Place in News - Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary

Context: The state of Madhya Pradesh has launched a cheetah mating program within the Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary, aiming to establish a second sustainable habitat for cheetahs following Kuno National Park.

About Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary:

➢ A designated sanctuary recognized for its diverse ecosystems and mixed deciduous forests.

➢ **Location:** Positioned on the northern edge of the Mandsaur and Neemuch districts in Madhya Pradesh, adjacent to Rajasthan.

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- **Established:** Officially recognized in 1974 and expanded in 1983.
- **Geography:** Encompassing an area of 368.62 square kilometers, divided by the Chambal River, featuring grasslands and dry forests that provide an ideal habitat for cheetahs.

Flora & Fauna:

- Characterized by the presence of Khair, Salai, Kardhai, Tendu, and Palash trees.
- Wildlife includes chinkara, sambar, nilgai, leopard, wild dog, otter, peacock, and mugger crocodile.

Cultural Significance:

- Home to the Chaturbhujnath temple, Hinglajgarh Fort, Bhadkaji rock paintings, and Dharmrajeshwar caves, highlighting its cultural heritage.

About the Cheetah Mating Programme at Gandhi Sagar:

- A scientific breeding program designed to mate relocated female cheetahs with the existing male coalition in Gandhi Sagar.
- **Aim:** To develop a self-sustaining population of cheetahs, lessen reliance on Kuno, and restore the grassland ecology of India.

Features:

- **Pre-Mating Monitoring:** Males and females are housed in separate enclosures; their behavior is monitored to prevent aggression (drawing lessons from the 2023 incident at Kuno).
- **Safe Denning Sites:** The relocation of 17 leopards has been carried out to minimize predation risks.

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➢ **Nutritional Management:** Prey supplementation and a provision of 15–20 kg of feed every 3–4 days during the gestation period.

➢ **Veterinary Surveillance:** Biweekly checks for pregnancy, remote monitoring of dens, and health assessments of cubs after birth.

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