Prelim Bits 22-02-2017

Tully Monster

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- Tullimonstrum gregarium, commonly known as the Tully Monster, is an extinct soft-bodied that lived in shallow tropical coastal waters of muddy estuaries during the Pennsylvanian geological period i.e about 300 million years ago.
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- It has been found only in the Mazon Creek fossil beds of Illinois, United States.
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- Its classification has been the subject of continual controversy, and interpretations of the fossil likened it to molluscs, arthropods, conodonts, worms, and even possibly vertebrates.
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- A new study found that it cannot be classified as a vertebrate.
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The National Regulatory Authority (NRA)

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- NRA of India comprises of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), State Drug Regulatory Authorities, Pharmaco-vigilance Programme of India (PvPI) and Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) structures at the Central and States levels.
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- A fully functional NRA is a pre-requisite for WHO prequalification of vaccines.
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- WHO Prequalification Programme facilitates access to vaccines that meet the unified standards of quality, safety and efficacy as well as programme needs.
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- The vaccine manufacturers can only apply for WHO vaccine prequalification if the NRA meets the standards of the WHO NRA published indicators i.e.

WHO Global benchmarking Tool on functional regulatory system for vaccines.
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- WHO has completed the assessment of the status of the Indian vaccine regulatory system.
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- The country's NRA being declared "functional' with a maturity level of 4, i.e., the highest level as per currently evolved definitions in respect of 5 functions, and maturity level 3 in respect of 4 functions.
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Nyctibatrachus

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- Indian Scientists have discovered seven new frog species belonging to the genus Nyctibatrachus, commonly known as Night Frogs in the Western Ghats.
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- Four out of seven of the new species are miniature-sized frogs and they are among the smallest known frogs in the world.
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- Unlike other frogs in the genus that are predominantly stream dwelling, the new miniature frogs were found under damp forest leaf litter or marsh vegetation.
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- One-third of the Western Ghats frogs are already threatened with extinction. Out of the seven new species, five are facing considerable anthropogenic threats and require immediate conservation prioritization.
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