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1. Deby Sworn in as Chad's President, Names Allamaye Halina as PM (May 25, 2024)

Mahamat Idriss Deby was sworn in as President of Chad, succeeding his late father after serving three years as an interim leader under military rule.

An Overview of the News

- Deby won the presidential election on **May 6, 2024**, and will serve a **five-year term**.
- President Deby has appointed Allamaye Halina, Chad's former ambassador to China and former director general of state protocol, as the new Prime Minister of Chad.
- Allamaye Halina replaces opposition leader Succes Masra, who **resigned on May 22, 2024**.
- Succes Masra was **appointed Prime Minister in January 2024**.

About Chad

- Chad, officially known as the Republic of Chad, is an independent state.
- It is located at the crossroads of North and Central Africa.
 - Capital:- **N'Djamena**
 - Official languages:- **French, Arabic**
 - Currency:- **Central African CFA franc**

2. DD Kisan launches AI anchors Krish and Bhumi (May 25, 2024)

DD Kisan, the government TV channel, is set to introduce two AI anchors, AI Krish and AI Bhoomi.

An Overview of the News

- The Agriculture Ministry announced the channel's revamp, scheduled for May 26th, promising a fresh presentation catering to India's farming community.
- These AI anchors are equipped to communicate in fifty languages and deliver news tirelessly, **24/7, 365 days a year**.
- Viewers across all states of India will have access to these AI anchors, who will disseminate vital information on agricultural research, global trends, market updates from Krishi Mandis, weather forecasts, and details about government schemes.
- The introduction of AI anchors signifies a new era for DD Kisan, enhancing its ability to educate and inform farmers across the nation.

DD Kisan:

- It is an agriculture television channel, was established by the Government of India and falls under the ownership of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- **Launched on May 26, 2015, DD Kisan** serves as the primary channel under the Doordarshan umbrella, focusing solely on agricultural content.
- This state-owned channel aims **to cater specifically to the needs and interests of India's agricultural community, providing valuable information and resources.**

About Doordarshan (DD)

- It is India's state-owned public television broadcaster.
- Established by the Government of India on **September 15, 1959.**
- Owned by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and operated under Prasar Bharati.
- One of India's largest broadcasting organizations with extensive studio and transmitter infrastructure.
- Provides television, radio, online, and mobile services across metropolitan and regional India as well as overseas.
- Broadcasts on digital terrestrial transmitters, ensuring wide coverage.

3. Nepal marks the 2568th Buddha Jayanti and Lumbini Day Celebrations (May 24, 2024)

The 2568th Buddha Jayanti and Lumbini Day was celebrated in Nepal on April 23 and devotees gathered at the Maya Devi Temple in Lumbini, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, to celebrate the occasion.

An Overview of the News

- Monks from India, Nepal, and China led ceremonies, chanting hymns and making offerings in the sacred garden of the Maya Devi Temple.
- The atmosphere was filled with reverence as devotees participated in rituals to commemorate Buddha Jayanti.
- A peace procession was organized in the morning, drawing participants from various social groups including monks, civilians, and school children from different institutions.
- The procession aimed to promote peace and harmony, echoing the teachings of Buddha.

International Representation:

- Ambassadors from countries like India, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam, along with representatives from international organizations like BIMSTEC, attended a program held at the Lumbini Conference Hall.

Government's Commitment:

- Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' affirmed the government's dedication to fostering Buddha's teachings and promoting Lumbini as a global hub for peace and spiritual tourism.
- Nepal's government is actively engaged in initiatives to develop Lumbini as a prominent religious destination, aiming to attract millions of Buddhist pilgrims and tourists worldwide.

About Nepal

- Capital:- **Kathmandu**
- Currency:- **Nepalese Rupee**
- Official language:- **Nepali**
- President:- **Ram Chandra Poudel**
- Prime Minister:- **Pushpa Kamal Dahal**

4. Spain Joins International Solar Alliance as 99th Member (May 23, 2024)

Spain becomes the 99th member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA), marking its commitment to solar energy initiatives.

An Overview of the News

- Spain handed over the International Solar Alliance Instrument of Ratification during a meeting in New Delhi.
- The ratification was completed by Ambassador José María Ridao Domínguez of Spain and the Head of Depository, Joint Secretary Abhishek Singh of the External Affairs Ministry.

ISA's Objectives:

- The International Solar Alliance (ISA) serves as a collaborative platform to boost the deployment of solar energy technologies.
- Its primary goals include enhancing energy access, ensuring energy security, and driving energy transition in member countries.

Origin of ISA:

- The ISA originated as a joint initiative by India and France to combat climate change by promoting solar energy solutions.
- It was conceptualized during the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Paris in 2015.

About Spain

- King - Felipe VI of Spain
- Prime Minister - Pedro Sánchez
- Capital - Madrid
- Official language - Spanish

5. Cabinet approves India AI mission with Rs 10,372 crore funding (May 22, 2024)

The Cabinet approved the India AI Mission with a budget outlay of Rs 10,372 crore for five years.

An Overview of the News

- This significant step is aimed at fostering the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in India.

The Prime Minister's Vision:

- The announcement resonates with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's emphasis on AI development in India.
- India aims to become a substantial contributor in the global AI landscape under his leadership.

Infrastructure Development:

- A large computing infrastructure will be established, comprising over 10,000 GPUs.
- This infrastructure will provide the necessary computational power for AI research and development.

Access to Stakeholders:

- Startups, academia, researchers, and industry players will have access to the AI supercomputing infrastructure.
- This inclusivity aims to cultivate an AI ecosystem with diverse stakeholders contributing to innovation.

National Data Management Officer:

- A National Data Management Officer will be appointed under the mission.
- Their role will involve coordinating with government departments to enhance data quality and availability for AI development.

Visionary Goals:

- The India AI Mission is aligned with the vision of "Making AI in India" and "Making AI Work for India."
- It aims to demonstrate the positive societal impacts of advanced technology and enhance India's global competitiveness in AI.

6. Lawrence Wong Shyun Tsai Becomes Fourth Prime Minister of Singapore (May 17, 2024)

Lawrence Wong Shyun Tsai, a US-trained economist and former civil servant, was sworn in as Singapore's fourth Prime Minister on May 15, 2024.

An Overview of the News

- **Oath of Office:** The oath was administered by the President of Singapore, Tharman Shanmugaratnam.
- **Predecessor:** Wong succeeded Lee Hsien Loong, who served as Prime Minister from 2004 to 2024.
- **Leadership Role:** Wong will lead the fourth generation People's Action Party (PAP) government, known as the 4G government, as both Prime Minister and Finance Minister.
- **Term Duration:** He is expected to hold the post until the general election, which is set to be held by November 2025.

About Lawrence Wong

- **Political Career:** Wong was first elected as a Member of Parliament (MP) in 2011.
- **Previous Positions:**
 - Deputy Prime Minister
 - Minister in the Ministry of Culture, Community, and Youth
 - Minister in the Ministry of National Development
 - Minister in the Ministry of Education
- **Other Roles:**
 - Deputy Chief Executive in the Energy Market Authority
 - Chairman of the Monetary Authority of Singapore
 - Co-chaired the Multi-Ministry Taskforce overseeing the government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

About Singapore

- President - **Tharman Shanmugaratnam**

- Prime Minister - Lawrence Wong
- Capital - Singapore

7. India, Iran Sign 10-Year Deal for Shahid Beheshti Port Terminal (May 15, 2024)

On May 13, 2024, India and Iran sealed a decade-long deal to manage the Shahid Beheshti Port Terminal at Chabahar Port, Iran, promoting regional connectivity and trade relations.

An Overview of the News

- The agreement was inked between India Ports Global Limited (IPGL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of India Ports Global Chabahar Free Zone (IPGCFZ), and the Port and Maritime Organisation (PMO) of Iran.
- Notable figures present during the signing were Sarbananda Sonowal, Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways of the Government of India (GoI), and Mehrdad Bazrpash, Minister of Roads and Urban Development of Iran.
- Under the terms, IPGL is set to invest around USD 120 million to upgrade the port facilities.
- Additionally, India has extended a credit line of USD 250 million for joint ventures aimed at bolstering infrastructure associated with Chabahar.

Background

- In May 2015, India and Iran inked an inter-Governmental memorandum of understanding (MoU) to facilitate the development of the Chabahar port.
- The contract for the port's development was finalized in May 2016, coinciding with the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Iran.
- Under a tripartite agreement known as the Chabahar Agreement, signed in May 2016 among India, Iran, and Afghanistan, India undertook the development of the Shahid Beheshti terminal as part of its commitment to the project.

Chabahar Port

- Chabahar Port, situated in the Sistan-Baluchistan province of South Eastern Iran, comprises two major ports: Shahid Kalantari and Shahid Beheshti.
- The project is a joint initiative between India and Iran, designed to facilitate trade by serving as a crucial transit port for Afghanistan and landlocked Central Asian nations.
- India views Chabahar Port as strategically significant, offering a shorter and more accessible trade route that bypasses Pakistan, easing commerce with Central Asian countries.
- Chabahar Port is integral to the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) project, a multi-modal transportation initiative spanning 7,200 kilometers. It aims to streamline freight movement between India, Iran, Afghanistan, Russia, Central Asia, and Europe.

About Iran:

- President: Ebrahim Raisi
- Capital: Tehran
- Currency: Iranian Rial

8. Climeworks launches world's largest DAC+S plant "Mammoth" in Iceland (May 10, 2024)

On May 8th, 2024, Climeworks AG, a Swiss startup, inaugurated Mammoth, the largest operational Direct Air Capture and Storage (DAC + S) facility globally, located in Iceland.

An Overview of the News

- Mammoth's purpose is to extract carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the atmosphere and sequester it underground in rock formations.
- Mammoth can capture up to 36,000 tons of CO₂ annually, representing a substantial advancement in carbon capture technology.

Regarding Mammoth:**Scale and Progress**

- The second DAC + S facility by Climeworks, Mammoth, is ten times larger than its predecessor, Orca, established in Iceland in 2021.
- Mammoth's modular design allows for scalable growth and is set to be completed by the end of 2024.

Infrastructure

- Comprising a total of 72 collector containers, with 12 already operational on-site, indicating its phased deployment strategy.

Cost Reduction Projections

- Mammoth aims to drive down the cost of CO₂ removal significantly:
- Projections target USD 400 to 600 per ton by 2030.
- A further reduction to USD 200 to 350 per ton is anticipated by 2040.

Renewable Energy Integration

- Mammoth harnesses geothermal energy as its primary renewable energy source, facilitating the low-temperature heat required for the air capture process.

Carbon Transformation Process

- Captured CO2 is transported underground, where it undergoes a natural process of reacting with basaltic rocks, ultimately transforming into stone.

Important Points:

- Co-Chief Executive Officers of Climeworks AG: Jan Wurzbacher and Christoph Gebald.
- Headquarters: Zurich, Switzerland.
- Iceland's capital: Reykjavik.
- Prime Minister of Iceland: Bjarni Benediktsson.

9. John Swinney Elected 7th First Minister of Scotland by Scottish Parliament (May 9, 2024)

On May 7, 2024, John Ramsay Swinney, leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP), was elected as the 7th First Minister of Scotland by the Scottish Parliament.

An Overview of the News

- John Swinney replaces Hamza Haroon Yusuf, who officially resigned from the position on May 7, 2024.
- Swinney's formal appointment will be granted through a Royal Warrant from His Majesty King Charles III of the United Kingdom (UK).
- John Swinney's nomination for First Minister was the result of a vote within the Scottish Parliament.
- Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs) voted 64 to 57 in favor of selecting John Swinney as First Minister out of a total of 4 nominees, with seven abstentions.

About John Swinney

Background:

- John Swinney, aged 60, was born on April 13, 1964, in Edinburgh, Scotland. He joined the Scottish National Party (SNP) in 1979.

Political Career:

- In 1997, Swinney was elected as the Westminster Member of Parliament (MP) for North Tayside.
- Transitioning to Scottish politics, he became the Member of the Scottish Parliament (MSP) for Tayside North in 1999.
- Swinney held the position of deputy leader of the SNP from 1998 to 2000, and subsequently served as party leader from 2000 to 2004.

Government Positions:

- From 2011 to 2014, Swinney served as the Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Employment, and Sustainable Growth.
- He assumed the role of Deputy First Minister from 2014 to 2023, achieving the distinction of being the longest-serving Deputy First Minister in the history of UK devolution.
- In addition to his deputy leadership, Swinney held various cabinet positions:
 - Cabinet Secretary for Finance, Constitution, and Economy from 2014 to 2016.
 - Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills from 2016 to 2021.
 - Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery from 2021 to 2023.

About Scotland

- First Minister- John Ramsay Swinney
- Capital - Edinburgh
- Currency - Pound sterling
- Official languages - Scots, Scottish Gaelic, English, British Sign Language
- National animal - Unicorn
- National flower - Thistle

10. Sweden becomes 38th country to sign NASA's "Artemis Accords" (April 22, 2024)

On April 16, 2024, Sweden officially became the 38th nation to sign NASA's "Artemis Accords," joining other countries in establishing guidelines for peaceful space exploration.

An Overview of the News

- The agreement was signed by Mats Persson, Minister for Education of Sweden, and Erik D. Ramanathan, the United States Ambassador to Sweden, in Stockholm.

Switzerland's Entry into Artemis Accords

- Switzerland preceded Sweden, becoming the 37th country to sign the Artemis Accords on April 15, 2024.
- Guy Parmelin, Swiss Federal Councillor and Head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education, signed the accords on behalf of Switzerland.
- The signing ceremony took place at NASA headquarters in Washington D.C., with Bill Nelson, NASA administrator, present.

List of signatories to the Artemis Accord as of April 20, 2024:

- New Zealand, Nigeria, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Czech Republic, Ecuador, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, Spain, Switzerland, Uruguay, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, and Sweden.

Artemis Accords Overview

- Initiation: Launched jointly by NASA and the **US Department of State in 2020.**
- Signatories: Eight founding countries signed on **October 13, 2020.**
- Nature: **Non-binding agreement** with no financial commitments.
- Purpose: Establish a framework for implementing key obligations from the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, promoting responsible and sustainable space exploration.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

- It is an autonomous body under the **United States federal government.**
- Its primary duties **include overseeing the civilian space program.**
- Additionally, NASA conducts research in the fields of aeronautics and space.
- Its mandate includes **exploration beyond Earth's atmosphere.**
- The agency is responsible for advancing scientific knowledge and technological innovation in space exploration and related fields.
 - Established - **29 July 1958**
 - Founder - **Dwight D. Eisenhower**
 - Headquarters: **Washington, D.C., United States**