**Intro**

**Lawachara National Park** (Bengali: লাউয়াছড়া) is a major national park and nature reserve in Bangladesh. The park is located at Kamalganj Upazila, Moulvibazar District in the northeastern region of the country. It is located within the 2,740 ha (27.4 km2) West Bhanugach Reserved Forest.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawachara_National_Park#cite_note-ce-1)

Lawachara National Park covers approximately 1,250 ha (12.5 km2) of semi-evergreen forests Biome and mixed deciduous forests Biome. The land was declared a national park by the Bangladesh government on 7 July 1996 under the Wildlife Act of 1974.

**Location**

Lawachara is about 160 km (99 mi) northeast of Dhaka and 60 km (37 mi) from Sylhet. It is 8 kilometres (5.0 mi) from the town of Srimongal.

The terrain of Lawachara is undulating with scattered 10 to 50 m (33 to 164 ft) hillocks. Locally known as *tila*, the hillocks are primarily composed of Upper Tertiary soft sandstone. The park is crossed by numerous sandy-bedded streams (locally known as *Nallah*), one of which is the Lawachara tributary, from which the park derived its name. The soil of Lawachara is alluvial brown sandy clay loam to clay loam dating from the Pliocene epoch. Shallow depressions filled with water (haor wetlands) are also a feature of the region as the low-lying areas are often subject to flooding.

The climate of Lawachara is generally pleasant to warm, averaging at 26.8 °C (80.2 °F) in February to 36.1 °C (97.0 °F) in June. The humidity is high throughout the year, and Lawachara experiences frequent rains with occasional cyclonic storms.

**Biodiversity**

Biological diversity in the Lawachara National Park consists of 460 species, of which 167 species are plants, 4 amphibian species, 6 reptile species, 246 bird species, 20 mammal species, and 17 insect species. One of this is the critically endangered western hoolock gibbons, of which only 62 individuals remain in the area.

### Plant and animal

The forest of Lawachara is of a mixed type, with the understory usually composed of evergreens, including *Quercus*, *Syzygium*, *Gmelina*, *Dillenia*, *Grewia*, and *Ficus*. The upper canopy, meanwhile, is mainly composed of tall deciduous trees including *Tectona*, *Artocarpus chaplasha*, *Tetrameles*, *Hopea odorata*. *Toona ciliata*, and *Pygenum*. The original indigenous mixed tropical evergreen vegetation had been removed or replaced in the 1920s. It is now mostly secondary forest with small remnant areas of rich primary forest. In the undergrowth are bamboo groves of jai bansh (*Bambusa burmanica*) and muli bansh (*Melocanna baccifera*), as well as several fern species and other epiphytes.

159 plant species belonging to 123 genera and 60 families were studied in 2010. It includes 78 species of trees, 14 species of shrubs, 42 species of herbs, and 25 species of climbers. *Ficus* (fig trees) and *Syzygium* (brush cherries), each with 7 species, were the most diverse genera. Other notable genera include *Terminalia*, *Dioscorea* (yams), *Artocarpus*, *Calamus* (rattan palm), *Piper* (pepper vines), *Alpinia*, and *Curcuma*. Threatened indigenous plant species include *Bridelia retusa*, *Zanthoxylum rhetsa*, *Alstonia scholaris*, *Phyllanthus emblica*, *Cassia fistula*, *Orexylum indicum*, *Semocarpus anacardium*, and *Garuga pinnata*.

The western hoolock gibbon (*Hoolock hoolock*) is a higher primate found in India. It is one of the top 25 most endangered primates and one of the six non-human primate species found in Lawachara.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lawachara_National_Park#cite_note-2008-2010Top25-8) In a census in 2007, only 62 individuals in 17 groups were found in Lawachara and in the greater West Bhanugach Reserved Forest. Yet this is the biggest surviving gibbon population in Bangladesh. The Lawachara population is considered of critical importance as it is likely to be the last viable population of western hoolock gibbons that will survive into the next century.

**Human Settlement**

There are about eighteen villages near Lawachara. Two of them (Magurchara punji and Lawachara punji) are located within the boundaries of the park. Indigenous peoples in the area include the Christian Khasia people, the Hindu Tripuri people, the Tipra people, and the Monipuri people. The rest of the population are mostly Muslim migrants from Noakhali, Comilla, and Assam. There is a mosque located off Srimangal-Bhanugach Road called Lawachara Jame Mosque.

Registered forest villagers have certain rights within the reserve. This includes wood collection for fuel and building materials, hunting, betel leaf production, grazing of livestock, harvesting of other forest products, and limited agriculture in allocated land.