

Tribal Art Exhibition - 'Silent Conversation: From Margins to the Centre' - to be inaugurated in New Delhi today

Over 50 tribal artists from across 17 States to showcase artworks giving insight into issues related to tiger conservation, habitat protection and symbiotic relationship between Nature and these Communities

4-day Exhibition to present a collection of 250 paintings and crafts from across more than 30 tiger reserves of India

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Former President of India, Shri Ram Nath Kovind, would be inaugurating a 4-day unique tribal art exhibition 'Silent Conversation: From Margins to the Centre', at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi, on October 9, 2025. In its fourth edition, the annual exhibition is being organised by the Sankala Foundation with the support of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), a statutory body under the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), and the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA).

The exhibition aims to spread awareness about the conservation ethos of tribal communities and other forest-dwellers residing in and around forests, particularly India's tiger reserves. The exhibition will showcase artworks of these communities and provide an opportunity to city-dwellers to learn more about various issues related to tiger conservation, habitat protection, and the symbiotic relationship between nature and these communities. It will also explore alternative livelihood opportunities for these communities, thereby reducing their dependence on forest resources and further strengthening human-wildlife bonds.

This year, the exhibition will bring together over 50 tribal artists from across 17 states (that host tiger reserves), celebrating a deep and enduring relationship between tribal communities and nature. The paintings and artworks will offer a glimpse into how these communities live in harmony with forests and wildlife. Some of the tribal art forms on display will be Gond, Warli, and Saura. The proceeds from the sale of displayed artworks were directly credited to the accounts of artists.

Tribal communities and forest dwellers have been the custodians of traditional knowledge, rich cultural heritage, and ecological wisdom. They have revered forests as a source of livelihood and sacred heritage and conserved them through sustainable practices, customs, and traditions.

The exhibition (October 9-12) will present a collection of 250 paintings and crafts from across more than 30 tiger reserves of India for a diverse audience. These include art enthusiasts, conservationists, diplomats, policy

makers, nature lovers, and students.

Sankala Foundation, a non-profit, is also organising a National Conference on ‘Tribal Arts and India’s Conservation Ethos: Living Wisdom,’ on 10th October in partnership with Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal, and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), New Delhi. The conference will be inaugurated by Shri Gajendra Singh Sekhawat, Union Minister of Culture and Tourism. This will bring together policymakers, scholars, artists, conservationists, and community leaders to deliberate on how tribal wisdom and cultural practices can guide conservation strategies. On 9th and 10th October, cultural evenings have been planned, which are an integral part of the exhibition. This time, artists from Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh will perform.

The earlier editions of ‘Silent Conversation’, received national recognition as a platform for showcasing art that reflects our age-old conservation ethos, sustainable and traditional knowledge of tribal communities. The first edition was organised in November 2023 and was inaugurated by the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu in the presence of Union Minister (MoEFCC), Shri Bhupender Yadav.

Union Minister of External Affairs, Dr. S. Jaishankar inaugurated the second edition, which was held in October 2024. The third edition was held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan Museum in December 2024 after the completion of the Artists-in-Residence programme. With each edition, the exhibition has evolved into a driver of conservation ethos and an enabler of tribal livelihoods and cultural heritage.

This exhibition was conceptualised in 2023 to mark the 50 years of Project Tiger. Sankala Foundation, dedicated to mitigating the impact of climate change, promoting sustainability, and cultural ethos, is spearheading this effort with the support of NTCA. It has got wide support from the people and has emerged as a flagship programme promoting conservation and tribal arts.

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