

Black Panther in Achanakmar Tiger Reserve | Chhattisgarh | 01 Aug 2024

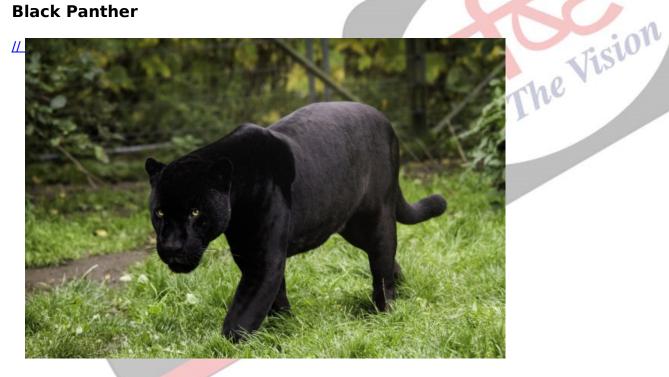
Why in News?

Recently, a rare black panther has been sighted in the Achanakmar tiger reserve (ATR) in Bilaspur district in Chhattisgarh.

Key Points

- The presence of the black panther in ATR was confirmed during the tiger census in 2022.
- The fourth phase of survey for the tiger count in the ATR has indicated the presence of ten tigers in the reserve forest, seven females and three males.

Black Panther



About:

- Leopards (Panthera Pardus) are either light colored (pale yellow to deep gold or tawny) with black rosettes or with black fur.
- The melanistic leopards, which are either all-black or very dark in coloration, are known as black panthers. It is a color variant of spotted Indian leopards, reported from densely forested areas of south India.
- Black coat coloration is **attributed to the expression of recessive alleles** in leopards and dominant alleles in jaguars. In each species, a certain combination of alleles stimulates the production of large amounts of the dark pigment melanin (Melanism) in the animal's fur and skin.
 - The appearance of a black coat may be influenced by other factors, such as the angle of incident light and the animal's life stage.

- Habitat:
 - They are mainly in **Southwestern China, Burma, Nepal, Southern India, Indonesia**, and the southern part of **Malaysia.**
 - In India they can be spotted in the states of Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala,
 - Maharashtra etc.
- Threats:
 - Habitat loss.
 - Collision with vehicles.
 - Diseases.
 - Human encroachment.
 - Poaching.
- Protection Status:
 - IUCN Red List: Vulnerable.
 - <u>CITES</u>: Appendix I
 - Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972: Schedule I

Achanakmar Tiger Reserve

- It is situated in Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh. Established in 1975 and was declared a tiger reserve in 2009.
- It is part of the huge Achanakmar-Amarkantak Biosphere Reserve.
- It has a corridor connecting <u>Kanha</u> and <u>Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve</u> and plays a critical role in the dispersal of tigers among these reserves.
- River:
 - The **Maniyari River** flows right from the centre of this reserve, which is the forest's lifeline.
- Tribe:
 - It is home to the Baigas, a forest-dwelling tribal community classified as a "<u>Particularly</u> <u>Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG)".</u>
 - In 626 hectares of the core area of the reserve, there are 25 forest villages, with approximately 75% of the population belonging to the <u>Baiga tribe.</u>
- Vegetation:
 - Tropical moist deciduous vegetation covers the majority of the area.
- Flora:
 - Sal, bija, saja, haldu, teak, tinsa, dhawara, lendia, khamar, and bamboo bloom along with other 600 species of medicinal plants.
- Fauna:
 - It includes the tiger, leopard, bison, flying squirrel, Indian giant squirrel, chinkara, wild dog, hyena, sambar, chital, and over 150 species of birds.

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