



सत्यमेव जयते
Government of India



Media Scanning & Verification Cell



Media alert from the Media Scanning & Verification Cell, IDSP-NCDC.

Alert ID	Publication Date	Reporting Date	Place Name	News Source/Publication Language
5794	24.02.2020	24.02.2020	Alipurduar West Bengal	Hindustan Times English Newspaper 24th February, 2020/Page No. 08
Title:	Anthrax kills five one-horned rhinos at Jaidapara National Parkadline in district Alipurduar, West Bengal			
Action By CSU, IDSP -NCDC	Information communicated to DSU-Alipurduar, SSU-West Bengal			

The authorities have suspended elephant safaris at West Bengal's Jaldapara National Park until Wednesday following the death of five one-horned rhinoceroses of anthrax since Tuesday last to allow them to carry out a vaccination drive against the infectious bacterial disease.

Anthrax primarily impacts herbivores animals and humans can contract the disease directly or indirectly from animals or animal products.

A forest official, who did not wish to be named, said they have identified a 7 sq km area in the park's core zone where the disease has spread. "There are around 13 rhinos in that area. We have started vaccinating all of them. Till Saturday morning five [rhinos] have been vaccinated."

The park, which is spread over around 200 sq km in the foothills of the eastern Himalayas, is known for its one-horned rhinos. It has the highest rhino population-- 230--after Assam's Kaziranga National Park. The park also has 78 trained captive elephants, which are used for safaris and patrolling.

Save Water- Save Life, Save a tree- Don't print unless it's really necessary!

Disclaimer:- This is a media alert subject to verification.

**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

22-Sham Nath Marg, Delhi - 110 054

For more information please contact: Media Scanning & Verification Cell: - Phone (011)23946029

Email: - idsp-msc@nic.in, idsp-npo@nic.in

Join us on



<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Media-Scanning-Verification-Cell-IDSPNCDC/137297949672921>

twitter

<https://twitter.com/MSVC1>



The vaccination drive was started after the blood and tissue samples of the dead rhinos tested positive for anthrax. "To date, five rhinos have died. We are taking all measures to contain the disease..." said West Bengal's chief wildlife warden, Ravi Kant Sinha.

Officials said tourism would not be affected as the anthrax outbreak is restricted to the park's core area, which is deep inside and far away from the tourist zone. They added there was no need to vaccinate all the rhinos.

Officials were using captive elephants to reach the affected area and vaccinate the rhinos from a distance with the help of dart guns. They have also deployed drones to find out if any other animals have died or taken fallen ill.

Chief forest conservator Ujjwal Ghosh said the suspension of elephant safaris will allow them to vaccinate captive elephants against anthrax. "Every day around four to five elephants, each carrying four persons, would take tourists inside the forest at least three times daily. This has been stopped till Wednesday. ...the elephants are being vaccinated against anthrax and would need some rest. We would also need additional elephants for sanitizing the area and to gear up our patrolling," said Ghosh. He added jeep safaris were being allowed inside the park.

Officials said it was too early to say how the disease spread and they were yet to ascertain whether the source was cattle from adjoining villages that often graze inside the park, where rhino deaths were reported in 1993 following another anthrax outbreak.

"The local panchayat, animal resources development department and the district administration should join hands to vaccinate cattle in the adjacent villages before the problem takes a serious shape," said Animesh Bose of the Himalayan Nature and Adventure Foundation, an NGO.

Save Water- Save Life, Save a tree- Don't print unless it's really necessary!

Disclaimer:- This is a media alert subject to verification.

**Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP), National Centre for Disease Control,
Ministry Of Health & Family Welfare, Government of India**

22-Sham Nath Marg, Delhi – 110 054

For more information please contact: Media Scanning & Verification Cell: - Phone (011)23946029

Email: - idspsc@nic.in, idsppnpo@nic.in

Join us on



<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Media-Scanning-Verification-Cell-IDSPNCDC/137297949672921>

twitter

<https://twitter.com/MSVC1>

