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Kerala Regional News

Wildwatch App	**Context:** ● In an effort to **mitigate recurring human-animal conflicts** in Kerala, the state forest department is set to launch the **WildWatch app**. **Key Points:** ● The app, Wildwatch, will **enable near real-time reporting** of wildlife sightings and incidents to an integrated alert system and, in turn, notify the nearest emergency operation centre of the forest division. ● This will help issue public safety warnings immediately. ● One can take a picture of the wild animal near or in human habitation and upload it on the mobile app. ● Through the emergency operation centre, an alert will be given to people in the area on their mobile numbers, which we will keep in the GIS-enabled web portal.
Lightning strikes 5.3m times in south India in 2-yr period	**Context:** ● According to the **study by the National Centre for Earth Science Studies (NCESS**), a staggering 5.**3 million lightning strikes,** both **cloud-to-ground (CG) and intra-cloud (IG),** occurred in South India during 2019-21. ● The study was published recently in the Journal of Earth System Science, and found that **most of the lightning strikes occurred in the pre-monsoon period, between March and May.** **cloud-to-ground (CG):** ● Most of the **peak CG** lightning strikes occurred in the midlands and foothills of the **Western Ghats in Kerala and the Kochi coastal belt.** **intra-cloud (IG):** ● The IG activity was mostly centred in Kothamangalam, with 8,112 strikes occurring during the period. **Favorable Conditions:** ● It was observed that the easterly winds through the Western Ghats, regional topography, moisture availability, high aerosol concentrations, and proximity to shipping routes **produce more favourable atmospheric** conditions for lightning activity in the Ernakulam region. ● The study shows that most of the lightning activity in the hotspot region occurs between 3pm and 6pm, due to solar heating. ● It was also found that lightning in the northeast monsoon period carries more electric current, 100 kiloampere (kA), making it more dangerous. Such high current is generated during the origin of oceanic storms.

Kerala Forest department to launch e-governance applications	**Context:** ● The Forest department is set to **launch a new bilingual website** and a range of advanced e-governance applications designed to improve accessibility, transparency and forest management. **Key Points:** ● The newly designed website features a bilingual interface, catering to both **English and Malayalam**-speaking users, ensuring accessibility to a diverse audience and fostering inclusivity. ● It is developed by the State-run C-DIT. ● Also, various e-governance applications will be launched **e-governance applications:** 1. **TIMBER**, a mobile and web-based system, will facilitate the process of obtaining timber cutting permits in compliance with the Kerala Promotion of Tree Growth in Non- Forest Areas Act, 2005. 　○ The system allows landowners and farmers to apply for, track, and download permits from their smartphones, ensuring transparency and compliance with legal requirements 2. **WILDWATCH** mobile app is aimed at addressing human-wildlife conflict. 　○ It enables users to report wildlife sightings and incidents in real time. 　○ The app integrates with Forest Division Emergency Operation Centres (FDEOCs) and uses Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology to analyse data, enhancing decision-making and conflict management. 3. **WILDNET software** supports the preparation and monitoring of management plans for Protected Areas. 　○ By integrating the mobile app data with GIS and Remote Sensing (RS) technology, WILDNET ensures accurate field data collection and efficient conservation planning. 4. **FIREWATCH** is a web portal for reporting and managing forest fire incidents. It enables quick response to fire threats and supports the preparation of fire management plans using real-time data. 5. **NATURESTAY and ECOFRAME** portals simplify the process of obtaining permissions for paid nature camps and film shoots in forest areas, making the application process more efficient and accessible while promoting environmental awareness. 6. **REACH portal** is designed for students and researchers and streamlines the process of obtaining research permissions in forest areas, encouraging more scientific exploration and conservation efforts. 7. **GREEN CONNECT** is a media-sharing platform that facilitates the transfer of media files from field offices to the Forestry Information Bureau, enhancing the department's social media presence and outreach efforts.
Kerala to link all minor ports	**Context:**

- The Kerala government is **planning a coastal shipping project** to link minor ports along the state's coastline with the **International Container Transshipment Terminal (ICTT) at Vallarpadam, Kochi**.
- This initiative aims to **enhance cargo movement and reduce transportation costs** by utilizing **non-major ports such as Kollam, Beypore, and Azhikkal.**
- The **project aligns** with the broader objectives of improving logistics infrastructure under the **Sagarmala Programme**.

About:
- The Sagarmala Programme is a **flagship initiative of the Government of India** aimed at promoting port-led development in the country.
- It seeks to modernize India's ports and enhance their connectivity with hinterland regions.

Key objectives:
- **Port Modernization**: Upgrading India's major and minor ports to handle increased cargo traffic and improve efficiency.
- **Port Connectivity**: Improving connectivity between ports and hinterland regions through rail, road, and inland waterways.
- **Coastal Shipping**: Promoting coastal shipping to reduce logistics costs and reduce congestion on roads.
- **Port-led Industrialization**: Developing industrial clusters and special economic zones around ports to boost economic growth.

Kathakali mural	**Context:**
	- The Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode (IIMK) has introduced a Kathakali mural, which has quickly become a major attraction on campus. - This 75x35-foot painting not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of the institute but also serves to promote the rich cultural heritage of Kerala. **About Kathakali:** - Kathakali is a traditional dance-drama form that originated in Kerala, India. - It is known for its elaborate costumes, stylized makeup, and symbolic hand gestures. - Kathakali stories are typically based on Hindu mythology, epics, and folktales. **Mural:** - **"Mural"** comes from the Latin muralis, meaning **"wall painting"**. This word is related to murus, meaning **"wall".** - A mural is any piece of graphic artwork that is painted or applied directly to a wall, ceiling or other permanent substrate. - Mural techniques include fresco, mosaic, graffiti and marouflage.