



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](#)

