

3-day tribal art exhibition Silent Conversation: From Margins to the Centre organized by NTCA & Sankala Foundation concludes

**Conservation ethos of tribal artists was the
highlight of these paintings**

**Empowering tribal communities at the core of
Silent Conversation**

**President of India invited these tribal artists to
Rashtrapati Bhavan and had interaction – a life
time experience for these tribal artists**

New Delhi: The first ever art exhibition of its kind, the 'Silent Conversation: From Margins to the Centre' organised by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change, Govt of India and Sankala Foundation at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on from 3 – 5 November, 2023 concluded successfully.



The 'Silent Conversation' was inaugurated by the Hon'ble President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu on 3rd November, 2023. In her address, the President emphasized the necessity for a comprehensive and united approach in light of the pressing issue of climate change. This approach is imperative not only for safeguarding the environment

but also for the very survival of humanity. She underscored the importance of embracing the life principles practiced by tribal communities, noting that there are valuable lessons to be learned from them on how to lead a prosperous and contented life while coexisting harmoniously with nature.



The President was presented with a memento by an artist belonging to the Mahar community of Kanha Tiger Reserve. The painting titled Baghdev in dot/ bindu style represents how Mahars engage in night time worship rituals under the blue sky, seeking the tiger's eternal protection.

The inaugural was also graced by Shri Bhupender Yadav, Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Ashwini Kumar Choubey, MoS, MoEF&CC, Smt. Leena Nandan, Secretary, MoEF&CC, Shri Bharat Lal, Secretary General, NHRC; Shri C. P. Goel, DG (Forests) & Special Secretary, MoEF&CC, Shri S. P. Yadav, Additional DGF (Project Tiger) & Member Secretary, NTCA and senior officials from the government. A number of ambassadors/ high commissioner and other diplomats, eminent people, art and wildlife lovers, attended the meet.

The exhibition showcased the exceptional talent of 43 artists from 12 different states across India, representing a myriad of art styles such as Gond, Bhil, Patachitra, Khovar, Sohrai, Warli, and many more. The displays highlighted the intricate relationship



between tribal communities residing in and around India's tiger reserves and their deep-rooted connection with the forest and wildlife. These creations served as reflections of age-old bonds and showcased unique art styles such as Madhubani, Gond, Bhil, Patachitra, Khovar and Sohrai, Warli, and many others. Numerous tribal artists travelled to Delhi, providing visitors and art enthusiasts with an opportunity for direct interaction.

The artists were invited to visit the Rashtrapati Bhavan, where they had the opportunity to meet Hon'ble President, Smt. Droupadi Murmu. The President took a personal interest in their well-being and inquired about their experiences. She also extended a warm gesture by gifting a chocolate to the youngest artist, Mr. Siddharta, who hailed from Nagarhole Tiger Reserve in Karnataka. This special encounter was particularly memorable for the 12-year old as it marked his very first visit to the bustling city of New Delhi, leaving him filled with happiness and lasting memories.

In India, there are 705 groups officially recognized as Scheduled Tribes, who are commonly referred to as Adivasis, a term that essentially signifying tribal communities. With an estimated population of 104 million, they constitute approximately 8.6% of the total population of India. Among these tribal communities, 10%, that is 75 groups, fall under the category of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs). Notably, many of these tribal communities reside in close proximity to national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and even within tiger reserves.



'Silent Conversation' offered an extraordinary platform for the public to immerse themselves in the art and culture of these tribal communities, enabling a deep appreciation of environmental preservation and conservation. Throughout the weekend, Delhi NCR played host to numerous eminent individuals, including distinguished Ambassadors and High Commissioners representing various nations. They, along with their families, graced the occasion, not only to engage with the artists but also to acquire these unique paintings and artifacts, thereby contributing to the promotion and preservation of tribal art and heritage. The exhibition served as a platform to educate the public about the importance of wildlife conservation, the challenges faced by tiger reserves, and the pivotal role of tigers in maintaining ecological balance. Through the



sale of artwork, the exhibition empowered tribal artists economically, providing them with alternate and sustainable livelihoods. A remarkable feature is that proceeds from the sale were sent directly to the bank accounts of the tribal artists via a QR code.



The tribal artists further enriched their experience with an engaging day tour, exploring some of the iconic landmarks in the city. Their itinerary included a visit to India Gate, a symbol of national pride and sacrifice, and Kartavya Path, a place that inspires a sense of duty and responsibility, among others. This allowed the artists to connect with the historical and cultural significance of these contributing to their holistic experience in the heart of India's capital.

The inception of Silent Conversation was marked by the initiation of partnership between NTCA and Sankala. Over the span of three months, a dedicated team reached out to all the 54 tiger reserves scattered across the country to participate in this exhibition.



This exhibition marks the beginning of a series that will further be showcased in other major cities in India and abroad, spreading the message of art, culture, and tiger conservation to a broader audience.
