

Young tiger seen near Tirupati

DC CORRESPONDENT

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TIRUPATI

Oct 25: The forest department personnel of the Tirupati wildlife circle are filled with joy as a young tiger was spotted in the Mamandur range of the SV National Park zone, about 35 km from Tirupati.

Forest guards who were on duty in the area spotted the tiger in May and it was spotted moving around the forest guest house at Mamandur, which is popularly known as the Mamandur Guest House.

The guards reported the sighting to the higher officials, who in turn, organised a scientific way of detecting the young tiger's movements.

The guards had tried to record the pugmarks of the tiger but their efforts did not yield any results owing to the hard summer soil.

However, they did not give up and kept trying, and their efforts have finally paid off owing to the incessant rains. The pugmarks, identified as that of a male, were seen on the bank of a pond.

However, the sighting of the endangered species remained a secret until now.

The chief conservator of forests (Tirupati wildlife division), Mr P.V. Chalapati Rao, confirmed the report of the tiger spotting.

In the past decade, the forest cover of the SV National Park — spread across the



Chamla valley in Chittoor district to Rajampet in Kadapa — has improved quite a bit.

A few other species too were spotted near the Chamla valley and at Papavinasanam, which is located at the down reaches of Tirumala, but the officials never confirmed the same.

However, in the case of the young tiger, the officials believe that it must have strayed into the range from the neighbouring Nallamala hill ranges. The phenomenon is hailed as a feather in the cap of the forest conservation department of the Seshachalam range and projects integrated growth in the future.

It may be noted that the Seshachalam hill ranges were home to several tigers in the late 1950s, but the big cats began to gradually disappear thereafter.

It is even recorded that the famous hunter, Kenneth Anderson, had travelled in the area and killed two tigers, at Mamandur and Chamla valley.