

Queen Heo Hwang-ok memorial park

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In news– Ayodhya’s Ram Katha Park is to be renamed as Queen Heo Hwang-ok memorial park.

About the memorial park-

- The memorial **space located on the banks of the Sarayu in Ayodhya (U.P) has been named after a Korean queen with Indian roots.**
- The legend of Queen Heo is inscribed on the **stone memorial** in Korean and English.
- The monument was **built in Korean traditional style**, using a 3m high and 7,500 kg heavy stone shipped from Korea.
- The park which surrounds the memorial is colloquially called **“Korea Park”**.
- The memorial now comprises Queen and King pavilions with their busts in place, and a pond to represent Princess Suriratna’s journey.
- According to the legend, the princess had taken a golden egg to Korea, and the park includes an egg made of granite.
- The Mayors of the City of “Ayodhya” in India and the City of “Gimhae” in South Korea had signed an **International “Sister City” bond in March 2001** to formalise the relationship and encourage cultural and mutual development.
- In March 2016, a 38-member South Korean delegation made a proposal to develop the memorial further.
- The two countries had signed an agreement regarding the Queen Suriratna Memorial Project to facilitate upgrade and expansion of the existing monument commemorating *Princess Suriratna (Queen Heo Hwang-ok)*.

About Heo Hwang-ok-

- She was a Korean queen who is believed to have been born Princess Suriratna of Ayodhya, daughter of King Padmasen and Indumati.
- Padmasen ruled the ancient kingdom of Kausala, a region that extended from present-day UP to Odisha.
- Her story is described in Samguk Yusa (Memorabilia of Three Kingdoms), a 13th-century collection of legends, folktales and history of Korea's three kingdoms – Goguryeo, Baekje and Silla.
- In 48 BC, the princess, then 16, travelled to Korea from the ancient land of 'Ayuta' and married Kim Suro, founder and King of Geumgwan Gaya in south-eastern Korea.
- She became the first queen of Geumgwan Gaya, believed to be located around modern-day Gimhae city in Southern Gyeongsang province.

Kausala (Kosala) kingdom-

- It is the kingdom of the celebrated personality of Treta Yuga, Raghava Rama.
- Ayodhya was its capital, presently in Ayodhya district, Uttar Pradesh.
- Rama's sons Lava and Kusha inherited parts of this kingdom.
- Lava ruled from the city called Ayodhya and Kusa from the city called Kushavati.
- A colony of Kosala kings existed in Madhya Pradesh.
- It was called Dakshina Kosala. Rama's mother Kausalya was from this kingdom.

