



## Forest officials gun down Corbett man-eater

Neha Shukla, TNN Jan 28, 2011, 04.15am IST

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LUCKNOW: Ramanagar forest official shot down a man-eating tiger near Corbett Tiger Reserve on Thursday afternoon. The animal had reportedly killed and eaten a 27-year-old youth in the morning. Forest officials launched an extensive combing to trace the man-eater after mutilated remains of the youth -- sixth victim since November -- was found and killed the animal around 2.30 pm.

In the beginning, there was confusion whether this is the same tiger which has been a terror in the area for the past three months. But, Uttarakhand forest officials went on record on Thursday evening claiming that the tiger shot by them was the one which was killing humans in Corbett area since November. "We can not say that man-eating is over in Corbett forever but in this area it has ended for sure," said S Chandola, chief wildlife warden, Uttarakhand.

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The tiger received multiple wounds in neck and thighs. "But I have found the an old wound as well. Though it had distinctly healed," said Chandola. The big cat was shot at on January 11 by forest officers when it was eating human flesh. "I had predicted that the wound to be on its shoulder," said the official. The same wound, he said, was found on the carcass of the tiger.

When asked about the earlier reports, confirmed even by local forest officials, that it was a tigress which was killing and eating humans in the area since November, Chandola said, "these were only deductions. It's a wild environment and a feline can not be expected to lift its paws to show if it is a male or female."

Earlier in the day, the locals went berserk after the remains of Puran Chand were recovered from Sunderkhal area in Ramnagar forest division. On Wednesday, Puran, son of Bhopal Ram, resident of Maldhan village, Ramnagar, went missing. According to a forest officer, Puran had left his motorcycle on the outskirts and ventured inside the forest area at around 1.00pm. It is common for the local people to cross the forest on foot to reach human settlements on the other side.

When Puran could not be traced till 7.00pm, locals approached Ramnagar officers and requested them to comb the area. His motorcycle was found parked. The locals had gheraoed the area and that probably did not allow the tiger to move out. On Thursday morning, the youth's legs were recovered from Sunderkhal forest area. The tiger had eaten the rest of the body. This triggered a large-scale protest in the area.

The forest officers had to call in police to control the mob which had blocked Ranikhet-Ramnagar highway. "We also called in three elephants for the combing," said Ramnagar DFO Ravindra Juyal. The tiger was finally spotted in Sunderkhal area and was shot. Its carcass has been brought to Ramnagar. There was a huge crowd in Ramanagr to have a look at the dead tiger.

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disgusting...shameful, barbaric, brutal incident...shame on the entire nation...shame on the forest officials...who couldnt just tranquilize it but shot dead an endangered species.... now they are just covering up and saying it was a male man eater all the while....when past two months they have been searching a female.... how incompetent is the forest staff.... i ask will this be the last killing as villagers will never stop venturing inside forest areas.....how many more tigers will be killed?? when will the government wake up to this crisis situation? when will the buffer zones be marked and enforced? till when will we follow the 1972 laws on tigers? when will the time for change come? if a human kills humans the trials go on for years in various courts but a voiceless animal is gunned down in a few hours without orders, verification, or relocation attempts!!!! when will this man animal conflict end?? till when will animals loose out to our greed??? the government sleeps over such incidents for votes and officials for money.... i wonder where this country is headed to?????