Prelim Bits 06-09-2018

Asia-Europe Meeting

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- Republic of Korea is organising 3rd Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) conference on ‘Global Ageing and Human Rights of Older Persons’.
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- It will be attended by international institutions including the UN, regional institutions such as UNESCAP, UNECE, European Union, ASEAN and international NGOs.
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- India is also taking part in this conference. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment will represent India.
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- ASEM) is an exclusively Asian–European forum, established in 1996 at the firstsummit in Bangkok, Thailand.
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- It currently has 51 nations from the European Union and South Asia and 2 regional organisations (ASEAN,EU) as partners.
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- The 3 pillars of ASEM are Political, Economic, Socio Cultural and Educational.
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- In 2016, it adopted Ulaanbaatar declaration to resolve fight against terrorism was signed in the ASEM summit.
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Chagos Island

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- There is a dispute between Mauritius and UK over the sovereignty of Chagos islands in the Indian Ocean.
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- Itis home to Diego Garcia, the key military base of the U.K. and the U.S. in the Indian Ocean.

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- The island was taken by UK before the Mauritius decolonisation.
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- After the Independence in 1968, most of the islanders were deported to give the island in lease to US for its airbase.
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- The evicted islanders have been campaigning for their right to return home.
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- A resolution by Mauritius was passed in UN general assembly asking the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to offer a legal opinion in the issue.
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- Twenty-two countries and the African Union are going to appear before ICJ to give their statements.
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- India has backed Mauritius over its claim on the disputed Chagos islands.
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- Australia and the United States are expected to back Britain’s position.
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Click here to know more about the issue.

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Mid-Air Refuelling

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- Tejas is an indigenously developedlight combat aircraft.
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- It is a single-seat, single-jet engine, multirole light fighter.
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- It is the smallest and lightest multi-role supersonic fighter aircraft in its class.
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- It can fire Air to Air Missiles, carry bombs and Precision Guided ammunition.
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- The Indian Air Force has successfully carried out the first ever mid-air refuelling ofTejas.
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- A Russian-built IL-78 MKI tanker transferred fuel to a Tejas MK I aircraft.
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- It is considered as a major milestone in its development cycle.
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- The ability to carry out air-to-air refuelling is one of the critical requirements

for Tejas to achieve final operational clearance.
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- Earlier, Tejas has successfully fired an air-to-air beyond visual (BVR) range missile.
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FOXSI Mission

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- Focusing Optics X-ray Solar Imager (FOXSI) is a sounding rocket mission by NASA.
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- It aims at directly focus at Sun and search for nanoflares using its X-ray vision.
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- The mission’s third flight is going to be launched soon.
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- FOXSI rockets travel above the Earth’s atmosphere for a peek at space before falling back to the ground.
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- It is the first instrument built specially to image high-energy X-rays from the Sun by directly focusing them.
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Nanoflares

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- Nanoflares are miniature explosions invisible to the naked eye.
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- They are born when magnetic field lines in the Sun’s atmosphere tangle up and stretch until they break like a rubber band.
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- Consequence - The energy they release accelerates particles to near light speed and heats the solar atmosphere to its searing million-degree Fahrenheit temperature.
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Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats (IDWH)

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- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairshas recently approved continuation of the IDWH beyond the 12thPlan period from 2017-18 to 2019-20.
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- It is a centrally sponsored umbrella scheme consists of Project Tiger, Development of Wildlife Habitats and Project Elephant.
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- The schemes would result in overall strengthening/ consolidation of tiger, elephant and wildlife conservation in the country.
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- Besides, it would also address the Man-Animal conflict effectively and benefit the communities relocating from core protected areas.
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- The implementation of the schemes would be done through the respective States in designated Tiger Reserves, Protected Areas and Elephant Reserves.
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World Health Organisation (WHO) Regional Director

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- In the ongoing WHO’s South-East Asia regional meeting , Indian member Dr. Poonam Khetrapal was unanimously re-elected as Regional director.
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- She has already served as the regional director for south-east Asia since 2014.
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- She is the first Indian National and the first woman to hold this post.
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- The WHO’s south-east Asia region covers Bangladesh, Bhutan, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Timor-Leste.
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Source: PIB, The Hindu, Business Standard

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