

# **The Indian Express**

## **Front Page**

**As protests rage, Services ready to start Agnipath recruitment (Page no. 1)  
(GS Paper 3, Defence)**

As authorities grappled with protests against the short-term Agnipath recruitment scheme for the armed forces, the three services announced Friday that they were all set to start the recruitment process.

The Indian Army said a notification will be issued in the next two days while the Indian Air Force said the recruitment process will start June 24. The Indian Navy too said the process will begin very soon.

The announcements came a day after the government announced a one-time age relaxation for candidates this year, raising the upper age limit from 21 to 23 years.

Welcoming the age relaxation decision, Army chief General Manoj Pande said the notification for the recruitment process will be issued in two days and training will begin by December.

## **Express Network**

**China blocks move to list LeT deputy chief Abdul Makki as global terrorist (Page no. 7)  
(GS Paper 2, International Relation)**

China has put on “technical hold” the proposal to list Lashkar-e-Toiba’s (LeT) deputy chief Abdul Rehman Makki as a global terrorist. India and the US had jointly proposed to list Makki at the United Nations.

Sources said India and the US jointly proposed on June 1, 2022 to list Pakistan-based terrorist Abdul Rehman Makki under the UN Security Council’s Al Qaeda (Dae’sh) and ISIL Sanctions Committee, also known as the UNSC 1267 Committee.

Both India and the US have already listed Makki as a terrorist under their domestic laws. Abdul Rehman Makki is the deputy amir/chief and head of the political affairs of the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT)/Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD), which itself is a UN-proscribed terrorist entity.

**PM to launch 2 schemes for pregnant, lactating women today in Gujarat (Page no. 7)  
(GS Paper 2, Polity and Governance)**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Saturday launch in Vadodara two flagship programmes of the Gujarat government under its Integrated Child Development Services, Poshan Abhiyan, which will be focused on rolling out additional nutrition to pregnant women and lactating mothers.

The Mukhyamantri Matrushakti Yojana, which will cover 7 lakh women, is Gujarat government’s first scheme aimed at dealing with dietary deficiency within the first 1,000 days of the conception of a child (from pregnancy to 2 years), considered the crucial first window to check malnutrition.

The scheme will entail distribution of 2 kg chickpeas, 1 kg toor daal and 1 litre fortified ground nut oil.

The entire scheme will be electronically monitored. Packets will have bar codes which will be scanned and the scheme is OTP based.

This means the beneficiary will receive OTPs confirming that they have received these packages, so that we know that the intended beneficiary is actually receiving the ration.

## **Editorial Page**

**The President for our time (Page no. 10)  
(GS Paper 2, Indian Constitution)**

A new president will take over from Ram Nath Kovind on July 25. Sharad Pawar’s “no” to becoming the Opposition’s consensus candidate — he has said he wants to remain in active politics — is a sign that the ruling side is confident of getting its candidate through. Pawar was best placed to garner the support of non-BJP parties, given his cross-party relationships over his long political career spanning half a century.

But having won every election he has contested, he may not want to risk losing one now. The NDA commands 48 per cent of the electoral college vote.

But the remaining 52 per cent is a divided house. Five non-BJP parties were absent at the June 15 Opposition meeting called by Mamata Banerjee to evolve a consensus.

They were Biju Janata Dal, Telangana Rashtra Samithi, YSR Congress, Shiromani Akali Dal and Aam Aadmi Party — these parties are obviously keeping their options open.

## **Explained**

### **Monsoon so far: heavy rainfall in parts of Northeast, hardly any elsewhere (Page no. 13)**

#### **(GS Paper 1, Indian Geography)**

The southwest monsoon has started inconsistently in different parts of the country, with rain eluding many states but lashing parts of other states. The all-India rainfall was 18% short of normal.

But while a majority of India awaits rain, Assam and Meghalaya have been submerged in record rainfall of 1,000mm in the last 24 hours.

Despite the monsoon's early arrival on May 29 over Kerala, rainfall has been abysmally poor over most regions where the onset has been declared.

The rainfall deficiency for the season until June 17 is as high as 60% in Kerala and Maharashtra. Experts at the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that the wind circulation pattern is yet to fully get established.

This, along with absence of favourable systems, have kept the monsoon inactive so far. Senior Met officials noted that the monsoon onset has largely been driven by convective activities — thunder, lightning and localised rainfall, mainly realised during afternoon hours.

### **Inter State Council (Page no. 13)**

#### **(GS Paper 2, Polity and Governance)**

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday (June 16), asking that at least three meetings of the Inter-State Council should be held every year to “strengthen the spirit of cooperative federalism”.

Stalin also suggested that bills of national importance should be placed before the Council before being tabled in Parliament.

He said this was because there is no “effective and interactive communication” between the states and the Centre on issues of common interest.

It is a mechanism that was constituted “to support Centre-State and Inter-State coordination and cooperation in India”.

The Inter-State Council was established under Article 263 of the Constitution, which states that the President may constitute such a body if a need is felt for it.

The Council is basically meant to serve as a forum for discussions among various governments.

## **Economy**

### **RBI bats for CBDC, regulation of fintechs, BNPL (Page no. 15)**

#### **(GS Paper 3, Economy)**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has unveiled the Payments Vision 2025 document which proposes a host of innovative payment systems and regulation of BigTechs, fintechs, buy-now-pay-later (BNPL) systems, and introduction of a central bank digital currency (CBDC), among others.

The Payments Vision 2025 promises to further elevate our payment systems towards a realm of empowering users with affordable payment options accessible anytime and anywhere with convenience.

The RBI document has proposed enabling of geotagging of digital payment infrastructure and transactions and revisiting guidelines for prepaid payment instruments (PPIs), including closed system PPIs.

It also proposed a framework for regulation of all significant intermediaries in payments ecosystem and link credit cards and credit components of banking products to UPI.

Other proposals include bringing in enhancements to Cheque Truncation System (CTS), including One Nation One Grid clearing and settlement perspective, and creating payment system for processing online merchant payments using internet and mobile banking. It also proposed regulation of BigTechs and FinTechs in the payments space.