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WEEKLY

Weekly Current Affairs Compilation · 28 October – 3 November 2026 · 10 Topics

A new barklice species, bent-toed gecko, fungus and micro-snail join the discovery list, Chhattisgarh picks the Orange Oakleaf as its state butterfly, the Ganges dolphin programme earns a UN restoration flagship tag, and Odisha starts its Olive Ridley fishing ban. This week's compilation tracks ten stories across species, wildlife and protected areas.

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"innovation in learning"

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NEW SPECIES DISCOVERIES

Allocaecilius nilgiriensis: New Barklice Species Found in the Nilgiri Hills

WHY IN NEWS

Zoological Survey of India scientists described Allocaecilius nilgiriensis, a new species of barklice (order Psocodea, family Pseudocaeciliidae), from moist, shaded shola and evergreen forests of the Nilgiri Hills in the southern Western Ghats. The description appeared in Zootaxa. It is only the second Allocaecilius species recorded from India.

13 **Species now known in the genus Allocaecilius worldwide**



Barklice (illustrative image)

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Western Ghats Insect Endemism**
   Use it as a fresh example of undocumented insect diversity in high-altitude shola forests, to argue for more taxonomic surveys.

2. **Decomposers and Nutrient Cycling**
   Cite its diet of fungi, algae, lichens and decaying matter to show how small detritivores recycle forest nutrients.

3. **Role of ZSI in Taxonomy**
   Link the discovery to ZSI's mandate of surveying and describing fauna, and to the need for trained taxonomists.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Scientific name	Allocaecilius nilgiriensis
Group	Barklice, order Psocodea, family Pseudocaeciliidae
Type locality	Nilgiri Hills, southern Western Ghats
IUCN status	Not assessed (newly described)
Appearance	Small insect with brown patches in forewing cells R1, R3 and R5
Sex traits	Males have thumb-like structures on the hypandrium; females have a deeply indented subgenital plate
Behaviour	Feeds on fungi, mould, algae, lichens and decaying matter; harmless to people and animals
Habitat	Moist, shaded vegetation in high-altitude shola and evergreen forests

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

Despite the name, barklice are not true lice: they do not parasitise humans or animals, and they live on fungi, lichens and decaying matter.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Allocaecilius nilgiriensis | Barklice (Psocodea) | Pseudocaeciliidae | Nilgiri shola forests | Zootaxa | 13 species worldwide

EXAM TRAP

Do not read the name as a caecilian. Allocaecilius is an insect, while caecilians are limbless amphibians, and barklice are not parasitic lice.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Allocaecilius nilgiriensis, recently in the news, is

(a) a newly described barklice species

(b) a limbless amphibian of the Western Ghats

(c) a parasitic louse of mammals

(d) a freshwater crab of the Nilgiris

Answer: (a) a newly described barklice species

APPROACH

The genus name echoes caecilians, but it is an insect of the order Psocodea described from the Nilgiri Hills, so eliminate the amphibian and parasite options.

NEW SPECIES DISCOVERIES

Cyrtodactylus dimensis: New Bent-Toed Gecko Described From Assam's Dima Hasao

WHY IN NEWS

Researchers from Mizoram University described Cyrtodactylus dimensis, a new bent-toed gecko, from rocky microhabitats around Umrangso in Dima Hasao district, Assam. Specimens were collected in August 2025 and July 2026 over seven nights of fieldwork, and the work appeared in the Journal of Threatened Taxa. It raises the described Cyrtodactylus species from Assam to eight.

8 **Cyrtodactylus species now described from Assam**



Cyrtodactylus dimensis

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Indo-Burma Hotspot**
   Use Dima Hasao's new reptile as an example of how much of the Indo-Burma hotspot remains undocumented.
2. **Integrative Taxonomy**
   Cite the use of morphology, scale arrangement and genetic analysis together to separate look-alike geckos.
3. **Rocky Habitat Protection**
   Link the find to the need to protect rocky outcrops and hill habitats that hold narrow-range reptiles.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Scientific name	Cyrtodactylus dimensis
Group	Bent-toed gecko, genus Cyrtodactylus, family Gekkonidae
Type locality	Umrangso, Dima Hasao district, Assam
IUCN status	Not assessed (newly described)
Appearance	Told apart from its closest relative by scale arrangement and body structures
Behaviour	Genus is mostly nocturnal; this species was recorded in rocky microhabitats
Published in	Journal of Threatened Taxa, by Mizoram University researchers
Region	Indo-Burma biodiversity hotspot

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

The genus name Cyrtodactylus means 'bent toe' in Greek, and the genus is one of the most species-rich gecko groups in the world.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Cyrtodactylus dimensis | Umrangso, Dima Hasao | Journal of Threatened Taxa | Mizoram University | 8 species in Assam | Indo-Burma hotspot

EXAM TRAP

Do not place Dima Hasao in Meghalaya or Nagaland. It is an Assam district, and the new species is a gecko, not a skink or a frog.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

With reference to Cyrtodactylus dimensis, consider the following :

I. It is a bent-toed gecko.

II. It was described from Dima Hasao district of Assam.

III. It was described from the Western Ghats.

IV. Its description was published in the Journal of Threatened Taxa.

How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All the four

Answer: (c) Only three

APPROACH

Statements I, II and IV are correct. The species comes from the Indo-Burma region of Assam, not the Western Ghats, so Statement III is wrong.

NEW SPECIES DISCOVERIES

Mollisia sokpayensis: New Endophytic Fungus From a Rare Sikkim Medicinal Plant

WHY IN NEWS

A team of microbiologists led by Laishram Shantikumar Singh described Mollisia sokpayensis, a new endophytic fungus isolated from the rhizome of Panax sokpayensis, a rare medicinal plant, at Jorbotay in Uttarey, West Sikkim (1,800 to 2,300 m). It appears in Fungal Diversity, vol. 136 (2026), and is named after its host plant. Researchers see possible uses in biotechnology and drug discovery.

8 cm
Colony size after 14 days on potato dextrose agar at 28°C

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Endophytes and Drug Discovery**
   Use the new fungus to show how plant-associated microbes are screened for useful compounds.
2. **Sikkim Himalaya Biodiversity**
   Cite it as proof that Eastern Himalayan fungal diversity is still poorly documented.
3. **Medicinal Plant Conservation**
   Link the host, a rare Panax (ginseng) species, to the need to conserve plants together with their microbes.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Scientific name	Mollisia sokpayensis
Group	Endophytic fungus, genus Mollisia (Ascomycota, order Helotiales)
Host plant	Panax sokpayensis, a rare medicinal plant (rhizome)
Collection site	Jorbotay, Uttarey, West Sikkim
IUCN status	Not assessed (newly described)
Appearance	Cottony brown colonies in culture that turn blackish-brown
Behaviour	Lives inside healthy host tissue without visible disease; grows slowly
Published in	Fungal Diversity, vol. 136 (2026)

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS
The species is named after its host plant, not after a collection village, and Panax is the same genus that gives the world ginseng.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Mollisia sokpayensis | Endophytic fungus | Panax sokpayensis | Uttarey, West Sikkim | Fungal Diversity | DBT-funded study

EXAM TRAP
Do not call an endophyte a pathogen. It lives inside healthy tissue without causing visible symptoms, and its name comes from the host plant, not from the Uttarey site.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Consider the following statements :

Statement I :
Mollisia sokpayensis is an endophytic fungus.

Statement II :
It lives inside the tissues of its host plant without causing visible disease.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I
(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I
(c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct
(d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

Answer: (a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I

APPROACH
Living inside healthy tissue without symptoms is what makes a fungus an endophyte, so Statement II explains Statement I.

NEW SPECIES DISCOVERIES

Dicharax tilariensis: New Micro Land Snail Found in the Tilari Region, Maharashtra

WHY IN NEWS

A new micro land snail, Dicharax tilariensis, has been described from the Tilari region of Kolhapur district in the northern Western Ghats, near Swapnavel Point. The shell is under 5 mm across, and the species is currently known only from semi-evergreen forest at 700 to 800 m. It is the second endemic Dicharax species from the northern Western Ghats.



Dicharax tilariensis

Under 5 mm **Shell width of the new snail (4.21 to 4.87 mm)**

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Point Endemism**
   Use a species known from a single locality to argue for site-level protection even before an IUCN assessment.
2. **Leaf-Litter Invertebrates**
   Cite micro-snails in forest litter as understudied indicators of forest moisture and health.
3. **Northern Western Ghats**
   Link the find to documentation gaps in the northern Western Ghats compared with the south.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Scientific name	Dicharax tilariensis
Group	Operculate micro land snail, genus Dicharax (family Alycaeidae)
Type locality	Tilari region, Kolhapur district, Maharashtra
IUCN status	Not assessed (newly described)
Size	Width 4.21 to 4.87 mm, height 3.01 to 3.52 mm
Appearance	Whitish shell with a pinkish or brownish tinge, ribbed, with an elevated spire
Behaviour	Lives among forest litter, decaying matter and moist soil
Habitat	Semi-evergreen forest at 700 to 800 m

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

It is known only from its discovery site, so it counts as a point endemic, and it is the second endemic Dicharax species from the northern Western Ghats.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Dicharax tilariensis | Tilari, Kolhapur | Micro land snail | 700 to 800 m | Alycaeidae | 2nd endemic of genus

EXAM TRAP

Do not file it under the southern Western Ghats or under freshwater snails. Tilari is in the northern Western Ghats of Maharashtra, and this is a terrestrial litter dweller.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

With reference to Dicharax tilariensis, consider the following statements :

1. It is a micro land snail.
2. It was described from the Tilari region of Kolhapur district, Maharashtra.
3. It is a freshwater snail of the Brahmaputra floodplain.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (b) 1 and 2 only

APPROACH

The snail is terrestrial and lives in northern Western Ghats forest litter, so Statement 3 is wrong.

WILDLIFE IN THE NEWS

Orange Oakleaf Butterfly Chosen as Chhattisgarh's First State Butterfly

WHY IN NEWS

Chhattisgarh has picked the Orange Oakleaf (Kallima inachus) as its first state butterfly, following a public online poll held from 31 July to 31 August 2026 and an assessment by an expert panel. The panel weighed ecological significance, presence across the state, conservation value, distinctiveness and ease of identification.

1st State butterfly of Chhattisgarh



Orange Oakleaf, open wings

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **State Symbols and Biodiversity**
   Use the choice to show how state symbols, now including butterflies, build public awareness of local species.
2. **Camouflage and Mimicry**
   Cite its dry-leaf look with folded wings as an example of crypsis that protects against predators.
3. **Participatory Conservation**
   Link the public online poll to citizen involvement in conservation decisions.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Scientific name	Kallima inachus (family Nymphalidae)
Common names	Orange Oakleaf, Indian Oakleaf, Dead Leaf
IUCN status	Not evaluated; described as not rare in India
Appearance	Folded wings mimic a dry leaf; open wings show orange, black and deep blue
Wingspan	About 85 to 110 mm
Behaviour	Feeds on fermenting fruit, tree sap and mud; rests motionless with wings closed
Host plants	Larvae feed on Strobilanthes and several other plant families
Range	Tropical Asia, in forests with dense undergrowth near streams

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

Chhattisgarh's existing state symbols are the wild buffalo (animal), the hill myna (bird) and sal (tree), and the oakleaf now adds a butterfly.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Kallima inachus | Orange Oakleaf | Nymphalidae | Dead-leaf mimicry | First state butterfly | Public online poll

EXAM TRAP

Do not confuse it with Maharashtra's Blue Mormon or Karnataka's Southern Birdwing, which are swallowtails. The oakleaf is a Nymphalidae butterfly.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Consider the following statements :

Statement I :
The Orange Oakleaf is hard for predators to spot when it rests.

Statement II :
With its wings folded, it resembles a dry, withered leaf.

Statement III :
It feeds mainly on flower nectar while basking on open flowers.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement II and Statement III are correct and both of them explain Statement I

(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I

(c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I

(d) Neither Statement II nor Statement III is correct

Answer: (c) Only one of the Statements II and III is correct and that explains Statement I

APPROACH

Statement II explains why it is hard to spot. The butterfly feeds on rotting fruit, tree sap and mud, not flower nectar, so Statement III is wrong.

WILDLIFE IN THE NEWS

Ganges River Dolphin Recovery Programme Named a UN World Restoration Flagship

WHY IN NEWS

UNEP's report 'Nature's Comeback: Scaling Ecosystem Restoration for People and Planet' (October 2026) lists India's Ganges river dolphin recovery programme among 35 UN World Restoration Flagships under the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. India's Comprehensive Action Plan for dolphin conservation runs from 2022 to 2047.



Ganges river dolphin

35 **UN World Restoration Flagships, including the Ganges dolphin programme**

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Project Dolphin and Action Plan**
   Use the 2022 to 2047 Comprehensive Action Plan to show long-horizon species recovery with community roles.
2. **Indicator Species**
   Cite the dolphin as an indicator of river health to link flows, pollution and fishing gear to ecosystem outcomes.
3. **Environmental Flows and Dams**
   Use the WII finding of a 41 percent drop in Chambal sightings (2022 to 2026) to argue for ecological flow norms.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Scientific name	Platanista gangetica (Ganges river dolphin, Susu)
IUCN status	Endangered
Legal status	WPA 1972 Schedule I; CITES Appendix I
Appearance	Long thin snout, tiny eyes, almost blind
Behaviour	Hunts by echolocation; surfaces to breathe every 30 to 120 seconds
Habitat	Deep pools, river bends and confluences in the Ganga-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu systems
Symbols	National Aquatic Animal (2009); Assam's state aquatic animal
Sanctuary	Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary, Bhagalpur, Bihar

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

India's national count was about 6,327 river dolphins across 28 rivers, of which 6,324 are Gangetic and 3 are Indus river dolphins found in the Beas.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Platanista gangetica | Endangered | Schedule I | Susu | Vikramshila Sanctuary | UN Restoration Flagship

EXAM TRAP

Do not confuse it with the Irrawaddy dolphin of Chilika. The Ganges dolphin is an obligate freshwater species with poor eyesight, and it is Endangered, not Critically Endangered.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Consider the following statements :

Statement I :
The Ganges river dolphin is regarded as an indicator of river ecosystem health.

Statement II :
It is categorised as Endangered on the IUCN Red List.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I

(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I

(c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct

(d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

Answer: (b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I

APPROACH

Both are correct, but the IUCN category does not explain its role as an indicator, so Statement II does not explain Statement I.

WILDLIFE IN THE NEWS

Odisha Begins Seven-Month Fishing Ban to Protect Olive Ridley Turtles

WHY IN NEWS

Odisha's annual fishing ban for Olive Ridley turtles took effect on 1 November 2026 and runs to 31 May 2027. Fishing is barred within 20 km of the coast in the 1,435 sq km Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary, and trawlers must fit Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs). MPEDA gave 1,200 TEDs to Odisha trawler owners in October. Gahirmatha saw no mass nesting in 2026.

7 months **Odisha's Olive Ridley fishing ban, 1 Nov 2026 to 31 May 2027**



Olive Ridley turtles on the beach

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1 TEDs and Trade
Use the US restriction on Indian wild-caught shrimp imports under Section 609 to link turtle bycatch rules with exports.

2 Livelihoods and Conservation
Cite the TED catch-loss dispute, 1 to 5 percent per MPEDA against 10 to 20 percent per fishers, to show the trade-off.

3 Mass Nesting Sites
Name Gahirmatha and Rushikulya as Odisha's key rookeries, with the state holding about 90 percent of India's Olive Ridleys.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Scientific name	Lepidochelys olivacea
IUCN status	Vulnerable
Legal status	WPA 1972 Schedule I; CITES Appendix I
Appearance	Small sea turtle with a heart-shaped olive-green shell
Behaviour	Mass nesting (arribada); females arrive around November and lay mostly in March
Odisha rookeries	Gahirmatha (Kendrapara) and Rushikulya (Ganjam)
Gahirmatha sanctuary	Declared 1997; 1,435 sq km; fishing barred within 20 km of the coast
2025 nesting	About 606,933 turtles nested at Gahirmatha, 5 to 10 March 2025

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS
Odisha is reported to host about half of the world's Olive Ridleys and about 90 percent of those in India.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Lepidochelys olivacea | Vulnerable | Gahirmatha | Rushikulya | Turtle Excluder Device | 1 Nov to 31 May

EXAM TRAP
Do not swap the two beaches. Gahirmatha is in Kendrapara and Rushikulya is in Ganjam, and a TED is a trawl-net escape device, not a hatchery or a nesting-beach tool.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

With reference to the Olive Ridley turtle, consider the following statements :

1. It is categorised as Critically Endangered by the IUCN.
2. Fishing within 20 km of the coast is barred in Gahirmatha Marine Sanctuary.
3. Turtle Excluder Devices are compulsory for trawlers under the ban.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

(a) 1 only
(b) 1 and 2 only
(c) 2 and 3 only
(d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: (c) 2 and 3 only

APPROACH
The Olive Ridley is Vulnerable, not Critically Endangered, so Statement 1 is wrong. The 20 km bar and compulsory TEDs are both part of the ban.

PROTECTED AREAS & RESERVES

Talacauvery Wildlife Sanctuary: Eight Poachers Held in Kodagu

WHY IN NEWS

Karnataka Forest Department staff arrested eight poachers in the Akkikandi range of Talacauvery (Talakaveri) Wildlife Sanctuary, Kodagu, after a late-night chase and an exchange of fire, as reported on 29 October 2026. A gun was reported seized. The sanctuary protects the Talakaveri spring on the Brahmagiri hills, the source of the Cauvery.



Asian elephants (illustrative image)

105 sq km — Area of Talacauvery Wildlife Sanctuary, notified in 1987

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Cauvery Headwaters**
   Use the sanctuary to show how forest protection at a river source supports downstream water security.
2. **Western Ghats World Heritage Site**
   Cite its place in the Western Ghats UNESCO site and its Important Bird Area tag to show layered protection.
3. **Wildlife Crime Enforcement**
   Link the arrests to anti-poaching patrols and Wildlife Protection Act enforcement along forest frontiers.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Location	Kodagu district, Karnataka
Area and year	About 105 sq km; notified 1987
Name and source	Talakaveri spring on the Brahmagiri hills, origin of the Cauvery
Neighbours	Ranipuram and Kottencheri hills, Kasaragod district, Kerala
Vegetation	Wet evergreen and semi-evergreen forest with shola grassland
Mammals	Tiger, Asian elephant, leopard, stripe-necked mongoose
Birds	Important Bird Area: Malabar trogon, Nilgiri wood pigeon, great hornbill
Heritage	Part of the Western Ghats UNESCO World Heritage Site

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

The sanctuary is named after the Talakaveri spring, a holy source of the Cauvery on the Brahmagiri hills at the sanctuary's eastern fringe.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Talacauvery WLS | Kodagu, Karnataka | Brahmagiri hills | Source of the Cauvery | Notified 1987 | Important Bird Area

EXAM TRAP

Do not confuse it with Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary, which lies downstream in southern Karnataka. Talacauvery is in Kodagu, at the river's source.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

The river Cauvery rises in which of the following protected areas?

(a) Talacauvery Wildlife Sanctuary
(b) Bhadra Wildlife Sanctuary
(c) Nagarahole Tiger Reserve
(d) Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary

Answer: (a) Talacauvery Wildlife Sanctuary

APPROACH

The Cauvery rises at the Talakaveri spring on the Brahmagiri hills in Kodagu, inside this sanctuary, while Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary lies downstream.

PROTECTED AREAS & RESERVES

Bhimbandh Wildlife Sanctuary: Rs 62.87 Crore Tourism Tender Draws Legal Questions

WHY IN NEWS

Bihar's forest department floated a tender for a Rs 62.87 crore tourism project inside Bhimbandh Wildlife Sanctuary in Munger district, covering about 12.9 acres with cottages, tree houses and a helipad. The tender has drawn questions about conflict with statutory restrictions and a Supreme Court order restraining construction in protected areas, as reported on 31 October 2026.



Forest trail at sunrise (illustrative image)

682 sq km — **Area of Bhimbandh Wildlife Sanctuary in the Kharagpur Hills**

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Tourism in Protected Areas**
   Use the tender to argue that eco-tourism needs statutory clearances and carrying-capacity limits inside sanctuaries.
2. **Geothermal Hot Springs**
   Cite the Bhimbandh, Sita Kund and Rishi Kund springs as a rare geothermal feature on the Chota Nagpur fringe.
3. **Kharagpur Hills Habitat**
   Link its sal-dominated moist deciduous forest to the northern edge of the Chota Nagpur Plateau.

PRELIMS MATRIX

Location	Kharagpur Hills, Munger district, Bihar
Area and year	About 682 sq km; established 1976
Landscape	South of the Ganga, at the northern edge of the Chota Nagpur Plateau
Forest type	Northern tropical moist deciduous sal forest, with bamboo and mixed patches
Hot springs	Bhimbandh, Sita Kund and Rishi Kund
Mammals	Leopard, sloth bear, hyena, jungle cat, fishing cat, pangolin, barking deer
Birds	More than 100 resident species plus winter migrants
Tourism tender	Rs 62.87 crore; cottages, tree houses and a helipad on about 12.9 acres

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

The Bhimbandh spring is the hottest of the sanctuary's hot springs, at 52 to 65°C.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Bhimbandh WLS | Munger, Bihar | Kharagpur Hills | Hot springs | 682 sq km | Rs 62.87 crore tender

EXAM TRAP

Do not call it a tiger reserve or a national park. It is a wildlife sanctuary in Munger district, and construction inside protected areas is restricted by law and court orders.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

With reference to Bhimbandh Wildlife Sanctuary, consider the following :

I. It is located in Munger district of Bihar.
II. It is known for natural hot springs.
III. It lies in the Western Ghats.
IV. It is a national park.

How many of the above statements are correct?

(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) Only three
(d) All the four

Answer: (b) Only two

APPROACH

Statements I and II are correct. The sanctuary is in the Kharagpur Hills near the Chota Nagpur Plateau and is a wildlife sanctuary, not a national park.

PROTECTED AREAS & RESERVES

Pench Tiger Reserve: Umred-Karhandla Cub Recorded Near Chorbahuli Gate

WHY IN NEWS

A tiger cub born to Tigress F2 in Umred-Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary was sighted near the Chorbahuli Gate of Pench Tiger Reserve, Nagpur district, on 29 October 2026. Officials call it natural dispersal and a possible corridor link, but say it is too early to tell whether the cub will settle.



Tiger (illustrative image)

1,920 sq km — **Combined area of Pench Tiger Reserve across Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra**

CONNECT TO STATIC SYLLABUS

1. **Tiger Corridors and Dispersal**
   Use the cub's move to show why corridors let young tigers reach new territory and maintain gene flow.
2. **Twin-State Management**
   Link the Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra split to the need for coordination between two forest departments.
3. **Jungle Book Landscape**
   Cite the Seoni-Pench region as the setting of Kipling's Jungle Book to link literature with the landscape.

PRELIMS MATRIX

States	Madhya Pradesh (Seoni, Chhindwara) and Maharashtra (Nagpur)
Area	MP side 1,179.63 sq km; Maharashtra side 741.2 sq km
Established	Sanctuary 1977, National Park 1983, MP Tiger Reserve 1992
Components	Indira Priyadarshini Pench National Park and Pench Mowgli Sanctuary
Rivers	Pench river, which names the reserve; Totladoh reservoir of 72 sq km
Mammals	Tiger, leopard, dhole, sloth bear, chital, sambar, gaur, nilgai
Cub's origin	Umred-Karhandla Wildlife Sanctuary, Maharashtra

UNIQUE FACT FOR PRELIMS

In December 2025, tigress PN-224 was airlifted from Pench to Rajasthan's Ramgarh reserve in India's first interstate tiger airlift.

PRELIMS MEMORY BANK

Pench TR | MP and Maharashtra | Pench river | Totladoh reservoir | Umred-Karhandla cub | Jungle Book setting

EXAM TRAP

Do not treat Pench as a single-state reserve. It spans Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, and this cub was recorded on the Maharashtra side, near Nagpur.

PRELIMS MODEL MCQ

Consider the following statements :

Statement I :
The sighting of an Umred-Karhandla cub in Pench points to possible corridor connectivity between the two areas.

Statement II :
Officials have confirmed that a functional corridor exists and that the cub has settled in Pench.

Which one of the following is correct in respect of the above statements?

(a) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct and Statement II explains Statement I

(b) Both Statement I and Statement II are correct but Statement II does not explain Statement I

(c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct

(d) Statement I is not correct but Statement II is correct

Answer: (c) Statement I is correct but Statement II is not correct

APPROACH

Officials called it natural dispersal and said the corridor needs monitoring and validation, and that it is too early to say if the cub will settle, so Statement II is incorrect.