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## 'MICE RAIN' IN EASTERN AUSTRALIA



- The government of New South Wales (NSW) in Australia has extended a support package of \$50 million to farmers to deal with a devastating mouse plague that has affected farmers, community members and residents.
  - To control the plague, the government has now authorised the use of an
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- The current plague is being called one of the worst plagues in decades and started being reported around mid-March in Australia's eastern states.
  - In some places, residents of affected areas reported mice falling out from roof tops causing "mice rain".
  - Researchers attributes the plague to an unusually abundant grain harvest, which caused a surplus of mice earlier in the season.
  - Add to this the fact that mice have a short breeding cycle (a pair of breeding mice can give birth to a new litter every 21 days or so) and are not very choosy about food.
  - Rodents (which includes rats and mice) are the second most successful mammals on the planet after humans.

How does a plague of this scale affect people?

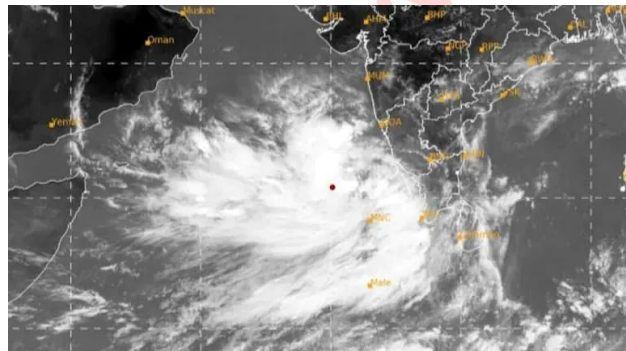
- Rodents are capable of destroying food grains and can cause widespread damage to domestic households, commercial businesses, farms, manufacturers and livestock.
- Further, rodents can not only gnaw through materials but can also ruin supplies by excreting on them.
- Rodents can also cause diseases such as leptospirosis and typhus fever.
- They can also carry fleas or ticks that can harm pets and humans.

## RED-EARED SLIDER



- A 'cute' American turtle popular as pet is threatening to invade the natural water bodies across the Northeast, which is home to 21 of the 29 vulnerable native Indian species of freshwater turtles and tortoises.
- Between August 2018 and June 2019, a team of herpetologists from the NGO 'Help Earth' found red-eared sliders in the Deepor Beel Wildlife Sanctuary and the Ugratara temple pond — both in Guwahati.
- The red-eared slider (*Trachemys scripta elegans*) derives its name from red stripes around the part where its ears would be and from its ability to slide quickly off any surface into the water.
- Native to the U.S. and northern Mexico, this turtle is an extremely popular pet ... But on the flip side they grow fast and virtually leave nothing for the native species to eat.
- Much like the Burmese python that went to the U.S. as a pet to damage the South Florida Everglades ecosystem, the red-eared slider has already affected States such as Karnataka and Gujarat, where it has been found in 33 natural water bodies.
- But more than elsewhere in India, preventing this invasive species from overtaking the Brahmaputra and other river ecosystems in the Northeast is crucial because the Northeast is home to more than 72% of the turtle and tortoise species in the country, all of them very rare.

## How did Cyclone Tauktae get its name and what does it mean?



- The name 'Tauktae' has been given by Myanmar and it means 'gecko', a highly vocal lizard. Naming of cyclones is done by World Meteorological Organization/United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (WMO/ESCAP) Panel on Tropical Cyclones (PTC).
- Thirteen countries on the panel, including India, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Pakistan, name cyclones in the region.

## Tashi Yangjom becomes 1st Indian woman to scale Mount Everest this season



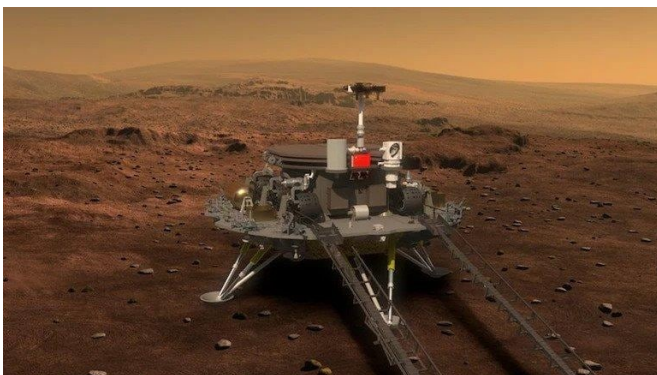
- Tashi Yangjom from Arunachal Pradesh has become the first Indian woman to scale the world's highest peak, Mount Everest, this season.
- Union Sports Minister and MP from Arunachal Kiren Rijiju took to Twitter to congratulate her.
- Arunachal Pradesh CM Pema Khandu revealed that she is the ninth climber from National Institute of Mountaineering and Allied Sports (NIMAS) to scale Everest.

## 73-million-year-old 'talkative' dinosaur species identified in Mexico



- Paleontologists identified a new species of dinosaur after a specimen from about 73 million years ago was found in northern Mexico, the country's National Institute of Anthropology and History said.
- The animal is called Tlatolophus galorum. "We know...they had ears with the capacity of hearing low-frequency sounds, so they must have been peaceful but talkative dinosaurs," a statement read.

## MARS LANDING BY CHINA



- China landed a spacecraft on Mars carrying its first Mars rover in a big boost to its space ambitions.
- China had in July last year launched its first Mars mission, called Tianwen-1, meaning Questions to Heaven, carrying a lander and rover.
- Tianwen-1 had been in orbit since February, and recently, a lander descended successfully on to the surface of the red planet carrying a rover named Zhurong, named after a god of fire for a planet known in Chinese as the planet of fire.

- Only the Soviet Union and the U.S. had previously carried out a successful landing on Mars.
- The rover will provide “first-hand materials for research on the planet’s space environment, surface topography, and soil structure”.
- China had previously tried to launch a Mars orbiter along with Russia in 2011, but that failed to enter orbit. This attempt, on its own, hit the target.

## PETROLEUM & EXPLOSIVES SAFETY ORGANIZATION (PESO)



- Government of India has reviewed the existing procedure for approval of global manufacturers for importing oxygen cylinders by Petroleum and Explosive Safety Organization (PESO).
- Petroleum & Explosives Safety Organization (PESO) is an organization under Department of industrial policy and promotion (DIPP), Ministry of commerce & industry.
- It administers the usage of explosives & petrol stations in India.
- It is headquartered at Nagpur, Maharashtra.

## Dongria Kondh tribe



- The first cases of COVID have been reported among the Dongria Kondh tribe, settled in the Niyamgiri hills of Odisha.
- The tribes had remained untouched during the first wave.
- The Dangaria Kandha or Dongria Kondh people are members of the Kondhs.
- They sustain themselves from the resources of the Niyamgiri forests, practising horticulture and shifting cultivation.
- Niyamgiri is a hill range spread over 250 km<sup>2</sup> which falls under the Rayagada and Kalahandi District in south-west Odisha, India.
- The Dongria Kondh derive their name from dongar, meaning ‘agricultural land on hill slopes’, and the name for themselves is Jharnia – “protector of streams”.
- The people of Niyamgiri use Kui language which is not written.
- They worship Niyam Raja.

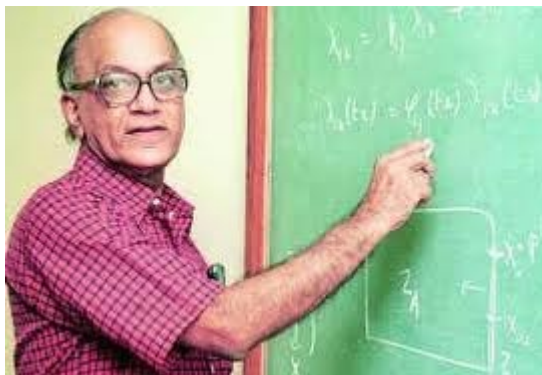
- The Kondh community is organized into many clans from which thirty-six clans are clearly identifiable where each clan possess their own customary territories which are locally also known as padars (consisting several hills).
- The socio-political governing and decision-making body of the community is also known as Kutumba.

## FragAttacks



- A number of vulnerabilities in a majority of Wi-Fi products have left millions of devices to be impacted.
- The flaws named FragAttacks were discovered by cybersecurity expert Mathy Vanhoef, a postdoctoral researcher at the New York University of Abu Dhabi.
- Since the vulnerabilities are design flaws in the Wi-Fi standard, any device released after 1997 could be vulnerable.
- He previously highlighted Kracattacks, which were a serious flaw in WPA2, a protocol used to secure protected Wi-Fi networks.
- 'FragAttacks' or fragmentation and aggregation attacks, allow an attacker who is within range of one's Wi-Fi device to steal user information, including passwords.
- Anyone who can receive radio signals from a router or Wi-Fi hotspot can use these vulnerabilities and steal data from devices.
- While the design or hardware level flaws are much harder to exploit, the programming mistakes are quite easy to abuse.
- There are security updates available for some of the products. E.g. Microsoft has rolled out Windows 10, Windows 8.1 and Windows 7 update, which has patches for these vulnerabilities.

## Narasimhan–Seshadri theorem



- Famous mathematician Professor MS Narasimhan has passed away on May 16, Sunday.
- Known for the Narasimhan-Seshadri theorem, the mathematician was the only Indian to receive the King Faisal International Prize in the field of science.
- He was a recipient of the Bhatnagar Prize, the Third World Academy Award for Mathematics and a Fellow of the Royal Society, London
- In mathematics, the Narasimhan–Seshadri theorem, proved by Narasimhan and Seshadri (1965), says that a holomorphic vector bundle over a Riemann surface is stable if and only if it comes from an irreducible projective unitary representation of the fundamental group.

- The main case to understand is that of topologically trivial bundles, i.e. those of degree zero (and the other cases are a minor technical extension of this case).
- This case of the Narasimhan–Seshadri theorem says that a degree zero holomorphic vector bundle over a Riemann surface is stable if and only if it comes from an irreducible unitary representation of the fundamental group of the Riemann surface.

## Mission Hausla



- The Uttarakhand Police has launched a drive called “Mission Hausla” to help people get oxygen, beds, ventilators, and plasma for Covid-19 patients.
- Besides these, police will also help the public to get medicines meant for Covid-19 management as part of the mission and rations.
- Delivering medicines, oxygen and ration at the doorsteps of families battling the coronavirus and coordinating between plasma donors and those in need of it will also be some of the activities to be taken up by the police as part of the mission.
- Police stations will serve as nodal centres for managing crowds in market areas and ensuring COVID- appropriate behaviour by people like wearing masks and social distancing in public places, he said.
- Stern action will be taken against those who violate the norms.

## China becomes the world’s first country to ban synthetic cannabinoids



- China will become the world’s first country to ban all synthetic cannabinoid substances.
- The ban is likely to come into effect on July 1.
- The move comes as China tries to curb the manufacturing & trafficking of the drug.
- The synthetic cannabinoids are highly camouflaged, as some are found in e-cigarette oil, and some are found in cut tobacco made from various flower petals, or plant stems and leaves.
- In Xinjiang, it has a commonly known nickname of “Natasha.”
- Synthetic cannabinoids are highly camouflaged, as some are found in e-cigarette oil & some are found in cut tobacco made from leaves, flower petals, etc.
- The synthetic cannabinoid has become one of the most-abused new psychoactive substances.
- Cannabinoid substances pose a severe threat to society, where the abuse of such substances gives rise to incidents such as intentional injuries and impaired driving.

## RBI cancels licence of United Co-operative Bank



- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cancelled the licence of United Co-operative Bank Ltd over inadequate capital, regulatory non-compliance, based in Bagnan, West Bengal.
- Through an order dated May 10, 2021, the central bank has prohibited the co-operative lender from carrying on banking business, with effect from the close of business on May 13, 2021.
- RBI said it cancelled the licence as United Co-operative Bank did not have adequate capital and earning prospects.
- “As such, it does not comply with the provisions of section 11(1) and section 22(3)(d) read with section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

## PM Kisan Samman Nidhi: Eighth Instalment released



- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently released the eighth instalment of Prime Minister Kisan Samman Nidhi.
- The Government of India transfers Rs 6,000 to the account of small and marginal farmers
- These funds are transferred in three instalments.
- The first instalment of Rs 2,000 is made between April and June.
- The second Instalment is made between August and November. The third instalment is made between December and March.
- The scheme was begun in 2018.
- The scheme provides financial support to farmers who hold land ownership up to two hectares.
- Since its inception, the Gol has provided Rs 75,000 crores.
- It aims to cover 125 million farmers irrespective of their land size.

## New Zealand PM Jacinda Ardern Tops Fortune's World's 50 Greatest Leaders 2021



- New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern has topped the 'World's 50 Greatest Leaders' list for 2021, released by Fortune Magazine.
- The 'World's 50 Greatest Leaders' list for 2021 is the eighth edition of the annual list which celebrates leaders, some well-known and others who aren't so familiar, who made a difference amid the “truly unprecedented times” of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- From India, Adar Poonawalla, the chief executive officer (CEO) of Serum Institute of India (SII) is the only Indian among the top 10 names. He is placed in the 10th spot.

#### List of Top 10 Fortune's World's 50 Greatest Leaders 2021

- ⇒ Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand
- ⇒ mRNA Pioneers
- ⇒ Dan Schulman, CEO of PayPal
- ⇒ Dr John Nkengasong, director of Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention
- ⇒ Adam Silver; Michele Roberts; Chris Paul, NBA Rescuers
- ⇒ Jessica Tan, founder of Ping An Group
- ⇒ Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury for the Church of England/Anglican Church
- ⇒ Stacey Abrams, founder of Fair Fight
- ⇒ Reshorna Fitzpatrick, pastor for Proceeding Word Church, Chicago
- ⇒ Adar Poonawalla, CEO of Serum Institute of India

## Google Pay users in US can now transfer money to India, Singapore



- Alphabet Inc's Google has launched international money transfer partnerships with remittances firms Wise and Western Union Co for users of its U.S. payments app.
- Google Pay users in the United States can now transfer money to app customers in India and Singapore, with plans to expand to the 80 countries available via Wise, and 200 via Western Union by the end of the year.
- The company has partnered with Western Union and Wise, both of which have integrated their services into Google Play.
- When Google Pay users in the U.S. attempt to send money to someone in India or Singapore, they will be informed about the exact amount that the recipient will receive.
- From within the Google Pay app, users also get to choose which payments provider Wise or Western Union, they wish to use and how long it would take for the recipient to receive the money.



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