



Elephant Colony in Bandhavgarh

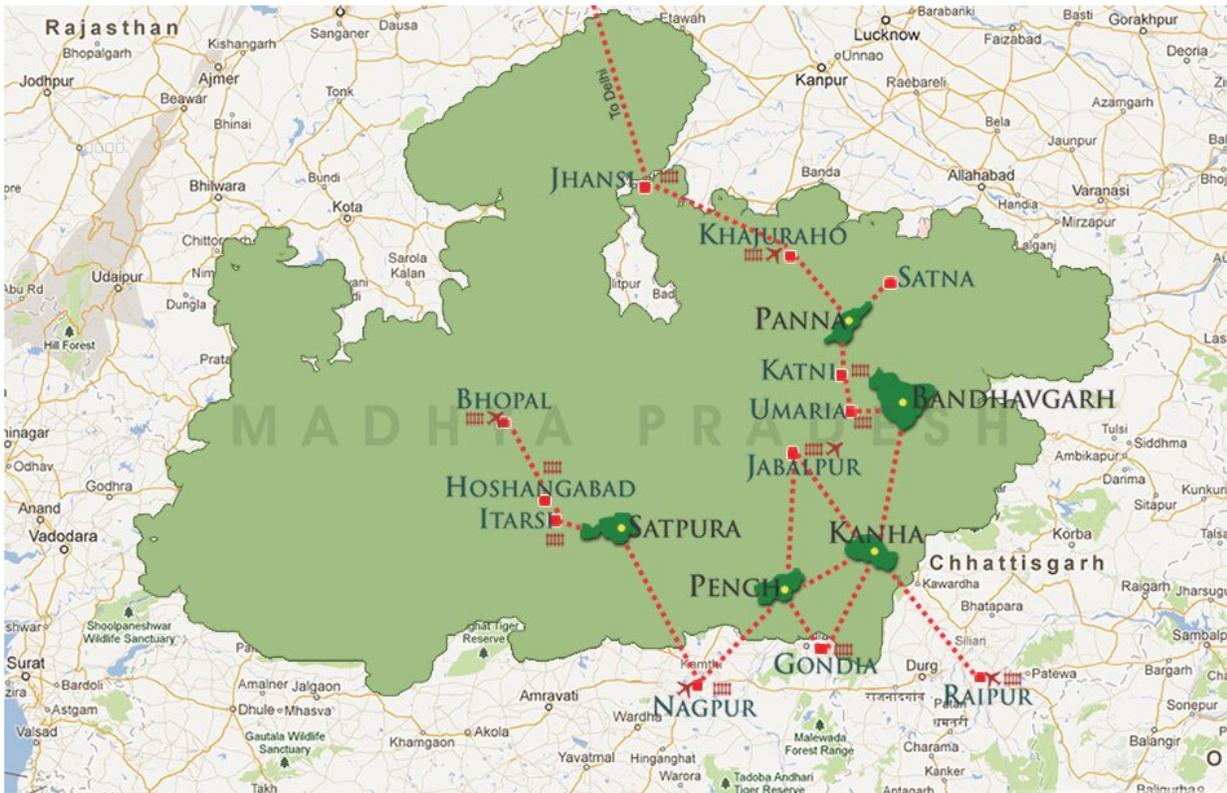
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Why in News

For the first time, **Bandhavgarh Reserve forest** located in Madhya Pradesh (MP), has a colony of elephants who migrated from Chhattisgarh in November 2018 and has stayed on. Bandhavgarh is a **large reserve forest** that has plenty of food and water which is the possible reason for this migration and stay.

Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve

- In **1968**, it was notified as a national park and in **1993** was declared a **tiger reserve** under the Project Tiger Network at the neighbouring **Panpatha Sanctuary**.
- **Historical Significance:** Its mention can be found in the ancient books of the '**Narad Pancharatra**' and the '**Shiv Purana**' that this place is being associated with Ramayana.
 - The **Bandhavgarh Fort** is a great masterpiece of "**Treta Yuga**" (one of the ages of mankind in Hinduism).
 - It was ruled by major dynasties including **Sengars, the Kalchuris, and the Baghels** (believed to rule the regions for the longer period).
- **Geographical Aspect:** It resides on the extreme north eastern border of Madhya Pradesh and the northern edges of the **Satpura mountain ranges**.
 - **Climate: Tropical monsoon climatic zone.**
 - **Streams:** The whole park is filled with **more than 20 streams** out of which some of the most important streams are **Johilla, Janadh, Charanganga, Damnar, Banbei, Ambanala and Andhiyari Jhiria**. These streams then **merge into the Son river** (an important southern tributary to the **river Ganga**).
- **Biodiversity:** There is a large number of **tigers in the core zone**. There are more than 22 species of mammals and 250 species of birds.
 - Species Found:** Asiatic Jackal, Bengal Fox, Sloth Bear, Striped Hyena, Leopard and Tiger, Wild Pigs, Nilgai, Chinkara and **Gaur** (a herbivore and the only coarse feeder).



Note:

- Elephant is a **Schedule-1 species** as listed under the **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972**.
- While India is home to 50% of the **Asian Elephant population**, and according to **2017 elephant census**, there are 27,312 elephants in the country, marking a decrease of nearly 3,000 elephants from the 2012 census.
- The **'Tiger State' of MP**, which in the 2019 census recorded the **most number of estimated tigers** at 526, presently has no know-how of dealing with elephants.
- There are **no elephants in MP** and there is **no known reason** for this disappearance from India's central region, including MP and until a few years ago Chhattisgarh. A loss of **habitat** could have led to this problem.
 - But growing **urbanisation and deforestation** in other elephants residing areas, such as West Bengal and Jharkhand, could now be pushing the animals westwards (i.e, in MP).
 - In October 2019, the Union Ministry for Environment, Forests and Climate Change constituted a technical committee to develop a **National Elephant Action Plan**.
 - Although there is extensive forest cover, relying of elephants on crops makes **human-elephant conflict** inevitable.

Source: TH