Vishwamitri River

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Environment*

Why in News?

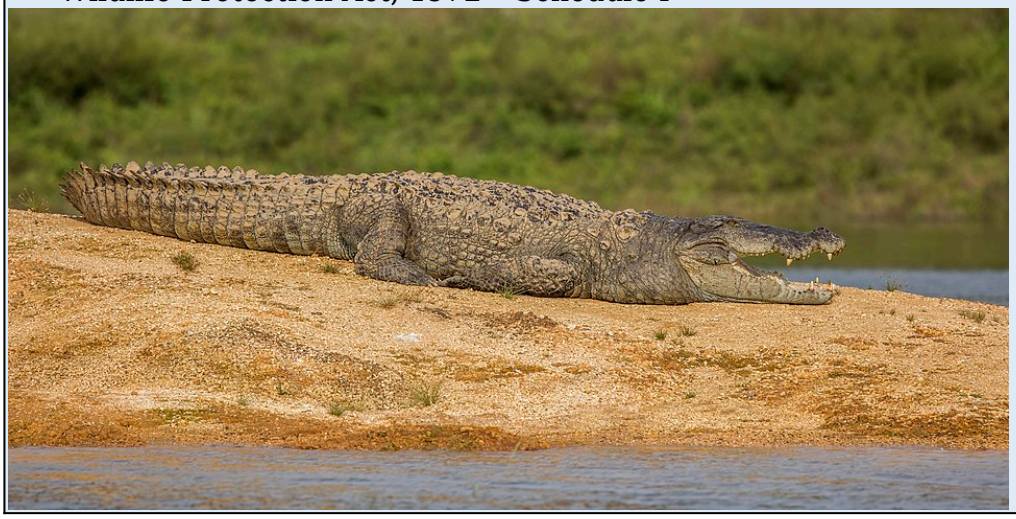
Recently, the Gujarat Forest Department conducted a Mugger crocodile census in Vadodara's Vishwamitri River after flood-mitigation works.

- **Location –** It is a ***non-perennial river located in Vadodara, Gujarat.***
- It is situated between two major perennial rivers, namely the Mahi and the Narmada.
- **Origin –** It starts from the ***Pavagadh hills in Gujarat.***
- **Course –** It flows westward through Vadodara, joining the Dhadhar and Jambuva tributaries.
- **Drainage –** Finally, it empties into the Arabian Sea via *the Gulf of Khambhat.*
- **Ecology –** Supports rich biodiversity and is home to Indian crocodiles in an 18 km stretch.
    - It is highly *meandering in nature.*
- **Fauna –** Mugger crocodile, Indian Softshell turtles, monitor lizards, and various bird species.

Quick Fact

Mugger crocodile

• It is a medium-sized broad-snouted crocodile, also known as the marsh crocodile.
• **Scientific name –** *Crocodylus palustris*
• **Habitat –** They are primarily found in freshwater habitats like rivers, lakes and marshes.
• **Distribution –** India (15 states), Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Iran.
  - **Key populations –** Middle Ganga, Chambal River, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu's Cauvery delta.
• **Characteristics –** Crocodiles eat minimally during winters; it is only during their breeding season in summers that they become opportunistic predators.
• **Diet –** Muggers primarily eat fish, crabs, insects, and small fish.
• Adults consume amphibians, reptiles (snakes, turtles), birds, monkeys, deer, buffalo.
• **Threats –** Habitat destruction, fishing equipment entanglement, illegal poaching for skin and meat and the use of body parts in medicine and human conflict.
• **Conservation status –**
  - IUCN RedList – Vulnerable
  - Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 – Schedule I



References

1. IE | Vishwamitri River
2. ToI | Vishwamitri River

SHANKAR IAS PARLIAMENT
Information is Empowering