Delhi Zoo's new conservation plan

Why in News?

Prelims - Biodiversity, Environmental Ecology

Mains Paper 3- Conservation

The National Zoological Park (NZP) in Delhi is exploring the possibility of setting up an on-site wildlife biobank in collaboration with the Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad.

- The proposed facility is expected to collect and preserve genetic material DNA, tissues, reproductive cells from animals at the zoo.
- The initiative is part of a broader effort led by the Central Zoo Authority (CZA) to strengthen ex-situ conservation in Indian zoos.
- The Biobank is expected to follow a model already implemented at the Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park in Darjeeling.
- The samples collected are intended strictly for research and regulated breeding purposes, under the supervision of the CZA and CCMB, as third-party usage requires explicit approval.
- Delhi zoo was among six zoos that had been identified by the CZA to join the Consortium of Indian Zoos for Biobanking of Wildlife Genetic Resources under a pilot project.
- The programme was built on a tripartite agreement signed in 2019 between the CZA, CCMB-LaCONES (Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Species), and the selected zoos.
- Under this agreement, zoos, including Delhi's NZP, have been encouraged to collect biological samples from deceased animals, as well as from live animals during health interventions.
    - It is for submission to the National Wildlife Genetic Resource Bank (NWGRB) at the CCMB's laboratory.
- **National Zoological Park -** It is home to several endangered species listed under ***Schedules I and II*** of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972.
- These include the Asiatic Lion, Bengal Tiger, Indian Elephant, Indian Rhinoceros (Greater One-Horned Rhino), Sloth Bear, Lion-tailed Macaque, Indian Wolf, Indian Bison (Gaur), Dhole (Asiatic Wild Dog), Eld's Deer, Four-horned Antelope, Himalayan Black Bear, Marsh Crocodile, Gharial, Indian Rock Python, and Spectacled Cobra.

Reference

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