

INDIA: Enraged villagers beat tigress to death in Uttar Pradesh's Pilibhit

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After it reportedly injured nine locals of the Mataina village, an adult tigress was beaten to death by villagers in the Pilibhit district of Uttar Pradesh on Wednesday. A magisterial inquiry has been ordered.

Lucknow: On Thursday, residents of Mataina village in Pilibhit district of Uttar Pradesh trapped and killed an adult tigress after she reportedly injured nine people over the course of the past few days. Officials with the wildlife department said that the animal was beaten to death, not far from where forest rangers were stationed in the area.

Aged between 5 and 6 years, the tigress attacked nine locals on Wednesday. Even as the injured were undergoing treatment, the big cat pounced upon 19-year-old Shyam Mohan the very next day. This angered villagers who surrounded the tigress on Thursday and mercilessly assaulted her with lathis and spears before forest officials could arrive at the spot.

Highlights -

-Post-mortem of tigress confirmed death due to injuries: Forest Department.

-District Magistrate orders inquiry into death of tigress.

-In Pilibhit, 16 tigers have died since 2012.

Moreover, the villagers did not even allow rangers to take the majestic cat to the veterinary hospital which led to the tigress succumbing to her injuries within a few hours of the attack. Field director of the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve (PTR), H Rajamohan said that the predator had sustained fractures and injuries from "sharp-edged weapons like spears on almost every part of her body". He added that the tigress also had broken ribs.

After an autopsy was conducted on her by a panel of three veterinarians, the animal was cremated. The panel concluded that the animal died as a direct result of injuries inflicted upon her by the villagers. A magisterial inquiry has been ordered into the big cat's death and how or why the forest rangers failed to protect her life.

District Magistrate Vaibhav Srivastava said that some of the locals who attacked the tigress have been identified while efforts are underway to establish the identities of the rest. An FIR has been lodged against 31 unidentified assailants and 12 unknown attackers.

The big cat's death highlights a major escalation in the man-animal conflict which has been erupting in the region over the last decade. Since 2012, as many as 16 tigers and 3 leopards have died in the Pilibhit Tiger Reserve. An alarming number of these deaths were caused by poisoning and snaring while others were caused by infighting among the animals. A similar incident had come to light from Uttar Pradesh in November of last year where residents of Chaltua village located in Kishanpur sanctuary of Dudhwa Tiger Reserve were held responsible for killing a tigress. A post-mortem report had revealed that those who killed the animal even tried to pull out the predator's nails and canines.

- Mirror Now, The Sun