

KUNO CHEETAH CAPTURED AFTER 22-DAY SEARCH OPERATION

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August 13, 2023 10:19 pm | Updated August 14, 2023 02:06 am IST - Sheopur:

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The cheetah, Nirva, was caught around 10 a.m. in the Dhoret range of the Kuno National Park. File image for representation. | Photo Credit: The Hindu

A South African female cheetah that went untraceable in the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district since her radio collar stopped working on July 21, was captured on Sunday after a 22-day search operation, officials said.

The cheetah, Nirva, was caught around 10 a.m. in the Dhoret range of the Kuno National Park (KNP), after which a health check-up was conducted on her, they said.

An intense search for the female feline was on for the last 22 days after her radio collar stopped functioning on July 21, a release issued by the Chief Wildlife Warden of the Madhya Pradesh Forest department said.

More than 100 field staff, including officers, veterinarians and cheetah trackers were searching for the spotted cat day and night, it said.

Besides the team on ground, two drone teams, one dog squad and available elephants were deployed in the search operation.

In addition to this, local villagers were informed about Nirva.

Nirva is healthy and has been kept inside a *boma* (enclosure) for a further health check-up, the release added.

All 15 cheetahs (seven males, seven females and one female cub) at the KNP are now kept in *bomas*. They are healthy and continuously being monitored on health parameters by Kuno's team of veterinarians, it said.

Under the Cheetah Reintroduction Project, eight Namibian cheetahs — five female and three male — were released into enclosures at the KNP on September 17 last year. In February, 12 more cheetahs arrived at the KNP from South Africa.

In March this year, four cubs were born to a Namibian cheetah named Jwala, but three of them

died in May.

Since March, six of the adult cheetahs have died due to various reasons, taking the total death count of felines, including three cubs, to nine.

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