

Maharashtra: Forest Dept trains youth living near Melghat tiger reserve for better future

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The Maharashtra forest department has imparted skill development training to over 200 youth from 25 villages. The Melghat Tiger Conservation Foundation has set up three computer centres in Harisal, Chikhaldara and Vastapur villages of Amravati district.



An official from the Maharashtra forest department informed that it had imparted skill development training to over 200 youth from 25 villages located near Melghat tiger reserve in Amravati to help them get jobs and have a sustainable livelihood. Melghat tiger reserve's field director, MS Reddy, said that the young people from tribal communities who stay in core areas of such tiger reserves were directly or indirectly dependent on forests and forest products. As these areas lack proper infrastructure and these villages are located in remote areas, providing skilled education to youth poses many challenges, said Reddy. He added that poverty in such remote areas also leads to a higher rate of drop-outs from schools. "This leads to unemployment among locals, which is the greatest bane of these forests. Unemployment among these people also affects the forest ecosystem through various anthropogenic activities," said Reddy as reported by The Hindustan Times. In order to overcome these challenges and make them skilled enough to find employment, the Melghat Tiger Conservation Foundation has set up three computer centres in Harisal, Chikhaldara and Vastapur villages of Amravati district. Reddy shared that around 224 youth from 25 villages have been imparted training in information technology at these centres and also been provided with certificates. The official said that providing sustainable livelihood to local communities is an important initiative for conserving forests and wildlife. Reddy mentioned that the Melghat tiger reserve is among the first nine reserves created in the country under the Project Tiger Mission. The reserve is spread over an area of 2,768 sq km which is divided into four wildlife divisions. Most importantly, the reserve includes a critical tiger habitat area of 1,500.5 sq km and a buffer zone of 1,268.3 sq km.

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