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Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

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6196	02.07.2021	02.07.2021	Thiruvananthapuram Kerala	www.newindianexpress.com/English https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/thiruvananthapuram/2021/jul/01/death-of-wild-animals-in-districts-facilities-sparks-concern-2323683.html
Title:	Death of wild animals in district's facilities sparks concern in district Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU- Thiruvananthapuram, SSU- Kerala			

Wild animals kept in the parks and rehabilitation centres under the forest department of the state government in the district are dying due to various illnesses, raising concerns. At Neyyar Deer Park alone, 12 spotted deer died in the last one-and-a-half months while two lions died at Neyyar lion safari park in May. A four-member expert team of veterinary doctors of State Institute of Animal Diseases (SIAD) at Palode has been constituted to study the exact reasons for the death of deer. Though the death of lions were confirmed due to early stages of pneumonia and age-related ailments, the reasons for the death of spotted deer remain a mystery.

At the time of Covid pandemic, the deaths of deer have raised apprehensions among the forest officials. The average lifespan of deer is 20 years. But many of these were cases of premature deaths. Sadly, many other fawns have also died due to illnesses. Earlier, there was an assumption that the reason for the deer deaths was due to foot-and-mouth disease. Later, the veterinary doctors concluded that the deaths might have occurred due to "foot rot", an infectious disease. However, the study is in progress and the experts will soon submit a report to the forest department. At

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Disclaimer:- This is a media alert subject to verification.

**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

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present, the 8.5 acres of deer park at Vlavetty near Neyyar dam has 186 spotted deer.

According to the forest department, measures have been taken to prevent such deaths in the future. "The spotted deer are vulnerable to diseases. If any disease occurs, it may die soon. Above all, it has high rate of breeding. So recently we installed fencing to partition male and female deer. Similarly, we have instructed the deer park authorities to initiate hygienic measures to ensure that the deer are healthy. We also have plans to provide periodical treatment to the deer. At present, 10 deer are sick and the treatment process is on," said J R Ani, wildlife warden, Thiruvananthapuram. The deer park at Vlavetty was set up in 1995. Earlier, there was a deer park at Meenmutty. However, it was closed due to the rapid increase in the number of deer after releasing them into the forest. Meanwhile, the state forest department has written to the chief wildlife warden in Gujarat to bring one male and two female lions to the Lion Safari Park at Neyyar as its two lions, a 12-year-old male and 17-year-old female, died.

"We have written to the forest authorities in Gujarat to bring three lions to the Safari park. However, it is only in the preliminary stage. We hope the safari park will get lions in the near future," Ani added. At Kottur elephant rehabilitation centre too in the district, three elephants died of illnesses in the last one-and-a-half years.

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