Prelim Bits 10-02-2017

Nilambur teak gets GI tag

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- Nilambur teak is internationally known for its superior quality and elegant appearance.
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- Nilambur in kerala is also known as "Mecca of Teak". Its teak will soon be added to the list of Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
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- Nilambur also has a Teak Museum.
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- The teak plantation in Nilambur, the **world's first teak plantation** was done around the year 1842 -1844.
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- Other kerala products in GI tag are **Pokkali rice**, Vazhakulam Pineapple, Wayanadan rice varieties (Jeerakasala and Gandhakasala), Tirur Betel vine, Central Travancore Jaggery and Chengalikodan Nendran - a banana variety.
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India rejects report of U.S. faith panel

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- India rejected criticism from the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) report on challenges faced by religious minorities.
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- In its report titled “Constitutional and Legal Challenges Faced by Religious Minorities in India”, it says that religious minorities in the country continued to face vigilantism and constitutional challenges.
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- USCIRF is an independent, bipartisan U.S. federal government commission dedicated to defending the universal right to freedom of religion or belief abroad.

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- USCIRF Commissioners are appointed by the President and the Congressional leadership of both political parties.
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Intellectual property index

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- The index is published by **US Chamber of Commerce**.
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- The index evaluates the intellectual property (IP) environment and grades countries on patents, trademarks, copyright, trade secrets, enforcement, and international treaties.
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- This year the index evaluates 45 countries and India with a score of 8.75 out of 35 occupies 43rd place followed by Pakistan (44th) and Venezuela (45th).
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- The US, UK , Germany, Japan and Sweden were ranked the top five countries in the IP Index.
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Key concerns about India's IP environment (2017)

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- National Intellectual Property Rights policy does not address fundamental weaknesses in the country's IP framework
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- Limited framework for protection of life sciences IP
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- Patentability requirements outside international standards
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- Challenges with the scope of patentability for computer-implemented inventions
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- Delhi high court ruling in the case involving University of Delhi regarding photocopying of copyrighted content
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