

# Vizag forest tribals produce to be listed on Amazon India website

TNN | May 21, 2024, 09.10 PM IST



VISAKHAPATNAM: Andhra Pradesh Forest Department has joined hands with Amazon India signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to empower tribal artisans from Visakhapatnam Division through economic opportunities, cultural preservation, and tribal community development. The partnership aims to leverage the rich heritage and craftsmanship of the tribal communities dwelling in the hamlet of Sambhuvanipalem in the middle of Kambalakonda Wildlife Sanctuary to offer authentic handcrafted products to a global audience via Amazon's e-commerce platform.

This step is part of the initiative of the Forest department to empower local communities by providing them sustainable

livelihoods and also underscores Amazon India's dedication to social responsibility and sustainability, aligning with its mission to create positive impacts in the communities it serves.

The primary objective of this partnership is to provide visibility and support revenue generation through the forest produce manufactured by the tribals through listing on Amazon and in turn create employment opportunities.

The Amazon Karigar program will provide comprehensive training for tribal members in value addition, packaging, and branding, empowering them to sell their products online. Under this initiative, an e-commerce hub will be established by the Forest department. The hub will serve as a crucial centre for various activities, including primary and secondary packaging, storage, dispatch, and order processing.

The MoU between Amazon India and the Vishakhapatnam Forest Division is a shared commitment to fostering indigenous craftsmanship, promoting cultural exchange, and enhancing livelihoods. As part of Amazon Karigar, Tribal artisans will gain access to Amazon's expansive reach and resources, showcasing and selling tribal handicrafts. Initially, the project will focus on the online sale of forest produce in non-consumable categories, such as cow dung pots, paper-mache masks, postcards showcasing traditional art crafts made using plant-based dyes and colours, products made from coconut shells and bamboo.

Anant Shankar,, District Forest Officer, Visakhapatnam informed that "Visakhapatnam division of the Andhra Pradesh Forest Department has been working with the local and forest-dependent communities in improving their lives through various interventions. One of these is providing skill development to the communities, especially the women and a safe place to work, " he added.

The division has established the Eastern Ghats Biodiversity Centre where in addition to facilities for eco-tourism and awareness generation like Nature Interpretation Centre, Orchidarium, Rashi Van, Aushadhavan, Ficus garden, and Bambusetum, a workshop for the tribals has also been established. The ultimate aim of establishing this centre is to provide a unique model of ecotourism linked with livelihood generation. The Forest department is acting as a facilitator to empower the local community through several collaborations and partnerships. This partnership with Amazon India will be a game-changer for the tribal community dwelling in the middle of the Kambalakonda Wildlife Sanctuary in the district of Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

On this occasion, Gaurav Bhatnagar, Head of Seller Acquisition and Development at Amazon India, said, "This partnership marks our continued efforts to celebrate the rich tapestry of India's handicrafts, empower and support socio-economic empowerment of tribal communities while preserving their traditional knowledge, skills, and cultural heritage.