



Cheetahs Spotted Near Pagara Dam

Why in News?

[Cheetahs](#) from [Kuno National Park](#) appeared near Pagara Dam in Madhya Pradesh's Morena district, prompting the forest department to urge people to stay alert.

Key Points

- **About Kuno National Park:** Located in Madhya Pradesh's Sheopur and Morena districts, Kuno National Park was originally declared a [wildlife sanctuary](#) in 1981, it gained [national park status in 2018](#) due to its ecological importance.
 - The National Park is named after **Kuno River**, a major tributary of **the Chambal river**, and it consists mainly of dry deciduous forests. It is situated in **the Vindhya mountain range**.
 - Kuno National Park is the habitat for **cheetahs** relocated from **Namibia and South Africa under Project Cheetah**.
 - **Fauna:** Leopard, striped hyena, Indian wolf, [blackbuck](#), sambar deer, [gharial](#) (Kuno River).
 - **Flora:** The primary tree species are Kardhaai, Khair and Salai .
- **Project Cheetah:** Launched in 2022, aimed at reintroducing cheetahs extinct in India since 1952, the project involves translocating cheetahs from South Africa and Namibia to Kuno National Park.
 - The project is implemented by **the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)** in collaboration with the Madhya Pradesh Forest Department, [Wildlife Institute of India \(WII\)](#) and cheetah experts from Namibia and South Africa.
 - Phase-2 of the project plans to source cheetahs from Kenya and introduce them to Kuno and [Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary](#).

National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)

- The NTCA is a **statutory body** constituted under the enabling provisions of the [Wildlife \(Protection\) Act, 1972](#), as amended in 2006. It functions under the **Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change**, and NTCA was established in 2005 following the recommendations of the Tiger Task Force.
 - The NTCA was created to strengthen tiger conservation in India, exercising powers and performing functions as assigned under the said Act

Wildlife Institute of India

- Established in 1982, it is an autonomous institution under the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**.
- It is based in **Dehradun, Uttarakhand**. The Wildlife Institute of India offers training programs, academic courses, and advisory in wildlife research and management.

Cheetah

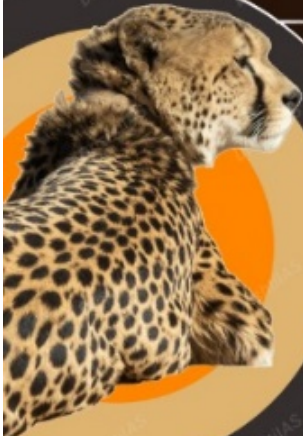
Common Name - Cheetah

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.

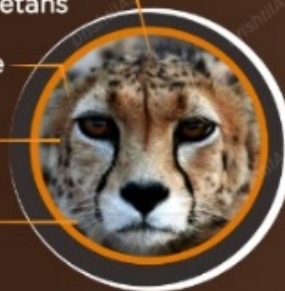


Slightly brownish and golden skin; thicker than the Asiatic Cheetahs

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



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