



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 **49th Tiger Reserve** of the country, being notified in 2016.
- It is also known as the **mini Kaziranga National Park** 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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