

Child Friendly News



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EXTINCTION ALERT FOR INDIAN BIRDS

The Great Indian Bustard, a tall, grassland dwelling bird almost became the national bird of India. But, despite support for the Bustard from India's most famous ornithologist, Dr. Salim Ali, the peacock was chosen as India's national bird. Since then, it's been a gloomy time for the Bustard as its numbers kept going down and down. Today, it is one of India's most critically endangered birds.

Who else is in danger?

The IUCN, an international organization that tracks the status of species in danger, has just released its Red List, which lists animal species in danger of becoming extinct. Along with the Great Indian Bustard, on the Critically Endangered List

are birds from India such as the Bengal Florican, Jerdon's Courser (grassland and scrubland birds), the White-bellied Heron (a wetland bird), the Forest Owlet and several species of vultures. Vultures are the scavengers or cleaners of the wild as they eat the meat of dead animals.

Birds like the Bustard and the Florican are in danger as their habitats are getting smaller and

smaller as humans occupy more land. The use of chemicals by farmers that entered crops and hence grass-eating animals (that ate the crops) killed thousands of vultures that ate the meat of these grazers.

Elsewhere in the world

The Okapi, a curious mix of a horse and a zebra, that lives in central Africa, is almost on the brink of extinction, the IUCN

has said. The Okapi is such a rare sight that it is compared to the legendary unicorn.

Some good news

The Leatherback Turtle, the world's largest turtle, seems to be increasing in numbers in the Atlantic Ocean. This may be due to protection of turtle nesting beaches, action against poachers and the increasing use of fishing gear that doesn't trap turtles.



Great Indian Bustard

(Photo courtesy: Nikhil Devanar)



Okapi

(Photo courtesy: Charles Miller)



Leatherback Turtle

Who is an ornithologist?

An ornithologist is a scientist who studies birds

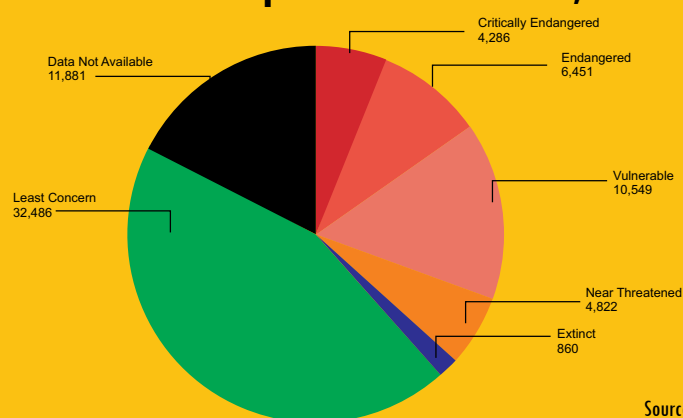


THE IUCN RED LIST OF THREATENED SPECIES

Understanding the IUCN Red List

The IUCN divides species into groups that are in danger and those that are not. Those in danger are further classified into Critically Endangered, Endangered and Vulnerable Species. The ones in most danger are the Critically Endangered species

Total no of Species studied : 71,576



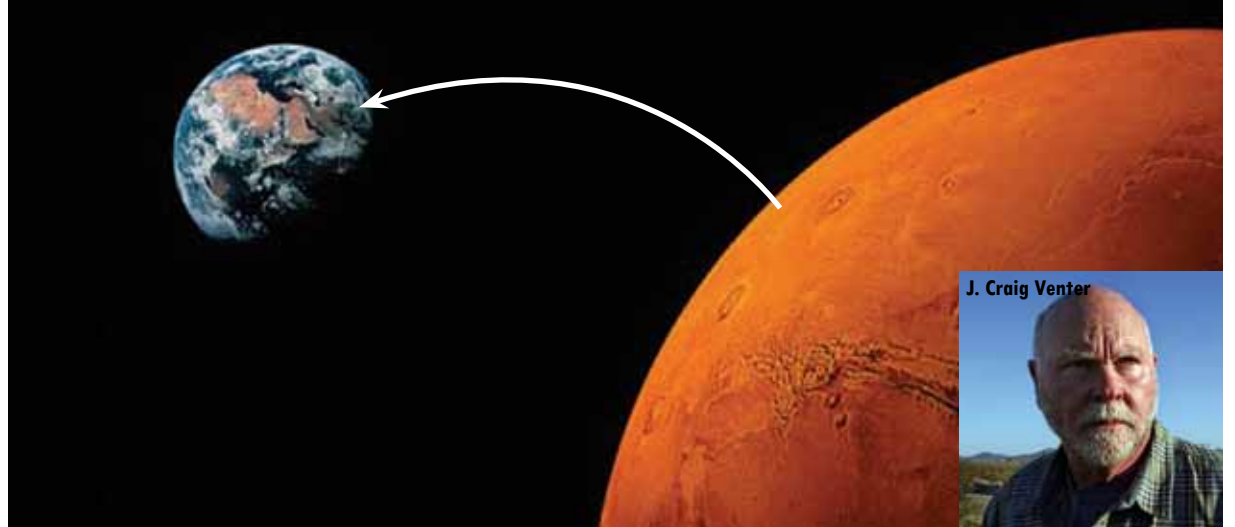
Source : IUCN
Chart excludes low risk category

JUST FAX IT FROM MARS TO EARTH!

An American scientist has come up with an idea for an ambitious system that will be able to 'fax' organisms from anywhere to anywhere in the universe. The idea, which belongs to J. Craig Venter, a scientist from the United States, is not as far-fetched as it seems.

Venter has been involved in sequencing the human genome – the patterns of DNA that are part of every living creature. You can think of DNA as a formula based on which your body grows and develops after birth. DNA is part of every cell in every living creature, including humans.

Venter's core (central) idea is quite simple – an organism at Location A will be studied and its DNA will be mapped. This will



be sent over a communications network to Location B, where using the DNA formula, a 'copy' of the original organism will be built. Of course the complexity (difficulty) lies in mapping a living creature's DNA quickly and accurately. So, at the beginning,

Venter and his team may only be able to 'scan, fax and copy' simple creatures and organisms like bacteria and viruses. It will be a long while before they can 'fax' across a mammal or even a bird. But the beauty of the idea is that it is scalable – so Location A and

Location B can be anywhere in the planet or even the universe. Such a system that can 'scan, fax and copy' life forms from distant Mars to our Earth may help us discover more about Mars in a much shorter time.

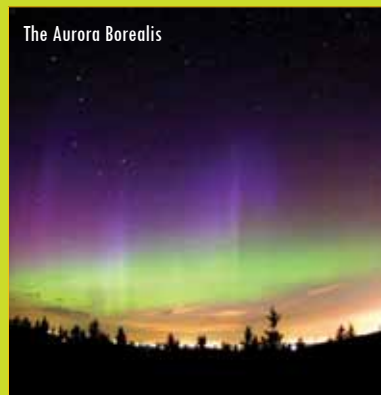
Sun will flip upside-down in a few weeks

Within three to four months, the Sun is all set to perform some spectacular acrobatics. It will flip upside-down as its magnetic field (north and south poles) completely reverses its polarity. The flip does not happen suddenly. It builds up over a period of eleven years. The flip will not cause any harm to the Earth, scientists say. However, there may be 'magnetic' storms or disturbances in the Earth's

atmosphere which may interfere with satellite and radio signals. This may cause disruptions (breaks) in television and radio programmes. A more spectacular effect will be an extra beautiful display of the Northern Lights or Aurora Borealis during the flip. While the flip is expected to take place in the next three to four months, scientists are unable to predict a more specific date.

More sun power!

An Indian designer living in the United States has come up with the neat idea of sunglasses that tap and store solar energy. The solar energy is stored in a pair of small panels attached to the side of the frame. At night, when the glasses are not needed, the panels can be removed and used to charge a cell phone! How is that for efficiency?



'Selfie' is the word of the year

'Selfie' has been chosen as the 'Word of the Year' for 2013 by Oxford dictionaries.

Selfie is defined by Oxford Dictionaries as "a photograph that one has taken of oneself, typically with a smartphone or webcam and uploaded to a social media website." The word was chosen based on its popularity and increased use.

Other shortlisted words included "binge-watch" – meaning watching lots of TV – and "Schmeat", meaning a form of artificially produced meat.





Owlle Talks Technology

TECHNOLOGY ON THE CRICKET FIELD

Truly technology is everywhere – it's in the washing machine, part of cars, in the shoes you wear and now even on the game field. Over the last decade, a technology-based system called the Decision Review System (DRS) is being used to help umpires decide if a player should be given out. As DRS gets more and more new components (parts), let's get down to basics and find out what DRS is all about.

What's the DRS?

The DRS consists of three components

- Hawk-Eye which tracks the trajectory (the moving path) of a ball
- Hot Spot which helps identify if a ball made contact with the bat
- Real-time Snicko which also traces contact between bat and ball

Hawk-Eye

When you watch a re-play during a cricket telecast, you are shown an animated image of a bowler's delivery that re-traces the path

of the ball after its release and determines if the ball would hit the stump. This animation is made possible through Hawk-Eye. What make the technology work are high performance cameras that track every movement of every delivery. These different images are then combined together to create a 3D representation of the trajectory of the ball. Hawk-Eye is generally held to be accurate.

Hot Spot

Hot Spot is based on infra-red technology that tracks the heat temperature of an area. Infra-red cameras are installed on the field and these continuously record images of field activity. When the bat makes contact with the ball, the infrared image shows a bright spot, which is caused by higher temperature at the point of contact. The higher temperature is caused by friction between bat and ball. This technology is useful to determine if the batsman edged the ball into a fielder's hand, in which case he would be out. In a tournament



Notice the 'larger' sound wave captured at the moment when the ball hits the bat

held earlier this year, there were some issues over players taping their bats to escape being caught by Hot Spot.

Real-time Snicko

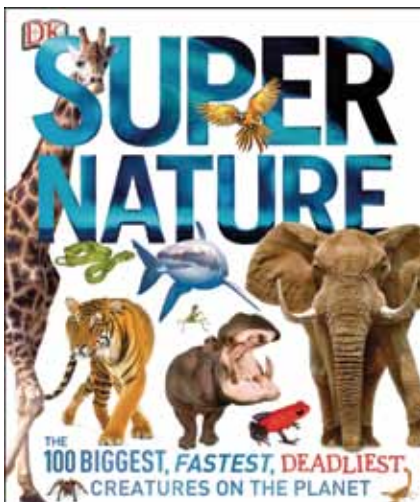
Snicko also works to identify if the ball came in contact with the bat – except it uses sound waves to determine this. During the Ashes series that is now underway (happening) in Australia, Hot Spot and Snicko are being used together to make a correct umpiring decision. Batsmen can

no longer tape bats and get away with it!

While all this technology is supposed to help umpires make fair decisions, sometimes, it lands the game in even greater controversy (problems). As a result, cricket boards of some countries, including India, have not accepted the DRS, saying that it not 100% fool proof. Certainly these technologies are work in progress, but just as certainly, they are here to stay!

The Book Nook

SUPERNATURE – THE 100 BIGGEST, FASTEST, DEADLIEST CREATURES ON THE PLANET



Animal encyclopedias are dime a dozen these days (common), but Dorling Kindersley's Supernature is still an excellent read. All creatures mentioned in this book have been singled out for their super athletic skills, unique body structure or their super-tuned senses.

Be prepared to encounter a parrot that is so heavy it cannot fly, a salamander that

can grow new limbs and a weight lifting beetle.

For all those of you who love Internet videos, the layout of the book would be familiar.

Each animal is given a double page with a massive photo, short text and facts and data in neat boxes. Easily digestible!

The book is a great addition to any library.

Price: Rs.999

Available at most bookstores





Personally, I rather look forward to a computer program winning the world chess championship. Humanity needs a lesson in humility.

— Richard Dawkins



It was used to teach war strategy to kings and nobles. In fact it was called the 'king's game'



From India it spread to Persia and then to Europe and Russia
It was in Europe that the rules of modern chess were created



Chess originated from India more than 1500 years ago. It was played first possibly in the Gupta kingdom. It was then called Chaturanga

ORIGINS



Won by German Adolf Anderssen



The Chess Olympiad, though not connected to the Olympics, is played between teams of different countries

The first modern chess tournament was organized in London in 1851

Chess is recognized as a sport by the International Olympic Association but it is not an Olympic sport

The 2012 Chess Olympiad was won by Armenia



MODERN CHESS



FIDE is in charge of the ranking of players. Ranking is done according to ELO Ratings, which were created by Arpad Elo, a Hungarian-born American physics professor

CHESS RANKINGS

Grand master or GM is the highest level requiring an ELO rating of 2500 or more, and minimum number of wins against other Grand Masters

Vishwanathan Anand became India's first Grand Master in 1988



International Master or IM — the minimum ELO rating for this title is 2400

Manuel Aaron became India's first International Master in 1961



Highest ranked female player is Hungary's Judit Polgar whose ELO rating is 2696. She is the only woman on the FIDE Top 100 list. She refuses to compete in women only tournaments, as she believes that male and female players should be treated alike



Highest ranked player now is Norway's Magnus Carlsen who has an ELO rating of 2872. This is the highest ELO rating of all time.



CHECK

For two weeks Chennai, the centre of the chess universe, a Vishwanathan Anand for who is seen as the new generation.

This edition's Special Report brings you a mind map that traces the roots of culture of the game.



Drawing is rather like playing chess: your mind races ahead of the moves that you eventually make.

— David Hockney



Special Report

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MATE!

FIDE is the governing organization that is in charge of chess globally



Organizes the FIDE World Chess Championship

The 2013 FIDE championship match was played in Chennai



2013 World Champion is Magnus Carlsen



'Through the Looking Glass', which is entirely based on the theme of chess with the main character, Alice, herself a pawn.



The 'Harry Potter' books feature wizard's chess, a chess variant where the pieces are similar to living beings, to which the players give orders by voice.



The TV show 'Star Trek' featured Three-dimensional Chess, which is played on boards at different levels which enables a chess piece to move up/down in addition to forward/backward/sideways



COMPUTERS & CHESS

Chess engines can be freely downloaded from the Internet



Chess playing computers

IBM's Deep Blue was the first to defeat a human World Champion — the computer defeated Gary Kasparov in 1996



The top-rated chess engine in the world is Houdini



RAPID CHESS

In normal tournaments, each player is given 60 to 180 minutes



In all these formats, once the minutes are exhausted, if the game is still underway, a small amount of time per additional move is given

In Rapid Chess each player is given 15 to 50 minutes

In Blitz chess, each player gets a total of three minutes

The capital of Tamil Nadu, was the chess challenger Magnus Carlsen battled for the title 'World Champion.' Carlsen, genius of the chess world, eventually triumphed. You something different – a massive chess and then looks ahead to the fu-

JADE RABBIT HEADS TO THE MOON

China has launched Jade Rabbit, a lunar rover that will explore the Earth's Moon. The rocket carrying Jade Rabbit blasted off from a spot in South-western China on Monday.

If the rover, which is a pilot-less craft that is controlled from Earth, lands successfully, it will be the first landing on the moon in the last 40 years. The last time the Moon had a visitor from Earth, it was in 1976, when the Soviet Union sent up a probe (a space craft that carries instruments without any human passengers). The last time an astronaut landed on the moon was in 1972 when the United States sent a manned mission to the Moon.

In recent years, China has made a lot of progress with its space program, and the Jade Rabbit project is another feather in its cap. It now hopes to become the first Asian country to land a person on the moon.

The rocket carrying Jade Rabbit blasts off and (below) Jade Rabbit



India's Mars Orbiter or 'Mangalyaan' passed an important test last Sunday. Scientists from Indian space agency ISRO were able to successfully launch it out of Earth's orbit onto a path headed for Mars. Mangalyaan had been orbiting Earth for a few weeks since its launch on November 5. The craft has now crossed the Moon's orbit on its way to the red planet. Mangalyaan is now "travelling beyond the moon into deep space", ISRO officials announced. The craft will take 10 long months to reach Mars.



Japanese royals visit India

Japan's Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko arrived in India last Saturday. They are visiting the country after 53 years. The pair last visited India in 1960 — they were then Crown Prince and Princess of Japan. During this six day

trip, they will visit Delhi and Chennai.

Japan has the oldest continuous hereditary monarchy in the world. This means that the same family of kings has ruled Japan for hundreds of years.

Making friends with Iran

After years of living in isolation (all alone), West Asian country Iran stepped out to shake hands with a few countries last week. This is the result of a very important agreement reached between Iran and six countries — the United States, Russia, China, Britain, France, and Germany — on November 24.

For years, most of these countries remained on unfriendly terms with Iran and they opposed Iran's plan to build a nuclear bomb. Such a bomb is a dangerous weapon that can cause death and destruction on a very large scale. To put pres-

sure on Iran to stop making the bomb, some of these countries banned (put an end to) trade (the buying and selling of goods) with Iran. Iran is one of the biggest oil producers in the world and it has been unable to sell its oil (used for making petrol, plastics and many other goods) to many of the world's countries due to this ban. The Iranian government was also refused permission



Leaders from the six countries announce that they have reached an agreement with Iran.

to use money it had placed in banks in those countries.

Now, according to the agreement that has been reached, Iran will slow work on the bomb for the next six months. In return, it will get back some of its money and will also be allowed

to sell its oil a little more freely. Experts who have been closely watching Iran all these years say this is the first time that Iran has agreed to slow work on its dangerous bomb. Perhaps Iran will finally give peace a chance, they say.

“One of the big challenges is to get used to the pace and bounce... The reason being, in India even on the best of wickets you don't get the same pace, or even bowlers who can generate similar pace and bounce.

— M S Dhoni on the challenges his team will face in South Africa



IT'S A BIRD, IT'S A PLANE, NO...IT'S A DELIVERY SERVICE

Amazon, the world's largest internet shop, announced this week that in future it may use automatic 'drones' for speedy delivery in the United States (US). Drones are small, unmanned aircrafts which means they operate automatically without a pilot. You could compare them to radio controlled aircraft toys that are commanded from the ground. In this case, the drones will be controlled by a computer.

Imagine this: Order comes in at amazon.com. A delivery manager packs the good ordered into a box and straps it to a drone. In minutes, the drone is in the air and headed for the customer's home to make the delivery. According to Amazon, the drones could help it deliver goods in just 30 minutes. A lot like Dominos pizza? However, the rules for 'drone-travel' are not yet out and it will be a few years before the US government puts these in place.



(Photo courtesy: Amazon)

Such rules will have to take into account safety for humans (you don't want drones flying into people, right?) and birds. Once they are in place though, such drones could become common-place.

Dhoni wins ICC People's Choice Award



India's cricket captain M S Dhoni has won the ICC People's Choice Award. He is the third winner of the prize after Sachin Tendulkar in 2010 and Sri Lanka's Kumar Sangakkara in 2011 and 2012. The award is given by the International Cricket Council (ICC) but the winner is chosen by the fans who vote online. Around 188,000 people from all over the world registered their votes for the 2013 award.

PV Sindhu lifts Macau Open

Acce badminton player P V Sindhu won the Macau Open in China on Sunday beating Canadian Li Michelle in just 37 minutes. This is the second major title win this year for Sindhu. She won the Malaysian Open in May. 2013 has been a fantastic year for Sindhu. In addition to two tournament wins, Sindhu also became India's first women's singles medallist at the World Championship in August, where she won the bronze. She was given the Arjuna award, one of India's most important sports prizes, by the government earlier this year.



India to face SA test

Over the next few weeks, the Indian cricket team will battle it out on the bouncy cricket pitches of South Africa (SA). Dhoni's 11 will play the South Africans in three One Day Internationals and two test matches between Dec 5 and Dec 30. It promises to be an interesting contest between the No1 (SA) and No 2 (India)

test teams in the world. For the first time, the test team will be playing without any member of the Fab Four — Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, VVS Laxman and Saurav Ganguly. In their place however, the team has many promising new players — Murali Vijay, Shikhar Dhawan, Virat Kohli, Chesteshwar Pujara and Rohit Sharma. They will be backed by the experienced Za-

heer Khan who makes a come-back to India's bowling attack after a year. India has been able to rapidly re-build its team after the retirements of the Fab Four and the two test matches against SA will be a test of the new squad.

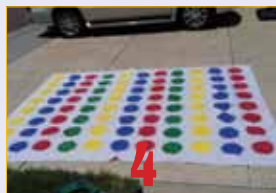


Indian captain MS Dhoni with South African captain AB de Villiers

India's ODI team includes other players such as Yuvraj Singh and Suresh Raina. The first match is an ODI scheduled for December 5.

A ROLL OF DICE

You read about chess in this issue's Special Report. Now, can you name the board games shown here?



Answers
1. Chinese Checkers 2. Backgammon 3. Monopoly 4. Twister

FIND THE HIDDEN OBJECTS

Can you spot the hidden objects detailed at the bottom of the picture?



What do you think these sheep are knitting? Can you find and circle eight more balls of yarn? Also find and circle another knitting needle and a pair of scissors hidden in the picture.

UNSCRAMBLE THE WORDS

Re-arrange the alphabets to find the word

Clue: All clues are linked to chess

1. **PBIHSO**

2. **APWN**

3. **MCEKTEAHC**

4. **OKOR**

Answers
1. Bishop
2. Pawn
3. Checkmate
4. Rook

SUDOKU TIME

		5		1	
			3		
		2		4	
	3		5		
		1			
	5		6		

Try your hand at this Sudoku. Remember that numbers 1 to 6 can appear only once in each of the six rectangles. They can also appear only once in each row and column of the overall square.

4	5	3	6	2	1
6	2	1	4	3	5
1	3	4	5	6	2
5	6	2	1	4	3
2	1	6	3	5	4
3	4	5	2	1	6

Answer

Top Reads for Kids and Young Adults

1. Diary of a Wimpy Kid: Hard Luck by Jeff Kinney
2. Asterix and the Picts by Jean-Yves Ferry
3. The Volcano of Fire: The Kingdom of Fantasy (Vol 5) by Geronimo Stilton
4. Heroes of the Olympus: The House of Hades by Rick Riordan
5. Sita's Ramayana by Samhita Arni & Moyna Chitrakar
6. Fortunately The Milk by Neil Gaiman
7. Demon Dentist by David Walliams
8. Gandhi: My Life is My Message (Graphic Novel) by Jason Quinn / Sachin Nagar
9. Allegiant by Veronica Roth
10. The Deadly Royal Recipe by Ranjit Lal



To know more about these books and to buy them, check out www.toptenbooksoftheweek.com

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Child Friendly News or CFN is an age appropriate newspaper for children in the age group 7-13. The newspaper comes out every fortnight. Every issue is written using language that young readers can understand on their own interspersed with pictures and imagery. Quick explanations of difficult words and terms and boxed elements that explain concepts accompany every article — this is to help build

vocabulary as well as context understanding. Special reports take up one topic in depth while regular columns on everyday technology concepts keep children up-to-date with the world around them. A subscription costs Rs.500 for the year.

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