



Increase Tiger Numbers in Valmiki Tiger Reserve

Source: DTE

Why In News?

Recently, the [National Tiger Conservation Authority \(NTCA\)](#) had officially announced the increase in [tiger](#) population in **Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR)**.

- It witnessed the growth in the number of big cats from **31 (2018)** to **54 (2023)**.
- The **Bihar government** is waiting to obtain **NTCA** approval for declaring **Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary** as the **state's second tiger reserve** after VTR.

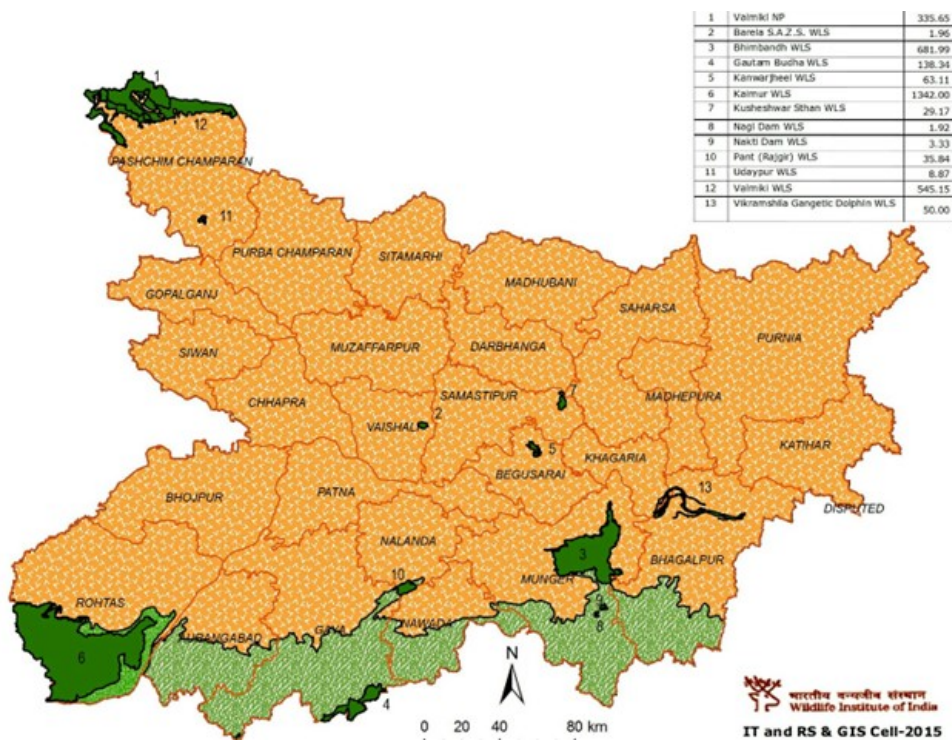
Why Has the Number of Tigers in VTR Increased?

- A total ban on **sand and stone mining** inside **VTR**, and strict restrictions on **mining** in its **eco-sensitive zone**, helped increase **grassland cover**.
- An **increase in grassland cover** thus helps in supporting the **prey population**, in turn increasing the chances of the carnivores' survival.
- The reserve is dedicated to managing and sustaining the tiger population **by raising awareness among local residents** and monitoring mining activities in and around the area **to minimize human-wildlife conflict**.
- The **NTCA** placed the reserve in the **'Very Good'** category.

What are the Important Facts of Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR)?

- The **VTR** is the **only tiger reserve** in **Bihar**, which forms the easternmost extent of the **Himalayan Terai forests** in India.
 - The **VTR** is located in **Bihar's West Champaran district**, bordering **Nepal** to its **north** and **Uttar Pradesh** to its **west**.
- Situated in the **Gangetic plains bio-geographic region**, the vegetation of this Tiger Reserve is a combination of **Bhabar** and **Terai regions**.
- According to the **Forest Survey of India Report 2021**, **85.71%** of its total area is covered by forest cover.
- Wild mammals found in the forests of **Valmiki Tiger Reserve** include **tiger, sloth bear, leopard, wild dog, bison, wild boar** etc.
- **Rivers Gandak, Pandai, Manor, Harha, Masan and Bhapsa** flow through various parts of the reserve.

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What is the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)?

▪ About:

- **National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** is a **statutory body** under the **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change**.
- It was established in **2005** following the recommendations of the **Tiger Task Force**.
- It was constituted under enabling provisions of the [Wildlife \(Protection\) Act, 1972](#), as amended in **2006**, for **strengthening tiger conservation**, as per powers and functions assigned to it.

▪ Objectives:

- Providing **statutory authority** to [Project Tiger](#) so that compliance of its directives becomes legal.
- Fostering **accountability** of **Center-State** in management of **Tiger Reserves**, by providing a basis for **MoU** with States within our federal structure.
- Providing for an **oversight by Parliament**.
- Addressing livelihood interests of local people in areas surrounding Tiger Reserves.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q1. Consider the following protected areas: (2012)

1. Bandipur
2. Bhitarkanika
3. Manas
4. Sunderbans

Which of the above are declared Tiger Reserves?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
 (b) 1, 3 and 4 only
 (c) 2, 3 and 4 only
 (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Ans: (b)

Q2. From the ecological point of view, which one of the following assumes importance in being a good link between the Eastern Ghats and the Western Ghats? (2017)

- (a) Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve
- (b) Nallamala Forest
- (c) Nagarhole National Park
- (d) Seshachalam Biosphere Reserve

Ans: (a)

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