Kuno National Park

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

Why in News?

A South African cheetah, Gamini, gave birth to three cubs in Kuno National Park, raising India's total cheetah population to 38.

- **Location –** It is a protected area in the Kuno Wildlife Division of Sheopur district, Madhya Pradesh.
  - It is a ***part of the Central Indian Vindhyan Hills.***
- **Notified in –** 1981 (as Kuno Wildlife Sanctuary)
- Upgraded to a National Park in December 2018.
- **Vegetation –** Southern & Northern Tropical Dry Deciduous Forests, Dry Savannah Forest & Grassland and Tropical Riverine Forest.
  - **Dominant trees –** Kardhai, Salai and Khair trees.
- **River system –** The Kuno River flows through the park as the main water source for the forest.
- ***Kuno River is a tributary of the Chambal River.***
- **Fauna – Herbivores –** Spotted deer (Chital), Sambar, Barking deer, Chousingha, Nilgai, Chinkara, Blackbuck, Gaur.
- **Carnivores –** Leopard, Wild dog (Dhole), Striped Hyaena, Indian Wolf, Jackal, Jungle/Desert cat.
- **Others –** Sloth bear, Indian fox, Civets, Mongooses, Indian hare, Porcupine, Tree shrew, Langur, Rhesus monkey.
- **Historical sites –** Kuno National Park has forts such as Palpur, Amet, and Maitoni, remnants of former princely rulers.

Quick Facts

Project Cheetah
• It is India's ambitious cheetah relocation program and the 1st intercontinental reintroduction of a wild, large carnivore species.
• **Launched on –** September 17, 2022, with the translocation of the first batch of cheetahs from Namibia.
• **Aim –** To bring in 5–10 animals every year, over the next decade, until a self-sustaining population of cheetahs is established.
• **Implementing body –** The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change.
• **Assisted by –** The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF).
Asiatic cheetah
• **Scientific name –** *Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*
• **Distribution –** Its range once spread from the Arabian Peninsula and Near East to northern South Asia.
• **IUCN –** Critically Endangered.
• Asiatic cheetahs, once abundant in India, were officially declared extinct by the Indian government in 1952.
African cheetah
• **Scientific name –** *Acinonyx jubatus jubatus*, native to East and Southern Africa.
• **Distribution –** Lives mainly in grasslands, scrublands and open forests across Botswana, Namibia, and South Africa.
• **IUCN Status –** Vulnerable.

Reference

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