Prelim Bits 10-12-2018

Dead Sea Scrolls

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- The Dead Sea Scrolls are a collection of ancient manuscripts that include the earliest existing copies of books from the Hebrew Bible, date from the 3rd century BC to the 1st century AD.
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- Around 900 scrolls were discovered between 1947 and 1956 in the Qumran caves above the Dead Sea.
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- Israeli scholars have recently deciphered one of the previously unread manuscripts of the Dead Sea Scrolls.
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- The latest deciphered scroll contains references to the 364-day calendar used by the sect, as opposed to the lunar calendar used in Jewish religious practice today.
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- It also refers to annual wine and olive harvest festivals no longer observed in Judaism.
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Discovery of Ape Fossil

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- Researchers have recently unearthed 11 million years old the Ape fossil in Kutch, Gujarat.
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- It is the oldest and the only known ape fossil discovered in peninsular India.
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- Fossils of Ape have been previously unearthed near the Siwalik hill range, spreading across Pakistan, Churia Hills in Nepal and around the Himalayas.

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- But this new finding, almost 1,000 km south from the previous finds has increased the geographic range of the genus.
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- Many associated mammal fossils belonging to the Miocene age have been discovered in Kutch in the past, including whales and sea cows.
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- That’s the reason, Kutch is considered as a paradise for fossils.
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- The new discovery will help to understand in detail the evolution of great apes.
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Bioplastics

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- Plastics are usually made from petroleum, with the associated impacts in terms of fossil fuel depletion and climate change.
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- It is estimated that by 2050, plastics could already be responsible for 15% of the global CO2 emissions.
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- Bioplastics, plant-based plastics is often considered as an alternative to petroleum-based plastics.
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- They are in principle climate-neutral since they are based on renewable raw materials such as maize, wheat or sugar cane.
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- Therefore, producing bioplastics consumes CO2 and their net greenhouse gas balance is assumed to be zero.
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- However, a recent study found that shifting to plant-based plastics could lead to generate increased greenhouse gas emission from cropland expansion on a global scale.
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Gulf Cooperation Council

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- The Gulf Cooperation Council is a regional political and economic alliance of

six Gulf States.
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- Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates are the member countries.
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- It is headquartered in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
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- Its aim is to achieve ever closer union between the energy rich Gulf countries.
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- The 39th GCC summit was recently held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
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- The summit has failed to resolve a diplomatic crisis that continues to grip the region.
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- Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE and Egypt have imposed an air, land and sea blockade on Qatar since June 2017.
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- The blockading countries has accused Qatar of supporting terrorism.
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Ideate for India

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- It is a national challenge to students of classes 6 - 12 across the country to give them a platform to become solution creators for the problems.
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- It will help inculcate innovation skills in youth and equip all students to utilise technology for the betterment of their communities and the society at large.
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- It is designed and launched by the National e-Governance Division, Ministry of Electronics & IT in collaboration with Intel India, with the support of Ministry of Human Resource Development.
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Source: PIB, The Hindu, The New Indian Express

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