

How many tigers in Simlipal ?

While the RBT population is dwindling elsewhere in the country, in the Similipal area it has gone up to 101, Patnaik had said. The state has a total of RBT population of 192 against 173 in 2002, he added.

According to the 2004 tiger census on the basis of pugmarks, the largest number of the big cats, 101 in all, is found in Similipal, followed by 32 in Sunabeda wildlife sanctuary and 18 in Satkosia sanctuary. Ghumsur area (both north and south divisions) has 10 tigers. Similarly, four RBTs have been reported from Kharia reserve forest, three from Rayagada and Boudh reserve forest, six from Baliguda reserve forests under Kotagada sanctuary and five from Hirakund forest sanctuary.

The 2004 tiger census report says that 57 of the 192 RBTs living in Orissa forests are males , 75 are females and 60 are cubs.

However, Orissa wildlife Society secretary Biswajit Mohanty rejected the figures of RBTs given by Similipal authorities. Explaining his viewpoint, Mohanty said the Similipal area includes 62 villages but since there are no reports of killing of cattle or humans, the actual number of RBTs cannot be as high as 101 as claimed by the government . Though pugmarks indicate the existence of RBTs nothing concrete can be said about their number, he added.

Several tourists who frequently visited Similipal say they could not see any RBTs in the national park, Mohanty said.

Former chief wildlife warden Saroj Patnaik expressed concern over RBTs in various Orissa forests. Barring Similipal, RBTs in other forests are exposed to poaching, as there are not enough forest guards to look after their security, Patnaik said.

Though there has been no incident of tiger poaching in Orissa since 1996, sources said all forests, including Similipal remain understaffed. Nearly 40% of the posts , including that of forest guards, have been vacant for years.

Source : Times of India, dt.27.03.2005

BELINDA WRIGHT, WILD LIFE PROTECTION SOCIETY OF INDIA

Indian tiger Skin sold abroad

During the course of the investigation, Ms. Wright said they counted 83 tiger skin,

“ No tiger will be left here unless India and China work hand – in – hand,” She said.

Recently, the United Nations also issued an appeal asking the Indian government to take steps to save its Tigers.

Source : BBC, News, Delhi. Dt. 22 September'2005

BIG CAT POACHING IN SIMILIPAL

According to Wildlife Trust of India vice – chairman Ashok Kumar, who has moved a PIL in the Supreme Court challenging official Similipal Tiger figure, “ The number of tigers is not more than 30 as per our information. It is true that there are plenty of water bodies in the sanctuary and it is also dense forest. But as per our information, professional poachers are very much active in SIMILIPAL. We have also moved a PIL in the Supreme Court, saying the number has dwindled to 30.

Source : TNN, dt. 24 September'2005