

## 2. Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary

### Why in News?

- Recently, A 'seed bank for native plant species found in the Aravallis region is gradually taking shape at a nursery at the Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary, after a few years of efforts at collecting seeds from across Delhi and other states.

### Highlights

- The project, which started in 2015, is being implemented jointly by the Forest Department and the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS).
- The nursery at Asola Bhatti Wildlife Sanctuary is growing more than 100 species of native grasses, plants, and trees, and provides saplings for plantation by agencies in the city.
- The aim of the seed bank is to supply native saplings for the city and reintroduce species that have become rare or hard to locate.
- The seed bank also aims to create awareness around the trees that are disappearing in Delhi, have these trees available for people to be able to grow them, and map where they are.
- The plan is to raise production to around 10 lakh saplings every year.
- Seed banks are important repositories of plant genetic resources.
- They store seeds of different plant varieties, which are conserved to maintain their genetic diversity and to preserve their ability to adapt to changing environmental conditions.
- Seed banks also serve as important resources for research, agriculture, and conservation.
- India has established its own seed storage facility at Chang La in Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir.
- It has been built jointly by the Defence Institute of High-Altitude Research (DIHAR) and the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources (NBPGR) in 2010 under the aegis of Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- It stores over 5,000 seed accessions (one accession consists of a set of seeds of a particular species collected from different geographical and demographic locations).