

Lt Gen Sahai named AMC's first woman commandant

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Lucknow: Lieutenant general Kavita Sahai has been appointed the first woman commandant of Army Medical Corps Centre and College, Lucknow. She has succeeded Lt Gen V Sabid Syed, who re-



tired from service on Jan 29. Lt Gen Sahai took the charge Thursday.

A recipient of Sena Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal, Lt Gen Sahai was posted as additional DGAFMS (HR) at the office of the Director General Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS), Delhi.

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An alumna of the Armed Forces Medical College, Pune, Lieutenant Gen Kavita Sahai is a recipient of Sena Medal and Vishisht Seva Medal

AMC in 1986. Lt Gen Sahai did MD (pathology) and DNB (pathology) from AFMC. The general officer also did a fellowship in oncopathology from AIIMS Delhi and holds a diploma in health professional education from FAIMER-Keele University, UK.

In her 37-year-long career, Lt Gen Sahai has held various important administrative and staff appointments such as HOD and professor, lab medicine at Base Hospital, Delhi; professor in department of pathology at AFMC; HOD and professor, lab medicine at Army Hospital (research and referral) Delhi.

Lt Gen Sahai has written more than 100 research papers which have been published in national and international journals. She also received Chief Of Army Staff Commendation in 2008 and 2012 for her meritorious services.

She is married to Maj Gen (retd) Rajesh Sahai.

EU agrees to \$54bn in new aid for Ukraine as Hungary falls in line

Brussels: European Union leaders unanimously agreed on Thursday to extend €50 billion (\$54 billion) in new aid to Ukraine, overcoming weeks of resistance from Hungary and winning praise from Kyiv.

Before the summit started, EU leaders piled pressure on Hungary to lift its block, telling PM Viktor Orban to pick sides in what several saw as an existential challenge posed by Russia's war in Ukraine, the biggest conflict in Europe since WWII. "We have a deal. Unity," said European Council President Charles Michel in a post on X. "All 27 leaders agreed on an additional 50-billion-euro support package for Ukraine within the EU budget."

Ukrainian President **Volodymyr Zelensky** welcomed the agreement, saying the aid would strengthen long-term economic and financial stability of his country. The agreement comes after weeks of wrangling with Orban, who vetoed the aid package last December. There was no comment from Hungary. Diplomats said in exchange for the green light from Hungary, the bloc did not commit to releasing any of the billions of euros of EU funds intended for Hunga-



Have proof Kyiv used US missiles to down jet with 'PoWs': Russia

Russian investigators said on Thursday they have evidence showing that Ukraine's military shot down a Russian Il-76 military transport plane last week with US-made Patriot surface-to-air missiles. Russia said all 74 people on board, including 65 captured Ukrainian soldiers en route to be swapped for Russian prisoners of war, were killed. Russia's State Investigative Committee said in a statement that Ukrainian soldiers in the area of Lyptsi in the Kharkiv region had fired two missiles at the plane. "The fragments seized from the scene, according to their design features, geometric characteristics and available markings, are structural elements of the MIM-104A anti-aircraft guided missile of the Patriot complex of the US," the committee said. **REUTERS**

ry but frozen by Brussels over widespread concerns about human rights and the rule of law in the country. With an agreement on budget support done, the leaders were next discussing military aid for Kyiv. The bloc is seen falling short of its target of sending artillery shells to Ukraine. **REUTERS**

Maldives ties choppy, India doubles aid

TEAM TOI

Despite the turbulence in bilateral ties with the Maldives, Delhi will continue to prioritise development projects in the Indian Ocean archipelago.

In terms of assistance to foreign governments, India revised its budget allocation for the Maldives in 2023-24 from Rs 400 crore to Rs 770 crore. And for 2024-25, it has earmarked Rs 600 crore for the Maldives, which is next only to Bhutan and Nepal.

India has not allowed differences with Male, most notably in defence and security cooperation, to affect work on the \$500 million Greater Male Connectivity Project, the largest infrastructure project in the country. All allocation for the Maldives is in the form of grant and not loan.

Like last year, Bhutan again topped the list of budgetary allocation, with India earmarking Rs 2,068 crore for Thimphu. The allocation for Nepal is Rs 700 crore.

India's overall estimate for assistance to foreign governments, including both grant and loan, for the year 2024-25 is Rs 5,667 crore, out of which Rs 4,677 crore is in the form of grant assistance and the remaining in the form of loan to Bhutan. This is about 874 crore less than the revised estimate for the previous year.

India's allocation for strife-torn Myanmar went down considerably from Rs 370 crore last year to Rs 250 crore for 2024-25.

Concerned about deteriorating Myanmar situation: Govt

New Delhi: As the Myanmar junta extended emergency in the country, India Thursday said it's concerned about the deteriorating situation which has "direct implications on us as a neighbouring country and a friend of Myanmar".

"India has been advocating for a complete succession of violence and Myanmar's transition towards inclusive federal democracy. We want an early resolution of the issue and re-



Myanmar soldiers patrol a street during a 'silent strike' to protest the military coup, in Yangon on Thursday

turn of peace and stability in the country," said the EAM spokesperson.

The military rulers had on Wednesday extended a state of emergency in the country that has been in place since the 2021 coup. According to a Reuters report, the junta has deployed heavy artillery and fighter jets to try to suppress militias allied with a shadow govt and ethnic minority armies, several of which launched a coordinated

offensive in Oct that stunned the military and has dented its battlefield credibility. "An inclusive solution to this crisis requires conditions that permit the people of Myanmar to exercise their human rights freely and peacefully. The military's campaign of violence targeting civilians and political repression must end, and those responsible be held to account," said the UN spokesperson on the issue. TNN

India: Deeply concerned about allegations of UN relief workers' hand in Hamas attack

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: The Indian govt said Thursday it's deeply concerned about Israel's allegations that UNRWA staff were involved in Hamas attacks on Israel, while welcoming a probe by the UN agency into the issue.

Unlike western countries, India has far not announced any cut in its funding of the UN agency, but it has continued to strongly condemn terrorist attacks by Hamas. India supports Palestine and Palestinian refugees through



FIGHTING TERROR: Despite the Israeli claim, India has so far not announced any cut in its funding of the UN agency but slammed terrorism by Hamas

its contributions to what is known as United Nations Relief and Works Agency for

Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and has contributed more than \$36.5 million to the agency in the past 20 years.

"India is an important partner of Palestine. We have been extending assistance to them bilaterally and through the UN," said MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal.

"But at the same time, we have a policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism and in that regard we are deeply concerned about the allegations that the UNRWA staff was involved in the Oct 7 ter-

ror attacks. We also welcome the investigations launched by the UN in this regard," added the official.

The official also said India had taken note of the ruling of the International Court of Justice that asked Israel to prevent death and destruction but stopped short of ordering an end to the military offensive.

The US, UK, Germany and Italy have already suspended funding to the agency which is said to have 13,000 employees in Gaza, most of them Palestinians.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

10 THINGS IN THE BUDGET THAT CAN IMPACT YOUR LIFE

1 CHEAPER LOANS | Fiscal prudence means govt borrows less, banks have more to lend. That in turn could prompt RBI to cut rates, lowering interest burden on all loans

2 CHARGED UP | EV manufacturing & charging ecosystem will get a major boost. Owning EVs will likely become more attractive

3 LESS TAXING | Small tax disputes will be settled. Demands up to Rs 25,000 till 2009-10 and up to Rs 10,000 for 2010-11 to 2014-15 to be withdrawn. 1cr taxpayers to benefit

4 EASE OF TRAVEL | 40,000 ordinary railway bogies to be upgraded to Vande Bharat standards. Three new economic corridors mean passenger trains will run faster as rail tracks get less crowded

5 SUN POWER | GOI to set up 1 crore rooftop solar power units for households. This means free power up to 300 units every month and annual savings of Rs 15,000-Rs 18,000 for each beneficiary

6 HOME SWEET HOME | New scheme for middle class housing to be announced. Beneficiaries will be those paying rent or living in chawls and unauthorised colonies

7 MORE DOCTORS | New medical colleges to be built around existing hospitals. A panel will finalise the details

8 COMBATING CANCER | Preventive vaccination for cervical cancer for girls in the 9-14 age group

9 TONIC FOR TECH | Corpus of Rs 1 lakh crore to be set up for 50-year interest-free loans for those doing R&D in deep-tech. Big help for startups & companies working on breakthrough engineering and scientific advances

10 MORE RELIEF | Tax incentives for startups, sovereign wealth funds and pension funds will be extended. Also for units in international financial centres