



**PENCH TIGER RESERVE, MAHARASHTRA
APRIL 2018**

Team: Abhijit Dutta – *Assistant Director (Conservation)*
Bandu Uikey – *Assistant Conservation Officer*
Dilip Lanjewar, Balkrishna Bagmare – *Field assistants*

Highlights

- ⇒ *Five community patrols*
- ⇒ *Assisted in fighting fires in forest twice*
- ⇒ *One new waterhole built, one existing waterhole cleaned and de-silted*
- ⇒ *Two village eco-development committees (VEDCs) re-activated*
- ⇒ *Workshop on forest protection and forest fire prevention at Chargaon*
- ⇒ *One meeting on forest fire prevention at Kadbikheda*
- ⇒ *One meeting on organic farming at Khapa*
- ⇒ *Earth Day awareness program on 22nd April at Siladevi*
- ⇒ *Two nature trails*
- ⇒ *Six school education programs with 126 student participating*
- ⇒ *Weekly IT education classes at Sawara and Siladevi*
- ⇒ *Marketing assistance to lantana craft artisans*
- ⇒ *Two youths sent to Forest dept.'s organic farming workshop*
- ⇒ *Follow-up of candidates sent for driver's training program*
- ⇒ *Six free medical camps, 137 patients treated*
- ⇒ *Research on 'Assessing benefits of wildlife tourism for communities and conservation in Tiger Reserves of Vidarbha'*

Conservation Action and Awareness

Sr. no.	Date	Village / Place	Activity	Participants
1.	Apr 4	Mehkepar (Kolitmara)	Inactive VEDC reactivated with new elected members	30
2.	Apr 5	Ghatpendari	Submission of 15 names to Gram Panchayat for new LPG connection under Prime Minister's Ujjwala Yojna	15
3.	Apr 6	Chargaon	Workshop on forest protection and prevention of forest fires	50
4.	Apr 8	Khapa	Awareness meeting on organic farming	10
5.	Apr 10	Surera	VEDC reactivated with new	25

		(Kolitmara)	elected members	
6.	Apr 10	Wagholi	Community patrol	6
7.	Apr 13	Kadbikheda	Forest fire prevention awareness meeting with VEDC members	12
8.	Apr 14	Saleghat Beat	Waterhole cleaned	4
9.	Apr 15	Saleghat Beat	Community patrol	5
10.	Apr 15	Ghoti	Nature trail	17
11.	Apr 16	Ghoti	Water hole construction	9
12.	Apr 18	Saleghat Beat	Community patrol	4
13.	Apr 18	Khapa	Nature trail	12
14.	Apr 22	Siladevi	Earth Day Awareness, Nature Trail	10
15.	Apr 23	Khapa	Community patrol	5
16.	Apr 23	Salai Beat	Fighting fire in forest	20
17.	Apr 29	Siladevi Beat	--do--	10
18.	Apr 29	Siladevi Beat	Night patrol	5
<i>Total participants</i>				<i>249</i>

On April 29, Bandu and Abhijit saw smoke coming out from the forest behind Wanera village. As the area is inaccessible by road, Bandu immediately informed the Forest Department staff at Narhar check-post about the fire and they sent a wireless message to Nagalwadi Range Office.

On the same day, the villagers at Siladevi informed us about a massive forest fire behind their village. Bandu, Balkrishna and Abhijit went to douse of the fire with some villagers and informed the Forest Department staff who later arrived with blowers to extinguish the fire.

A similar incident happened in Salai beat on April 23, where Dilip helped the Forest Department staff in dousing a forest fire.



*Siladevi - Bandu and Balkrishna assisting in fire-fighting in Compartment no. 221 (left);
Siladevi – Fire-fighting in compartment no. 221 with Forest Dept. staff using blowers
(right)*

On April 14, a water hole was cleaned and de-silted in compartment no. 659 in Saleghat beat.

A new waterhole was constructed near Ghoti village for birds and smaller wildlife on April 16. The waterholes are of great help to wildlife especially in the summer months due to water scarcity.



*Ghoti - New waterhole made with help of villagers (left);
Saleghat beat- Waterhole cleaned at compartment no. 659 (right)*

On April 4, Bandu helped in the re-activation of the VEDC at Mehkepar, Kolutmara which was inactive for a few months. Bandu helped in mobilizing villagers to elect new members for the VEDC and motivated them to work and take full benefit of government schemes so that pressure on the forests is reduced. RFO West Pench, forest guards and villagers were present during the re-activation.

A similar program was conducted by Bandu to re-activate Surera VEDC in Kolutmara on April 10.

Dilip organized an awareness programme on preventing forest fires with VEDC members and villagers of Kadbikheda on April 13.

On April 8, Dilip organized an awareness programme on organic farming at Khapa.



*Mehkepar, Kolutmara - Bandu speaks during the re-activation of VEDC (left);
Kadbikheda - Dilip at awareness meeting with VEDC members on prevention of forest fires (right)*

A workshop on forest protection and forest fire prevention was organized in Chargaon which was attended by RFO Nagalwadi, VEDC presidents of Chargaon and Suwardhara and villagers. The villagers were shown a movie on forest protection and fire fighting and were encouraged to take action on forest protection by RFO, Nagalwadi.

Five community patrolling programs were organized in Saleghat, Siladevi, Wagholi and Khapa. Such patrolling helps in checking illegal activities around villages through community participation. A night foot patrol was carried out in Siladevi after a forest fire incident on the same day.



Chargaon - RFO Nagalwadi, VEDC Presidents of Chargaon and Suwardhara interacting with villagers during awareness program on forest protection (left); Siladevi- Community night foot patrol in compartment no. 221 (right)

On April 22, Earth Day was celebrated with school students in Siladevi. They were taken for a nature trail and were taught the importance of conserving the local village forests and the benefits they provide in the form of watershed and biodiversity. Dilip organized similar nature trails for students in Khapa and Ghoti.



Shiladevi - Balkrishna with students during nature trail on the eve of Earth Day (left); Khapa - Dilip with students during a nature trail (right)

An Azolla cattle feed tank set up last month at Ghoti showed results with the tank full with Azolla this month. Azolla helps cattle and poultry with improved quality of feed.

On April 5, Bandu helped in submission of 15 names to Gram Panchayat for new cooking gas connection under PM Ujjwala Yojna for Ghatpendari village. The connections will help in reducing dependence on local forests for fuel wood.



Ghoti - Azolla growth in the tank

Environment Education

School Education Programs

Sr. No.	Date	School	Village	Number of students
1.	Apr 9	ZP School	Narhar	18
2.	Apr 10	ZP School	Awaleghat	30
3.	Apr 11	ZP School	Chargaon	25
4.	Apr 12	ZP School	Siladevi	15
5.	Apr 13	ZP School	Ambazari	20
6.	Apr 17	ZP School	Suwardhara	18
Total Participants				126

In the month of April, a total of six school education programs were conducted by our team in which students were given lectures on man-animal conflict, biodiversity conservation, climate change and other issues related to nature conservation.

A total of 126 students attended these programmes.

IT Education Program

Satpuda Foundation has donated desktops as well as laptops to the Zilla Parishad School in Sawara village and has been conducting IT education program for the students free of cost since 2013. Basic computer skills are taught to the students to make them feel comfortable with technology and improve their IT skills. Sita Uikey, a resident of Sawara village works on an honorarium basis for Satpuda Foundation to impart IT education to the students. Four such classes were held in April in ZP School, Sawara.

This programme has been extended to Siladevi village where the IT Education program was inaugurated in ZP School Siladevi in March 2018. A new Raspberry-pi system was donated by Sushant Kudagi from Karnataka through Satpuda Foundation. Four classes were held in April in ZP School, Siladevi.



*Awleghat- Balkrishna during an environment education program (left);
Siladevi - Balkrishna and school head teacher Rathore during IT education Program
(right)*

Employment Cell



*Chargaon - Customized lantana hairpins prepared for buyer in Bengaluru (left);
Chargaon – Villagers prepare lantana products for display and sale at Bhivsen mela
(right)*

Satpuda Foundation helped in creating a market linkage for lantana craft artisans of Pench Tiger Reserve with ‘Ragi Kana’, a weekly rural display market in Bengaluru. Raghu, who is associated with ‘Ragi-kana’ had placed some orders on test basis from three craftsmen in Pench Tiger Reserve. The craftsmen completed the order and sent the products to Bengaluru. Depending on the demand for these products in Bengaluru, further orders may be placed for various lantana products. The artisans were encouraged to display and sell their lantana items at Bhivsen mela which is a popular annual mela in Parseoni region attended by thousands of people.

Two youths from Ghatpendari village were encouraged to participate in a one-day organic farming training workshop organized by the Forest Department in Surewani on 18th April. They learnt techniques of organic farming, how to grow vegetables with maximum output and the importance of pesticide- and chemical fertilizer-free farming. The two youths have pledged to practice organic farming in the next agricultural cycle.

Forest Department's Organic Farming Workshop

Sr. no.	Name	Qual.	Age	Village
1.	Kaliram Uikey	12 th	36	Ghatpendari
2.	Shivpal Uikey	12 th	26	Salai-tola, Ghatpendari

Satpuda Foundation had helped the Forest Department in mobilizing, selecting and sending candidates for a driver's training program funded by BCRLIP in September 2017. As the candidates have already completed the training and some of them have cleared the RTO tests, Satpuda Foundation followed up to know about their job placements. Our field team regularly meets these candidates and mentors and encourages those who are still unemployed to take up jobs. We have listed out the youths who have not cleared the RTO exams and planned a one-day workshop to train them to handle the computer-based RTO tests as most of the candidates lack basic computing skills.

Follow-up of youths sent for Driver Training Program funded by BCRLIP during September 2017

Sr. no.	Name	Village	Job	Monthly Salary
1.	Akshay Bagmare	Chargaon	Cleaner at Waterproof company, Nagpur	Rs. 5000
2.	Sanjay Hosiyar Chavhan	Garra	Gypsy driver at Khudsapar gate	Rs. 5000
3.	Naresh Kapurchand Uikey	Garra	Gypsy driver at Khudsapar gate	Rs. 5000
4.	Yogesh Mangaldeo Kodwate	Garra	Gypsy driver at Khudsapar gate	Rs. 5000
5.	Shivdas Shrichand Kowache	Garra	Gypsy driver at Khudsapar gate	Rs. 5000
6.	Arun Mayaram Kodwate	Khudsapar	Gypsy driver at Khudsapar gate	Rs. 5000
7.	Swapnil Sudhakar Nagrale	Khudsapar	Gypsy driver at Khudsapar gate	Rs. 5000
8.	Mukesh Sriram Bhalavi	Khudsapar	Gypsy driver at Khudsapar gate	Rs. 5000
9.	Ashok Shamrao Idpachi	Khudsapar	Gypsy driver at Khudsapar gate	Rs. 5000
10.	Prashant Dhanraj Kokode	Zinzeriya	Driver for self-owned taxi at Zinzeriya	Rs. 6000
11.	Mangesh Dipak Dhurve	Zinzeriya	Driver for self-owned taxi at Zinzeriya	Rs. 6000
12.	Nitin Vitthal Gagane	Zinzeriya	Driver for self-owned taxi at Zinzeriya	Rs. 6000
13.	Shrikant Punaram	Zinzeriya	Driver for taxi owned by	Rs. 5000

	Masram		others at Zinzeriya	
14.	Avinash Ramnath Sarote	Zinzeriya	Driver for taxi owned by others at Zinzeriya	Rs. 5000
15.	Rajendra Gopal Takod	Garra	Tractor driver at Garra	Rs. 4500

Mobile Health Service (MHS)

There were six medical camps in April in which 137 patients were treated.

Sr. no.	Date	Village	No. of Patients
1	April 28	Salai-tola	24
2.		Ghatpendari	27
3.	April 29	Ghatkukda	23
4.		Siladevi	29
5.	April 30	Dhawlapur	21
6.		Saleghat	13
Total Patients			137



Dhawlapur- Dr. Zanjil treats patient during our MHS camp

Research

Two interns have joined Satpuda Foundation to work on a project- 'Assessing benefits of wildlife tourism for communities and conservation in Tiger Reserves of Vidarbha', the final report of which will be produced in June 2018.

The interns are conducting structured/ unstructured interviews, group discussions and questionnaire surveys with tourist guides, drivers, gypsy owners, people from hospitality sector and villagers. They are also analyzing socio-economic surveys and data from Forest Department records to reach a conclusion as to how tourism is shaping the local economy and helping in conservation.



Interns interacting with guides,drivers and Forest Dept. staff at Khursapar gate (left) and Surewani gate (right) to assess impact of wildlife tourism