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International & National News

Centre, Assam sign a peace pact with ULFA faction



Context

- The Union Home Ministry and the Assam government signed a memorandum of settlement with the pro-talks faction of the **United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA)**.
- The Group's cadres have agreed to **surrender arms, vacate their camps, and engage in a peaceful democratic process.**

About ULFA

- The United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) is an **armed separatist organization** operating in the Northeast Indian state of Assam.
- It **seeks to establish an independent sovereign nation-state of Assam** for the indigenous Assamese people through an armed struggle in the Assam conflict.
- The Government of **India banned the organization in 1990** citing it as a terrorist organization

11th century Jain sculptures discovered in Mysuru district



Context

- Three 11th-century Jain sculptures were discovered at **Varuna village in Mysuru district.**
- The entire belt comprising **Varuna, Varakodu and Vajamangala** had been thriving Jain centres in the past.

About Jainism

- Jainism is an ancient religion that is rooted in the philosophy that **teaches the way to liberation and a path to spiritual purity** and enlightenment through disciplined nonviolence to all living creatures.
- Jainism **came to prominence in the 6th century B.C.** when Lord Mahavira propagated the religion.
- There were 24 great teachers, the last of whom was **Lord Mahavira**

Indian Navy unveils new epaulettes for admirals



Context

- The Navy unveiled the **new design of epaulettes for admirals**, with the octagon in the new design drawn from the naval ensign and inspired by **rajmudra of Chhatrapati Shivaji.**
- The new design is a **“true reflection of our rich maritime heritage”** and reiterates the **“resolve to do away with Ghulami ki Maansikta”.**
- The new epaulettes have the golden Navy button top, followed by an octagon, an Indian sword and a telescope crossed, followed by stars indicating the ranks.



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XPoSat



Context

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) will launch the **PSLV-C58 X-ray Polarimeter Satellite (XPoSat)** mission.

Key points

- XPoSat is the first dedicated scientific satellite from ISRO to carry out research in space-based polarisation measurements of X-ray emission from celestial sources.
- It carries two payloads — **POLIX (Polarimeter Instrument in X-rays)** and **XSPECT (X-ray Spectroscopy and Timing)**.
- POLIX has been developed by the **Raman Research Institute** and XSPECT is by the **Space Astronomy Group of URSC, Bengaluru**.

Lithium deal with Argentina



Context

- The Mines Ministry, through the state-owned **Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (KABIL)**, has entered into a draft exploration and development agreement with **Argentinan miner CAMYEN** for possible acquisition and development of five-odd lithium blocks.
- The company has also entered into a non-disclosure agreement with **Chilean miner ENAMI** for 'possible exploration, extraction, processing and commercialization' of the mineral

Did you know?

- Latin American nations, primarily **Chile and Argentina**, account for **30–35% of the world's supplies**.
- Chile, with 11% of the world's lithium reserves, supplies 26% of the requirements; while Argentina with nearly a fifth of the global reserves supplies about 6%.
- **Australia is among the other large producers globally**.

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