



Maharashtra's Tiger Count

Why in News?

Maharashtra Forest Minister stated that the **State's tiger population** had **risen to 444 in 2025 from 101 in 2000**. He attributed the rise in **man-animal conflicts**, including fatal attacks on humans, to the increasing tiger population.

Key Points

- **Proposal for Animal Museum in Maharashtra:**
 - The Forest Minister stated that he had written to businessman **Anant Ambani, founder of the non-profit Vantara**, to establish an **"animal museum" in Maharashtra**.
 - He also **mentioned plans to approve the creation of a museum modeled after similar initiatives in Gujarat**, where businesspersons could contribute to setting up such a facility.
- **Human-Animal Conflict:**
 - The Minister highlighted the increasing incidents of **tiger attacks on humans**.
 - The **concerns about the safety of farmers living near forested areas**, including those close to **the wildlife sanctuary in Bhandara** was raised.
 - It was pointed out that tiger attacks have created fear among farmers and also led to crop destruction.
- **Government's Response to the Crisis:**
 - The Forest Minister clarified that **the tigress's two-year-old cub had attacked humans** and assured that it would soon be captured.
 - He announced that the government had **approved Rs 200 crore for solar fencing** in villages near tiger zones.
 - He also assured that the Forest Department was implementing necessary measures to prevent further incidents.
 - The government had **introduced a policy change**, ensuring that farmers would pay only a nominal sum for solar fencing.
 - Instructed authorities to fence villages near forests at no charge to enhance protection.

HUMAN-WILDLIFE CONFLICT



When encounters between humans and wildlife lead to negative results, such as loss of property, livelihoods, and even life

Causes of HWC

- Agricultural Expansion
- Urbanization
- Infrastructure Development
- Climate Change
- Wildlife Populations Growth and Range Expansion

Impacts of HWC

- Grave injuries, Loss of life
- Damage to farms and crops
- ↑ violence against animals

WWF India during 2003-2004 developed the Sonitpur Model by which community members were connected with Assam Forest Dept and given training on how to drive elephants away from crop fields and human habitations safely.

In 2020, the SC upheld Madras HC's decision on the Nilgiris elephant corridor, affirming the right of passage of the animals and closure of resorts in the area.

Data on HWC

- Tigers killed 125 humans between 2019 and 2021
- Death of 329 tigers due to poaching, natural and unnatural causes.
- Elephants killed 1,579 humans in three years
- Death of 307 elephants due to poaching, electrocution, poisoning and train accidents

Advisory for HWC Management (Standing Committee of the National Board of Wildlife)

- Gram Panchayats empowered to deal with problematic wild animals (WPA 1972)
- Compensation against crop damage due to HWC (PM Fasal Bima Yojna)
- Local/State depts. to adopt early warning systems and create barriers
- Paying a part of ex-gratia as interim relief within 24 hours of the incident to the victim/family

State – Specific Initiatives

- **UP** - Man-animal conflict under **listed disasters** (in State Disaster Response Fund)
- **Uttarakhand** - **Bio-fencing** carried out by growing various species of plants in areas
- **Odisha** - Casting **seed balls** inside different forests to **enrich food stock for wild elephants**

