



## Exotic Animals

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### Why in News

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Recently, the Delhi High Court directed the Centre to take a decision on **framing rules to confer protection for exotic animals** that are currently **not under the purview of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**.

- The court's order came in response to a petition filed by animal rights group, **People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)** India about the status of a male **hippopotamus** rescued from the Asiad Circus in Uttar Pradesh.
- Earlier in June 2020, the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change** issued an **advisory to streamline and formalise the process of importing live exotic animals**.

### Key Points

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- **Exotic Animals:**
  - The term exotic does not have a set definition but it usually **refers to a wild animal or one that is more unusual and rare than normal domesticated pets** like cats or dogs.
  - These are those **species which are not usually native to an area** and are introduced to an area by humans.
- **Provisions Related to Illegal Trade of Animals:**
  - Illegally traded exotic animals are confiscated under **Section 111 of the Customs Act, 1962** which is read with the provision of the **Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)** and the Foreign Trade Policy (Import-Export Policy) of India.
    - CITES is **an international agreement between governments**. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten the survival of the species. **India** is a party to it.
  - Also, **Sections 48 and 49 of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972** prohibit trade or commerce in wild animals, animal articles or trophies.

## Hippopotamus



- **About:**

- Hippopotamus, **also called hippo or water horse**, is an **amphibious** African ungulate mammal.
- It is considered to be the **second largest land animal** (after the elephant).
- Hippos are **well adapted to aquatic life**. The ears, eyes, and nostrils are located high on the head so that the rest of the body may remain submerged.
- Hippopotamuses were extinct in northern Africa by 1800 and south of Natal and the Transvaal by 1900. They are still **fairly common in East Africa, but populations continue to decrease continent wide**.

- **Scientific Name:**

*Hippopotamus amphibius*.

- **Threats:**

- **Human-wildlife conflict** and habitat encroachment.
- Often **killed for their meat** under the guise of protection, and they are also hunted for **hippo fat and their ivory canine teeth**.

**Source: DTE**