Prelim Bits 23-05-2017

Cobra Lily

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- The incredibly rare Arisaema translucens, more commonly known as the cobra lily, was recently rediscovered in the western Nilgiris after 84 years.
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- They can be found only in a small area measuring less than 10 square kilometres in the Nilgiris.
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- The **Toda tribals of the Nilgiris,** who know the plant well, have an embroidery motif known as the ‘podwarshk’, which resembles it.
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- The indigenous community could **predict the early arrival of monsoon from the blooming of the cobra lily's ‘translucens’.**
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- Prized for their beauty around the world, cobra lilies are at even greater risk of extinction from the commercial trade in exotic plants.
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- Of the handful cobra lily species found in the Nilgiris, **only two are endemic**.
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- Cobra lilies have vanished in the past decades along with the **disappearance of the shola tree patches** in which they were found.
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Pampa Conservation

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- The document, named Pampa Declaration, delineates a comprehensive plan to be implemented with the active involvement and support of the government and the public.
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- **The salient features of the declaration** include\n
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    - bestowing living entity status to river Pampa;
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    - the constitution of a River Management Board for the governance of the river;
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    - documentation of livelihood along the river basin;
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    - publication of periodic status report of flood plains and wetlands and formation of tributaries, micro watersheds, and ponds linked to the river every five years.
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- The declaration calls upon the government to **create an additional standing committee** on environment at the local bodies to ensure participation of local government institutions in the governance of the river.
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- **Pampa:** It is the third longest river in the South Indian state of Kerala after Periyar and Bharathappuzha.
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- The river is also known as 'Dakshina Bhageerathi' and 'River Baris'.
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- The river rises at an altitude of 1,650 metres on the Peermade Plateau in the Idukki district of Kerala. After traversing a distance of 176 kilometres (109 mi), the river joins the Arabian Sea through a number of channels.
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International Solar Alliance

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- The world’s smallest republic, **Nauru** — has become the sixth country to ratify the ISA Framework pact initiated by the Indian and French Governments at the climate change summit held at Paris in 2015.
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- Headquartered in India, the alliance, conceived as a coalition of solar resource-rich countries to collaborate on meeting their energy needs through a common, agreed approach, **will become a legal entity once at least 15 countries ratify and deposit the framework agreement.**
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- India has earmarked about $2 billion to finance solar projects in Africa out of it commitment to provide $10 billion of concessional lines of credit for projects in the continent.

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Hillary Step

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- The Hillary Step was a 12-metre-tall rocky outcrop on the south-east ridge of the Mount Everest.
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- The near vertical outcrop is named after Edmund Hillary who was the first to scale Everest in 1953.
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- The Step was considered one of the trickiest part of climbing the world’s highest peak.
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- Mountaineers confirmed last week that the Hillary Step on Mount Everest has collapsed, possibly during the earthquake in Nepal in 2015.
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