Prelim Bits 14-08-2018

Lab for Conservation of Species

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- The Laboratory for the Conservation of Endangered Species (LaCONES) is India's only facility for conservation of endangered species.
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- It is a dedicated facility of CSIR’s Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB) in Hyderabad.
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- It was set up in 2007 with the support of Department of Biotechnology, Central Zoo Authority, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Govt. of Andhra Pradesh.
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- It uses modern biotechnologies for conservation of endangered wildlife.
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- It supports both in-situ habitat preservation and Ex-situ conservation through captive breeding in controlled environment to restock original wild populations.
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- It is the only laboratory in India that has developed methods for collection and cryopreservation of semen and oocytes from wildlife and successfully reproducing endangered blackbuck, spotted deer and Nicobar pigeons.
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- It has established Genetic Resource Bank for Indian wildlife and collected genetic resources from 23 species of Indian wild animals.
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Next Generation Offshore Patrol Vessels

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- The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) has accorded approval for the procurement of 6 Next Generation Offshore Patrol vessels (NGOPVs) for the Indian Navy.
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- It will be indigenously designed and manufactured.
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- It will be fitted with state-of-the-art sensor suite with increased endurance.
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- It will strengthen maritime security by its maritime interdiction operations, search & seizure operations, surveillance missions, anti-piracy missions, anti-poaching and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.
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Defence Acquisition Council

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- It was consitituted in 2001 to ensure expeditious procurement of the approved requirements of the Armed Forces in prescribed time frame by optimally utilizing the allocated budgetary resources.
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- DAC is headed by Union Defence Ministry.
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- It will give policy guidelines to acquisitions, based on long-term procurement plans.
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- It will also clear all acquisitions, including imported equipment and those produced indigenously or under a foreign licence.
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- It will preside over 3 wings,\n
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    - **Defence Procurement Board** which will deal with purchases
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    - **Defence Production Board** which will supervise procurement from indigenous sources, such as ordnance factories and equipment manufactured under a foreign licence
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    - **Defence Research and Development Board**
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Swadesh Darshan Scheme

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- It is one of the flagship scheme of Ministry of Tourism for development of thematic circuits in the country in a planned and prioritised manner.
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- It is a central sector scheme.
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- The following thematic circuits have been identified, for development namely North-East India Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Krishna Circuit, Desert Circuit, Tirtankar circuit, Tribal Circuit, Eco Circuit, Wildlife Circuit, Rural Circuit, Spiritual Circuit, Sufi circuit, Ramayana Circuit and Heritage Circuit.
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- The first project under the Scheme and North-East India Circuit is going to be inaugrated in Manipur.
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- The project covers two sites i.e. Kangla Fort and Khongjom.
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- The completion of the projects sanctioned under the scheme would result in increased tourist inflow thereby creating employment opportunities for the local community.
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- It is different from "PRASAD" scheme of Ministry of Tourism.
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- National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) focus on development and beautification of the identified pilgrimage destinations.
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Kangla and Khongjom

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- Kangla Fort is one of the most important historic and archaeological site of Manipur located in the heart of the Imphal city.
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- It served as the seat of Manipur’s power till 1891.
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- Under the project, restoration and rejuvenation of old Govindajee Temple in Kangla has been carried out.
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- Khongjom is the place where the last war of resistance of Anglo Manipur War of 1891 was fought.
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- Under the project a Pedestrian bridge and rejuvenation of Kombirei Lake has

been carried out.
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Ease of Living Index

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- It is an initiative of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) to help cities assess their liveability vis-a-vis global and national benchmarks.
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- It ranks 111 cities based on four pillars namely Institutional, Social, Economic and Physical.
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- Ranking of cities based on this index was recently released.
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- Three cities in Maharashtra - Pune, Navi Mumbai and Greater Mumbai topped the first Ease of Living Index.
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- The national capital, New Delhi, is ranked 65 among 111 cities, while Chennai is in 14th place. Kolkata did not participate in the survey.
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- The other cities in the top ten include Tirupati, Chandigarh, Thane, Raipur, Indore, Vijayawada and Bhopal.
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- The three cities at the bottom of the rankings are Rampur, Kohima and Patna.
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Source: The Hindu, PIB

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