Prelim Bits 01-10-2018

Black Spotted Turtles

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- According to a recent report by TRAFFIC, India accounts for 29% of black spotted turtles seized from across seven countries in South Asia.
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- Black spotted turtle or spotted pond turtle is a medium-sized freshwater turtle and native to South Asia.
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- The species was once smuggled for its meat and is now sought after as an exotic pet.
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- It is classified as Vulnerable by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) Red List of threatened species.
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- In India, the species is distributed across the north, northeast and a few parts of central India.
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- The States are West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, and parts of Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan and Meghalaya.
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- According to TRAFFIC, in turtles seizure rate, India is followed by Thailand (19%) and Hong Kong (17%),Bangladesh (12%).
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TRAFFIC

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- TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, is a leading non-governmental organisation working globally on trade in wild animals and plants.
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- It is a strategic alliance of IUCN and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).
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- Its mission is to ensure that trade in wild plants and animals is not a threat to the conservation of nature.
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- It plays a vital role in tackling illegal wildlife trade through conducting research and analysis, advocacy and awareness work and by supporting remedial action against illegal wildlife trade.
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- It is currently working in the following projects,
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1. **ReTTA** - Reducing trade threats to Africa's wild species and ecosystems through strengthened knowledge and action in Africa and beyond.
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2. **Wildlife-TRAPS** - Wildlife Trafficking Response, Assessment and Priority Setting.
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3. **The Global Shark and Ray Initiative** – It works to secure the future of our oceans through shark and ray conservation.
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Open Insulin Project

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- It is a California based initiative trying to develop an open-source protocol for manufacturing off-patent insulin.
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- It is similar to movements in the software industry in 1980s & 90s that successfully made open source operating systems.
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- This project was founded in 2015 through crowd funding .
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- It aims to make and refine synthetic insulin from E.Coli bacteria and document their process, so that generic pharamecutical company can use to make affordable insulin for patients all over the world.
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MiG-21 Fighter Jets

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- MiG is a product of Soviet Union which entered in to the service in 1959.
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- India inducted the MiG-21 in 1963 and got full technology transfer and rights to license-build the aircraft in the country.
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- It is the first **supersonic fighter** aircraft of the Indian Air Force.
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- Russia stopped producing the aircraft in 1985, while India continued operating the upgraded variants.
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- In the upcoming India-Russia Bilateral summit, India is likely to gift 3 MiG fighter jets to Russia.
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- MiG-21 fighter jets will be phased out of service by 2021-22.
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- Tejas, an indigeneous fighter aircraft will replace the ageing MiG-21.
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Click here to know more about Tejas.

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UNHRC

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- UN Human Rights Council has recently passed a resolution for creating an international body to look into grave crimes in Myanmar.
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- The resolution was a joint initiative of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation and the European Union.
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- The resolution mandates the new body to,\n
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    - Collect, consolidate, preserve and analyze evidence of the most serious international crimes in Myanmar since 2011,
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    - Prepare files to facilitate and expedite fair and independent criminal proceedings.
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- The resolution calls on the UN secretary-general to appoint staff and allocate

the resources necessary to support the body's work.
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- The resolution follows the report by the UN Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar.
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- The fact finding mission found that Myanmar's security forces committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide against ethnic Rohingya in Rakhine State.
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Click here to know more about UNHRC.

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Exercise Yudh Abhyas 2018

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- Exercise Yudh Abhyas is a joint Indo-US Military exercise.
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- Its 2018 edition was recently concluded in Uttarakhand.
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- The exercise was started in the year 2004 under US Army Pacific Partnership Programme.
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- It is one of the largest joint running military training and defence corporation endeavors between India and USA.
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Source: PIB, The Hindu

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