Milestone in Wildlife Conservation: First Captive-Bred Great Indian Bustards Released into Wild

For the first time in India, two captive-bred male Great Indian Bustards (GIBs) were released into the wild at Desert National Park, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan under the Bustard Recovery Programme.

The Great Indian Bustard (Ardeotis nigriceps) is one of the heaviest flying birds in the world, categorized as Critically Endangered, with fewer than 150 individuals remaining globally.

KEY EXAM POINTS

- The project is implemented by MoEFCC, Rajasthan Forest Department, and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII).
- Funded by the National CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority) with technical backing from the International Fund for Houbara Conservation (IFHC), Abu Dhabi.
- Desert National Park in Jaisalmer contains the last viable wild breeding population of GIBs in India.
- The birds are fitted with satellite transmitters to monitor post-release survival, foraging behavior, and habitat adaptation.

DID YOU KNOW..!?

IUCN Status: Critically Endangered (CR); listed under Schedule I of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972; Appendix I of CITES.

Primary threats: Collisions with high-voltage overhead power cables in Thar, habitat fragmentation, and feral dog predation.

Supreme Court of India (M.K. Ranjitsinh case) directed undergrounding of power transmission lines across priority bustard habitats.

Syllabus Relevance: Very high recurring question in TNPSC Environment papers (IUCN status, National Parks, endemic species).

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