

# SC PANEL FLAYS ASSAM ON ANIMAL CORRIDOR INVASION

Relevant for: Environment | Topic: Biodiversity, Ecology, and Wildlife Related Issues

A one-horned rhino with its calf in the Kaziranga park. Ritu Raj Konwar

A Supreme Court panel has prodded the Assam government for laxity in checking illegal construction activities on the animal corridors of Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve.

The 1,300-sq. km wildlife habitat, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the best-known address of the world's one-horned rhinos, has nine notified animal corridors. Seven of these — Amguri, Bagori, Chirang, Deosur, Harmati, Hatidandi and Kanchanjuri — are in Nagaon district while Haldibari and Panbari are in the adjoining Golaghat district.

The Supreme Court's Central Empowered Committee (CEC) had in a meeting on April 4 directed the Chief Secretary and other representatives of the Assam government to provide an action-taken report on the encroachment of and illegal constructions on the animal corridors as soon as possible.

The illegal activities are in violation of a Supreme Court order of April 12, 2019, which barred new construction on private lands that are within the corridors that the animals of Kaziranga use to move in and out of the flood-prone park.

The CEC has been writing to the Assam government since 2020 for action against the illegal activities on the animal corridors. The latter has gone slow as a few MLAs are allegedly involved in such activities.

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