



Union Environment Minister Chairs 43rd Meeting of Central Zoo Authority; Key Discussions held on Ex-Situ Conservation, Management and Evaluation of Zoos across Country

Zoos not just Display Centres but Space for Research and Learning: MoS Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh at 34th Foundation Day of CZA

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Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Bhupender Yadav on Tuesday chaired the 43rd meeting of the Central Zoo Authority (CZA) at the National Zoological Park, New Delhi. In a post on the social media platform 'X', the Minister informed that issues related to ex-situ conservation and the management of zoos across the country were deliberated in detail during the meeting. He said that directions were also issued to complete the second round of Management Effectiveness Evaluation (MEE) of zoos across the country.

On the Foundation Day of Central Zoo Authority, chaired the 43rd Meeting of CZA today in Delhi.

The issue of ex-situ conservation and taking the management of zoos across the country was deliberated in detail. Directions to complete the second round of Management Effectiveness... pic.twitter.com/Ub7uYFW4i1

— Bhupender Yadav (@byadavbjp) February 3, 2026

Significant decisions taken at the meeting included the constitution of a sub-committee to examine and report on the potential of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) contributions for zoos and an enhanced frequency of CZA meetings henceforth, in line with the meetings of the Standing Committee of the National Board for Wildlife.

Shri Yadav also highlighted in the meeting that the MEE of zoos is an evidence-based, comprehensive, holistic and independent exercise that encourages the maintenance of the highest standards in zoos across the country.

It was noted that one of the objectives envisaged in the National Policy on Zoos is to inspire empathy for wild animals among zoo visitors, and to promote understanding and awareness about the need for conservation of natural resources and maintenance of ecological balance. To achieve this, it was

emphasised that outreach activities of zoos should be enhanced through the preparation of an annual calendar and action plan for the observance of important days, along with species-wise assignment of roles to zoos in this regard.

The Central Zoo Authority, a statutory body under the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, also celebrated its 34th Foundation Day on Tuesday at the National Zoological Park, New Delhi. The event coincided with the Chief Wildlife Warden and Zoo Directors' Conference, providing a common platform for discussions related to zoo management and wildlife conservation.

During the Inaugural Session of the event, Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh said that a zoo is not just a display centre where people come to see animals. It is also a major opportunity for researchers and scientists to learn more about animal behaviour, animal care and to evolve better medical care methods. "We are taking care of poor, defenceless animals here, and we really need to be very sensitive to what all can be done," he said.

Addressing officials at the *Chief Wildlife Warden and Zoo Directors' Conference*, the Minister asked them to reflect on whether they are taking into account the world's best practices and learning from other zoos. The Minister noted that the younger generation is increasingly focused on virtual reality through mobile phones and is losing sensitivity towards the natural wonders around them. In this context, he said zoos play a critical role in making the younger generation, especially urban dwellers, aware of the natural world.



Referring to rapid technological advancement, Shri Singh called for discussions on how technology can be used for better zoo management, improved animal care and enhanced visitor experience. He further stressed the need for greater collaboration with state governments, research institutions, stakeholders and NGOs to gain valuable inputs for improving zoos from the viewer's perspective.

Director General of Forests and Special Secretary Shri Sushil Kumar Awasthi said that CZA's Foundation Day marks a milestone in India's journey towards strengthening ethical and conservation-oriented zoo management. Additional Director General of Forests (MoEFCC) Shri Ramesh Kumar Pandey said India holds a special position in zoo management, noting that out of more than 150 zoos in the country, most are run by the forest departments. Member Secretary, CZA, Shri V. Clement Ben said that the CZA has contributed significantly to transforming Indian zoos from traditional animal display facilities into professionally managed conservation institutions.

The day-long Conference brought together perspectives from policy, practice, science and administration. The sessions scheduled during the day focused on contemporary issues and opportunities, including modern zoo management, conservation breeding, veterinary care, animal nutrition, sustainability and the One Health approach. The deliberations highlighted the interconnected well-being of animals, ecosystems and human communities, reinforcing the importance of coordinated and informed action in wildlife conservation.



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