

SHORTNEWS:

1.EURASIAN OTTER

NEWS: Recently, Eurasian Otter, thought to be extinct in the Valley, was spotted in the Lidder River in Srigufwara, south Kashmir.

Eurasian Otter

- The **eurasian otter (Lutra lutra)** is one of the three otter species found in India, alongside the **Smooth-coated Otter (Lutrogale perspicillata)** and the **Asian small-clawed otter (Aonyx cinereus)**.
- **Habitat:** Clean freshwater environments with ample fish, including rivers, lakes, and marshes.
- **Characteristics:** It is elusive, **solitary and nocturnal**.
- **Distribution:** Primarily found in **Europe and parts of Asia**, its presence in India is **rare**, mainly confined to the **Himalayan foothills, parts of Northeast India**, and scattered sightings in the **Western Ghats**.
- **Protection Status:**
 - **Eurasian Otter:** CITES Appendix I; WPA Schedule II; IUCN Status “Near Threatened”
 - **Smooth Coated Otter:** CITES Appendix I; WPA Schedule I; IUCN: Vulnerable.
 - **Asian small-clawed otter:** CITES Appendix I; WPA Schedule I; IUCN: Vulnerable.

About Lidder River

- Situated in the **Kashmir Valley** of Jammu and Kashmir, India.
 - **Pahalgham** is located on its bank
- Originates from the **Kolahoi Glacier** and feeds the **Jhelum River**.

2.EXERCISE KHAAN QUEST

NEWS: Indian Army contingent arrives in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia for Exercise Khaan Quest.

About Exercise Khaan Quest

- The exercise initially began as a **bilateral event between the USA and the Mongolian Armed Forces in 2003** and became a **multinational exercise from 2006 onwards**.

- The current year (2025) will be the 22nd iteration.
- **Hosted by:** Mongolia
- **Focus:**
 - Increasing interoperability and military readiness in peace support operations under Chapter VII of United Nations Charter.
 - The exercise will focus on high degree of physical fitness, joint planning and joint tactical drills.

3.UNHCR Global Trends Report

NEWS: According to the **Global Trends Report** of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), **1 in every 67 people** worldwide is now forcibly displaced due to conflict, violence, or persecution.

UNHCR's Global Trends report

- The **annual** report presents **key statistical trends and the latest official statistics on refugees, asylum-seekers, internally displaced and stateless people worldwide.**

Key Findings Of The Global Trends Report

- **Displaced People:** The number of people forcibly displaced by violence and persecution around the world has risen to more than **122 million (as of April 2025), up by about two million from last year and a near-doubling over the last decade.**
- **Major Crisis Zones:**
 - **Sudan:** World's **largest displacement crisis** (14 million), **surpassing Syria** (13.5 million).
 - **Afghanistan:** Over **10 million displaced**;
 - **Ukraine:** 8.8 million displaced internally or abroad.
 - **Rohingya Crisis:** UN investigating reports of Indian naval vessels pushing refugees into the sea.
- **Key Trends**
 - **Internally Displaced People (IDPs):** Increased by **9% (73.5 million)** due to conflicts like **Sudan's civil war.**
 - **Refugee Movements:** **65% remain in neighboring countries, countering the myth of mass migration to the West.**
 - **Recovery Signs:** Nearly 2 million Syrians have returned home in the last six months, indicating early signs of recovery post-civil war.

4.GAZA CEASEFIRE RESOLUTION IN UNGA

NEWS: India **abstained** from a UN General Assembly resolution calling for a ceasefire in Gaza for the fourth time in **three years.**

Reasons for India's Abstention on UNGA Ceasefire Resolution

- **Support for Bilateral Dialogue** – India believes direct negotiations between Israel and Palestine are more effective than unilateral resolutions, emphasizing diplomacy over symbolic votes.
- **Strategic Partnerships** – India's strong defense and technological ties with Israel, alongside its economic and energy interests in Arab nations, require a balanced diplomatic approach.
- **Geopolitical Considerations** – India's growing partnership with the U.S., which opposed the resolution, and broader regional stability concerns influenced its careful positioning.
- **Domestic and Policy Flexibility** – The government aims to maintain autonomy in foreign policy while avoiding political backlash from any overt alignment in the Israel-Palestine conflict.

About UN General Assembly

- It is the main policy formation and representation entity of the United Nations.
- The assembly meets from **September to December each year in regular sessions.**
- **Members: It comprises all 193 member states, each has equal right to vote.**
- **Major functions:** Discuss global issues, elect non-permanent members of the UN security council, and **Appoints the UN Secretary-General based on the security council recommendation.**

5.ARMY SUCCESSFULLY TESTS RUDRASTRA

NEWS: Indian Army has successfully tested **Rudrastra**, a **hybrid Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)**, developed by Solar Aerospace and Defence Limited (SDAL).

- **Location:** Trials conducted at **Pokhran firing range, Rajasthan.**
- **Range:** Covers a total distance of **170 km**, including **target-area loitering.**
- **Endurance:** Sustains flight for up to **1.5 hours.**
- **Warhead:** Armed with **precision airburst munitions for wide-area anti-personnel impact.**
- **Strike Capability:** Executes **high-altitude releases for maximum area destruction.**
- **Key Features:** Fully autonomous operation, real-time video relay, and automatic return-to-base function.
- **Significance:** Enables **stand-off strikes** on enemy artillery and terror infrastructure.
 - Supports the **Army's push for indigenous, unmanned warfare solutions.**
 - Strengthen India's tactical and surveillance infrastructure.