

Summary

When Maharaja Jilani Jung Jung Bahadur was born, the astrologers had foretold that one day, the king would have to die. Suddenly, the ten-day-old prince started speaking; he told them that all those who were born would have to die one day. He asked them to tell the manner of his death. Everyone stood stunned as an infant born just ten days ago was talking in such a manner. The chief astrologer told the Prince that he was born in the hour of the bull. As bull and tiger were enemies, therefore, his death would come from a tiger.

The Maharaja grew stronger and took to tiger hunting. He was overjoyed when he killed the first tiger. When he told the chief astrologer about it, the chief astrologer told him that he may kill 99 tigers, but he must be careful with the hundredth one. In ten years,

he killed 70 tigers. He banned the killing of tigers in Pratibandapuram. The tiger population became extinct at Pratibandapuram. So the Maharaja married into a royal family in a state where tiger population was high. Thus, he killed 99 tigers but one was still left. There was no sign of tigers anywhere. Maharaja could not bear this any more. He raised the land tax and also dismissed some of his men. Later, a tiger was brought for the Maharaja. Maharaja took his men for hunting. He shot the tiger but missed it. Since the tiger fainted on hearing the shot, the Maharaja did not realise that he had not killed the tiger. Maharaja's men knew it but they feared that if they tell it to Maharaja, then they may lose their job, so they killed the tiger. But the Maharaja did not know that he still had one tiger left to kill. Free from the threat of imminent death, the Maharaja had now decided to celebrate his three-year-old son's birthday. He gifted him a wooden tiger. The tiger was made by an unskilled man. Its surface was rough, as a result, a splinter pierced into Maharaja's hand. The infection spread into his whole hand and the Maharaja died.

Thus, ironically, the fateful hundredth tiger, though a wooden one, was the cause of the Maharaja's death and proved the prediction of the astrologer correct.