

Jharkhand tribals vow to protect wild animals

For the first time, tribals in Jharkhand celebrating their traditional Vishu festival have vowed to protect wild animals, instead of hunting them.

Tribals celebrated Vishu festival Monday near Dolma jungle in Jamshedpur district. They performed the rituals and did token 'Sendra' (animal hunt). After the rituals, tribals vowed not to kill wild animals but to protect and save them.

The festival is celebrated to protect the tribals from wild animals. Traditionally, tribals celebrate Vishu by chasing and killing animals in the wild, preparing food from their flesh and drinking Handia (home-made rice liquor).

Despite forest conservation and animal protection laws, tribals are venturing into deep jungle and killing wild animals.

Last year tribals celebrating this festival killed four animals, including a deer.

The Jharkhand government does not seem to be enforcing the laws as it would hurt the sentiment of the tribal community.

The forest and environment department has launched an awareness programme among the tribals so that they do not kill the wild animals.

'We will maintain our culture and tradition. The Vishu festival will be celebrated every year. The only difference will be that no animal will be killed,' said Yudhishtir Singh, a member of Eco Vikas Committee of Dolma jungle.

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