Prelim Bits 04-08-2018

West Nile Virus

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- Kerala Health department has suspected a viral infection similar to West Nile in a woman from Kozhikode district.
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- West Nile Virus (WNV), typically spread by mosquitoes, can cause neurological disease and death in people.
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- It is a member of the flavivirus genus and belongs to the same family of Japanese encephalitis - Flaviviridae.
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- Its transmission cycle, by nature, revolves between birds and mosquitoes. Humans, horses and other mammals can be infected.
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- Mosquitoes become infected when they feed on infected birds, which circulate the virus in their blood for a few days.
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- Human infection is most often the result of bites from infected mosquitoes.
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- To date, no human-to-human transmission of WNV through casual contact has been documented.
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- It may be transmitted through contact with other infected animals, their blood or other tissues.
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- No vaccine is available for humans.
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- It is commonly found in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, North America and West Asia.
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- It was first isolated in a woman in the West Nile district of Uganda in 1937. In India, it was first noticed in 1956 and it had its presence in Kerala in 1973.
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Sports University

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- The National Sports University Bill, 2018 was recently passed by Lok Sabha.
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- The bill seeks to establish a National Sports University headquartered in Manipur.
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- The university, first of its kind, aims to promote sports education in the areas of sports sciences, sports technology, sports management and sports coaching.
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- It will undertake research on physical education, strengthen sports training programmes, and collaborate internationally in the field of physical education.
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- As per the bill, key powers of the university includes,
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i. Prescribing courses of study and conducting training programmes,
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ii. Granting degrees, diplomas, and certificates,
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iii. Providing facilities through a distance education system, and
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iv. Conferring autonomous status on a college or an institution.
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- The central government will review and inspect the functioning of the University.
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- It will maintain a fund which is contributed by the central, state governments, UGC, income from fees and others sources.
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- The government has signed an agreement with two Australian Universities to make the sports university a world-class institution.
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Purchasing Managers' Index - Service

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- PMI is an indicator of the economic health and investor sentiments about the manufacturing sector (Manufacturing PMI) and services sector (Services PMI)
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- Its purpose is to provide information about current business conditions to company decision makers, analysts and purchasing managers.
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- For India, the PMI Data is published by Japanese firm Nikkei but compiled and constructed by Markit Economics.
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- In a PMI survey, a standard questionnaire is administered to business entities.
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- The respondents can either give a “Positive, Neutral or Negative” response and each response is marked as “1, 0.5 or 0” on the score card respectively.
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- In adding up the response, a reading above 50 indicates economic expansion, while a reading below 50 points shows contraction of economic activities.
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- According to the recent PMI survey, service sector business activity witnessed the strongest growth since October 2016, amid improved demand conditions.
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Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

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- The scheme, launched in 2016, aims to provide free LPG connections to women from BPL households by providing financial support of Rs 1600 for each new LPG connection.
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- **Target** - Initially, 5 crore BPL households were targeted to be given free LPG connections by 31st March, 2019.
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- But, in a record time of 28 months for its launch, it achieved the initial target of providing 5 crores LPG connection to BPL households.
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- It is implemented by Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas through its Oil Marketing Companies.
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- The identification of eligible BPL families will be made in consultation with

the State/ UT based on the socio-economic and caste census data.
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- Providing LPG connections to BPL households will ensure universal coverage of cooking gas in the country which will empower women and protect their health.
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- It will also provide employment for rural youth in the supply chain of cooking gas.
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Bandipur National Park

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- Bandipur National Park was formed from the forest areas of the then Venugopala wildlife park in 1941.
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- Subsequently some adjacent **reserve forest areas** were added to the Bandipur reserve.
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- This reserve was brought under Project Tiger in 1973.
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- The Bandipur, Nagarahole, Wayanad, Mudumalai and Sathyamangalam Tiger Landscape is spread across the states of Karnataka (Bandipur-Nagarahole), Tamil Nadu (Mudumalai-Sathyamangalam) and Kerala (Wayanad).
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- It is a fine example of managing inter-state Tiger Reserves for the long term Conservation of Tiger Source Population.
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- Presently, there is a ban on vehicle movement during night in the reserve forest areas.
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- Union Road Transport ministry has recently asked the state government to lift the ban.
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- The ministry has also mooted a flyover in the reserve area to avoid the consumption of fuel because of the ban in vehicle movement on NH 766 during night.
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- However, the state government has asserted that the ban will continue, citing the highest density of elephants in the reserve area.
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Source: The Hindu, PIB

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