

CURIOSITY WEEKLY

Age-Appropriate Content

School Curriculum-Aligned News

Non-Sensational News

Quote of the week



“

Successful engineering is all about understanding how things break or fail.

”

- Henry Petroski

Word to know



Din
noun [S]

a loud and unpleasant noise or mixture of noises, esp. one that continues for some time:

People all over the world join biggest day of climate demonstrations in history

Date : Sep 20, 2019 | Image Credit : flickr.com



Date : Sep 15, 2019 | Image Credit : Wikimedia Commons

Millions of people are going on strikes for climate change today, across almost 150 countries.

- Led by Greta Thunberg, students and youth across the world are missing school and lectures today, 20th September 2019.
- Students have taken to the streets as worldwide demonstrations against climate change get underway.
- People are demanding that world leaders take immediate action to limit the harmful effects of man-made climate change.
- An environmental summit at the United Nations, New York is scheduled to take place on Monday 23rd September 2019.
- This is the 3rd such climate rally and maybe the biggest till date.
- Protests have already kicked off from Sydney to Perth to Hongkong to Bangkok. Over 300,000 people gathered at more than 100 cities and towns Australia. There were protests across India as well.
- Protests are well underway in Central and Eastern Europe as well – Poland, Ukraine, Germany, Britain etc.

By going on strike, protesters hope to put pressure on politicians and policymakers to act on climate issues.

Amazon and Microsoft employees have also decided to join in the protests against the use of fossil fuels.

How does the drone attack on Saudi Arabia's oil facilities affect India?

Date : Sep 20, 2019 | Image Credit : Wikimedia Commons



Recently we read that drone strikes on Saudi Arabia's Abqaiq oil refinery and Khurais oil field knocked out half of Saudi Arabia's total output and 5% of global oil supply.

Saudi Arabia has said that production will be back to normal by the end of September.

Now, how does this attack affect India?

- India is one of the biggest importers of oil in the world, importing it mostly from Saudi Arabia and Iran.
- However, earlier this year, India stopped buying Iranian oil. India also imports from other countries like the US, but at a higher cost.
- So, this attack has caused worry over the supply of oil as well as its price.
- Saudi Arabia may take a few weeks to repair the facility. However, the longer it takes to repair, the higher India's import cost will be.
- The higher cost of import can lead to a higher fiscal deficit for India, especially, as India's economy is also not doing well currently.
- Every one dollar increase in the price of oil raises India's import bill by more than US\$1.5bn every year.
- Industries like manufacturing and aviation require oil to function and changes in prices will affect them. Petroleum's by-products are also used to manufacture plastic and tyres.
- This attack has also shown how vulnerable Saudi Arabia's oil facilities can be. It has highlighted that India needs to have safeguards in place if incidents like this happen again.

International Travel Map – Jeju Island, South Korea

Date : Sep 20, 2019 | Image Credit : Wikimedia Commons



Today, let's learn about Jeju Island in South Korea.

- Jeju Island, also known as Jeju-do is the only self-governing province in South Korea. This means that local natives instead of those from the mainland run the province.
- The island has three UNESCO World Heritage sites and a moderate (pleasant) climate.
- Famous for its pristine (clean) nature and beautiful beaches, many local and international tourists visit Jeju Island. It is sometimes called "South Korea's Hawaii" because so many tourists come throughout the year!
- Tourists can cycle around the beautiful island, go hiking, eat abalone (a type of seafood) and see many beautiful sights.
- Jeju Island is also famous for its divers called Haenyeo. They dive deep into the sea to collect oysters, abalone, etc and consist only of women.

Indian tourists do not need a visa to visit Jeju-do. Other tourists from many other countries, like China, also do not require a visa. However, all tourists need a visa to visit the rest of South Korea.

Unfortunately, due to excessive tourism, the beaches have become quite polluted and the South Korean government is working to keep the island clean.

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A new study shows that rats like to play hide and seek

Date : Sep 17, 2019 | Image Credit : Twitter@CNN



Recently, a German scientist, **Michael Brecht** experimented by training a set of rats to play hide and seek. He has discovered that they enjoy playing the game.

Also, they have noticed that rats scream with joy when they win!

The study was published in the journal **Science**.

- Mr Brecht is a neuroscientist and conducted this experiment in order to study play behaviour in animals.
- Mr Brecht and his team began with 6 rats in a customised room fitted with boxes, in which the rats could hide.
- The rats were trained to play hide and seek with humans for a couple of weeks.
- Instead of rewarding the rats with food, they were tickled as a reward, for both hiding and finding the researchers.
- Transparent boxes were also placed in the play area. But, surprisingly, the rats did not hide in them as they could be seen!
- Sensors were attached to rats to observe which parts of the rats' brains were active during the game.

The researchers said that the rats 'laughing' when tickled and responding with empathy, have made them realise that humans and animals have many basic things in common.

The video of the rats playing hide and seek is becoming very popular on the internet!

Scientists discover new Supercool' method to increase organ survival

Date : Sep 15, 2019 | Image Credit : Wikimedia Commons



Many times, due to accidents, illness or genetics, people require organ donation to live a healthy life. Organ donation is crucial (very important) but the process is difficult and it needs to be done quickly.

Now, scientists have discovered a new method called 'Supercool'. They have published this research online in the journal **Nature Biotechnology**.

- In this method, the organs are stored at extreme cool temperatures with chemicals.
- The 'Supercool' method will keep will extend the length of time for storing the organs for transplant*.
- This means that more people who live far away can get more chances to receive donated organs.
- According to the report, the Supercool storage system has increased the shelf-life (the length of time for which an item remains usable) of the human liver three times more than the current method.
- It is more effective than the currently used ice-cold method.
- The researchers will now first test this system properly before we can use it in surgery.

Transplant: To perform a medical operation in which an organ that has been removed from the body of one person is put into the body of another person.

Credit: Trushika Narang

Did You Know



Readers' Desk

Chandrayaan 2, feelings of a grateful Indian

11 September 2019 | Anjaneya Kaul, 5, Scottish High International School, Gurgaon, Haryana



An inspirational handwritten note from a 10-year-old to the scientists and our role models at ISRO. He writes it on behalf of the whole nation. His verse, which is so positive, reflects his own mental strength and optimism.

Don't get disheartened so soon,
We will definitely reach the moon
Our next endeavour is Chandrayaan 3,
which will launch next June.

Don't forget the Orbiter is still there,
It will send the pictures, which is our next affair
It'll tell us where to go,
Where to sow our plants and let them grow!

May be Vikram actually, did land
and Pragyan is still alive
And getting ready to send graphical bands
and then success will be in our hands

ISRO scientists are an inspiration,
for kids of next-generation,
ISRO, you are our pride,
a heartfelt thanks from a grateful nation

Joke Pokes



Q: Why can't Cinderella play soccer?

A: Because she's always running away from the ball.

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Indian Finance Minister announces changes in taxes to boost economy

Date : Sep 20 , 2019 | Image Credit : Wikimedia Commons



Today, Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman made significant announcements regarding direct and indirect taxes to give a boost to the economy by giving reliefs to the business community.

She announced the following changes:

- The corporate tax rate shall be 22% without exemptions, inclusive of surcharge and cess. As an outcome of this effective corporate tax rate after surcharge shall be 25.17%, which is lower than before. The earlier rate was close to 35%.
- To attract investment in the manufacturing industry, companies incorporated (started) after October 2019 will pay tax at 15%.
- The companies enjoying tax holidays would be able to avail concessional rates post the exemption period.
- The enhanced surcharge announced in Budget 2019 will not apply on capital gains arising on sale of any securities like shares, mutual funds, derivatives etc.

With the above changes, the government shall forego (give up) 1.45 lakh crore per year in revenues.

However, the GST (Goods and services tax), which is an indirect tax, is expected to stabilise in the medium term. This shall allow more companies to come under the indirect tax net.

Post these announcements, the stock market saw an upswing (increase) with the business community giving a thumbs up for the changes.

NASA releases new images of Saturn and its rings

Date : Sep 16 , 2019 | Image Credit : nasa.gov



NASA's Hubble Space Telescope has captured a magnificent view of the planet Saturn when it was at its closest point to Earth on 20 June.

- On 20 June, Saturn was 845,064,821 miles from Earth and the numerous ringlets and faint inner rings around Saturn are visible in the image.
- Dutch astronomer Christiaan Huygens first identified the rings around Saturn in 1655. He thought they were a disk circling the planet.
- Later studies revealed that the rings are composed of particles of ice and dust.
- Jupiter, Uranus, and Neptune also have rings—but Saturn's are the brightest.
- NASA shares an image of Saturn every year and this year, the massive storm visible at Saturn's north pole in 2018's close-up has vanished without a trace.
- NASA's Voyager 1 first spotted the hexagon-shaped feature around Saturn's north pole in 1981 and it is still present. Other smaller storms have also been found across the planet's surface.
- These images of the outer planets help scientists study the outer planets and their atmosphere and also understand the evolution of the solar system.

Credit: TCP

Tongue Twister!



Ann and Andy's anniversary is in April.

Readers' Desk

It took a lot of red ink to make us well-read

4th September 2019 | Rheanna Ann Jikku, The Choice School, Kochi, Kerala



To our Teachers, with Love

On this day we reminisce,
With love in our hearts for all
our Teachers.
Through their everlasting
strength and efforts,
We are becoming curious
learners.

Teachers are the rugged
stepping stones,
On them, we tread towards a
golden education.
They wave their magic wands
of wisdom,
And they take away all fears
and trepidation.

It took a lot of red ink to make
us well read,
Pots of gratitude for a
fountain of knowledge.
With little sighs of happiness
and glee,
To all our Teachers with love
we pledge.

Joke Pokes



Q: What's a snake's favorite subject?

A: Hisstory.

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Study of nearly 5000-year-old woman links modern Indians to ancient civilization

Date : Sep 16 , 2019 | Image Credit : Wikimedia Commons



A recent study of a 4500-year-old skeleton found at Rakhigarhi (Haryana) shows that **modern people in India are the descendants of the people of the Harappan Civilization.** Rakhigarhi is the largest Harappan site in India.

This report was published in the scientific journal **Cell**.

- Researchers discovered a woman buried in **Rakhigiri**, which is about 150 km away from **north-west Delhi**.
- The DNA of this woman matches with the other 11 individuals who were found at the sites in Iran and Turkmenistan. Researchers believe that these 11 individuals are Harappan migrants.
- The DNA test revealed that there was no migration or inclusion of any Iran or Central Asian gene in Harappan people.
- They have found that the people of Harappan civilization are the ancestors of most of the current South Asian population.
- Researchers have also found that farming in South-Asia was started by the local-hunter gathers. It rejects the earlier findings which said that the farming was brought by the people from the fertile crescent (a region in the Middle East).

Researchers plan to continue their research on this.

Indus civilization, also called **Indus valley civilization** or **Harappan civilization**, is the earliest known civilization in the Indian subcontinent.

Passion Profession – Pilot

Date : Sep 14 , 2019 | Image Credit : Wikimedia Commons



Recently we read about **Anupriya Lakra** from Odisha.

Would you also like to fly high in the sky? Then, you could choose to be a pilot in your life.

- A pilot (or aviator) is someone who **flies and navigates aeroplanes, helicopters and other kinds of aircraft**.
- It provides you with the opportunity to travel to places and learn new experiences.
- Types of pilots include **commercial pilot, private pilot, recreational pilot, sport pilot, and a flight instructor**.
- Pilots can work for specific companies to transport people and cargo (goods carried on an aircraft).
- As a pilot, one should have a **bachelor's degree** and undergo **professional training** along with a **license and certification**.
- In India, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) issues the pilot licensing or certification to the pilots.
- Apart from the ability to fly an aircraft, pilots also need good listening and speaking skills.
- This profession requires a lot of concentration, dedication, and responsibility in the field as many times, you will be responsible for other people's safety as well.
- You can also serve in the military by being a pilot, which requires a different kind of training.

Some famous pilots are James H. Doolittle, Noel Wien, Amelia Earhart, J.R.D Tata, Purushottam Meghji Kabali and many more.

Did you miss these news? Find them on CuriousTimes.in

Amit Panghal is first Indian to enter finals of World Boxing Championships



Air Marshal RKS Bhadauria to be new IAF Chief



India vs South Africa: India grabs T20I series lead with 7-wicket win



Amazon's Alexa now speaks Hinglish



Trains to go 'noiseless', have more seats for differently abled



Vinesh Phogat wins 2020 Olympic seat, maiden World bronze title

