



Cheetah Dies at Kuno National Park

Why in News?

Recently, **another Namibian cheetah dies** in Madhya Pradesh's [Kuno National Park](#).

- This is the **tenth death among cheetahs** brought from **South Africa's Namibia in 2022**.

Key Points

- Cheetahs have been extinct in India for around 70 years. [Project Cheetah](#) is an initiative to reintroduce the species into the country.
- According to the [Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change \(MoEFCC\)](#), this is the **first intercontinental reintroduction of a wild, large carnivore species**.
- The **Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF)**, a [non-profit organisation in Namibia](#), was invited by the government of India **to participate in a programme to reintroduce cheetahs** to India.
- The then MoEF shared the first overview of Project Cheetah in September 2010.
 - This **outlined the current status of cheetahs around the world**, the **benefits and complexities of reintroducing cheetahs** into India, and areas where they may be reintroduced, along with information about the task force.
 - In **January 2020**, the **Supreme Court approved the pilot programme** to reintroduce cheetahs into the country.
 - In **July 2020**, **India and the Republic of Namibia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**, where the Namibian government agreed to donate the eight felines to the programme.
- **Five female and three male Southeast African cheetahs** between the **ages of four and six** were **brought to India** and kept in quarantine **in Kuno National Park (KNP) in Madhya Pradesh**.
- In **February 2023**, **12 more cheetahs were brought from South Africa** to expand on the project. The MoEFCC further planned "to translocate a further 12 annually for the next eight to 10 years,"

Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF)

- The CCF is a **research and lobby institution in Namibia concerned with the study and sustenance of the country's cheetah population**, the largest and healthiest in the world.
- Its Research and Education Centre, **located east of Otjiwarongo**.
- The CCF **was founded in 1990** by conservation biologist Laurie Marker who won the 2010 Tyler Prize for her efforts in Namibia.

Kuno National Park

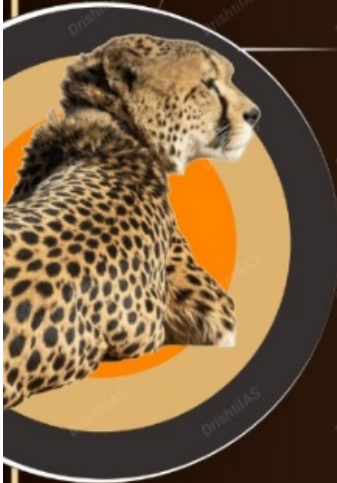
- Kuno National Park which is **located in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur district** is home to several cheetahs translocated from Namibia and South Africa.
- **Project Cheetah in India formally commenced on September 17, 2022**, to restore the population of cheetahs, which were declared extinct in the country in 1952.

Cheetah

Common Name - Cheetah

Scientific Name - *Acinonyx jubatus*

- *Acinonyx jubatus jubatus* (African Cheetah)
- *Acinonyx jubatus venaticus* (Asiatic Cheetah)



Reintroduction of Cheetah to India:

- The "Action Plan for Introduction of Cheetah in India" was released by MoEF&CC at the 19th meeting of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) (January 2022).
 - Such a plan was first proposed in 2009.
- In September 2022, eight cheetahs landed in India from Namibia.
 - The 8 cheetahs have been relocated to the Kuno-Palpur National Park, Madhya Pradesh.
 - The relocation of cheetahs to India from Namibia is the world's first inter- continental large wild carnivore translocation project.

Slightly brownish and golden skin; thicker than the Asiatic Cheetahs

More prominent spots and lines on the face

Found all over the African continent

IUCN Red List Status - Vulnerable



African Cheetah

Slightly smaller than the African ones.

Pale yellowish fawn coloured skin - more fur under body, belly specifically.

Found only in Iran; the country claims there are only 12 of them left. Year 1952 - Asiatic Cheetah officially declared extinct from India.

IUCN Red List Status - Critically Endangered



Asiatic Cheetah



Drishti IAS



