Prelim Bits 05-05-2018

Human-Animal Conflict

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- Recently, Wildlife Society of Odisha (WSO), in collaboration with Wildlife Protection Society of India and Elephant Family has released a data about human animal conflict, especially Human-elephant conflicts.
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- Since 1990, nearly 1,400 elephants have died because of human-animal conflict, of which 591 died in the last eight years.
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- The number of human-elephant encounters has gone up from 107 in 2014 to 120 in 2017-18 in the state.
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- Shortage of fodder in the natural forests is the main reason for elephants venturing into human habitations.
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- The shortage happens primarily due to large-scale felling of trees for timber, forest fires, rampant harvesting of fruits in summer, and cutting off fodder creepers like Siali.
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NITI Aayog to Collaborate with IBM

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- NITI Aayog and IBM signed a Statement of Intent (SoI) to develop a crop yield prediction model using Artificial Intelligence (AI).
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- It is aimed to provide real time advisory to farmers in Aspirational Districts.
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- First phase of the project will focus on developing the model for 10 Aspirational Districts across the States of Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.
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- The scope of this project is to introduce and make available climate-aware

cognitive farming techniques and identifying systems of crop monitoring, early warning on pest/disease outbreak based on advanced AI innovations.
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- IBM will be using Artificial Intelligence to provide all the relevant data and platform for developing technological models for improving agricultural output and productivity.
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- NITI Aayog will facilitate the inclusion of more stakeholders on the ground for effective last mile utilization and extension, using the insights generated through these model.
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- Percision agriculture is a farming management concept based on observing, measuring and responding to inter and intra-field variability in crops.
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Buckyball

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- Bucky ball or Buckminster fullerene is a spherical allotrope of carbon.
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- Allotropes are various forms of the same element that differ from each other in terms of physical structure.
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- Fullerene is a molecule which may be spherical or cylindrical in shape.
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- The spherical fullerene was discovered first and its structure was found to resemble the geodesic dome built by the American architect Richard Buckminster Fuller, it was christened Buckminsterfullerene, ‘buckyball’ for short.
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- The buckyball consists of 60 carbon atoms arranged spherically in hexagonal or pentagonal patterns.
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- It is the most common naturally occurring fullerene and is found in soot.
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- It is used in the fields of material sciences, nanotechnology and electronics.

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Regional Conference on Futuristic, Resilient and Digital Infrastructure

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- The Ministry of Finance, Government of India in collaboration with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), and Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS) organized the 4th Regional Conference on Futuristic, Resilient and Digital Infrastructure.
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- The Conference is a lead-up to the Annual Meeting of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) to be hosted by the Government of India in Mumbai later this year.
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- It was pointed-out that Digital Infrastructure is the ‘infrastructure for infrastructure’.
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- The Conference mainly gave thrust on three (3) broad areas including
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1. the Challenges as well as Opportunities in the context of need for Futuristic
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2. Resilient and Digital Infrastructure
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3. Resource Mobilization and Emerging Challenges
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- Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), a multilateral development bank with a mission to improve social and economic outcomes in Asia and beyond.
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- It is headquartered in Beijing, China.
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Cochlear Implant Awareness Program

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- Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment will organize a ‘Cochlear Implant Awareness Program’ soon.
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- It will create awareness among the public about the Cochlear Implant Program under ADIP (Assistance to Disabled persons for purchasing / fitting of aids / appliances) Scheme of the Department.
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- A cochlear implant is an electronic medical device that does the work of damaged parts of the inner ear (cochlea) to provide sound signals to the brain.
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- It is surgically implanted electronic device that will provide a sense of sound to a person who is profoundly deaf or severely hard of hearing in both ears.
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- Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for Speech and Hearing Disabilities (AYNISHD), Mumbai is the Nodal Agency for Cochlear Implant Surgeries.
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Uropeltis bhupathyi

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- Uropeltis bhupathyi is the latest addition to the snake fauna of the Western Ghats.
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- It has been named Uropeltis bhupathyi , after the late herpetologist S. Bhupathy, for his contributions to the field.
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- They are non-venomous, burrowing and mostly earthworm-eating.
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- They are called shieldtails after the large, flat tips of their tails, which make them appear almost sliced off.
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- The discovery has taken the number of known species of shieldtails in India to 41.

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Source: PIB, The Hindu, Business standard

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