Prelim Bits 13-02-2017

Pilot Whales

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- Oceanic dolphins are a widely distributed family of dolphins that live in the sea of the order Cetaceans.
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- Cetaceans consist of the whales, dolphins, and porpoises.
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- Oceanic dolphins include several big species whose common names contain "whale" rather than "dolphin", such as the killer whale and the pilot whales.
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- Pilot whales grow to about 7.5m and are common around New Zealand’s waters.
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- They were named "pilot whales" because the group of these animals are often "piloted" by a leader.
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Stranding of Pilot whales

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- Recently around 600 pilot whales were stranded in Farewell Spit.
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- Farewell Spit is narrow sand spit at the northern end of the Golden Bay, South Island of New Zealand.
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- It has been the site of previous mass strandings and sometimes is described as a whale trap.
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- A splinter of sand that arches like a hook into the Tasman Sea, seems to confuse whales and the spit’s long coastline and gently sloping beaches seem to make it difficult for whales to navigate away from once they get close.
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President Salary

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- The Home Ministry had proposed an increase in the salary of the President from the current Rs. 1.5 lakh to Rs. 5 lakh per month. Similarly for the Vice-President, the proposal was to increase the salary from Rs. 1.1 lakh to Rs. 3.5 lakh per month.
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- The boost in salary is commensurate with the recommendations of the Seventh Pay Commission, implemented in 2016.
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- For over six months now, The President has been drawing less salary than a Joint Secretary in the Government of India.
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- The Cabinet Secretary, the seniormost in the government hierarchy, gets Rs. 2.5 lakh currently.
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- The recommendations were moved six months ago and it is stuck in the PMO.
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- Once the PMO clears the files pertaining to the President's salary, it will be sent to the Parliament for approval before getting a sanction from the union Cabinet.
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- President is entitled to emoluments allowances and privileges as determined by the parliament. His emoluments and allowances cannot be diminished during his term of office.
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