

Project cheetah

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Why in News?

The third anniversary of India's cheetah reintroduction program (Project Cheetah) was observed on September 17, 2025.

- **Project Cheetah** - It is India's ambitious cheetah relocation program and the **1st intercontinental** reintroduction of a wild, large carnivore species.
- **Launched in - 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.
- **Need for introduction** - To establish a **viable cheetah metapopulation in India** and provide space for the expansion of the cheetah within its historical range.
- It is a **flagship species**; the conservation of cheetah will revive grassland-forests habitat.
- **Implementing body** - The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) under the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change.
- **Assisted by** - The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF).
- **Reintroduction so far** - The African cheetahs are translocated from the forests of **South Africa and Namibia** to the **Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh**.
- The cheetahs were relocated from Kuno National Park to **Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary** in Madhya Pradesh, making the sanctuary the **second home of the species** since their reintroduction.
- As of 2025, between Kuno and Gandhisagar, **India currently has 27 cheetahs**.
- **Other potential sites to support cheetahs** - Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary and Bhainsrorgarh Wildlife Sanctuary, Madhya Pradesh; Shahgarh bulge in Jaisalmer and Mukundara Tiger Reserve, Rajasthan.

Quick Facts

Asiatic cheetah

- **Scientific name** - *Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*, the planet's fastest land animal, ***currently surviving in Iran***.
- **Distribution** - Its range once spread from the Arabian Peninsula and the Near East to the Caspian region, and northern South Asia.
- **IUCN** - Critically Endangered.
- Asiatic cheetahs, once abundant in India, was officially declared ***extinct*** by the Indian government in **1952**.

African cheetah

- **Scientific name** - *Acinonyx jubatus jubatus*, also called Southeast African cheetah, native to East and Southern Africa.
- **Distribution** - The Southern African cheetah lives mainly in the grasslands, scrublands and open forests across the continent, especially in the countries of Botswana, Namibia and South Africa.
- **IUCN Status** - Vulnerable

References

1. [The Hindu | September 17 - Third anniversary of Project Cheetah](#)
2. [NTCA | Project Tiger](#)