

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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