

# Reintroduction of Cheetahs in Gandhi Sagar Sanctuary

#### Why in News?

The Madhya Pradesh government has completed preparations at the <u>Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary</u> to become a new habitat for <u>cheetahs</u>.

### **Key Points**

- Teams from Kenya and South Africa had earlier visited Gandhi Sagar to assess the conditions for reintroduction of cheetahs.
  - Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister chaired a meeting of the state wildlife board, during which it was informed that preparations have been completed.
- Prey animals were relocated from <u>Kanha</u>, <u>Satpura</u> and Sanjay tiger reserves to Gandhi Sagar.
- Under the ambitious cheetah reintroduction project, eight Namibian cheetahs, five females and three males, were released into enclosures at <u>Kuno National Park (KNP)</u> in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district on 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2022.
  - In February 2023, 12 more cheetahs were brought from South Africa.
- During the meeting, the chief minister directed officials to conduct a study on the possibilities of bringing rhinos and other rare and endangered wild animals to the forests of Madhya Pradesh.
- Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary in Mandsaur district is around 270 km from Kuno National Park in Sheopur.
  - The second home for cheetahs is spread over 64 sq km.

#### **Kanha Tiger Reserve**

- It stretches over an area of 940 square km in the two districts Mandla and Balaghat of Madhya Pradesh.
- The present-day Kanha area was divided into two sanctuaries, Hallon and Banjar. Kanha National Park was created in 1955 and in 1973 was made the Kanha Tiger Reserve.
  - Kanha National Park is the largest National Park in Central India.

### Satpura Tiger Reserve

- Satpura Tiger Reserve, is in the Hoshangabad district of Madhya Pradesh. Famous as a tiger conservation center, this area is also rich in wildlife and plant diversity.
- Apart from the tiger, various wildlife including leopard, Indian bison, Indian giant squirrel, sambar, chital, deer, nilgai, langur, bear, wild boar are found here.
- It has more than 300 caves of historical and archaeological importance.

## Sanjay Tiger Reserves

- Sanjay-Dubri National Park and Tiger Reserve was established in 1975 to conserve the biodiversity rich forest area of the district. Comprising an Evergreen Sal forest.
- The major species found are tiger, Sloth bear, Chital, Nilgai, Chinkara, Sambar (limited to hilly terrain and in very small number), leopard, Dhole (wild dog), Jungle Cat, Hyena, Porcupine, Jackal, Fox, Indian Wolf, Indian Python Four-horned Antelope and Barking

# Cheetah

Common Name - Cheetah

Scientific Name - Acinonyx jubatus

- · Acinonyx jubatus jubatus (African Cheetah)
- · Acinonyx jubatus venaticus (Asiatic Cheetah)



#### Reintroduction of Cheetah to India:

- The "Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in India" was released by MoEF&CC at the 19th meeting of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) (January 2022).
- Such a plan was first proposed in 2009.
- In September 2022, eight cheetahs landed in India from Namibia.
  - The 8 cheetahs have been relocated to the Kuno-Palpur National Park, Madhya Pradesh.
- The relocation of cheetahs to India from Namibia is the world's first inter- continental large wild carnivore translocation project.

Slightly brownish and golden skin; thicker than the Asiatic Cheetahs

More prominent spots and lines on the face

Found all over the African continent

**IUCN Red List Status - Vulnerable** 



#### **African Cheetah**

Slightly smaller than the African ones.

Pale yellowish fawn coloured skin - more fur under body, belly specifically.

Found only in Iran; the country claims there are only 12 of them left. **Year 1952** – Asiatic Cheetah officially **declared extinct from India.** 

**IUCN Red List Status - Critically Endangered** 

**Asiatic Cheetah** 





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