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News: Invasive Chital Population

- The chital (*Axis axis*) population on Bose Island, Andaman and Nicobar Islands has exceeded the ecosystem's carrying capacity, prompting the Andaman and Nicobar Forest Department to consider relocating around 500 deer to a Biological Park in Port Blair.
- It was brought to the Andaman and Nicobar Islands for hunting in the early 1900s by the British.
- Recent studies indicate that the invasive chital species is negatively impacting local flora and fauna, necessitating strategic management measures.

Chital / Spotted deer

- The Chital / Spotted deer is a deer species native to the Indian subcontinent.
- It is the most common deer species in Indian forests.
- **Distribution:** It is widely distributed in Asia, especially in India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan, and a small group in Pakistan.
- **Habitat:** Subtropical grasslands and forests are the favourite habitats of chital
- With a lifespan of about 20 to 30 years, it stands at about 35 inches tall and weighs about 187 pounds.

- It is a slightly reddish brown with white spots on its body.
- Only males have antlers, and their bodies are larger than females.
- Spotted Deers are social animals. They commonly occur in herds of 10 to 50 individuals.
- They mainly feed on grasses throughout the year. Their diets include herbs, shrubs, foliage, and fruits.
- IUCN Red List: Least Concern (LC).