

Prelim Bits 08-09-2017

Exercise Yudh Abhyas - 2017

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- It is a joint military training, being conducted at Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington, USA between India and USA, as part of the ongoing defence cooperation.

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- It is one of the largest joint running military training and defence corporation endeavors between India and USA.

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- It will provide an opportunity to the armed forces of both countries to train in an integrated manner at Battalion level with joint planning at Brigade level.

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- Multiple scenarios will be rehearsed with a view to understand each-other's organisational structure and battle procedures.

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- Experts from both sides will also hold expert academic and military discussions to share each other's experiences on varied topics for mutual benefit.

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Microbes in Bio-fuel

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- Indian scientists have found a way to convert carbon-rich waste materials into bio-fuel using microbes.

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- They discovered two distinctly different species of bacteria from Aravalli marble mines near Alwar and from the high-altitude Pangong Lake in Ladakh.

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- They also found that they can combine forces to produce bio-diesel from carbon-containing waste materials.

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- The bacterium identified and isolated from the marble rocks in Rajasthan, called *Serratia* sp. ISTD04, is capable of sequestering atmospheric carbon dioxide into organic compounds such as lipids. Meanwhile, lipase, which the team isolated from cold-loving bacterium *Pseudomonas* sp. ISTPL3, can convert these lipids into bio-diesel.

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Bullet Train

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- Indian Prime Minister and his Japanese counterpart will lay the foundation stone of the proposed High Speed Rail Network between Ahmedabad and Mumbai.
- The bullet train project is expected to cost nearly Rs.1.10 lakh crore and will be completed by 2022.
- The train will cover the 508-km-long distance between Ahmedabad and Mumbai in less than three hours at a speed of 350 km per hour.
- Japan will extend 81% of the cost as debt for 50 years at an interest of 0.1% and its repayment will start after 15 years of the commencement of operations.

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Central Information Commission

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- The Central Information Commission has been constituted under the Right to Information Act, 2005.
- The jurisdiction of the Commission extends over all Central Public Authorities.
- The Commission includes 1 Chief Information Commissioner and not more than 10 Information Commissioners who are appointed by the President of India.
- The Commission has certain powers and functions related to adjudication in

second appeal for giving information; direction for record keeping, suo motu disclosures receiving and enquiring into a complaint on inability to file RTI etc.

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- The decisions of the Commission are final and binding.
- According to the recent data on CIC website, there were 24,302 cases related to information appeals pending with the Central Information Commission.
- This backlog is in spite of the fact that the Commission is returning a majority of appeals coming to it.
- Lack of sufficient staff strength as among the reasons why their backlog is increasing.

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Pulikkali

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- It is a recreational folk art from the state of Kerala.
- Literal meaning of Pulikkali is the 'play of the tigers' hence the performance revolves around the theme of tiger hunting.
- On the fourth day of Onam celebrations, performers painted like tigers and hunters in bright yellow, red, and black dance to the beats of instruments like Udukku and Thakil.
- The folk art is mainly practiced in Thrissur district of Kerala.

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Source: The Hindu, PIB

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