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1. PM Narendra Modi releases 8 Cheetahs in MP's Kuno National Park (Sept. 17, 2022)

The first batch of cheetahs, translocated from Namibia to India, has been released into the Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 17.

IMPORTANT FACTS -

- Cheetahs (**5 females and 3 males**) have been brought from Namibia in Africa as part of '**Project Cheetah**'.
- Eight cheetahs were brought in a cargo plane to Gwalior as part of an intercontinental **cheetah translocation project**.
- Later, helicopters from the Indian Air Force transported the cheetahs from Gwalior Air Force Station to **Kuno National Park**.
- This is the first time in the world that a large carnivore has been transferred from one continent to another.
- The cheetahs have been brought under a memorandum of understanding signed earlier this year.

Reintroduction Action Plan :

- Reintroduction of a species means releasing it in an area where it is capable of surviving.
- Under the scheme, 50 cheetahs will be released in various national parks of the country over a period of 5 years.

Extinction of cheetahs :

- The last cheetah of the country was found dead in the year **1947 in Chhattisgarh** and in the year **1952** it was declared extinct in the country.
- Habitat loss, conflict with humans, poaching and high susceptibility to diseases are the major causes of their extinction.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION -

About 'Project Cheetah' :

- This is a one of its kind project in which a species is being brought out of the country (from **South Africa / Namibia**) and restored to the country.

- The subspecies of the extinct cheetah in India was the **Asiatic cheetah (Acinonyx jubatus venaticus)** and the subspecies of the cheetah being brought back to the country is the **African cheetah (Acinonyx jubatus jubatus)**.
- Research has shown that the genes of both these subspecies are similar.

2. Indian Oil to give Rs 50 crore for Cheetah reintroduction project (Aug. 3, 2022)

According to an agreement signed on July 2 with the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), IndianOil will contribute Rs 50 crore over four years to the government's cheetah reintroduction project.

Important facts

- IndianOil is the first corporate that has come forward to support "Project Cheetah" under CSR, as the project is not only of national importance, but is also essential to balance the ecosystem.
- IndianOil will contribute Rs 50.22 crore over 4 years for project components such as pyre logging, its habitat management and conservation, environmental development, staff training and veterinary health care.
- Under this cheetah reintroduction project, 8-10 cheetahs will be brought from Namibia and South Africa and kept in Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh.
- Last month, India and Namibia signed an agreement to reintroduce cheetahs that were declared extinct in the country in 1952.
- The first batch of four male and equal number of female cheetahs will reach India from Namibia by August 15.
- The cheetah is the only large carnivore that has been completely wiped out from India, mainly due to over-hunting and habitat loss.

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National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA)

- It has been constituted under Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

- Authority consists of the Minister in charge of the Ministry of Environment and Forests as Chairperson, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Environment and Forests as Vice-Chairperson.
- Its members include three Members of Parliament, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests and other members.
- Bhupender Yadav is the chairperson of NTCA.
- Ashwini Kumar Choubey is the Vice- Chairperson.

3. India And Namibia Sign MoU For Wildlife Conservation (July 20, 2022)

India and Namibia on 20 July signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Wildlife Conservation and Sustainable Biodiversity Use to place the Cheetah in the Historic Category in India.

Thrust areas of the MoU

- Biodiversity conservation with a special focus on the conservation and restoration of cheetahs in areas where they became extinct.
- Exchange of expertise and capabilities with the aim of promoting cheetah conservation between the two countries.
- Wildlife conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity by sharing good practices
- Technological applications, mechanisms of livelihood generation for local communities living in wildlife habitats and sustainable management of biodiversity.
- Cooperation in climate change, environmental governance, environmental impact assessment, pollution and waste management and other areas of mutual interest.
- Training and exchange of trained personnel in wildlife management including sharing of technical expertise, wherever relevant.

About Cheetah

- The cheetah is one of the oldest of the big cat species, whose ancestors can be traced back more than five million years to the Miocene era.
- It is the world's fastest land mammal that lives in Africa and Asia.
- Human-wildlife conflict, habitat loss and hunting and illegal trafficking are the reasons for their extinction in India.

Cheetah reintroduction project in India

- The main goal of the project is to establish viable cheetah metapopulation in India that allows the cheetah to perform its functional role as a top predator.
- The surveys were conducted at 10 locations between 2010 and 2012.

- Under this project, 50 cheetahs will be introduced in various national parks of the country over a period of 5 years.

4. Hurun India Future Unicorn Index 2022 (July 6, 2022)

According to the findings of the recently released Hurun India Future Unicorn Index 2022 by Hurun Research Institute, Bengaluru continues to be the start-up capital of India. It is home to 46 possible unicorns.

- After Bangalore, Delhi NCR has 25 potential unicorns.
- Mumbai is in third place with 16 possible unicorns.
- **Important facts of the index**
 - According to this index, there will be 122 new unicorns in India in the next two to four years.
 - Startups Zepto, Shiprocket, Turtlemint are in the top list of potential unicorns according to this report.
- **Classification of companies**
 - **Will-Be Unicorns** - Companies that were founded after 2000 and were valued at least US\$1 billion.
 - **Gazelles** - Companies that are likely to become unicorns in the next two years.
 - The Gazelles are expected to be valued between USD 500 million and USD 1 billion.
 - The Gazelles pack is led by Shiprocket, a five-year-old logistics tech start-up.
 - Shiprocket is followed by Zepto, Turtlemint, Ather Energy and Vivriti Capital.
 - The other five start-ups on the list include Ninjakart, Rapido, Dunzo, Cleartax and Twin Health.
 - **Cheetah** - The start-up that could turn into a unicorn in the next four years.
 - Pepperfry leads the cheetah pack. After this comes the number of Juspay and Mswipe Technologies.
 - Sugar Cosmetics, ZestMoney, Waycool, QMath, Bluestone, Winzo are other startups in this list.
- **What is a Unicorn Company?**
 - A unicorn is a private start-up company, valued at over USD 1 billion.

5. Captain Abhilasha Barak becomes first woman combat pilot in Army (May 26, 2022)

On May 25, Captain Abhilasha Barak from Haryana became the first woman officer to join the Army Aviation Corps as a Combat Aviator.

- She was awarded the prestigious wing along with 36 other Army pilots by the Director General of Army Aviation and the Colonel Commandant during a ceremony in Nashik.

- **About Captain Abhilasha Barak**

- She is an alumna of The Lawrence School, Sanawar, Himachal Pradesh.
- She completed her B.Tech in Electronics and Communication Engineering from Delhi Technological University in 2016.
- She joined his first job in Deloitte, USA.
- In 2018, she was inducted into the Indian Army from the Officers Training Academy, Chennai.
- While serving with the Corps of Army Air Defence, he was selected by President Ram Nath Kovind as a contingent commander for the presentation of colors for Army Air Defence.
- After completing his training from Officers Training Academy, Chennai in 2018, she joined the Army Aviation Corps.

- **About Army Aviation Corps**

- Established on 1 November 1986, the Army Aviation Corps was first deployed in Jaffna in 1987 in India's fight against the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) in what is known as 'Operation Pawan'.
- This corps flies Chetak and Cheetah helicopters developed by HAL.
- Presently, this Corps and its helicopters are serving in high altitude areas like Siachen Glacier.
- It is one of the youngest corps of the Indian Army and operates a fleet of helicopters like Chetak, Cheetah, Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH), Dhruv and Rudra.
- Apart from attack, these helicopters also play a major role in observation, reconnaissance operations, evacuation of casualties, drop of goods or relief material as well as relief and rescue operations.

6. Deoghar ropeway accident: IAF completes rescue operation (April 13, 2022)

Indian Air Force in coordination with NDRF, local administration and Army completed the rescue operations of stranded people in ropeway service located in Trikut hills in Deoghar district of Jharkhand on 12 April 2022.

The IAF used two Mi-17V5s, one Mi-17, an Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) and a Cheetah helicopter to fly for more than 26 hours in this mission.

- A total of 70 people were trapped when two cable cars collided on Trikut, the highest ropeway in Jharkhand's Deoghar, at around 5 pm on April 10, 2022, bringing operations to a complete halt.
- To save the people trapped in this incident, the rescue work continued from the day of 11 April till the morning of 12 April.
- However, now the rescue operation has been completed and people were evacuated safely. But during this 3 people died, out of which 2 people fell during the rescue operation.
- Drones sent food and water to those trapped in the cable car. The rescue operation had to be called off after dark on Monday.
- Taking suo motu cognizance of the Deoghar ropeway accident, the Jharkhand High Court has ordered an inquiry into the matter and asked the state government to file a detailed inquiry report before April 26.
- NDRF, Indian Army, Air Force and ITBP personnel were involved in this relief and rescue operation which lasted for about 40 hours. Those who safely rescued the people trapped in the cable car.

7. Cheetah to be Introduced in India (Jan. 7, 2022)

An Action Plan regarding the introduction of Cheetah in India was released by the Union Minister for Environment and Forest Bhupendra Yadav .The action plan was released at the 19th Meeting of the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA).

- The Union Environment Minister announced that 50 Cheetahs will be introduced in the different National Parks in the country in a span of 5 years.
- The Cheetah, which is the fastest animal on land, was declared extinct in 1952 in India .
- **The African Cheetah from South Africa was expected to be reintroduced in Madhya Pradesh-based Kuno National Park in November 2021, but it was delayed due to the Corona pandemic.**

8. India added 33 Unicorns in 2021- the highest ever (Dec. 23, 2021)

To the point:

- **Hurun Research Institute** has released the **Hurun India Future Unicorn List 2021.**
- According to the report **India has displaced the United Kingdom** to be **third in the list** by **adding 33 "unicorns"** in a single year.
- The United States and China occupy the first two ranks. **The top-two occupants are home to 74% of the unicorn universe.**
- The U.S. added 254 unicorns and now totals 487 companies in the coveted list, while China added 74 to take its tally to 301 start-ups having a valuation of more than \$1 billion.
- The **U.K. added only 15 unicorns to take its total to 39**, and hence got displaced by India.

- **India is in the midst of a start-up boom**, more than doubling its unicorns to take its official tally of unicorns to 54, and overtake the U.K. to third place in the world.

Hurun India Future Unicorn List:

This list highlights **India's fast growing start-up ecosystem to investors, governments, family offices, aspiring entrepreneurs and the international community.**

- Hurun Research Institute has classified these start-ups as:
 - **Unicorns** (start-ups founded after the year 2000 with a valuation of US\$1bn),
 - **Gazelles** (start-ups that are most likely to go Unicorn in the next 2 years) and
 - **Cheetahs** (could go Unicorn in the next 4 years).

The evaluation is based on regulatory filings, feedback from other entrepreneurs and some of the active India-focused VC funds and angel investors.