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### **1. Appointment of Nidhu Saxena as MD and CEO of Bank of Maharashtra ( March 29, 2024 )**

Nidhu Saxena was appointed Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD and CEO) of Bank of Maharashtra by the Central Government.

#### **An Overview of the News**

- The appointment of Nidhu Saxena is effective from March 27, 2024, for a tenure of three years.
- Saxena replaces A S Rajeev, who has been selected as Vigilance Commissioner in the Central Vigilance Commission.
- The appointment is subject to further orders and remains valid for three years or until further instructions are issued.

#### **About Nidhu Saxena**

- Before this appointment, Saxena held the position of Executive Director at Union Bank of India, where he oversaw critical areas including Treasury, International Banking, Human Resources, and Audit.
- Saxena's banking career commenced at Bank of Baroda before he moved to UCO Bank, where he held various significant positions including Branch Head, Zonal Head, and Vertical Head.
- He has also served on the boards of Union Bank of India (UK) and Union Asset Management Company.

#### **Expectations for Bank of Maharashtra:**

- With his extensive corporate and banking experience, Saxena is expected to significantly contribute to the growth and success of Bank of Maharashtra.
- Bank of Maharashtra is a public sector bank with the Government of India holding an 86.46% stake as of September 30, 2023.

### **2. New Members take Oath in Lokpal of India ( March 28, 2024 )**

Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi assumed charge as the newest judicial member of the Lokpal on March 27, 2024.

#### **An Overview of the News**

- Lokpal Chairperson Justice AM Khanwilkar administered the oath to Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi.
- Pankaj Kumar and Ajay Tirkey took oath as new members of the Lokpal at the Lokpal Office in New Delhi on March 27, 2024.

- On March 26, the tenure of two judicial members, Justice PK Mohanty and Justice Abhilasha Kumari, ended.
- Additionally, on the same day, the tenure of three other members – DK Jain, Archana Ramasundaram and Mahendra Singh – expired.

**Introduction of New Members:**

- Justice Ritu Raj Awasthi, former Chairman of the 22nd Law Commission of India and former Chief Justice of the Karnataka High Court, plays the role of judicial member.
- Pankaj Kumar, a 1986 batch IAS officer of Gujarat cadre, previously served as the Chief Secretary of Gujarat.
- Ajay Tirkey, a 1987 batch IAS officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre, was the former Secretary of the Department of Land Resources, Government of India.

**Historical Background of Lokpal:**

- The concept of an ombudsman originated in Sweden in 1809 and gained global prominence with its adoption by New Zealand and Norway in 1962.
- In India, the idea of a Constitutional Lokpal was first proposed in Parliament in the early 1960s by Law Minister Ashok Kumar Sen.
- The terms "Lokpal" and "Lokayukta" were introduced by jurist LM Singhvi, and the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 was ultimately passed after advocacy by the Anna Hazare-led India Against Corruption Movement.
- The purpose of this Act was to establish the Lokpal at the Center and Lokayuktas in the states to investigate allegations of corruption against public officials.

**3. Bassirou Diomaye Faye wins in Senegal's Presidential Election ( March 28, 2024 )**

Faye, known as an anti-establishment figure, won the initial round with 54.28% of the vote.

**An Overview of the News**

- At 44, Faye is poised to become Africa's youngest democratically elected head of state.
- His victory marked the first time an opposition candidate had won in the first round since Senegal gained independence from France in 1960.
- Recognition of Faye's victory awaits confirmation from Senegal's Constitutional Council in the coming days.

**Defeat of the governing coalition candidate:**

- Faye won a decisive victory over the ruling coalition's candidate, former Prime Minister Amadou Ba, who won 35.79% of the vote.
- Aliou Mamadou Dia is in third place among 19 contenders with just 2.8% of the votes.

- Voter turnout stood at 61.30%, surpassing the 2012 figure but lower than the previous 2019 election.

**Departure from the status quo:**

- Faye, who was released from prison just 10 days before the election, advocates a departure from the current political landscape.
- He promised to restore national "sovereignty" and launch a program focused on "leftist Pan-Africanism", potentially indicating a significant restructuring of Senegal's institutions.

**About Senegal**

- Capital - Dakar
- Currency - West African CFA Franc
- Official language - French

**4. Professor Jayant Murthy honored with Asteroid name ( March 27, 2024 )**

The International Astronomical Union (IAU) recognized Indian scientist Professor Jayant Murthy by naming an asteroid after him.

**An Overview of the News****Asteroid (215884) Jayantamurthy**

- Originally known as 2005 EX296, this asteroid orbits the Sun between Mars and Jupiter every 3.3 years.
- Its new name, (215884) Jayanta Murthy, will always carry forward the rich legacy of the Indian scientist.

**Career and Contribution of Jayant Murthy**

- Professor Murthy served as the Acting Director of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) and currently holds the rank of Honorary Professor.
- His scholarly achievements in the interstellar medium, ultraviolet astronomy, and space missions have greatly advanced our understanding of the universe.

**Participation in NASA's New Horizons Mission**

- Professor Murthy played a key role in NASA's New Horizons science team and contributed to the observation of ultraviolet background radiation in the outer reaches of the Solar System.
- The New Horizons mission's historic flyby of Pluto in 2015 provided unprecedented insights into the dwarf planet and its satellites.

**Rare Honor and Legacy**

- Annapurni Subramaniam, the current director of the IIA, considers the asteroid naming "a very rare honor", linking Professor Murthy with respected predecessors in astronomical research.
- (215884) The naming of Jayanti Murthy symbolizes the outstanding contributions of Professor Murthy and serves as an inspiration for future scientists.

**5. Luis Montenegro Appointed as Prime Minister of Portugal ( March 27, 2024 )**

Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa announced the appointment of Luis Montenegro, leader of the Social Democratic Party (PSD), as the country's new prime minister.

**An Overview of the News**

- The decision followed political consultations on forming a new government, during which the president consulted with parties and coalitions that secured seats in the March 10 elections for the Assembly of the Republic.
- Montenegro's party, the Democratic Alliance (AD), emerged victorious in terms of seats, leading to his appointment as prime minister.

**Election Results and Parliamentary Composition**

- Montenegro's AD defeated the incumbent Socialist Party (PS) in the March 10 elections but secured only 80 seats in the 230-seat parliament, falling short of a majority.
- The Socialist Party won 78 seats in the elections.

**Commencement of the New Government**

- The new government, headed by Luis Montenegro, is scheduled to assume office on April 2.

**Montenegro's Political Journey**

- Luis Montenegro's political career began in the early 2000s when he joined the PSD.
- He swiftly climbed the party ranks and held various positions within the party over the years.
- In 2011, Montenegro was elected to the Portuguese Parliament as a representative for Aveiro, a city situated on the Atlantic Ocean coast.

**6. Eveready appoints Neeraj Chopra as New Brand Ambassador ( March 27, 2024 )**

Current Olympic gold medalist and globally top-ranked athlete in men's javelin throw Neeraj Chopra was introduced as the new brand ambassador of battery industry giant Eveready Industries India (EIL).

**An Overview of the News**

- This collaboration marks the launch of the Ultima Alkaline Battery series, reflecting Eveready's dedication to excellence and innovation.
- The Ultima series targets the Indian youth market, providing durable and cost-effective solutions to high-drain appliances.

**Performance and Endurance Incorporation**

- Neeraj Chopra's remarkable journey reflects the values of Ultima Alkaline batteries, providing 400% more power for longer-lasting performance.
- Both the Chopra and the Altima epitomize the virtues of performance, power, endurance and reliability.

**Innovative TurboLock Technology**

- The Ultima Alkaline battery series features TurboLock technology, meeting emerging consumer needs with advanced performance.
- Eveready aims to provide cutting-edge energy solutions in parallel to Chopra's journey of excellence and growth.

**7. Virat Kohli created history by becoming the first Indian to score 12,000 T20 runs ( March 27, 2024 )**

Indian cricket captain Virat Kohli etched his name in history by becoming the first Indian cricketer to score 12,000 runs in the T20 format.

**An Overview of the News**

- Kohli achieved the remarkable feat during the opening match of the 2024 Indian Premier League (IPL) between Chennai Super Kings (CSK) and Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) at the MA Chidambaram Stadium.
- Kohli holds many records in the IPL, including the most runs with 7,284 runs in 239 matches and 230 innings.
- His IPL batting average is 37.24, with a strike rate of 130.02.
- Kohli's highest individual score in the IPL is 113, scoring seven centuries and 50 half-centuries in the tournament.

**Details of Kohli's T20 runs**

- Kohli's 12,000 runs include his scores for RCB in the IPL and the now-defunct Champions League, for Delhi in domestic Twenty-over cricket, and for India in T20 Internationals.
- Rohit Sharma is the second-highest run-scorer in T20 cricket for India with a total of 11,156 runs.

**Global T20 Run-Scorer**

- The list of highest T20 run scorers is topped by former West Indies opener Chris Gayle, former Pakistan captain Shoaib Malik and West Indies player Kieron Pollard.

**T20I Contribution**

- Kohli has scored 4037 runs in T20 Internationals representing India, including one century.

**8. Indian diplomat Abhay Thakur appointed as the next envoy to Myanmar ( March 27, 2024 )**

Senior Indian diplomat Abhay Thakur has been appointed the next Ambassador to Myanmar and the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced the appointment on March 26.

**An Overview of the News**

- Thakur, a 1992-batch officer of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS), is currently serving as an Officer on Special Duty in the Ministry of External Affairs.
- He previously held the position of **Sous-Sherpa** (deputy representative) for the G20 process during India's chairmanship.
- Thakur's appointment underlines India's diplomatic engagement with Myanmar.

**Important times for India-Myanmar relations:**

- Timing of appointment: Given the current circumstances, Thakur's selection as India's envoy to Myanmar is significant.
- Political unrest: Mass violent protests are taking place in Myanmar following the military coup on February 1, 2021, advocating for the restoration of democracy.
- India's stand: India advocates restoring "inclusive federal democracy" in Myanmar through dialogue and constructive engagement among all stakeholders.

**Strategic Neighborhood Bond:**

- Geographical proximity: Myanmar shares a 1,640-km-long border with several northeastern Indian states, including Nagaland and Manipur.
- Strategic Importance: Myanmar holds strategic importance as one of the neighboring countries of India.

**Engagement in Global Diplomacy:**

- Participation: Thakur participated in the G20 Development Working Group meeting in Brasilia as an Officer on Special Duty (G20).

**9. Simon Harris: Ireland's Youngest Prime Minister ( March 26, 2024 )**

37 year old Simon Harris is going to become the youngest Prime Minister of Ireland.

**An Overview of the News**

- He came into limelight after the unexpected demise of Leo Varadkar.
- Harris, a prominent figure in Irish politics, emerged as the only candidate to be the next Prime Minister of Ireland.
- At 37, he is set to make history as Ireland's youngest Prime Minister.

**Simon Harris's Political and Ministerial Experience:**

- A member of Fine Gael, Harris has been actively involved in politics since his youth, and has risen through the ranks of the party's youth organisation.
- Despite not completing her undergraduate degree, she increasingly demonstrated her commitment to politics, holding various positions within Fine Gael.
- Notably, Harris held the position of Health Minister of Ireland from 2016 to mid-2020, and played a key role in managing the country's response to the COVID-19 pandemic during that period.
- Currently serving as Minister for Further and Higher Education, her time in these ministerial roles has honed her leadership skills and policy acumen.

**Strategic Approach and Social Media Presence:**

- With 92,000 followers and 1.8 million likes, Harris' skillful use of TikTok has attracted attention.
- It serves as a platform to promote their political agenda and connect with voters.
- Harris aims to rejuvenate Fine Gael's appeal by taking advantage of his youth and crisis management skills.
- His campaign will emphasize key policy priorities while addressing internal concerns of the party.

**10. Maryam Mammen Mathew assumes role of DNPA Chairperson ( March 26, 2024 )**

Maryam Mammen Mathew has been appointed as the Chairperson of DNPA for a two-year term starting from April 1, 2024.

**An Overview of the News**

- Mariam Mammen Mathew, who currently serves as CEO of Manorama Online, will take over the role of Digital News Publishers Association (DNPA) Chairperson in place of Tanmay Maheshwari, managing director of Amar Ujala.

**New leadership and roles:**

- Chairperson: Mariam Mammen Mathew, CEO, Manorama Online, will take over as DNPA Chairperson in place of Tanmay Maheshwari.
- Vice Chairman: Puneet Gupta, COO of Times Internet, was appointed as the new Vice Chairman.
- Continuity: Punit Jain, CEO of Digital HT Media, continues in the role of treasurer.

**Role and Members of DNPA:**

- Umbrella Organization: DNPA serves as an important umbrella organization covering various digital media entities including print and broadcast.
- Member Organizations: DNPA includes 18 leading media organizations like Dainik Jagran, Dainik Bhaskar, The Indian Express.
- Efforts: DNPA's objectives include democratizing the digital news landscape and supporting regulatory efforts to ensure fairness in the operation of major technology platforms in India.