

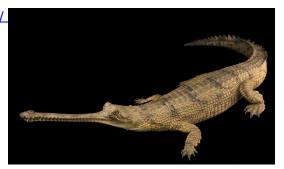
## **Gharials**

### Why in News

The **Assam government** has issued a preliminary notification to make **Orang National Park** more than thrice its existing size **for conserving Gharials.** 

## **Key Points**

About: //



- Gharials, **sometimes called gavials**, are a type of Asian crocodilian distinguished by their long, thin snouts.
  - Crocodilians are a group of reptiles that includes crocodiles, alligators, caimans, and more.
- India has three species of Crocodilians namely:
  - Gharial (Gavialis gangeticus): IUCN Red List- Critically Endangered
  - Mugger crocodile (Crocodylus palustris): IUCN- Vulnerable.
  - Saltwater crocodile (Crocodylus porosus): IUCN- Least Concern.
    - All the three are listed on **Appendix I of CITES** and **Schedule I of the** Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972.
    - Exception: Saltwater Crocodile populations of Australia, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea are included in Appendix II of CITES.
- Habitat of Gharials:
  - Natural Habitat: Fresh waters of the northern part of India.
  - **Primary Habitat: Chambal river** (a tributary of Yamuna).
  - **Secondary Habitat:** Ghagra, Gandak river, Girwa river (Uttar Pradesh), the Ramganga river (Uttarakhand) and the Sone river (Bihar).
- **Significance:** Population of Gharials are a good indicator of clean river water.
- Conservation Efforts:
  - Kukrail Gharial Rehabilitation Centre in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, National Chambal Sanctuary (Gharial Eco Park, Madhya Pradesh).
- Threats:
  - Increased river pollution, dam construction, massive-scale fishing operations and floods.

• Illegal sand mining and poaching.

#### **Orang National Park**

- The Orang National Park also known as **Rajiv Gandhi Orang National Park** is located on the north bank of the **Brahmaputra River in the Darrang and Sonitpur districts of Assam** and covers an area of 78.81 square kilometers.
- It was established as a wildlife sanctuary in 1985 but was declared as a National Park in 1999. It is also the 49<sup>th</sup> Tiger Reserve of the country, being notified in 2016.
- It is also known as the mini <u>Kaziranga National Park</u> since the two parks have a similar landscape made up of marshes, streams, and grasslands.
- It is the only stronghold of rhinoceros on the north bank of the Brahmaputra river.

#### Other Protected Areas in Assam

- Dibru-Saikhowa National Park,
- Manas National Park,
- Nameri National Park,
- Kaziranga National Park.
- Dehing Patkai and Raimona National Parks
- Barnadi Wildlife Sanctuary



# **7 NATIONAL PARKS IN ASSAM**

• 6th : Raimona National Park (Notified in 2021)

• 7th : Dihing Patkai National Park (Notified in June 2021)

**Source: TH** 

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