

CLARIFICATION OVER TIGER DEATHS

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Biodiversity, Ecology, and Wildlife Related Issues

Certain media reports have highlighted the death of tigers during the year 2021, in a manner which is a lopsided view of tiger conservation in the country.

While it is appreciated that figures as available on the National Tiger Conservation Authority's website have been used in these reports, the manner in which it has been presented causes alarm and does not take into account the gamut of processes that go into dealing with tiger death in the country and the natural gains that have been made in tiger conservation, as a result of sustained technical and financial interventions by the Government of India.

Due to efforts of the Government of India through the National Tiger Conservation Authority, the tiger has been taken from the brink to an assured path of recovery, which is evident in findings of the quadrennial All India Tiger Estimation conducted in 2006, 2010, 2014 and 2018. These results have shown a healthy annual growth rate of tigers at 6%, which offsets natural losses and keeps tigers at the habitats carrying capacity level, in the Indian context.

For the period 2012 to 2021, one can observe that the average tiger deaths per year in the country hover around 98, which is balanced by the annual recruitment as highlighted by this robust growth rate. In addition, the National Tiger Conservation Authority has taken several steps under the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme of Project Tiger to address poaching, which too, is significantly controlled as seen in the confirmed poaching and seizure cases.

The National Tiger Conservation Authority maintains the highest standards of transparency in so far as making tiger death statistics available to the citizen through its website as well as dedicated portal - www.tigernet.nic.in , so that people can make a logical assessment, if they desire.

In the news reports it has been reported that out of 126 instances of tiger deaths, 60 tigers had died due to poachers, accidents, man-animal conflict outside protected areas while ignoring the process involved in ascribing tiger mortality cause.

In this light, it is pertinent to mention that the NTCA, through a dedicated Standard Operating Procedure, has a stringent protocol to ascribe cause to a tiger death, which is treated as unnatural, unless otherwise proved by the State concerned through submission of necropsy reports, histopathological and forensic assessments besides photographs and circumstantial evidences. It is only after a detailed analysis of these documents that the cause of death of 60 tigers outside tiger reserves can be ascertained.

It is expected that media, will inform the aforesaid facts, to the country so that there is no sensationalism and citizens are not led to believe that there is cause for alarm.

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