Prelim Bits 15-03-2017

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Shortest-Duration Cotton Variety

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- One of the main reasons for repeated failure of dryland cotton crop is its long duration i.e around 170-240 days.
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- This extends well beyond the monsoon months.
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- These plants then go without water during the crucial time of flowering and fruiting and suffer weak uptake of nutrients.
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- Central Institute for Cotton Research has developed what is reported to be the shortest-duration cotton variety in the world, tentatively named Yugank.
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- It requires only 100-120 days for maturity.
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- This could emerge as the solution to the problems of dryland cotton farmers.
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- Another advantage of shorter-duration cotton is that the fibre quality is better. The longer the duration, the weaker will be the fibre.
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National Security Council (NSC)

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- NSC of India is an executive government agency tasked with advising the Prime Minister's office on matters of national security and strategic interest.
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- The members are the National Security Advisor (NSA), the Deputy National Security Advisor (DNSA), the Ministers of Defence, External Affairs, Home & Finance of the GOI.

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- It is the apex body of the three-tiered structure of the national security management system in India. The other two are the Strategic Policy Group and the National Security Advisory Board.
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- It was established in 1998.
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Credible Minimum Deterrence

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- Credible Minimum Deterrence is the principle on which India’s nuclear doctrine is based.
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- It underlines no first use (NFU) with a second strike capability.
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- Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) is another doctrine of military strategy in which a full-scale use of nuclear weapons by two or more opposing sides would cause the complete annihilation of both the attacker and the defender.
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Oldest Plant Fossil

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- A pair of 1.6 billion-year-old fossils that appear to contain red algae was found in Chitrakoot in central India.
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- This might be the oldest plant-like life discovered on Earth.
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- The oldest known red algae until now was 1.2 billion years old.
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- Scientists generally agree that large multicellular organisms became common about 600 million years ago.
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- This discovery could lead experts to rewrite the tree of life.
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- The fossils were embedded in fossil mats of cyanobacteria, called stromatolites.
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- Stromatolites are layered mounds, columns, and sheet-like sedimentary

rocks originally formed by the growth of layer upon layer of cyanobacteria.
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