

**HUNTING THE HUNTERS-III CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM**  
**AT**  
**SARISKA TIGER RESERVE**  
**FROM**  
**11-13<sup>TH</sup> FEB. 2011**

The Phase-III capacity building training program held at Sariska Tiger Reserve was an eye-opener to the officers who attended the training program. The training programs offered by Tiger Trust usually aims at strengthening the investigational, forensic, and legal skills of the forest officers. These skills are essentially required in successfully arriving at the prosecution of the poachers. This training program however witnessed a digressed path. The faculty of Tiger Trust instead of teaching the forest officers the important provisions of the Indian Evidence Act, Criminal Procedure Code and the Wildlife Protection Act, took the officers to the Sariska Tiger Reserve for understanding the basic ingredients of carrying out on the spot investigation.

On day one the forest officers were assembled at the Training Institute, Alwar. A short recapitulation of the basic provisions pertaining to investigation were given. The officers were divided into two teams, **Team “A”** being the Tiger Team and **Team “B”** being the Panther Team. The trainees were then taken to the Tiger Reserve for carrying out the mock cases assigned to them. On reaching the Tiger Reserve, specified spots were assigned to the Teams. Information was given on wireless that a suspect is seen on the periphery of the national park. The Team was asked to act upon the information and take necessary pre-emptive steps to avoid any instance of poaching. The trainees were taken to the villages situated near the Tiger Reserve and were asked to interrogate the villagers. It was at this juncture that communication skills were taught to the trainees so as to obtain correct and relevant information from the villagers. These skills were later on utilized during the process of cross-examining the villagers during trial.

Later on Team “A” was assigned the case of a lady being attacked by a bear, a wild animal. The lady filed a suit for compensation and the team members were asked to defend the State Forest Department in the Court of Law. On carrying out this mock case, the trainees were asked to keep in mind the provisions of the Wildlife Protection Act in denying the liability of the forest department to pay damages.

Team “B” was given a mock case which demanded carrying out a mock raid and filling up of the relevant forms. The case was based on a decided High Court judgment which dealt with all the nuances of carrying out a full-fledged investigation. The team leader received an information on over the wireless of an anonymous person dealing in tiger skin at a house in a nearby village. The information was passed onto the Range Officer and on reaching the premises a raid was conducted. The trainees were taught how to carry out a raid and to fill the relevant forms including the seizure memo, seizure report, site plan of the house etc. After carrying out the raid the trainees were asked to carry out the investigation. The trainees were asked to investigate on the following points:

- how the tiger skin was received by the accused.
- Whether the accused had any license in dealing with articles/trophy
- To record the statements of the persons present in the house
- Steps to be taken by the ACF.

The day two of the training program was also entirely spent in the Tiger Reserve. Dr. Parag Nigam, veterinary expert from the Wildlife Institute of India gave his expertise on collecting the blood sample of the deceased animal. For proper illustration, a bull was tranquilized by Dr. Nigam and steps were taught on how to take blood sample, hair and scat. In addition to this, the challenges faced in prosecution on account of lack of proper evidence were also analyzed in detail.

The last day of the training program was a classroom session held in the presence of a local Chief Judicial Magistrate, Public Prosecutor, the faculty of Tiger Trust, the State Forest Department and the trainees. The 3 hour long session was devoted exclusively to sort out the difficulties faced by the trainees in carrying out the mock cases.

### **Inaugural Session at Training College Alwar**





**Post inaugural session. Pictures depicting mock interrogation of a villager and arrest of an accused**



**At Sariska National Park. Dr. Parag Nigam, veterinary expert from Wildlife Institute of India giving demonstration on tranquilising a bull. Procedure to collect blood sample, hair and scat were also demonstrated**





**Dr. Parag Nigam and Dr. Arvind from the Rescue Team, Jaipur giving presentation on the importance and correct usage of forensic skills.**



