Prelim Bits 31-08-2017

Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)

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- It is an autonomous Telecom Technology development centre under the Ministry of Communication.
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- The key objective was to build a centre for excellence in the area of telecom technology.
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- It is vested with full authority to develop state-of-the-art telecommunication technology to meet the needs of the Indian telecommunication network.
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- Recently, it launched its latest innovation "**WiDHWAN**", to cater the recurring call drop issues in no-signal and low-signal network scenarios.
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Hybrid Annuity Model (HAM)

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- It was introduced to revive PPP mode of infrastructure development.
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- As per the model, the government will contribute to 40% of the project cost to the Private entity in the first five years through annual payments (annuity).
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- The remaining payment will be made on the basis of the assets created and the performance of the developer.
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- Whereas in Build Operate Transfer (BOT) annuity model, a developer builds the project, operates it for a specified duration and transfers it back to the government.
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- HAM has been adopted for the first time in the country in sewage management sector.
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- Advantage of HAM is that payments are linked to the performance which will ensure continued performance of the assets created.
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- It also allows the financial risk to be shared between the government and private entity.
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Conservation of Pagodas

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- Cabinet has recently approved the MoU between India and Myanmar for the conservation of earthquake-damaged pagodas at Bagan, Myanmar.
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- A pagoda is a tiered tower with multiple diminishing roofs rise above the other, built in traditions originating as stupa in South Asia and further developed in East Asia.
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- It is commonly found into Nepal, India, China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and other parts of Asia.
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- Pagodas in Myanmar, Thailand, Laos and Cambodia are derived from South Indian Dravidian architecture and traditionally have an odd number of levels in roofs.
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- They became prominent as Buddhist monuments and are used for enshrining sacred relics.
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- In India, it is mostly found in Mandi, Kullu, Shimla hills and Kinnaur regions of Himachal Pradesh.
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Chambal River Bridge

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- It is India's longest hanging bridge, constructed across the river Chambal in Kota, Rajasthan.
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- Cables of the bridge are aerodynamic giving them the ability to be neutral in stormy winds.
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- The Chambal River is a tributary of the Yamuna River that originates in Mhow, South Slope of the Vindhya Range Madhya Pradesh.
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- Chambal and its tributaries drain the Malwa region of Madhya Pradesh.
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- Few stretches of the river are protected as **National Chambal Sanctuary**, which is known for gharial, mugger crocodiles, gangetic river dolphins.
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Shekatkar Committee

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- The 11 member committee headed by Lt. Gen. Shekatkar was appointed by Defence Ministry to recommend reforms in Indian Army, Navy and Air Force for enhancing combat compatibility
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- They submitted the report in December, 2016.
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- They gave 99 recommendations including, increasing the deployment of soldiers for active combat in the Indian Army and redeployment of civilian in different wings of the Armed Forces and improving efficiency of National Cadet Corps (NCC).
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- The first batch of reforms has been accepted recently by Defence ministry and will be operationalized in 2019.
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Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA)

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- FCRA was enacted to regulate the acceptance and utilization of foreign

contribution by certain individuals or associations.
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- It aims to prohibit the utilizations of foreign funds in the activities detrimental to the national interest.
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- The act is under the purview of **Home ministry**, which is responsible for giving FCRA licence to NGO's receiving foreign funds.
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- The following are prohibited to receive foreign contributions\n
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    - A candidate for election, judge, government servant, member of any legislature,
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    - Correspondent, columnist, cartoonist, editor, owner, printer or publisher of a registered newspaper,
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    - Organisation of political nature,
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    - Association or company engaged in the production or broadcast of audio news or audio visual news or current affairs programmes through electronic mode.
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- The Home Ministry has recently declined to renew the FCRA licence of four NGOs which received funds from U.S based Bloomberg Philanthropies.
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