

5th cycle of India's Tiger Census

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In news— Prime Minister Narendra Modi has released the figures of the 5th cycle of India's Tiger Census recently.

Key updates-

- The **National Tiger Conservation Authority, which conducts the estimation, has not released state or tiger reserve-wise tiger estimation**, but has provided **some state-specific insight** in the overall report.
- **India since 2006 has been conducting scientific tiger population estimation** once every four years.
- **The estimation was done in five landscapes.**
- The fifth cycle revealed that tiger **numbers have once again increased in the country** and now **stands at 3,167** in the wild as of 2022.
- **The 2018 Tiger Census**, released in July 2019, had established the presence of **2,967 tigers** in India.
- **The animal's population in the country has increased by 200 or 6.7 per cent** in the past four years.
- While the tiger numbers in the country stood at 1,411 in 2006, it increased to 1,706 in 2010 and 2,226 in the 2014 cycle of evaluations.
- **75 per cent of the world's tiger population can now be found in India** and tiger reserves in the country span 75,000 square kilometres.
- According to the latest tiger estimation report released by Prime Minister, the **only landscape in India where the tiger population has gone down is Western Ghats**, where declaring of the ecologically sensitive zone has been hanging since 2010.
- The overlap between “wildlife and humans” because of

developmental activities has led to a fall in the tiger population in this area.

- **The Western Ghats tiger landscape is 1,600-km long** and covers an area of about 1,40,000 square km and **contains 12 tiger Reserves, 20 National Parks, and 68 Wildlife Sanctuaries.**
- **The Nilgiri cluster that is Nagarahole to BRT Hills in Karnataka is the largest tiger population in the world,** and has contributed significantly to colonisation of tigers in neighbouring areas, the survey shows a decline in tiger numbers there.
- **The report said while tiger populations within the protected areas have either remained stable or increased,** the occupancy outside of the reserves significantly decreased in areas such as the Wayanad landscape, BRT Hills, and the tiger areas on Goa-Karnataka border.
- Most of the decline in tiger population is in Karnataka, where the majority of Western Ghats fall.
- **The report also said that tiger populations have also declined in the central Indian states of Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh** and Telangana, even though tigers have been spotted for the first time in Himachal Pradesh and in new areas in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.
- **Population increase is substantial in Shivalik & Gangetic flood plain which is followed by Central India, North Eastern Hills** and Brahmaputra flood plains and Sundarbans while Western Ghats population showed decline with major populations being stable.
- Of the four other landscapes, the report said the population increase is substantial in Shivalik and Gangetic floodplain, which is followed by central India, northeastern hills and Brahmaputra flood plains and Sundarbans.
- The report identified **Himachal, Suhelwa** in Uttar Pradesh and **Valmiki in Bihar** as **new potential tiger areas.**

- Despite the number of tigers increasing in the central Indian landscape, most in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, the local tiger population has become extinct in Sri Venkateswara National Park and tiger reserves in Kawal, Satkosia and Sahyadri.

International Big Cat Alliance-

- During the same event PM also inaugurated the International Big Cat Alliance in Karnataka's Mysuru, the first of its kind in the country, organised to mark 50 years of Project Tiger.
- The three-day conference focuses on protection and conservation of seven major big cats of the world – tigers, lions, leopards, snow leopards, pumas, jaguars and cheetahs.