

Prelim Bits 09-07-2018

Kepler Telescope

\n\n

\n

- NASA has recently revealed that the Kepler Space Telescope is almost out of fuel and decided it to put the spacecraft in a hibernation-like state.

\n

- The Kepler telescope was originally launched in 2009 as part of NASA's Discovery Program.

\n

- It is an observatory in space dedicated to finding planets outside our solar system.

\n

- It targets particularly alien planets that are around the same size as Earth in the "habitable" regions of their parent star.

\n

- Since 2009, it has discovered extra-solar planets in the range between the size of Earth and Neptune.

\n

- Most of these planets were discovered in a small region of the constellation Cygnus.

\n

- Kepler was the first telescope to find a planet (Kepler-69c) approximately the size of Earth in the habitable region of a star.

\n

- It examined the TRAPPIST-1 system which likely has multiple Earth-sized planets in it between December 2016 and March 2017.

\n

- It was approved far beyond its original mission length and was operating well until May 2013, when a second of its four reaction wheels or gyroscopes failed.

\n

\n\n

TESS

\n\n

\n

- Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) is a new exoplanet hunting spacecraft.
\n
- While Kepler is nearing its mission lifetime, TESS is readying to take its place.
\n
- It was launched in 2018 to detect small planets with bright host stars in the solar neighbourhood.
\n
- The spacecraft will be looking for a phenomenon known as a transit, where a planet passes in front of its star, causing a periodic and regular dip in the star's brightness.
\n
- It will do an all-sky survey from an orbit between the Earth and the moon.
\n

\n\n

Legal Entity for Animal Kingdom

\n\n

- The Uttarakhand High Court has declared the entire animal kingdom, including birds and aquatic animals, as a legal entity having rights of a "living person".
\n
- The court has invoked Article 21 of the Constitution - safeguarding the rights of humans, protects life. The court has clarified that the word 'life' includes animal world.
\n
- According to the judgement, Legal Entity means "The entity acts like a natural person but only through a designated person, whose acts are processed within the ambit of law".
\n
- This means the animal kingdom could be represented by a custodian.
\n
- It declared all citizens of Uttarakhand "persons in loco parentis" (in the place of a parent) giving them the responsibility to protect animals and ensure their welfare.
\n
- The high court, last year accorded the status of "living entity" to the Ganga and Yamuna rivers , a decision subsequently stayed by the Supreme Court.
\n

\n\n

World Sanskrit Conference

\n\n

- \n
- World Sanskrit Conference is to promote, preserve and practice the Sanskrit language all over the world by the people.
- \n
- It is being held in various countries across the globe once in every three years and so far it has been held thrice in India.
- \n
- The latest edition, 17th World Sanskrit Conference is going to be held at Vancouver, Canada.
- \n
- Union HRD minister will be inaugurating the conference.
- \n
- More than 500 scholars and delegates from over 40 countries will be participating in this conference on various subjects.
- \n

\n\n

Formalin

\n\n

- \n
- Fish Samples in Chennai have shown the presence of Formalin.
- \n
- This is the first time, samples of fish in Tamil Nadu have tested positive for formalin.
- \n
- Formalin, a derivative of formaldehyde is a carcinogenic substance used to prolong the shelf life of fish.
- \n
- It is harmful when consumed by humans.
- \n
- Once ingested, formalin releases toxins into the body, and the sustained ingestion of formalin can eventually lead to cancer.
- \n
- A solution which contains 37% formalin has the capacity to kill a fully grown adult.
- \n
- Other chemicals added - **Sodium benzoate** was a preservative that was mixed when the ice was formed and **Ammonia** is also added to the ice, but it is done to prevent the ice from melting.
- \n

\n\n

Mattala Airport

\n\n

\n

- Mattala Airport is referred to as the world's "emptiest airport" located in Sri Lanka.

\n

- India is negotiating a joint venture with Sri Lanka to operate this loss making airport.

\n

- It is located strategically very near to Hambantota port which is operated by China.

\n

\n\n



\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Hindu, PIB, Financial Express.

\n

