

TELANGANA

# Forests, urban parks to be rid of plastic

## SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

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### Special teams to be formed in all forest areas to collect garbage

Encouraged by the success of a pilot project taken up in the Amrabad Tiger Reserve (ATR), the Forest department is initiating measures to make forests, protected areas and urban parks completely plastic-free.

PCCF (Head of Forest Force) R.M. Dobriyal has issued directions towards the same, and asked officials to regulate the use of plastic in the two tiger reserves, three national parks, four sanctuaries, 109 urban forest parks and the zoo park.

Forest areas are filled with large amounts of plastic waste owing to the garbage dumped by people from surrounding villages and tourists and travellers on highways, putting wildlife at peril and causing fire accidents.

Nearly 1,000 kg plastic and other kinds of garbage were removed from the Kawal Tiger Reserve (KTR) during a special drive conducted recently.

A system has been developed in the 65-km Srisailem highway stretch of the Amrabad reserve over the few years, whereby plastic garbage is collected, segregated, and sent for recycling in a streamlined fashion.

After witnessing the success of the programme, the same system is being implemented across the other forest regions, a statement from the department informed.

As part of this programme, special teams will be formed in all forest areas for garbage collection. Recycling points will be established, and garbage will be segregated before baling and transferring to the processing units. Local communities will be employed in all the phases of this exercise, thus generating local employment.

The Forest department has also urged tourists through the woods to act responsibly and not throw plastic bottles, wrappers, cigarettes, and other garbage into forests. Due to increasing traffic into the forests for temples, tourist places, view points, waterfalls, and other locations, there is accumulation of plastic waste inside. Only responsible Eco Tourism will be encouraged henceforth, the statement said.