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Thursday, 29 February 2024

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NEWS





Justice Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar Appointed as New Lokpal, Six Members Also Named

- Former Supreme Court judge Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar was appointed the chairperson of Lokpal.
- The Lokpal has been functioning without its regular chief after Justice Pinaki Chandra Ghose completed his term on May 27, 2022.
- President Droupadi Murmu also named six others as members of the anti-corruption ombudsman.
- Former Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh High Court Lingappa Narayana Swamy, former chief justice of Karnataka High Court and the current chairperson of the Law Commission of India Ritu Raj Awasthi, and former Allahabad High Court chief justice Sanjay Yadav are the new judicial members of Lokpal.
- Former Chief Election Commissioner Sushil Chandra, former Gujarat chief secretary Pankaj Kumar, and former secretary, Department of Land Resources Ajay Tirkey are the new nonjudicial members.

Lokpal:

- The Lokpal is a powerful institution that has jurisdiction over central government to inquire into allegations of corruption against its public functionaries including the Prime Minister, cabinet ministers, members of Parliament, and Group A officials of the central government.
- It is the President who appoints the chairperson and members of the Lokpal based on the recommendations of a selection committee headed by the prime minister.
- Q. Who has been appointed as the New Lokpal of India? Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar















New Zealand to repeal world-first law banning tobacco sales for future generations

- New Zealand is all set to repeal the world-first law banning tobacco sales for future generations.
- The new coalition government elected in October 2023 confirmed the repeal will happen as a matter of urgency, enabling it to scrap the law without seeking public comment, in line with previously announced plans.
- Set to take effect from July, the toughest antitobacco rules in the world would have banned sales to those born after Jan. 1, 2009, cut nicotine content in smoked tobacco products and reduced the number of tobacco retailers by more than 90%.

New Zealand:

Capital: Wellington

Prime Minister: Christopher Luxon

Currency: New Zealand dollar

Q. Which nation is all set to repeal the world-first law banning tobacco sales for future generations? New Zealand















S Korea, US to begin major exercises

- South Korean and US troops will begin their expanded annual military drills next week in response to North Korea's evolving nuclear threats.
- The South Korea and US militaries jointly announced that the allies will conduct the Freedom Shield exercise, a computer-simulated command post training, and a variety of separate field training, from March 4-14.
- The allies' drills are designed to bolster their joint capabilities to prevent North Korea from using its nuclear weapons.
- The allies are to carry out 48 field exercises this spring, twice the number conducted last year, and that this year's drills would involve air assault, live-firing and bombing training.'
- Q. Which two countries will conduct the Freedom Shield exercise, a computer-simulated command post training, and a variety of separate field training? **South Korea and US**















Four astronauts named for India's first manned space mission

- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) in Thiruvananthapuram and announced the names of four Indian astronauts chosen for this unique mission.
- They (astronauts) will be awarded the 'wings' or logos for them to become the chosen astronauts for the manned space mission.
- Group Captain Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, Group Captain Ajit Krishnan, Group Captain Angad Pratap and Wing Commander Shubhanshu Shukla are selected for the manned Gaganyaan mission.
- Prime Minister Modi will also inaugurate three space infrastructure projects worth about Rs 1,800 crore to provide world-class technical facilities for space sector.
- The projects include the PSLV Integration Facility (PIF) at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota; new 'Semi-cryogenics Integrated Engine and stage **Test** facility' at the Isro Propulsion Complex at Mahendragiri; and the 'Trisonic Wind Tunnel' at VSSC.
- Q. Name the four astronauts nominated for India's first manned space mission? Prasanth Balakrishnan Nair, Ajit Krishnan, Angad Pratap and Shubhanshu Shukla















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Telangana govt decides to dump Pharma City project

- The Telangana government has decided to scrap the Hyderabad Pharma City, the much-talkedabout exclusive facility for pharmaceutical companies marketed heavily by the erstwhile Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) government.
- Industries and IT Minister D Sridhar Babu has announced that the government has decided to wind up the project keeping in view legal issues around it and the farmers' demands. Issues related to the environment too are said to be one of the major reasons for winding up of the project.
- The government, however, is bringing in an alternative policy to promote Pharma Villates, dispersing the growth of the pharma industry across the State. "We would like to promote the industry across the State. To start with, we will set up 10 pharma villages. Of these, three will be set up in Nalgonda, Vikarabad and Medak districts.
- Q. Which state government has recently decided to scrap its Pharma City project? Telangana



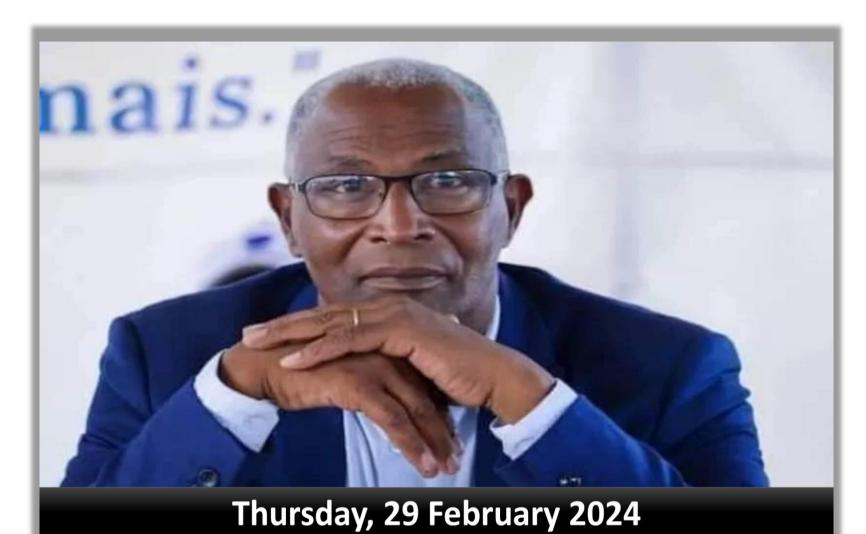












Guinea appoints Mamadou Oury Bah as prime minister

- Guinea's transitional president General Mamady Doumbouya appointed Amadou Oury Bah as prime minister.
- Bah, commonly know as Bah Oury, has been a prominent figure on the Guinean political scene since the early nineties.
- He served as minister of reconciliation in a consensus government in the wake of a political crisis triggered by the killing of at least 130 people in union-led protests in 2007.
- The founder and vice president of the UFDG party later spent four years in exile in France, during which time he was convicted in absentia for a 2011 assassination attempt against Conde.
- He returned to Guinea in 2016 following a presidential pardon, but was later pushed out of UFDG.

Guinea:

- Capital: Conakry
- Currency: Guinean Franc
- Q. Who is the new prime minister of Guinea? Mamadou **Oury Bah**















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Tech Mahindra, Pegatron ink MoU to develop AIenabled private 5G networks

- Indian IT and consulting services firm Tech Mahindra signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Taiwanese Pegatron to develop private 5G solutions for enterprises. The two companies signed the MoU at the ongoing Mobile World Congress 2024 (MWC 2024).
- The partnership will enable the two companies collaboratively find global prospects, with Pegatron offering the 5G connectivity layer and private 5G products and Tech Mahindra delivering end-to-end 5G services.
- The companies also intend to use 5G to accelerate the implementation of artificial intelligence (AI) applications and edge computing across a variety of industries.
- With Tech Mahindra, Pegatron will acquire insights into how to better develop its products based on specific geographic, industrial, user, technological, and regulatory issues, particularly in the APJI region.
- Tech Mahindra and Pegatron will also focus on improving digital resilience for disaster response and boosting communication in disaster-prone or remote places. They further aim to assist first-line disaster relief units with solutions that use 5G Radio Access Network (RAN) and satellite connectivity.
- Q. Which Indian IT and consulting services firm has signed an MoU with Taiwanese Pegatron to develop private 5G solutions for enterprises? Tech Mahindra













Sachin Jain

CEO, India





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World Gold Council appoints De Beers' Sachin Jain as chief executive officer

- The World Gold Council has revealed the appointment of Sachin Jain as the new CEO for its India operations, with him assuming the role starting March 2024.
- Jain comes to the World Gold Council from De Beers, where he has served in various senior capacities for the past 13 years.
- In his most recent role as Managing Director of De Beers India, he successfully led the De Beers Forevermark business in India and the Middle East.
- Prior to his tenure at De Beers, Sachin has held notable senior positions at Lladro, Swatch Group, and Benetton.
- Somasundaram PR, the current CEO for India at the World Gold Council, will maintain his existing position and duties until the arrival of Jain, ensuring a seamless transition.
- Even after Jain assumes the role, Somasundaram will persist in his association with the World Gold Council, taking on an advisory role specifically focused on establishing a Self-Regulatory Organization (SRO), a crucial initiative for the Indian gold industry.

Q. Who has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of the World Gold Council? Sachin Jain















Thursday, 29 February 2024

PM Narendra Modi Inaugurates ISRO's Second Spaceport In Tamil Nadu

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) second spaceport in Kulasekarapattinam, Tamil Nadu.
- This ambitious project, costing Rs 950 crore, marks a pivotal moment in India's space exploration journey, promising to enhance the nation's satellite launch capabilities, particularly for small satellites.
- The new spaceport, sprawling over 2,233 acres in the villages of Padukkapathu, Pallakurichi, and Mathavankurichi in Kulasekarapattinam and Sathankulam taluks, is expected to be operational in two years.
- It will complement the existing spaceport in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh, and is strategically positioned to offer geographical advantages that promise fuel savings and more efficient satellite launches.
- The Tamil Nadu government has completed the land acquisition for this project, which comes at a time when the Centre has opened up the space sector to 100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).
- Q. Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone for the second spaceport of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) in ______, Tamil Nadu. Kulasekarapattinam















Uday Shankar to be VC of merged Reliance-Disney media business: Report

- Former Walt Disney executive Uday Shankar will be named as vice chairman of the board following a merger between the India media assets of Reliance Industries and Disney.
- Shankar is set to take a stake of around 9% in the new merged entity..
- Reliance and Disney each have a streaming service and 120 television channels between them and the deal is expected to strengthen Reliance's hold over India's \$28 billion media and entertainment market.
- The new entity is likely to have Nita Ambani, wife of Indian billionaire Mukesh Ambani, as chair of the board.

Reliance Industries Limited:

Owner: Mukesh Ambani

Founder: Dhirubhai Ambani

• President: Mukesh Ambani

Headquarters: Mumbai

• Founded: 1957

Q. Who will be named as the Vice Chairman of the Board following the merger between the Indian media assets of Reliance Industries and Disney? Uday Shankar



















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