First Case Of Robot Suicide

Why In News

- A **robot working** for the **Gumi City Council in South Korea** was recently found unresponsive at the bottom of a two-meter staircase. Locals are labelling it country's **first robot "suicide".**
- Witnesses who saw the robot a few minutes before it **"took its own life**," said that the robot, dubbed 'Robot Supervisor' was behaving strangely and "circling in one spot as if something was there."

All you need to know

- Made by **Bear Robotics, a California-based company**, city council officials quickly collected the pieces of the shattered robot for analysis and sent it to the company, but the reason behind its **erratic behaviour** still remains unclear.
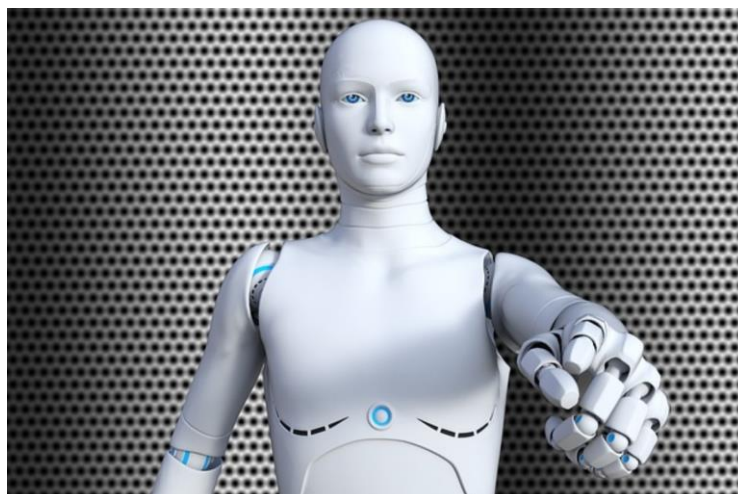
- The robot even had an employee card and worked **from 9 am to 4 pm**, just like other employees. **But unlike most robots that** are limited to a single floor, this one could easily navigate between floors and even call the elevator without any external assistance.

- According to a Gumi city official, the robot "**helped with daily document** deliveries, city promotion, and delivered information" to residents and "was officially part of the city hall." Local media was quick to pick up the story and published headlines asking if the robot's workload had to do anything with its malfunction.

- **Appointed in August last year, Robot Supervisor** was one of the first of its kind to be used in the city. The International Federation of Robotics says that South Korea has one of the highest robot densities in the world, with one industrial robot for every ten human employees.

- When asked if the city council will adopt another robot, the authority said that there is currently no plan to **replace the "demised" Robot Supervisor.**
- This is not **the first time a robot has met** an untimely end. In 2017, a security robot named Steve working in Washington, DC reportedly "died by suicide" by drowning in a fountain. However, on further investigation, it was found out that the robot has dived in the water body after skidding on a loose brick surface.