Blackbuck

Prelims: *Current events of national importance | Conservation*

Why in News?

Blackbucks once extinct in Chhattisgarh since 1927, are steadily reclaiming their habitat following a reintroduction program launched in 2018.

- **Common Name –** Blackbuck is a Medium-sized antelope native to India and Nepal.
- **Scientific Name –** *Antilope cervicapra.*
- **Genus –** Antilope.
- **Kingdom –** Animalia.
- **Family –** Bovidae.
- **Habitat –** Open grasslands, scrublands, and lightly forested areas.
- **Distribution –** Indian subcontinent.
- **Morphology**
  - **Males –** Distinctive spiraled horns, dark brown to black coat.
  - **Females –** Fawn-colored, usually hornless.



- **Diet – Herbivorous** – Coarse grasses, pods, leaves.
- **Reintroduction in Chhattisgarh –** Under scientific wildlife management

under Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
    - **First Release (2018) –** 77 blackbucks (50 from Delhi, 27 from Bilaspur Zoo).
    - **Current Population (2026)** – 190 (130 wild + 60 in enclosures).
- **Monitoring –** Pan-Tilt-Zoom (PTZ) Infra-Red Cameras, daily patrolling by forest guards.
- **Future –** Introduction in *Gomardha Wildlife Sanctuary, Sarangarh-Bilaigarh district.*
- **Conservation Status**
    - **IUCN Status –** Least Concern
    - **CITES –** Appendix III (India)
    - **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 –** Schedule I
- **Threats**
    - Habitat loss due to agriculture and urbanization.
    - Poaching for meat and horns.
    - Human-wildlife conflict in farming areas.

Reference

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