Prelim Bits 05-03-2018

Ama Gaon, Ama Vikas program

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- The Odisha government has launched Ama Gaon, Ama Vikas (Our Village, our development) to reach out to the people in rural areas and involve themselves in the developmental activities.
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- Mobile video vans for ‘Ama Gaon Ama Vikas’ program will move across the State to highlight various welfare schemes at villages in the state.
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- Through these Wi-Fi enabled latest technology video wall vans, people can directly send their grievances to the Chief Minister’s Office at the Secretariat in Bhubaneswar.
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Black tip Sharks

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- Black tip sharks that gather off the South Florida every year coast are shrinking in number.
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- The Blacktip Shark is widespread in warm temperate, subtropical and tropical waters.
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- The species are found over the following areas,
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1. In the western Atlantic it ranges from United States to southern Brazil
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2. In the eastern Atlantic it is known from the Mediterranean Sea southwards to central Africa
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3. In the Indian Ocean from South Africa to western Australia, including the

Red Sea and Persian Gulf
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4. In the Pacific Ocean it is recorded from throughout the Indo-Australian Archipelago
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5. In the eastern Pacific from California, USA, to Peru
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- Black tip Shark meat is primarily consumed locally and fins are dried and shipped to the Far East where they are used in preparing shark-fin soup.
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- It is a near threatened species under the IUCN red list.
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Effect of Smartphones on Environment

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- Smartphones and data centres will be the most damaging information and communications technologies to the environment by 2040, a study has found.
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- ICT may account for 14% of the global footprint by 2040, or about half of the transportation sector worldwide.
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- Telecommunications networks and data centres consume a lot of energy to serve you and most data centres continue to be powered by electricity generated by fossil fuels.
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- Smartphones consume little energy to operate, 85% of their emissions impact comes from production.
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- Smartphones also have a short life which drives production of new models.
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Kuthiyottam Ritual

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- The Kerala State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights registered a suo motu case in connection with the Kuthiyottam ritual.

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- The Kuthiyottam ritual is usually performed every year during the Pongala festival at the Attukal Bhagavathy Temple in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.
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- The Attukal Pongala festival is the largest congregation of women for a festival in the world.
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- Pongala, which means 'to boil over', is a ritual in which women prepare a pudding made from rice, jaggery, coconut and plantains cooked together, and offer it to the goddess.
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- Young boys undertake a seven-day penance before Pongala day by being within the temple, sleeping on the floor, observing strict diet restrictions and bathing three times a day.
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- The ritual also reportedly involves piercing the child's side with a small hook and knotting a thread through it to symbolize their bond with the Goddess.
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Urban Air Pollution Source

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- According to a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Adminstration-led study, chemical products that contain compounds refined from petroleum rivals motor vehicle emissions as the top source of urban air pollution.
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- Household cleaners, pesticides, paints and perfumes, lotions, paints and other products are some of examples of such chemical products.
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- The scientists focused on volatile organic compounds or VOCs that can escape into the atmosphere and react to produce either ozone or particulate matter causing health impacts, including lung damage.
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- The amount of VOCs emitted by consumer and industrial products is actually two or three times greater than estimated by current air pollution inventories.
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- The NOAA study covered North America, particularly United States of America.
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Swajal Yojana

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- Union Minister of Drinking Water and Sanitation launched the Swajal pilot project at Rajasthan recently.
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- Swajal is a community owned drinking water programme for sustained drinking water supply.
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- The project ensures the availability of clean drinking water to every household round the year and also generates employment.
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- Under the scheme, 90% of the project cost will be taken care by the Government and the remaining 10% of the project cost will be contributed by the community.
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- The Operations and management of the project will be taken care by the local villagers.
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Map of the Day

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North America - Physical Features

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Note - No Landlocked country in North America

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Source: PIB, The Hindu, Science daily

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