

Indian Vulture

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Indian Vulture Latest News

Two Indian vultures released in the Melghat Tiger Reserve (MTR) in Maharashtra's Amravati district have been recently spotted near Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh after covering a flight distance of over 1,000 km.

About Indian Vulture

- The Indian vulture, also called the **long-billed vulture**, is a **bird of prey native to Asia**.
- Scientific Name: *Gyps indicus*
- It is part of a group called "**Old World vultures**".
- They belong to the Accipitridae family, which includes eagles and hawks.

Indian Vulture Habitat and Distribution

- These are **native to India, Pakistan, and Nepal**.
- They are usually found in **savannas and other open habitats around villages**, cities, and near cultivated areas.

- It has suffered a **97-99% population decrease** due to **poisoning caused by** the **veterinary drug diclofenac**.
- It was given to working animals, as it reduced joint pain and so kept them working for longer.
- **Vultures got poisoned when they ate the meat** of dead cattle that had been treated with diclofenac. This caused **kidney failure** in the vultures.

Indian Vulture Features

- It is a **bulky medium-sized** bird. **Females** of this species are **smaller** than males.
- They have a **small, mostly bald head** with **few feathers**.
- It has a **long, featherless neck**, dark eyes, and a **long, yellowish beak**.
- Its body and covert feathers are light brown.
- Its wings are broad, and its tail feathers are short.
- Its **large wingspan allows it to fly long distances** while using minimal energy.

Indian Vulture Conservation Status

It is classified as '**Critically Endangered**' under the IUCN Red List.

Key Facts about Melghat Tiger Reserve

- It is located in **Maharashtra's** Amravati district.
- Perched on the **southern offshoot of the Satpura Hill Range**, also known as the **Gavilgarh Hills**, the very name Melghat translates to "meeting of the ghats."
- It was the first tiger reserve in Maharashtra.
- **Rivers:** The **Tapti River** flows gracefully along the reserve's northeastern boundary, while **five tributaries—Khandu, Khapra, Sipna, Gadga, and Dolar**—crisscross the sanctuary.
- **Tribes:** The **Korkus** are the **largest tribal community** in Melghat.
- **Flore:**
 - It is dominated by **tropical dry deciduous** forests.
 - Towering **teak trees** (*Tectona grandis*) dominate, interspersed with other valuable species such as **Ain** (*Terminalia tomentosa*), **Haldu** (*Adina cordifolia*), and **Bamboo**.
- **Fauna:**
 - **Sloth Bear, Indian Gaur, Sambar deer, Leopard, Nilgais**, dhole, hyena, jungle cat, langur, etc.
 - It is considered a stronghold of the **critically endangered forest owlet**.

Source: **DH**

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