



Prelim Bits 10/11-06-2017

Marine reserves can mitigate climate change

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- Around the world, coastal nations have committed to protecting 10% of their waters by 2020, but so far, only 3.5% of the ocean has been set aside for protection.

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- A new study notes that **ocean surface waters have become on average 26% more acidic since pre-industrial times.**

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- By the year 2100, they will be 150% more acidic, while coastal wetlands, including mangroves, seagrasses and salt marshes have demonstrated a capacity for reducing local carbon dioxide concentrations because **many contain plants with high rates of photosynthesis.**

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- So, protecting a portion of our oceans and coastal wetlands will help sequester carbon, limit the consequences of poor management, protect habitats and biodiversity that are key to healthy oceans of the future, and buffer coastal populations from extreme events.

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SATH program

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- NITI Aayog has launched SATH, a program providing '**Sustainable Action for Transforming Human capital**' with the State Governments.

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- The program will be implemented by NITI along with **McKinsey & Company and IPE Global consortium**, who were selected through a competitive bidding process.

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- The vision of the program is to initiate transformation in the education and health sectors.
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- SATH aims to identify and build three future 'role model' states for health systems.
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- NITI will work in close collaboration with their state machinery to design a robust roadmap of intervention, develop a program governance structure, set up monitoring and tracking mechanisms, hand-hold state institutions through the execution stage and provide support on a range of institutional measures to achieve the end objectives.
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New events for Tokyo Olympics

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- The International Olympic Committee (IOC) yesterday approved new events for the 2020 Tokyo Games, including a number of mixed-gender competitions.
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- The Tokyo Games would include **321 events**, up from 306 at Rio 2016, with **3-on-3 basketball** among the new additions.
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- The additions include a mixed team event for judo. Table Tennis will also get a mixed doubles competition.
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- **Mixed triathlon** will also appear at Tokyo for the first time, along with a **mixed team archery** event and BMX freestyle.
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- In Tokyo, the number of mixed events will double from nine in Rio 2016 to 18.
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Kaladan project

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- Kaladan was the first major project taken up by India in Myanmar and the government is on course to completing the \$484-million multi-modal transport projects that **will offer connectivity to Mizoram in India.**

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- The project will connect the eastern Indian seaport of Kolkata with Sittwe seaport in Myanmar by sea; it will then link Sittwe seaport to Paletwa in Myanmar via Kaladan river boat route and then from **Paletwa on to Mizoram** by road transport.

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- A 1,600-crore contract has been awarded for building 109-km road connecting Paletwa river terminal to Zorinpui in Mizoram border.
- India completed the construction of **Sittwe port**, at the estuary of Kaladan river, in trouble-prone Rakhine state of Myanmar, last year.
- **Construction of the river terminal** 158 km upstream and dredging of the river to ensure navigability are in the final stages.
- At the Indian side, extension of the **Aizawl-Saiha National Highway** by 90 km to the international border at Zorinpui, at the southern tip of Mizoram, is almost over.

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Fund to promote sustainable development

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- India and the **UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC)** have launched a partnership fund that will support sustainable development

projects across the developing world.

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- The collaborative initiative is aimed at reducing poverty and hunger, improving health, education and equality, and expanding access to clean water, energy and livelihoods.

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- UNOSSC, hosted by UNDP since 1974, **was established by the UN General Assembly** with a mandate to advocate for and coordinate South-South and triangular cooperation on a global and UN system-wide basis.

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