Black Kite

Why in News?

Recently, an article suggested that black kites have nesting habitats at a tower structure in Chennai.

- **Black Kite** – It is a bird of prey and a ***migratory bird*** extends to an extremely large range of habitats.
- **Scientific Name** – Milvus migrans.
- It is often called ***Fork-Tailed Kites*****.**
- **Habitat –** Close access to water bodies such as rivers, ponds, lakes, and wetlands, woodlands, grassland and open savannas.
- **Distribution –** Tropical portions of Australasia, Eurasia, and Africa.
- **Morphology –** Medium-sized raptors, dorsal, ventral and tail color is brown with darker brown striped feathers within.
- It has small, bead-like dark brown eyes and a large black, hook-shaped beak, long black talons and pale-yellow legs.



- **Sexual dimorphism**
  - **Female** – It has a slightly *larger body size than males*, though they feature similar coloration.
- **Characteristic –** It typically lives in social groups.
- It migrates from Europe and northern Asia wintering in sub-Saharan Africa and southern Asia.
- It has well developed intraspecific communication and very loud vocalizing.
- **Diet –** An extremely *versatile feeder*, it takes carrion, birds, mammals, fish, lizards, amphibians, invertebrates and forage on vegetable matter such as palm oil fruits.

- **Threats –** Poisoning
    - Shooting
    - Electrocution by power lines
    - Pollution of water by pesticides and other chemicals
    - Vulnerable to the effects of wind energy development.
- **Conservation Status**
    - **IUCN** – Least Concern.
    - **CITES** – Appendix II.
    - **Wild Life Protection Act, 1972** – Schedule-II.

References

1. The Hindu| Nesting activity by Black kites
2. ABW| Black kite's Habitat & Distribution
3. Birdlife| Black kite's Diet, Threats & Conservation

