Greater One-Horned Rhinoceros Born at Chester Zoo

Prelims: *Current events of national and international importance | Species*

Why in news?

A greater one-horned rhinoceros calf was born at Chester Zoo in the United Kingdom on 11 October 2026, following a pregnancy of around 15 months, captured on CCTV cameras.

- **Scientific name** – Rhinoceros unicornis.
- **Family** – Rhinocerotidae.
- **Distribution** – Native to the Indian subcontinent and found in India and Nepal.
- **Habitats** – It inhabits wetlands, riverine grasslands and adjoining forests.
- India's major habitats include Kaziranga, Pobitora, Orang and Manas in Assam, Jaldapara and Gorumara in West Bengal, and Dudhwa in Uttar Pradesh.

Key features

- The greater one-horned rhino is the largest rhino species in Asia.
- **Appearance** – It has a single horn made of keratin and thick, folded skin that gives an armour-like appearance.
- **Size & Weight** – It stands up to 1.8m at the shoulder and weighs more than two tonnes as an adult.
- It is a strong swimmer and primarily a grazer, and calves remain with their mothers during their early years.
- **Population** – Around 4,000 individuals are estimated to remain in the wild, with a large share concentrated in a limited number of protected areas, especially in India.



- **Conservation status**
  - IUCN – Vulnerable
  - CITES – Appendix I.

    - Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 – Schedule 1.
- **Threats** – Habitat loss, poaching, etc.

The Chester Zoo calf forms part of a European conservation-breeding programme intended to maintain genetic diversity in human care; it is not an addition to the wild population.

Reference

Down to Earth | Rare greater one-horned rhino born at Chester Zoo, birth captured on CCTV

