Prelim Bits 16-01-2019

Makaravilakku festival

- Makaravilakku festival is the most important event in the two-month-long annual festival season.
- Makara jyothi is a star that appears in the sky on Makara Samkramam on the first day of the Malayalam month of Makaram.
- Makara vilakku is a light lit at Ponnambalamedu, a plateau across the Sabarimala shrine.
- The light, believed to have celestial origins, is shown three times by the chief priest of Pamba temple.
- Pamba is the base station of Sabarimala.
- The light is dubbed as Makara vilakku.
- This ritual is done after the Sirius star appears in the sky.
- This ritual had been done by Malaya araya tribals in the past.
- When the Travancore Devaswom Board took over the administration of the temple in the early 1950s, the tribal community lost that right.

Congenital Central Hypoventilation Syndrome (CCHS)

- It is a disorder of the nervous system in which the cue to breathe is lost when the patient goes to sleep.
- This results in a lack of oxygen and a build-up of carbon dioxide in the body, which can sometimes turn fatal.
- A typical presentation of the lack of breathing is when the lips start turning blue and it is a typical feature of a carbon dioxide build-up.
- The disease is also known as Ondine's Curse.
- The mutation of a gene called PHOX2B, which is crucial for the maturation of nerve cells in the body, can cause CCHS.

Chadar Trek

- Air force Station, Thoise, in Nubra Valley of J&K conducted a trekking expedition called Chadar Trek to commemorate 70th Republic Day.
- The Chadar Trek is one of the toughest and most challenging trails in the country.
- This arduous expedition was on the frozen Zanskar river.
- The Zanskar River is a north flowing tributary of the Indus River in Jammu

and Kashmir.
- The river meanders north-westwards through the gorge of Zanskar.
- It finally meets the Indus River near Nimmu of Ladakh region.

Vaduvoor Bird Sanctuary

- Vaduvoor Bird sanctuary is situated in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu.
- Vaduvoor lake is home to thousands of avian visitors every year from different continents.
- The lake is surrounded by fertile wetlands and offers a perfect spot for the birds for food, shelter and reproduction.
- It is a ideal spot when the temperture drops in their home countries in Europe, the Americas and sometimes Russia.
- The entire sanctuary is declared a protected area and the lake is periodically desilted.
- Ruff, spot billed duck, pin tailed duck, cotton teal and black headed ibis are the common visitors.

Source: PIB,The Hindi, Indian Express

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