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.
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- The bullet train project is expected to cost nearly Rs.1.10 lakh crore and will be completed by 2022.
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- 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.
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- 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.
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- The jurisdiction of the Commission extends over all Central Public Authorities.
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- The Commission includes 1 Chief Information Commissioner and not more than 10 Information Commissioners who are appointed by the President of India.
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- 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.
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- According to the recent data on CIC website, there were 24,302 cases related to information appeals pending with the Central Information Commission.
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- This backlog is in spite of the fact that the Commission is returning a majority of appeals coming to it.
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- 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.
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- Literal meaning of Pulikkali is the 'play of the tigers' hence the performance revolves around the theme of tiger hunting.
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- 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.
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- The folk art is mainly practiced in Thrissur district of Kerala.
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Source: The Hindu, PIB

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