Prelim Bits 22-04-2018

Gurusaday Museum

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- Gurusaday Museum, a cultural institution in Kolkata that preserves rare artifacts from undivided Bengal is running out of funds.
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- It is a National Treasure House of the tribal arts and crafts of undivided Bengal and India.
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- The museum was founded by the Bengal Bratachari Society, an organization started by Dutt to promote the region's folk art and culture.
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- It was started with his personal collection of artifacts from undivided Bengal.
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- This museum was intended to act as a connect with the heritage of indigenous art from this part of the subcontinent.
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- Presently it has a rich collection of over 3300 exquisite exhibits of folk arts and crafts.
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- It reflects the rural life and presents the picture of art and social traditions, religious beliefs, practices and motifs, aesthetic assimilation and cultural influences in undivided Bengal as well as in India.
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Stone Age surgery

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- The Scientists say primitive humans may have been practicing their veterinary skills.
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- The evidence lies in a hole in the skull of a Stone Age cow that was likely made by humans about 5,000 years ago.
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- The puncture does seem to represent the earliest known example of

veterinary “trepanation” — the boring of a hole into the skull.
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- The cow skull comes from an archaeological site in western France, inhabited by a Stone Age community between 3,400 and 3,000 B.C.
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- Whether the hole was an operation to save the cow or practice for surgery on humans, was not clear.
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Biodiversity Conservation and Rural Livelihood Improvement Project (BCRLIP)

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- BCRLIP aims at conserving Biodiversity in selected landscapes, including wildlife protected areas/critical conservation areas while improving rural livelihoods through participatory approaches.
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- Development of Joint Forest Management (JFM) and eco-development in some states are models of new approaches to provide benefits to both conservation and local communities
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- The project intends to build on these models and expand lessons to other globally significant sites in the country.
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- It will strengthen linkages between conservation and improving livelihoods of local communities that live in the neighborhood of biodiversity rich areas-as well as to enhance the local and national economy.
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- The Project was negotiated with the World Bank on 2011.
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- The Project would be implemented by the Forest/Wildlife Department of the respective State Government.
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- The Conservation and Survey Division in the Ministry of Environment & Forest would be overseeing and coordinating the Project at the country level.
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Sunderbans

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- The Sunderban Reserve Forest, with mangrove forests and creeks, is likely to be declared a Ramsar Site soon.
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- The Indian Sunderbans comprise almost 43% of the mangrove cover in the country according to a 2017 Forest Survey of India report.
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- Sunderbans is one of the ten biosphere reserves which are a part of the World Network of Biosphere Reserve (WNBR), based on the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Program list.
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- It is also home to about 100 Royal Bengal tigers.
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- It is already a World Heritage Site.
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- Other than threats such as climate change, sea level rise, widespread construction and clearing of mangrove forests for fisheries is posing a danger to the sunderbans.
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Nature’s clock goes out of sync

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- A study published in PoNAS has revealed that climate change has thrown biological timings of various species into disarray.
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- The timings are crucial to maintain ecosystems.
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- Bees, for example, have to be around flowers at the same time when they bloom for there to be successful pollination.
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- For species dependent on others, this presents potential catastrophe.
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- The study of 88 species found that the average species is moving apart from others by around six days each decade.
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- An example cited was of the Eurasian sparrow hawk in the Netherlands, which often missed out on food because its prey, the blue tit, arrived six days earlier.
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Plastic eating enzyme

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- Scientists have created a mutant enzyme that breaks down plastic drinks bottles by accident.
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- The breakthrough could help solve the global plastic pollution crisis by enabling for the first time the full recycling of bottles.
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- The new research was spurred by the discovery in 2016 of the first bacterium that had naturally evolved to eat plastic, at a waste dump in Japan.
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- PET – or polyethylene terephthalate – is the most common plastic used for soft drinks bottles.
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- This is because it is lightweight, shatterproof, easy to mould and colour and cheap to produce.
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- PET in a different form is also used in clothing, where it is called polyester.
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- The estimated recycling rates for PET bottles vary significantly around the world, from 31% in the US, to 48% in Europe, 72% in Japan and 90% in India, where rag pickers collect the bottles to sell to waste traders.
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- The finding will help in promoting this year's Earth Day theme "End Plastic Pollution".
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Map of the day

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Indian States

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Gujarat

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- It has the longest coastline in the country.
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- Gujarat has become the first state in the country to come with a solar policy in 2009, with a view to give boost to the solar energy sector.
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- In order to boost agricultural growth and to further improve it, the state government celebrated 2014-15 as krishi vikas varsh.
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Haryana

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- The major irrigation projects in the state are Western Yamuna Canal System, Bhakra Canal System and Gurgaon Canal System.
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- Giving practical shape to the lift irrigation system for the first time in India, Haryana has raised water from lower levels to higher and drier slopes through the Jawaharlal Nehru Canal Project.
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- The state is among the beneficiaries of the multipurpose Sutlej-Beas project, sharing benefits with Punjab and Rajasthan
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Source: PIB, The Hindu, Business Standard

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