World Rhino Day & its Conservation Measures

Prelims: Current events of national and international importance | Species

Why in news?

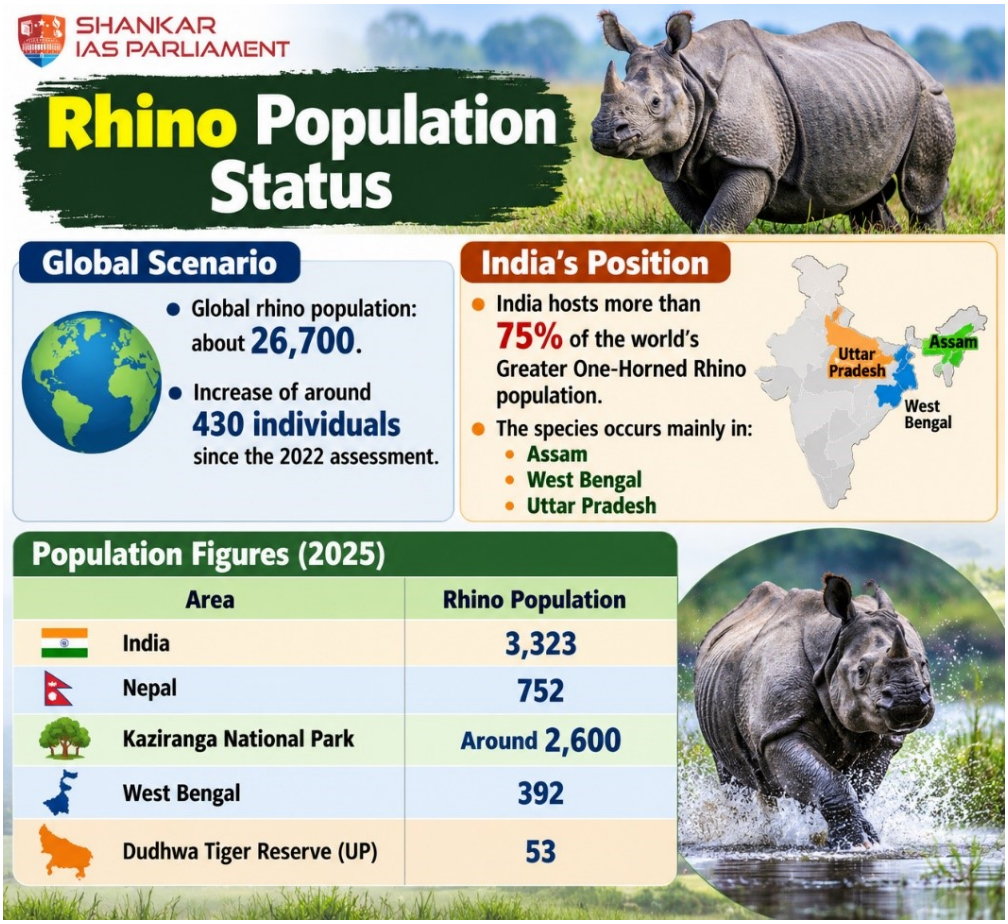
Prime Minister of India highlights India's commitment to protecting the greater one-horned rhinoceros on World Rhino Day.

- **World Rhino Day** – It is celebrated globally every year on September 22 to raise awareness for the five remaining rhinoceros species and their conservation.
- **Theme for 2026** – "Keep the Five Alive".
- **5 Rhino Species** – Black rhino, White rhino, Greater one-horned (Indian) rhino, Sumatran rhino, and Javan rhino.
- **Conservation Status of Rhinos**

Species	IUCN Status
Greater One-Horned Rhino	Vulnerable
Black Rhino	Critically Endangered
Javan Rhino	Critically Endangered
Sumatran Rhino	Critically Endangered
White rhino	Near Threatened (NT)

India's measures to conserve Rhinos

- **Rhino DNA Index System (RhODIS)** – It is used to create genetic profiles of rhinos and support wildlife crime investigations, help officials track parentage, assess genetic diversity and reduce the risk of inbreeding in isolated populations.
- 1340 DNA samples have so far been collected and called an "outstanding performance" under the RhoDIS programme.
- **Rhino population status** – According to a 2025 International Rhino Foundation report shared with the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) –



- **National Rhino Conservation Strategy (NRCS)** – Launched in Feb 2019 with a focus on population recovery, expanding the species' range, strengthening protection and improving transboundary cooperation with Nepal and Bhutan.
- It also provided dedicated funding for rhino conservation (Earlier, there was no specific fund allocation for rhinos).
- **Manas Rhino Conservation Success Story** – Manas National Park, Assam - now home to 50 rhinos; 20 years ago, it had no one-horned rhinos due to rampant poaching between 1989 and 2001.
- **Under Indian Rhino Vision 2020** – A rhino reintroduction programme launched in 2006 helped increase the population to about 48 rhinos, and the park has also recorded three consecutive years of zero poaching.
- **India-Bhutan Cooperation** – Some rhinos from Manas are frequently moving into Bhutan, creating a need for a joint conservation mechanism between India and Bhutan.
- **Shared Transboundary Landscape** – Manas Tiger Reserve (2,837 sq km) & Manas National Park (core area of 500 sq km) of Assam, India and Royal Manas National Park (1,057 sq km), Bhutan.

References

1. The Hindu | World Rhino Day focus on India-Bhutan joint conservation
2. TOI | World Rhino Day

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