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PRODUCTION-LINKED INCENTIVE SCHEME FOR THE ADVANCED CHEMISTRY CELL (ACC) BATTERY STORAGE



- The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal of Department of Heavy Industry for implementation of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme 'National Programme on Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage'.
- The move aims to achieve a manufacturing capacity of 50 GigaWatt Hour of ACC and five Giga Watt Hour of Niche ACC with an outlay of 18,100 crore.
- ACCs are the new generation of advanced storage technologies that can store electric energy either as electrochemical or as chemical energy and convert it back to electric energy as and when required.
- It will also give a big push to electric mobility, benefiting three-wheelers, four-wheelers and heavy vehicles.
- India is currently importing Battery Storage Equipment worth 20 thousand crore rupees and the scheme will be helpful in making the country self-reliant (Atmanirbhar).

WORLD FOOD PRIZE



- Dr Shakuntala Haraksingh Thilsted, a global nutrition expert of Indian descent has won the prestigious 2021 World Food Prize for her groundbreaking research in developing holistic, nutrition-sensitive approaches to aquaculture and food systems.
- Thilsted's trailblazing research on small native fish species in Bangladesh led to the development of nutrition-sensitive approaches to aquatic food systems at all levels, from the farm to food processing to final consumers, resulting in improved diets for millions of the most vulnerable people in Asia and Africa.
- Thilsted, who is a native of Trinidad and Tobago and a citizen of Denmark, was born in 1949 in the Caribbean island of Trinidad in the small village of Reform.
- Most of the inhabitants, including her family, were descendants of Indian Hindu migrants brought to Trinidad to engage in agricultural labour.

- The World Food Prize recognizes the achievements of individuals who have advanced human development by improving the quality, quantity or availability of food in the world.
- It recognizes contributions in any field involved in the world food supply such as plant, animal and soil science; nutrition; rural development; marketing; food processing and packaging; water and the environment; physical infrastructure; policy analysis etc.
- The prize is open to every individual without regard to race, religion, nationality, or political beliefs.
- Presented by World Food Prize Foundation, with various sponsor companies.
- The prize was conceived by Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970 for his work in global agriculture.
- The Prize was created in 1986 and was first awarded in 1987 with M. S. Swaminathan of India being the first recipient.
- The annual award is presented each October on or around UN World Food Day (October 16).

AERIAL PASSENGER ROPEWAY SYSTEM BETWEEN DEHRADUN AND MUSSOORIE



- The Union Cabinet gave its approval to the transfer of land of Indo-Tibetan Border Police, ITBP to Government of Uttarakhand for development of Aerial Passenger Ropeway System between Dehradun and Mussoorie.
- The proposed Ropeway is a mono-cable ropeway of 5580 meters length between Purkul Gaon, Dehradun and Library, Mussoorie being constructed at an estimated cost of Rs 285 crore.
- It will have a carrying capacity of 1,000 persons per hour per direction.
- This will considerably reduce the traffic flow on the road route from Dehradun to Mussoorie.
- Besides, this will generate direct employment of 350 and indirect employment of more than 1,500 people.
- Once completed, the ropeway will be a huge attraction for tourists which in turn will provide a boost to the tourism industry in the state and create additional employment opportunities in the tourism sector.

BAMBOO BATS



- The guardians of the cricket laws, The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), has turned down the idea of bats made with bamboo instead of willow.
- According to MCC it would be “illegal” under current laws, which says bats must be made only of wood and also bans lamination of the blade in bats meant for senior cricketers.
- Currently, Law 5.3.2 states that the blade of the bat must consist solely of wood, so for bamboo (which is a grass) to be considered as a realistic alternative to willow would require a Law change.
- But MCC did welcome the experiment, saying that “this angle of willow alternatives should also be considered.
- A study by the University of Cambridge suggested that cricket bats made of bamboo offered a more sustainable alternative than the traditional ones made with willow.
- According to researchers, the bamboo bat “was stiffer, harder and stronger than those made of willow, although more brittle”.
- The research additionally brought up that willow trees need 15 years to develop and deliver cricket bats, while bamboo requires only five to six years.
- It is likewise accessible in wealth in China, South America, Southeast Asia, and India also.

NITI AAYOG'S PROJECT FOR GREAT NICOBAR ISLAND



- The Environment Appraisal Committee (EAC) - Infrastructure I of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) has flagged serious concerns about NITI Aayog's ambitious project for Great Nicobar Island.
- The committee has, however, removed the first hurdle faced by the project.
- It has “recommended” it “for grant of terms of reference (TOR)” for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) studies, which in the first instance will include baseline studies over three months.
- Documents uploaded recently on the MoEFCC's Parivesh portal show that the 15-member committee headed by marine biologist and former director, Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS), Deepak Apte, made the decision.

- The proposal includes an international container transshipment terminal, a greenfield international airport, a power plant and a township complex spread over 166 sq. km. (mainly pristine coastal systems and tropical forests), and is estimated to cost ₹75,000 crore.

Galathea Bay



- This includes Galathea Bay, the site of the port and the centrepiece of the NITI Aayog proposal.
- Galathea Bay is an iconic nesting site in India of the enigmatic Giant Leatherback, the world's largest marine turtle.
- A number of species are restricted to just the Galathea region.
- These include the critically endangered Nicobar shrew, the Great Nicobar crane, the Nicobar frog, the Nicobar cat snake, a new skink (*Lipinia* sp), a new lizard (*Dibamus* sp,) and a snake of the *Lycodon* sp that is yet to be described.

ANIMAL CORRIDORS IN KAZIRANGA



- The authorities in Assam's Golaghat and Nagaon districts have begun probing cases of clearance of forest land, digging and construction activities on at least three animal corridors within the eco-sensitive zone of the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve.
- These two districts share large swathes of the 1,300-sq. km. tiger reserve that has nine identified animal corridors.
- Seven of these — Amguri, Bagori, Chirang, Deosur, Harmati, Hatidandi and Kanchanjuri — are in Nagaon district while Haldibari and Panbari corridors are in Golaghat district.
- These corridors are crucial for the rhinos, elephants, tigers, deer and other animals that escape a flooded Kaziranga during the monsoon months for the safety of the hills of Karbi Anglong district beyond the highway skirting the southern boundary of the tiger reserve.
- But the most blatant violation has been on the Kanchanjuri animal corridor in Nagaon district. A patch of forest land has been cleared and a section of a tea plantation dug up apparently for a water reservoir.
- Kaziranga National Park is located in the Golaghat, Karbi Anglong and Nagaon districts of the state of Assam.
- The sanctuary, which hosts two-thirds of the world's great one-horned rhinoceroses, is a World Heritage Site.

CJI launches an official mobile App for Journalists to cover proceedings of apex court



- Chief Justice of India N.V. Ramana today launched an official mobile application for Journalists to cover proceedings of the apex court.
- The mobile application will help journalists to cover the Supreme Court proceedings in a responsible and fair way from the comfort and safety of their homes, in view of the growing concerns of the COVID pandemic.
- The Chief Justice also informed that the Supreme Court is also contemplating to telecast live proceedings of the court cases in the apex court, for which the process of further considerations and consensus is already underway.

Government of India's Special Window Completes First Residential Project



- Union Minister for Finance & Corporate Affairs handed over possession to homebuyers virtually as Government of India's Special Window for Affordable & Mid-Income Housing (SWAMIH) completes its first residential project.
- The residential project - Rivali Park, located in suburban Mumbai, was the first housing project in India to have received funding under the SWAMIH Fund.
- The SWAMIH Fund was launched by Smt. Sitharaman in November 2019.
- Rivali Park Wintergreens is the first investment by the Fund and is also the first project to get completed.
- It is a large project spread over 7 acres consisting of 708 units of various configurations.
- The project is "Rivali Park Wintergreens" developed by CCI Projects Pvt Ltd (CCIPPL), an associate company of Cable Corporation of India Ltd.
- In a short time-span of 1.5 years since inception, the SWAMIH Investment Fund I today is one of the largest private equity teams in India and has done commendable work despite COVID-19 related restrictions.
- The Fund so far has given its final approval to 72 projects that will complete 44,100 homes, while 132 projects have received preliminary approval, which will complete an additional 72,500 homes.

- Thus, the Fund is targeting to complete an aggregate of 1,16,600 homes.
- This Fund is bridging the trust deficit between homebuyers and developers by completing construction and delivering homes without depending on any other source of finance.

Cyclone Tauktae



- It appears increasingly likely that India's western and southwestern coasts will encounter the first cyclone of the year 2021 this weekend, as a low-pressure system is set to form in the Arabian Sea in the next 24 hours.
- According to the latest update from the India Meteorological Department (IMD), a cyclonic circulation is currently located over Southeast Arabian Sea, and under its influence, a low-pressure area (LPA) is very likely to form over the same region during the next 24 hours.
- The sea surface temperatures over the Arabian Sea are quite high at above 30°C and the Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) is also conducive for enhanced convection.
- Therefore, the conditions favour LPA to rapidly concentrate into a depression around the Lakshadweep area by Saturday.
- Thereafter, it is expected to move north-northwestwards, intensify further into a Cyclonic Storm over the east-central Arabian Sea around Sunday, and then continue to move north-northwestwards for some more time with further intensification.
- Upon the system's intensification into a Cyclonic Storm, it will be named Cyclone Tauktae. Recommended by Myanmar, Tauktae means a highly vocal lizard gecko.
- For the formation of Cyclone Tauktae, multiple favourable factors are contributing to its creation, including the high sea temperature worth 30-31°C in the southwest Arabian Sea, high tropical cyclone heat potential (140 KJ/cm²), moderate vertical wind shear (15-20 kts), good poleward outflow, westerly wind outburst, and the conducive phase of Madden-Julian Oscillation for enhanced convection over the Arabian Sea for the next seven days.