

DAILY PT POINTERS

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The Hindu-Defense(GSIII)-Page 1

New govt. should review Agnipath scheme: JD(U)

Remove shortcomings of the scheme, says the party; LJP (Ram Vilas) chief Chirag Paswan says it should be looked into at the 'appropriate' time; NDA meeting today; Modi to take oath on June 9

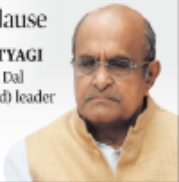
Nistula Hebbar
Sobhana K. Nair
NEW DELHI

Amid meetings being held by the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) partners to form a government, two allies of the BJP said on Thursday that the new government should review the Agnipath scheme for short-term recruitments to the armed forces.

Janata Dal(U) leader K.C. Tyagi told *The Hindu* that "there is anger among certain sections on the Agnipath scheme. Our party wants those shortcomings removed." He said Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had not refused a review when asked about the scheme during the polls. "The scheme should be reviewed clause by clause," he said.

There is anger among certain sections on the Agnipath recruitment scheme.. it should be reviewed clause by clause

K.C. TYAGI
Janata Dal
(United) leader



Mr. Tyagi also said that on the issue of a caste census already undertaken by the Bihar government led by the JD(U) last year, "there is no party that can now refuse to conduct a caste survey. Bihar has shown the path. Prime Minister [Narendra] Modi too didn't oppose it when an all-party delegation met

If they [parties] believe that a scheme has not worked for the country, they can always discuss it. Either you convince me, or I will convince you, that is how we will go ahead

CHIRAG PASWAN
Lok Janshakti Party
(Ram Vilas) chief



him. Caste-based census is the call of the hour. We will pursue it."

'No preconditions'

Mr. Tyagi said his party had no preconditions in forming the government.

Another ally in the NDA, Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) chief Chirag Paswan, also said the Agnipath

scheme should be reviewed at the appropriate time. "It is too early to comment on issues like this. Every party has its own agenda and concerns, and they have equal right to voice them. Ultimately our goal is the same – to make India a developed nation. If they believe that there is a scheme that has not necessarily worked for the country, they can always discuss it. Either you convince me, or I will convince you, that is how we will go ahead," he said.

The NDA's parliamentary party meeting will be held on Friday morning and Chief Ministers of the BJP-ruled States and all MPs-elect will be present.

Mr. Modi will be taking the oath of office on June 9.

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- The Government had launched Agnipath scheme on June 15, 2022 to recruit both male and female aspirants into 'below the officer's rank' cadre of the three services for a period of four years as Agniveers.
 - After this period, 25 percent of the recruits are retained as full-time soldiers, while the rest are released with a one-time financial package.
- Candidates between the age group of 17.5 to 21 years are eligible to apply for the scheme.

The Hindu-Social Issues(GSI)Page 6

NHRC seeks report on 'sale of girls' as part of *Nata Pratha*

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) issued notice on Thursday to the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development and the States of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Gujarat over a practice known as *Nata Pratha*. The girls in some communities of these States are sold either on stamp paper or otherwise in the name of illegal or child marriage, mostly by their own families.

Given the immoral consequences of *Nata Pratha* on women and minor girls, the Commission has called for its eradication and abolition, says a message issued by the rights body.

The States have been directed to submit a report on measures taken or proposed to be taken in this regard within eight weeks.

The Commission's directions has come following its intervention in a complaint dated July 15, 2020, by the father of a minor girl who claimed that the child was allegedly kidnapped from Rajasthan's Salangrah area, in district Pratapgarh. Her body was found in Dampur, in the district of Banswara. "The Commission through its Investigation Division conducted a spot inquiry. It was found that the father himself sold her as part of a marriage deal to a man for ₹2.5 lacs. As part of the *Nata Pratha* deal signed by their families and with-



The move follows NHRC's intervention in a complaint by the father of a minor girl.

nessed by villagers on July 11, 2019, the groom paid ₹60,000 and the remaining amount was to be paid by January 10, 2020," the NHRC stated.

The commission further noted that when the groom failed to pay the remaining amount within the stipulated time, the father brought his daughter back and fixed her 'Nata' with another man for ₹32,000. The girl objected to this and went to live with her earlier husband at Gagarwa. She also complained to the Banswara SP, alleging that her father was an alcoholic and had made several attempts to fix her 'Nata' against her will with many boys to earn money and that he had also threatened to kill her. The police failed to take any action and she was found dead on June 16, 2020.

It suggested that individuals involved in forcing women into *Nata Pratha* must be prosecuted under laws relating to human trafficking and prosecuted under POCSO Act.

- The NHRC has expressed serious concern over the social practice of *Nata Pratha*, where girls are sold by their family members under the guise of marriage in parts of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Gujarat

The Hindu : _GS 2-IR-Page 13

'India-Norway cooperation to witness manifold increase'

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Norwegian businesses are showing a lot of interest in India and a manifold increase in cooperation between the two countries is expected in the next 10 years, May-Elin Stener, Ambassador of Norway to India, said on Thursday.

In an interaction with journalists of *The Hindu* in Chennai, while responding to a question on the role of Norway in the recently signed trade pact between India and the four-nation European Free Trade Association (EFTA) bloc, Ms. Stener said, "Norwegian businesses are showing a lot of interest here because India is the fifth-largest and fastest-growing economy in the world. The treaty has immense importance because the Western businesses also feel secure and can now rely on this frame-



May-Elin Stener

work for them to operate within."

She said Norway will contribute a lot in terms of promoting investments in India. "EFTA's [pact with India] is the first trade treaty with an investment chapter. We have committed to promoting investments in India in the coming years. Altogether, we [EFTA countries] wanted to create a million jobs and Norway will contribute a considerable part of that. We will also work on strengthening relations between the governments,

including with the State governments in India, and business-to-business and people-to-people."

Further, the Ambassador said Norway is keen on three sectors – renewable energy, maritime and circular economy. A conference on marine environment and circular economy in Chennai has been scheduled on Friday, which will focus on shores, rivers and other ecosystems and how to preserve the environment, she said. The conference will bring together diverse stakeholders to take forward environmental issues.

Ms. Stener added Norway is set to host the third India-Nordic Summit by the end of this year in its capital Oslo. "... The Third Summit was scheduled accordingly by taking into consideration the elections in India and we are looking forward to it."

Norwegian businesses are showing a lot of interest because India is the fifth-largest and fastest-growing economy in the world, and the recently signed trade pact between India and EFTA countries provides a framework for companies to operate

Norway will contribute a lot in terms of promoting investments in India. Norway is keen on three sectors - renewable energy, maritime and circular economy

Do you know ?

India and Norway established bilateral relations in February 1947. Both countries have been enjoying a cordial and friendly relationship since then.

India signed an Agreement on Science and Technology with Norway in 2006 for promotion of cooperation in the field of S&T.

There has been growth in economic and commercial relations between India and Norway in recent years, especially in areas such as oil and gas, shipping and maritime industries, renewable energy, offshore projects and service sectors

HEADLINES OF THE DAY



The Hindu- GS 2 –Health (Page 16)

'First fatal human case of H5N2 bird flu identified'

Agence France-Presse
GENEVA

The World Health Organization said on Wednesday a person in Mexico had died in the first confirmed human case globally of infection with the H5N2 variant of bird flu.

The patient, who died on April 24 after developing fever, shortness of breath, diarrhoea, and nausea, had "no history of exposure to poultry or other animals", and "multiple underlying medical condi-

The World Health Organization said on Wednesday a person in Mexico had died in the first confirmed human case globally of infection with the H5N2 variant of bird flu.

- Avian influenza or bird flu refers to the disease caused by infection with avian (bird) influenza (flu) Type A viruses. These viruses naturally spread among wild aquatic birds worldwide and can infect domestic poultry and other bird and animal species.

Mexico

It is located in the southern part of North America.

It borders the United States to the north, Guatemala and Belize to the southeast, the Pacific Ocean to the west, and the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Sea to the east.

Mexico shares its maritime borders with Cuba and Honduras.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY



The Hindu –Health (GSII)/S&T(GSIII)-Page 22

Major cause of inflammatory bowel disease discovered

Asian News International

Researchers have identified a new biochemical pathway that is a major cause of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) and related disorders that can be addressed with existing medications.

An autoimmune disease, such as IBD, which encompasses Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis, presently affects approximately 5% of the world's population and one in every 10 people in the United Kingdom. These diseases are also becoming increasingly widespread,

Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) is a term for two conditions (Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis) that are characterized by chronic inflammation of the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. Prolonged inflammation results in damage to the GI tract.

Indian Express:GS 2-IR-Page 15

As Shehbaz visits China, the hope and unfulfilled promise of CPEC

ARJUN SENGUPTA
NEW DELHI, JUNE 6

PAKISTAN'S PRIME MINISTER Shehbaz Sharif is on a five-day visit to China. The second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is expected to be formally announced during the visit.

The \$62-billion CPEC, which was launched in 2015, is part of President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) aimed at expanding China's geopolitical influence through billions of dollars of investments in infrastructure projects in around 100 countries.

CPEC is supposed to facilitate construction of power plants, road and rail networks, and the deep-sea port of Gwadar in Pakistan. To China, it is supposed to provide direct access to the Indian Ocean through highways in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir and down the length of Pakistan.

CPEC story so far

The first phase of CPEC focused on infrastructure, energy, and port development projects. Data from the CPEC website show that of the 21 proposed power projects, 14 have been completed, two are under construction, and five are yet to start. Of the 24

proposed transport-related projects (rail and road), six have been completed, but no work has started on 13. Only four of the nine proposed Special Economic Zones (SEZs) have seen any progress, and no SEZ is complete.

Not much is happening in Gwadar. Andrew Small, a leading expert on Chinese foreign policy, had told *The Indian Express* in 2022 that most of the projects around the port were "far from completion". According to the official Chinese news agency Xinhua, CPEC had brought direct investment of \$25.4 billion to Pakistan until 2022.

Behind stalled progress

CPEC has been hobbled by Chinese concerns about corruption and red tape in Pakistan, the political turmoil in the country, and the poor security situation in Balochistan province where Gwadar is located.

The project has triggered violence in the restive province, and tens of Chinese nationals have been killed in terrorist attacks since 2018. At least five Chinese working on various CPEC projects have been killed in attacks by Baloch militants this year so far.

To the historically marginalised Baloch, Gwadar appears as a symbol of continued economic injustice. CPEC-related infrastructure has not generated quality jobs for local

people, and has failed to bring any economic dividends to the impoverished population.

"The developers from Punjab and Sindh, who had made a fortune from trading land in Balochistan, did not build schools and other social infrastructures as they had agreed," Ruoshui Jiao of Lanzhou University wrote in a 2023 paper ("Implications of Pakistani Dynastic Politics for the Construction of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor"). "The government [too] did not fulfil its promise to promote economic and social development, and the rural areas of Balochistan were getting even poorer," he wrote.

Stella Hong, a China Public Policy Postdoctoral Fellow at Harvard, told *Al Jazeera* that Pakistan's security situation "remains the most immediate concern" for China and may impact future Chinese investments in the country. "Companies need to be able to run viable businesses if they were to relocate to Pakistani SEZs or even in Pakistan in general. But many seem to have been frustrated by the difficulties of getting things done in Pakistan," she said.

Sharif has assured the Chinese that his government has started on structural changes to weed out corruption, and that he will

"spare no effort to protect the lives of Chinese workers", *Down* reported on Thursday.

Hopes and questions

Bringing big-ticket infra investment to CPEC is a priority for Sharif and the crisis-hit Pakistani economy. But CPEC's limited track record does not inspire confidence. "CPEC has certainly improved sectors such as transportation or energy...but one has to translate these benefits into economic productivity and economic growth, which has not happened," economist Ammar Malik of the US-based research lab AidData, told *Al Jazeera*.

CPEC was estimated to generate more than 2 million employment opportunities for Pakistanis, government data say less than 250,000 jobs have been created so far. "The Chinese approach of not partnering with local companies is not going to help create new job opportunities for millions of Pakistani youth. Since Chinese companies are tax-exempt, they bring everything from China, including labour, and hence they will have no reliance on Pakistani businesses to fulfil their demands," economist Abdul Khalique wrote for the international advocacy *The Committee for Abolition of Illegitimate Debt*.

According to the International Monetary Fund, China holds roughly \$30 billion of Pakistan's \$126 billion external debt, up from just \$4 billion in 2013, prior to the announcement of the CPEC. An IMF report also found that between July 2021 and March 2022, more than 80% of Pakistan's bilateral debt service went to Beijing.

Many in Pakistan fear that this debt burden is unviable, and effectively makes Pakistan a Chinese client state. "From the start, many in Pakistan worried that CPEC was a neo-colonial project that would give China control over Pakistan, like the British East India Company through which the British colonized the Indian Subcontinent," Osama Ahmad, an Islamabad-based researcher at the Stimson Center wrote in 2023 ("Ten Years of CPEC: A Decade of Disappointments").

The 'mirage' of CPEC

Ahead of Sharif's visit, the Pakistani government has been talking up the anticipated revival of CPEC. China, however, has issued only a vague statement.

"Under the guidance of the leaders of the two countries, China and Pakistan have in recent years had close high-level exchanges, steadily advanced practical cooperation...on the CPEC, and maintained

sound communication and coordination in international and regional affairs," *Down* reported. Chinese foreign ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning was saying.

The "noise around a revival of the CPEC is either wishful thinking (at best) or a way to camouflage what really is going on," Khuram Husain, a leading Pakistani commentator on business and economy, wrote in an article titled "The great CPEC mirage" in *Down*.

In March, the IMF agreed to release a \$1.1 billion tranche of its \$3 billion bailout package to Pakistan. The government is currently negotiating for a fresh package of \$6-8 billion, but a sticking point has been Pakistan's standing debt obligations, especially to China.

"The IMF does not want its resources being used to service Chinese debt obligations, and has told the government that an agreement will only be possible if there is no positive net outflow from Pakistan to China during the programme period. This means rescheduling some of the maturities in the slew of Chinese debt instruments maturing in the next three years," Husain wrote.

This is what lies at the heart of Sharif's visit to China, not CPEC, commentators including Husain believe.

LONGER VERSION ON
indianexpress.com/explained

Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is on a **five-day visit to China**, his country's biggest and most important ally. The second phase of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is expected to be formally announced during the visit. The first phase of CPEC focused on infrastructure, energy, and port development projects. CPEC — one of OBOR's largest investments — was formally launched in 2015 during Chinese President Xi Jinping's two-day state visit to Pakistan. The main project was establishing the corridor connecting Pakistan's Gwadar port in Balochistan to China's Kashgar in south-western Xinjiang region. **India's opposition to CPEC** Since its inception, India has opposed CPEC as most of its projects run through areas in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir (PoK). Cutting through Gilgit-Baltistan, CPEC projects link Balochistan to China's Xinjiang region. New Delhi has always maintained that PoK was an integral part of India and has been illegally occupied by Pakistan since 1947.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB :GS 2-Governance

Ministry of Coal

SECL's CSR program Helps 39 Bright Minds Crack NEET 2024

Posted On: 06 JUN 2024 3:53PM by PIB Delhi



- Chhattisgarh-based Coal India subsidiary South Eastern Coalfields Limited's (SECL) NEET coaching assistance CSR program "SECL Ke Sushrut" has delivered exceptional results
- Launched in 2023, the "SECL ke Sushrut" initiative was designed to provide free residential medical coaching to Class 12 students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, particularly in the coal belt areas of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. Students were selected through a competitive exam based on the NEET pattern, and coaching was provided in partnership with a private coaching institute in Bilaspur.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

PIB :GS 2-IR

Ministry of Commerce & Industry

India attends Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) Ministerial meeting in Singapore

Posted On: 06 JUN 2024 4:55PM by PIB Delhi



- The IPEF Ministerial Statement of 14 November 2023 declared substantial conclusion of negotiations for Clean Economy, Fair Economy, and the overarching Agreement on the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity. Pursuant to this, the IPEF partners completed legal review of the text for these agreements and domestic approval processes.
- IPEF was launched on 23 May 2022 at Tokyo, Japan, comprising of 14 countries – Australia, Brunei, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam and USA. The IPEF seeks to strengthen economic engagement and cooperation among partner countries with the goal of advancing growth, economic stability and prosperity in the region.
- The framework is structured around four pillars relating to Trade (Pillar I); Supply Chain Resilience (Pillar II); Clean Economy (Pillar III); and Fair Economy (Pillar IV). India had joined Pillars II to IV of IPEF while it has maintained an observer status in Pillar-I.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Air :GS 2-IR

Indian Toy Industry Makes Strong Push Into UAE Market



- The Toy Association of India (TAI) has brought a delegation to the UAE, consisting of members from across India, including manufacturers, importers, exporters, retailers, and toy testing lab designers. This diverse group of professionals aims to promote the Indian toy industry at both the manufacturing and export levels.
- The India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) has significantly boosted the competitiveness of Indian toys by granting them zero-duty access to the UAE market. Additionally, many Indian toy manufacturers comply with Gulf Standards Organization (GSO) requirements, ensuring their products meet stringent safety and quality standards. This compliance facilitates seamless export processes and enhances the appeal of Indian toys in the Gulf region.

HEADLINES OF THE DAY

Air :GS 2-IR

India, US, Japan, South Korea & EU Launch
Biopharmaceutical Alliance



- India, South Korea, Japan, the US, and the European Union launched an alliance to put joint efforts to build a resilient supply chain in the biopharmaceutical sector.
- The announcement was made at the inaugural meeting of the Biopharmaceutical Alliance, held in San Diego, California, during the Bio International Convention 2024, the world's largest biopharmaceutical exhibition.
- Government officials and representatives from bio and pharmaceutical companies from the participating countries attended the meeting.
- The participants emphasised the importance of a reliable and sustainable supply chain and agreed to coordinate the respective countries' bio policies, regulations, and research and development support measures.
- They recognised the production of essential raw materials and ingredients is concentrated in a few countries and agreed to work together to build a detailed pharmaceutical supply chain map.
- The alliance was launched in response to the drug supply shortages experienced during the Covid-19 pandemic.