

Tiger death stats grim for state

Pelt Seized Shows Trade Is Rampant

Jayashree Nandi | TNN

Bangalore: The official figures of tiger mortality and crime are now available online at the website facilitated by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA). But the figures of tiger part seizures in Karnataka are grim, because it has the highest number: four cases of skin seizures in 2009, as compared to three in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh, two in West Bengal and Uttaranachal, and one or two in other states.

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On the one hand, the higher the number of seizures, the more it points to good patrolling and investigation. On the other, it is

NOT PRETTY

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Skin of a 12-yr-old tiger was seized from Pandavapura in 2009

In 2010, no tiger deaths have been reported from Karnataka



proof to the grim reality that trade is rampant.

Current investigations in Kalhalla range of Nagarahole show the role of Satna tribals from Madhya Pradesh, sources told TOI. The forest department, however, said that two persons were arrested last

year. They were active wildlife criminals from local areas, and investigations are on to nab others.

POACHERS ARE ACTIVE

“Of the 66 tigers which died last year, 10 were in Karnataka. It is not higher than other states. A fifth

of the country’s tiger population is in Karnataka. Last year, the skin of a 12-year-old tiger was seized from the Pandavapura limits. That is being counted in the 2009 figures, so obviously the number of dead tigers has gone up. The other two skins were poached in the Kalhalla region and Gundlupet taluk, and there was one more case in early 2009,” principal chief conservator of forests B K Singh told TOI.

Maharashtra had as many as 10 tiger mortality cases, while Madhya Pradesh, Assam and Uttarakhand reported nine each. In 2010, six tiger deaths have been reported, though none from Karnataka.

The Karnataka forest department is looking forward to healthy estimations from the census that was recently conducted. A training programme is being carried out for four data operators, who would be placed in four zones to collate the data from the census and send it across to the Wildlife Institute of India in a month’s time.