Prelim Bits 12-04-2018

Power to withdraw a case

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- Recently, the Haryana government announced its decision to withdraw cases relating to violence during the Jat agitation of February, 2016.
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- The power to withdraw criminal cases against individuals or entities is enshrined in law and vested with the state government through its public prosecutor.
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- It is based on the principle that since every crime is a crime against the state, the state has the responsibility to prosecute and ensure punishment for the criminal.
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- The power to withdraw criminal cases is vested with the public prosecutor or assistant public prosecutor under Section 321 of the Criminal Procedure Code.
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- According to the statute, at any stage before the judgment, the prosecutor can decide to withdraw prosecution against one or all offenders in a case.
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- The withdrawal of cases, however, is subject to the court giving its consent.
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- Even after a case has been withdrawn by a state government and received the consent of the court concerned, it can be challenged for a judicial review under Article 226 of the Constitution.
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- Courts have held that every member of the society has the locus standi to oppose or challenge withdrawal in a criminal case, particularly in case of corruption and criminal breach of trust or cheating.
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Protecting heritage along the Hoogly River

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- IIT Kharagpur has initiated a pilot project to protect the rich cultural heritage of the cities and towns along the Hoogly River.
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- The project would focus on five former trading posts and garrison settlements near Kolkata along the Hooghly river.
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- The **five trading posts and garrison settlements** bear traces of Portugese (**Bandel**), Dutch (**Chinsurah**), British (**Barrackpore**), French (**Chandernagore**), and Danish (**Serampore**) presence, as well as India's own rich culture.
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- Among the top priorities of the project is the conservation of centuries-old buildings, which are mainly private houses.
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- The project is being jointly funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, UK, and the Indian Council for Historical Research.
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- The project aims to draw up a Heritage Management Strategy and an hour-long documentary film among its other efforts to preserve the collective history.
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- An annual Hoogly Heritage Day is also being planned.
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Online dashboard to monitor public grievances on real time basis

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- Union Minister of State, Ministry of Personnel and Public Grievance launched an online Dashboard.
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- It was developed by Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) and also will be the nodal department for the same.
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- It will monitor public grievances on real time basis and periodically review progress of systemic reforms.
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- This will enable concerned Ministries/Departments to monitor implementation of these reforms.
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Coal Bed Methane (CBM)

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- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approves Exploration and Exploitation of Coal Bed Methane (CBM) from areas under Coal Mining Lease allotted to Coal India Limited (CIL) and its Subsidiaries.
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- Coal Bed Methane (CBM) is an unconventional form of natural gas found in coal deposits or coal seams.
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- CBM is formed during the process of coalification, the transformation of plant material into coal.
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- CBM is one of the cleanest burning fossil fuels.
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- The gas is considered to be sweet, meaning it has minimal to no additional gases or chemicals.
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- CBM is different from sour gas which contains Hydrogen Sulfide (H2S).
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- CBM referred to as an unconventional resource referring to the method in which the gas is stored in the earth, and the impact this has on how it is produced.
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- CBM is stored within the molecular structure of the coal and is held in place by the pressure of the overlying rock and, in many cases, by water circulating through the coal seam.
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- To produce this gas, the pressure must be reduced in the coal seam before the gas can flow through existing fractures within the coal seam up to the pipeline.
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Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve

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- The reserve spreads across the Vidarbha region in eastern Maharashtra.
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- One of the most significant reserves in central India, the Reserve is said to be hosting more than 50 tigers.
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- Andhari Wildlife Sanctuary is part of the reserve.
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- The Tadobha National Park is Maharashtra's oldest and largest National Park.
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- Tadoba Lake is the crucial perennial water source for the region.
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- It represents Southern Tropical Dry Deciduous Teak Forests in the Tiger habitat.
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- The word 'Tadoba' is derived from the name of God "Tadoba" or "Taru," which is praised by local tribal people of this region
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- While "Andhari" is derived from the name of Andhari river that flows in this area.
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- Teak is the prominent tree species in the forest region.
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- It is a mega-biodiversity site with large surrounding forest area and thus has a long term conservation value and also a gene bank of wild relatives of the cultivated species for future use.
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Pharma waste threatens world’s rivers

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- River systems around world are coursing with over-the-counter and prescription drug waste harmful to the environment.
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- Drug waste dumped into rivers driven some species to the brink of

extinction.
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- The amount of pharmaceutical effluence leaching into waterways could increase by two-thirds before mid-century.
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- A large number of drugs found in the environment have been detected in nature at levels dangerous for marine life.
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- The drugs include analgesics, antibiotics, anti-platelet agents, hormones, psychiatric drugs, anti-histamines.
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- Hormonal drugs, for examples, have notoriously induced unnatural changes in fish and amphibians.
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- European Union and the US Environmental Protection Agency have identified Diclofenac, an anti-inflammatory and pain-relief drug, as an environmental threat.
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- Pollution levels are likely to be substantially higher in much of Latin America, Africa and Asia where—on average—less than a quarter of waste water is treated.
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Map of the Day

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India Important wetlands

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- India currently has 26 sites designated as Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites).
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- Jammu and Kashmir houses 4 ramsar sites while there are 3 ramsar sites in Kerala.
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- The wetlands in the four extremes of our country
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1. Northernmost- Wular Lake
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2. Southernmost- Ashtamudi lake
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3. Easternmost - Loktak Lake
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4. Westernmost – Nalsarovar Lake
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- Lake Pichola is situated in Udaipur in state of Rajasthan which is an artificial fresh water lake.
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- Powai Lake is an artificial lake that is situated in Mumbai, in the Powai valley.
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- Pushkar Lake is located in the town of Pushkar in Ajmer district of the Rajasthan state of western India which is a sacred lake of the Hindus.
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Source: PIB, The Hindu, Indian Express

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