

Tigress death in MP: Ramesh seeks report

NEW DELHI

PERTURBED by the death of a tigress in Madhya Pradesh's Bandhavgarh sanctuary, Environment Minister Jairam Ramesh has sought a report from the chief minister. "The minister has taken a serious note of the matter and has asked Chief Minister Shivraj Chauhan to probe the case thoroughly and send a report," a senior Environment official said. He said, MP Additional Principle Chief Conservator of Forest (PCCF) Dharmendra Negi is investigating the case even as various theories for death of the ten-year-old feline on May 19, in the Tala Range of the reserve are doing rounds.

Meanwhile Reserve Field Director CK Patil has demanded a CID or CBI inquiry into the

incident. "Patil has written to the State Chief Wildlife Warden RS Negi with such a request," the official said.

Earlier soon after the animal's death, Patil had said that "We are of the view that a tourist vehicle had hit the tigress after which she died. But it needs investigation."

Madhya Pradesh Government has already suspended three Officials, including an SDO and two range officers for alleged negligence.

Wildlife Expert Belinda Wright too demanded a thorough probe. "We have information that the poor animal was hit twice," she said. The tigress' death, which left three cubs orphan, has also put a question mark on the current tourism policy being adopted across the country causing disturbance to the wildlife particularly endangered animals like big cats.

Earlier, a tiger had died after being hit by a tourist vehicle in Bandhavgarh in April 2009. —PTI