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Seke Language

- Nepalese language Seke is reported to be “near-extinct” which has only 700 speakers around the world.
- According to the Endangered Language Alliance (ELA), Seke is one of the over 100 indigenous languages of Nepal and is mainly spoken in the five villages of Chuksang, Chaile, Gyakar, Tangbe and Tetang in the Upper Mustang district.
- The dialects from these villages differ substantially and are believed to have varying degrees of mutual intelligibility.
- In recent years, Seke has been retreating in the face of Nepali, which is Nepal’s official language and is considered to be crucial for getting educational and employment opportunities outside villages.
- According to ELA, difficult conditions at home and job prospects elsewhere have brought speakers of Seke to places such as Pokhara, Kathmandu and even New York.
- Therefore, the vulnerability of the language is linked to the migration of people to places where Seke is not spoken, which has reduced the intergenerational transmission of the language.
- Furthermore, the younger generation does not find much use in learning the language, giving preference to Nepali and English.

Classification of Endanger Languages

- UNESCO has six degrees of endangerment, these are,
- **Safe** - which are the languages spoken by all generations and their intergenerational transmission is uninterrupted.
- **Vulnerable Languages** - which are spoken by most children but may be restricted to certain domains.
- **Definitely endangered languages**, which are no longer being learnt by children as their mother tongue.
- **Severely endangered** are languages spoken by grandparents and older generations, and while the parent generation may understand it, they may not speak it with the children or among themselves.
- **Critically endangered** languages are those of which the youngest speakers are the grandparents or older family members who may speak the language

partially or infrequently.
- **Extinct languages**, of which no speakers are left.
- Considering these definitions, Seke may be considered to be a definitely endangered language.
- As per UNESCO, roughly 57 per cent of the world's estimated 6,000 languages are safe, about 10 per cent are vulnerable, 10.7 per cent are definitely endangered, about 9 per cent are severely endangered, 9.6 per cent are critically endangered and about 3.8 per cent of all languages are extinct since 1950.
- As per the Endangered Languages Project (ELP), there are roughly 201 endangered languages in India and about 70 in Nepal.

Endangered Language Alliance

- Founded in 2010, the Endangered Language Alliance (ELA) is a non-profit based dedicated to supporting linguistic diversity and endangered languages in New York City and beyond.
- ELA's unique network of researchers, activists, and students documents the speech, stories, and songs of immigrant, refugee, and diaspora communities, bringing it to a wider audience.

Wetland Conservation Rules

- Union government has notified new rules that prohibit setting up or expansion of industries, and disposal of construction and demolition waste within the wetlands.
- The rules, provide for setting up an authority in each state and Union Territory.
- The authority will prepare a list of all wetlands of the state or UT within three months and make strategies for conservation and wise use of wetlands within their jurisdiction.
- It (authority) shall recommend mechanisms for maintenance of ecological character through promotional activities for land within the boundary of notified wetlands.
- The authority will include one expert each in the fields of wetland ecology, hydrology, fisheries, landscape planning and socio-economics.
- The wetlands are land areas covered by water, either temporarily/ seasonally or permanently.
- Marsh, fen and peatland come under this category, The wetlands play a key role in hydrological cycle and flood control, water supply and providing food, fibre and raw materials.
- The Centre had in September 2019, identified 130 wetlands for priority restoration in the next five years and asked states to submit their respective

integrated management plan.

- The highest number of such identified wetlands are in Uttar Pradesh (16) followed by Madhya Pradesh (13), Jammu & Kashmir (12), Gujarat (8), Karnataka (7) and West Bengal (6).
- ISRO had in 2011 come out with a national wetlands atlas on the basis of satellite image, mapping over two lakh wetlands covering around 4.63% of the total geographic area of India.
- India's prominent wetlands include

1. Chilika lake - Odisha
2. Wular lake - J&K ,
3. Renuka - Himachal Pradesh ,
4. Sambhar lake - Rajasthan,
5. Deepor Beel - Assam,
6. East Kolkata wetlands - West Bengal,
7. Nal Sarovar - Gujarat,
8. Harika - Punjab,
9. Rudra Sagar – Tripura,
10. Bhoj wetland - Madhya Pradesh.

'Green Credit Scheme'

- The Forest Advisory Committee, an apex body tasked with adjudicating requests by the industry to raze forest land for commercial ends, has approved a scheme that could allow "forests" to be traded as a commodity.
- If implemented, it allows the Forest Department to outsource one of its responsibilities of reforesting to non-government agencies.
- The proposed 'Green Credit Scheme', as it is called, allows agencies — they could be private companies, village forest communities — to identify land and begin growing plantations.
- After three years, they would be eligible to be considered as compensatory forest land if they met the Forest Department's criteria.
- An industry needing forestland could then approach the agency and pay it for parcels of such forested land, and this would then be transferred to the Forest Department and be recorded as forestland.
- "The participating agency will be free to trade its asset, that is plantation, in parcels, with project proponents who need forest land,"
- This is not the first time that such a scheme has been mooted.
- In 2015, a 'Green Credit Scheme' for degraded forest land with public-private participation was recommended, but it was not approved by the Union Environment Minister, the final authority.
- Such a scheme will encourage plantation by individuals outside the traditional forest area, will help in meeting international commitments such

as sustainable development goals, and nationally determined contributions.

- In the current system, industry needs to make good the loss of forest by finding appropriate non-forest land equal to that which would be razed.
- It also must pay the State Forest Department the current economic equivalent called Net Present Value of the forestland.
- It's then the Forest Department's responsibility to grow appropriate vegetation that, over time, would grow into forests.
- Industries have often complained that they find it hard to acquire appropriate non-forest land, which has to be contiguous to existing forest.
- The Centre had collected nearly Rs. 50,000 crore over decades, but the funds were lying unspent because States were not spending the money on re growing forests.

MILAN 2020

- After successfully hosting the International Fleet Review (IFR) in Feb 2016, the review meeting was followed by site visits to various venues by the Nodal officers from the Navy and the attendees representing stakeholder organizations towards drawing out time bound action plans.
- MILAN 2020 is a multilateral naval exercise aimed to enhance professional interaction between friendly foreign navies and learn from each other's strengths and best practices in the maritime domain.
- The Exercise with the theme 'Synergy Across the Seas' would provide an excellent opportunity for Operational Commanders of friendly foreign navies to interact with each other in areas of mutual interest.
- Total 41 navies have been invited for the MILAN 2020 exercise.
- City of Destiny Visakhapatnam will host this International Naval exercise in March 2020.

C-SASE

- Centre for Snow and Avalanche Study Establishment (SASE), is a laboratory of the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO).
- It is located near Manali, Himachal Pradesh its primary function is research in the field of snow and avalanches to provide avalanche control measures and forecasting support to Armed forces.
- Recently it has issued an Avalanche warning to Leh in Ladakh region.

Source: PIB, AIR, the Hindu, Indian Express, Times of India



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