

NASA's Ingenuity helicopter lands on Mars' surface ahead of flight

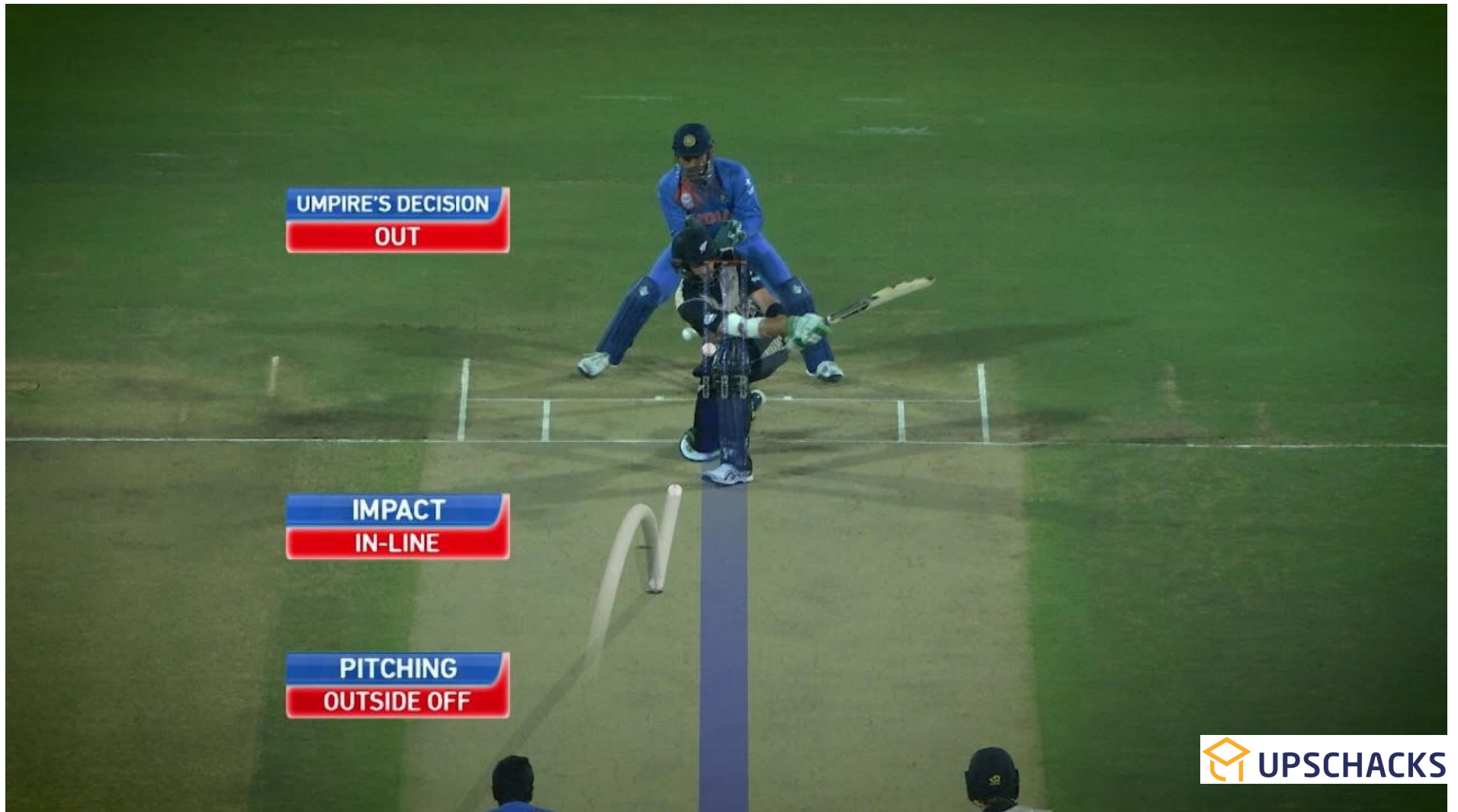


NASA's Ingenuity helicopter has been dropped on the surface of Mars in preparation for its first flight.


Over the next couple of days, the Ingenuity team will check that the helicopter's solar panels are working properly and recharging its battery before testing its motors and sensors.

Ingenuity is expected to make its first flight attempt no earlier than April 11.

DECISION REVIEW SYSTEM (DRS)



- The International Cricket Council's (ICC) cricket committee has made changes to the way lbws will be decided under the Decision Review System (DRS).
- The “wicket zone”, the area of the stumps a ball must hit for an on-field not-out decision to be overturned, which previously ended below the bails, will now extend all the way up to the top.

- The committee also decided to retain the umpire's call, an element that allows the on-field decision to stand when there is no conclusive evidence to overturn it. 
- A player can also ask the umpire whether an attempt was made to play the ball before deciding to review an lbw call.

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NATIONAL POLICY FOR RARE DISEASES, 2021



- . Union Health Minister approved the “National Policy for Rare Diseases 2021” on 30th March 2021.
- . The Rare Diseases Policy aims to lower the high cost of treatment for rare diseases with increased focus on indigenous research with the help of a National Consortium to be set up with Department of Health Research, Ministry of Health & Family Welfare as convenor.
- . Increased focus of research and development and local production of medicines will lower the cost of treatment for rare diseases.
- . The policy also envisages creation of a national hospital based registry of rare diseases so that adequate data is available for definition of rare diseases and for research and development related to rare diseases within the country.

Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve




- . The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court ordered notice to the Centre and the State in a public interest litigation petition that sought a direction to the authorities concerned to collect and dispose of 'ghost nets' (fishing nets lost or abandoned at sea) from the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve.

The Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park is a protected area of India consisting of 21 small islands (islets) and adjacent coral reefs in the Gulf of Mannar in the Indian Ocean.

It lies 1 to 10 km away from the east coast of Tamil Nadu, India for 160 km between Thoothukudi (Tuticorin) and Dhanushkodi.

Core area of the Gulf of Mannar Biosphere Reserve which includes a 10 km buffer zone around the park, including the populated coastal area.


The park has a high diversity of plants and animals in its marine, intertidal and nearshore habitats.

- **Mangroves dominate the intertidal zones of the park islands.**
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- **They consist of species of the genera Rhizophora, Avicennia, Bruguiera, Ceriops and Lumnitzera.**
 - **The flowering herb Pemphis acidula (family Lythraceae) is the only endemic plant species.**
 - **12 species of sea grass and 147 species of seaweeds were recorded.**
 - **The dugong, a vulnerable marine mammal, is the flagship mammal of the park.**
 - **It is an important habitat for the cetaceans: Indo-Pacific bottlenose dolphin, finless porpoise, spinner dolphin, common dolphin, Risso's dolphin, melon-headed whale, and dwarf sperm whale.**
 - **About 510 (23%) of the 2,200 fin fish species in Indian waters are found in the Gulf, making it the most highly diverse fish habitat in India.**

IUCN Status of African Elephant



- The African forest elephant is now listed as Critically Endangered and the African savanna elephant as Endangered on the IUCN Red List.
- The persistent pressures faced by the two species of elephants in Africa due to poaching for ivory and human encroachment.
- The Savanna elephant was “endangered” and the much smaller, lighter forest elephant was “critically endangered” .

- Previously IUCN had treated both elephants together which it considered as “vulnerable” .
 - The IUCN data showed that the populations of Africa’s savanna elephants decreased by at least 60% over the last 50 years.
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- Number of forest elephants found mostly in Central Africa had fallen by 86% over 31 years.
 - Combined, around 415,000 two species of elephants in Africa remain.
 - Despite the overall decline, some populations of forest elephants were rebounding due to successful conservation measures such as those taken by Gabon and Republic of Congo.
 - In 2000, scientists recategorized the African elephant species into two distinct species, the larger being the African savanna elephant and the smaller being the African forest elephant.
 - IUCN’s latest assessment — assessed 134,425 species of plants, fungi and animals of which more than a quarter are threatened with extinction.

Bidriware



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- Bidriware is one of the products that was displayed in 28th Hunar Haat programme in Panaji, Goa
- Bidriware is a combination of blackened alloy of zinc & copper and inlaid with thin sheets of pure silver.
- It is a metal decorative object ornamented with a type of inlay work.
- Bidriware derives its name from the town of Bidar, in Karnataka,

- **Bidriware in other parts of India: Hyderabad, Lucknow, Purnia and Murshidabad**
- **Origin: it originated in the 14th century during the rule of Bahmani Sultans.**
- **The Bahamani sultans had ruled Bidar in the 14th–15th centuries.**
- **It was first practised in ancient Persia and then it was brought to India by Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti's followers.**
- **The art form developed due to a mix of Persian and Arabic cultures and after the fusion with local style, a new and unique style of its own was created**
- **GI tag: This native art form has obtained Geographical Indications (GI) registry**
- **Common Bidriware items: Various flowers (known as asharfi-ki-booti), leaves (vine creepers), geometric designs, human figures, stylized poppy plants with flowers, etc. are commonly found on the items**