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## Campaign to Remove Lantana: Rajasthan

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### Why in News

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A special drive to **uproot the invasive Lantana bushes** in the **Sajjangarh Wildlife Sanctuary** in Rajasthan's Udaipur district has been carried out along with the **plantation of native species** on the cleared patches of land.

This has helped in **ecological restoration of grasslands and saved biodiversity.**



### Key Points

- **Lantana:**

- *Lantana camara* is a small perennial shrub, which forms **extensive, dense and impenetrable thickets**.
- It is **native to Central and South America**.
- It is an **invasive species** which was introduced in tropical regions as an **ornamental plant** (introduced in India in 1807).
- It is generally **deleterious to biodiversity** and is an **agricultural weed**.
- **Impact:**
  - The thickets covered vast tracts of land, **stopping the natural light and nutrition** for other flora and fauna.
  - The **toxic substance in its foliage and ripe berries** affected the animals.
  - With the herbivores not getting sufficient forage, the **prey base for carnivorous animals was declining**, leading to **ecological disturbances in the food chain**.
  - It has also invaded other wildlife reserves, river banks and the **Project Tiger** areas.
  - In some regions, the plant has **invaded pastures** and shrunk the cattle grazing areas, affecting the livelihood of villagers.

- **Sajjagarh Wildlife Sanctuary:**

- **Location:** Udaipur (Rajasthan)

- **History:** It is a part of **Sajjagarh Palace** (also known as Monsoon Palace) built in 1884.

The Palace derived its name from Maharana Sajjan Singh, one of the rulers of the **Mewar dynasty**.



- **Area:** 5.19 sq. Km

- **Flora and Fauna:** Animals like chitals, panthers, hares, blue bulls (Nilgais), jackals, wild boars, hyenas, and sambhar.

More than 279 Plant Species.

- Famous for **Long-billed vulture**, commonly known as the **Indian vulture**.

- Scientific Name: *Gyps indicus*

- **IUCN Red List Status:** Critically Endangered

- **CITES Status:** Appendix II

- **Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 Status:** Schedule I

## **Invasive Species**

- An invasive species is an organism **that is not indigenous, or native, to a particular area and causes harm.**
- They are capable of causing **extinctions of native plants and animals, reducing biodiversity, competing with native organisms for limited resources, and altering habitats.**
- They can be **introduced to an area by ship ballast water, accidental release, and most often, by humans.**

**Source: TH**