

Prelim Bits 16-10-2018

Chandra Telescope

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- Chandra X-ray observatory, a space based telescope, was launched by NASA in 1999.

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- It is specifically designed to detect X-ray emission from very hot regions of the universe such as exploded stars, clusters of galaxies, and matter around black holes.

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- Since the Earth's atmosphere absorbs the vast majority of X-rays, they are not detectable from Earth-based telescopes.

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- It has recently entered a protective 'safe mode', which interrupts scientific observations and puts the spacecraft into a stable configuration.

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- It is one of the Great Observatories, along with the Hubble Space Telescope, Compton Gamma Ray Observatory (1991-2000), and the Spitzer Space Telescope.

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QS World University Ranking

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- QS, the global higher education think tank, has recently released its first standalone ranking of India's higher education institutions.

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- Indian University ranking by this think tank is the second country-specific rankings, after it released one for China earlier.

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- The rankings include Public Universities, Private Universities and deemed universities.

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- The ranking looks in to the Indian university system with an international

lens.

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- According to the recent ranking, IIT Bombay is named India's leading institution.

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- Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore secured the second spot followed by IIT Madras in the third place.

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- Interestingly, while IISc was India's best institution in the QS World University Rankings released earlier this year, the domestic league has pegged IIT-Bombay at first place.

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- This variation is because of the difference in criteria taken in global and domestic level.

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Tri-Service Military Exercise

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- India and France are in discussions for a bilateral tri-service military exercise to take forward the strategic cooperation.

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- This will be India's third such joint exercise.

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- The first joint tri-service exercise (Ex. INDRA) was held with Russia in October last year.

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- India has recently finalised one with the U.S. to be held next year.

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- **Current Military Exercises with France** - Shakti, Varuna and Garuda respectively for the Army, Navy and Air Force.

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NBFC

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- Kreditech, a Germany based company, has been licensed by the RBI to operate as an NBFC.

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- It is the first-of-its-kind licence in Indian financial history for digital lending

business and app-based financing by RBI.

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- This digital lending NBFC offer two kinds of services,

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1. Individualised Direct-to-Consumer loans

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2. LAAS - Lending-as-a-Service Solution for Vendors, which allows partners to offer customised credit products to their customer.

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Cheetah Reintroduction Project

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- Cheetah was declared extinct in India in the year 1952.

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- Wildlife Institute of India started this ambitious Cheetah Reintroduction Project in 2009.

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- The project focused on relocating cheetah from Namibia in Africa to Nauradehi sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh.

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- This project had hit a roadblock for want of funds.

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- The Madhya Pradesh forest department has written to the National Tiger Conservation Authority to revive the plan to reintroduce cheetahs in the State's Nauradehi sanctuary.

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- The sanctuary was found to be the most suitable area for the cheetahs as its forests are not very dense to restrict the fast movement and the prey base is also in abundance.

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- It is the largest wildlife sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh, extending across the river basins of Narmada and Ganga.

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Source: The Hindu, The Indian Express

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