

**02 – 01 – 2022**

**News:** A striped reminder to the Sunderbans

- The residents of Mitrabari in the Satjhaleia area of the Gosaba block in the Sunderbans woke up on the New Year with tiger pugmarks in the forest near the habitation.
- This has been the **fourth incident of a tiger straying into the Sunderbans in the past few months.**
- On two occasions, tigers strayed from the Sunderbans Tiger Reserve (STR) into the adjoining habitations and on the other two, from the South 24 Parganas forest division.

## **Sunderbans National Park**

- Sunderbans is located in **West Bengal.**
- The Sunderbans ecoregion is located in the **tidally active lower deltaic plain of the Ganges–Brahmaputra–Meghna (GBM) basin.**
- It's a **National Park, Tiger reserve, Biosphere reserve and Designated Ramsar Site.**
- Sunderbans National Park is a part of Sunderbans Mangroves on Ganges Delta, adjacent to Sunderbans Forest reserve in Bangladesh.

- It spans from the **Hooghly River** in India's state of **West Bengal** to the **Baleswar River** in **Bangladesh**.
- The **Muriganga River** runs through the Indian Sunderbans on the west, and the **Harinbhahga** and **Raimangal** rivers run through it on the east.
- **Saptamukhi**, **Thakuran**, **Matla**, and **Goasaba** are some of the other major rivers that flow through this eco-system.
- Spread over parts of **Bangladesh and India**, the Protected Areas (PA) within the forested parts are designated by the **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO)** as **World Heritage Sites** in both countries.
- Four protected areas in the Sunderbans are enlisted as **UNESCO World Heritage Sites**, viz. **Sunderbans National Park**, **Sunderbans West**, **Sunderbans South** and **Sunderbans East Wildlife Sanctuaries**.
- Sunderbans hosts **the largest contiguous mangrove forest** and the **only mangrove tiger habitat** in the world.
- Sunderbans is home to **Royal Bengal Tiger**, **Salt-water Crocodile** and **Ganges River Dolphin** and the **Critically Endangered River Terrapin**.
- **Nine of the country's 12 kingfisher species** can be found here, as well as rare species like the **Goliath heron** and **Spoon-billed Sandpiper**.
- Recently, Sunderbans was **accredited with Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS)** for its excellence in Tiger conservation.

# Royal Bengal Tiger

- Royal Bengal Tiger is also known as **Bengal Tiger** and **Indian Tiger**.
- Tigers are **solitary animals**. They have **characteristic black stripes on their orange colour coat**. However, there are white tigers with bright white colour fur and black stripes.
- They are **excellent hunters and have the ability to run, climb trees, jump and swim**.
- Tiger is the **biggest of all big cats living** in the world. An average adult tiger usually **weighs around 300 kg**.
- CITES protection: **Appendix I**.
- Wildlife protection act: **Schedule I**.
- IUCN Red list: **Endangered**.
- It is distributed over India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan.
- Threats faced by the Tiger include poaching, Habitat destruction, Prey loss and Human conflict.
- Conservation programs include **Project Tiger, Tiger census, MsStripes, TX2 Goal, Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS) awards** and Integrated Tiger Habitat Conservation Programme (ITHCP by IUCN).

- The Tiger Census is conducted every 4 years (Quadrennial) by National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).
- More than 80% of the world's wild tigers are in India, and it's crucial to keep track of their numbers.
- Madhya Pradesh has the highest number of tigers (526) followed by Karnataka (524) and Uttarakhand (442).
- Government recently proposed to merge the Elephant Census and Tiger Census.
- Tiger was included in the "Not all animals migrate by choice" campaign by Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB).