

Prelim Bits 07-05-2018

Google Arts and Culture

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- Google Arts & Culture has released a 360-degree virtual reality video for the Incredible India tourism campaign in association with the Ministry of Tourism.

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- Google arts and Culture helps in exploring collection from around the world.

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- It is created by Google cultural institute.

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- It is an online platform through which the public can access high-resolution images of artworks housed in the initiative's partner museums.

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- The video shows the destinations like the Qutub Minar, Amritsar's Golden Temple, Vitthala Temples in Hampi, and Goa.

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Overfishing of hilsa

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- Scientists have raised alarm over the exploitation of hilsa, *Tenualosa ilisha* in West Bengal.

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- The publication by the scientists points out that the annual catch has decreased by 13 % over the past decade.

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- The hilsa fishery in the northern Bay of Bengal is targeting smaller fish, which is unsustainable in the long run.

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- Hilsa or ilish is intrinsically linked to the culture of the west bengal and makes 11% of the total fish catch of the State.

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- The hilsa fishery in the northern Bay of Bengal is "being unsustainably exploited" and the over fishing about 38% over the past few years (2012-16)

has been noticed after comparing the fishing mortality.

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Invasive aphid

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- The brown peach aphid has been recorded in the Kashmir valley for the first time.

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- It is a small bug which feeds by sucking sap from plant.

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- It attacks temperate fruit trees and it is bad for the fruit bowl of India.

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- The brown peach aphid *Pterochloroides persicae* is a notorious pest of peach and almond trees in the Mediterranean regions.

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- In India, the aphid was recorded for the first time in the 1970s from Himachal Pradesh and Punjab.

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- Natural chemicals including neem plant extracts and lavender oil can help control aphid numbers.

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- The pest could have come with plants imported from other countries.

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Vaccine for leptospirosis

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- Researchers from the Gujarat Biotechnology Research Centre, Gandhinagar have successfully identified a key peptide that can be used to develop a new preventive vaccine against leptospirosis.

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- Leptospirosis is an emerging tropical infectious disease.

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- Currently there is no preventive vaccine for humans that are available in the market.

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- Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that affects humans and animals.

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- It is caused by bacteria of the genus *Leptospira*.

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- The bacteria can be transmitted via exposure to contaminated water or soil or direct contact with reservoirs hosts like wild or domestic animal.

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- Without treatment, Leptospirosis can lead to kidney damage, meningitis (inflammation of the membrane around the brain and spinal cord), liver failure, respiratory distress, and even death.

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Bacteria to remove organophosphorous pesticide

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- Researchers from India have successfully removed chlorpyrifos pesticide from both water and soil using three bacterial species isolated from domestic sewage.

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- Chlorpyrifos is an organophosphorous pesticide and is moderately toxic to humans.

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- Chlorpyrifos poisoning may affect the central nervous system, the cardiovascular system and the respiratory system.

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- The pesticide bioaccumulates in the cell as well as being bound on the cell surface without any degradation

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Green City Concept

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 - Maharashtra's Forest Minister called for the implementation of the green city concept along with the smart city programme to increase tree cover in the State.
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 - Green city actually means a new way of enhancing the sustainability of urbanized areas.
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 - Ecosystem services lie at the core of the concept.
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 - Green or eco cities can be pre-existing cities that feature management directed towards
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 - 1. reducing the inputs of energy, water and food and
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 - 2. reducing the outputs of heat, water and air pollution
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 - In a nutshell is a city built from the principles of living within environment means.
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Source: PIB, The Hindu

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