Prelim Bits 28-05-2018

Baduli Kurung

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- Baduli Kurung is a bat cave in the Bamuni hill, 17 km south of Nagaon town in central Assam.
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- It is home to a number of colonies of both fruit- and insect-eating bats.
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- The people believe that the bats watch over the hills that provide them firewood and a life-saving spring (much of the groundwater in the area is contaminated with fluoride), which flows out of the cave.
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- From 2001, locals began hosting the three-day Badulithaan Mela, starting 24 hours after Sivaratri.
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Maravanthe Shoreline

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- Maravanthe Beach is located 12 km from Kundapur, which is 50 km north of Udupi, Karnataka.
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- The work on Asian Development Bank-funded Maravanthe Shoreline Protection and Management Project is under process.
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- There is a constant threat of National Highway 66 getting eroded by massive waves.
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- The NH66 is passing between the Arabian Sea and Souparnika River at Maravanthe.
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- About 24 groynes, each about 110 meters long, are being built into the Arabian Sea abutting National Highway 66 to protect the seashore by facilitating proper sand distribution.
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Eastern Peripheral Expressway

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- The Prime Minister inaugurated the two expressways in the Delhi NCR Region- Phase-I of the Delhi-Meerut Expressway and Eastern Peripheral Expressway.
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- The Eastern Peripheral Expressway (EPE) will contribute towards the twin objectives of decongesting and de-polluting the national capital by diverting traffic not destined for Delhi.
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- It is expected to reduce pollution levels in the national capital by 50 percent.
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- The 135-km Eastern Peripheral Expressway envisages signal-free connectivity between Ghaziabad, Greater Noida, Faridabad and Palwal.
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- It is the country's first highway lit by solar power with provisions of rain water harvesting.
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- For the first time, entry points at an expressway have 'weigh-in-motion' sensors to keep a check on overloading in trucks.
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- Nearly 2.5 lakh trees have been planted along the highway on both sides.
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Blockchain Technology in banking, contracts

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- A number of companies and banks are adopting blockchain technology to reduce documentation and increase operational efficiency.
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- Blockchain technology allows all stages of transactions to be securely shared between network members, as opposed to each bank working independently, which is more expensive and increases the chance of error.
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- Infosys created India Trade Connect, which is being used to run a pilot of a blockchain-based solution developed specifically to address the trade finance process requirements of banks.
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- Cost reduction, risk mitigation, speed, traceability and security are among the multiple benefits the participants are experienced by participants in the pilot project.
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- Blockchain technology can be used to digitize and authenticate currently complex records like land holdings.
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- The best use case is Sweden, which is putting all its land records on blockchain and it will quite quickly move towards doing land transfers and ownership verification using blockchain.
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Women’s health crucial to combat stunting

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- A first of-its-kind study by International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), analysing data from the National Family Health Survey (NHFS)- IV across all 640 districts of the country, highlights the impact of women’s health on stunting of children.
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- According to it the parameters related to women, including education and age at marriage, account for 50% of the difference between districts with high and low levels of stunting among children below the age of five.
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- Across the country, in 239 districts more than 40% of the children are stunted, while 441 districts record between 30% and 40 % of stunting.
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- The study reports that only 29 districts have levels between 10% and 20%, most of them in South India.
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- India accounts for approximately a third of the world’s stunted children at 63 million.
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- Overall levels have improved in the country from 48% in 2006 to 38.4% in 2016 with wide variations among different districts ranging between 12.4% and 65.1%.
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- The four crucial parameters in women that together contribute to a 44% reduction in stunting among children are

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1. Levels of body mass index accounting for 19% of the difference between districts
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2. Education accounting for 12% of the difference
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3. Age at marriage contributing a 7% reduction
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4. Ante-natal care adding 6**%.**
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Source: PIB, The Hindu

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