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

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
5863	07.04.2020	07.04.2020	Madhya Pradesh	www.timesofindia.com/English https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bhopal/coronavirus-alert-for-tigers-comes-two-days-after-mystery-death-in-pench-tiger-reserve/articleshow/75020028.cms
Title:	Coronavirus alert for tigers comes two days after mystery death in Pench Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to SSU-Madhya Pradesh			

A day after TOI broke news of the mysterious death of a full-grown tiger in Pench Tiger Reserve -- with ravaged lungs and fatal respiratory distress -- the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and Central Zoo Authority (CZA) on Monday issued alerts to the chief wildlife warden of Madhya Pradesh and all other states over reports of Covid-19 infection in captive tigers in US.

The 10-year-old tiger died on the morning of April 4. T21 had been found unresponsive in a waterbody in Pench Reserve, and was injected with medicines through a dart. But it died the next morning. An autopsy yielded a football-sized hairball in its stomach, and its lungs were badly damaged, but there was no immediate clue to cause of death.

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

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एक कदम स्वच्छता की ओर

Experts don't believe Covid-19 is a risk in wild, Its viscera samples were preserved but couldn't be sent on tests due to the lockdown. On Monday, special arrangements were made to send the samples to a lab.

"We will discuss with vets on what steps need to be taken. As per standard procedures, it was to be sent to wildlife laboratory in Jabalpur for histopathological report, which includes tests for virus and poison," said Pench field director Vikram Singh Parihar.

Wildlife experts don't believe Covid-19 is a risk in the wild. "I don't think Covid-19 can infect our wild tigers. The US case is that of a zoo tiger, which has less immunity than those in the wild. The Pench tiger died of an infection and had a huge hairball inside of her. We have to examine whose hair it was. I remember the death of a male tiger in Pench due to porcupine needles. A kilo of needles were found in its stomach," said retired forest officer R P Soni, who has spent several years in Pench.

He advised zookeepers across MP to be cautious. "They come in contact with suppliers of meat and food," he pointed out.

Zoo authorities have put their staff on alert. "We were careful from the very beginning. Those supplying meat and food to the zoo are being allowed in with complete safety precautions. A separate slaughterhouse has been created for the zoo here," said Upendra Yadav, in charge of Gwalior zoo. Dr Vaibhav C Mathur, AIG-NTCA, and Dr S P Yadav, member secretary CZA, have issued separate advisories on the "world's first positive case of Coronavirus among tigers at Bronx on April 5, 2020".

"Owing to the communicable and zoonotic nature of the disease (covid-19), action needs to be taken to avert the disease among wild tigers in India," says Dr Mathur's letter.

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