

SHORTNEWS:

1.KUMKI ELEPHANTS

NEWS: Karnataka will hand over trained Kumki elephants to Andhra Pradesh as part of efforts to address the growing man-elephant conflict along the border of the two states.

About Kumki Elephants

- The term “Kumki” originates from the Tamil word “kumkiyam,” meaning “aid” or “helper.”
- Kumki elephants are trained captive Asian elephants, primarily used to manage and control wild elephants.
- Roles of Kumki Elephants in Human-Wildlife Management:
 - Conflict Management: Helps drive wild elephants away from human settlements and farmlands.
 - Rescue and Patrolling: Play a vital role in rescue operations, forest patrolling, and wildlife conservation.
 - Medical Assistance: Assist in providing medical care to injured wild elephants.
 - Human-Elephant Mediation: Act as mediators between humans and wild elephants to reduce.

About Asian Elephants

- Population in India: 26,000 – 29,000
- IUCN Status: Endangered
- Gestation: 18–22 months
- Only the male Asian Elephant has tusks.
 - The exceptions are makhnas, who are tusk-less males.
- An elephant herd is led by the senior female, who is also called the ‘Matriarch’.
 - Matriarch remembers migratory routes clearly.
- Has no sweat glands

2.SAROJ GHOSE PASSES AWAY

NEWS: Saroj Ghose, regarded as the father of India’s science museum movement, passed away in Seattle, USA, at the age of 89.

About Saroj Ghose

- Tenure and Role at NCSM: Served as Director General of the National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) from 1979 to 1997.

- Known as the architect of India's network of science centres and museums.
- Served as President of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), headquartered in Paris.
- Landmark Institutions Designed: Science City, Kolkata, National Science Centre, New Delhi, Nehru Science Centre, Mumbai
- Recognition: Awarded the Padma Shri in 1989 and the Padma Bhushan in 2007, Indira Gandhi Prize (1988), and the National Award for Best Effort in Science Popularization Amongst Children (2001)

About National Council of Science Museums (NCSM)

- It is an autonomous society under the Ministry of Culture formed in 1978.
- Headquartered in Kolkata.
- Manages 26 science centres and museums across India, including 7 national-level centres.

3.WOMEN MAKE FOR 35% STEM GRADUATES GLOBALLY: UNESCO

NEWS: Women account for just 35 per cent of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) graduates worldwide, with little improvement recorded over the past decade, according to UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring (GEM) team.

- Key Observations Of UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring (GEM) team
- The digital transformation remains predominantly male-led.
- Women form only:
 - 26% of the global data science and AI workforce.
 - 15% of the workforce in engineering.
 - 12% in cloud computing roles.
- In the European Union, only 1 in 4 women with an IT degree enter digital occupations, compared to 1 in 2 men.
- Barriers to Participation as per UNESCO's GEM team
- Low confidence in mathematics develops early among girls, despite good performance.
- Persistent gender stereotypes discourage girls from pursuing STEM careers.
- STEM workplace culture is often male-dominated and unwelcoming, reducing female retention.
- Policy Gaps: While 68% of countries have policies supporting STEM education, only half of these policies specifically address girls and women in STEM.
- UNESCO's Key Recommendations:

- Gender-Responsive Policies: Education systems must integrate gender-sensitive guidance and train educators accordingly.
- Early School Interventions: Schools should address biases and foster STEM interest in girls from an early age.

Mentorship & Role Models: Visible female mentors are essential to inspire and retain girls in STEM.

4.MENAR WETLAND

NEWS: Menar wetland in Udaipur, Rajasthan has become a key stopover for migratory bird species, with sightings of rare and threatened birds.

- About Menar Wetlands:
- Geographical Setting: Part of the semi-arid zone of India.
- Wetland Complex: Comprises of two main wetlands:
- Brahma Wetland – Larger and deeper.
- Dhandh Wetland – Smaller and shallower.
- Includes rain-fed ponds, channels, and seasonal water bodies
- Ecological Significance:
- Biodiversity Hotspot: Hosts 200+ species of birds, including many migratory and threatened species. Example: Dalmatian pelican, Ferruginous pochard, Black-necked stork, Himalayan griffon vulture etc.
- Lies on the Central Asian Flyway – critical for global bird migration.
- It is recognized as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA) and is also known as the bird village.
- About Wetlands:
- According to the Ramsar Convention, Wetlands are areas with water, natural or man made, permanent or temporary, such as marshes, swamps, or shallow seas (up to six meters deep), where the water can be still or flowing, fresh, salty, or brackish.

Example: Mangroves, Lakes, Rivers, and Floodplains.

5.HONDURAS EMBASSY IN DELHI

NEWS: Recently, The Embassy of Honduras in New Delhi was inaugurated which is a significant step in strengthening India-Honduras diplomatic relations.

- About Honduras
 - It is the second largest country in Central America.
- It is positioned in the Northern and Western hemispheres of the Earth
- Bordered by Guatemala, Nicaragua, and El Salvador.
- To the north, it has a long coastline along the Caribbean Sea.

- To the south, it has a short coastal stretch along the Pacific Ocean.
- Geographical Features: Honduras is divided into four distinct geographical regions:
 - Central Highlands – hilly and mountainous terrain forms the interior core.
 - Pacific Lowlands – located along the southern coast near the Pacific.
 - Eastern Caribbean Lowlands – flat and tropical in nature.
 - Northern Coastal Plains and Mountains – stretch along the northern coastline.
- Major Rivers: Patuca, Ulúa
- Currency: lempira
- There are no volcanoes in Honduras.
- Capital: Tegucigalpa

It's also home to the ancient Maya city of Copán, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.