



## Rapid Fire Current Affairs

### Muggers of Rapti

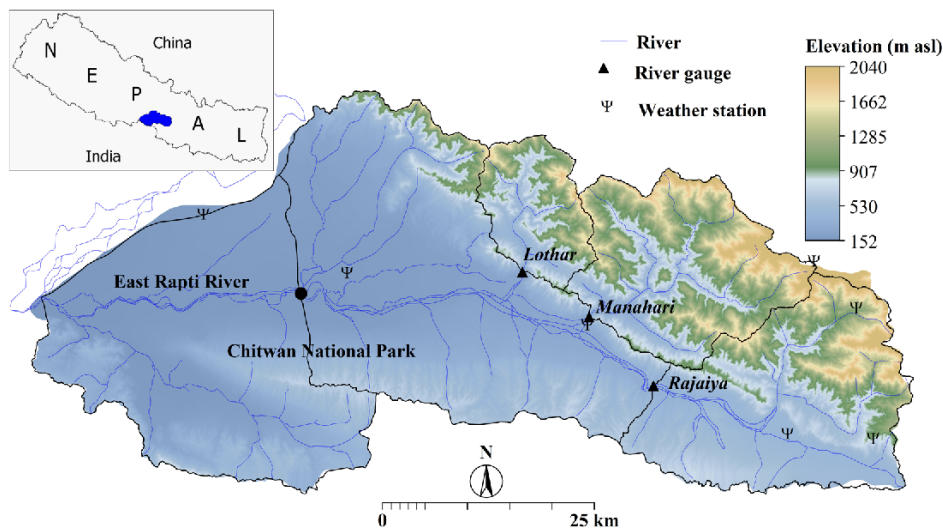


As per the recent study, **anthropogenic threats like illegal fishing and sand mining pose a threat to the mugger crocodiles (*Crocodylus plaustris*)** of the Rapti river flowing along the **Chitwan National Park (CNP)** in south-central Nepal, contiguous to the **Valmiki Tiger Reserve in Bihar (only tiger reserve of the state)**.

CNP, established in 1973, was **Nepal's first National Park**. One of the last populations of [single-horned Asiatic rhinoceros](#) lives in the park. It is recommended **to prioritise integrating local ethnic and river-dependent communities of CNP into effective conservation and management programmes with livelihood opportunities**.

The **mugger or marsh crocodile is one of the 24 extant species of crocodylians found globally**. It is found in India, Pakistan, Nepal and Iran. The species is **listed as 'Vulnerable' in the [International Union for Conservation \(IUCN\) of Nature's Red List](#)**. It has been enlisted in **Appendix I of the [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species \(CITES\)](#)** of Wild Fauna and Flora and **included in Schedule I of the [Wildlife Protection Act, 1972](#)**.

The Rapti river **originates in the Mahabharat Hills and lower range of the Himalayas and flows westward along the northern border of the CNP**.



Read More: [Crocodilian Species in India](#)

## Joint Military Exercise FRINJEX-23

The maiden **Joint Military Exercise FRINJEX-23** between **Indian Army** and **French Army** will be **conducted in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala**.

It is for the **first time that the armies of both nations are engaging in this format with each contingent** comprising of a Company Group each from the Thiruvananthapuram-based Indian Army troops and French 6<sup>th</sup> Light Armoured Brigade.

The **exercise is aimed at enhancing inter-operability, coordination and cooperation between both forces at the tactical level**. The Joint exercise **will further enhance the defence cooperation with France** which is a key aspect of the overall Indo-France strategic partnership.

**Other military dialogues and regularly held joint exercises include [Varuna \(navy\)](#), [Garuda \(air force\)](#), and [Shakti \(army\)](#).**

Read More: [India-France Relations](#)

## International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)

India has **proposed to launch a mega global alliance under its leadership to protect big cats and assured support over five years** with guaranteed funding of USD 100 million (over Rs 800 crore).

The **proposed International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) will work towards the protection and conservation of the seven major big cats** — [tiger](#), [lion](#), [leopard](#), [snow leopard](#), [puma](#), [jaguar](#) and [cheetah](#). **Membership to the alliance will be open to 97 “range” countries**, which contain the natural habitat of these big cats, as well as other interested nations, international organisations, etc. The alliance was inspired by the arrival of cheetahs in 2022 from Namibia.

India is the **only country in the world to have tigers, lions, leopards, snow leopards and cheetahs in the wild except for the pumas and jaguars**. So, it is only befitting that India takes the lead to bring together all big cat range countries **under an UN-like organisation**.

The IBCA’s **governance structure will comprise a General Assembly** consisting of all member countries, a council of at least seven but not more than **15 member countries elected by the General Assembly for a term of 5 years**, and a Secretariat. Upon the recommendation of the Council, **the General Assembly will appoint the IBCA Secretary General for a specific term**.

Read More: [Reintroduction of Cheetah](#)

