Prelim Bits 13-09-2018

International Criminal Court (ICC)

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- United States has recently threatened to prosecute ICC officials if Americans are charged with war crimes committed in Afghanistan.
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- ICC is an intergovernmental organization and international tribunal.
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- It is headquartered in The Hague in the Netherlands.
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- It has the jurisdiction to prosecute individuals for the international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, crime of aggression and war crimes.
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- It is the world‘s first permanent international criminal court.
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- It is intended to complement existing national judicial systems and it may therefore only exercise its jurisdiction when certain conditions are met.
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- States which become party to the Rome Statute becomes member of ICC and the co-operation of the non-party states with the ICC is of voluntary nature.
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- But when a case is referred to the ICC by the UN Security Council, all UN member states are obliged to cooperate, since its decisions are binding for all of them.
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- India is not a signatory to the Rome Statute.
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- The United States has not signed up to the court and in 2002, its Congress passed a law enabling U.S to invade the Netherlands to liberate any U.S. citizen held by the court.
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Bru Refugees

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- Union government has given a choice to Bru refugees in relief camps in Tripura, to either go back to their villages in Mizoram or be ready to be denied free ration and other facilities.
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- In 1990s, Mizo nationalists had demanded that the Brus be left out of the state's electoral rolls, contending that the tribe was not indigenous to Mizoram.
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- The Bru militancy was a reactionary movement against Mizo nationalist groups.
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- In 1997, the murder of a Mizo forest guard at the Dampa Tiger Reserve in Mizoram allegedly by Bru militants led to a violent backlash against the community.
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- It forced several thousand people belonging to Bru community to flee to neighbouring Tripura.
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- The displaced Bru people from Mizoram have been living in various camps in Tripura since 1997.
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- Recently, the Centre and the state governments of Tripura and Mizoram has recently signed an agreement for repatriation of Bru community from Tripura to Mizoram.
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Whale Sanctuary

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- Whale Sanctuary was proposed in South Atlantic by 39 countries in International Whaling Commission.
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- It was meant to provide haven for endangered marine mammals.
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- The idea was proposed by Brazil in 2001 in IWC meeting.
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- It was co-sponsored by Argentina, Gabon, South Africa and Uruguay.
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- In the recently concluded session of IWC in Brazil, pro-whaling nations blocked the proposal of setting up of sanctuary.
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- Pro-whaling nations include Japan and Russia.

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Click here to know more about IWC.

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National Technical Research Organisation

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- India’s first missile tracking ship is being built for NTRO by Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL).
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- NTRO is India’s technical intelligence agency.
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- It is working under the supervision of the Prime Minister’s Office and the National Security Adviser.
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- The organisation has the same “Norms of Conduct” as Intelligent Bureau (IB) and Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).
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- In 2017, ministry of home affairs through its notification, listed NTRO under The Intelligence Organisations (Restriction of Rights) Act, 1985.
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- The provisions of the act are,
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i. It prevents employees of a notified agency from forming unions/associations,
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ii. puts restrictions on the employee’s freedom of speech,
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iii. bars any communication with the press, or publishing a book or other document without the permission of the head of the intelligence organisation.
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Click here to know more about Missile tracking ship (VC 11184)

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NOTA

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- Election Commission has withdrawn the provision for the NOTA option for elections to the Rajya Sabha and the State Legislative Council.
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- Supreme Court has previously given directive not to extend NOTA to elections in Rajya Sabha.
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- None of the above (NOTA) is a ballot option designed to allow the voter to indicate disapproval of all of the candidates in a voting system.
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- The idea behind the use of NOTA is to allow the voter to register a “protest” vote if none of the candidates is acceptable to her for whatever reason.
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- While NOTA votes are tallied, the candidate with the highest number of votes polled is declared elected irrespective of the NOTA total.
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Source: The Hindu, The New Indian Express

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