



1. India, China jointly oppose trade-distorting agri subsidies



India and China have called for eliminating trade-distorting agricultural subsidies given by developed countries, in a joint proposal to the WTO.

- India and China have jointly submitted a proposal to the WTO, which has been called for ending the agricultural subsidies given by developed countries. In this proposal, subsidy has been described as "the most distorted form of agricultural subsidy". This kind of subsidy is called 'Aggregate Measurement of Support (AMS)' or 'Amber Box' subsidy in the WTO language.
- The proposal assumes importance in view of the ongoing negotiations for the ministerial conference of the WTO to be held in Buenos Aires in December.
- The joint letter cites the developed countries, including the US, EU and Canada, which are providing continuous turnover subsidy to their farmers, which is much more than the limit set for developing countries.



2. Union Minister launches scheme for senior citizens belonging to BPL category

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Thaawarchand Gehlot has launched a scheme that provides for physical aids and assisted-living devices for senior citizens belonging to the BPL category in Gujarat.



- This ambitious scheme, is expected to benefit 5, 20,000 senior citizens over a period of three years.
- The centrally-sponsored scheme, 'Rashtriya Vayoshri Yojana', was unveiled on April 1 this year and since then it has already been launched in Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.
- Under the scheme, devices will be distributed to senior citizens free of cost.

3. Sports Ministry approves constitution of 13- ESC



The Sports Ministry has approved constitution of a 13-member Empowered Steering Committee (ESC). It will shape and influence India's preparation for multi- disciplinary events, including 2020 Tokyo Olympic Games.

- The decision to form the Committee has been taken on the basis of recommendations made by the Olympic Task Force in its interim report, which was submitted to the government on the 22nd of May. The Steering Committee will have the mandate to work till December 31st, 2020 with clearly defined terms and references.

- These include review of the core probable list of each High Priority and Priority disciplines for the Commonwealth Games, Asian Games and Olympic Games.
- The Committee will also have power to recommend specific plans or packages for beneficiaries of Target Olympic Podium Scheme.

4. Environment Ministry to Launch ‘Prakriti Khoj’ – An Environment Quiz

The Environment Ministry will launch an environment awareness initiative, under which an online environmental quiz competition named “Prakriti Khoj” – an Environment Quiz to be conducted at the national level.



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Ministry of Environment
Government of India

- The quiz is being launched on September 5 on the occasion of Teachers’ Day. It will be an ideal medium to reach out to young minds through a fun-filled interactive learning mode to trigger their sensitivity towards environment protection and conservation.
- The objective of the quiz is to generate interest among school children about the science related to environment, interactions within it and the problems therein. This will help in sensitizing the children/youth to issues related to environment and development and motivate children towards environment conservation-oriented lifestyles.



5. Ministry of Railways Signs two MoUs with Switzerland



The first MoU is between Ministry of Railways and Federal Department of the Environment, Transport and Communications of the Swiss Confederation for technical cooperation in Rail Sector.

- The MoU aims at cooperation in the areas of traction rolling stock, electric multiple unit and train sets, traction propulsion equipments, freight and passenger cars, tilting trains, railway electrification equipments, tunnelling technology among other things.
- The second MoU was signed between Konkan Railway Corporation Limited (KRCL) and Swiss Federal Institute of Technology which will help the former in establishing the George Fernandes Institute of Tunnel Technology (GFITT) at Goa especially for assimilation and dissemination of knowledge in the field of tunneling.

6. Saab, Adani join hands for defence manufacturing

Swedish defence giant Saab and Indian conglomerate Adani group have announced collaboration in defence manufacturing entailing billions of dollars of investment, mainly eyeing a contract for single-engine fighter jets for the Indian Air Force.



- The government is set to procure a fleet of single-engine fighters for the IAF and US defence firm Lockheed Martin will be a major competitor for Saab for the deal.
- The two companies said the collaboration will combine the technical and product excellence of Saab, along with the industrial engineering, system integration and mega project execution capabilities of Adani with the intention to manufacture defence systems locally in India.

7. Europe unveils world's most powerful X-ray laser



The world's most powerful X-ray laser has begun operating at a facility where scientists will attempt to recreate the conditions deep inside the sun and produce film-like sequences of viruses and cells.

- The machine, called the European X-ray Free Electron Laser (XFEL), acts as a high-speed camera that can capture images of individual atoms in a few millionths of a billionth of a second.



8. Reliance Foundation Awarded Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar

The Reliance Foundation was rewarded with the prestigious Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Award at Rashtrapati Bhawan. Chairperson of the foundation, Nita Ambani collected the award from President Ram Nath Kovind in a glittering ceremony in New Delhi.



- For its contribution to the promotion of sports, the award went to Reliance Foundation.
- Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) also received the Rashtriya Khel Protsahana Purushkar this year for its 'Identification and Nurturing of Budding and Young Talent' (IDCO) program.



9. Saina & Srikanth climb up ladder in latest BWF world ranking



Indian shuttlers Saina Nehwal and Kidambi Srikanth climbed up the ladder in the latest BWF world ranking. Saina, who won a bronze at the World Championship, jumped four rungs to be placed at the 12th spot, while Kidambi Srikanth also improved two positions.

- Among others, Ajay Jayaram and B Sai Praneeth also improved by one and two places respectively to be placed at 16th and 17th spots.
- Mixed doubles pair of Pranaav Jerry Chopra and N Sikki Reddy improved a place to be at the 19th spot, while women's doubles combo of Ashwini Ponnappa and Sikki were static at 24th.
- World Championship silver medallist, P V Sindhu, retained her 4th position.