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# Park in panic as bacteria bug tigers

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After a series of tiger deaths over the past few days, six more tigers and three cubs are battling for life at the Bannerghatta National Park (BNP), 25 km from here. A desperate situation prevails in the national park and the veterinarians appear to have lost all hope of saving the big cats that are infected.

Talking to *The Pioneer* on Monday, the Chief Wildlife Warden and Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Karnataka) BK Singh said the situation was grim and six more tigers and three cubs were battling for life at the park.

Singh said, "Six tigers and three cubs are battling for life. The doctors are treating them on a war footing, but unfortunately their condition still remains critical. We have sent

these animals' blood samples to the laboratory and a team of doctors has been stationed at the park round the clock. We have shifted the ailing animals to an isolation ward and an emergency has been declared."

The condition of the six tigers and three cubs at the Bannerghatta National Park continues to be critical. Four of the tigers are Arya and Minchu (from the safari) and Lava and Rani (from rescue centers). Most of the infected tigers have been shifted to an isolation ward in the rescue centre, which is located within the park. Antibiotics are regularly administered to the ailing felines and doctors are regularly visiting them to keep a keen eye on their vital symptoms.

Last Sunday, Divya, a three-year-old cub, died of salmonella bacterial infection, which may have been caused

## 6 tigers, 3 cubs battling for life after contracting E coli infection

by consumption of infected chicken. According to officials at the Bannerghatta National Park, all leaves of the staff members have been cancelled and they have been asked to be on call 24 hours a day.

"An emergency has been declared. Each staff member at the national park will have to put in time as well as best efforts to save the ailing animals. We have told the staff members not to proceed on leave and be available on call whenever required," executive director and Conservator of Forests Millo Tago said.

The Institute of Animal Health and Veterinary



Biologicals (IAH&VB), Hebbal, has confirmed that the tiger cub which died on Saturday, had contracted an E coli infection and it subsequently led to gastroenteritis. "The bacterial infection has been confirmed on all the affected animals. The reason for this unfortunate development and how the bacterium entered the animals' systems, however, is not yet known. The

doctors are working hard and medicines and injections are being given to the affected animals every six hours to bring their infection condition under control," Tago added.

Assistant director of Veterinary Sciences (BBP) Dr BC Chittiappa said, "The blood report of seven-year-old Arya is normal while Minchu has tested positive for infection."