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Hindu-Kush Himalaya

- Scientists at a recently held important meeting of global biodiversity experts declared the Hindu Kush Himalayan region as a biosphere that is on the verge of destruction.
- The International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) made this call at a meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal.



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- Scientists called for stronger action and immediate funding to stop the loss of nature in this region, one of the most biodiverse regions on Earth.
- The Hindu-Kush Himalayan region extends about 3,500 km from Afghanistan in the west to Myanmar in the east.
- It has the largest ice reserves outside the polar regions.
- It supplies water to 10 major rivers including Ganga.
- It is known as 'the Great Himalayan Range' or the 'Roof of the World'.





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● Importance of Hindu-Kush Himalayas:-

- It regulates the global climate system.
- It has cultural and spiritual importance, like Gangotri Glacier.
- It includes components of the cryosphere, including permafrost and glacial lakes.
- It supports the livelihood of several billion people.



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● Concerns of the Asian Development Bank (ADB):-

- The HKH region is warming faster than the global average. If global temperatures rise by 3 degrees Celsius, 75% of the glaciers in Bhutan and Nepal could melt by the end of this century.
- 70% of the original biodiversity was lost in the last century.



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● **Hindu-Kush Himalaya Conservation Initiative:-**

- ICIMOD is working towards making the Hindu-Kush Himalayan region climate-shock resilient.
- ICIMOD is conducting the Hindu-Kush Himalaya Monitoring and Assessment Program (HIMAP).
- As a part of the National Climate Change Action Plan, India has launched a National Mission to Sustain the Himalayan Ecosystem.





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● ICIMOD:-

- ICIMOD is an inter-governmental institution.
- Its headquarters is in Kathmandu.
- ICIMOD's regional member countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal and Pakistan.



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Explosion in Firecracker Factory in Harda

- 12 people died in the explosion in a firecracker factory in Harda district of Madhya Pradesh, while more than 200 people are injured.
- The incident has again raised concerns over enforcement of industrial fire-safety regulations by industries in India.



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- The National Building Code (NBC) of India provides guidelines for fire safety measures in buildings including industrial structures.
- These include fire-resistant equipment in buildings; Fire detection and alarm systems; Provides for the requirements of means of escape, fire fighting equipment etc.
- "A Model Bill for Provision for Maintenance of Fire and Emergency Services for States, 2019" has been framed. It provides a model framework for the maintenance of fire and emergency services.
- It is noteworthy that fire service is a subject of the state list. It is included as a function of the municipality in the 12th Schedule of the Constitution.
- Under the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 (OSH), responsibilities have been laid down for factory owners to ensure fire prevention and safety.





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- The Petroleum and Explosives Safety Organization (PESO) carries out its responsibilities under the Explosives Act, 1984 and Petroleum Act, 1934 for the prevention of accidents.
- PESO monitors safety in the manufacture, possession, use, sale, import, export, transportation and handling of explosives, petroleum, flammable and non-flammable compressed gases and other hazardous substances.
- The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) sets specific standards for fire-protection equipment and systems used in industries.



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