Prelim Bits 26-03-2018

Mount Etna

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- Mount Etna was sliding towards the Mediterranean Sea at a rate of 14mm/year.
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- Mount Etna on the Italian island of Sicily is Europe's most active volcano.
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- It is believed that for the first time "basement sliding" of an entire active volcano has been directly observed.
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- It is moving down a very gentle slope due to its position on a base of relatively weak, loose sediments.
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Illegal Animal trade

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- Some of the animal products are driving the multi-billion dollar illegal trade in animal parts which are touted to cure anything.
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- Examples of such animal products are dried seahorse, sloth claws, manta ray gills, and macaque embryos.
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- Some of them are key constituents in centuries-old traditional cures prescribed by healers in Asia and Africa, others are fictional cure-alls sold by quacks.
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- The scales of the pangolin, or scaly anteater, are sold raw or fried in Asia for as much as $500 per kilogram for treating asthma and migraines.
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- There is no scientific evidence to support any supposed properties of pangolin scales.
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- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora is an international intergovernmental agreement to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.
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- TRAFFIC is the wildlife trade monitoring network, which is a non-governmental organization working globally on trade in wild animals and plants in the context of both biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.
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Paliyar tribes

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- After a relentless struggle, Paliyar tribals on Kodaikanal and Sirumalai hills have got the legal rights to access reserve forests for their survival and livelihood.
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- The aboriginal tribes live in the clad of Western Ghats.
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- They live as a scattered and unorganized smaller group in the foothills.
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- In olden days, these people lived in small cave like structures called Kalazhais and later on constructed a small hut in the forest.
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- Paliyar is a contemporary hunting and gathering society once lived in the interior forest.
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Pollutants in mobiles, laptops to be checked

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- Central Pollution Control Board will begin random checks on mobile phones, laptops and other electronic goods to check whether their constituent metals exceed safety norms.
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- The tests will be conducted at Centre for Materials for Electronic Technology,Hyderabad.
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- The levels of lead, cadmium, hexavalent chromium, mercury and polybrominated diphenyl ethers in the mobile phones will be checked.
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- If the company fails the Reduction on Hazardous Substance (RoHS) test, they have to withdraw its line of products or pay fines.
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- The decision followed key amendments to the Electronic Waste Management Rules (EWR) that was formalized recently.
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- Some of updated rules under the E-waste (Management) Amendment Rules are as follows:
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1. Producer Responsibility Organizations (PROs) shall apply to the CPCB for registration to undertake activities prescribed in the Rules.
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2. Under the Reduction of Hazardous Substances (RoHS) provisions, cost for sampling and testing shall be borne by the government for conducting the RoHS test.
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- A PRO is a European concept whereby the producer's responsibility of managing the waste is transferred to the PRO.
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- A PRO's aim is to bring in more efficiency, cost-effectiveness and awareness while managing the end-to-end operations associated with waste management.
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Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FEIO)

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- FEIO is the **apex body** of export promotion councils, commodity boards and export development authorities.
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- It was setup in 1965, **under the aegis of Ministry of Commerce.**
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- It facilitates the redressal of exporter’s problem by taking up them with concerned authority.
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- FIEO confers **Niryat Bandhu** and **Niryat Shree** awards to its exporters and export facilitators for their outstanding performance in exports.
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Vulture Conservation Breeding Centre (VCBC)

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- VCBC is an ex-situ conservation initiative.
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- The centers were setup by Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS).
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- Four such centers exist now at Haryana, Assam, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh.
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- Except these centers, Central Zoo Authority (CZA) manages five breeding centers.
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- A typical VCBC has aviaries of different types for breeding, nursing, looking after sick and injured vultures and colonies for vultures to live in.
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- Similar to the ex-situ conservation BNHS also provides in-situ conservation in the name of Vulture safe zones (VSZ).
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- A VSZ is a geographical area, the natural habitat of wild vultures, of at least 100 Km radius made free of the presence of the drug diclofenac in animal carcasses, the major food of vultures.
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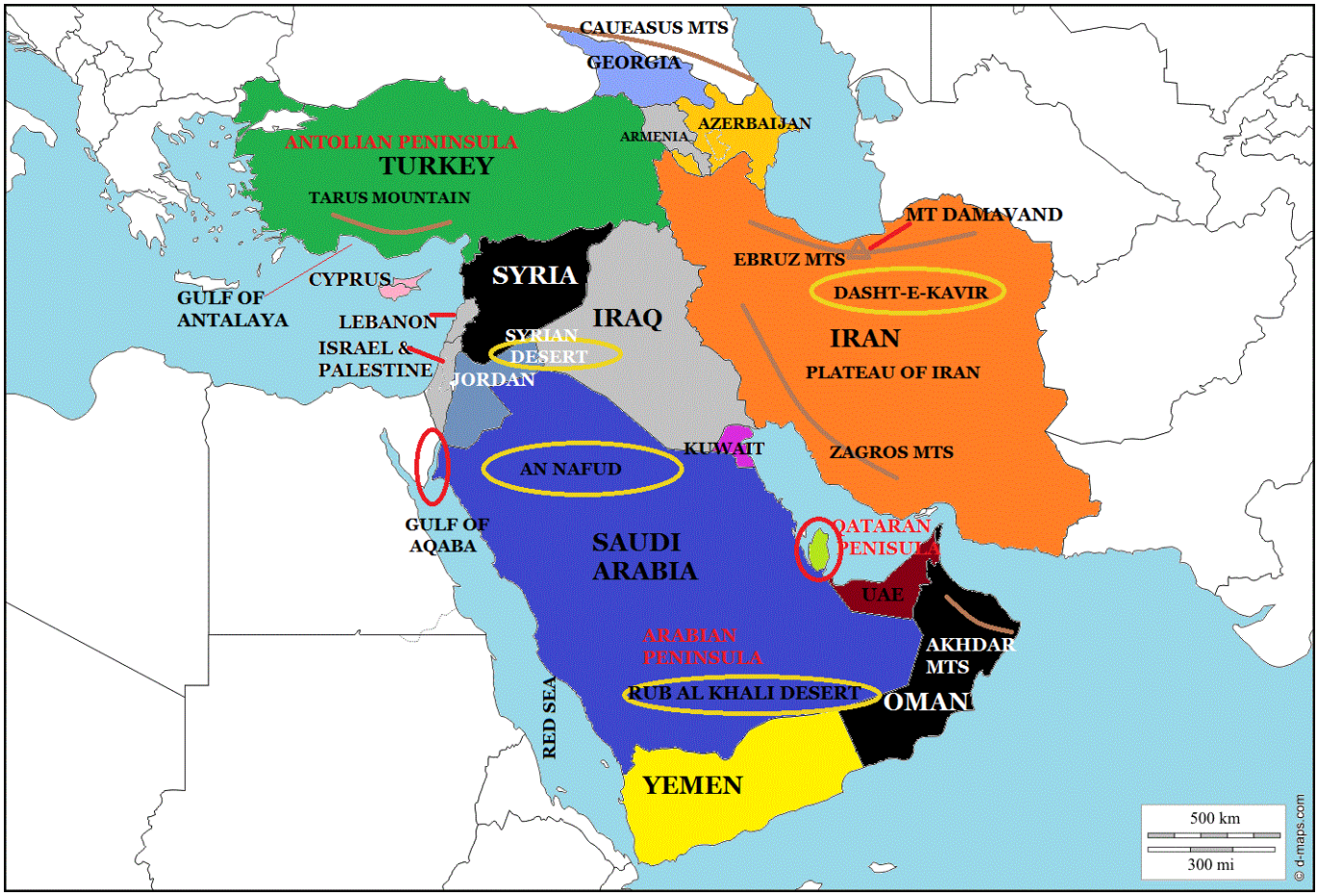
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Map of the Day

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West Asia Physical

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- Mount Damavand is an extinct volcanic peak of the Elburz Mountains in northern Iran and highest peak of Middle East.
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- The Rub- al-Khali is the largest area of continuous sand desert in the world.
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- Dasht e Kavir Desert or great salt desert of north-central Iran is located in a basin southeast of the Elburz Mountains.
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Source: PIB, The Hindu, Business Standard

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