



Sariska Tiger Reserve | Rajasthan | 17 Dec 2024

Why in News?

The Supreme Court has emphasized the need to balance the protection of [Sariska Tiger Reserve's wildlife](#) with the **religious sentiments of devotees visiting the Pandupol Hanuman temple**.

Key Points

- **Concerns Over Vehicle Traffic:**
 - The court raised **concerns about unregulated vehicle traffic impacting wildlife in the reserve**, particularly during high footfall days.
 - It is suggested that introducing [electric shuttle buses](#) as an alternative to reduce the **stress on wildlife** while ensuring visitor access.
 - The Supreme Court established a committee comprising local authorities and the [Central Empowered Committee \(CEC\)](#) to explore solutions that balance ecological conservation and religious needs.
- The court also recognized the concerns of the temple trust and devotees about the sudden halt of private vehicles, which would affect thousands of visitors on key religious days.

Sariska Tiger Reserve

- **About:**
 - Sariska Tiger Reserve is located in [Aravali hills](#) and forms a part of the Alwar District of Rajasthan.
 - It was declared a wildlife sanctuary in 1955 and was declared a [tiger reserve](#) later in 1978, making it a part of India's [Project Tiger](#).
 - It encompasses ruined temples, forts, pavilions and a palace.
 - **Kankarwadi Fort** is located in the centre of the reserve. It is said that **Mughal emperor Aurangzeb** had **imprisoned his brother Dara Shikoh** at this fort in the struggle for succession to the throne.
 - It also houses a famous **temple of lord Hanuman at Pandupole** related to Pandavas.
- **Flora and Fauna:**
 - It is characterised by **rocky landscapes, arid scrub-thorn forests, grasslands**, cliffs, and [semi-deciduous forests](#).
 - It is dominated by **dhok trees**, salar, kadaya, gol, ber, banyan, gugal, bamboo, kair, etc.
 - It also supports a **diverse array of other animals** such as Royal Bengal Tiger, leopards, sambhar, chital, nilgai, four-horned antelope, wild boar, hyenas, and jungle cats.

Birhor Tribe Joins Movement Against Child Marriage | Jharkhand |

17 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, people belonging to [the Birhor tribe](#), a [particularly vulnerable tribal group](#) in Jharkhand, have **joined a movement against [child marriage](#)** for the first time.

Key Points

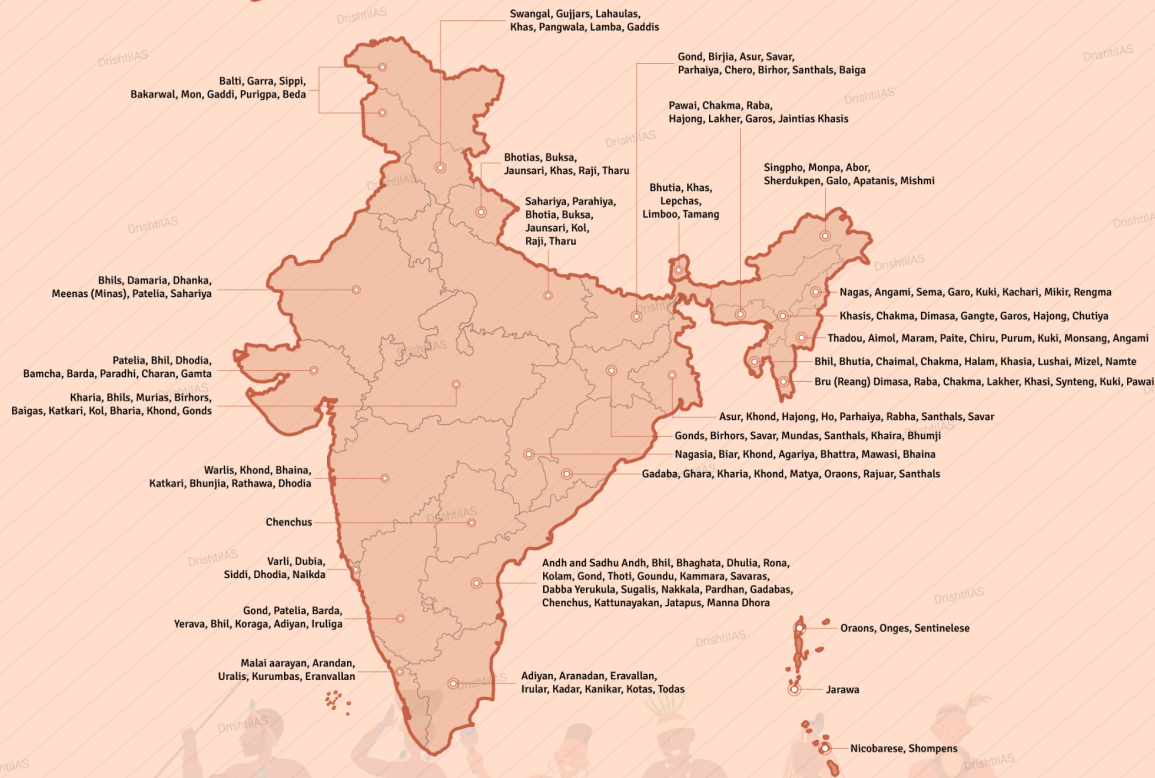
- **Birhor Community:**
 - The **Birhor people** are a [semi-nomadic tribal community](#), heavily forest-dependent, and economically and socially marginalized.
 - For the first time, hundreds of Birhor community members in Jharkhand's Giridih district joined a movement against child marriage, a rampant practice within their community.
- **Awareness on Child Marriage Consequences:**
 - The **Just Rights for Children Alliance (JRC)** highlighted that the event marked the first awareness drive where the community was informed about the legalities and consequences of child marriage.
 - Youth, children, women, and elders gathered under the glow of candles, taking a collective pledge to end child marriage and to report any such cases.
- **Support for Government Campaign:**
 - The marches were organized by Banvasi Vikas Ashram as part of the '[Bal Vivah Mukta Bharat](#)' campaign, launched by the [Union Ministry of Women and Child Development](#).
 - Banvasi Vikas Ashram is one of 250 partner [Non-governmental Organizations \(NGOs\)](#) under the JRC alliance.
 - The **ill effects of child marriage on children's health, education, and overall well-being were discussed** to make the Birhor tribe aware of the social evil.
 - JRC claimed to have **stopped over 7,000 child marriages in Jharkhand between April and December 2024** through events in blocks, villages, and schools across all 24 districts.
- **High-Prevalence Districts:**
 - **Jamtara, Deoghar, Godda, Giridih, Koderma, and Dumka** were identified as districts with a higher prevalence of child marriage cases.

Birhor Tribe

- **Physical appearance:** They are **short, with long heads, wavy hair, and broad noses**.
- **Language:** Their language is similar to **Santali, Mundari, and Ho**.
- **Religion:** They practice a **combination of animism and Hinduism**. The Sun God is their supreme deity, along with Lugu Buru and Budhimai.
- **Economy:** The Birhor have a "primitive subsistence economy" based on **hunting and gathering**, but some have settled into agriculture. They **make ropes from vine fibers to sell to nearby agricultural people**.
- **Socioeconomic status:** The Birhor are **divided into two groups** based on their socioeconomic status: the **wandering Uthlus and the settled Janghis**.

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Major Tribes in India



- STs constitute 8.6% of the population of India (Census 2011). Draft National Tribal Policy, 2006 records 698 STs in India.
- Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) are more vulnerable among the tribal groups. Among the 75 listed PVTGs, the highest number is found in Odisha.
- Bhil is the largest tribal group (38% of the total scheduled tribal population of India) followed by the Gonds.
- Madhya Pradesh has the highest tribal population in India (Census 2011).
- The Santhal are the oldest tribes in India. The Santhal system of governance, known as Manjhi-Paragana, can be compared to local self-governance.
- According to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes list (modification orders), 1956, the inhabitants of Lakshadweep who and both of whose parents were born in these islands are treated as STs.
- Article 342 of the Constitution prescribes procedure to be followed for specification of STs.
- Article 275 provides for the grant of special funds by the Union Government to the State Government for promoting the welfare of Scheduled Tribes and providing them with a better administration.



Illegal Construction Near Sultanpur National Park | Haryana | 17 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, The [Additional Chief Secretary \(ACS\) of Forest and Wildlife](#) directed the district administration to submit a report to the [Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change \(MoEF & CC\)](#) regarding **illegal constructions** near [Sultanpur National Park](#) and their current status.

Key Points

- **Committee to Monitor Illegal Construction:**

- In March 2024, a committee was formed to **monitor illegal construction activities in the [restricted zone](#)** surrounding the **national park**.
- It was found that several illegal colonies are being developed in the Farukhnagar areas near Sultanpur National Park.
 - Construction activities within the [sensitive zones](#) violate the provisions of the zonal master plan for **eco- sensitive zones**.
- **Compliance with Regulations:**
 - Officials were instructed to ensure **strict compliance with structural construction regulations** in the areas surrounding the national park.
 - Action should be taken against those who fail to comply with these regulations.

Sultanpur National Park

- **About:**
 - Sultanpur National Park is a bird paradise for bird watchers. It is famous for its **migratory as well as resident birds**.
 - Migratory birds start arriving in the park in September. Birds use the park as a resting place till the following March-April.
 - During [summer](#) and [monsoon](#) months the park is inhabited by many local bird species.
 - In April 1971, the [Sultanpur Jheel](#) inside the park (an area of 1.21 sq. Km.) was accorded **Sanctuary status** under section 8 of the **Punjab Wildlife Preservation Act, 1959**.
 - The status of the park was upgraded to [National Park](#) under the [Wildlife \(Protection\) Act, 1972](#) in July 1991.
- **Location:**
 - It is situated in Gurgaon district of Haryana. The distance of the park is around 50 Km from Delhi and 15km from Gurgaon.
- **Important Fauna at the Park:**
 - **Mammals:** [Blackbuck](#), [Nilgai](#), Hog deer, Sambar, [Leopard](#) etc.
 - **Birds:** [Siberian Cranes](#), [Greater Flamingo](#), [Demoiselle Crane](#) etc.

NGT Forms Panel in Faridabad | Haryana | 17 Dec 2024

Why in News?

[The National Green Tribunal](#) has formed a panel to investigate the **alleged illegal felling of several [Pipal \(Sacred Fig\) trees](#)** on the premises of the animal husbandry and dairying's office in Haryana's Faridabad.

Key Points

- **Destruction of Heritage Pipal Trees:**
 - The plea stated that **heritage Pipal trees had been destroyed**, but their **roots still existed**.
 - Despite complaints to the concerned authorities, **no action was taken**.
- **NGT's Observations:**
 - According to the application permission was granted to cut [Shisham \(Indian Rosewood\)](#) and **miscellaneous trees**, but **no permission** was given for **felling Pipal trees**.
 - The plea alleged illegal felling of trees by the deputy director, range officer, and contractor.

- The tribunal issued notices to Faridabad's Divisional Forest Officer and Haryana's Department of Forest and Animal Husbandry.
- A joint committee was appointed to verify the allegations and **submit the report to the tribunal within eight weeks.**
- **Members** include representatives from:
 - Member Secretary, [Central Pollution Control Board \(CPCB\)](#).
 - Regional Office of the [Union Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change \(MoEFCC\)](#) in Chandigarh.

NATIONAL GREEN TRIBUNAL

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) is a specialised body for swift resolution of environmental and natural resource cases.

About

- ⊕ **Establishment:** By National Green Tribunal Act 2010
- ⊕ **Objective:** Quick resolution of environmental & natural resource cases
- ⊕ **Case Resolution:** Within 6 months
- ⊕ **Places of Sitting:** New Delhi (Principal), Bhopal, Pune, Kolkata, and Chennai

Structure

- ⊕ **Composition:** Chairperson, Judicial Members, and Expert Members
- ⊕ **Tenure:** Up to 5 years/until age 65 (no reappointment)
- ⊕ **Appointments:** Chairperson - Central Government (with the CJI's consultation)
 - 10-20 judicial members & 10-20 expert members - Selection Committee

Powers & Jurisdiction

- ⊕ **Jurisdiction:** Civil cases on environmental issues and rights
- ⊕ **Suo Motu Powers:** Granted since 2021
- ⊕ **Roles:** Adjudicatory, preventative, and remedial
- ⊕ **Procedures:** Follows Principles of natural justice
 - Not bound by the CPC, 1908 or Indian Evidence Act, 1872
- ⊕ **Principles:** Sustainable Development; Precautionary; Polluter pays
- ⊕ **Orders:** Executable as civil court decrees; offers relief and compensation (**decisions are binding**)
- ⊕ **Appeals:** Tribunal can review its decisions.
 - If decision fails - Appeal to the SC to be filed within 90 days

NGT deals with Civil Cases under

- ⊕ Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974
- ⊕ Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Cess Act, 1977
- ⊕ Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980
- ⊕ Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981
- ⊕ Environment (Protection) Act, 1986
- ⊕ Public Liability Insurance Act, 1991
- ⊕ Biological Diversity Act, 2002

India is the third country globally (after Australia and New Zealand) and the first developing nation to establish a specialised environmental tribunal like NGT.

Drishti IAS

Pakistani Drone Seized in Jammu | Jammu & Kashmir | 17 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, a **Pakistani drone** carrying nearly half a kg of high-grade **narcotic substance** was seized by the **Border Security Force (BSF)** near **the International Border**.

Key Points

- **Quadcopter Entry and Seizure:**
 - A [quadcopter](#) entered India from across the border and was seized from the **Chinaz Border Outpost area** in the Arnia sector.
- **BSF's Vigilance and Commitment:**
 - The BSF praised the dedication and vigilance of its personnel in Jammu.
 - The official highlighted that the troops' efforts once again defeated the nefarious designs of anti-national elements.
 - The statement emphasized the **BSF's unwavering commitment to the nation's security.**

Border Security Force (BSF)

- The BSF was **raised in 1965, after the India-Pakistan war.**
- It is one of the [seven Central Armed Police Forces](#) of the Union of India under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
 - Other Central Armed Police Forces are: [Assam Rifles \(AR\)](#), [Indo-Tibetan Border Police \(ITBP\)](#), [Central Industrial Security Force \(CISF\)](#), [Central Reserve Police Force \(CRPF\)](#), [National Security Guards \(NSG\)](#) and [Sashastra Seema Bal \(SSB\)](#).
- The 2.65-lakh force is deployed along the Pakistan and Bangladesh borders.
 - It is deployed on the Indo-Pakistan International Border, Indo-Bangladesh International Border, and [Line of Control \(LoC\)](#) along with the Indian Army and in [Anti-Naxal Operations](#).
- BSF has been defending [Sir Creek in the Arabian Sea](#) and [the Sundarbans delta](#) in the [Bay of Bengal](#) with its state of the art fleet of Water Crafts.
- It contributes dedicated services to the [UN peacekeeping Mission](#) by sending a large contingent of its trained manpower every year.

Baiga Tribal Artist Jodhaiya Bai Passed Away | Madhya Pradesh | 17 Dec 2024

Why in News?

Recently, **Jodhaiya Bai**, a renowned [Baiga tribal artist](#) and [Padma Shri](#) awardee, passed away in Umaria district of Madhya Pradesh after a prolonged illness.

Key Points

- **Contribution to Baiga Tribal Art:**
 - Jodhaiya Bai played a **pivotal role in gaining international recognition for Baiga tribal art.**
 - She was honored with the Padma Shri award in 2023 for her significant contributions to the field of arts.
- **Condolences from the Chief Minister:**
 - The Chief Minister expressed deep grief over her demise. He stated that both **Madhya Pradesh and the country have lost an artist who dedicated her life to promoting [tribal culture, art, and traditions](#)** nationally and internationally.

Baiga Tibe

- The Baiga (means sorcerers) is **one of the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)**.
- They mainly live in Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Odisha, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.
- Traditionally, the Baiga lived a **semi-nomadic life and practised slash and burn cultivation**. Now, they are mainly dependent on **minor forest produce** for their livelihood.
 - **Bamboo** is the primary resource.
- **Tattooing is an integral part of Baiga culture**, every age and body part has a specific tattoo reserved for the occasion.

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/statepcs/17-12-2024/print>

