Mizoram's Two New Amphibians: Duttaphrynus phawngpui and Ingerana aizawl

Research papers: 13 and 14 September 2026 | News: 15 September 2026 | Prelims: environment, biodiversity and taxonomy

Why in the News

The Hindu of 15 September reports two newly described Mizoram amphibians: the toad Duttaphrynus phawngpui in Taprobanica and the frog Ingerana aizawl in Zootaxa. The publishers give dates of 13 and 14 September 2026 respectively.

Key Point to Remember

Morphology and 16S rRNA evidence support both identifications. The toad was found above 2,000 metres in Phawngpui National Park; Ingerana aizawl was previously considered I. borealis.

Two New Frog Species from Mizoram

Point	Duttaphrynus phawngpui (toad)	Ingerana aizawl (frog)
Family	Bufonidae	Dicroglossidae
Journal	Taprobanica, 13 September 2026	Zootaxa, 14 September 2026
Area	Phawngpui National Park; above 2000 m	Mizoram; press: Mizoram University campus
Identification	SVL 47.72-56.26 mm; indistinct tympanum; cranial crests mostly absent	Differs from I. borealis, I. occidens, I. tenasserimensis in size, tympanum, skin texture
Genetic evidence	3.8-5.5% divergence in 16S	A separate lineage in the 16S phylogeny
Earlier identification	Within the D. stuarti group, but a separate lineage	Earlier thought to be I. borealis
Name (press)	Highest peak of Mizoram	Capital of Mizoram

Original table. Source: Taprobanica; Zootaxa; The Hindu.

Original explanatory diagram | pcsmantra.com

pcsmantra.com

Diagram: original source-based comparative table by pcsmantra.com.

Duttaphrynus phawngpui	Toad; Phawngpui National Park, above 2,000 m; 16S divergence 3.8-5.5%
Ingerana aizawl	Frog; formerly identified as I. borealis
Papers	Taprobanica, 13 September; Zootaxa, 14 September

Diagram: original table.

What Do the Papers Say?

Toad: The abstract describes a montane bufonid from Phawngpui National Park. Morphology, multivariate measurements and 16S rRNA place it as a distinct lineage within the D. stuarti group, separate from D. stuarti, D. chandai and D. dhara. The 16S divergence is 3.8-5.5%. The body is medium-sized, with a snout-vent length (SVL) of 47.72-56.26 mm. The tympanum is indistinct and most cranial ridges absent. It is known only from the type locality above 2,000 m.

Frog: The abstract says Mizoram's Ingerana population was historically assigned to I. borealis, an identification questioned in recent reassessment. Morphology and 16S data support a separate lineage and species, differing from I. borealis, I. occidens and I. tenasserimensis in size, tympanum, skin texture and proportions.

The Hindu says the toad honours Mizoram's highest peak, Phawngpui, and the frog its capital, Aizawl. According to the report, the frog on the Mizoram University campus had been called I. borealis for over two decades. The report describes isolated peaks as "sky islands".

Where Examination Confusion Arises

A new species need not mean discovery in a new place: I. aizawl was a previously misidentified population. Check numerical sources too: The Hindu says up to 56 mm, while the abstract gives 47.72-56.26 mm SVL.

Preparation from Past Questions

UPSC's official 2023 GS-I Prelims paper used statement questions. Prepare species, locations and identification evidence separately. These are original practice questions, not actual PYQs.

Prelims-style Practice Questions

1. Consider these statements about D. phawngpui:

Statement 1: It is a toad described from Phawngpui National Park, Mizoram.

Statement 2: Its 16S divergence from recognised close species is 3.8-5.5%.

Statement 3: The abstract records it across many India-Myanmar mountains.

How many are correct?

(a) Only one
(b) Only two
(c) All three
(d) None

Answer and Explanation

Answer: (b). The abstract supports 1 and 2 and records it only at the type locality above 2,000 m.

2. Which species historically included Mizoram's Ingerana population, according to the Zootaxa abstract?

(a) Ingerana borealis
(b) Duttaphrynus stuarti
(c) Ingerana occidens
(d) Duttaphrynus dhara

Answer and Explanation

Answer: (a). It was historically identified as I. borealis.

3. According to The Hindu, what do the names honour?

(a) aizawl: state capital; phawngpui: highest state peak
(b) aizawl: longest river; phawngpui: largest lake
(c) aizawl: first national park; phawngpui: first sanctuary
(d) Both honour discoverers.

Answer and Explanation

Answer: (a). The names honour the capital and highest peak.

Sources

- Taprobanica: New montane toad from Mizoram, 13 September 2026
- Zootaxa: New Ingerana from Mizoram, 14 September 2026
- The Hindu: Two new-to-science amphibians, 15 September 2026
- UPSC: Prelims 2023 question format
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