

NAME OF PUBLICATION

THE PIONEER

PLACE OF PUBLICATION

NEW DELHI

DATE OF PUBLICATION

37 APR 2010

Kaziranga National Park has **highest tiger population**

Sanat K Chakraborty ■ Guwahati

Assam's famous Kaziranga National Park is said to have the highest tiger population density in the country.

There are at least 30 Royal Bengal tigers on every 100 sq km area of its habitat in the KNP, a survey jointly carried out by the Assam forest department and Aaranyak, a wildlife research and conservation group, indicated.

"This is a major finding — the status of tiger density — since the new camera-trapping technique has been

employed in finding out tiger population in the Kaziranga and other national parks that have tigers," said M Firoj Ahmed, a wildlife biologist and coordinator of the collaborative project on Tiger.

The final result of the joint survey, which is being compiled now, will soon be made public, he said.

A good number of tigers were also captured in camera in the Orang national park, about 60 km northwest of Kaziranga. Between April and July 2008, the researchers had deployed over 50 cameras in 26 sites across 78.80 sq km

Has at least 30 Royal Bengal tigers on every 100 sq km

of the park and tracked at least seven tigers.

However, researchers believe Kaziranga landscape has much better tiger density considering its 'very good prey base' and highly-favourable 'habitat parameters' for tigers. They believe Kaziranga may have close to 100 tigers.

The camera-trapping technique was introduced at Manas National park in Assam in 2005 for monitoring tiger population dynamics with support of Rufford

Maurice Laing Foundation and David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation of United Kingdom.

The collaborative works have generated new information on tiger population status in Assam, which is extremely valuable for monitoring and long-term tiger conservation planning in the State.

"We are developing a unique tool called Tiger Informatics through Geospatial and Ecological Research (TIGER) for long-

term monitoring of tigers," Firoj told *The Pioneer*. He said the tool would enable researchers to make a profile of individual tigers and effectively monitor its population.

Recently, during his visit to the Kaziranga National park, Union Minister for Environment and Forest Jairam Ramesh while reviewing the management of the park highlighted the need for augmenting infrastructure and professional capabilities of the park personnel.

