

# Tiger found dead in Ranthambhore

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**JAIPUR:** Amid hullabaloo over the forthcoming wedding of British comedian Russell Brand and pop singer Katy Perry in the balmy environs of the world famous Ranthambhore National Park in Rajasthan, a young tiger from the Park was found dead in the adjoining Kuwalji reserve in Sawai Madhopur district on Friday. Officials of the State Forest Department attributed the death to territorial clashes between two young male tigers vying for space in the wild.

Perhaps for the milling crowd of some 200 scribes and camerapersons from India and abroad who are on round-the-clock vigil on the movements of the couple and the arriving guests in the resorts of Aman-i-Khas, Vanya Vilas and Sher Bagh located just outside the Park the tiger is a sub-plot. Six-day celebrations are planned to mark the much talked about marriage,

to be solemnized in Hindu tradition, which would be reportedly joined by celebrities including pop icon Rihanna.

The victim, identified as T-36, a male of about three years of age, seemingly came in confrontation with a slightly elder male, which led to its untimely death after a bloody clash. The surviving tiger is T-42, which entered the Kuwalji sanctuary only recently, while the deceased, along with his female sibling, had been living in the area for over a year.

A post-mortem conducted by a medical board comprising three veterinarians and two forensic experts revealed fractures on the neck, ribs, and on both the front legs of the tiger. A gaping injury was noticed on the hind portion of the animal. The death reportedly took place at least 48 hours before. "There were maggots on the carcass," one of the experts informed from Ranthambhore. "The post-mortem findings confirm the

territorial fight theory."

"It is a very unfortunate incident," said P.S. Somashekar, Chief Conservator Forests (Wildlife), Rajasthan, talking to *The Hindu*. "The death of this particular male tiger is more distressing for us as it was one of the two cubs rescued by our staff when their mother was killed in a similar fashion by a male tiger in September 2008. The cubs were of the age of about eight months that time and they survived miraculously," he said. "Normally once the mother dies survival becomes difficult for the tiger cubs in the wild."

"Every month we are losing one tiger, whatever may be the reason," lamented Mr. Singh. "The issue which needs immediate attention is the overcrowding of tigers in Ranthambhore Park," he said. "The Park has a carrying capacity of 30-32 tigers while we have a population of around 35-36 if the cubs are not be counted."