

**05 – 02 – 2024**

**News: Golden Tiger in Kaziranga National Park (KNP)**

- Recently, a **wildlife photographer captured a rare golden tiger in Kaziranga National Park (KNP).**
- **Golden tigers (also known as golden tabby tigers) are a colour form, not a separate subspecies, like white and black tigers.**
- **They are exceptionally rare in the wild and even rarer in captivity.**
- **Golden tiger spotted in KNP are a color variation of Bengal tigers caused by a presence of recessive gene called "wideband".**
- **The wideband gene reduces melanin production during the cycle of hair growth. Thus, the agouti mutation (production of a protein that is usually expressed in the skin) is responsible for the blond or golden skin, while the orange stripes appear due to the 'tabby' mutation'.**
- **The Tabby gene responsible for most tabby patterns (coat pattern) in domestic cats.**
- **Black and golden tigers basically exist as they both possess a recessive gene which is expressed due to the absence of a dominant gene to suppress it. When two individuals with dominant traits breed, recessive genes are masked, but**

when two individuals with recessive genes breed, the recessive gene is expressed and such is the case for these two tiger (Black and golden) mutants.

## Kaziranga National Park

- Kaziranga National Park is located in **Assam**.
- The Kaziranga Protected Area was established in **1904** and is **located on the edge of the Eastern Himalayan Biodiversity Hotspot**.
- Kaziranga is a **World heritage Site, Tiger Reserve, Elephant reserve, and an Important Bird Area** under Birdlife International.
- The park area is circumscribed by the **Brahmaputra River, which forms the northern and eastern boundaries**, and the **Mora Diphlu, which forms the southern boundary**. Other notable rivers within the park are the Diphlu and Mora Dhansiri.
- Kaziranga is famous for Big 5 animals – **Greater one-horned Rhinoceros; Indian Elephant; Asiatic wild water buffalo, Royal Bengal Tiger, Swamp Deer**.
- Kaziranga has the **largest population of the Wild water buffalo anywhere accounting for about 57% of the world population**.
- Kaziranga has the highest Tiger density of **12.72 per 100 sq km in 2014**.

- Kaziranga is also home to 9 of the 14 species of primates found in the Indian subcontinent.
- Shooting orders for poachers are waiting.
- Currently, an Invasive Alien Species (IAS) named **Congress grass depletes the Elephant grass favourite food of Indian Rhinoceros.**
- Recently, Assam government has approved the **addition of 30.53 km<sup>2</sup> to the 884km<sup>2</sup> National Park.**
- The additions are habitat corridors and would **help provide connectivity to Orang and Nameri National Parks across river Brahmaputra.**
- **National Highway 37** (which connects Karimganj in Assam with Bhalia in Manipur) **passes through Kaziranga.**
- Recently, Kaziranga was **accredited with Conservation Assured | Tiger Standards (CA|TS) for its excellence in Tiger conservation.**
- Recently, Kaziranga **became the first national park in India to have been equipped with satellite phone, which are generally used by the law enforcing agencies.** The satellite phones will give an edge to the forest personnel over the poachers and also during emergencies like floods.
- The **public is barred from using satellite phones in India.**
- In the World Rhino Day 2021, **The “world’s largest stockpile” of rhino horns was burned in the headquarters of the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger**

Reserve, amid Vedic rituals, which was aimed at dispelling myths that have driven the illegal horn trade and the poaching of the animal.



## 7 NATIONAL PARKS IN ASSAM

- 6th : Raimona National Park (Notified in 2021)
- 7th : Dihing Patkai National Park (Notified in June 2021)