Syllabus subtopic: Conservation, Environmental Pollution and Degradation, Environmental Impact Assessment.

Prelims and Mains focus: about the species and conservation status; about WCCB and its mandate

News: Four rare Indian Tent Turtles were rescued by the Delhi police in north Delhi and were handed over to officials of the Delhi zoo after inspection by Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB).

Indian Tent Turtle (kachuga tecta tecta)

- The Indian tent turtle is a species of turtle in the family Geoemydidae. The species is endemic to India and Bangladesh.

- It is listed in schedule I of the Wildlife Protection Act, 1962. Possession of this species is prohibited.

- IUCN status: Least Concern (LC)

About Wildlife Crime Control Bureau (WCCB)

- It is a statutory multi-disciplinary body established by the Government of India under the Ministry of Environment and Forests, to combat organized wildlife crime in the country.

- The Bureau has its headquarter in New Delhi and five regional offices at Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Chennai and Jabalpur; three sub-regional offices at Guwahati, Amritsar and Cochin; and five border units at Ramanathapuram, Gorakhpur, Motihari, Nathula and Moreh.

Mandate
Under Section 38 (Z) of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, it is mandated

1. to **collect and collate intelligence** related to organized wildlife crime activities and to disseminate the same to State and other enforcement agencies for immediate action so as to apprehend the criminals;

2. to establish a **centralized wildlife crime data bank**;

3. co-ordinate actions by various agencies in connection with the enforcement of the provisions of the Act;

4. **assist foreign authorities** and international organization concerned to facilitate co-ordination and universal action for wildlife crime control;

5. **capacity building** of the wildlife crime enforcement agencies for scientific and professional investigation into wildlife crimes and assist State Governments to ensure success in prosecutions related to wildlife crimes; and

6. **advise the Government of India on issues relating to wildlife crimes** having national and international ramifications, relevant policy and laws.

7. It also **assists and advises the Customs authorities** in inspection of the consignments of flora & fauna as per the provisions of Wild Life Protection Act, **CITES** and EXIM Policy governing such an item.