Prelim Bits 29-11-2017

Alappuzha – A Leading Urban Centre in Waste Management

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- The report by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) titled ‘Solid approach to waste: how 5 cities are beating pollution” was released.
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- Alappuzha in Kerala is among the five cities recognized by the UNEP as global success stories in solving the problem of solid waste.
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- The other four cities are Osaka (Japan), Ljubljana (Slovenia), Penang (Malaysia) and Cajicá (Colombia).
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- Alappuzha, which is known as ‘the Venice of the East’ for its backwaters and coastal lagoons adopted decentralized waste management system.
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- The biodegradable waste was segregated at the ward level, and treated in small composting plants which provide biogas for residents.
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- Alappuzha has also received the Clean City Award from the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) in 2016.
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UN Environment Assembly

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- The UN Environment Assembly is the world's highest-level decision-making body on the environment.
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- The third UN Environment Assemble will gather in Nairobi, Kenya in December 2017 under the overarching theme of “pollution”.
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- The Assembly has the universal membership of all 193 UN Member States.
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- It is prepared throughout the year by a Committee of Permanent Representatives which is based in Nairobi.

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- It aims to deliver a number of tangible commitments to end the pollution of air, land, waterways, and oceans, and to safely manage chemicals and waste.
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First CoP of Minamata Convention

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- The Minamata Convention is a global treaty established to protect human health and the environment from the adverse effects of mercury.
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- The Minamata Convention on Mercury entered into force in August 2017 with ratification by over 50 countries.
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- The first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury (Mercury COP1) was held at Geneva, Switzerland.
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- The report, 'Towards a pollution-free planet', was launched during the COP1.
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- Global Environment Facility (GEF) is the financial mechanism for Minamata Convention.
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India Hypertension Management Initiative (IHMI)

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- IHMI is a collaborative project of Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Union Health Ministry, State Governments and WHO.
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- The primary goal of this project is to reduce morbidity and mortality due to Cardiovascular Disease, the leading cause of death in India.
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- IHMI will be progressively rolled out in 25 districts in the first two years across districts selected by the Health Ministry.
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- It involves active screening and intensification of treatment activities for hypertension by improving the control of high blood pressure, which is the leading cause.
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SC’s order on Hadiya’s Case

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- Supreme Court has recently overturned Kerela HC’s decision and protected her freedom to choose her religion (Article 25) and her freedom of movement (Article 19)
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- HC made some fault observations like that a woman’s marriage requires the involvement of her parents and that even if she had attained the age of majority she was still at a “vulnerable age” were flawed.
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- The Supreme Court has also made it clear that the National Investigation Agency can continue its ongoing probe into radicalisation.
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- Click here to know more about the case.
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NTPC & Reverse Bidding

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- The power sector has been languishing in recent times due to stressed power units.
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- NTPC is the largest thermal power generating company in the country.
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- It has decided to rescue the power sector by issuing a tender to buy stressed units via reverse bidding.
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- In a regular auction, a seller puts up an item and buyers place bids until the close of the auction and the item goes to the highest bidder.
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- In a reverse auction, the sellers compete to obtain business from the buyer.
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- The sellers typically underbid each other.
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- At the end of the auction the seller with the lowest amount wins.
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- Here operators of plants with stressed units, principle lenders and banks are the bidders.

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- NTPC is the buyer.
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- NTPC’s rate last year was Rs 3.18 per unit. So as per the principle, bidders would quote tariff below Rs.3.18
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Source: The Hindu, PIB, Business Standard

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