

The event also witnessed the exchange of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between WTI and the Nawegaon–Nagzira Tiger Reserve, formalising a long-standing partnership

under the Central India Tiger Corridor Securement Project. The collaboration will strengthen ongoing conservation interventions across the landscape, including Anti-Snare and Anti-Electrocution Walks, camera trap-based monitoring, occupancy surveys and linear infrastructure assessments aimed at securing critical wildlife corridors and tiger habitats.



Signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between WTI and the Nawegaon–Nagzira Tiger Reserve

The celebrations were later graced by Hon'ble Shri Devendra Fadnavis, Chief Minister of Maharashtra, who underlined the importance of making conservation a shared responsibility. "We must make tiger conservation a value proposition for every stakeholder. Only when every stakeholder recognizes its value will our conservation efforts truly succeed", stated the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Devendra Fadnavis.

Gondia, Maharashtra

The Central India Tiger Corridor Project team also conducted a sensitisation programme for around 200 students at DB Science College, Gondia. The programme was led by Mr. Harshad Rahangdale, field biologist of NNTR; Mr. Noor Ali; and Dr. G.P. Gadekar, HoD, Zoology, DB Science College.

Following the inaugural address by Mr. Manoj Patle, Principal, DB Science College, Mr. Mahendra Raut, Assistant Manager, WTI, introduced the students to WTI, its aims and conservation ethics. Mr. Vedang Saikhedkar, Field Officer, WTI, further led an interactive session on tiger ecology, threats to the species, field-based conservation strategies and the role of students in conservation.

An engaging group activity demonstrated the challenges faced by a tiger moving through a wildlife corridor. Students volunteered to represent tigers, threats such as poachers,

electrocution, snares, road hits, train accidents and jaw traps, as well as support systems including prey species, water sources and contiguous forest patches.



International Tiger Day programme at DB Science College, Gondia

Mr. Anish Patil, Intern, WTI, and Mr. Vedang Saikhedkar also presented a session on tiger conservation and corridor connectivity. They explained the importance of connected habitats, the actions required to safeguard corridors and WTI's ongoing work in these landscapes, supported by IFAW and Japan Tiger and Elephant Fund (JTEF).

The programme concluded with a screening of WTI's animated film *Kinara*, based on human-wildlife coexistence in villages close to forests, followed by a question-and-answer session on tigers, conservation and wildlife research.

Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary, Uttar Pradesh

At Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary (KWLS), the Rapid Response Team (RRT) of the Terai Tiger Project, in collaboration with the Forest Department, organised educational programmes highlighting tiger and big cat conservation, their ecological importance and human-wildlife coexistence.

At Government High School, Matehi under Nishangadha Range, students were introduced to the ecological significance of tigers, Project Tiger, negative human-wildlife interaction and the importance of coexistence. A quiz competition based on these themes saw the participation of 62 students. Range Officer Mr. Shiv Prasad Gupta attended the programme as the Chief Guest.

The WTI team also set up an educational stall where students were introduced to big cat identification, camera traps, drones and other equipment which are used for wildlife monitoring and research. The demonstration was attended by the school Principal and

Forest Department staff. Quiz participants were felicitated by the RRT with big cat conservation-themed art and craft books, crayons, pencils and other educational gift hampers.



International Tiger Day event at Government High School, Matehi

At another program at the Sharda Sahayak Pariyojana Inter College, Girjapuri under Katarniaghat Range, the RRT organised a drawing competition on the theme of Tiger Conservation and Human-Wildlife Coexistence, with 54 students participating. The top five participants received prizes jointly from the RRT and the FD. Deputy Ranger Mr. Mayank Pandey attended as the Chief Guest.

The programme was attended by PRT members Harikesh Chaube, Anil Maurya, Om Prakash, Ram Kishore, Sanjay Singh and Rekha Devi, along with FD staff including Forester Jai Karan Sahi, Forest Guard Abdul Salam, Kaushal Kishore and other field personnel.

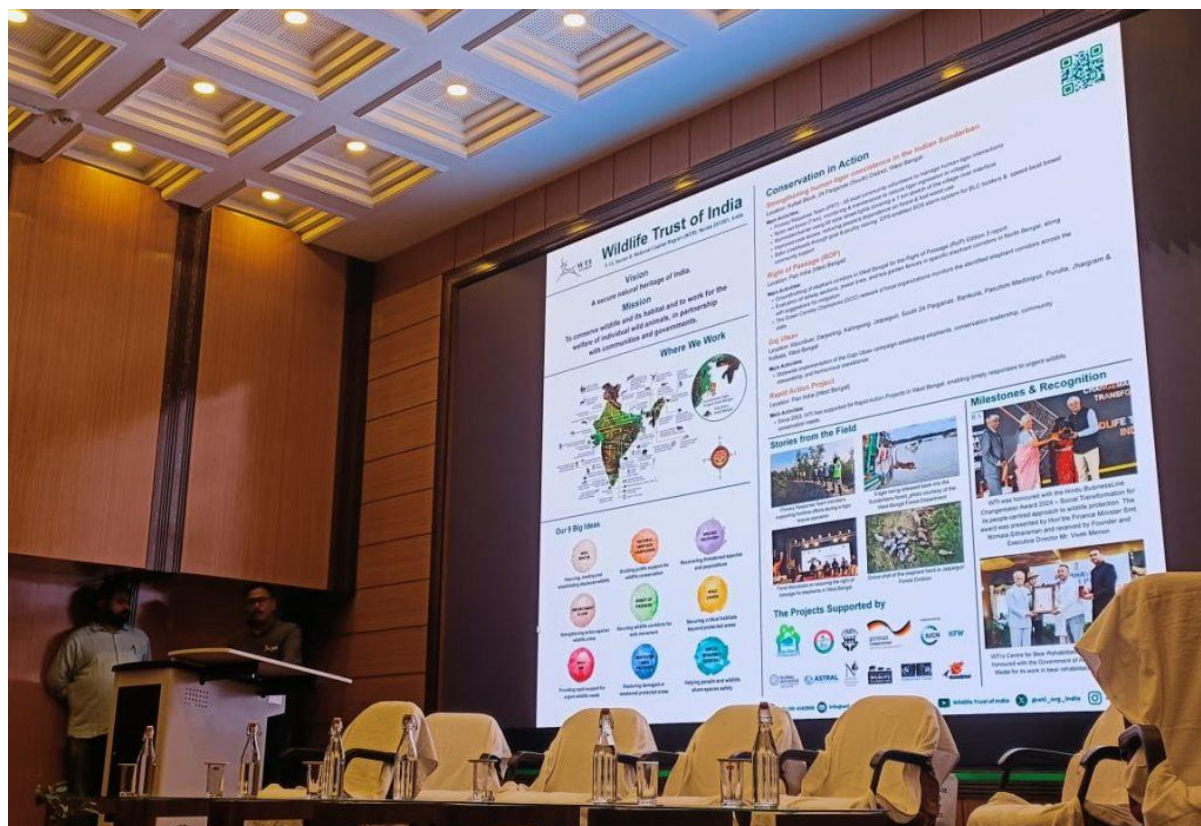
Kolkata, West Bengal

Under the project *Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Program*, an initiative implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and funded by the German Cooperation via KfW Development Bank, WTI co-organised a day-long Global Tiger Day event in Kolkata with the West Bengal Forest Department, NEWS, WWF-India, Nature Mates and SHER.

The event was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Forest Minister and the Hon'ble Minister of State (Forest) as Chief Guests. ACF-Forest, PCCF-HoFF and other officers from the State Forest Department also attended the programme.

The gathering brought together 45 CSOs working on wildlife conservation in West Bengal. and provided a platform through which the Forest Department and conservation organisations could discuss and streamline priorities related to human-wildlife conflict and corridor conservation. WTI's GCCs and RAP partners, including SNAP, SPOAR and WINGS,

showcased their conservation work and acknowledged their existing or erstwhile partnerships with WTI.



Dr. Abhishek Ghoshal presenting on WTI's work in West Bengal

Dr. Abhishek Ghoshal, Manager and Head Human-Wildlife Conflict Mitigation and Coexistence, WTI presented on the challenges of *Human-Wildlife Conflict and Corridors*, that led to discussions on elephant and tiger corridors in India and West Bengal, drawing upon RoP, PE, WII and NTCA reports.

The presentation highlighted RoP's work through four corridor securement models and conflict-mitigation interventions under the Terai, Manas and Sundarban projects. These included RRT, PRT, safer livelihoods, a public alert system, a predator-proof house cluster, an illuminated barrier and a community-managed hanging solar fence. It also referred to a proposed altruistic community guarding system planned in Brahmapuri and public engagement and behaviour-change efforts through Gaj Mahotsav, Gaj Utsav and Gaj Yatra. The presentation made the case for a State-level strategy or action plan integrating conflict mitigation and coexistence, corridor conservation and campaigns.

One of the key outputs planned from the event is an indexed booklet, to be prepared by the Forest Department, mapping the presence of CSOs and their species- and topic-wise areas of work in WB.

Sundarban Tiger Reserve, West Bengal

On the eve of Global Tiger Day, WTI was felicitated by the Sundarban Tiger Reserve (STR) Authority for partnering in tiger conservation in the landscape. The programme was organised by STR at the Sajnekhali WLS office.

The event was attended by Smt. Pratibha Raj, Additional PCCF & Director of Sundarban Biosphere Reserve (SBR); Shri Rajendra Jakhar, Field Director, STR; Shri Chitrak Bhattacharya, Deputy Field Director, STR; Shri Partha Debnath and Shri Debdarshan Roy, Assistant Field Director, STR; Shri Gaurav Sharma, IFS, and Shri Akash Verma, IFS, ACF; Shri Partha Mukherjee and Shri Jonmenjoy Pal, ADFO, 24 Parganas (South) Forest Division; and Shri Bikarna Naskar, MLA, Gosaba.



WTI recognised by Sundarban Tiger Reserve (STR) Authority for its partnership in tiger conservation in the Sundarbans landscape

Quiz and impromptu speech competitions were organised for local school students. Representatives from the West Bengal Biodiversity Board (WBBB) also presented a talk on Horseshoe crab conservation.

The documentary *Sundarban-The Tides of Life*, focused on the on-ground handling of tiger ingress incidents, was released during the programme. Another documentary on *Batagur baska* conservation in the Sundarbans was screened for the first time at the event.

Across WTI's project landscapes, the activities reinforced a shared message: effective tiger conservation depends on strong field enforcement, secure and connected habitats, practical coexistence measures and sustained collaboration among governments, conservation organisations and local communities.