

UPSC Preparation

Interesting Facts about International Tiger Day

29th July is celebrated as the Global Tiger Day, often referred to as International Tiger Day. 13 Tiger Range Countries participated in the Saint Petersburg Summit held in 2010 in Russia, since when the day has been revered as the Global Tiger Day.

The Theme of International Tiger Day 2021 – “Their survival is in our hands”.

Find out about the Saint Petersburg Summit 2010, Tiger-Range Countries, and relevant facts about endangered species – Tiger. Also, learn about the significance of International Tiger Day.

29th July 2021 – International Tiger Day Facts

It is the 11th edition of International Tiger Day. The idea behind celebrating this day annually is to raise awareness for the conservation of tigers, which are endangered species [IUCN Status].

Facts about Tigers and their conservation that one must know:

1. Tigers are globally listed as ‘Endangered.’ Malayan and Sumatran Tiger Subspecies are critically endangered.
2. They are native to the isolated areas of Asia and East Russia.
3. There are nine subspecies of tiger:
 - Siberian Tigers
 - Indian Tiger/Bengal Tiger
 - South China Tiger
 - Malayan Tiger
 - Indo-Chinese Tiger
 - Sumatran Tiger
 - Bali Tiger
 - Javan Tiger
 - Caspian Tiger
4. There are around 3900 tigers in the wild. The numbers show a 95 percent drop since the 20th century.
5. The World World Fund for Nature (WWF) aims to double the tiger population (around 6000) by 2022 which is also the Chinese Year of the Tiger.
6. The species that was once found all over Asia is now restricted to 13 countries which are also called the Tiger-Range Nations. (Read below to know about these countries).

To know India’s efforts in tiger conservation, candidates are advised to check the following links:

- [Tiger Conservation in India](#)
- [Latest Tiger Census Report](#)
- [Launch of Project Tiger \[1st April 1973\]](#)
- [National Tiger Conservation Authority](#)
- [RSTV: Big Picture – Importance of Tiger Conservation](#)

- [Jim Corbett National Park](#)

Characteristics of Tigers:

1. The nature of tigers is solitary where they believe in marking their territories and defending these from other tigers.
2. The height of the tiger can be up to 4m and weigh up to 296 Kgs.
3. As the geographical location and subspecies influence the physical characteristics of the tiger; the northern species of tigers are larger than the southern species.
4. An adult male Bengal Tiger can grow up to 3.4 m and can weigh up to 218 kgs; while the adult male Sumatran Tiger can grow up to 2.5 m and weigh up to 120 kgs.
5. The tigers have two types of hair – Longer Guard hair and shorter underfur.
6. Each tiger has an individual pattern of distinct dark stripes on their bodies.
7. Tigers can be white if both their parents have mutated genes.
8. Tigers use their tail to communicate.
9. Of all the big cat species, tigers have the largest canines. Older tigers might die due to starvation as their teeth, which were earlier used to help them catch and kill the prey, fall down.
10. Tigers can climb with the help of paws. The paws of male tigers are larger than female ones.
11. The vision of tigers at night is six times more powerful than humans.

Facts of Tiger Subspecies:

Subspecies of Tiger	Important Facts
Siberian Tiger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Called Amur Tigers • Largest tiger subspecies • Females are smaller than males • Found in Russia and China
Indian Tiger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Called Bengal Tiger • Most numerous tiger subspecies • Found in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Bhutan
South China Tiger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Found in China • Functionally Extinct
Malayan Tiger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Were called Indo-Chinese tigers till 2004. • Found in Thailand and Malaysia
Indo-Chinese Tiger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Called Corbett's tiger • Found in Cambodia, Laos, Burma, Thailand, and Vietnam and formerly in China • Smaller than Bengal tigers

Sumatran Tiger	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Found only in Sumatra• The coat of this subspecies is the darkest of all• It is the smallest subspecies of tigers
Bali Tiger	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is extinct
Javan Tiger	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is extinct
Caspian Tiger	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It is extinct

Saint Petersburg Summit 2010

St. Petersburg Declaration on Tiger Conservation was the result of a summit (International tiger Forum) that was held in Saint Petersburg in Russia in 2010. The governments of the following countries participated in this summit:

1. India
2. Bangladesh
3. Bhutan
4. Cambodia
5. China
6. Indonesia
7. Laos
8. Malaysia
9. Myanmar
10. Nepal
11. Russia
12. Thailand
13. Vietnam

The summit noted that the population of tigers had decreased from 1 lakh to a mere 3500 from 1910 to 2010. The tiger habitat too had shrunk by 40 percent from 2000 to 2010. Therefore, it was the nations' aim to double the number of tigers by 2022.

The summit adopted:

- National Tiger Recovery Priorities (NTRPs)
- Global Tiger Recovery Programme (GTRP)

The challenges to Tiger Conservation noted by the Tiger Summit in 2010 were:

1. Habitat loss
2. Poaching
3. Illegal wildlife trade
4. Human-tiger conflict

*The next Global Tiger Summit will be held in 2022.

Initiatives and Efforts to Conserve Tiger

At the Tiger Summit 2010, the nations acknowledged the following initiatives:

1. Management, preservation, protection, and enhancement of tiger habitats across the ranges.
2. Strengthening regional law enforcement through bilateral and multilateral groupings like:
 - Association of Southeast Asian Nations Wildlife Enforcement Network (ASEAN-WEN)
 - South Asia Wildlife Enforcement Network (SAWEN)
3. Eradication of poaching, smuggling, etc. with the help of international organizations including the CITES Secretariat, INTERPOL, the UN Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Bank, and the World Customs Organization.
4. Exploring and mobilizing domestic funding, including new financing mechanisms based on forest carbon financing including REDD+, payment for ecosystem services (PES), ecotourism, and private sector, donor, and nongovernmental organization partnerships.

Recently, IUCN has extended its Tiger Programme which was launched in 2014, till 2023.

Several organizations that support tiger conservation are:

- Global Environment Facility
- Save the Tiger Fund,
- Smithsonian Institution,
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Wildlife Conservation Society
- WWF