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Important Facts for Prelims (16th October 2018)

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QS ranking for Indian universities

- Recently Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) has launched its first India-specific rankings- India University Rankings. This is the first edition of the rankings exclusively for Indian institutions.
- It is the second country-specific rankings conducted by QS. The first was released for China.
- QS is a UK based global higher education company which brings out the QS World University Rankings, the world's most widely-consulted list of its kind.
- The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Bombay, has secured the top spot followed by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.
- The rankings reflect the top 75 Indian universities. Of these, at least seven IIT's are ranked in top ten.
- The indicators for ranking are – academic reputation (30 percent), employer reputation (20 percent), faculty-student ratio (20 percent), research citations per faculty member (20 percent), proportion of international students (2.5 percent) and proportion of international faculty (2.5 percent).

Pandavani Artist Teejan Bai Honoured by Japan

- Recently folk artist Teejan Bai from Chhattisgarh received Japan's one of the greatest honours, the Fukuoka Arts and Culture Prize for her art Pandavani.
- Earlier, the Fukuoka Art Prize had been awarded to Indian musician, A.R. Rahman.
- The Award to Teejan Bai can reflect India's strengthened soft power in East Asia.
- Pandavani (literally meaning 'songs of the Pandavas'), a folk theatre form involves enacting and singing with instrumental accompaniment ektara or tambura in one hand and sometimes a kartal in another.
- It is rustic entertainment, popular in the tribal areas of Chhattisgarh and neighbouring States.
- Sangeet Natak Akademi (National level academy of performing arts under Ministry of Culture) has initiated the documentation and promotion of this theatre form.

Mithun or Gayal (*Bos Frontalis*)

- The killing of at least 10 Mithuns has sparked tension between villagers on inter-State border of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. Mithun is the State animal of Arunachal Pradesh.
- The mithun or gayal (*Bos frontalis*), considered a descendant of the Indian Gaur or bison, plays an important role in the socio-economic and cultural life of tribes such as the Nyishi, Apatani, Galo, Mishmi, Adi, Sherdukpen and other communities of Arunachal Pradesh.
- They are considered sacred because mithun sacrifice is compulsory in all ceremonial rituals.
- The Mithun is often referred to as 'the cattle of the mountains' and 'ship of the highland'.
- Mithun prefers cold and mild climates, and feeds on forest leaves, shrubs and grass. It has a high fertility rate, producing one calf every year.
- It has been classified as Vulnerable by the IUCN.