



Daily current affairs

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India International Science Festival

- The fourth edition of India International Science Festival will be inaugurated by President of India in Lucknow on October 6, 2018. IISF-2018 is expected to be represented by approximately 10000 delegates including 5000 students, 550 teachers, 200 students from North-East Region, 20 international delegates and approximately 200 startups.
 - IISF-2018 with its focal theme "Science for Transformation" will have 23 special events. The Global Indian Science & Technology Stakeholders Meet (GIST), Industry Academia Meet and Science & Technology for Harnessing Innovations (SATHI) - A National startup entrepreneurship summit and Student Science Village are some of the important events, being organized.
 - **The Science Village program is linked with the Pradhan Mantri Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana** to reach out to the rural masses and propagate science and for seeking scientific solutions to the diverse challenges facing our society, particularly rural India.
 - The first and second IISF were held in New Delhi and the third in Chennai. Ministry of Science & Technology; Earth Sciences in association with Vijnana Bharti or VIBHA is organising the four-day event. As a prelude to the main event, Department of Biotechnology and Vijnana Bharti (VIBHA) have been organising outreach programmes at 80 centres across the country.
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Special Protection Group

- SPG is a professional organisation which takes its task of protecting serving Prime Ministers, former Prime Ministers and their families entrusted to its security, very seriously and in the highest professional spirit.
 - It was formed in 1988 by an act of the Parliament of India.
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Swadesh Darshan and Prasad Schemes of M/O Tourism

Under the plan scheme 'Swadesh Darshan' and 'PRASAD' the Ministry of Tourism provides Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to State Governments/Union Territory Administrations, for various tourism projects subject to availability of funds, liquidation of pending utilization certificates and adherence to the scheme guidelines.

- Under the Swadesh Darshan scheme, thirteen thematic circuits have been identified, for development namely: North-East India Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Krishna Circuit, Desert Circuit, Tribal Circuit, Eco Circuit, Wildlife Circuit, Rural Circuit, Spiritual Circuit, Ramayana Circuit and Heritage Circuit.
 - Under the PRASAD scheme thirteen sites have been identified for development, namely: Amritsar, Ajmer, Dwaraka, Mathura, Varanasi, Gaya, Puri, Amaravati, Kanchipuram, Vellankanni, Kedarnath, Kamakhya and Patna.
 - Under the 'PRASAD' scheme the focus is on development and beautification of the identified pilgrimage destinations. Whereas, in the 'Spiritual Circuit' identified under the Swadesh Darshan scheme, the thrust is on development of particular thematic circuit consisting of various religious/spiritual destination in a State and Union Territory.
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Indian Culinary Institute

- Indian Culinary Institute has been set up by the **Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India** as an autonomous society under **Societies Registration Act, 1860**, as an educational research Institute, headquartered at Tirupati with another Campus created at Sector 62, Noida.
 - In India, at present, there is a dearth of state-of-the-art training ground to groom top-of-the-line chefs of international standards.
 - To fill this void, the Indian Culinary Institute would provide the appropriate training platform at par with the elite "Chef Schools" functioning in different parts of the developed world.
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Mosquito population made extinct with genetic tweak

After eight generations, there were no females left to reproduce

- Scientists said they had succeeded for the first time in wiping out an entire population of malaria-carrying mosquitoes in the lab using a gene editing tool to programme their extinction.
- So-called gene drive technology works by forcing evolution's hand, ensuring that an engineered trait is passed down to a higher proportion of offspring — across many generations — than would have occurred naturally.
- In experiments with the species *Anopheles gambiae*, scientists at Imperial College London tweaked a gene known as **double-sex** so that more females in each generation could no longer bite or reproduce.
- After only eight generations, there were no females left and the population collapsed due to lack of offspring.
- Malaria affected more than 200 million people worldwide in 2016 and killed nearly 4,50,000.
- It remains one of the most deadly of infectious diseases.
- Previous attempts by the same team and others to induce the genetically programmed extinction of mosquitoes in the laboratory ran into "resistance" in the form of mutations that fought back against the high-tech engineering.

A timely breakthrough

- The next step will be to test the technology in a confined laboratory setting that mimics a tropical environment.
 - It will be at least five-to-ten years before, consider testing any mosquitoes with gene drive in the wild.
 - Scientists not involved in the study described it as a timely breakthrough.
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