

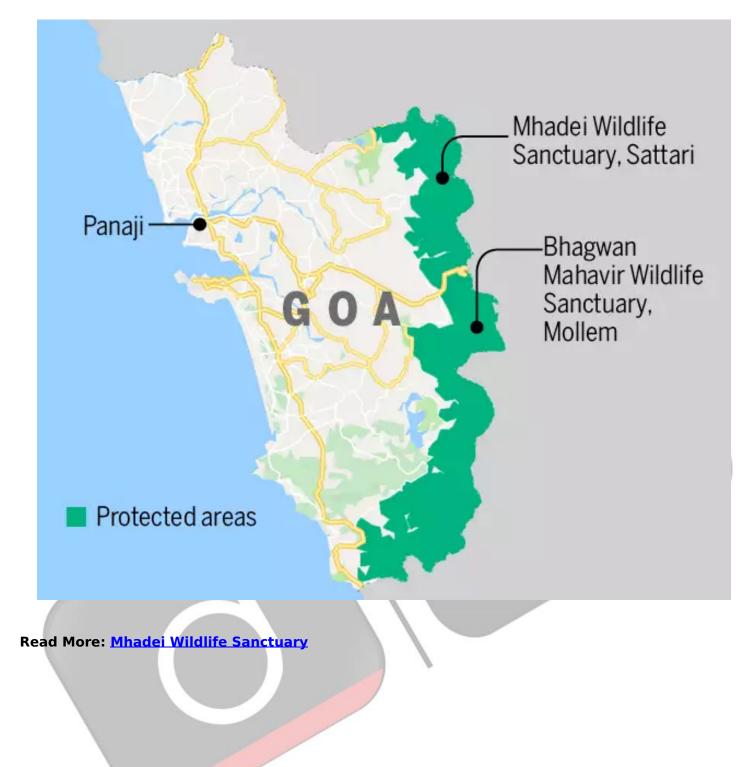
Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary

Source: HT

Recently, an **adult tigress** and **three cubs** were spotted in the <u>Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary (WLS)</u>, **Goa** for the first time since 2020.

- Location and Geography:
 - WLS is located near the **Chorla Ghat**, situated between North Goa and Belgavi. It borders both Maharashtra and Karnataka.
 - The Mhadei River flows through this sanctuary.
- Ecological Significance:
 - Mhadei WLS, along with other protected areas in Goa like Mollem National Park, forms part of the <u>Western Ghats</u>. This region is globally renowned for hosting the **world's largest** tiger population.
 - The sanctuary plays a vital role in a network of wildlife corridors that connect tiger populations across the Sahyadri Tiger Reserve (Maharashtra) and the <u>Kali Tiger</u> <u>Reserve</u> (Karnataka).
- Unique Flora and Fauna:
 - Notably, Vazra Falls in Mhadei WLS serves as a nesting ground for critically endangered <u>Long-billed vultures</u>, underscoring the sanctuary's importance for avian conservation.
- Conservation Status and Recommendations:
 - Goa stands as the **only state in India to have its entire portion of the Western Ghats** under state protection, with Mhadei WLS being a critical part of this area.
 - Previously, the <u>National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)</u> recommended the designation of Mhadei WLS as a tiger reserve under the <u>Wildlife Protection Act, 1972</u>, to enhance conservation efforts for the tiger population in this unique region.

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