Prelim Bits 03-01-2017

Kerala listed in 12 tourist hotspots in the world:

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- Kerala has been pegged as a ‘Destination to Watch’ in 2017 by Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA).
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- Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA) is one of the UK’s largest and most influential bodies of travel agents and tour operators.
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- The list, featured in ABTA’s **‘Travel Trends Report 2017’**, has Kerala in the eighth spot — higher than premier destinations like the US, South Africa and Vietnam.
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- ‘God’s Own Country’ is the only Indian entry in the list of 12 tourist hotspots brought out by the Association of British Travel Agents (ABTA).
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- The rankings consist of locations that are expected to capture travelers' imaginations over the next year.
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India and Mercosur bloc:

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- Mercosur bloc comprises Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay.
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- India and the Mercosur bloc have stepped up efforts to expand their preferential trade agreement (PTA) to make greater inroads into the other’s market.
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- A PTA is a limited free trade agreement where partner countries reduce import duties on a few identified products for the other.

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Paying ‘service charge’ at restaurants is discretionary:

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- The consumer affairs department has ruled out that the services charges at restaurants are deemed to be accepted voluntarily and if a customer is dissatisfied with the dining experience he/she can have it waived off.
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- The Department has asked State governments to sensitise companies, hotels and restaurants regarding these provisions of the **Consumer Protection Act, 1986.**
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- Under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, “A trade practice which, for the purpose of promoting the sale, use or the supply of any goods or for the provision of any service, adopts any unfair method or deceptive practice, is to be treated as an unfair trade practice and that a consumer can make a complaint to the appropriate consumer forum established under the Act against such unfair trade practices.”
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