

Tigress' radio collar found in jungle

ST/WS/CM-13

|| Statesman News Service



KOLKATA, 11 MARCH: A satellite radio-collar, which was fitted around the neck of a tigress, inhabiting the Sunderbans, a few days ago, was found near Pirakhali jungle in South 24-Parganas today.

A senior forest official said a tigress, that had strayed into an area near Pirakhali jungle, was trapped a few days ago. It was later tranquillised and the radio collar was fitted around its neck,

which helped officials track its movement.

The tigress was later released in the forest of the Sunderbans. But forest employees today found the radio collar in the jungle. Pug marks of a male tiger was also found in the nearby area.

The senior forest official added they suspect that the male tiger may have been instrumental in taking out the radio collar of the tigress during mating. The pinna of the tigress may have even bitten off by the tiger.

The new collars have been specially designed to withstand the salinity and the rugged terrain of the mangrove forest.

Scientists of Wild Life Institute, Dehra Dun have developed the new technology as in earlier cases radio collar stopped

functioning in less than four months.

Though forest official have decided that more big cats of the Sunderbans will be fitted with the new devices, they are thinking of modifying these devices. Radio collar is a very essential tracking system, as it is also an essential method for tiger census along with DNA test and the spotting of the pugmarks.

Mr Subrat Mukherjee, field director, Sunderban Tiger Reserve (STR), however, said there are 17 recorded cases of radio collars being taken out by tiger across the country, so it is a good find for them.

The forest department will also start trapping tigers and those will be fitted with radio collars from 21 March.