

Press Release

Wildlife Week Celebration 2025

Tamil Nadu Forest Department, under the guidance of the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, successfully organised the **Wildlife Week Celebration 2025** from **2nd to 8th October 2025** with the theme ***"Human Animal Co-existence"***. The week-long celebration aimed to foster awareness on wildlife conservation, promote community engagement, and highlight the state's continuous efforts towards biodiversity protection.

As part of the celebrations, a series of events were organised across the state, showcasing Tamil Nadu's commitment to wildlife protection and people's welfare. The celebrations commenced with the **Hon'ble Chief Minister Thiru M.K. Stalin inaugurating India's Second Dedicated Mahout Village at the Kozhikamuthi Elephant Camp in the Anamalai Tiger Reserve**, marking a significant milestone in the welfare of elephants and their caretakers. **The Inauguration of Infrastructure Facilities at the Kozhikamuthi Elephant Camp in Anamalai Tiger Reserve** further strengthens the state's wildlife management initiatives. In a progressive move, the **State Government has amended service rules to allow direct recruitment of Cavadis**, safeguarding traditional expertise and integrating it with modern elephant management practices.

The Hon'ble Minister for Forests and Khadi **Thiru R. S. Rajakannapan** released the **3rd Synchronised Elephant Population Estimation Report (2025)** highlighting Tamil Nadu's scientific approach and commitment towards long-term elephant conservation and management, announcing that Tamil Nadu is home to an estimated 3,170 wild elephants, a rise of 107 from the previous count of 3,063 reflecting the State's sustained efforts in habitat protection, conflict mitigation, and species monitoring.

On the occasion of Nilgiri Tahr Day, **Tmt. Supriya Sahu, I.A.S., Additional Chief Secretary to the Government, Department of Environment, Climate Change and Forests**, released the **Nilgiri Tahr Pictorial Post Card**, symbolising Tamil Nadu's continued commitment to conserving its endemic mountain ungulate and restoration of its natural habitats. A **Forest Range Officers' Conclave on Human-Wildlife Conflict Management** was conducted at the **Advanced Institute for Wildlife Conservation (AIWC), Vandalur**, providing a platform for field officers to exchange experiences and strategies for effective conflict mitigation.

Thiru Rakesh Kumar Dogra, IFS, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wildlife Warden, informed that a series of public awareness programmes were organised as part of the celebrations, including Plastic-Free Tiger Reserve Campaigns in all five Tiger Reserves, where waste was collected to promote sustainability and encourage the use of Manjappai. Various activities such as rallies, painting competitions, and elocution contests were conducted to engage the public, while Wildlife Conservation Awareness Treks at

Baraliyar and along the Sembukarai–Perumalmudi Trail in Coimbatore fostered eco-consciousness and encouraged active citizen participation in wildlife conservation.

A major highlight of the celebrations was the **State-Level Wildlife Quiz Competition**, jointly organised by the Tamil Nadu Forest Department. Conducted bilingually (Tamil & English), the online prelims on **September 30, 2025**, witnessed an unprecedented **participation of 72,298 school students** across all **38 districts**, making it one of the largest wildlife-themed student engagements in the country.

The **Grand Finale** of the quiz was held today (October 8, 2025) at **Guindy Children's Nature Park Auditorium, Chennai**, as part of the **Valedictory Function** of the Wildlife Week Celebrations. Finalists from six zones representing the entire state competed in the final round, demonstrating remarkable enthusiasm and knowledge about wildlife and nature.

The Valedictory Function commenced with the Grand Finale of the State-Level Wildlife Quiz, followed by the Prize Distribution Ceremony for the winners of the Wildlife Photography Competition and Quiz Competition. The event was graced by the presence of senior forest officers including **Thiru Srinivas R. Reddy, IFS**, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force); **Thiru Rakesh Kumar Dogra, IFS**, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wildlife Warden; **Thiru. H. Venuprasad, IFS**, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), **Thiru. Dinkar Kumar, IFS**, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (FCA), **Thiru Ritto Cyriac, IFS**, CCF & Director, Arignar Anna Zoological Park; and **Thiru Manish Meena, IFS**, Wildlife Warden, Chennai, all the Officers of Forest Department.

The dignitaries emphasised the significance of collective action in strengthening forest and wildlife conservation efforts and underscored the vital role of youth in fostering environmental awareness and promoting harmonious coexistence with nature.

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