Prelim Bits 01-12-2017

Cyclone OCKHI

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- A cyclonic Storm “OCKHI” is formed over Comorin area in South Kerala Coast.
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- It is very likely to move west-northwest wards towards Lakshadweep Islands.
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- The cyclone warning has been issued to South Kerala, adjoining districts of south Tamil Nadu and Lakshadweep Islands.
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Stages of Cyclone Warning

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- The cyclone warnings are issued to state government officials in four stages.
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- The first stage warning known as "Pre Cyclone Watch" contains early warning about the development of a cyclonic disturbance.
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- The second stage warning known as "Cyclone Alert" contains information on the location and intensity of the storm and coastal districts likely to experience adverse weather, advice to fishermen, general public, media and disaster managers.
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- The third stage warning known as "Cyclone Warning” forecasts likely point and time of landfall.
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- The fourth stage of warning known as "Post Landfall Outlook" forecasts expected time of landfall.
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\n**Stage of Warning**\n	\n**Time**\n	\n**Colour Code**\n
\nCyclone Alert\n	\nIssued at least 48 hrs in advance.\n	\nYellow\n
\nCyclone Warning\n	\nissued at least 24 hours in advance.\n	\nOrange\n
\nPost landfall out look\n	\nIssued at least 12 hours in advance\n	\nRed.\n

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Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme

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- The government in consultation with the RBI, had floated Series III of Sovereign Gold Bond.
- The bonds are to be issued by RBI.
- They will be restricted for sale to resident Indian entities including individuals, HUFs, Trusts, Universities and Charitable Institutions.
- They will be denominated in multiples of gram(s) of gold with a basic unit of 1 gram.
- Recently, RBI has increased the maximum investment to 4 kg (from 500g) for individuals and Hindu Undivided Family (HUF) and 20 kg for Trusts.
- The interest rate is fixed at the rate of 2.50% per annum.
- The tenor of the bond will be for a period of 8 years with exit option from 5th year.
- The interest on Gold Bonds shall be taxable.
- The capital gains tax arising to an individual on redemption of SGB has been exempted.

- Bonds can be used as collateral for loans and are eligible for Statutory Liquidity Ratio purposes in Banks.
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Small Farmers' Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC)

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- SFAC is an exclusive Society of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation.
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- It focused on increasing incomes of small and marginal farmers through aggregation and development of agribusiness.
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- It is implementing the National Agriculture Market Electronic Trading **(e-Nam) platform**.
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- The purpose is to provide for a single unified market for agricultural products with much higher price discovery for farmers.
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- It implements **Credit Guarantee Fund Scheme** to Farmer Producer Companies to improve availability of working capital and development of business activities.
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- It promotes development of small agribusiness through its **Venture Capital Assistance Scheme** for value added processing and marketing linkages.
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Stopping Malaria Germs from Invasion

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- Plasmodium falciparum is the parasite that causes malaria in humans.
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- P. falciparum invades Red Blood Cells (RBCs) and replicate inside them. It is during the blood stage of infection that malaria occurs.
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- Recently, Researchers, for the first time, deciphered a multiprotein complex that is involved in the invasion of RBCs by the parasite.
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- They have also identified a peptide molecule that can effectively prevent the interaction between malaria parasites and receptors found on RBCs.
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- The peptide molecule targets a specific receptor “cyclophilin B” found on the surface of RBCs to prevent the invasion of the parasite.
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- Cyclophilin B is used by the parasites to bind to the cells and causing the malaria.
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Preserving India’s Heritage City

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- Ahmedabad has been declared India’s first World Heritage City by the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO.
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- But it is facing difficulties in defending its tag of world heritage city due to pollution.
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- Ahmedabad's conservation committee has 3 years to document close to 3,000 buildings of heritage value to strict UNESCO standards.
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- The committee has also the responsibility to show that the decline and destruction in the city is slowing over the years.
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- If the deadline is missed, UNESCO may revoke or downgrade Ahmedabad's listing to "heritage in danger".
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- UNESCO experts have been warning that the city lacked a convincing plan for protecting its ancient citadels, mosques and tombs.
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Source: The Hindu, PIB, The Economic Times.

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