



Tiger boundaries

A turned-away tiger complains to the Supreme Court. [Ashish Kothari](#) reports on this strange case from the Maharashtra-Madhya Pradesh border

☒ In a first case of its kind case, but one that many conservationists fear will become commonplace, a tiger from Panna National Park (Maharashtra) was last week refused entry into the Panna National Park (Madhya Pradesh). The victim of this discrimination has filed a case in the Supreme Court of India, through its counsels in the Wildlife Protection Society of Hindustan (WPSH). She has complained that though she has been frequently going back and forth between the two parks, this time around she was told to turn back by Panna (MP)'s tigers, who asked her to show her ID card, and said that only those issued Panna (MP) IDs could henceforth be allowed in. This follows a move by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) to issue IDs to all tigers in India. The petitioner has named not only the Panna (MP) tigers as violating her rights, but also the NTCA for making such violation possible through its ID scheme.

Acting quickly in her support, the Vidarbha units of the Maharashtra Nazi Samiti (MNS) and Sieve Sena (SS) have filed a supplementary affidavit arguing that their state's tigers had full right to go into neighbouring states, or indeed into neighbouring countries, continents and planets if they so wished. It is learnt that the Pashus for Universal Citizenship and Liberty (PUCL) plans to file a counter-affidavit calling the MNS and SS hypocrites, pointing out that just the other month they had announced they would not allow anyone other than Marathi-manus and Marathi-pashu to come into Maharashtra.

Meanwhile, cattle of both states, united under the Can-graze Party, issued a resolution that tigers not be allowed to move anywhere outside the national parks assigned to them. One of the demands was that tigers that stray out be identified as terrorists and booked under the National Security Act. A congregation of wild ungulates, represented by the Deer Madhyabharat Kingdom (DMK) was reported to be confused about whether to support this stand, because though they agreed that tigers were terrorists (and not only those that went outside parks), they did not want to show solidarity with domestic livestock that competed with them for grass and water. A section of co-existentialist deer were last heard arguing that livestock did not in fact constitute an

incompatible competitor, and therefore they should all join hands against their joint tormentor.

Asked his expert opinion, famous environmental lawyer Raja Panja said the aggrieved tiger had a strong case. The Constitution of India allows all its citizens the right of free movement anywhere in the country (other than into the PMO, Indian parliament, all army establishments, most VIP zones, three-fourths of the offices of district collectors (on a rotational basis), and, if barefoot, Mumbai's Willingdon Club). So the MP tigers were wrong in stopping their Maharashtra sister.

Wildlife expert Khallas Current concurred with this view, stating that back-and-forth and various other kinds of movements were crucial to maintain the exchange of jeans, otherwise tiger fashion would stagnate. He was critical of the MNS and SS, and wanted the author to use this article to send them a message: 'Levis and let Levis'.

An obscure NGO named Clubvriksh was heard claiming that the entire problem was a result of the NTCA initiating its ID scheme without consulting with the country's tigers, tigerwallas (and wallis), and the local communities living in tiger-bearing areas.

Meanwhile the Cat Party of India (CPI) appeared to have been thrown into disarray, as its politburo was split neatly into two on the matter. The Cat Party of Mid-India-Leopardist (CPM-L) however was faring better; it was readying an affidavit arguing that the only resolution of the tiger vs tiger conflict was a tiger-free peace zone between the two Pannas. Obviously, though it was not saying so openly, the CPM-L saw in this the great prospect of a leopard-dominated zone. The National Cat Party (NCP), once very pawar-ful but now weakened by defections to the CPI and CPM-L, was maintaining a sullen silence.

The issue could snowball into a massive headache for the central Ministry of Environment vs Forests (MoEF). A number of other species are contemplating writing to MoEF asking for similar ID schemes or conversely, expressing concern about them. The Gujarati Lions Club has already sent a flurry of emanations ... sorry, emails ... demanding Gujarati IDs so they would once and for all be rid of the relocation sword hanging on their heads. With such IDs, they would be mercifully refused entry into Madhya Pradesh where the central government had readied, without seeking their prior informed consent, a new home at Palpur Kuno. The Bhalu's Jaunty Party (BJP) was likely to demand IDs, in the hope that this might help unite their warring factions when they see their essential one-ness as bears. The Elephants' Guild of India (EGI) was however undecided, not wanting to get into a situation where their inter-state movement was hampered. The Birds Salvation Party (BSP) was examining various relevant statues, I beg your pardon, statutes, to work out a position. The Reptilian

Jaago Dal (RJD) said they did not want IDs as it would make it tough to hide in the fodder. And so on.

Rumour has it that the Prime Minister's Office was going to ask Misinfosis founder NRN Murky to devise a unique barcode ID for each animal, which, however, did not contain its residential details. This could reduce discrimination such as what the Maharashtra tiger encountered. However, this author could not confirm this with Mr Murky, as none of the telephone directory services seemed to have his identity. We could only get a quote from rival Shutyam's B Ramalingu Fraudju, who from his prison-cell said, somewhat unkindly, that Mr Murky would only use the opportunity to increase his sher-holders.

The tiger case is not likely to be resolved by the Supreme Court anytime soon, especially since the matter had been referred to the Centrally Empawed Committee. Aware of this, the petitioner is believed to have simultaneously approached one of Nagpur's expert forgers, to make her a Panna (MP) ID. (Indeed there is now a thriving blackmarket in tiger IDs, but that's the subject of another investigative story, watch this space). Armed with two IDs, and most of her teeth and claws (missing only the ones that she lost in fighting the brute fellow who had first stopped her from crossing over), she hopes that she will once again be able to roam freely.

Ashish Kothari is with the NGO Clubvriksh, and hopes this article will pull it out of obscurity.

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