Environment & Ecology · GS - III

Examine the role of wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centres in elephant conservation in India. Discuss the importance of specialised veterinary care, institutional coordination and ethical wildlife management.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
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MARKS	WORD LIMIT
10	~150 words

Answer Hint

Elephant conservation, Wildlife Protection Act 1972, wildlife rescue centres, veterinary infrastructure, orphaned elephants, rehabilitation, habitat conservation, forest department coordination, animal welfare, ethical management

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Model Answer

Introduction

Elephants are ecologically important mammals that contribute to forest regeneration and ecosystem balance. Injuries, habitat fragmentation, human-elephant conflict and orphaning create significant conservation challenges.

Role of Rescue and Rehabilitation Centres

Specialised facilities provide medical treatment, nutritional support, physiotherapy and rehabilitation to injured or orphaned elephants. The transfer of Maya, an 18-month-old elephant calf from Kerala to Vantara in Jamnagar on 6 November 2026, highlights the role of inter-state collaboration in specialised wildlife healthcare.

Institutional and Ethical Considerations

Effective wildlife care requires coordination between State Forest Departments, veterinary institutions and specialised rescue facilities. Regular medical monitoring, transparent treatment protocols and independent veterinary assessments are essential.

Rehabilitation decisions must prioritise animal welfare, minimise suffering and consider the possibility of eventual return to suitable natural or managed habitats.

Way Forward

India should strengthen wildlife hospitals, train specialised veterinarians, improve rescue infrastructure and develop standardised rehabilitation protocols. Habitat protection and human-elephant conflict mitigation must remain central to conservation policy.

Conclusion

Wildlife rescue centres complement habitat-based conservation. Scientific veterinary care, institutional accountability and ethical management are essential for protecting India's elephant populations.

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