

18 grenades found in Faizabad

Arshad Afzaal Khan | TNN

Ayodhya: In a major security breach, 18 live grenades were recovered in Nirmali Kund area near officers' mess in Faizabad's army headquarters on Saturday.

Military Intelligence officials have seized the grenades.

The development comes a couple of days after security was beefed up and a checking drive was carried out in the cantonment area.

Vice-chairman of Cantonment Board, Ram Milan Nishad, said: "Grenades and other explosives were found in Nirmali Kund area. It is shocking that even after beefing up the security of cantonment, grenades were taken out from the ammunition lot." Sources said top army officials were investigating the matter.

CBI seeks nod to probe role of 2 ex-IAS officers

Alok Ranjan & Deepak Singhal In The Dock

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Lucknow: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which is investigating the Rs 1,500-crore Gomti riverfront scam, has sought the state government's opinion on a probe into the role of then senior IAS officers Alok Ranjan and Deepak Singhal.

While Ranjan was UP chief secretary, Singhal was posted as principal secretary, irrigation and also went on to become the chief secretary.

Sources in the CBI said the agency has approached the state government for its opinion on investigating the role of the two IAS officers which has not been probed as yet.

The CBI has sent a letter in this connection to the state's

appointment and personnel department. Repeated attempts to reach out to the additional chief secretary, appointment and personnel,

RIVERFRONT SCAM

proved futile.

CBI had started investigation into the case in 2017 following the recommendations of the Yogi Adityanath government. In November 2017, the CBI took over the case and filed an FIR against eight engineers of the irrigation department of different ranks in connection with Gomti River Channelization Project and Gomti River Front Development Project.

The central investigation agency had, on February 17, 2022, also filed a chargesheet against senior assistant Raj Kumar Yadav, two directors of a private firm associated with the project, Himanshu Gupta and Kavish Gupta, and senior advisor of the project Badri Shrestha.

The project involved construction of a rubber dam to maintain its water level, a stadium, an amphitheatre for 2,000 people, cycle and jogging tracks, a play area for children and a musical fountain. ED had also filed a criminal case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in March 2018 in connection with corruption in the Gomti Riverfront Development Project.

Kumbh 2025 to be grander than Ardh Kumbh: Govt

Kapil Dixit | timesgroup.com

Prayagraj: Deputy chief minister Keshav Prasad Maurya said on Sunday that Kumbh 2025 in Prayagraj would be more majestic and grander than the 2019 Ardh Kumbh.

He said chief minister Yogi Adityanath will attend an important meeting regarding Kumbh 2025 preparations in Prayagraj next month. Maurya was in the Sangam City to interact with party leaders and workers. Talking to TOI, Maurya said, "Over 24 crore devotees from across the world had attended Ardh Kumbh 2019 and we anticipate footfall to double. Devotees will through Sangam City to take holy dip and to get a glimpse of the rich Indian culture, tradition, and spirituality on the banks of the Ganga."

The state government has started its planning and preparations for the forthcoming Kumbh and aims to complete all the development projects before the Kumbh, he said.

"We will provide world class facilities to devotees and pilgrims coming to Prayagraj to attend Kumbh 2025. Major projects in the pipeline for Kumbh 2025 would bring about development and benefit the people," the deputy CM said.

The grandeur of 2025 Kumbh and exemplary arrangements by the state government will make it a memorable event, said Maurya. "We will ensure a mega religious event which will be remembered for being splendid," he added.

pendence as Amrit Mahotsav, the Chess Olympiad torch will cover 75 cities of the country in 40 days," the CM said. The torch will pass through Ayodhya, Gorakhpur, Varanasi, Prayagraj on June 27 and Jhansi on July 5. Players from over 150 countries will participate in the 14-day Chess Olympiad.

"Chess is the ancient mode to maintain patience and focus. The game makes us disciplined and focused," he said.

Yogi said UP government was providing all facilities to sportspersons and players would be able to achieve greater heights by availing the benefits of various government schemes. Earlier, president of All-India Chess Federation Sanjay Kapoor welcomed the Chief Minister with a shawl.

Hosting Chess Olympiad matter of pride, celebration of heritage: Yogi

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Lucknow: Watching Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath play a game of chess against first Indian grandmaster Viswanathan Anand was a rare sight for city residents on Sunday.

Making a ceremonial move while welcoming the torch relay for the Chess Olympiad which will be held in India for the first time, the Chief Minister said it was a moment of pride for the country.

Earlier, the world chess body, FIDE, had announced a torch relay for Chess Olympiad for the first time in history.

"This is for the first time that FIDE has started torch relay for Chess Olympiad and it is a matter of pride that the relay is starting from India," Yogi said, addressing the pro-



CM Yogi Adityanath with Viswanathan Anand and cultural programme being held at the event



gramme in front of Vidhan Bhawan. The torch relay was led by chess players Tejas Bakre and Vantika Agarwal. "Chess has its roots in India and the tradition is about 5,000 years' old. It is an oppor-

tunity for us to get connected to our heritage. It is not only an honour for India but also for our rich culture and heritage," he said.

"At a time when India celebrates its 75th year of Inde-

Arson over Agnipath: 43 FIRs in 72 hrs, over 1,000 booked

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh police has booked over 1,000 more youths in connection with protests and arson against Agnipath scheme.

As per the police dossier, 43 more FIRs have been registered in the last 72 hours.

Overall, as many as 1,562 youths have been booked and 82 FIRs registered in 31 districts of the state.

Of the total booked, 498 youths have been booked under major offences of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), while

1,064 have been booked under the charges of breach of peace, taking the total tally of those booked to 1,562.

A maximum of 535 have been booked in Jaunpur district where government buses were vandalised, followed by Ballia where 222 have been booked, and an empty train coach was torched.

The districts where fresh cases have been registered include two each in Basti, Gorakhpur, Hardoi, Ayodhya, and one each in Sitapur, Rae Bareilly, Kannauj, Ghazipur, Mainpuri, Sant Kabir

Nagar, Lalitpur, Unnao, Kanpur Dehat, Fatehgarh and Mainpuri.

Sofar, only Varanasi police commissionerate and district administration has assessed the losses and pegged it at Rs 12.97 lakh.

On June 17, as many as 36 UPSRTC buses were damaged by protesters.

Uttar Pradesh Additional Director General of police, law and order, Prashant Kumar, said that probe is ongoing in all the districts of the state wherever protests or violence had taken place.

'Peeved' over Agnipath, man ends life

Faiz Siddiqui | timesgroup.com

Kanpur: A 23-year-old Army aspirant, allegedly peeved over the recently launched Agnipath scheme, committed suicide by hanging himself in Fatehpur district.

The incident took place in Visnamau village under Kalyanpur police station on June 24.

It is alleged that the deceased Vikas Patel had been preparing for Army recruitment for many years, and was very upset after the launch of Agnipath scheme. He took the extreme step by hanging himself from a mango tree in the vicinity of his house. Terming it to be a routine incident, police that Vikas committed suicide because he had appeared twice but failed to enlist in the Army as he was declared medically unfit.

Vikas's father Chheda Lal, meanwhile, said that his son had been preparing to join the Army for the past several years. "He had taken part in the Army recruitment drive twice, but he did not qualify as he was declared medically unfit on some ground. After the recently launched Agnipath scheme, he was very much upset," said Chheda Lal.



Vikas Patel

Varun Gandhi draws parallel between Agnipath, farm laws

Pankaj Shah | timesgroup.com

Lucknow: Citing growing protests and wondering whether "same mistake would be committed again", BJP MP from Pilibhit Varun Gandhi on Sunday drew a parallel between Agnipath scheme and the farm laws.

Varun, who has been raising the voice against his own government, took to twitter in tagging the video of a wailing father of a youth, Vikas Patel, who committed suicide in Fatehpur, allegedly in protest against Agnipath scheme on Saturday. He also let loose an apparent taunt at BJP while terming the Fatehpur incident as "Vikas Ki Atmahatya" (BJP has been using the term Vikas to showcase its agenda of development).

Gandhi, also recalled the suicide by a Rohitak youth, Sachin, who allegedly committed suicide 10 days ago after learning about the

Agnipath scheme of four years of service in the army.

Two days ago, Varun had hit out at the Agnipath scheme for not provisioning pensions to the Agniveers. He said that if public representatives, who serve for five years can get pension then why the provision was not made for the youth who would join the army under Agnipath scheme. He also proposed to forgo his pension. The Pilibhit MP has been at odds with the saffron dispensation for nearly two years.

His attacks on BJP got sharper after he and his mother and Sultanpur MP Menaka Gandhi were dropped from the national executive committee last year. Before that Menaka was dropped from the Narendra Modi cabinet after the BJP returned to power at the centre in 2019 Lok Sabha elections.

UP first state to fully vaccinate 16cr people

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Lucknow: Uttar Pradesh achieved a major milestone by becoming the first state in the country to fully vaccinate over 16 crore individuals.

In nearly 20 days after crossing the landmark of fully vaccinating 15 crore people, the state crossed another significant milestone with 16,02,66,806 individuals receiving both doses of the Covid-19 vaccine.

The most populous state has so far administered over 33.92 crore doses. Besides, the state has also achieved the landmark of administering the first dose to 100% of the eligible adult population while nearly 99% of the popula-

tion is fully vaccinated. UP had started administering booster (precaution) doses from January 10 and nearly 35.22 lakh doses have been administered since.

The state government is providing vaccination to all children between 12 to 17 years of age in a time-bound manner. So far, over 2,60,80,643 doses have been administered to children in the 15-17 age group and over 1,37,51,108 to the children in the 12-14 age group.

Standing on the top, Uttar Pradesh is followed by Maharashtra with 16.90 crore doses.

Just a few days after crossing the 32-crore dose milestone, UP has also inched closer to the 34 crore shots mark.

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SPECIAL ON MSME DAY

A helping hand for UP's MSMEs in post-Covid era

René Van Berkel

The international community celebrates World Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Day on June 27 to recognize that MSMEs form the backbone of the global economy. India is no exception. MSMEs supply products and services to local consumer markets and to large-scale enterprises and lead buyers.

Before pandemic, around 6.3 crore MSMEs were providing an estimated 11.1 crore jobs across India. MSMEs have been severely hit by the pandemic, with the services sector being more affected than manufacturing.

The recovery of MSME sector remained fragile with continued uncertainty over ongoing waves of pandemic in domestic and international markets. The Ukraine-Russia conflict has added to uncertainty resulting in shrinking global supplies and soaring prices of fuel, food and fertilizer, with ripple effect across sectors. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) works with government and business sector to uplift MSME performance in UP and around India through technical support on manufacturing excellence, appropriate technology, energy and resource efficiency and cleantech innovation.

Manufacturing excellence combines the efficient use of all manufacturing inputs, ensuring that manufacturing outputs are effective in mee-

ting customer requirements and achieving maturity in planning, management and monitoring of manufacturing processes and systems. UNIDO and the Automotive Components Manufacturers Association (ACMA), with support from the Ministry of Heavy Industries, facilitate this in small and medium sized component manufacturers.

In UP, eight MSME component manufacturers for Tata Motors and Spark Minda implemented 750 improvement measures that improved on ti-

BY INVITATION

me delivery by 99% and reduced customer returns by 89%, whilst improving health and safety and saving Rs 13.3 lakh annually.

UNIDO also supports the Muzaffarnagar paper cluster with productivity assessment and training through the National Productivity Council (NPC). The Central Pulp and Paper Research Institute (CPPI) is customizing appropriate technologies to Indian industry conditions. With the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), UNIDO focused on improving energy efficiency in the Khurja ceramic cluster. A cluster-specific technology compendium was developed and promoted, including 19 specific technologies, covering kiln operation, raw materials handling, utilities and renewables.

Depending on unit specific conditions, 14 of these typically have a pay back within two years. Energy advisory was provided to 60 MSMEs and facilitated a cumulative

investment of Rs 1.5 crore, to achieve annual energy savings of 651 tonnes of oil equivalent and cost savings of Rs 2 crore and mitigate 2,100 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. Also with BEE, UNIDO supports cleantech innovation and entrepreneurship. New Leaf Dynamic Technologies was supported to demonstrate and validate the use of farm waste for refrigeration, reducing specific power consumption by 90%.

Infold demonstrated a retrofit solution that instantly chills milk to 4-6 degrees and can keep it at that level without back up power for up to 12 hours. A typical 1,000 litres bulk milk collection centre can reduce diesel consumption by 2,100 litres annually. Even though MSMEs provide the socio-economic fabric of both rural and urban India, in UP and elsewhere in the country, many MSMEs are in urgent need of modernization, greening and formalization.

This is doable and offers diverse benefits to employers and employees, consumers, public health, environment and society at large. Progress is though conditional on innovation – in the way MSMEs are publicly perceived, supported and financed, in MSMEs' access to appropriate technology, manufacturing excellence and digital solutions, and MSME's own commitments to quality, decent work, environmental compliance & responsible business.

(The writer is a representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and heads its regional office in India)

Maneater tigress pregnant, can't be tranquilised: Official

Bareilly: A maneater tigress, which the forest department was planning to tranquilise, is pregnant and is always accompanied by her sub-adult cub, making the task to capture her difficult, say officials. The tigress is believed to have killed at least 19 people in and around Dudhwa Tiger Reserve (DTR) since 2020.

DTR field director Sanjay Pathak told TOI, "It is difficult to establish which animal is responsible for the recent killings. We will tranquilise the cub but can't dart the adult because of her health condition. I've asked officials to provide easy bait to both the big cats to ensure they don't attack humans." TNN

ATS busts illegal arms unit in Mau, 5 accused arrested

Lucknow: The Uttar Pradesh Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) on Sunday arrested five persons for running an illegal arms manufacturing unit in Mau district.

The accused, identified as Naushad Ahmad, Amarjeet Yadav, Vivek Yadav, Aman and Giridhari Chauhan, were arrested from Ha-

midpur village in Ghosi area of Mau.

ATS sleuths recovered four revolvers, a single-barrel gun, cartridges and an air gun from their possession.

A huge quantity of semi-finished country-made pistols, lathe machines, furnaces and other equipment were also seized. TNN

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