



Union Environment Minister releases two male Great Indian Bustards into the wild at Desert National Park, Jaisalmer

**Milestone outcome of nearly a Decade of Unwavering Dedication of our Scientists, Researchers and Ground Staff:
Shri Bhupender Yadav**

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In a significant milestone for the conservation of the critically endangered Great Indian Bustard (GIB), Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav, today released two male GIBs into the wild at Sam in the Desert National Park, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. Rajasthan State Minister for Forest and Environment, Shri Sanjay Sharma, along with senior officers of the Union and State Governments, was present on the occasion.

In a post on X, Shri Yadav thanked Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi for his continued guidance, encouragement and support in enabling the scientific community to work towards the conservation of the Great Indian Bustard and other species.

In a milestone move, released two male Great Indian Bustards in Sam, Desert National Park, Jaisalmer, today morning.

This landmark success has been made possible by the nearly decade-long unwavering dedication of our scientists, researchers and ground staff who have spent years... pic.twitter.com/liDZzJKylv

— Bhupender Yadav (@byadavbjp) October 4, 2026

The Minister said the milestone is the outcome of nearly a decade of unwavering dedication of our scientists, researchers and ground staff to help the Great Indian Bustard reclaim the deserts of Rajasthan.

The release marks an important transition in India's GIB conservation programme from establishing a viable conservation-breeding population towards rewilding and augmenting the species in its natural habitat. Learnings from the release would be used to progressively refine the protocols for subsequent releases.

The Bustard Recovery Programme is a collaborative initiative of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Rajasthan Forest Department and the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), with technical collaboration from the International Fund for Houbara Conservation and funding support from National CAMPA. The programme focuses on conservation breeding, habitat management, threat mitigation, habitat restoration and community engagement.

The conservation-breeding programme has made significant progress. The GIB facilities at Sam and Ramdevra presently house 97 birds, of which 40 originated from wild-laid eggs and 57 have been bred in captivity. Of these, 86 birds are being maintained for captive reproduction, while 11 have been earmarked for release into the wild. Of these 11, 2 birds were released into the wild at Desert National Park today. Captive reproduction resulted in 24 live chicks in 2025 and 29 in 2026.

Scientific interventions, including the novel 'jumpstart' approach, have also contributed to the species' recovery. Under this approach, captive-laid eggs placed in wild nests were accepted by incubating females, resulting in the hatching of six chicks in Rajasthan and two in Gujarat.

These efforts are being reinforced through habitat restoration by the Rajasthan Forest Department, including the establishment of around 200 sq. km. of fenced grassland enclosures inside the Desert National Park. Long-term telemetry studies by WII have identified these enclosures as prime breeding habitats for the species. The species' conservation actions are being guided by the Judgement of the Supreme Court of India, based on recommendations of the Expert Committee constituted for this purpose.

VM/GS

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