

King John signs Magna Carta at Runnymede, near Windsor, England

George Washington appointed commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, the day after Congress establishes the force



Tsunami strikes Shinto festival on beach at Sanriku, Japan; 27,000 are killed, 9,000 injured and 13,000 houses destroyed

World War II: France surrenders to NAZI Germany, German troops occupy Paris

## Israel says US should helm Mideast build-up against Iran



Israeli Defence Minister Benny Gantz speaks to media during his visit to 5th Fleet Headquarters Navy Base in Juffair, Bahrain

Reuters | Jerusalem

Israel and Arab countries that share its worries about Iran should build up their military capabilities under Washington's aegis, the Israeli defence minister said yesterday ahead of a visit to the region by US President Joe Biden.

In a speech, Defence Minister Benny Gantz cited Israel's security ties with Gulf Arab states, as well as Egypt and Jordan, and said there were efforts to expand such cooperation.

"In the face of Iranian belligerence ... what is needed is not just cooperation, but also a regional force build-up, with American leadership, which would strengthen all parties involved," he said, according to an official transcript.

"On this, we are working continually, for the sake of the security of Israel's citizens," Gantz said.

Israel has voiced willingness to work militarily with its new Gulf partners, which have been more publicly reticent about such a prospect.

## Kuwait crown prince in good health after bout of illness, state news agency reports

Reuters | Kuwait

Kuwait's crown prince, who had taken over most duties of the country's ruling emir, has suffered from a bout of illness but is in good health, state news agency KUNA said yesterday.

Crown Prince Sheikh Meshal al-Ahmad al-Sabah, 81, required temporary rest after falling ill, KUNA cited an emiri court statement as saying. It gave no further details.

Last November, Emir Sheikh Nawaf al-Ahmad al-Sabah, 84, handed over most of his responsibilities to the crown prince, his designated heir, without specifying for how long.

The emir, who has looked frail in recent public appearances, returned to Kuwait in May after a two-week private visit abroad.

# Ukraine says troops holding out after last bridge destroyed

● Mayor says some evacuations still possible

● Ukraine seeks howitzers, tanks and drones from West

● Reports gains against Russian forces in south

Reuters | Kyiv

Ukraine said yesterday its forces were still holding out inside Sievierodonetsk and trying to evacuate civilians, after Russia destroyed the last bridge to the devastated eastern city in a potential turning point in one of the war's bloodiest battles.

Russia said it would give Ukrainian fighters holed up in a chemical plant inside the city a chance to surrender on Wednesday morning. Fighters should "stop their senseless resistance and lay down their arms" from 8 a.m. Moscow time, Interfax news agency quoted Mikhail Mizintsev, head of Russia's National Defence Manage-



A satellite image shows a close up view of a damaged bridge, in Rubizhne, Ukraine

ment Centre, as saying.

Civilians would be let out through a "humanitarian corridor", he said.

The city's Ukrainian mayor, Oleksandr Stryuk, said: "The situation is very difficult but there is communication with the city" despite the last bridge over the Siverskyi Donets river having been destroyed.

"Russian troops are trying to storm the city, but the military is holding firm."

Ukraine says more than 500

civilians are trapped inside Azot, a chemical factory where its forces have resisted weeks of Russian bombardment and assault.

Evacuations were still being carried out "every minute when there is a lull and there is a possibility of transportation," Stryuk said. "But these are discrete evacuations, done one by one, and every possible chance is taken."

Regional governor Serhiy Gaidai said: "The shelling is so

powerful that people can no longer stand it in the shelters, their psychological state is on the edge. The last few days, the residents are finally ready to go."

Both sides claim to have inflicted huge casualties in the fighting over the city, Russia's main target in its battle for the east of the country after it failed to capture the capital Kyiv in March.

Ukraine still holds Lysychansk, Sievierodonetsk's twin city on higher ground on the opposite bank. But with all the bridges now cut, its forces acknowledge a threat that they could be encircled in Sievierodonetsk.

Russia's separatist proxies said any Ukrainian troops left behind must surrender or die.

Damien Megrou, spokesperson for a unit of foreign volunteers helping to defend Sievierodonetsk, said there was a risk of leaving "a large pocket of Ukrainian defenders cut off from the rest of the Ukrainian troops" - as in Mariupol, the Black Sea port that surrendered last month after months of Russian siege.

## India overhauls military recruitment, seeking fitter, younger troops

Reuters | New Delhi

India's military is overhauling its recruitment process for personnel below officer rank, aiming to deploy fitter, younger troops on its front lines, many of them on shorter contracts of up to four years, defence officials said yesterday.

Soldiers have been recruited by the army, navy and the air force separately and typically enter service for a period of up to 17 years for the lowest ranks.

Under the new system, men and women between the ages of 17 and a half and 21 will be brought into the armed forces, many of them for a maximum four-year tenure.

India spent \$76.6 billion on its military in 2021, the highest in the world after the United States and China, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). Analysts said the move by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government would bring



Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addresses a news conference as Indian Air Chief Marshal Vivek Ram Chaudhari and Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R. Hari Kumar listen, in New Delhi, India,

down the armed force's pension costs, which along with salaries, form the largest chunk of the defence budget.

"In the long run, it will certainly start bringing down the revenue expenditure," said Colonel Vivek Chadha, a veteran who is now a research fellow at the Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses in New Delhi.

### 'PATH OF FIRE'

A total of 46,000 soldiers will be recruited this year on four-

year contracts with a quarter expected to be kept on at the end of that term, the government said.

"This scheme will strengthen the country's security and provide our youth an opportunity for military service," Defence Minister Rajnath Singh told reporters in New Delhi, where he was joined by the three service chiefs. Military officials said the new system, called Agnipath, meaning "path of fire" in Hindi, would help bring down the average age of the armed forces.



India, which shares a heavily militarised border with Pakistan and is involved in a high-altitude Himalayan stand-off with China, has one of the world's largest armed forces with some 1.38 million personnel.

## Moderna COVID vaccine may pose higher heart inflammation risk - US CDC

Reuters

Moderna's (MRNA.O) COVID-19 vaccine may pose a higher risk of heart inflammation in some age groups than Pfizer-BioNTech's (PFE.N), shot, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said yesterday, citing recent data.

The agency, however, said



the findings on myocarditis and pericarditis, types of heart inflammation linked to both the

mRNA shots, were not consistent across all of the US vaccine safety monitoring systems.

The CDC's analysis comes as the US Food and Drug Administration's advisers meet on Tuesday to discuss the authorisation of Moderna's vaccine for children and teens aged 6-17.

Based on data from the Vaccine Safety Datalink (VSD) sys-

tem, the incidence of heart inflammation was 97.3 cases per million doses for males aged 18-39 following a second dose of Moderna's shot, versus 81.7 cases per million Pfizer vaccine doses. Available information suggests that most people with myocarditis after mRNA COVID-19 vaccination recover over time, the CDC said.



TOP  
4  
TWEETS

01



Under my plan no one making less than \$400,000 per year will pay a penny more in federal taxes. But we'll no longer have a situation where 55 of the largest corporations in America pay zero in federal income taxes on \$40 billion in profits.

@POTUS

02



A decaying oil tanker off Yemen's coast could break apart or explode at any moment. The resulting oil spill- the 5th largest from a tanker in history- would be an environmental & humanitarian disaster. Urgent support is needed to address this threat

@antonioguterres

03



The service, sacrifice, and dedication of the women and men of the @USArmy in tackling today's greatest challenges knows no limit. The Department and the nation wish the Army a happy 247th birthday today.

@SecBlinken

04



Wheels down in Brussels, where I'm looking forward to hosting the next in-person iteration of the Ukraine Defense Contract Group and attending the @NATO Defense Ministerial.

@SecDef

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)