं. म्हणतात ना की, स्त्री सौंदर्य अलंकार केल्यानंतर अधिक उजळून दिसते तसंच काहीस, जंगलाची सौंदर्य साखळी ही वाघा वाचून नाही. पण स्थानिक नागरिकांच्या सहभागाशिवाय वन सुरक्षित राहणे शक्य ही नाही. माझ्या गावाच्या जंगलात पूर्वी पट्टेदार वाघ होते. तो जिथं जिथं राहत होता त्या ठिकाणाचे स्थानिक नाव आजही प्रचलित आहेत. रजोबा म्हणून ठिकाण

तेथे वाघाची दगडाची प्रतिकृती पूजा केली जाते. स्थानिक लोक आज ही पूजा करतात. वाघाची गुहा आहे, स्थानिक नाव वाघाचं भोकाड म्हणून प्रसिध्द आहे. तिथे वाघ असायचे पण मधला काळ असा आला की पट्टेदार वाघ जंगलातून नाहीसा झाला. मला तो काळ आठवतो, १९९८ ते २०१४ पर्यंत वाघ नाही? पण त्या मागील कारण कोणी ही शोधत का नाही, शिकारीच मारतात हे मुख्य कारण धरत होते पण याचे जोडून कारण माझ्या व्यक्तिगतमते पाणलोट विकास हे ही होते. प्राण्यांना बारमाही अन्नसाठा मिळतो. मग काय हे वन विभागाने अत्यंत हिसारीन काम करून आता आमच्या जंगलात पाणलोटच काम करून पाण्याचे साठे वाढविले व त्यामुळे प्राणी संख्या पण वाढली आहे. हरीण व कुरंग कुळातील बऱ्याच प्राण्यांच्या प्रजाती आमच्याकडे आहेत, पक्षी ही आहेत. वाघाला लागणारे अन्न पुरवठा हा आमच्या जंगलात आता आहे. म्हणून आमच्याकडे वाघ परतला आहे. आता तो निर्भयपणे जंगलात वावरतोय. आमच्याकडे पाव्हणे मंडळी आली की नेहमी विचारायचे, तुमच जंगल एवढा

मोठा पण वाघ का नाहीत. वाईट वाटायच पण त्या मागची कारणे माहिती नव्हती. मी जेव्हा गाईडच्या प्रशिक्षणासाठी गेलो तेव्हा कळलं की खरी कारण काय आहे ते. हे वाचवण्यासाठी खूप काम करायचं बाकी आहेत. पाणलोट असो वा पर्यटन असो वा जनजागृती. हे निरंतर करत राहावं लागेल. एक सुजाण नागरिक म्हणून ती माझी जबाबदारी आहे. वनविभागाने पर्यटनाला चालना मिळावी व स्थानिकांना रोजगार उपलब्ध व्हावा या उद्देशाने पैनगंगा अभयारण्यामध्ये दोन पर्यटन गेट सुरू केले आहे. एक मान्यळी गेट व खरबी गेट चालू केले आहे. त्यामुळे स्थानिकांना रोजगार मिळून ते वनावर अवलंबून राहणार नाहीत. निसर्गाने सौंदर्याची उधळण माझ्या पैनगंगा अभयारण्यावर केली आहे. ऑक्सिजनचे १०० टक्के साठे इकडे दिले आहेत. ऑक्सिजनची खरी किंमत आताच्या काळात म्हणजे कोविड काळात कळली असेल तर या मग आमच्याकडे निसर्ग बघायला. वाघ बघायला.





कुरण विकास क्षेत्र

अभयसिंग चंदेल

वनपाल,
मेलघाट व्याघ्र प्रकल्प



Latitude: 21.348907
Longitude: 77.314749
Elevation: 587.31 m
Accuracy: 3.8 m
Azimuth: 172° (S)
Pitch: -10.0° (1.6°)
Time: 17-12-2020 17:46

Powered by AngleCam

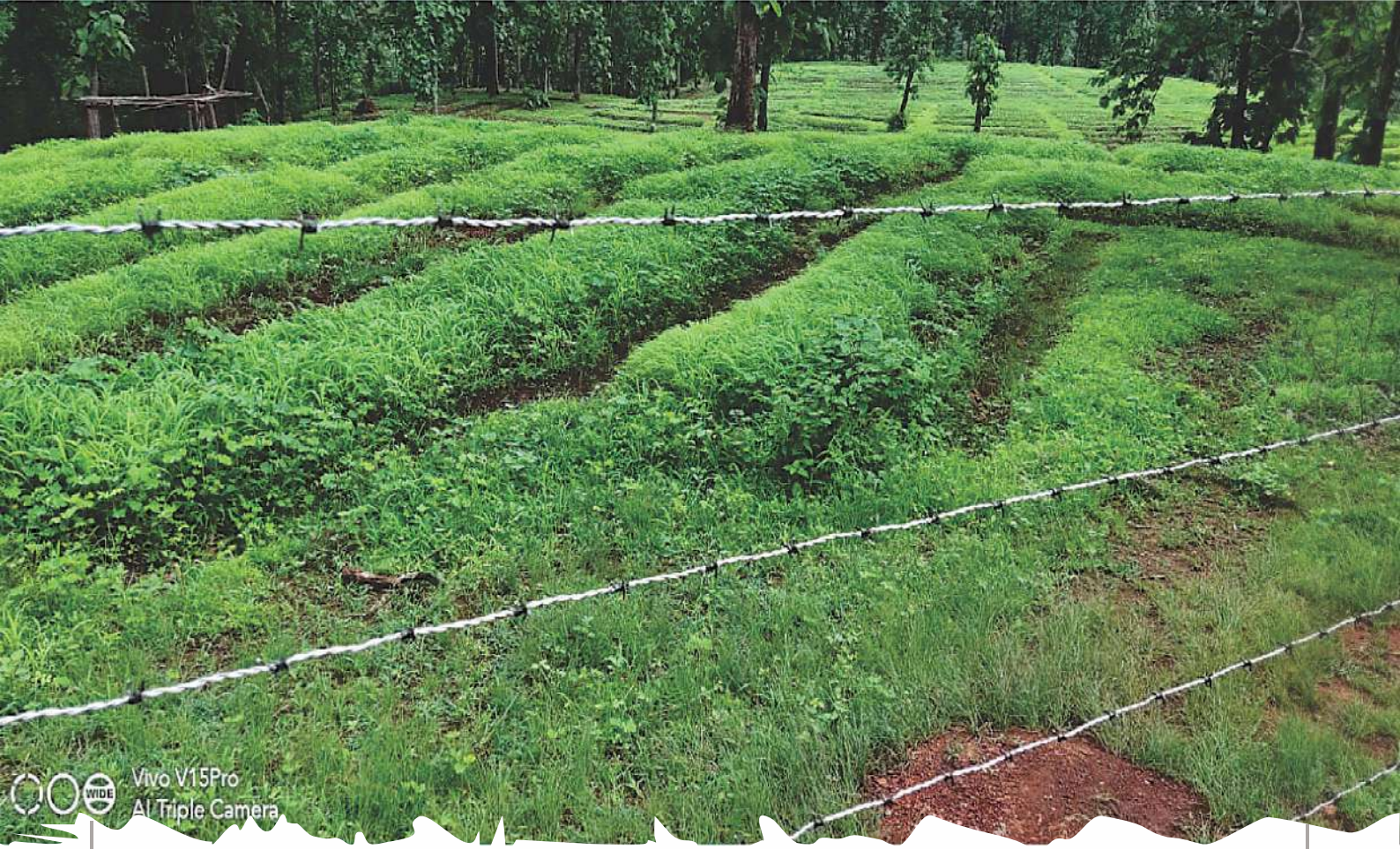
कुलगणा खुर्द, कुलगणा बु. व सोमवारखेडा या गावाचे गुरे पालक त्या ठिकाणी आपले गुरे घेवून चरायला न्यायचे परंतु दिनांक १२ फेब्रुवारी २०१९ रोजी सदर क्षेत्र एकछत्रीय नियंत्रणाखाली वन्यजीव विभागात समाविष्ट झाल्याने गुरे चराई करिता प्रतिबंध घालण्यात आले. यामुळे वन कर्मचारी व ग्रामस्थ वादविवाद होवून मानवी संघर्ष सारख्या घटना घडू लागल्या व वन्यप्राण्यांच्या प्रकृतीवर सुध्दा विपरीत वाईट परिणाम होण्याचे

कुरण विकास क्षेत्र म्हणजे गवत असलेले गवत बी पेरणे केलेले क्षेत्र संरक्षण करून गवत तयार करणे म्हणजेच कुरण विकास क्षेत्र होय. वन विभागाची किंवा महसुल विभागाची जागा जसे गायरान किंवा वनविभागाचे गावनजीकचे क्षेत्र अश्या ठिकाणी कुरण विकास क्षेत्र तयार करता येते.

असेच वस्तापुर वर्तुळातील सर्व्हे नं. ३३ हे वनविभागाचे प्रादेशिक विभाग असल्यापासून वस्तापुर,



POCO
SHOT ON POCO X2



Vivo V15Pro
AI Triple Camera



शक्यता नाकारता येत नव्हती कारण पाळीव जनावरांना ऋतु नुसार अनेक प्रकारचे आजार होत असतात व या पैकी काही आजार संसर्गजन असतात ह्या सर्व बाबी लक्षात घेता वन विभागातील वरिष्ठांनी (हस्तक्षेप) दखल घेत गावा गावात जावुन संरंपंच, पोलीस पाटील, समिती अध्यक्ष, ग्राम प्रमुख यांचे उपस्थितीत गावकऱ्यांची सभा घेवू लागले व कुरण विकास या बाबत लोकांना जनजागृती करुन मार्गदर्शन देवु लागले. तदनंतर संयुक्त वन व्यवस्थापन समिती अंतर्गत डॉ. शामाप्रसाद मुखर्जी जनवन विकास योजने अंतर्गत सर्व्हे नं. ३३ मधील एकूण २० हेक्टर क्षेत्रावर कुरण विकास करणारे ठरविले या करिता सदर क्षेत्राच्या भोवती काटेरी ताराचे

कुपन करण्यात आले नागरणी करण्यात आली बेड वाफे तयार आले व सदर क्षेत्राची मशागत झाल्यावर शेणखत टाकण्यात आले. वनरक्षक तथा वनमजुर यांनी परिश्रम घेवुन विविध प्रजाती जसे मारवेल, मोती तुरा व इतर विविध प्रकारचे गवत बी. जमा करुन पावसाळ्यात गवत बियाणाची पेरणी करण्यात आली व पावसाळा संपे पर्यंत कुरण विकास क्षेत्राचे संगोपन व संरक्षण केले यामध्ये गुरे पालकांनी मोलाचे योगदान करीत सदर क्षेत्रात चराई केली नाही. त्यांचे फह म्हणुन आता गवत कापणीसाठी तयार आहे. हिवाळ्यात वस्तापुर, कुलगणा खु., कुलगणा बु., सोमवारखेडा व मलकापूर या गावातील ग्रामस्थ सकाळी गवत कापुन गवत भारे आपआपल्या घरी दुधारी गायी म्हशींना घरी बांधल्या

ठिकाणी चारा चारत आहे. परिणामी दुधाची मात्रा वाढली दिवसभर जनावरांना चराई करिता जाण्याचा वेळ सुध्दा वाचुन त्यावेळा मध्ये इतर कामे करुन रोजगार मिळवतात व दोन पैश्याची या व्यक्तिरिक्त कमाई करतात सद्यस्थितीत वन कर्मचारी व ग्रामस्थ यांच्या मधील संघर्ष संपवुन मैत्री पुर्ण भावना वास्तव रीत आहेत तसेच वन्यप्राणी स्वातंत्र्यपणे मुक्त संचार करत असुन त्यांच्या संख्ये मध्ये सुध्दा कमालीची वाढ झाल्याची दिसुन येते.



Edition for Melghat



On the occasion of Wildlife Week 2021

WILD MELGHAT e-Magazine

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**Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav**

Commemoration of 75th year of India's Independence

**India for Tigers
'A Rally on Wheels'**

Edition for Melghat



On the occasion of Wildlife Week 2021

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