Prelim Bits 26-02-2017

Tortoise and Freshwater Turtles

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- Freshwater Turtles form an important part of the riverine system, acting as scavengers in cleaning up water bodies and generally being indicators of river health.
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- Gangetic Plains accounted for 46% of all seizures of Tortoise and Freshwater Turtles (TFT), with Lucknow and Kanpur being major hubs, given the diversity of TFT population along the river.
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- While domestic consumption of turtle meat in West Bengal and Bangladesh continues, it is the international export to south-east Asian countries and China that rake in profits for smugglers.
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- Before, it was primarily Star Tortoises. But now, the numbers of species such as Spotted Pond Turtle are on the rise. Both the species are Vulnerable according to IUCN.
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- They are different from five species of sea turtles are known to inhabit Indian coastal waters and islands viz Olive Ridley, Green turtle, Hawksbill turtle, Loggerhead turtle and the Leatherback turtles.
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- Except the Loggerhead, the remaining four species nest along the Indian coast.
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Helicopter Money

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- Helicopter Money/Helicopter Drop is a hypothetical, unconventional tool of

monetary policy that involves printing large sums of money and distributing it to the public in order to stimulate the economy.
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- It was first mentioned by noted economist Milton Friedman.
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- Helicopter drop is now used for unconventional measures to jumpstart the economy during deflationary periods.
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TRAPPIST-1

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- A year before scientists announced the discovery of three planets orbiting the dwarf star.
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- Recently the team found four more through intense searches using several ground-based telescopes including Spitzer Space Telescope.
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- This is by far the largest collection of Earth-like planets in the habitable ‘Goldilocks’ zone of a star — neither too close nor too far from a star, which raises the possibility of liquid water being present on the surface.
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- Unlike earlier discoveries of exoplanets, all seven planets could possibly have liquid water.
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- Three of the planets have the greatest chance.
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- Since the initial discovery of three planets was made using the Chile-based Transiting Planets and Planetesimals Small Telescope, the exoplanet system is called TRAPPIST-1.
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McGurk effect

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- It is a powerful multisensory illusion whereby the brain can be deceived into hearing sounds that don’t exist.
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- It involves showing a person’s lips making the shape of one sound — like “bah” — while the audio is actually the person saying “fah.”

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- In that case our brain changes what we “hear” based on what we see.
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- It demonstrates the overwhelming influence that sight exerts over the brain and how the latter reorders perception to give us a consistent picture of the world.
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