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## 1 Black Sea (Source: The Indian Express)

- **Location:** Between Eastern Europe and Western Asia
- **Bordering Mountain Ranges:** Pontic, Caucasus, and Crimean Mountains.
- **Connecting Straits**
  - **Dardanelles Strait:** Connects the Sea of Marmara with the Aegean and Mediterranean seas
  - **Bosporus Strait:** Connects the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara
  - **Strait of Kerch:** Connects Black Sea to the Sea of Azov
- **Bordering Countries:** Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Turkey, Bulgaria, and Romania.



## 2 Gharial (Source: Down To Earth)

- **What is it?:** A freshwater crocodilian known for its long, narrow snout and specialized fish-eating habits.
- **Distribution:** Chambal River (Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan).
- **Threats:** Dams, sand mining, pollution
- **Conservation**
  - **IUCN Red List:** Critically Endangered
  - **Wildlife Protection Act, 1972:** Schedule I
  - **CITES:** Appendix I





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### 3 Repo Rate and Reverse Repo Rate (Source: The Hindu)

#### Repo Rate

- Repo rate is the interest rate at which the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) lends short-term funds to commercial banks against government securities.

#### Reverse Repo Rate

- The reverse repo rate is the rate at which the RBI borrows funds from banks by accepting their surplus liquidity against similar collateral.

#### Note

- These are the RBI's quantitative tools to control inflation.



### 4 Cheetah Reintroduction Sites in India and Ecological Impact of Cheetah Reintroduction (Source: The Hindu)

#### Cheetah Reintroduction Sites in India

- **Madhya Pradesh**
  - Kuno National Park
  - Gandhi Sagar National Park
  - Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve



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### Ecological Impact of Cheetah Reintroduction

- **Positive Impact**
  - **Restoration of Neglected Biomes:** Elevates open natural ecosystems (grasslands, scrub forests, and semi-arid tracts) that are frequently mismanaged as "wastelands," using the cheetah as an umbrella species to channel conservation focus into these overlooked habitats.
  - **Trophic Balance:** Re-establishes natural predator-prey dynamics by regulating medium-sized herbivore populations, thereby preventing overgrazing and maintaining vegetative health.
  - **Landscape Resilience:** Enhances dryland ecosystem health, improving groundwater recharge, soil moisture, and carbon sequestration capacity.
  - **Unique Biodiversity Milestone:** Establishes India as the only nation globally to host five major wild cat species concurrently (Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, and Cheetah).
- **Negative Impact**
  - **Habitat Mismatch:** The primary release site (Kuno National Park) is a dry deciduous forest rather than open savanna plains, which can hinder the high-speed cursorial hunting style of cheetahs.
  - **Interspecific Competition:** High densities of resident leopards, wolves, and tigers pose significant predation risks to translocated adults and vulnerable cubs.
  - **Adaptation & Survival Stress:** Translocated animals face novel climatic conditions (such as heavy monsoons), unfamiliar pathogens, and high cub mortality rates.
  - **Human-Wildlife Conflict:** Movement outside protected areas may lead to livestock depredation.

