

Poisoned goats used to kill tigers

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Jaipur: A day after two tiger cubs were found poisoned to death on the outskirts of Ranthambore National Park, forest officials arrested two persons for killing them. The accused have allegedly confessed to their crime.

According to officials, the two — Ram Khilari Gujjar and Mukesh Gujjar — are residents of nearby Bhowpur village and were arrested on Sunday night.

"The day after Holi, the tigers killed a goat belonging to

the accused. This prompted the accused to set up a trap for killing the tigers," said an official.

"The duo went to a place called Khandar and picked up some Aldrin, a powerful pesticide often used by people to commit suicide. They then coated a goat with the poison and tied it below a tree. Another was hoisted atop the tree after injecting it with the pesticide so that the smell of the cattle spreads and attracts the tigers," he added.

Eventually, the tigers were



drawn towards the goats and both died while feasting on them. However, forest officials are yet to recover the samples of the pesticide and syringes used for the purpose.

"We want to get these samples so that we can produce

them as evidence in court," the official added.

Meanwhile, the forest department has begun chalking out steps to prevent the recurrence of such incidents. The plans will be submitted before the committee probing the killing of tigers.

"I have given a suggestion to set up one more range at Talra with sufficient men posted there. Besides, we are also looking at offering some compensation for villagers whose livestock were harmed by the tigers so that they stay away from

killing tigers," said RN Mehrotra, chief wildlife warden, Rajasthan.

"But at the end of it, people have to understand that they cannot just walk away after killing tigers. The government has excellent schemes for compensating them. All they have to do is to report such incidents to us and we will promptly compensate them. In fact, even the minister for forests, Ram Lal Jat, had personally appealed to people sometime back to stay away from killing animals. And it is only when that happens

will the big cats be totally safe," he added.

Officials are also planning to speed up the construction of a boundary wall around the forest area under NREGS. "The issue has been pending for some time. Now the minister has also taken an interest in it. Besides, it is a demand from the people living on the fringes of the park as it will prevent animals from entering their farms and destroying their crop. We hope to speed it up besides deputing some more guards," said an official.