

## **Prelim Bits 17-09-2017**

### **Black Planet**

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- Astronomers have discovered a black planet using hubble space telescope.
- It is formally called as WASP-12b, an exoplanet that reflects almost no light, making it appear essentially pitch black.
- It orbits its parent star WASP-12A, about 1400 light year away.
- Its albedo is 0.064, whereas the albedo of earth is 0.3 and moon is 0.12.
- It is categorized as a hot Jupiter since its radius almost twice that of Jupiter and a year of just over one Earth day.
- Albedo - Fraction of light falling on a surface that is reflected.
- Exoplanet - A Planet that orbits a star other than a sun.

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### **Global Burden of Disease Study - 2016**

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- Recent global burden of disease study - 2016 report has put forth comprehensive data on the leading causes of deaths in India.
- According to the report, cardiovascular disease was the leading killer in 2016 followed by Diarrhoea, lower respiratory and infectious diseases being the 2<sup>nd</sup> cause.
- In India and world over, lifestyle diseases have increased, while deaths due to curable diseases have come down because of better medical care.
- Nearly 72% of all deaths in 2016 were from non-communicable diseases.

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- The report also highlighted that smoking and poor diet remains leading risk factors of ill health.

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## **ATAGS**

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- Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS) is a indigenous artillery gun which has set a new world record in range by hitting targets at a distance of 48 km.
- It is being jointly developed by the DRDO and the private sector.
- The development is being done through a consortium based model, similar to that adopted for the pinaka multi-barrel rocket launch system.
- The Army has not inducted any new artillery gun since the Bofors in the 1980's.
- Last year, India signed a contract for 145 M-777 Ultra-Light Howitzers from the US.

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## **Gharial Exchange Programme**

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- Bangladesh Forest Department and IUCN have piloted the first ever gharial exchange programme to initiate the captive breeding of the species in Bangladesh.
- The gharial is a crocodilian of the family Gavialidae, native to the northern part of the Indian Subcontinent.
- It is listed as “Critically Endangered” in the IUCN red list.
- The gharial is one of three crocodilians native to India, the other two being the mugger crocodile and the saltwater crocodile.

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**Source: The Hindu**

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