Prelim Bits 22-02-2018

Global Corruption Index

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- India’s rank on the Corruption Perception Index fell two notches to 81 in 2017 from 79 in 2016.
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- The Berlin-based non-government body Transparency International ranked 180 countries in 2017.
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- New Zealand was the least corrupt and Somalia was the most.
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- The 2017 index revealed — despite attempts to combat corruption, most countries were moving too slowly with their effort.
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ICGS Vajra

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- The Indian Coast Guard ship ‘Vajra’, was decommissioned in Paradip.
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- The Indian Coast Guard ship rendered three decades of service in maritime security along the northeast coastal waters.
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- The ship monitored the coastal activities along with Odisha and West Bengal.
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- It was built by Mazagon Dock, named ‘Vajra‘, after the weapon of Lord Indra, and commissioned on 1988.
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Eravikulum National Park

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- Eravikulam National Park is located in the Kannan Devan Hills of the Southern Western Ghats in the Idukki District, Kerala State.
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- In the local language, Eravikulam denotes streams and pools.
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- The highest peak in peninsular India, Anamudi (2695 m), is situated in this park.
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- Three major types of plant communities found in the park are: Grasslands, Shrub Land and Shola Forests.
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- Neelakurunji ,a plant endemic to the Western Ghats, blooms once every 12 years is found in this national park.
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- It also is home to and the sanctuary of the Nilgiri tahr, an endangered goat species.
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- The catchment area of three important rivers, Periyar, Chalakudy and Pambar is located in this area.
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- The Muthuvans are the indigenous people, who have traditionally been associated with the management of the park.
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Rare Fish Species from Australia

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- Scientists hauled up thousands of fish in an attempt to examine life at abyssal depths along Australia’s vast coastline.
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- Life at such depths is one of crushing pressures, no light, little food and freezing temperatures, with animals that call it home evolving unique ways to survive.
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- As food is scarce, they are usually small and move slowly and others are jelly-like and spend their lives floating about.
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- Some species have ferocious spines and fangs and lie in wait until food comes to them.
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- Over 42,000 fish and invertebrates were caught, some of which are potentially new species.
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- Scientists gathering in the Tasmanian capital Hobart to examine them which is a first in its nature.
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- It is the first systematic attempt to examine life at abyssal zone depths anywhere along Australia's vast coastline.
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Plastic pollution

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- India will host the official global World Environment Day celebrations on June 5.
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- The Theme of this year Environmental day will be "Beat Plastic Pollution".
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- The following are some insights into the plastic pollution in the country,
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1. The average production and consumption of plastic products between 2011-12 and 2015-16 at 707 million metric tons (MMT) per year.
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2. A report by Central Pollution Control Board in 2015 estimated that around 4,059 tons per day of plastic waste is generated from major cities.
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3. In 2015, the government had approved a scheme for "setting up of need-

based **plastic parks** with requisite state-of-the-art infrastructure to assist the sector move up the value chain.
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4. Ockhi Cyclone resulted in agglomeration of plastic debris along the coasts of Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka, Goa and Gujarat.
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Dara Shukoh

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- An exhibition was conducted to showcase the forgotten Mughal Prince Dara Shukoh, at Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, in New Delhi.
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- He was the eldest son of Emperor Shah Jahan and heir apparent to the Mughal throne.
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- The religious insight of the Mughal prince marks him out from most other Mughal rulers.
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- Dara Shukoh leaned towards the Chishti order of Sufism that is known to have promoted tolerance.
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- He commissioned the translation of all the Upanishads from Sanskrit to Persian for Muslim scholar to learn.
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- He wrote the Majma-ul-Bahrain (The confluence of two seas).to elaborate upon the syncretism between Sufism and Vedic philosophies.
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- Prince Dara Shukoh was defeated by Prince Aurangzeb in the battle of Samugarh.
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Source: PIB, The Hindu, Business Standard

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