

# 2 tigers lost in red tape

APURVA

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TWO Ranthambore tigers cleared by the Ministry of Environment and Forests for translocation to the Sariska tiger reserve have landed the Rajasthan forest department in a fix — the tigers, designated T-37 and T-47, have been on the run from Ranthambore since January and are now said to have strayed nearly 100 km away.

As per forest records, the Ranthambore National Park has 40 tigers, cubs included,

but can sustain only 30 tigers.

In 2009, the Ministry decided to halt the translocation after reports that one tiger and two tigresses sent to Sariska may not have been compatible for breeding. The Ministry asked Rajasthan to wait for results of DNA tests on the Sariska tigers.

But on Wednesday, Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, responding to a question on the delay in translocation, assured the Rajasthan Assembly that efforts were on to move another pair to Sariska. "Two cats, T-37 and

T-47, have been chosen to be shifted and all efforts are on," Gehlot said.

R N Mehrotra, Rajasthan Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and Chief Wildlife Warden, said the two tigers cleared for translocation by the Ministry had strayed from the RNP more than a month ago.

"The MoEF gave permission for tigress T-37, which has been spotted in Kota, and tiger T-47, which is near Bharatpur, for translocation to Sariska," Mehrotra said. Five teams of forest officials are trailing the two cats.