

OPERATION SINDOOR

PAHALGAM PAYBACK

India hits 9 terror targets in Pakistan, PoK in 25-minute precision strike

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: India's armed forces destroyed nine terrorist infrastructure including that of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) in a 25-minute-long measured and non-escalatory missile and drone strike early Wednesday in retaliation to the dastardly terror attack in Pahalgam.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said India decided to carry out the proportionate strikes to bring the perpetrators and planners of the April 22 Pahalgam attack to justice as there was no demonstrable step from Pakistan to act against terrorist infrastructure on territories under its control.

Misri said India's actions were in line with the UN Security Council's statement about holding perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of the Pahalgam terror attack accountable.

Under 'Operation Sindoor', the Indian military targeted Markaz Taiba of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Muridke, Markaz Subhan Allah of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) in Bahawalpur and Hizbul Mujahideen's Mehmoona Joya Facility in Sialkot and LeT's base in Markaz Ahle Hadith in Barnala and its camp in Muzaffarabad's Shawai Nalla, military officials said.

The operation was conducted from 1.05am to 1.30am and all the targets were neutralised with clinical efficiency, two women officers - Col Sophia Qureshi of the Army's Corps of Signals and Wing Commander Vyomika Singh, a helicopter pilot of the IAF - said at a media briefing alongside Misri.

Around 15 minutes after the operation ended, the Defence Ministry said, "A little while ago, the Indian Armed forces launched 'Operation Sindoor' hitting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir from where terrorist attacks against India have been planned and directed."

It said the actions by the Indian Armed forces have been



REDUCED TO RUBBLE: Pakistani army soldiers inspect a building damaged by a suspected Indian missile attack near Muzaffarabad, the capital of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, Wednesday AP/PTI

Over 300 flights cancelled; 25 airports shut temporarily

More than 300 flights have been cancelled and at least 25 airports, including Srinagar, have been temporarily shut for operations amid restrictions in the wake of the armed forces launching missile attacks on terror targets in Pakistan Wednesday morning. Air India, IndiGo, SpiceJet, Air India Express, Akasa Air, and a few foreign airlines have cancelled their services to and from various airports. Sources said that at least 25 airports in the northern and western parts of the country have been temporarily shut. These airports include Srinagar, Leh, Jammu, Amritsar, Pathankot, Chandigarh, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Shimla, Dharamshala and Jamnagar, they added.



'Nari Shakti' takes centrestage

India's 'Nari Shakti' was veritably on display during a press briefing here on 'Operation Sindoor' Wednesday, as two accomplished woman military officers joined Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri in giving details about the precision strikes by the armed forces on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. At the briefing held at the National Media Centre, Misri was flanked by Col Sofiya Qureshi and Wing Commander Vyomika Singh, presenting a striking image of a combination of India's prowess in military and diplomacy. Col Qureshi from the Army's Corps of Signals, and Wg Cdr Singh, a helicopter pilot, shared the names and details of the sites targeted in the early hours Wednesday.



13 civilians killed in Pak shelling

As many as 13 people, including four children, two women and a soldier, were killed and over 50 injured when the Pakistan army pounded forward villages in Poonch and Rajouri in Jammu region and Baramulla and Kupwara in north Kashmir with artillery and mortar shelling. The shelling from across the border started shortly after Indian armed forces carried out missile attacks on nine terror targets in Pakistan and PoK to avenge the April 22 terror attack. Hundreds of residents along the Line of Control (LoC) and the International Border (IB) here were evacuated to safer zones Wednesday as authorities chalked out countermeasures to safeguard civilians from Pakistani shelling.



focused, measured and non-escalatory in nature and that no Pakistani military facilities have been targeted. India has demonstrated considerable restraint in selection of targets and method of execution, the ministry said.

Military sources said Prime Minister Narendra Modi was monitoring 'Operation Sindoor' closely. Following the operation, he held a meeting of the Union Cabinet and hailed the Indian armed forces for successful strikes.

In his remarks, Misri said the Indian military carried out the measured, non-escalatory, proportionate, and responsible

military strike to dismantle terrorist infrastructure to deter and pre-empt any further terrorist strikes.

Hours after the Indian operation, Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said his country has every right to give a befitting reply to this act of war imposed by India. Pakistani Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, however, said Islamabad is ready to wrap up tensions with New Delhi, if it de-escalates the situation.

The Pakistan Foreign Ministry described the Indian strikes as unprovoked and that the Indian military has violated Pakistan's sovereignty using

standoff weapons.

The Pakistan army said at least 26 people were killed and 46 injured in these strikes.

JeM chief Maulana Masood Azhar acknowledged that 10 members of his family and four close associates were killed in India's missile attack on the outfit's headquarters in Bahawalpur. Indian officials said the strikes on all nine targets including Bahawalpur and Muridke were successful.

Muridke, located a short distance from Lahore, is home to a sprawling markaz or base of LeT. Bahawalpur is the main stronghold of the JeM.

In Washington, US President

Donald Trump said he hoped that the hostilities between India and Pakistan would end very quickly.

"It's a shame," he said adding, "we just heard about it just as we were walking in the doors of the Oval (Office)."

"I just hope it ends very quickly," he said when asked about the Indian actions on Pakistan.

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval spoke to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio and his counterparts in several countries including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

In his remarks, Misri said,

"Our intelligence monitoring of Pakistan-based terrorist modules indicated that further attacks against India were impending."

Earlier this morning as you would be aware India exercised its right to respond and pre-empt as well as deter more such cross-border attacks, he said.

These actions were measured, non-escalatory, proportionate, and responsible. They focused on dismantling the terrorist infrastructure and disabling terrorists likely to be sent across to India, Misri said.

The attack in Pahalgam was marked by extreme barbarity,

with the victims mostly killed with headshots from close range and in front of their families, he said.

It was the largest number of civilian casualties in a terrorist attack in India since the November 26, 2008 Mumbai terror attacks.

Family members were deliberately traumatized through the manner of the killing, accompanied by the exhortation that they should take back the message, Misri said.

Wing Commander Singh said Indian armed forces are fully prepared to respond to Pakistani misadventure, if any, to escalate the situation.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



We were ready for the operation right after the terror attack—it just took them two weeks to come up with a good name

OPERATION SANKALP Security forces gun down 22 Naxalites

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bijapur, May 7: Twenty-two Naxalites were killed in an encounter with security forces Wednesday in the forests of Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district bordering Telangana during 'Operation Sankalp', a massive counter-insurgency initiative, a senior police official said. The gunfight broke out in the morning in the Karregutta hills forest along the interstate border, he said.

So far, bodies of 22 Naxalites have been recovered and a search operation was underway

in the area, he said, adding that the identity of the slain cadres was yet to be established.

With the latest encounter, the toll of Naxalites gunned down under Operation Sankalp since April 21 has climbed to 26.

Operation Sankalp, one of the biggest counter-insurgency actions launched in the Bastar region, involves around 24,000 security personnel from different units including District Reserve Guard (DRG), Bastar Fighters, Special Task Force (STF), all units of state police, CRPF and its elite unit CoBRA.

Cash row: Trouble mounts for Justice Varma

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: The Supreme Court-appointed panel has confirmed the cash discovery allegations against Allahabad High Court's Justice Yashwant Varma in its inquiry report, sources have said. Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna is also learnt to have nudged the judge to step down in view of the critical findings in the report.

The CJI has forwarded the panel's report to Justice Varma and sought his reply following the principle of natural justice,

the sources said.

The report was submitted to the CJI by the three-member panel comprising Punjab and Haryana High Court Chief Justice Sheel Nagu, Himachal Pradesh High Court Chief Justice GS Sandhawalia and Justice Anu Sivaraman of the Karnataka High Court. It was finalised May 3.

The panel analysed evidence and recorded the statements of over 50 people, including Delhi Police Commissioner Sanjay Arora and Delhi Fire Service chief who were among the first responders to the fire



incident at Justice Varma's Lutvans Delhi residence at around 11.35pm March 14. He was Delhi High Court judge at the time.

Sources said the panel found clear evidence to confirm the allegations that a huge stash of cash was found in the store room of Justice Varma's official residence at the time of fire incident. The allegation was repeatedly denied by the judge in his reply to the Delhi High Court chief justice.

The sources said CJI Khanna, who is set to superannuate May 13, is likely to take the issue to its logical conclusion and has informally discussed the findings of the report with senior collegium members of the apex court.

Russian Embassy unveils special plaque honouring Biju Patnaik

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar, May 7: Russia Wednesday paid tribute to freedom fighter and former Odisha Chief Minister Biju Patnaik by unveiling a memorial plaque in his honour at its embassy in New Delhi.

The event was part of celebrations marking the 80th Anniversary of the Great Victory in World War II.

Biju Janata Dal (BJD) chief Naveen Patnaik, the younger son of Biju Patnaik, attended the ceremony at the Russian Embassy in the national capital.

"Honoured to attend the memorial plaque inauguration ceremony at Russian Embassy in New Delhi to commemorate

the contribution of legendary #BijuPatnaik in Stalingrad Operation during WWII. The Battle of Stalingrad led to success for Russia in the war against Nazi Germany which saved the world from untold horror. People of #Odisha will be immensely pleased with this award for #BijuPatnaik whom they treat with huge respect. Thank @RusEmbIndia for the honour. #RussiaHonoursBijuPatnaik," Patnaik said in a post on X.

Russian Ambassador Danis Alipov had specially invited Patnaik, Leader of the Opposition of Odisha Assembly, to attend the programme. The main function will be held May 9.

Alipov, in a letter to Patnaik, had said, "Among the



heroes who we pay tribute to is your late father, Honourable Shri Biju Patnaik ji, a towering personality and a valiant pilot of the Indian National Airways, who had participat-

ed in the Stalingrad Operation, supplying weapons to the besieged Red Army."

The Battle of Stalingrad, which took place from July 1942 to February 1943, marked the successful Soviet defence of the city during World War II.

Russia has plans to honour those who stood together against Nazism in anti-Hitler coalition, and commemorate the heroic deeds of the people of the former Soviet Union and its allies, who bore the brunt of the most brutal conflict in human history.

Biju Patnaik was the chief minister of Odisha for two terms — from 1961 to 1963 and again from 1990 to 1995. He died April 17, 1997.

CBI chief gets 1-yr extension

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: The Centre Wednesday extended the tenure of CBI Director Praveen Sood by one year. Sood took over as the CBI director May 25, 2023 for a two-year term.

The decision to extend his tenure was taken in a meeting of the selection committee headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and comprising Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna and Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi Monday, officials said.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), based on the recommendations of the selection committee, approved Sood's extension for a period of one year beyond May 24.

leisure



HALLE STARVED HERSELF AHEAD OF MET GALA

Hollywood actress Halle Berry didn't eat 'anything all day' in the build-up to the Met Gala. The 58-year-old actress, however, treated herself to some fried chicken after starving herself all day so that she could fit into her somewhat revealing LaQuan Smith dress.

SMOKEY ROBINSON ACCUSED OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Motown star Smokey Robinson has been accused of sexual assault by four former employees, who are seeking at least \$50,000,000 in damages. The 85-year-old was accused of sexual battery, assault, false imprisonment, gender violence and creating a hostile work environment by four women who worked for him.



FORTUNE FORECAST



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ARIES
Without apparent reason you may go into your shell today. No doubt you will acknowledge the contribution of others, but Ganesha says you have to do more than that. Without any apparent reason, you may feel like retreating into your shell today. While you will likely acknowledge the contributions of others, Ganesha advises that you need to do more than that; you should share your knowledge with your peers.

TAURUS
Your thinking is expected to be immensely clear and focused today, according to Ganesha. This makes it a great day for holding important meetings with colleagues and partners, resolving vital issues, and entering into new business tie-ups. Knowing what you want and how to achieve it will give you a tremendous advantage. Those engaged in joint ventures may experience a windfall.

GEMINI
Today will be a day of joy, happiness, and festivities at home. You will likely try to spend as much time as possible with your children and will enthusiastically participate in home improvement projects. You will be able to resolve pending issues at home by taking an intelligent interest in them, says Ganesha.

CANCER
Ganesha says that you may feel tired and weak, but in the office or business, you will be relaxed and less tense. Ganesha advises that you should be careful to fulfill the new responsibilities entrusted to you. You will spend money on travel.

LEO
You may not get the desired results despite working hard. Ganesha advises that you keep your weaknesses and mistakes in mind before starting anew. You may need to do more than necessary to ensure that your business relationships remain strong. Your finances will improve, says Ganesha.

VIRGO
Issues regarding religious beliefs and spirituality may surface today. Ganesha advises you to pursue your goals single-mindedly to achieve success in your chosen field and to fully exploit your abilities and talents. You will be more logical and calculative, rather than emotional, in matters of relationships.

LIBRA
Ganesha says that higher officials in your workplace may be displeased with you, and you may face issues with them. This may cause you to feel mentally depressed and down, but by the afternoon, you should be able to impress them with your work. Ganesha advises that today is not a good day to try out any new business ventures.

SCORPIO
As the saying goes, "Life is the best teacher," and you may experience this today. You may learn to survive in a highly competitive market, which may attract a lot of envy, but nothing will bother you. Ganesha reminds you of the adage, "To err is human, to forgive is divine," so it's fine even if you commit some errors.

SAGITTARIUS
Lengthy business meetings will keep you occupied almost throughout the day. Ganesha suggests that you may add value to your work by taking your co-workers' suggestions and inputs. Implementing these inputs will prove highly beneficial in the long run.

CAPRICORN
Now is the perfect time to showcase your talents and skills. You are all geared up to hit your target and do everything that needs to be done. Your efforts will not go in vain, as they will bear fruit, says Ganesha. You will spend quality time with your family and catch up with old friends.

AQUARIUS
You will spend the day introspecting, but mental peace may still seem distant. Some unavoidable circumstances will force you to handle situations with diligence, says Ganesha. Due to your devotion to the Almighty and spirituality, you will be able to deal with problems quite well.

PISCES
It is usually difficult to be part of one team and work as a member of two teams, but today you can do anything you want. You will be able to demonstrate your expertise to your team and will be praised by all. Women will make a profit today and will feel encouraged.

Lauren: Haven't felt typecast

New Delhi: Dancer-actress Lauren Gottlieb is saying she hasn't felt underestimated or typecast and feels respected for her dedication and experience. She emphasises her focus on contributing meaningfully to every project, beyond personal gain.

Asked if there have been moments where she felt underestimated or typecast, and how did she navigate them, Lauren told this agency: "Honestly, no—and I feel really grateful to say that. If anything, I've felt the opposite. I've been treated with a lot of respect in the spaces I've worked in."

The 36-year-old actress added: "I think that comes from people seeing the journey I've taken, the years of training, the projects I've been part of, and recognizing the work and dedication behind it."

Lauren was a contestant on the third season of the reality dance competition *So You Think You Can Dance* and played the lead role in the 2013 Indian dance film *AB-CD: Any Body Can Dance*.

She was a runner up in the sixth season of *Jhalak Dikhhla Jaa* with choreographer and partner Punit Pathak in 2013. Two years later, she also judged the eighth season of the show.



New Delhi: Actress Wamiqa Gabbi, who is gearing up for the release of her upcoming film *Bhool Chuk Maaf*, has talked about what makes the topic of love and romance blended with comedy so universally popular. Wamiqa told this agency: "It's love only. Love can keep us in unity generally as a world. That is why it is universal. It is a feeling that makes you feel good."

The actress said she is so glad that after a long time a film like *Bhool Chuk Maaf* with a script with comedy and romance, came her way. Talking about the film, the actress said: "By the way, I felt it was very less 'filmy pyaar' between Ranjan and Tittli. The way they fight or love is so beautiful. When I

Wamiqa's take on love, romance

heard the narration, it was like, 'is this a romantic film?' in that 'nok-jhok (playful banter)' there was love. I am so glad I got to work with such an amazing cast."

The film is directed by Karan Sharma and produced by Dinesh Vijan under the Maddock Films banner, with music by Tanishk Bagchi, lyrics by Irshad Kamil, and vocals by Tanishk Bagchi and Madhubanti Bagchi.



Nikita on her UPSC dream

Mumbai: Actress Nikita Dutta opened up about her formative years, sharing that her childhood was marked by a strong sense of discipline, structure, and routine. Raised in an environment where rules and responsibilities took precedence, she credited this upbringing for instilling values of order and perseverance—traits that continue to influence her personal and professional life. At a recent event, Nikita also shared an interesting revelation about her early ambitions—she once wanted to appear for the UPSC exams and pursue a career in the civil services. Long before she stepped into the world of showbiz, the actress envisioned herself serving the nation as a civil servant, reflecting the disciplined upbringing that shaped her early years.

Most recently, she featured in the heist action thriller *Jewel Thief - The Heist Begins*. Directed by Kookie Gulati and Robbie Grewal, the film also starred Saif Ali Khan, Jaideep Ahlawat, and Kunal Kapoor.



Made-in-Kerala carpet steals show at Met Gala

New York: The 2025 edition of Met Gala gives fashion fans time to dissect every look. Shah Rukh Khan's Sabyasachi ensemble, for instance, had social media divided, while almost all factions of the latter seemed to 'stan' Diljit Dosanjh's modern-day Maharaja tailoring. Instagram, especially, has been flooded with posts celebrating Indian representation — but many overlooked another standout from the subcontinent: the striking blue carpet.

Also called the 'Met Gala rug', the striking blue floor covering — sprinkled with yellow and white daffodils — perfectly complimented the various fits sported by celebrities in accordance with this year's theme. It was woven by Extraweave, the parent company of Neytt Homes from Cherthala, Alleppey, Ker-



Indian actress Kiara Advani flaunts her costume on the blue carpet

ala, and reportedly took 480 people working over 90 days to bring it to life. The company had provided the carpets for the 2022 and 2023 Met Galas as well.

The Indian brand had knitted the wall-to-wall carpet from natural sisal fibre that was im-

ported from Madagascar, and then shipped the white base carpet in 57 rolls (of four metres x 30metres), with its area size sprawling 6,840 square metres, to New York. Once there, it was hand-painted by local artists. "As much as we appreciate all the love we've been getting, we don't want to take credit for the design of the final rug as that was all done by the Met Gala team. The rug we provided was a blank canvas (white rug) on which the floral design was hand painted," according to an official of the company. Neytt is an extension of the century-old Travancore Mats and Matting Company, which was established in 1917 by the current co-founder Sivan Santhosh. "Through Neytt we wanted to create an exclusive sustainable space using exotic raw materials such as sisal, lycell, and linen to name a few. Our aim is to revolutionise how premium lifestyle floor coverings have been explored till now," Santhosh had told Vogue India back in 2023.

PEANUTS



CALVIN AND HOBBS

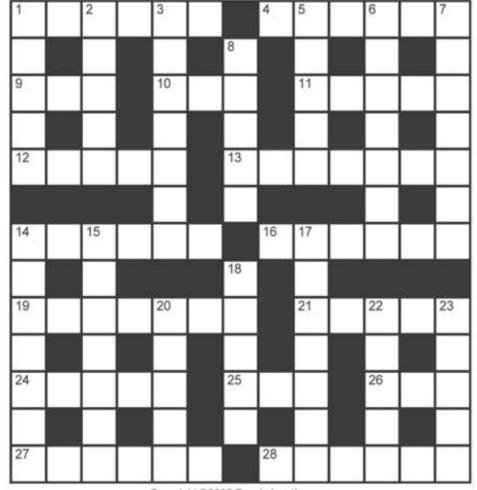


BREVITY



FUN POST

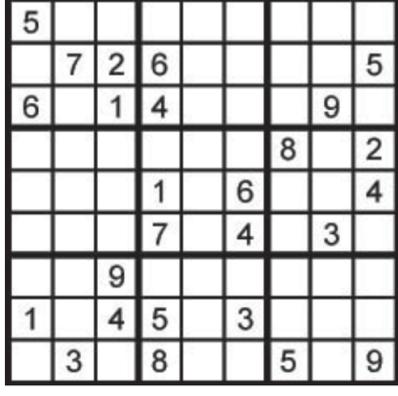
CROSSWORD



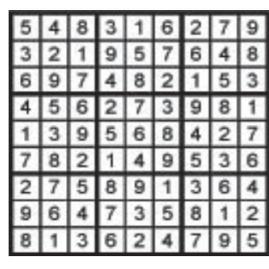
- Across**
- 1 World's largest desert
 - 4 Injury
 - 9 Ornamental vase
 - 10 Suds source
 - 11 Dirigible
 - 12 "The Lord of the Rings" figure
 - 13 Ill will
 - 14 Least
 - 16 Go to bed (4,2)
 - 19 West Indies music
 - 21 Bridal path
 - 24 Kind of card
 - 25 Chinese tea
 - 26 Commuting option
 - 27 Gold unit
 - 28 Longest river in Great Britain
 - 1 Ten-armed cephalopod mollusk
 - 2 Redhead's dye
 - 3 Scams (3-4)
 - 5 Songbird
 - 6 Symbol of purity
 - 7 Headache helper
 - 8 Cut short
 - 14 Book store section
 - 15 Dingo, e.g. (4,3)
 - 17 Out of touch
 - 18 Marsupial feature
 - 20 Sprite
 - 22 Cavalry sword
 - 23 City near Düsseldorf

SUDOKU

To solve the Sudoku puzzle, fill in the boxes in such a manner that every row, column and 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating any.



SOLUTIONS



CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

'Jagannath Dham': Gajapati seeks ISKCON intervention

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 7: Puri's titular king and Shree Jagannath Temple Managing Committee chairman Gajapati Dibyas-ingha Deb Wednesday urged the ISKCON to convince the Digha temple trust board to remove the 'Jagannath Dham' name from the newly-consecrated temple in the coastal town in West Bengal.

In a letter to Govardhan Das Prabhu, chairman of ISKCON Governing Body Commission, Mayapur, Deb said Shankaracharya Swami Nischalananda Saraswati Maharaj of Govardhan Peeth (Puri) and Jagadguru Shankaracharya Swami Avimukteshwaranand Saraswati Maharaj of Jyotish Peeth (Joshihath) have categorically declared that only 'Purushottama-kshetra' Puri is 'Jagannath Dham' and that no other temple or place should be called as such.

Stating that ISKCON plays a key role in performing rituals at Digha's Jagannath temple, Deb, the first servitor of Lord Jagannath in Puri, said, "Having regard to participation of ISKCON representatives in the trust board of Digha Jagannath temple, I request you to use your good offices to convince the Digha temple trust board to desist from using the word 'dham' with reference to Shree Jagannath temple at Digha."

"As you (ISKCON) are well aware, the most revered Shankaracharyas are the highest religious authorities in Sanatana Vaidika Dharma. Moreover, Shankaracharya of Govardhan Peeth is the 'Adi Guru' and 'Parama Guru' in the tradition and culture of Lord Jagannath," he said.



The Muktimandapa Pandita Sabha in Puri Srimandir has stated, citing relevant scriptural declarations, that Shree Jagannath temple in Digha cannot be called 'Jagannath Dham', he mentioned in the letter.

The nomenclatures, such as 'Shree Jagannath Dham', 'Shree Purushottama Dham or Kshetra', 'Shreekshetra' and 'Shree Neelachala Dham' refer only to the 'moola-peetha' (original abode) of Lord Jagannath at Puri and cannot be used for any other place or temple even if Lord Jagannath has been duly consecrated and worshipped there, he said quoting the opinion of the Muktimandapa Pandita Sabha.

Meanwhile, a video released by Govardhan Peeth, Puri showed Shankaracharya Nischalananda Saraswati, who is currently touring Punjab, saying, "Lord Brahma had first installed Shree Jagannath idol in Puri temple. Later, Adi Shankaracharya again installed the 'Darui' (wooden) idols of Lord Jagannath."

"However, the fact remains that the Puri servitors and markets of the city run on Bengali pilgrims' spending. Mamata Banerjee thinks that if Jagannath temple is set up in West Bengal, the Bengali pilgrims will spend money only there. An economy game is being played in the name of Lord Jagannath," the Puri seer said in the video.

Civil defence mock drills in 12 districts

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 7: Civil defence mock drills were conducted in 12 districts of the state Wednesday to assess the preparedness to deal with an emergency amid the escalating tensions between India and Pakistan, officials said.

Among the cities where these drills were held were Bhubaneswar, Sambalpur and Rourkela, they said.

At the Raj Bhavan Square in Bhubaneswar, sirens were blared for five minutes from 4pm, marking the beginning of the exercise.

People lay on the ground as fire services teams doused a controlled blaze and rescued some people stuck there. The situation returned to normal after another siren was blared.

Similar drills were conducted in Angul, Balasore, Bhadrak, Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Ganjam, Dhenkanal, Puri, Koraput and Sundargarh districts, officials said.

Bhubaneswar-Cuttack Police Commissioner S Dev Datta Singh said the drill was conducted with the participation of different agencies, including police, fire services, NCC, Army, Bharat Scouts and Guides, and trained volunteers.

"During the drill, they displayed how to respond in case of a fire and evacuate people stranded in high-rise buildings, among others," he said, adding, "All were willing to give us assistance."

Such kinds of drills will make people prepared for war-like situations and also boost the morale of the security forces, Singh said.

The drills are being conducted across the country on the instructions of the Ministry of Home Affairs.



ENSURING READINESS



CM: Op Sindoor shows zero tolerance towards terrorism

PNN & AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 7: Lauding the armed forces, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday said Operation Sindoor is a perfect example of India's zero tolerance policy towards terrorism under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Majhi was reacting to the Indian military's strikes on terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. He said the entire nation stands united with its brave soldiers.

Stating that 'sindoor' (vermillion) is a symbol of India's tradition, sacrifice and resolve, Majhi said Indian soldiers have always proven that they are ready to uphold the honour of that resolve.

He said that the people across the country were demanding a befitting reply to the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 innocent persons were killed. "India's brave soldiers have given a befitting reply to terrorists. Operation Sindoor has ensured the death of the terrorists and the destruction of their camps. It is a great victory for the country. The world recognised the valour of India," Majhi said.

"Terrorism will not be tolerated under any circumstance. Under the leadership of Modi ji, India's firm steps against terrorism will continue. India will take leadership in the fight against terrorism," Majhi said.

Earlier, in a post on X, the CM said, "India stands united. Salute to our brave armed forces for the precision and resolve shown in #OperationSindoor. Every strike on terror is a message - we will not tolerate threats to our sovereignty."

The chief minister said, "India is now not just defending itself but is moving towards completely eradicating terrorism. We appreciate the



Terrorism will not be tolerated under any circumstance. Under the leadership of Modi ji, India's firm steps against terrorism will continue. India will take leadership in the fight against terrorism

MOHAN CHARAN MAJHI | CHIEF MINISTER

courage of the army. We are with the army. We believe in the victory of the army."

In retaliation to the Pahalgam terror attack, Indian armed forces carried out missile strikes early Wednesday on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, including the Jaish-e-Mohammad stronghold of Bahawalpur and Lashkar-e-Taiba's base Muridke.

In a post on X, the office of Governor Hari Babu Kamhampati said, "The honourable governor lauds #OperationSindoor as a stellar demonstration of the valour, strategic precision, and unwavering dedication of our armed forces."

"Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi ji, India reaffirms its resolute stance against any threat to its sover-

eignty. A clear and unyielding message has been sent - India will brook no tolerance for terrorism in any form," he added.

Deputy Chief Minister KV Singh Deo also hailed the armed forces for the air strikes, saying India remains steadfast in its resolve to safeguard the country.

"India stands firm in its commitment to sovereignty and security. I salute our brave armed forces for their precision and unwavering resolve in Operation Sindoor - a decisive strike against terror that sends a clear message: threats to our nation will never be tolerated. Their courage and sacrifice embody the spirit of a strong and united India. We remain steadfast in our mission to safeguard every inch of our motherland," said Singh Deo.

Leader of the Opposition (LoP) in the Assembly and BJD president Naveen Patnaik also expressed his gratitude to the armed forces.

Patnaik, who is in Delhi, said, "I have been informed that the Indian armed forces have been successful in the operation against terrorists. I congratulate them with all my heart."

Nod to Mukhyamantri Bus Seva with 50% concession for women, students

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: The state Cabinet, led by Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, approved eight proposals, including one to implement Mukhyamantri Bus Seva (MBS) across Odisha with 50 per cent rebate in ticket fare for women, transgenders, students, differently-abled and senior citizens travelling in buses under the scheme, Wednesday.

MBS will connect important business centres, educational and medical hubs, and other places of public interest within and outside the state. The government expects the scheme to generate local employment opportunities and promote small-scale industries through a well-coordinated transport system. Additionally, the initiative will promote women empowerment and strengthen social security of the rural mass through gender inclusiveness.

"Under the scheme, women, transgenders, students, differ-

CABINET DECISIONS

ently-abled and senior citizens can avail a 50 per cent concession in ticket fares in both non-AC and AC MBS service. The buses will be equipped with advanced passenger safety features such as CCTV cameras, live vehicle tracking, passenger information system, and panic buttons. Furthermore, the advanced driver assistance system will be integrated into all MBS buses as an innovative road safety measure," the Transport and Commerce department said. The MBS has been approved for operation till FY2032-33 and will be extended based on periodic review and requirement of the citizens, it said.

The Cabinet approved the continuation of 'Free Diagnostic and Dialysis Services - NIDDAAN' scheme at public health facilities for five years. All forms of user charges except for patients in cabins are waived to reduce out of pocket spending for healthcare, according to

the Health and Family Welfare (H&FW) department.

The state Cabinet also approved continuation of 'Nirmal: Strengthening ancillary services at public health facilities' scheme at an estimated budgetary allocation of Rs 5,174.79 crore for five years, the H&FW department said, adding that the scheme will cover all public health facilities across Odisha.

The state Cabinet also approved a proposal of Rural Development department for launch of new scheme 'constituency-wise allocation' with an objective to construct, or improve, RD roads under 142 Assembly constituencies in rural Odisha. The scheme has been approved for three years (2024-25 to 2026-27) with an allocation of Rs 426 crore.

Among other proposals, the state Cabinet also approved the proposal of Fisheries and Animal Resources Development department for Odisha Veterinary Technical Service (Recruitment and Conditions of Service) Rules, 2024.

Ajit Mishra named addl political secy to Naveen



AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 7: Biju Janata Dal (BJD) Wednesday appointed retired bureaucrat Ajit Kumar Mishra as additional political secretary to party president Naveen Patnaik.

This comes almost a year after Santrupt Misra was appointed political secretary to the BJD supremo.

An OAS officer promoted to IAS rank, Mishra had served as Nabarangpur Collector for four years from 2018, joint secretary in Housing and Urban Development department, additional secretary in Health and Family Welfare department and also as the project director of Odisha State AIDS Control Society.

He was also posted as the chief executive officer of Western Odisha Development Council (WODC).

The BJD supremo had also reconstituted political affairs committee (PAC) and appointed new state-level office bearers and convenors of party's frontal wings. The PAC existed as the highest decision-making body of the party in its initial years, but later became defunct.

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CLASSIFIED AFFIDAVIT

I, Bijay Kumar Sahu, S/o-Late Uday Nath Sahu, At/P.O. - Sarasara, P.S. - Boudh, Dist. - Boudh, PIN - 762026, Odisha, declare by this Affidavit No. - 5655 dtd - 30.04.2025 that now onwards I shall be known as Bijoy Kumar Sahu for all future purposes.

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Executive Magistrate, Balangir, I, Bhima Nanda, R/o. At./P.O.- Randa, P.S.-Puintala, Dist.-Balangir, Odisha, Pin-767002 declare that in Aadhaar card bearing No. xxxx xxxx 2630 my daughter's name has been wrongly mentioned as Dibya Nanda. By this affidavit No.1181 dated 6.5.25 I have changed her name from Dibya Nanda to Priya Nanda for all future purposes.

I, P Srinivash Rao aged about 59 years, S/o. P Rajeswar Rao, resident of Plot No.130/2390, Baramunda, Opposite of B-213, HIG BDA Duplex, Bhubaneswar, Pin-751003, Dist.-Khordha, Odisha hereby declare that I have changed my name from P Srinivash Rao to Paidiseti Srinivash Rao by an Affidavit before the Notary Public, Bhubaneswar on Dt.06.05.2025. Hence I shall be known as Paidiseti Srinivash Rao for all purposes.

By virtue of an affidavit sworn before the Notary Public, Cuttack, Vide affidavit No.- 2505, dated- 28.11.2024, I, Amrit Kumar Kar, aged about 24 years, S/o- Asit Kumar Kar, residing At- Kusunpur, P.O.- Nishintakoili, P.S.- Derabish, Dist.-Kendrapara- 754207, Odisha, declare that I have changed my mother's name from PRIYATRMA KAR to PRIYATAMA KAR. Henceforth, she will be known as PRIYATAMA KAR for all purposes.

I P.K. Bhaskar, son of P. Krishna Reddy, P.O.- Sunabada-2, Dist.-Koraput, presently residing at Qtr. No.-G-182, HAL Township, P.O.- Sunabada-2, P.S.- Sunabada, Dist.-Koraput (Odisha), working at HAL Koraput Division do hereby declare that by virtue of affidavit dated- 06.05.2025 before the Notary Public, Sunabada, I have changed my name from P.K. Bhaskar to Panati Krishnareedy Bhaskar in future and I will be known as Panati Krishnareedy Bhaskar in official and all other purposes.



LAW REVIEW: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi reviews the effective implementation of three new criminal laws at Lok Seva Bhawan in Bhubaneswar, Wednesday

CM proposes digital justice reforms

Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi advocates for e-FIR, e-summons, and mobile forensics to enhance the efficiency of the state's justice system

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 7: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Wednesday called for the integration of technology into Odisha's justice system to enhance efficiency and speed. During a review meeting on the implementation of India's three new criminal laws at Lok Seva Bhawan, Majhi proposed the introduction of e-FIR, e-summons, and e-evidence systems to simplify and expedite legal proceedings. He stressed the importance of making the justice delivery system more accessible and faster by adopting digital tools. "The introduction of electronic systems for FIRs, summons, and evidence will not only ease

the process but also ensure quicker resolution of cases," Majhi said. In line with his digital vision, the Chief Minister suggested connecting critical institutions like jails, hospitals, forensic labs, and courts through video conferencing. "This would allow witnesses and experts to provide their testimonies from remote locations, eliminating the need for travel and further speeding up the judicial process," he said. Majhi also proposed the deployment of mobile forensic vans to enhance the state's forensic capabilities. Reports from the meeting indicated that 32 such vans would be operational soon, improving crime investigation and evidence collection across the state. To further strengthen the justice system, Majhi directed that cases involving mob lynching, extremism, and organised crime should only be overseen by officers of the rank of Superintendent of Police (SP) or higher.

This move aims to ensure that such serious cases receive the attention and expertise they require, he noted. The review meeting also revealed that over 98 per cent of police personnel and officers have already been trained on the new criminal laws, with additional measures being taken to incorporate modern technology in investigations. Moreover, the forensic labs are being upgraded, and 247 new positions for forensic and cyber forensic experts have been created to improve investigative processes. In the prosecution sector, 267 additional posts have been added, and amendments are being made to Odisha's prosecution rules to align with the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNSS) Act. The Chief Minister emphasised that the key to an effective justice system lies in the collaboration and efficiency of all institutions involved, which will ultimately lead to quicker and fairer justice for everyone in the state.

WEATHER

	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	37.6°	37.5°
Min Temp	24.5°	24.6°
Humidity	66%	76%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil

FORECAST
Sunny to Partly sunny

MARKET WATCH

INDEX	VARIATION
SENSEX	80,746.78 ↑ 105.71
NIFTY	24,414.40 ↑ 34.80
DOLLAR	84.70 ↑ 0.40
EURO	96.10 ↑ 0.24
GOLD	₹97,059 ↓ ₹401
SILVER	₹95,850 ↓ ₹82

LOST

I, Chitaranjan Pradhan (57) S/o. Banchhanidhi Pradhan, Vill - Bherenda, P.O. - Dihapadhala, P.S. - Bhanjanagar, Ganjam that while I am travelling my Bicycle from Bherenda to Bhanjanagar SBI on dated 29.04.2025 lost my bag containing my original Registered sale deed vide No.-31779 any where. Several times I searched but did not find. Lodge complain on Bhanjanagar Police Station. I swear this Affidavit above are true and best of knowledge.

Subhadra Shakti Café opens in Kalinga Nagar

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: A new symbol of women's empowerment and entrepreneurship was unveiled with the opening of the Subhadra Shakti Café in the serene Anandabana area of Kalinga Nagar. The café, run entirely by members of the Bhuasuni self help group (SHG), was inaugurated recently by Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida. Speaking at the event, Parida said, "Every initiative like this brings us closer to a self-reliant Viksit Odisha. We are not just promoting livelihoods—we are nurturing leaders. The café is more than just a food outlet—it is a symbol of transformation and opportunity."

The café reflects the continuing success of the state's flagship Mission Shakti programme, which empowers women through training, enterprise development, and collective strength. All staff members have received professional hospitality training at the Institute of Hotel Management (IHM), Bhubaneswar, enabling them to manage the café with competence and confidence. The café offers a diverse menu featuring nutritious breakfast items, fresh juices, herbal teas, smoothies, and mocktails. Beyond food, it serves as a platform for SHG women to step into entrepreneurship, manage operations, and serve their community with pride.

Three arrested in Nuapada drug raid

POST NEWS NETWORK

Nuapada, May 7: Police in Nuapada district arrested three individuals and seized a significant quantity of narcotic injections during a raid at a house in Ward No. 13, Dhobipada, under Jonk police station limits. The accused were produced in court Wednesday.

The arrested individuals have been identified as Aktar Mohammad (55), Sohel Mohammad (23), and Shah Rukh Khan (32), all residents of Dhobipada in Khariar Road's Ward No. 13. Police recovered two mobile phones and 622 vials of Pentazocine Lactate injections (30 mg) from their possession.

In a press conference at the district police headquarters, Superintendent of Police GR Raghavendra stated that the operation was part of a district-wide anti-drug campaign that began on April 13. Under his directive, station officers have formed dedicated teams to conduct raids in areas suspected of drug trafficking. Khariar Road has seen a rise in illegal drug activities recently, prompting increased police surveillance. Acting on a tip-off, a team led by Jonk police station officer Pradeep Dharua raided Aktar Mohammad's residence on Tuesday, resulting in the seizure of the injections.



The accused are believed to have sourced the injections from Raipur, Chhattisgarh, and were allegedly distributing them across Khariar Road and nearby areas. Police suspect that the drug racket has a network extending beyond the district. Investigations are ongoing, with further details expected to emerge.

Min Naik calls for rural innovation



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: A two-day review meeting of the Odisha Rural Development and Marketing Society (ORMAS) started at the SIRD campus here Wednesday, with a strong call for innovation, self-reliance, and deeper rural engagement. Chairing the meeting, Panchayati Raj, Drinking Water and Rural Development Minister Rabi Narayan Naik urged the stakeholders to transform ORMAS into a leading brand representing Odisha's rural strength. In his inaugural address, Minister Naik lauded ORMAS for its consistent efforts in empowering rural producers and artisans through industry promotion, market linkages, and capacity building. ORMAS is in the hearts of the people, Naik said, highlighting the organisation's grassroots credibility and impact. He emphasised the need to keep pace with modern trends and set ambitious yet practical targets to meet the aspirations of rural communities. Naik outlined the vision where ORMAS would become a key driver of self-sufficiency in agricultural production. He called for a focus on improving crop protocols, post-harvest practices, packaging, and mar-

keting to boost incomes and create jobs. Crops like onion, potato, turmeric, chilli, pineapple, and maize were identified as priority areas for development based on state's diverse agro-climatic zones. Stressing the importance of innovation, the Minister proposed the creation of local processing units and an integrated entrepreneurial cycle to strengthen the rural economy. He noted that each step in the production and marketing chain—from cultivation to final sale—offered significant employment opportunities. ORMAS chief executive officer Chakravarti Singh Rathore presented an overview of current initiatives and outlined the next steps in enhancing the organisation's outreach and effectiveness. District-level officers also showcased their achievements and plans through presentations, sharing success stories and region-specific challenges. Additional CEO Sanjeev Kumar Singh and other senior officials participated in the deliberations, reaffirming their commitment to ORMAS's mission. The meeting concluded with a renewed focus on aligning rural development strategies with innovation, self-reliance, and sustainability.

Odisha to observe Mental Health Week



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 7: Odisha will observe Mental Health Week across all schools, colleges, and health institutions, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida announced Tuesday. The initiative aims to raise awareness about emotional well-being and combat the stigma surrounding mental illness. Speaking at the Illness to Wellness Awareness Summit

on Mental Health & Wellness organised by the Illness to Wellness Foundation (IWF), Parida said, "Good mental health helps individuals overcome challenges and move forward in life." She highlighted that mental illnesses aren't limited to clinically defined disorders and emphasised the need to normalise discussions around them. Parida raised concerns over increasing mental health issues among the youth. Citing a 2025

study by NIMHANS and international researchers, she said one in ten students experienced suicidal thoughts in 2024, with over a third attempting suicide. "We cannot let this situation prevail. Early intervention is key, particularly in addressing stress, anxiety, and behavioural issues among students," she added. Chief Secretary Manoj Ahuja, the guest of honour, noted that mental health concerns, once seen mostly in urban and student populations, are now affecting rural and tribal communities. To promote wellness among school children, the state has introduced 75 traditional and indigenous games into the curriculum. IWF advisory council chairman Anil Rajput praised the Odisha government's proactive steps, expressing hope that such efforts would inspire broader national action on mental health.

Odisha women leaders hail female forces' briefing

Politicians celebrate women empowerment as female officers lead Operation Sindoor briefing, highlighting India's growing gender inclusivity in defense

MANOJ KUMAR JENA, OP

Bhubaneswar, May 7: As the nation hailed the success of Operation Sindoor—India's precision military response to the horrific Pahalgam terrorist attack—Odisha's women politicians joined the chorus of praise, particularly for the historic moment when two female officers led the official media briefing. The nation woke up to a wave of patriotic fervour as news broke of India launching preci-

sion missile strikes on nine key terror targets across Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK). The retaliatory operation came in the wake of the brutal killing of 26 Indian tourists by terrorists in Pahalgam. Among the major targets were strongholds of terror outfits like Lashkar-e-Taiba in Muridke and Jaish-e-Mohammed in Bahawalpur. In a defining moment for India's armed forces and a symbol of women empowerment, two senior women officers—Wing Commander Vyomika Singh from the Indian Air Force and Colonel Sofiya Qureshi from the Indian Army—took the lead in briefing the media about the operation. This unprecedented move was widely applauded across the country and marked a turning point in gender representation within the military.



Reacting to this, Barabati-Cuttack Congress MLA Sofia Firdous said, "It's a proud moment. The women who led the briefing represent all those whose sindoor was taken away by terrorism. This shows that Indian women are not just survivors but leaders in delivering justice and protecting the na-

tion's honour." BJD spokesperson Lekhasri Samantsinghar also praised the development. "It's the first time in Indian history that women officers have led a military operation briefing. This proves how women are excelling in every sector. When given a chance, they don't just participate—they

lead." BJP state secretary Kasturi Mishra called the event symbolic on multiple fronts. "The terrorists told the Pahalgam victims to 'tell Modi'. Today, Modi ji replied through this strike. And to top it off, women officers represented the mission—sending a powerful dual message. This wasn't just a military strike; it was also a social message about the strength and capability of Indian women." The visible presence of women at the forefront of national defense during such a critical moment has become a rallying point for leaders across party lines in Odisha. It has also sent a larger message about the evolving face of India's armed forces—one that now strongly reflects the growing role of women in national security and public life.

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FAKE CERTIFICATES ROW

Teachers suppress probe by greasing palms of officials



POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur/Korei, May 7: Despite repeated directives from the Directorate of Elementary Education for action against teachers who have obtained their jobs with fake certificates, Jajpur district has seen little progress in this regard.

According to sources, the district has over 200 such fake teachers with 70 of them posted in Korei block alone. Orders sent to the District Education Officer (DEO), either from the Chief Minister's Grievance Cell or the state School and Mass Education department, to identify and act against such individuals have become ineffective.

Sources alleged that these errant teachers have managed to evade action by greasing the palms of some unscrupulous officials to suppress investigation and subsequent measures against them. While other districts have taken action against such fraudulent teachers, those in Jajpur district appear to be enjoying protection.

The Directorate of Elementary Education issued a fresh directive (Letter No. 7820) instructing DEOs to submit detailed reports on fake certificate cases April 23. However, whether this order will yield results in Jajpur remains to be seen.

Lack of action against nine such fake teachers hailing from Ashanajhara village under Korei block is a case in this point. The nine persons have allegedly secured teaching jobs under the Korei education cluster by submitting fake caste certificates showing them as members of Scheduled Tribes (ST). These individuals are posted in government schools at Ashanajhara, SK Gadia, Sheetalgobindpur, Mathurapur, Jaintira, Dhanatri, and Gajendrapur, as well as in MLA High School and Haldigadia Primary School under the block.

Complaints against these fraudulent appointments have surfaced at multiple government levels, but no concrete action has been taken so far.

Earlier, two teachers of same caste hailing from Ashanajhara had been suspended by the then-DEO Ranjan Kumar Giri after allegations surfaced that they had forged caste certificates to secure their jobs.

However, despite the availability of supporting evidence, no action such as suspension of salary or issuance of notice for caste certificate verification has been taken against the nine errant teachers from Ashanajhara.

These teachers are reportedly claiming publicly that financial transactions of ₹2 lakh at the District Education Office and ₹1 lakh at the Block Education Office have been made to suppress an inquiry directed by the Chief Minister's Grievance Cell.

Block Education Officer (BEO) Sudarshan Mallik said that the suspected teachers had been instructed to submit valid caste certificates by April 30. However, none have complied so far. He added that they will be given an extension of up to three months. If they fail to submit valid caste certificates within the deadline, action will be taken, he added.

When contacted, District Education Officer Nityananda Barik said that the responsibility of acting on the order of the CM's grievance cell has been assigned to the BEO. He assured that appropriate steps will be taken following further discussions with the BEO.



MYTHOLOGICAL PLAY: Artists enact a scene from Ramlila at Raghunathdev temple in Taladiha village under Ratanpur panchayat of Tangi block in Khurda district

OP PHOTO

Slain Pahalgam victim's wife hails Op Sindoor

PNN & AGENCIES

Balasure, May 7: Hailing Operation Sindoor, Priyadarshani Satpathy of Balasure, who lost her husband in the Pahalgam attack, said terrorists must now live in fear and would understand the value of a human life.

Priyadarshani's husband, Prashant Satpathy, was among the 26 people killed in the April 22 attack in Pahalgam. "I thank the government for taking such a bold step. Army personnel had assured me near my husband's body that action would be taken, and that has happened today," she told reporters at her home in Ishani village of Balasure district.

"I am elated because the terrorists will now understand the value of a human life and how precious it is. The sacrifice of

my husband has not gone in vain," she said, adding that terrorists who killed innocent people in front of their families must live in fear — if they have survived India's strike.

Indian armed forces carried out missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, including the Jaish-e-Mohammad stronghold in Bahawalpur and Lashkar-e-Taiba's base in Muridke, under Operation Sindoor. Appreciating the operation's name, Priyadarshani said the terrorists had erased the sindoor from the foreheads of many women, and were rightly punished.

"My husband will not return, but such an attack should not happen again anywhere in the world," she said.

An emotionally charged



Priyadarshani said she had confidence the government would act, though she had been anxious about its timing.

"I was confident because I had seen the mood of the government and our soldiers. I am very happy today," she said.

"Terrorism should be completely rooted out — not just from India, but from across the world. People on this planet should live without fear," she added. Priyadarshani said the fight against terrorism must

continue until the end.

"Human life must be valued and respected. I know I cannot be happy all my life, but no one else should have to face this situation," she said.

Satpathy's younger brother, Jayant, said he had been waiting for revenge.

"We do not need money, but revenge for our brother's killing. We are relieved today as the government acted as expected. All the terrorists behind the Pahalgam attack must be punished," he said.

Satpathy, 41, was an employee of the Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering and Technology. He had travelled to Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir with his wife and son on holiday. His nine-year-old son, Tanuj, performed his last rites April 24.

Couple arrested for murder of grandmother

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, May 7: Town police Wednesday cracked the murder case of a 70-year-old woman as it arrested the granddaughter and grandson-in-law of the victim.

The victim was identified Birma Munda, a native of Gambharia (Mundasahi) village under the Town police limits while the accused were Ganga Munda, 35, and her husband Chhotu Munda, 38, in the area.

The incident occurred late Tuesday night when the couple had a heated brawl with the elderly woman over some issue. Enraged, the couple picked up the elderly woman and hurled her to the ground. The woman sustained critical injuries and lost her sense.

The villagers found the woman lying dead at home and informed the police.

Police personnel rushed to the spot and launched an investigation. A forensic team was also pressed into the service.

A case was registered in this connection and the body was handed over to the family members after a post-mortem, IIC Srikant Sahu of Town police station said. Further investigations were on.



RECURRING FLOODS

Farmers demand embankment to restrict erosion of farmland



POST NEWS NETWORK

Khandapada, May 7: With recurring annual flood waters from Kusumi and Kuanria rivers swallowing vast stretches of fertile farmland and converting those into barren sandbars, distressed farmers from basin village have once again urged the Water Resources Department to take immediate and lasting action to safeguard their land and livelihoods.

According to reports, the confluence of the Kusumi and Kuanria rivers near the villages of Kontilo, Duaragaan, and Dhanachangada has become a hotspot of agricultural destruction. Seasonal floods not only erode the riverbanks but also deposit large quantities of sand, rendering the submerged land unfit for paddy cultivation.

A stream, known as the Kamai river, formed at this junction flows through a deep gorge — nearly 150 feet deep — and eventually merges with the Mahanadi river approximately four kilometers downstream.

In an effort to protect nearby settlements and farmland, the Water Resources Department

has constructed embankments on both sides of the Kamai river. A 2.5km-long embankment runs along the southern bank — from Kamai bridge to Dhanachangada — while a 4-km stretch has been built on the left bank — from Kantilo sub-road to Dhabanighai and Bhagabat Mundia.

Despite these interventions, around 1,000 acres of farmland between the Kamai river and its left embankment — including Chanapata, Patakukuta, Bolupata, Kendua, and Mareikana — continue to be submerged during floods. Paddy farming in these areas has become nearly impossible. Instead, farmers are forced to cultivate less water-sensitive crops such as brinjal, green gram, black gram, horse gram, and groundnut — especially pulses, which yield relatively better.

However, reports said, strong flood currents continue to carry silt and sand deep into farmlands. In many cases, the riverbank is eroding significantly each year, consuming more agricultural land into the river's bed.

Frustrated by years of inac-

tion, farmers have repeatedly appealed to the authorities for stronger protective infrastructure. Their primary demand is the construction of a 150-foot-long and 2-metre-high stone embankment (escape structure) at the confluence of the Kusumi and Kuanria rivers, in the downstream. They believe such a structure would trap incoming flood debris and minimise sand deposits, providing a much-needed shield for their land.

During peak flood season, the Kamai river rises dramatically, often breaching its banks and flowing at heights of 25 to 30 feet. A well-designed embankment, farmers argue, would prevent such overflows and reduce damage to cropland.

However, despite repeated appeals from affected farmers over the years, the authorities have allegedly failed to implement permanent flood control measures. Though the state government spends crores annually on embankment maintenance and new constructions, allegations have surfaced that the funds are being misused or misdirected without addressing urgent needs.

Meanwhile, Assistant Engineer of the Water Resources Department, Ram Mohan Behera, acknowledged the concern and said that if the embankment is deemed necessary, the suggestion will be forwarded to higher departmental authorities. "After an on-site inspection, appropriate measures would be undertaken," he said.

University hostel inmate found dead

POST NEWS NETWORK

Chhatrapur, May 7: A hostel inmate of Centurion University, located near IREL Square under Chamakhandi police jurisdiction in Ganjam district, has reportedly died Tuesday under suspicious circumstances.

The deceased student, D Purushottam Reddy, was from Lakshmiipur village in Chhatrapur block. He was undergoing training under the Odisha Skill Development Programme.

Meanwhile, Purushottam's mother D Tarinamma Reddy demanded a probe claiming that her son was in good health when he left for the hostel. She has also filed a written complaint at Chamakhandi police station.

Based on the complaint, the police have registered a case and launched an investigation. Tarinamma said she got a call from the university late at night informing her that her son was unwell and experiencing chest pain. He was reportedly taken to Chhatrapur hospital in an auto-rickshaw for treatment, where doctors declared him dead on arrival.

However, the university authorities have yet to offer any clarification regarding the incident. The family also alleges that university officials abandoned the body at the hospital and left.

The post-mortem was conducted Wednesday. The police said the exact cause of death will be known after the autopsy report is received.

EAST COAST RAILWAY	
File No. DRM/Engg/KUR/25-26E-Tender/10 Dt. 05.05.2025	
1) Tender No. etenderEastkur-35-2025, Dtd. 29.04.2025	
DESCRIPTION : NEW WORKS, ADDITIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO THE EXISTING STRUCTURES, ALL ORDINARY REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE WORKS OF MISCELLANEOUS NATURE AND SUPPLIES EACH COSTING Rs.5,00,000/- OR LESS IN THE SECTION BARANG (EX) TO JENAPUR (EX) INCLUDING KAPILAS ROAD TO GURUDUHATIA (EX) AND NERUNDGI TO SALAGAON UNDER ASSISTANT DIVISIONAL ENGINEER-I/CUTTACK FOR THE PERIOD UPTO 30.06.2026.	
Approx Cost of the Work (₹): 130.98 Lakhs, EMD (₹): 2,15,500.00	
2) Tender No. e-tender-eastkur-32-2025, Dtd. 29.04.2025	
DESCRIPTION : UPGRADEMENT OF FREIGHT WAGON MAINTENANCE FACILITIES AT SICK LINE NEAR ROH DEPOT/PARADEEP. (FOR P.WAY WORK)	
Approx Cost of the Work (₹): 31.75 Lakhs, EMD (₹): 63,500.00	
3) Tender No. e-tender-Br-KUR-29-25, Dtd. 24.04.2025	
DESCRIPTION : PROPOSED STRENGTHENING AND REPLACEMENT OF CORRODED MEMBERS WITH METALIZED NEW MEMBERS AND REPAIRING OF BR. NO. 950DN BETWEEN GANJAM - CHATRAPUR STATIONS OF KHURDAROAD DIVISION	
Approx Cost of the Work (₹): 274.03 Lakhs, EMD (₹): 2,87,000.00	
4) Tender No. e-tenderEastkur-33-2025, Dtd. 28.04.2025	
DESCRIPTION : PROVISION OF 08 NUMBER OF GOOMTY IN CONNECTION WITH "CONVERSION OF EXISTING UP LINE JAKHAPURA TO HARIDASPUR INTO ABIDIRECTIONAL LINE"	
Approx Cost of the Work (₹): 327.97 Lakhs, EMD (₹): 3,14,000.00	
Completion period: 12 (Twelve) Months (for Sl. No. 1 & 3), 06 (Six) Months (for Sl. No. 2) & 09 (Nine) Months (for Sl. No. 4)	
Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1500 Hrs. of 21.05.2025 (for all the tenders).	
No manual offers sent by Post / Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.	
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tender is available in website: https://www.ireps.gov.in	
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / Corrigendum issued for this tender.	
Divisional Railway Manager (Engg), PR-100/Q/25-26, Khurda Road	

EAST COAST RAILWAY	
Tender Notice No. C-NIT-RR3-BRGA-CMU-WP/01, Dtd. 29.04.2025	
NAME OF WORK: TENDER FOR PROVISION OF REFRESHMENT ROOM (GENERAL MINOR UNIT-WOMEN) AT PLATFORM NO. 01 OF BARGARH ROAD (BRGA) STATION FOR THE PERIOD OF 05 (FIVE) YEARS.	
Reserve Price per Annum: ₹1,94,552/-, EMD: ₹50,000/-, Cost of Tender Document: ₹2,500/- + @ 18% GST = ₹2,950/- (Non-refundable), Time Period: 5 Years.	
Date & Time of Closing of Tender: 21.05.2025 at 1100 hrs.	
Date & Time of Opening of Tender: 21.05.2025 at 1130 hrs.	
Complete details are available at website: www.ireps.gov.in	
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/ PR-95/Q/25-26 Sambalpur	

EAST COAST RAILWAY	
Tender Notice No. SRDCM-KUR-03-ENQ-01-2025 Date: 25.04.2025	
DESCRIPTION : CONTRACT FOR OUTSOURCING OF MAN-POWER FOR OPERATION OF COACH INDICATION BOARD TRAIN INDICATION BOARD A U T O A N D M A N U A L ANNOUNCEMENT SYSTEM AND FACE TO FACE ENQUIRY, TELEPHONIC ENQUIRY, COACH GUIDANCE BOARDS AND OTHER ALLIED WORKS PERTAINING TO PASSENGER ANNOUNCEMENT AND INFORMATION FACILITATION ROUND THE CLOCK AT BHUBANESWAR, CUTTACK, KHURDA ROAD, PURI, BHADRAK, JAJPUR, KEONJHAR ROAD, BRAHMAPUR, BALUGAON, PALASA, DHENKANAL, AN G U L , C H A T R A P U R , I C H C H A P U R A M , S O M P E T A , M A N C H E S W A R , K H A L I K O T , L I N G A R A J T E M P L E R O A D , T A L C H E R R O A D , N I R A K A R P U R , K A L U P A R A G H A T , S A K H I G O P A L R A I L W A Y S T A T I O N S & C O M M E R C I A L C O N T R O L O F K H U R D A R O A D D I V I S I O N F O R A P E R I O D O F 02 (TWO) YEARS (730 DAYS) FROM THE DATE OF COMMENCEMENT OF WORK.	
Approx Cost of the Work (₹): 7,26,02,415/-, EMD (₹): 5,13,000/-, Completion Period: 730 Days.	
Tender Closing Date and Time: At 1100 Hrs. of 19.05.2025.	
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/ Fax or in person shall be accepted against such e-tenders. All such manual offers shall be considered invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.	
Complete information including e-tender documents of the above e-Tender is available in website: www.ireps.gov.in	
Note: The prospective tenderers are advised to visit the website 10 (Ten) days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes / corrigendum issued for this tender.	
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager, PR-99/Q/25-26 Khurda Road	

Waterman Rajendra Singh joins Baitarani Banchoo Yatra

POST NEWS NETWORK

Keonjhar, May 7: Indian environmentalist Rajendra Singh, also known as Jal Purush or Waterman for his work in water conservation, joined the 'Baitarani Banchoo Yatra' in this district Wednesday as part of a two-day visit to raise awareness about the protection of the Baitarani River.

The drive began from Gonasika, the river's origin point. During his interactions with the locals, the conservationist emphasised the urgent need to safeguard rivers, forests, and land from industrial exploitation.

"The Baitarani belongs to the people, not a commodity for companies," he said, adding, "Industries are using river water to transport iron ore through slurry pipelines,



which harms tribals, forests, and ecosystems."

He said the purpose of the campaign is to make people aware of the vital link between water, land, and forests, and to check destructive practices. Sudarshan Das, coordinator of the Mahanadi Banchoo Movement, said the sacred Baitarani worshipped like the Ganga is under threat. "It is the lifeline of Keonjhar,

Mayurbhanj, Jajpur, and Bhadrak districts. Its survival is crucial for both people and wildlife," he said.

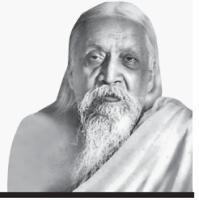
Participants alleged that despite government restrictions, companies are drawing water from the river during dry months, leading to shortages downstream.

The group will visit an intake well and slurry pipeline in Basantpur Thursday, followed by a visit to the Kanpur Irrigation Project site to meet displaced and affected farmers.

Activists, including Padma Shri Daitari Naik of Keonjhar and Ashok Thakkar of Barbil, joined the yatra. The group also plans to visit the Sona and Karo rivers in the Joda mining area, where pollution from mining and industrial activities has become a growing concern.

इंडियन बैंक Indian Bank		ZONAL OFFICE : SAMBALPUR		APPENDIX-IV [Rule-8(1)]	
ALLAHABAD		Shyam Arcade, Khetrajpur, Sambalpur-768003		POSSESSION NOTICE (For immovable property)	
Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Indian Bank under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 8 and 9 of the Security interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a Demand Notice calling upon Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Legal Heirs/Mortgagor(s) to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said Notice. The Borrower(s) having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Legal Heirs/Mortgagor(s) and the public in general that the undersigned has taken SYMBOLIC POSSESSION of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 & 9 of the said rules. The Borrower(s)/Guarantor(s)/Legal Heirs/Mortgagor(s) in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the Indian Bank, Chatuanka Branch for an amount mentioned herein below with interest & other expenses thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to the provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.					
CHATUANKA BRANCH / Name & Address of the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) / Legal Heirs / Morgagor(s) / A/c. No.	Amount Payable as on specified date	Date of Demand / Possession Notice	Description of the immovable property		
Borrower: Late Hemant Panika, represented by Legal Heirs: 1) Mrs. Chandrakanti Panika, W/o- Late Hemant Panika, 2) Mr. Purnada Panika, S/o- Late Hemant Panika, 3) Mr. Chandan Panika, S/o- Hemant Panika, 4) Mrs. Namita Panika, D/o- Late Hemant Panika, 5) Rasmita Panika, Minor Daughter of Late Hemant Panika / Guarantor & Morgagor: Late Diga Panika, represented by Legal Heirs 1) Mr. Prabhulal Panika, S/o- Late Diga Panika, 2) Mr. Mouzi Panika, S/o- Late Diga Panika, All are resident of Village: Kandabahal, PS: Kantabanji, Dist.: Bolangir, Odisha / A/c. No.: 50067872031 (CC-Poultry)	₹16,38,858.00 as on 05.02.2025 plus interest & cost thereon	06.02.2025 / 01.05.2025	All that piece and parcel of property recorded in the name of Late Diga Panika, S/o- Late Braja Panika bearing Khata No.: 139/195, Plot No.: 2472/2477, Area: Ac.0.70 dec. and Plot No.: 2472/2485, Area: Ac.0.30 dec. with Total Area: Ac.1.00 dec. at Mouza: Dhamandanga, PS: Kantabanji, Dist.: Bolangir, KISSAM: Gharbari. The Property is Bounded by- North: Narindira Majhi, South: Tapan Panika, East: Hadu Majhi, West: Sitaram Majhi.		
Date: 07.05.2025, Place: Sambalpur	Authorised Officer, Indian Bank				

“Our actual enemy is not any force exterior to ourselves, but our own crying weaknesses, our cowardice, our selfishness, our hypocrisy, our purblind sentimentalism.”
SRI AUROBINDO



Two-Pronged Threat

Last month, Islamist gunmen – two of whom have been identified as Pakistani nationals – slaughtered 26 civilians in Kashmir. It was a brutal attack, in which Hindu tourists, including one from Nepal, were singled out for slaughter. And yet, it was not surprising: terrorist groups have long operated freely from Pakistani soil, with the tacit or explicit support of Pakistan’s powerful military.

What might be different this time is that India may have finally found a way to push back, including through military strikes on Pakistani terror camps – strikes that Indian officials claimed were “measured, responsible, and designed to be non-escalatory in nature.” Despite the risks of tit-for-tat retaliation, India, as the stronger side, could escalate or de-escalate the conflict to its advantage.

The threat India faces, however, is not coming from Pakistan alone. China has consistently provided diplomatic and strategic cover for India’s terrorism-sponsoring neighbour. For example, China’s government has repeatedly blocked United Nations sanctions against top Pakistani terrorists. After the latest attack, it praised Pakistan’s counterterrorism efforts, calling the country an “all-weather” strategic partner. The enemy of China’s enemy is its “ironclad friend.”

That leaves India wedged between two closely aligned nuclear powers, both of which claim sizable swaths of Indian territory. Recent crises – from brutal Pakistani terror attacks to brazen Chinese land grabs in the Doklam and Ladakh regions – have highlighted just how acute a threat the Sino-Pakistani strategic axis poses to India.

During his 11 years in power, however, Prime Minister Narendra Modi largely maintained a reactive security posture toward both China and Pakistan, with little strategic deterrence to be seen. The Sino-Indian military standoff that was triggered in 2020 by Chinese encroachments on India’s Ladakh borderlands still has not been fully resolved.

But this time, Modi has offered a calibrated and impactful response, pausing the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), the world’s most-generous water-sharing pact, which grants downstream Pakistan access to over 80 per cent of the Indus Basin waters. Brokered in 1960 by the World Bank, the IWT has long been hailed as a model of cross-border cooperation – one that China has not emulated. (Though its 1951 annexation of the water-rich Tibetan Plateau gave it control over the headwaters of Asia’s major rivers, China has refused to enter into a water-sharing treaty with any of its 18 downstream neighbours.)

But treaties are built on mutual trust and good faith – or, as the IWT’s preamble puts it, “a spirit of goodwill and friendship.” And while India has steadfastly adhered to the treaty for 65 years – even when it meant compromising development in its water-stressed regions – Pakistan has consistently acted in bad faith. For example, it has used the treaty’s dispute-resolution mechanisms to drag India repeatedly into international arbitration over minor engineering differences and obstruct India’s ability to use its rightful share of water. Last year, when India formally sought to update the IWT – to account for unanticipated factors like climate change, groundwater depletion, and population growth – Pakistan refused to negotiate.

Meanwhile, Pakistan has waged what is effectively a proxy war by terrorism against India. The 2008 Mumbai massacre, in particular, is still etched in India’s national memory. In fact, the latest killings occurred shortly after the United States extradited a key Mumbai plotter to India. Pakistan’s army chief, General Asim Munir, recently fanned the flames of conflict by urging Pakistanis to teach their children that Muslims are “different from Hindus in every possible way.”

International law is clear: when a treaty’s fundamental conditions collapse, or one party persistently violates them, the other party has the right to suspend or withdraw from the agreement. For now, India has stopped short of blowing up the IWT, instead placing the treaty “in abeyance,” a term undefined in international law. Modi has thus retained strategic ambiguity, while sending a resolute message: resource-sharing comes with conditions. This is a warning, not a rupture.

To be sure, Pakistan claims that suspending the IWT amounts to an “act of war,” and has retaliated by suspending all bilateral agreements, including the 1972 Simla treaty, which governs peaceful dispute resolution. But this response not only ignores the reasons for India’s decision; it also misrepresents the impact.

India is halting data sharing, design approvals, and inspections under the IWT, while opening the way for actions that Pakistani objections have obstructed, such as reservoir flushing and the desilting of riverbeds. But it is not disrupting current water flows. In fact, India does not have the infrastructure to divert the major rivers flowing to Pakistan, and its storage capacity on those rivers is negligible. So, while India is imposing costs on Pakistan, in an attempt to hold its leaders accountable for state-sponsored terrorism, it is not punishing the Pakistani people.

The six rivers of the Indus Basin have sustained local civilisations for millennia, and they can continue to do so. But no country can be expected to uphold a peacetime treaty while suffering the consequences of an undeclared war. If Pakistan does not want India to turn off its taps by building new hydrological infrastructure, it must demonstrate a verifiable commitment to peace, arrest terrorist leaders, shut down terrorist-training camps, and end its support for cross-border violence.

The writer is Professor Emeritus of Strategic Studies at the New Delhi-based Center for Policy Research and Fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy in Berlin.



Brahma Chellaney

**RECENT
CRISES –
FROM BRUTAL
PAKISTANI
TERROR
ATTACKS
TO BRAZEN
CHINESE LAND
GRABS IN
THE DOKLAM
AND LADAKH
REGIONS
– HAVE
HIGHLIGHTED
JUST HOW
ACUTE A
THREAT
THE SINO-
PAKISTANI
STRATEGIC
AXIS POSES
TO INDIA**

FOCUS INDIA-UK FTA

A CORPORATE COUP

It’s a charming British summer for corporations, following the long-awaited UK-India trade deal signed after three years of negotiations. The Labour Party-led British government has hailed the agreement as “the best deal India has ever agreed to, providing businesses with security and confidence to trade,” and describes it as “a deal for growth.” British Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer stated that the deal would “deliver for British people and business” by boosting the UK economy. Using the Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) model known as the Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP), the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) projects that UK exports to India will increase by 59.4%, adding £15.7 billion to the British economy and increasing bilateral trade with India by £25.5 billion.



Bhabani Shankar Nayak

**ACROSS
SECTORS
BUSINESSES
ARE
CELEBRATING
UK-INDIA
TRADE DEAL,
EYEING INDIA’S
60 MILLION-
STRONG MIDDLE
CLASS, WHICH
IS PROJECTED
TO GROW TO A
QUARTER OF A
BILLION BY 2050**

However, the same DBT modelling reveals that the deal will result in a meagre 0.2% increase in real wages in Britain. As such, it offers little to no tangible benefit for working people in the UK. The agreement includes a provision exempting Indian and British workers from social security payments for three years—a modest gesture that has nonetheless been branded “an unprecedented achievement.” The deal also claims to improve living standards in India. But how? There appears to be little, if anything, in the agreement for Indian workers. Despite this, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has described the trade pact as “ambitious and mutually beneficial.” Neither the Indian nor British prime ministers have acknowledged that this trade deal primarily serves corporate interests, offering substantial gains to businesses while leaving ordinary workers on both sides largely un-



The UK-India Free Trade Agreement primarily serves corporate interests, offering substantial gains to businesses while leaving ordinary workers on both sides largely untouched

touched. The UK-India trade deal is a corporate coup.

Corporate leaders are hailing the UK-India Free Trade Agreement as pathbreaking. From Chivas Brothers Ltd. and Diageo to Mark Kent, Chief Executive of the Scotch Whisky Association, many have welcomed the deal as “transformational,” particularly in light of opportunities in India’s whisky market. Across sectors—ranging from biomedical corporations and food corporations to luxury knitwear brands, banking institutions, and even the sports industry led by the Premier League—businesses are celebrating the deal, eyeing India’s 60 million-strong middle class, which is projected to grow to a quarter of a billion by 2050. According to the International Monetary Fund’s (IMF) World Economic Outlook published in April 2025, India is expected to become the world’s third-largest economy within the next three years. Such a lucrative market has compelled British corporate leaders to swallow the pride and set aside colonial-era prejudices, embracing a trade reality though in a racialised capitalist sys-

tem where white supremacy continues to thrive.

Even the section titled “Protecting Our Values” in the trade agreement carries a condescending tone that echoes British colonial attitudes. It reads: “Throughout the negotiations, we have championed our values—securing India’s first-ever chapters on anti-corruption, consumer protections, labour rights, the environment, gender equality, and development. We have protected the NHS, defended the UK’s interests, ensured the points-based immigration system is not affected, upheld our high food standards, and maintained our animal welfare commitments throughout. This deal demonstrates our commitment to both workers and businesses, staying true to our values while driving economic growth.” The language in this paragraph implies as if India lacked principles before this agreement—a patronising assertion that masks deeper, dominant and inherent colonial reminiscences. These lofty declarations serve as rhetorical cover for a deal crafted not by visionary leaders but by shopkeepers—those who focus

on trade margins and tariffs rather than social transformation. True transformational leadership seeks social progress through trade, business, and politics. This agreement, however, is a deal by shopkeepers, for shopkeepers. It offers nothing of substance to the working people of India or Britain, serving instead the entrenched interests of corporate elites in both nations.

In “An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,” Scottish economist and moral philosopher Adam Smith defined Britain during his time as “a great empire for the sole purpose of raising up a people of customers, may at first sight, appear a project fit only for a nation of shopkeepers. It is, however, a project altogether unfit for a nation of shopkeepers, but extremely fit for a nation whose government is influenced by shopkeepers. “Such statesmen, and such statesmen only, are capable of fancying that they will find some advantage in employing the blood and treasure of their fellow-citizens, to found and maintain such an empire.” These words were written in the late 18th century and published on 9 March, 1776, yet they echo unmistakably in the UK-India trade deal of May 2025. The British empire is dead, but its spirit continues to guide its governing elites and their shopkeeper mentality where people are treated as customers and nation-states reduced to mere markets. The celebration of the UK-India trade deal is merely a reflection of this ideological framework, where a corporate coup is presented as mutually beneficial, all while sidelining the interests of working people.

The writer teaches at the London Metropolitan University.

SPECTRUM ONE STATE, ONE RRB

Amalgamating rural banking

Establishment of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) was based upon the report of the Working Group Committee headed by M Narasimha dated 30 July, 1975. The committee recommended the establishment of a new type of banking institution to supplement the efforts of commercial and cooperative banking institutions in the rural sector to develop the grassroots level economy. Later RRB Act of 1976 was passed on 9 February, 1976, expanding their network in mostly lead districts, maintaining a lean structure. Central government, state and sponsored banks held the stake in the proportion of 50:15:35. While the onus of management of RRBs rested on the sponsoring banks, the stake is well diversified.



Gopabandhu Mohapatra

**THE MERGER OF
MULTIPLE RRBs
INTO UNIFIED
ENTITIES WILL
MARK A PIVOTAL
REFORM IN
INDIA’S RURAL
BANKING
STRUCTURE**

The first RRB Prathama Grameen Bank was opened on 2 October, 1975, in Moradabad, which was sponsored by Syndicate Bank. RRBs since then were supervised by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). Initially, 6 RRBs started with 17 branches, and by 1991, the number grew to 196 RRBs with

14,000 branches.

It is pertinent to note that during the last 50 years, RRBs played a critical role in providing banking services to the underserved segments of the economy. RRBs were active in opening bank accounts under PMJDY and used the Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, and Mobile (JAM) trinity to foster financial inclusion. In the recent past, RRBs have posted the highest ever consolidated net profit of ₹4,974 crore during FY23, and their consolidated Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) was at an all-time high of 13.43% as on 31 March 2023. The asset quality measured by GNPA (Gross Non-Performing Assets) at 7.28% was the lowest in the previous 7 years. Credit expansion led to an increase in the consolidated CD ratio to 67.50%, which was the highest in over 15 years.

Though RRBs account for just 2.9% outstanding loans of ₹4.1 lakh crore out of the total bank credit of all banks, they have not only achieved the priority sector lending target of 75% of Net Demand and Time Liabilities (NDTL) but also effectively leveraged

their high priority sector lending portfolio.

In the past, RRBs have initiated phased amalgamations, leading to an expansion in coverage, and increase in branches. By 2005, in phase 1 itself the numbers were reduced from 196 to 67. They were further reduced to 56 banks in March 2016 in phase 2, and in the third phase, the RRBs were merged and the number reduced to 43.

As on 31 March 2023, the 43 RRBs sponsored by 12 Scheduled Commercial Banks have a network of 21,995 branches with operations extending to 30.53 crore deposit accounts and 2.90 crore loan accounts in 26 states and 3 Union Territories.

In the phase 4 amalgamation, under the “One State, One RRB” initiative it is aimed to reduce the number of RRBs to 28 covering 700 districts with more than 22,000 branches. According to the notification of the Finance Ministry, the RRBs present in 11 states - Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha and Ra-

jaasthan will be merged into one entity each.

One RRB in each state will open up opportunities to operate in the entire state and coordinate with the state-level bankers committee as one of the key stakeholders in the banking ecosystem of the state. The policy to limit one RRB in one state will prevent the overlapping clout of different sponsoring banks in the state. A unitary control of one sponsoring bank will be able to shape the RRBs into a powerful banking institution with technology and manpower support to make it more effective. Structurally, this is also the best combination to have one RRB in each state for integrated involvement in the development of the rural economy.

The merger of multiple RRBs into unified entities will mark a pivotal reform in India’s rural banking structure. By reducing fragmentation and fostering scale, the move is expected to bring long-term benefits to both the banking sector and rural customers.

The writer is a retired banker.

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1886: Coca-Cola is invented. According to legend, Dr. John Styth Pemberton, an Atlanta pharmacist, produced the syrup in a brass pot in his backyard. It was first intended as a patent medicine. Today, Coca-Cola is one of the world’s most popular soft drinks and one of the most recognized trademarks.
- 1902: Mount Pelée on Martinique erupted, destroying the port of Saint-Pierre and killing approximately 30,000 people, 15 percent of the island’s population.
- 1970: A month after Paul McCartney announced that he had left the Beatles, the British rock group released Let It Be, their last original studio album to hit the record shops.
- 1980: Following a global vaccination program, the WHO officially declared that smallpox was eradicated; for centuries, the acute infectious disease was one of the world’s most-dreaded plagues.

Letters

TO THE EDITOR

Readers of Orissa Post are most welcome to contribute letters (100 words), articles and columns (between 600-1000 words). Contributors are requested to send their contact numbers and full postal address/email ID. They may also send in their valuable comments, opinion and suggestions, preferably by email, to: edit@orissapost.com



Strategic masterstroke

Sir, In a bold and meticulously orchestrated operation, the Indian Armed Forces launched precision strikes on nine terror hubs, including Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed bases inside Pakistan, killing dozens of terrorists in a decisive retaliation for the Pahalgam terror attack. Executed just before the nationwide mock drills, the timing of the operation was a strategic masterstroke—deceiving Pakistani intelligence and delivering a crippling blow before they could react. The operation, carried out with clinical precision, targeted terror launch-pads, training camps, and arms depots in Pakistan-occupied territories. Backed by real-time intelligence, elite Indian forces executed simultaneous strikes, neutralising key operatives and dismantling the logistics network of terror outfits responsible for cross-border violence. By carrying out the strikes under the cover of domestic military exercises, India masked its operational movements, giving Pakistan no indication of the impending assault. The result was total tactical surprise—and complete mission success. No Indian casualties were reported, underscoring the professionalism and efficiency of the armed forces. The message is now unambiguous—India will strike when and where it chooses and Pakistan’s use of terror as proxy war has a steep price.
N Sadhasiva Reddy, BANGALORE

Laudable initiative

Sir, The Supreme Court of India must be lauded for publishing the assets of certain judges, including that of the Chief Justice of India, in the court’s website. The initiative marks a significant departure from past practices and reflects a growing commitment to openness and accountability in one of the country’s most important and prestigious institutions. The move comes amid growing public concern over the judiciary’s opacity, especially following a controversy involving burnt currency notes found at the residence of a Delhi High Court judge which sparked debates about judicial accountability and the need for greater transparency in judicial conduct and appointments. By voluntarily placing judges’ assets and appointment details in the public domain, the SC has taken a proactive step to address these concerns.
Ranganathan Sivakumar, CHENNAI

'OPERATION SINDOOR'

Red alert declared in UP

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath emphasised ensuring public safety and maintaining law and order across Uttar Pradesh, prompting the DGP to order immediate compliance from all district, commissionerate, and police units



portant installations," UP DGP Prashant Kumar said from his 'X' handle.

"UP Police is alert, equipped with resources, and fully prepared to ensure the safety of every citizen of the state. Jai Hind!" he added.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath emphasised ensuring public safety and maintaining law and order across Uttar Pradesh, prompting the DGP to order immediate compliance from all district, commissionerate, and police units.

The key directives issued include enhancing security at critical installations by strengthening physical security, surveillance systems, and perimeter defenses.

Mock drills under internal security protocols are to be conducted with full preparedness, including pre-briefing and post-debriefing sessions. Participation of all relevant security units has been mandated, the directive said.

The DGP also asked for an audit of police facilities and resources stating that security audits are to be carried out at police lines, offices, depots,

units, and control rooms.

"Deficiencies must be swiftly addressed. Cybersecurity of police servers and websites is also to be reinforced," he said.

"Entry protocols at critical establishments must be tightened with proper identification checks and verification procedures," he added.

Emphasising on close coordination with agencies, he said it is to be maintained with the Army, Air Force, civil defence, intelligence units, and other relevant agencies, adding that senior police officers will oversee the coordination efforts.

About security of strategic movements, he said confidentiality and secure movement of military convoys via highways and railways, ATF/fuel supply for air operations, and protection of railway bridges and tracks are to be ensured.

All movements will follow a "need-to-know" confidentiality protocol, he said.

Directing for heightened vigilance in communally sensitive areas, the DGP said districts with communal sensitivity are to remain on high alert with increased force deployment.

Tight security in Raj

2 airports closed, schools shut in 3 border districts

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Jaipur, May 7: A high alert has been sounded in all border areas of Rajasthan after India's airstrikes Pakistan-based terror bases. Also, Bikaner and Jodhpur airports have been closed.

At the same time, a holiday has been declared in schools today in border cities, including Bikaner, Barmer and Jaisalmer, on the orders of the District Collector. In Bikaner, government employees' leaves have been cancelled, and they have been ordered not to leave the headquarters.

India has carried out airstrikes at nine places in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Bahawalpur, Pakistan, was attacked, where hideouts of the terrorist organisation Jaish-e-Mohammed are located.

Bahawalpur is about 100 km from the Rajasthan-Pakistan border.

Meanwhile Air India in its tweet said, "In view of the prevailing situation, Air India has cancelled all its flights to and from the following stations - Jammu, Srinagar, Leh, Jodhpur, Amritsar, Bhuj, Jamnagar, Chandigarh and Rajkot - till 12 noon 7 May, pending further updates from authorities. Two international flights en route to



Amritsar are being diverted to Delhi. We regret the inconvenience caused due to this unforeseen disruption."

Around 2 am, the sounds of fighter jets were heard in many areas of Jaisalmer-Barmer.

Eyewitnesses said that at first it seemed that India was doing some exercise, but later it came to light that India had carried out an airstrike.

Meanwhile, officials said that four flights, which were going to the states near the Pakistan border, have been cancelled at Jaipur airport. Flight operations from Bikaner airport have also been stopped.

Bikaner District Collector Namrata Vrishni has cancelled the leaves of all the officers and employees of the district. All employees will have to at-

Mock drills conducted in several Rajasthan cities

Jaipur: Acting on the directives of the Ministry of Home Affairs, several cities in Rajasthan, including the state capital Jaipur, conducted large-scale mock drills Wednesday to test wartime civil defence mechanisms. Also, air strike simulation exercises were conducted in Jaipur after over 50 years, while

a high alert was issued in border districts as well. These simulated air strike response exercises were carried out in key urban and border areas, including Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Bikaner, Dausa, Alwar, Sikar, Sirohi, Kota, Barmer, Jaisalmer, Bharatpur, Rawatbhatta, and Sri Ganganagar. In fact, air strike drill was held in Jaipur after five decades. Officials confirmed that for the first time in nearly 50 years, Jaipur witnessed an air strike simulation -- a preparedness effort not seen since the 1971 India-Pakistan War. The mock drill took place at the BSNL office on MI Road, with a warning siren sounding at the Rajasthan Secretariat to alert staff and citizens. The District Collector received a simulated air strike alert via hotline, triggering immediate action to relocate citizens to designated safe zones. Government employees at the Secretariat were also trained on emergency evacuation and rescue protocols. A similar mock drill was conducted at 4 pm in Kota, which, along with Rawatbhatta, has been marked as a high-sensitivity zone by the Central government due to its strategic importance. Civil defence teams, police personnel, and fire brigade units participated in the exercise.



and were seen celebrating the demolition of terrorist hideouts. People in Barmer said that India has taken revenge by conducting airstrikes.

India has carried out airstrikes at nine places in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir

tend their workplace as usual. A mock drill is to be held in Bikaner Wednesday.

Officials said that leave of any officer or employee will not

BKU extends support, puts protests on hold

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Muzaffarnagar (UP), May 7: The Bhartiya Kisan Union (BKU) Wednesday extended its support to the central government over 'Operation Sindoor' and announced the postponement of all its agitations, dharnas and protest.

In a video message posted on Facebook, BKU national spokesperson Rakesh Tikait said the decision was taken keeping in mind the current atmosphere in the country. Earlier, BKU leader Rakesh Tikait had announced a tractor march to protest against the recent terrorist attack in Kashmir Valley's Pahalgam that left 26 people, mostly tourists, dead. The date for the march will be decided in the coming days,

he had informed.

"We have postponed all our agitations and movements due to the situation after Operation Sindoor. We welcome the action taken and urge the government to continue taking strict steps against terrorism," Tikait said.

He also congratulated the authorities on the operation and extended full support to the government in its fight against terrorism. The BKU has been holding protests over various issues related to farmers' interests. Tikait was allegedly heckled at the 'Akrosh' rally organised by some right-wing groups May 2 to protest the Pahalgam terrorist attack that killed 26 people, mostly holidayers, April 22. The farmer leader was reportedly asked to

leave. In the commotion, his turban fell, as seen in some purported videos of the incident.

"The incident was not spontaneous. It was pre-planned and driven by political motives," Naresh Tikait had said. Rakesh Tikait also denounced the alleged heckling, saying he believed it was a political sabotage. Earlier, Naresh Tikait had also announced that the panchayat would be held at the GIC ground to deliberate on the incident, calling it part of a conspiracy orchestrated by a "political party" to weaken the farmers' movement.

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) and the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) had also condemned the alleged attack on Tikait.



Security personnel keep a vigil at the Taj Mahal complex, in Agra, Uttar Pradesh, Wednesday

PTI PHOTO

Food biz without licence not allowed in UP

Initiated in the first week of April by the Food Safety and Drug Administration (FSDA), the campaign aims to bring all food-related businesses -- from street vendors to large restaurants and food manufacturing units -- under mandatory food safety compliance

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Lucknow, May 7: The Uttar Pradesh government Wednesday extended its campaign to help food business operators register themselves and obtain licences till May 31 and said those without valid documents will not be allowed to operate.

Initiated in the first week of April by the Food Safety and Drug Administration (FSDA), the campaign aims to bring all food-related businesses -- from street vendors to large restaurants and food manufacturing units -- under mandatory food safety compliance.

The objective of the campaign is to ensure that every food business operator (FBO) in both urban and rural areas registers and obtains a licence under the Food Safety and Standards Act. The step seeks to guarantee provision of safe and quality food to the consumers, while also curbing unregulated practices in the food sector, the government



said in a statement.

"District-level food safety officers have been instructed to conduct special camps to facilitate on-the-spot registration and licensing for food vendors and restaurant owners. Strict orders have been given to ensure that no food

establishment operates without valid documentation," it said.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has directed that no food business should function outside the framework of food safety regulations. "Despite legal requirements, many

small and large food operators are yet to comply with licensing norms," it added.

FSDA has launched intensive outreach efforts across all districts, holding registration camps and deploying food safety teams to assist businesses. "The campaign is not only about compliance but also public health. Unlicensed food businesses pose risks to consumers and violate legal provisions. Therefore, authorities are ensuring full coverage -- from roadside vendors and dhabs to premium restaurants -- under the drive," the government said.

Thousands of new registrations have been completed during the campaign.

The food safety department has also warned that from May 31, strict action will be taken against food businesses operating without valid licences.

Food safety officers are tasked with enforcing compliance in every district, it added.

Rajasthan to witness prolonged spell of rain, storm for next 3-4 days

Jaipur: Rajasthan will witness a spell of rain and storms for the next three to four days, the Met office said Wednesday. Light to moderate rain with thunderstorms is possible in the southern, eastern and western parts of the state for the next three to four days, with wind speed reaching up to 50 km per hour, the forecast reads. May 12 onwards, the temperature is likely to increase by three to five degrees Celsius. However, in a welcome respite, the state will not witness any heatwave for the next five to six days. Western disturbance remains over western parts of Madhya Pradesh and the surrounding areas in the form of a circulation system. As a result, strong thunderstorms are expected in parts of Udaipur and Kota divisions. Heavy rains, with a wind speed of 50-60 km per hour, are also likely to occur. There is a possibility of light to moderate rain and thunderstorms at some places in Jodhpur, Bikaner, Jaipur, Bharatpur, and Ajmer divisions today.

**GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA
OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI,
BISSAMCUTTACK, RAYAGADA**

E-mail- ori-bissamcuttack@nic.in
NATIONAL COMPETITIVE BIDDING THROUGH e-PROCUREMENT
Identification No. BISSAMCUTTACK.04/2024-25
TENDER CALL NOTICE

No. i-83. The Block Development Officer, Bissamcuttack, District- Rayagada on behalf of Government of Odisha invites percentage rates bids in SINGLE Cover system for the Construction of Additional Classrooms Buildings work (Civil) as detailed in the Detailed Tender Call Notice (D.T.C.N.) from ELIGIBLE Contractors registered with the State Govt. and Contractors of equivalent Grade/Class Registered with Central Govt. for execution of Civil works on production of definite proof from the appropriate Authority.

- No. of Works: 04
- Cost of Tender Paper : Rs.6000/-
- Class of Contractors : "D" & "C"
- Mode of Submission of tender: Tender should be submitted online in www.tendersodisha.gov.in
- Availability of tenders online: From 11.00 AM of 13.05.2025 to 17.00 PM of 19.05.2025.
- All other terms and conditions, details can be seen from the above website.

Sd./- Block Development Officer,
Bissamcuttack

OIPR-19149/11/0008/2526

भारत सरकार
कार्पोरेट कार्य मंत्रालय
त्वरित कॉर्पोरेट समापन प्रसूचका केन्द्र (सी-पेस),
आई.आई.सी.ए. बिल्डिंग, 7वीं मंजिल,
प्लॉट P-6, 7, 8, से.-5,
आई.एम.टी. मानेसर,
गुडगाँव, हरियाणा - 122050
Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in

Government of India
Ministry of Corporate Affairs
Centre for Processing Accelerated
Corporate Exit (C-PACE),
IICA Building, 7th Floor,
Plot P-6, 7, 8, Sector-5,
IMT Manesar,
Gurgaon, Haryana - 122050
Email: roc.cpace@mca.gov.in

**Form No. STK - 6
PUBLIC NOTICE**

[Pursuant to sub-section (2) and sub-section (4) of section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 and rule 7 of the Companies (Removal of Names of Companies from the Register of Companies) Rules, 2016]

Public Notice: ROC/C-PACE/STK-2/248(2)/2024-25/315 Date: 29/04/2025

Reference: In the matter of striking off or removal of names of (3) companies in the state of Odisha under section 248 of the Companies Act, 2013 in respect of:

S. No.	Work Item	CIN	Company Name
1	AB2882656	U51109OR2000PTC006137	GANESH COMPUTECH MARKETING AND SERVICES PRIVATE LIMITED
2	AB3063543	U73100OD2024PTC045695	WILLOWWRAP MEDIA PRIVATE LIMITED
3	AB3484094	U05150OR2019PTC031322	SHREE LINGARAJ MARKETING PRIVATE LIMITED

2. Notice is hereby given that the Registrar of Companies has received applications from the above-mentioned companies under section 248(2) of the Companies Act, 2013 for removal of its/their name (s) from the ground that they have failed to commence business within one year of their incorporation or on the ground that the company(ies) is/are not carrying on any business or operation for a period of two immediately preceding financial years and has/have not made any application (s) within such period for obtaining the status of a dormant company under section 455 of the Companies Act, 2013 or the company(ies) have obtained the status of dormant company/subscribers to the memorandum have not paid the subscription which they had undertaken to pay at the time of incorporation of a company and a declaration to this effect has not been filed within one hundred and eighty days of its incorporation under subsection (1) of section 10A/ have not been carrying on any business or operations, as revealed after the physical verification carried out under sub-section (9) of section 12, but it/they do not wish to continue its/their registration as companies and have, therefore, requested for removal/strike off of its/their names from the register of companies.

3. Accordingly, the Registrar of Companies proposes to remove or strike off the names of the above-mentioned companies from the Register of Companies.

4. Any person objecting to the proposed removal or striking off name of the companies from the register of companies may send his or her objection to the office address mentioned here above within thirty days from the date of publication of this notice.

**Irkan Tirkey
Assistant Registrar**

CBC 07123/11/0160/2526
Centre for Processing Accelerated Corporate Exit



There is naturally the issue of how we adjust to the demands of the global workplace to optimise benefits

FRESH HEAT WAVE SPELL LIKELY IN EASTERN INDIA FROM TODAY

A fresh spell of heat wave may commence over eastern India from Thursday, while rainfall and thunderstorm activity will continue over the northwest and central parts of the country for the next five days, the India Meteorological Department (IMD) said Wednesday



of the day quote

If they will put in carbon tax, and now there is a big if for obvious reasons. If they do put it in, we will retaliate. They will put it on products which really will hurt their own economy and the retaliation will further hurt their economy

PYUSH GOYAL | COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY MINISTER

River erosion has claimed over 1,600 hectares of land in Dhulian, Samserganj, Lalgola and Bhagabangola. We have given the Centre a proposal of Rs 1,300 crore, but they are sitting on it

MAMATA BANERJEE | WEST BENGAL CM

Under the Surcharge Waiver Scheme-2025, domestic (urban and rural) and AP (agricultural power) consumers will be granted various forms of relief concerning their pending/ outstanding dues of electricity bills

ANIL VIJ | HARYANA ENERGY MINISTER

OPERATION SINDOOR

Over 300 flights cancelled

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/ Mumbai, May 7: More than 300 flights have been cancelled and at least 25 airports, including Srinagar, have been temporarily shut for operations amid restrictions in the wake of the armed forces launching missile attacks on terror targets in Pakistan Wednesday morning.

Air India, IndiGo, SpiceJet, Air India Express, Akasa Air, and a few foreign airlines have cancelled their services to and from various airports. Sources said that at least 25 airports in the northern and western parts of the country have been temporarily shut. These airports include Srinagar, Leh, Jammu, Amritsar, Pathankot, Chandigarh, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Shimla, Dharamshala and Jamnagar, they added.

According to one of the sources, more than 300 flights to and from various airports have been cancelled by airlines. IndiGo said it has cancelled more than 165 flights from various domestic airports, including Amritsar and Srinagar, till early morning of May 10 due to airspace restrictions.

The sources said that around 140 flights of Air India Group -- Air India and Air India Express -- have been cancelled. "Air India flights to and from the following stations, Jammu, Srinagar, Leh, Jodhpur, Amritsar, Bhuj, Jamnagar, Chandigarh, and Rajkot, are being cancelled till 0529 hrs IST on 10 May following a notification from aviation authorities on the closure of these airports," the airline said.

In a post on X, the airline also said passengers holding valid tickets for travel during



AIR INDIA, INDIGO, SPICEJET, AIR INDIA EXPRESS, AKASA AIR, AND A FEW FOREIGN AIRLINES HAVE CANCELLED THEIR SERVICES TO AND FROM VARIOUS AIRPORTS

SOURCES SAID THAT AT LEAST 25 AIRPORTS IN THE NORTHERN AND WESTERN PARTS OF THE COUNTRY HAVE BEEN TEMPORARILY SHUT

THESE AIRPORTS INCLUDE SRINAGAR, LEH, JAMMU, AMRITSAR, PATHANKOT, CHANDIGARH, JODHPUR, JAISALMER, SHIMLA, DHARAMSHALA AND JAMNAGAR, THEY ADDED

this period will be offered a one-time waiver on rescheduling charges or a full refund for cancellations. "Due to government notification on airspace restrictions, over 165 IndiGo flights from multiple airports (Amritsar, Bikaner, Chandigarh, Dharamshala, Gwalior, Jammu, Jodhpur, Kishangarh, Leh, Rajkot, and Srinagar) are cancelled until 0529 hrs. IST of 10 May 2025," IndiGo said in a statement.

The airline also said that passengers whose flights are affected can reschedule the

booking on the next available flight or opt to cancel their bookings at no additional cost, and a full refund will be processed. IndiGo operates around 2,200 flights daily. In an update on X, SpiceJet said that due to the ongoing situation, flights to and from Leh, Srinagar, Jammu, Dharamshala, Kandla and Amritsar are cancelled till 0529 hours of May 10.

The affected passengers can opt for a full refund or an alternate flight as per availability, it added. Around 140 flights to and from the Delhi airport

were cancelled by various airlines including foreign carriers Wednesday.

As many as 65 arrivals and 66 departures were cancelled. Besides, 2 international departures and 2 international arrivals were cancelled during the day, one of the sources said.

Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL) operates the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA). Akasa Air, in a post on X, said that due to the prevailing situation in the region, all its flights to and from Srinagar have been cancelled until May 9.

As per data available on flight tracking website Flightradar24.com, United Airlines cancelled its flight from Newark to Delhi while American Airlines cancelled its flight from New York to Delhi. Regional carrier Star Air said its flights to/from Nanded, Hindon, Adampur, Kishangarh and Bhuj stand cancelled for the day.

Meanwhile, Qatar Airways, in a post on X, said it has temporarily suspended flights to Pakistan due to Pakistani airspace closure. India Wednesday closed about 25 flight routes that allow planes to enter Pakistan through the Indian airspace on a day when the armed forces launched missile attacks on terror targets in Pakistan, according to officials.

In retaliation against the Pahalgam terror attack, Indian armed forces, under Operation Sindoor, on early Wednesday, carried out missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, including the Jaish-e-Mohammad stronghold of Bawalpur and Lashkar-e-Taiba's base in Muridke.

Starlink gets nod for satcom services as telecom dept issues LoL

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Starlink, backed by billionaire Elon Musk, Wednesday received government nod for satcom services in India, as Department of Telecommunications issued a letter of intent (LoI) to it.

Starlink is a satellite internet service developed by SpaceX -- the American aerospace manufacturer and space transportation company founded in 2002 by the world's richest man Musk. It provides high-speed, low-latency broadband internet worldwide using satellite technology and is aptly described by some as broadband beamed from the skies. Unlike conventional satellite services that rely on distant geostationary satellites, Starlink utilises the world's largest low Earth orbit or LEO constellation (550 km above Earth).

This constellation of LEO satellites (7,000 now but eventually set to grow to over 40,000) and its mesh delivers broadband internet capable of supporting streaming, online gaming, and video calls.

The Department of Telecom (DoT) on Wednesday issued Letter of Intent to Starlink, sources said adding the latter has agreed to the security terms.

The nod for the satcom offering -- known for its resilience in harsh conditions and conflict zones -- came on a day when India pounded terror camps in Pakistan and POK in pre-dawn strikes, retaliating to the Pahalgam massacre. DoT



sources, however, said that the decision was independent of the developments of the day. The government has already issued licences to Eutelsat OneWeb and Jio Satellite Communications -- the players will be able to start their services after the allocation of radio wave frequencies.

Earlier this week, the government issued stringent security norms mandating legal interception of satellite communication services and barred companies from linking connection of users in any form with any terminal or facility located outside the country's border as well as processing of their data overseas. The tighter security rules also mandate service providers to indigenise at least 20 per cent of their ground segment of the satellite network within years of their establishment in the country.

According to the instruction, the satcom service licence holder will require security clearances for specific gateway and hub locations in India and compliance to monitoring, interception facilities and equipment requirements.

SHORT TAKES

6 students, driver killed in accident

Chandigarh: Six school children and a driver were killed when the SUV they were travelling in collided with a truck at Samana in Punjab's Patiala district Wednesday, police said. The incident occurred on the Samana-Patiala road when the SUV was ferrying the students back from school. Police said six out of the nine children in the vehicle died while one child was critically injured. The deceased children were in the age group of 12-13 years.

MEA to hold talks with Abbas today

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will hold wide-ranging talks with his Iranian counterpart Abbas Araghchi Thursday amid escalating tensions between India and Pakistan. Araghchi is visiting India May 7 and 8 to co-chair the 20th Joint Commission Meeting between India and Iran. It is the Iranian foreign minister's first visit to India since assuming office in August 2024. The rising tension between India and Pakistan is expected to figure in the talks between the two foreign ministers.

ED seizes ₹2.37 cr in crypto, bank deposits

New Delhi: The ED has frozen Rs 7 lakh in cryptocurrency and Rs 2 crore of bank funds apart from seizing Rs 30 lakh cash following searches connected to a money laundering probe linked to alleged financial irregularities in certain Gujarat Waqf properties. Nine sites were raided in Ahmedabad Tuesday. The federal probe agency's zonal office in Ahmedabad recently registered a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, taking cognisance of a local police FIR.

Man found dead on wedding day

Kota: A 26-year-old man was found dead under mysterious circumstances in Bundi near here, hours before he was supposed to get married, police said Wednesday. Prima facie, it appears that Ram Mewara consumed a poisonous substance to end his life, a police officer said. His was found unconscious in his house in Notara Bhopat village early Wednesday, hours before his wedding.

MoU signed between Patanjali varsity, IKS Division and Education ministry

POST NEWS NETWORK

Haridwar, May 7: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between Patanjali University, Patanjali Research Foundation (PRF), and the Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) Division under the Ministry of Education, Government of India. This collaboration aims to promote mutual academic cooperation and advance the preservation and dissemination of India's ancient knowledge traditions.

The MoU was formally signed by Acharya Balkrishna, Vice Chancellor of Patanjali University, and Prof Anil Sahasrabudhe, Chairman of the Implementation Committee of the IKS Division and Executive Committee of NAAC.

Acharya Balkrishna highlighted that the MoU will enable Patanjali University to be recognised as an official IKS Center. The university will host research initiatives, training sessions, workshops, and conferences under the aegis of the IKS Division. A key



feature of the agreement is the development of joint projects to publish and share scholarly research on Indian Knowledge Systems carried out by Patanjali University and PRF.

He further added that both institutions will contribute scientific expertise to the collaboration. One major initiative will be the establishment of a museum at Patanjali University in partnership with the IKS Division. This museum will feature archaeological artifacts along with comprehensive exhibits on India's historical, scientific, and cultural legacy.

The university will also support documentation and preservation projects covering areas such as ancient rituals, manu-

scripts, music, languages, traditional medicine, governance systems, and indigenous disaster management practices. Additionally, Patanjali University plans to develop online certification and vocational courses rooted in Indian Knowledge Systems, with approval from the IKS Division.

Prof. Anil Sahasrabudhe noted that this partnership will support evidence-based research in Indian philosophy, history, and related disciplines. A specialised lab will be developed to explore foundational concepts of Indian knowledge using advanced scientific tools. The IKS Division will also assist in facilitating necessary permissions from other government bodies for future research.

The event was graced by Prof G Suryanarayana Murthy, National Coordinator of IKS Division; Dr Mayank Agarwal, Pro Vice Chancellor of Patanjali University; Dr Vedapriya Arya, Head of Patanjali Herbal Research Division; and other esteemed dignitaries.



People burst firecrackers and wave the tricolour as they hail 'Operation Sindoor' in Prayagraj, Indian armed forces carried out missile strikes on terror targets in Pakistan and PoK under 'Operation Sindoor', in retaliation for the Pahalgam terror attack

Land compensation must reflect equity, justice & fairness: SC

The apex court's verdict came on a batch of cross-appeals filed by the Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation and several landowners challenging the quantum of compensation awarded by the Punjab and Haryana High Court for the land situated in Fazalwas and Kukrola villages in Gurugram district

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: The Supreme Court Wednesday said the compensation for land acquisition cannot be assessed in a mechanical manner but must be guided by considerations of equality, equity, and justice.

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and Ujjal Bhuyan said a fundamental principle in land acquisition jurisprudence was that lands with similar locational and developmental potential must be compensated equitably unless clear, objective distinctions justify otherwise.

The bench said it must caution against an "excessively positivist" approach in matters of land acquisition. "It is

well understood that the very exercise of assessing compensation is antithetical to rigid formalism. Compensation cannot be assessed in a mechanical or formulaic manner but must be guided by considerations of equality, equity, and justice," it said.

The apex court's verdict came on a batch of cross-appeals filed by the Haryana State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation and several landowners challenging the quantum of compensation awarded by the Punjab and Haryana High Court for the land situated in Fazalwas and Kukrola villages in Gurugram district.

The bench observed the acquisition proceedings com-



menced in April 2008 and the public purpose of the acquisition was to build Chaudhary Devi Lal Industrial Model Township.

The determination of compensation for compulsory

acquisitions under the Land Acquisition Act, 1894, was fundamentally an exercise in equity, it added.

The bench said instead of being a "precise science", the law of compulsory acquisition

in India strives to uphold the enduring principles of justice, equality and fairness.

"This ethos is reflected in the procedural framework of the 1894 Act and has been further refined by its successor-statute, i.e., the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013," it said.

The bench said the apex court has consistently held that the determination of market value and corresponding compensation must necessarily factor in the escalation of land prices over time. "Given the inherently dynamic nature of real estate markets, any assessment of land value cannot remain static but must reflect prevail-

ing economic conditions, infrastructural developments, and increasing demand," it said.

The bench partly allowed the appeals of the landowners from Kukrola Village and modified the high court's May 2022 verdict.

It upheld the high court order granting compensation for the "outer belt", that is, lands beyond 52 acre from NH-8, at Rs 62.14,121 per acre.

It noted the high court essentially categorised the lands acquired from these two villages into the "inner belt" and the "outer belt". The apex court noted the "inner belt" referred to lands abutting NH-8 up to a depth of 5 acre whereas the "outer belt" comprises lands beyond that limit.

India strikes

OPERATION SINDOOR

Indo-Pak standoffs



India and Pakistan have shared a turbulent history since their partition in 1947, marked by multiple wars, skirmishes, and cross-border tensions. Here's the timeline of India-Pakistan armed conflicts:

1947 (first Indo-Pak War)

The war, also known as the First Kashmir War, broke out over the then princely state of Jammu and Kashmir between the newly independent nations India and Pakistan. It began in October 1947 when Pakistan-backed tribal militias invaded the princely state. In response, post the accession of Jammu and Kashmir to the Indian Union by Maharaja Hari Singh, India sent its troops to defend the region, leading to full-scale conflict between the two nations.

1965 (second Indo-Pak War)

The armed conflict broke out August 5, 1965 over Kashmir. It was triggered when thousands of Pakistani soldiers, disguised as local insurgents, infiltrated the Indian territory across the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir.

1971 (Bangladesh Liberation War)

The 1971 Indo-Pak War was triggered by Pakistani military's crackdown on East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and its demand for independence. India entered the war in support of the Bangladeshi independence movement, and after intense fighting on both the eastern and western fronts, Pakistan's forces surrendered December 16, 1971.

1999 (Kargil War)

The 1999 Kargil War was a high-altitude conflict between India and Pakistan, fought from May to July after Pakistani troops and terrorists occupied peaks in the Kargil sector of Jammu and Kashmir. India launched 'Operation Vijay' to reclaim the territory, supported by the Air Force's 'Operation Safed Sagar'. The war ended July 26 with India regaining control, a day now marked as 'Kargil Vijay Diwas'.

2016 (Uri Attack)

Following the terrorist attack on an Indian Army base in Uri, Jammu and Kashmir, on September 18, 2016, which killed 19 soldiers, India conducted a surgical strike on September 28-29 across the LoC. The Indian Army targeted multiple terrorist launch pads in PoK, claiming significant casualties among terrorists preparing to infiltrate.

2019 (Pulwama attack)

On February 26, 2019, the Indian Air Force carried out airstrikes on a Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorist training camp in Balakot, Pakistan, in response to the Pulwama terror attack that killed 40 CRPF personnel. Using fighter jets, India targeted the camp deep inside Pakistani territory, marking the first such airstrike since the 1971 war.

Indian armed forces under Operation Sindoor struck nine Pakistani sites Wednesday that provided "terrorist infrastructure" and from which attacks against it were orchestrated. Sindoor, which refers to the red vermilion worn by married Hindu women, is an apparent reference to the widows left by the April 22 attack that killed 26 men

It was Prime Minister Narendra Modi who picked the evocative term "Operation Sindoor" to codename the Indian armed forces' strikes on nine terror sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, official sources said Wednesday.

The government, at an official briefing, said the targets were struck between 1.05 am and 1.30 am, with precision missiles and drones hitting facilities in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, including the Jaish-e-Mohammed stronghold of Bahawalpur and Lashkar-e-Taiba's base in Muridke.

Modi monitored the operation through the night and later praised the armed forces at the weekly meeting of the Union Cabinet for the successful strike.

Sources said it was the Prime Minister's idea to codename the military exercise aimed at avenging the slaughtering of civilians, a few of them couples celebrating their wedding at the famous tourist town, as "Operation Sindoor".

Vermilion (sindoor) is associated with married women in Indian tradition. The picture of a distraught Himanshi Narwal sitting beside the body of her husband - Navy Lieutenant Vinay Narwal - in the meadow became the defining image of the tragedy, which sparked nationwide outrage and demand for action against the terrorists and their handlers.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah said Wednesday that the strikes carried out by Indian armed forces against targets in Pakistan and PoK is a befitting reply from India to those who dare to challenge our borders, military and citizens

The couple were married for less than a week and were on honeymoon in Pahalgam.

Dinesh Mirania of Raipur and Neha had arrived to celebrate their wedding anniversary when terrorists killed him, while Kanpur-based businessman Shubham Dwivedi and Aishanya were there after tying the knot in February.

Several women accompanying the victims said the men were shot dead at point-blank range after religious profiling.

Meanwhile, top Congress leadership Wednesday lauded

Netizens hail 'Operation Sindoor'

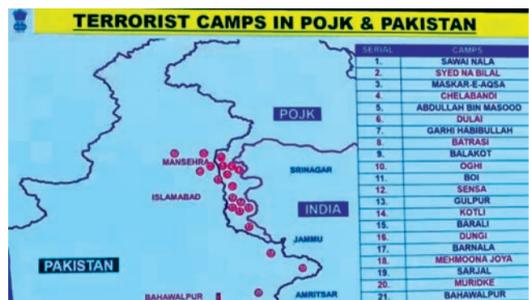
Social media erupted in a chorus of 'Jai Hind' Wednesday as netizens flooded platforms with patriotic messages, applauding the armed forces after India launched pre-dawn precision strikes on terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (PoK). Hashtags like 'Operation Sindoor', 'Terrorism', 'CoSofo-aQureshi', and 'NariShakti' rapidly gained traction on X. At the same time, the conversation and messages on WhatsApp saw a shift from civilian defense drill advice to a flood of messages highlighting India's targeted strikes on nine terrorist camps in Pakistan and PoK. "Right from the name Operation Sindoor. To the precision of the strikes. To having two women briefing this. Great stuff so far!" said a user on X. "It's Goosebumps. Indian Armed Forces Jai Ho - Jai Hind," wrote another. Posts like 'Justice served. Jai Hind' to 'Indian Army has done it' echoed strongly across social media and digital platforms, capturing the widespread public sentiment.

the Indian armed forces for their bold and decisive step against terror camps in Pakistan and PoK.

The statement came after a meeting of the Congress Working Committee was urgently convened by party chief Mallikarjun Kharge, who said his party extends all its support to the armed forces in ensuring the safety of the country and its unity and integrity.

Rahul Gandhi, who was also present at the meeting, said the Congress party extends all

its support to the armed forces. Women leaders from the ruling BJP Wednesday lauded the Indian military's Operation Sindoor with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman saying India shall never tolerate terrorism. Chief ministers of southern states, political leaders and families of victims of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack Wednesday hailed India's retaliatory attacks on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.



13 KILLED AS PAK POUNDS VILLAGES ALONG LoC IN J&K



A damaged house after heavy firing and shelling from Pakistan side at Salamabad near LoC in Uri

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu/Srinagar, May 7: At least 13 people, including four children and a soldier, were killed and 57 injured as the Pakistan Army carried out one of the most intense artillery and mortar shelling in years targeting forward villages along the LoC in Jammu and Kashmir, officials said Wednesday.

Hundreds of residents were forced to take refuge in underground bunkers or shift to safer places as the indiscriminate shelling by Pakistan destroyed houses, vehicles and various buildings, including a Gurudwara, and created panic among the border residents in the worst-hit Poonch district and Rajouri in Jammu region and Baramulla and Kup-

wara in north Kashmir.

The officials said the Indian Army is responding to the shelling in a befitting manner, resulting in many casualties on the enemy side after several of their posts engaged in firing were destroyed.

Poonch district accounted for all 13 deaths, the officials said, adding 42 people were also injured and the condition of two of them was stated to be serious.

The shelling was reported from all along the LoC in Poonch, including Balakote, Mendhar, Mankote, Krishna Ghati, Gulpur, Kerani and even Poonch district headquarters, resulting in damage to dozens of houses and vehicles, they said.

India closed about 25 flight routes that allow planes to enter Pakistan through the Indian airspace

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS



1 Security personnel during a mega civil defence mock drill 'Operation Abhyaas', at Terminal 3 of the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport in New Delhi. Blaring sirens, residents rushing to safer places, injured people being carried away on stretchers - these were some of the scenes which played out across the 55 locations where mock security drills were carried out by authorities in the national capital.

2 School students take part in a drill as part of a nationwide civil defence drill, in Ranchi, Jharkhand.

3 A view of the India Gate during a blackout as part of the nationwide drill, "Operation Abhyaas" in New Delhi.

4 Security personnel and students take part in a drill conducted as a part of the nationwide civil defence exercise, in Agartala.

PTI PHOTOS

Missile strikes a fitting tribute: Families of Pahalgam victims

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: A sense of satisfaction and relief was collectively shared by the families of Pahalgam terror attack victims after the Indian armed forces carried out missile strikes.

"Terrorists will think 100 times before acting again," said Rajesh Narwal, father of Lt Vinay Narwal, hailing India's response. "I had said that such a thing (retaliatory strikes) has to be done so that no one dares to do such a cowardly act again... the strikes carried out on the terror targets will resonate in their minds forever," Rajesh said. Married about three weeks ago, Narwal (26), accompanied by his wife Himanshi, was on a honeymoon in Pahalgam when terrorists shot him at point-blank range.

Sumathi, the mother of Manjunath Rao from Shivamogga in Karnataka who was killed in Pahalgam, said she did not want her son's "sacrifice" to go to waste. Rao had travelled to Kashmir with his wife Pallavi



Anushka Mone and Richa Mone, wife and daughter of Pahalgam terror attack victim Atul Mone, speak to the media regarding 'Operation Sindoor' in Thane, Maharashtra

and son Abhijeet. Bharath Bhushan from Bangalore, who was visiting Pahalgam with his wife and three-year-old son, was also shot dead by terrorists. Bhushan's father Channaveerappa hailed the armed forces' response.

Jennifer, wife of Sushil Nathaniel, said the four terrorists involved in the Pahalgam attack should be killed. Sushil Nathaniel, an Indore resident, was holidaying with his wife in Pa-

halgam. Arathy, daughter of N Ramachandran from Kochi, expressed hope that the operation would bring some relief to the families of the victims. Sangita Ganbote, wife of Kaustubh, said that they were extremely happy that India avenged the Pahalgam terrorist attack in which she and other women lost their "sindoor".

"We were all waiting to see when India would avenge the terrorist attack. Today, the Indian armed

forces gave a befitting reply to the cowardly attack in Pahalgam," she said.

Harshal Lele, who lost his father Sanjay Lele and relatives Atul Mone and Hemant Joshi in the terror attack, expressed a sense of closure after Operation Sindoor.

The families of Samir Guha and Bitan Adhikary, two victims from West Bengal, called the operation a "step towards justice".

Odisha's Priya Darshani Acharya, who lost her husband Prashant Satpathy in the Pahalgam attack, said terrorists must live in fear and would now understand the value of a human life.

Kajalben Parmar from Bhavnagar in Gujarat, who lost her husband Yatish Parmar and their son Smit in the terror attack, urged the government to continue action against Pakistan till it is wiped out.

Shitalben Kalathiya from Surat, wife of victim Shailesh Kalathiya, told the media that she was "very satisfied" with India's action against Pakistan.

Terrorists will think 100 times before acting again

RAJESH NARWAL, FATHER OF LT VINAY NARWAL



The US welcomes the successful rescue of all hostages held by the Maduro regime at the Argentinian Embassy in Caracas. Following a precise operation, all hostages are now safely on US soil

MARCO RUBIO | SECRETARY OF STATE, US

CONCLAVE TO ELECT NEW POPE OFFICIALLY BEGINS

With the cry of "Extra omnes" - Latin for "all out" - the great doors of the Sistine Chapel closed Wednesday and 133 cardinals began the secretive, centuries-old ritual of electing a new leader of the Catholic Church, opening the most geographically diverse conclave in the faith's 2,000-year history



'OPERATION SINDOOR'

Pak PM vows to respond

In retaliation for the Pahalgam terror attack, Indian armed forces carried out missile strikes early Wednesday, hitting terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and PoK from where terrorist attacks against India have been planned and directed

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, May 7: Pakistan's top security body Wednesday said the armed forces have been duly authorised to undertake retaliation "at a time, place, and manner of its choosing" to avenge the loss of lives in the Indian military strikes.

Pakistan Army spokesman Lt Gen Ahmad Sharif Chaudhry said 31 people were killed and 57 others injured in the missile strikes launched shortly after midnight on cities in the Punjab province and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), and firing on the Line of Control.

Jaish-e-Mohammad chief Maulana Masood Azhar's 10 family members and four close aides were killed in the attack on the outfit's headquarters in Bahawalpur.

A hurriedly called National Security Council meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and attended by cabinet ministers, chief ministers, all services chiefs and senior officers, described the strikes as "unprovoked" and an "unlawful act of war".

An NSC statement warned that in consonance with Article 51 of the UN Charter, Pakistan reserves the right to respond, in self-defence, "at a time, place, and manner of its choosing" to avenge the loss of innocent Pakistani lives in the Indian strikes.

"The Armed Forces of Pakistan have duly been authorised to undertake corresponding actions in this regard," the statement said.

Addressing a session of the Parliament later, Prime Minister Shehbaz claimed that the Pakistan armed forces destroyed five



Pakistan Army spokesman said 31 people were killed and 57 others injured in the missile strikes launched shortly after midnight on cities in the Punjab province and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), and firing on the Line of Control

Indian jets. He, however, did not provide any evidence in support of his claim.

He lauded the Pakistan Air Force and its chief "for the swift response", saying that the armed

forces had prior intelligence about India's plans.

Addressing the nation Wednesday night, Shehbaz claimed that India "paid a heavy price" for attacking Pakistan despite its numerical superiority and strength.

India launched Operation Sindoor early Wednesday hitting nine terror targets in PoK and Punjab in retaliation for the terror attack in Pahalgam April 22 that killed 26

Pakistan has every right to give a befitting reply to this act of war imposed by India, and a strong response is indeed being given

SHEHBAZ SHARIF | PRIME MINISTER, PAKISTAN

people. Citing "cross-border linkages" to the horrific attack, India had promised severe punishment to those involved in the strike.

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif earlier said Pakistan is ready to "wrap up" tensions with India if New Delhi de-escalates the situation.

"We have been saying all along in the last fortnight that we'll never initiate anything hostile towards India. But if we're attacked, we'll respond. If India backs down, we will definitely wrap up this tension," he was quoted as saying by Bloomberg Television.

The Pakistan Army spokesman said six locations were attacked by India.

He said that 13 people were killed and 37 others injured in Bahawalpur's Ahmedpur East, where the Subhan Allah mosque was attacked. In Muridke, three men were killed and one was injured.

In Muzaffarabad, three persons were killed and two injured in the attack on the Bilal mosque. In the strike at Kotli, two youths were killed, while two persons were injured.

The army spokesperson also said that five civilians were killed in cross LoC firing by India.

JeM chief Azhar acknowledged that 10 members of his family and four close associates were killed in the missile attack on the outfit's headquarters in Bahawalpur.

WORLD LEADERS EXPRESS CONCERN



It's a shame. Just heard about it. I guess people knew something was going to happen based on a little bit of the past. They've been fighting for a long time. They've been fighting for many, many decades. I hope it ends

DONALD TRUMP | PRESIDENT, US

3The Secretary-General is very concerned about the Indian military operations across the Line of Control and international border. He calls for maximum military restraint from both countries. The world cannot afford a military confrontation between India and Pakistan



ANTONIO GUTERRES | SPOKESPERSON FOR UN SECRETARY-GENERAL

In regard to the terrorist act that occurred in Kashmir April 22, our country firmly condemns such acts of terrorism. Furthermore, we express strong concern that this situation may lead to further retaliatory exchanges and escalate into a full-scale military conflict. For the peace and stability of South Asia, we strongly urge both India and Pakistan to exercise restraint and stabilize the situation through dialogue



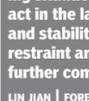
YOSHIMASA HAYASHI | CABINET SECRETARY CHIEF, JAPAN

China finds India's military operation early this morning regrettable. We are concerned about the ongoing situation. We urge both sides to act in the larger interest of peace and stability, remain calm, exercise restraint and refrain from taking actions that may further complicate the situation



LIN JIAN | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON, CHINA

Current tensions between India and Pakistan are a serious concern. The UK government is urging India and Pakistan to show restraint and engage in direct dialogue to find a swift, diplomatic path forward. We need all sides to work urgently to see regional stability restored and ensure protection of civilians



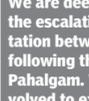
DAVID LAMMY | FOREIGN MINISTER, UK

We are deeply concerned about the escalation of military confrontation between India and Pakistan following the terrorist attack near Pahalgam. We call on the parties involved to exercise restraint in order to prevent further deterioration of the situation in the region



MARIA ZAKHAROVA | FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESPERSON, RUSSIA

We call on India as well as on Pakistan to show restraint in order to avoid escalation. Nobody has anything to gain from prolonged confrontation between India and Pakistan. These are two major military powers, that is why we call for restraint



JEAN-NOEL BARROT | FOREIGN MINISTER, FRANCE

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the UAE Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed has called on India and Pakistan to exercise restraint, de-escalate tensions, and avoid further escalation that could threaten regional and international peace



ABDULLAH BIN ZAYED AL NAHYAN | FOREIGN MINISTRY, UAE

Pak Army, JuD attend funeral of 3 killed in Indian strike

LAHORE: The Pakistan Army personnel and members of the banned Jamaat-ud-Dawah (JuD) of Hafiz Saeed Wednesday attended the funeral of three persons killed in the Indian military strikes on the terror group's headquarters in Muridke, some 40 kms from Lahore. The funeral prayer for Qari Abdul Malik, Khalid and Mudassar was held in Muridke amid high security, said Tabish Qayyum, spokesperson of the Pakistan Markazi Muslim League, a political wing of JuD. Members of the civil bureaucracy were also present at the funeral, said Qayyum, who also attended the event. The funeral prayer was led by Hafiz Abdul Rauf, with prayers offered for the safety and security of the country.

Pak restores air traffic across major routes

KARACHI/ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Wednesday evening restored air traffic across major routes, while a few routes are to remain closed for another 24 hours. The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) made the announcement as per a revised notice to airmen (NOTAM) it issued. Pakistan earlier Wednesday announced a 48-hour closure of its airspace for all air traffic after India carried out a military strike on terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The CAA in the revised NOTAM said that the airspace in Islamabad, Rawalpindi and Karachi has now been fully restored. In a separate notice, it added that certain parts of the air traffic route in the Lahore Flight Region would remain closed at all altitudes for operational reasons until 12:20 pm May 9.

Emergency declared in Pak's Punjab province

LAHORE: Emergency was declared Wednesday in Pakistan's Punjab province even as all educational institutions closed in the wake of the Indian missile attack. "Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has declared a state of emergency across the province," a Punjab government statement said here. All security agencies, including Punjab police, have been placed on high alert. Leaves of all doctors and medical staff across hospitals in Punjab have been cancelled. The statement said all staff have been ordered to report for duty immediately and district administrations in all districts of Punjab have also been placed on high alert. Officers and personnel of all relevant institutions, including Civil Defence, have been summoned, it said. The educational institutions would remain closed Wednesday, the statement said.

Pak blocks 16 Indian YouTube news channels, 32 websites

ISLAMABAD: Pakistani authorities have blocked 16 Indian YouTube news channels, 31 YouTube links, and 32 websites in view of the prevailing regional situation. The move is part of the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority's continued efforts to ensure the responsible use of digital platforms, officials said. The action of blocking 16 Indian YouTube news channels, 31 YouTube links, and 32 websites "has been taken in the light of the prevailing regional situation to safeguard national security and protect Pakistan's digital ecosystem," the officials said.

LOCAL ELECTION

Sri Lanka prez's party continues winning streak

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Colombo, May 7: The National People's Power led by President Anura Kumara Dissanayake Wednesday emerged as the largest party in 265 out of 339 local municipal councils across Sri Lanka despite failing to win capital Colombo's body.

However, the National People's Power (NPP) party's ability to form administrations in those 265 bodies is in doubt as the combined opposition groups have more members than NPP in multiple councils, official results issued by the independent election commission has shown.

The election commission data showed that the ruling NPP garnered over 4.5 million votes or 43 per cent of the votes, drastically down from the 68 per cent polled at the parliamentary election held in November last year. It also had a thumping win in the presidential polls prior to that.

The main opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) won just 14 of the 339 councils earning 21 per cent vote.

More than 70 per cent of the registered voters exercised their franchise Tuesday in the local council polls, which were postponed in 2023 following the economic crisis in the island nation.

ISRAELI STRIKES KILL 38 IN GAZA US, China to hold ice-breaker trade talks in Geneva



REUTERS

Cairo/Gaza, May 7: Israeli strikes on a school housing displaced families and by a crowded market and restaurant in Gaza City killed at least 38 people Wednesday, local health authorities said.

Medics said two strikes targeted the Karama School in Tuffah, a suburb of Gaza City, killing 15. Later in the day, an Israeli strike near a restaurant and market in the city killed at least 23 people, including women and children, medics said.

Reuters footage showed wounded men being rushed

ISRAEL STRIKES SCHOOLS HOUSING DISPLACED PEOPLE ON TWO DAYS ARMY CONTINUES TO DEMOLISH HOUSES IN RAFAH, SAY RESIDENTS ISRAELI PRIME MINISTER NETANYAHU SAYS HE WILL EXPAND OFFENSIVE HAMAS SAYS WILL NOT ACCEPT AN INTERIM TRUCE FOR AID TWO JOURNALISTS KILLED IN STRIKES, SAYS HAMAS-RUN MEDIA OFFICE

away on the back of pickups and carts. Ambulances sped down shattered streets and a

woman in tears carried a baby away from the scene, with two young children beside her.

An image posted on social media showed what appeared to be a family of three - mother, father and son - lying dead on the street in pools of blood. The young boy was carrying a pink backpack. Reuters could not immediately verify the image that was purportedly from the scene of the Tuffah strike.

There was no immediate Israeli comment. Two Israeli airstrikes on another school, housing displaced people in Bureij camp in central Gaza, killed at least 33 people, includ-

ing women and children, Tuesday, local health authorities said. The Israeli military said it struck "terrorists" operating from a command center in the compound.

The strike smashed classrooms, destroyed furniture and left a large crater in the school campus. Survivors sifted through rubble to look for some of their belongings Wednesday.

"What happened is an earthquake. The Israeli occupation hit a school housing children. They are children," said eyewitness Ali Al-Shaqra. He said the school housed 300 families.

"Here is the building; it was razed to the ground. We cannot find the gas cylinder, the flour bag we had, the kilo of rice, or the meal we got from the Tukkiyah (community kitchen). Thank God we are left with the clothes we had on," Shaqra added.

In Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip, near the border with Egypt, residents and Hamas sources said Israeli forces, who have taken control of the city, continued to blow up and demolish houses and buildings.

Al-Qassam Brigades, the military wing of the Palestinian militant group Hamas, said Wednesday their fighters had detonated a pre-planted minefield targeting an Israeli armoured force east of Khan Younis in the south. They said they inflicted casualties, followed by mortar shelling of the area.

US, China to hold ice-breaker trade talks in Geneva

REUTERS

Washington/Beijing, May 7: US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and chief trade negotiator Jamieson Greer will meet China's economic tsar He Lifeng in Switzerland this weekend for talks that could be the first step toward resolving a trade war disrupting the global economy.

News of the planned Geneva meeting, first announced by Washington late Tuesday, sent US equity index futures higher. Stock markets in China and Hong Kong followed suit during Asian trading Wednesday.

The talks come after weeks of escalating tensions that have seen duties on goods imports between the world's two largest economies soar well beyond 100%, amounting to what Bessent Tuesday described as the equivalent of a trade embargo.

The impasse, alongside US President Donald Trump's decision last month to slap sweeping duties on dozens of other countries, has upended supply chains, roiled financial markets and stoked fears of a sharp downturn in global growth.

The negotiating teams convening in Switzerland, known



for its neutrality, are expected to discuss reductions to the broader tariffs, two sources familiar with the planning said. The talks should also cover duties on specific products, export controls and Trump's decision to end de minimis exemptions on low-value imports, one of the sources added.

China's State Council did not immediately reply to a faxed request for comment.

"My sense is this will be about de-escalation," Bessent told Fox News after the announcement. "We've got to de-escalate before we can move forward."

A Chinese commerce ministry spokesperson later confirmed that China had agreed to meet the US envoys.

"On the basis of fully considering global expectations, China's interests, and the appeals of US industry and consumers, China has decided to re-engage the US," the spokesperson said, citing a proverb about actions speaking louder than words.



The India-UK FTA is expected to pave the way for long-term growth, attract investment, and create a more favorable business environment for textile stakeholders in both countries

SC RALHAN | PRESIDENT, FIEO

GOLD CROSSES ₹1 LAKH

Gold prices surged ₹1,000 to breach the crucial ₹1 lakh per 10 gram-mark in the national capital Wednesday amid tensions between India and Pakistan. According to the All India Sarafa Association, the precious metal of 99.9 per cent purity climbed ₹1,000 to ₹1,00,750 per 10 grams from Tuesday's closing of ₹99,750 per 10 grams. Meanwhile, gold of 99.5 per cent purity jumped ₹1,050 to ₹1,00,350 per 10 grams and ended at ₹99,300 per 10 grams in the previous market close.



of the day quote

Going forward, wheat and pulse prices are expected to moderate amid strong domestic output. Edible oil prices are also likely to soften over the next 2-3 months as global supplies pick up, mainly from Argentina, Indonesia and Malaysia

PUSHAN SHARMA | DIRECTOR, CRISIL

In 2025, the market is expected to undergo further consolidation, reinforcing structural fundamentals and enabling steady, sustainable growth

DHRUV AGARWALA | CEO, HOUSING. COM, PROPTIGER.COM

Later this year, we will launch AWS Market-place in India. Think of this as the UPI moment for enterprise software procurement. It's going to be coming with India-specific features

SANDEEP DUTTA | PRESIDENT, AWS INDIA, SOUTH ASIA

Banks tighten cyber security amid Indo-Pak tension

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Banks have tightened their cyber security network to ward off any cyber threat in the wake of India launching missile attacks on Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. Banks have also improved their security at the branches near border areas due to heightened threat of a counter-attack.

"We have strengthened the cyber security mechanism... we have created a 24 hours war room to diffuse any cyber attack... we are prepared for any eventuality", Punjab National Bank MD and CEO Ashok Chandra said.

The bank has also beefed up



security at the branches in the border areas, he said, adding that the bank has also made arrangements for safety and security of their staff. According

to a senior official of another public sector bank, the bank has put in place an anti-cyber attack mechanism in place to withstand any possibility of

We have strengthened the cyber security mechanism... we have created a 24 hours war room to diffuse any cyber attack... we are prepared for any eventuality

ASHOK CHANDRA | MD&CEO, PNB

cyber attack. ATMs have been flushed with funds in the border areas so that customers there don't face any crunch, the official added.

In retaliation to the Pahalgam terror attack, Indian armed forces carried out missile strikes early on Wednesday on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, including the

Jaish-e-Mohammad stronghold of Bahawalpur and Lashkar-e-Taiba's base Muridke.

The military strikes were carried out under 'Operation Sindoor' two weeks after the terrorists killed 26 civilians in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam. Meanwhile, leading stock exchanges BSE and NSE have taken precautionary measures by blocking their websites for international users.

BSE, being a critical market infrastructure institution (MII), proactively and continuously monitors risks at domestic and international levels for potential cyber threats, a BSE spokesperson said, explaining the rationale behind the decision.

₹ falls 42 paise to close at 84.77 against dollar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 7: The rupee depreciated 42 paise to close at 84.77 against the US dollar Wednesday, as heightened cross-border tensions following India's military strikes against terrorist camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir weighed on the domestic currency.

Indian armed forces on early Wednesday carried out missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir including the Jaish-e-Mohammad stronghold of Bahawalpur and Lashkar-e-Taiba's base in Muridke.

Forex traders said the Indian rupee declined Wednesday after the Indian Army conducted 'Operation Sindoor' and struck terrorist camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, which weighed on the domestic currency.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 84.65 and moved between an intra-day high of 84.47 and a low of 84.93 against the greenback. The unit ended the session at 84.77, registering a fall of 42 paise over its previous closing level.

On Tuesday, the rupee settled for the day 5 paise lower at 84.35 against the US dollar amid growing uncertainty and a cautious recalibration of risk appetite.

BIZ-BUZZ

SIP Abacus opens new regional office in City

Bhubaneswar: SIP Abacus inaugurated its new regional office at Chandrasekharpur, Bhubaneswar Wednesday. The facility was unveiled by Director of Finance - SIP Academy India Pvt Ltd Sarala Kulasekaran, in the presence of Regional Manager (East) Shubhajit Mullick, Odisha State Head Sunil Nayak, all branch heads, teachers, and several noted educationists. With over 1,000 plus centres across India and 22 in Odisha, SIP Abacus currently serves 5,000 children weekly in the state. Kulasekaran highlighted the company's focus on quality coaching and child development, announcing plans to expand to all major cities in Odisha. The new office is equipped for training, meetings, and administrative operations.



No power cuts till June 15: TPCODL

Bhubaneswar: TP Central Odisha Distribution Limited (TPCODL), a joint venture between Tata Power and Government of Odisha, has announced that there will be no scheduled power outages for routine maintenance work till 15th June 2025. This step aims to provide relief to consumers during peak summer. To ensure uninterrupted and reliable power supply during this period, TPCODL will not undertake any planned maintenance shutdowns. Power outages may occur in exceptional situations, like new service connections, safety-related emergencies addressing unsafe conditions, or urgent project work. In such cases, affected consumers will be informed in advance. "We understand that summer brings added challenges, and uninterrupted power is essential for comfort and wellbeing. Our field teams are committed to ensure reliable power supply while continuing critical work with utmost care," said Arvind Singh, CEO, TPCODL.

SCPD holds workshop on 'Banking for PwDs'

Bhubaneswar: A workshop on "Banking for PwDs" for bank officials was organized by state Commissioner for Person with Disabilities Odisha at Toshali Bhawan SCPD conference hall. The commissioner cum secretary social security & Empowerment of persons with disabilities Department RS Gopalan, State Commissioner for persons with disabilities Bratati Harichandan, convener SLBC Goutam Patra, controlling heads of banks and persons with disabilities attended the meeting. Harichandan advised all banks to provide easy accessibility in bank branches, and ATMs such as ramp, tactile flooring, lift, accessible to toilet, wheel chair, side bar etc. She also emphasised that banks have to abide the rules on reservation in employment, guideline for transfer and allowances, other facilities available to them as per RBI guideline. The convener SLBC requested banks to go through the rights of persons with disabilities act, 2016 and act accordingly.



CIL net profit rises

New Delhi: Coal India Ltd (CIL) reported a 12 per cent rise in consolidated net profit at ₹9,604.02 crore in the quarter ended March 2025. The company had posted a consolidated net profit of ₹8,572.14 crore in the year-ago period, said in a filing to BSE. Total income during the January-March period rose to ₹41,761.76 crore from ₹40,457.59 crore a year ago.

HUDCO profit up

New Delhi: Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) reported 4 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at ₹727.74 crore for March quarter FY25 on higher income. Its net profit stood at ₹700.16 crore in the year-ago period. Total income rose to ₹2,854.91 crore in January-March 2024-25 from ₹2,194.04 crore in the year-ago period, according to a regulatory filing.

Dabur sales fall

New Delhi: FMCG major Dabur India reported 8 per cent fall in consolidated net profit at ₹312.73 crore for March quarter FY25, on higher expenses. It had earned ₹341.22 crore net profit in the January-March period of 2023-24, the company said in a filing. Total income increased to ₹2,971.29 crore in the fourth quarter from ₹2,943.49 crore in last fiscal.

Stock ends higher post 'Op Sindoor'

Amid tensions between borders, stock market sees a bullish trend at closing hours

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 7: Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty closed higher in a volatile session on Wednesday as India launched missile strikes on terrorist hideouts in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir.

After gyrating between gains and losses during the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 105.71 points or 0.13 per cent higher at 80,746.78. The index opened sharply down by 692 points and fell further to hit a day's low of 79,937.48 in early trade. However, buying in private banks and select auto shares such as Tata Motors helped the barometer recover most of the losses and hit a high of 80,844.63 later.

The 50-issue Nifty of NSE advanced by 34.80 points or 0.14 per cent to settle at 24,414.40. Nifty moved between a high of 24,449.60 and a low of 24,220 during the session.

Broader markets also recouped intraday losses and closed higher by more than a per cent. Sectoral indices closed mixed as auto, realty, and metal sectors advanced while pharma and FMCG ended in the red.

"Geopolitical tensions, following India's military response to a terrorist attack, triggered a gap-down opening. However, a swift recovery helped the indices edge higher by the close," Ajit Mishra - SVP, Research, Religare



Broking Ltd said.

From the 30-share Sensex firms, Tata Motors jumped the most by 5.05 per cent as India and the UK sealed a trade deal to reduce duties on most traded goods. The trade deal will make it easier for British firms to export whisky, cars, and other products to India.

Bajaj Finance, Eternal, Adani Ports, Tata Steel, HDFC Bank, Kotak Bank, ICICI Bank, Titan, Mahindra & Mahindra and Power Grid were among the gainers. Asian Paints, Sun Pharma, ITC, Nestle, Reliance Industries and HCL Tech were among the laggards.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth ₹3,794.52 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

The BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.36 per cent and small-cap index climbed 1.16 per cent.

Among sectoral indices, auto rallied the most 1.74 per cent, followed by consumer discretionary (1.21 per cent), metal (1.19 per cent), realty (1.12 per cent), consumer durables (1.05 per cent), power (0.95 per cent) and financial services (0.94 per cent). BSE FMCG and healthcare indices were the only laggards.

As many as 2,203 stocks advanced while 1,685 declined 158 remained unchanged on the BSE.

Snapping its two days of gains, the BSE benchmark declined 155.77 points or 0.19 per cent to settle at 80,641.07 on Tuesday. The Nifty dipped 81.55 points or 0.33 per cent to 24,379.60.

100% movie tariff menaces Indian filmmakers

US president Donald Trump imposed cent per cent tariff on filmmaking affecting movie makers worldwide, especially Indian film industry as substantial earnings derives from US



REUTERS

New Delhi, May 7: Indian film industry, earns roughly 40 per cent of its overseas revenue from the United States, sounded the alarm this week about higher costs after President Donald Trump announced a tariff of 100 per cent on all movies produced beyond American soil. The announcement has disturbed the film makers, producers and distributors globally.

"The real question is how the term 'foreign produced' will be defined, and until that's clear, it's hard to say anything," said film maker Anubhav Sinha, known for his Netflix streaming series, "IC 814: The Kandahar Hijack".

India's film industry em-

loys 272,000 people, with overseas box office takings of about 20 billion rupees (\$237 million) in fiscal 2024, or a tenth of total earnings, Deloitte and studio grouping the Motion Picture Association said in a report.

Key Hollywood films with India scenes are Oscar-winners such as the rags-to-riches tale "Slumdog Millionaire", and the Osama bin Laden manhunt thriller, "Zero Dark Thirty", along with rom-com "Eat, Pray Love", and Batman outing "The Dark Knight Rises".

In the absence of details on the planned levy, film producers worry it could double the cost of exporting their films to the United States, where people of Indian descent are estimated to number 5.2 million.

"The United States is one of the most important overseas markets for Indian cinema, largely due to the substantial diaspora," said producer Madhu Bhojwani, reponsible for hits such as "Airlift", on workers evacuated from Kuwait during the Gulf War.

"Any increase in ticket prices resulting from these tariffs would directly affect audience turnout, compounding the challenges posed by evolving consumer behaviour and broader industry headwinds."

The cost-effective South Asian nation has also grown in stature as Hollywood's preferred hub for on-ground production and post-production services, especially in visual effects, since it offers a skilled talent pool.

Hitting revenue, and how

Prominent Indian actor and producer Prakash Raj called Trump's move "tariff terrorism".

On the contrary, Madhu Bhojwani, the co-founder of Emmay Entertainment and Motion Pictures expressed her concerns over tariff, highlighting its consequences for Indian media sector.

"We can expect a potential decline in outsourced work from U.S. studios to Indian vendors, which could have notable implications for the Indian media services sector," she said.

"If revenue from the U.S. drops, it could affect budget planning and profitability for Indian production houses," said Pradeep Dwivedi, chief executive of Eros International Media.

"Even a 30% drop in revenue for such mid-scale movies would be a significant dent," said Raj Kandukuri, producer of a well-regarded film, "Pelli Choopulu", in India's southern language of Telugu.

As per the reports, there are a sizeable number of students in the United States who watch movies, they will not spend high on ticket prices. The planned levy might also see a paradigm of limited screens, smaller releases, and a shift toward digital platforms.

India to save ₹1.8L-cr on import bill on easing global oil prices

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: India as world's third largest oil importing and consuming nation, is likely to save approximately ₹1.8 lakh crore on import of crude oil and LNG shared Investment information and credit rating agency (Icra).

India meets over 85 per cent of its crude oil needs through imports, spent USD 242.4 billion on buying crude from overseas in the fiscal year ended March 31, 2025. With domestic production meeting roughly half of the demand, it also spent USD 15.2 billion on import of liquefied natural gas (LNG) in the fiscal.

Icra expects average crude prices for FY2026 (April 2025 to March 2026 fiscal year) to remain in the USD 60-70 per barrel range, the rating agency said in a note.

This uncertainty related to tariff trade call by US President Donald Trump has clubbed with the recent OPEC+ steadily withdraw their production cuts, starting with 411,000 barrels per day addition from May 2025 and another 411,000 bpd from June 2025, have resulted in oil prices declining from about USD 77 a barrel as on March 31 to about USD 60-62.

This announcement has impacted various major oil giants,



including Brent Crude and US West Texas Intermediate crude oil fell to their lowest since February 2021, have since risen to USD 62.4 on signs of more Europe and China demand and less US output. Still the rates are USD 20 per barrel lower than March 2024 when petrol and diesel prices were cut by ₹2 per litre each ahead of general elections.

As per reports, a sharp decline in the global oil market will lead to boosting the Indian market as it would help in increasing imports and profits simultaneously. Even Indian ports and airbuses companies will see a bullish market trend.

Marketing margins on auto fuels for oil marketing companies (OMCs) would remain above long term average of ₹2.5-4 a litre and under recoveries on LPG are expected to reduce with decline in crude prices.

OPERATION SINDOOR

Sports fraternity lauds India's action in Pak

Superbet Chess Classics

Gukesh draws with Praggnanandhaa

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: "Fearless in unity. Boundless in strength," said cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar as he led India's sporting fraternity in lauding 'Operation Sindoor' to destroy terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan.

The Indian armed forces, in the early hours of Wednesday, launched precision missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, including the strongholds of Jaish-e-Mohammed in Bahawalpur and Lashkar-e-Taiba in Muridke.

The strikes were in retaliation to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam in which 26

people, mostly tourists, were gunned down.

"Fearless in unity. Boundless in strength. India's shield is her people. There's no room for terrorism in this world. We're ONE TEAM! Jai Hind," Tendulkar posted on 'X'.

Former cricketers Virender Sehwag, Irfan Pthan, Suresh Raina and Shikhar Dhawan also took to the social media platform in hailing India's strong response to the barbaric attack.

"Agar koi aap par patthar phenke toh uspar Phool Phenko, Lekin Gamle ke saath (If someone throws stones at you then respond with flowers but not without the pots they are planted in). Jai Hind," Sehwag wrote.



Indian pacer Mohammed Shami lauded the armed forces.

"The Indian Armed Forces turned adversity into a powerful Fateh moment. Their courage and valor in the face of dan-

ger have made us all proud. Jai hind," he posted on Instagram.

Dhawan added: "India takes a stand against terrorism."

Pathan and badminton ace Saina Nehwal tweeted: "Jai

Hind." Olympic bronze medal-winning boxer Vijender Singh and wrestler Yogeshwar Dutt too praised the retaliatory strikes. "Bharat Mata ki Jai," wrote Vijender. Yogeshwar added: "India's zero tolerance towards terrorism!! Jai Hind - Jai Jawan #sindoor."

Chess ace Vidith Gujrathi said brutal terrorist attacks like the one in Pahalgam should always be punished.

"I am glad India responded firmly with Operation Sindoor after the horrific Pahalgam attack. Terrorism must never go unanswered. And what a beautiful name for the operation. Bharat Mata ki Jai!," Gujrathi wrote.

Indian Olympic Association President and former sprinter PT Usha echoed the sentiment.

"There is no place for terrorism in India and in the World," she posted. World champion boxer Nikhat Zareen added, "Our soldiers don't make threats, they take action. Operation Sindoor is a testament to heroes who speak only the language of courage."

Former wrestler and Congress leader Vinesh Phogat said she is praying for the safety of the armed forces.

"The Indian Army is giving a befitting reply to the terrorist attacks on the country by putting its life at stake. I salute your passion and bravery in this fight for the protection of Mother India and the safety and peace of all of us. I pray to God to protect you at every step and give you victory soon," she posted on 'X'.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bucharest (Romania) May 7: World Champion D Gukesh began his campaign at the Superbet Chess Classics with a draw against fellow Indian R Praggnanandhaa in the opening round here Wednesday.

Gukesh enjoyed a stable advantage in the middle game arising out of a Queen pawn opening wherein Praggnanandhaa chose to play the Queen's gambit accepted.

Interestingly, the same opening was used by Gukesh in the crucial game to qualify for the World championship match and Praggnanandhaa was only too aware of the situation.

It was a tit-for-tat battle in the early phase but Gukesh seized the initiative that looked almost dominating by the 20th move. But right when Praggnanandhaa was trying to find the best defense, Gukesh erred a little and went for a queen grabbing for a rook and minor pieces letting his Chennai city-mate walk back in the game.

Another error by Gukesh led to a dynamic equality by the 26th move and soon after Praggnanandhaa won a rook for knight to force parity. The game lasted 35 moves.

Meanwhile, Frenchman Firouzja Alireza and Wesley So emerged as the early leaders in the ten-players round-robin tournament defeating Maxime Vachier-Lagrave of France and Deac Bogdan-Daniel of Romania respectively.

Compound archery teams enter World Cup Stage 2 finals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Shanghai, May 7: The Indian men's and women's compound archery teams stormed into the finals of the World Cup Stage 2 with commanding wins here Wednesday, assuring the country of two medals from the prestigious event.

While the compound archers continued to shine, it was a grim picture in the Olympic discipline recurve section, where the Indians endured a disappointing day with only Dhiraj Bommadevara finishing in the top-10, while the rest struggled with ordinary qualifying scores.

In the women's compound section, the top ranked Indian team comprising Madhura Dhamaangaonkar, Chikitha Taniparthi and Jyothi Surekha Vennam overcame Kazakhstan in the quarterfinal, before defeating Great Britain in the last-four stage to set up a title clash with Mexico. Both the gold-medal matches against Mexico will take place Saturday.

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Inter Milan knock out Barca to reach final



ASSOCIATED PRESS

Milan, May 7: Inter Milan has another Champions League final to look forward to. Once the players catch their breath, that is.

In the end it took extra time, two astonishing comebacks and 13 goals to separate Barcelona and Inter and see the Italian club — which was a mere seconds away from elimination — prevail 7-6 on aggregate after winning another rollercoaster encounter 4-3 Tuesday.

Substitute Davide Frattesi was the extra-time star for Inter, firing home in the 99th minute to leave the Barcelona players slumped to the ground while his Nerazzurri teammates — including those on the bench — were racing to celebrate with him.

"I don't know what happened tonight. I'm lucky I managed to finish the game, I screamed so much (in celebration) that I saw everything black," Frattesi told Italian broadcaster Sky.

Moments earlier, he'd been encouraging the already loud San Siro crowd to make more noise and the atmosphere grew more feverish after Frattesi delivered on his super-sub reputation again.

■ For the second time in six days Inter Milan and Barcelona served up a European classic as the champions of Italy won 4-3

■ The five-time winners, Barcelona, were hoping to reach their first Champions League final in a decade

"That's part of my career," the midfielder said. "I wasn't given so much incredible talent, but I am always the last one to give up and the first one to believe we can do it. At 3-3, I told Marcus (Thuram) that we would go through." Three-time European champion Inter, which lost the 2023 final to Manchester City, will face either Paris Saint-Germain or Arsenal in Munich May 31 for the title. PSG beat Arsenal 1-0 in London last week in their first match. The return leg is Wednesday in Paris.

Inter coach Simone Inzaghi thinks his squad has shown in wins over Barcelona in the semis and Bayern Munich in the quarterfinals that it can compete against the very best.

"My players have been extraordinary, they've put out there two monstrous performances to get to this final," he said.

END OF AN ERA

Hitman retires from Test

India will have a new Test captain for the five-Test series in England with possible candidates being Jasprit Bumrah, KL Rahul, Shubman Gill and Rishabh Pant

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 7: Rohit Sharma Wednesday announced his retirement from Test cricket with immediate effect ending all speculations about his future in the longest format.

The 38-year-old was India's most prolific Test batter in the second half of his career, scoring 4301 runs in 67 Tests with 12 hundreds and 18 half centuries at an average of 40.57.

Having already retired from T20 Internationals after the World Cup last year, Rohit will now only be seen in the ODI format for India.

"Hello everyone, I would just like to share that I am retiring from Test cricket. It's been an absolute honour to represent my country in whites. Thank you for all the love and sup-

Rohit ends his Test captaincy tenure as India's fifth most successful captain in the red-ball format with 12 wins in 24 games. Only Virat Kohli (40), MS Dhoni (27), Sourav Ganguly (21), and Mohammad Azharuddin (14) won more games leading the national team in red-ball cricket. Rohit's win percentage of 50% in Test cricket is the second best for an Indian captain behind Kohli (58%).

port over the years. I will continue to represent India in the ODI format," he posted on Instagram with a picture of his Test cap after PTI's newscast.

Rohit captained India to the World Test Championship final against Australia and save the last couple of indifferent series against New Zealand at home and the Border-Gavaskar series against Australia.

India will have a new Test captain for the five-Test series in England with possible candidates being Jasprit Bumrah, KL Rahul, Shubman Gill and Rishabh Pant.

Rohit endured a particularly diffi-

STELLAR RED-BALL CAREER

Runs Scored	: 4301 runs
Batting Average	: 40.57
Highest Score	: 212 vs South Africa
Centuries	: 12
Half-Centuries	: 18
Other Records	: Century on debut (177)
	Century in each innings of a match

cult run during the Border-Gavaskar Trophy where he had to drop himself from the playing XI owing to poor form but he had ruled out retirement at that stage. There was also widespread speculation about his differences with Head Coach Gautam Gambhir, who had vowed to end the "star culture" in Indian cricket after taking charge last year in July.

Both steadfastly denied the chatter but Gambhir has time and again made it clear that only performance would ensure selection in the team.

Cricketing community congratulates Rohit

Following Indian skipper Rohit Sharma's retirement from the Test format, ex-players and teams all rushed to social media to thank the 38-year-old for his 12 year tenure with the national team. Among the first wishers was the Mumbai Cricket Association (MCA), the governing body which helped Rohit grow to new heights in his career. "Mumbai cha Raja (The King of Mumbai) hangs up his Test whites. From pulling fast bowlers into the stands to leading with calm authority — Rohit Sharma's Test journey was worth every watch, every roar, every rise," posted the MCA. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said it was "proud of the Hitman" "Thank you, Captain. End of an era in whites! @ImR045 bids adieu to Test cricket. He will continue to lead India in ODIs. We are proud of you, Hitman," posted BCCI. India wicket-keeper batter Rishabh Pant claimed Rohit's impact will echo in the Indian team's dressing room for years to follow. "Your presence and impact will echo in that dressing room forever. Much love, @rohitsharma45 bhai," posted Pant on Instagram. "Congratulations @ImR045 on your test career. The 2021 Test series in England will be remembered for your heroics. Go well in your next phase," posted Irfan Pathan. "End of an era! @ImR045, your grit, grace, and leadership in Test cricket will always remain a big part of India's cricket journey. Thank you for the memories, Captain! #RohitSharma," posted Parthiv Patel. "Congratulations on a legendary Test career, @ImR045. You've made India proud. All the best for your ODI journey. God bless you," posted Amit Mishra. Rohit Sharma's IPL franchise, the Mumbai Indians also took the time to congratulate their most successful captain. "Cap 280, Jersey 45, Bowling out from Test cricket. It was a privilege watching you in India whites, Ro!," posted MI.



SHORT TAKES

Eves beat SA, to take on Sri Lanka in final

Colombo: Riding on Jemimah Rodrigues' career-best century and half-tons from opener Smriti Mandhana and Deepti Sharma, India defeated a fighting South Africa by 23 runs to set up a title clash with Sri Lanka in the women's Tri-Nation ODI series here Wednesday. Rodrigues' blazing 123 off 101 balls, laced with 15 fours and a six, saw India post a huge 337 for 9 before the bowlers, led by pacer seamer Aneesh Kaur (3/59) and off-spinner Deepti Sharma (2/57) restricted the opponents to 314/7. This despite Annerie Dercksen's fine 81-run knock and stand-in skipper Chloe Tryon's 67. India ended their round-robin phase with six points from four games. Sri Lanka, on the other hand, have four points from three games and could garner two more points if they beat South Africa Friday.

IOC's online channel livestreams KIYG

New Delhi: Continuing a recently-formed partnership with the International Olympic Committee's official digital platform, the Khelo India Youth Games are being livestreamed on the IOC's online channel. The Games are underway in five cities of Bihar and New Delhi. Olympics.com partnered with Khelo India for the first time in the Winter Games held in Leh (Ladakh) and Gulmarg (J&K) in January and March this year.

Defending champions KKR playoff hopes dim

Dhoni's vintage finish, Brevis' explosive fifty virtually knock KKR out of IPL play-offs contention

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Kolkata, May 7: Dewald Brevis's explosive 25-ball 52, combined with a disciplined four-wicket burst from left-arm spinner Noor Ahmad, virtually extinguished defending champions Kolkata Knight Riders' IPL play-off hopes as Chennai Super Kings cruised to a thrilling just-two-wicket win at the Eden Gardens here Wednesday.

The Afghan spinner exploited the turning conditions brilliantly, picking up 4/31, to restrict KKR to 179/6 after Ajinkya Rahane opted to bat first in their must-win clash.

For CSK, their spin trio dominated the middle overs taking a combined 5/84 in 11 overs that proved to be the difference.

Chasing 180 under tricky conditions, CSK were rocked early on, losing half their side for just 60 inside 5.2 overs under the glowing Eden Gardens lights. But it was MS Dhoni who had the final say -- possibly for the last time at this venue -- finishing the chase with



his trademark calm and power, as CSK completed the task with two balls to spare.

This was the end of KKR's campaign at home. They now have 11 points from 12 matches. The three-time champions play their next two matches away against Sunrisers Hyderabad and Royal Challengers Bengaluru and even in case they win both the games, they have to depend on other results.

With eight runs needed off the last over, Dhoni hammered Andre Russell's low full toss for a towering six over deep mid-wicket, triggering wild celebrations.

He then calmly took a single, passed on advice to debutant

IPL STANDINGS					
TEAM	M	W	L	NRR	PTS
GT	11	8	3	0.793	16
RCB	11	8	3	0.482	16
PBKS	11	7	3	0.376	15
MI	12	7	5	1.156	14
DC	11	6	4	0.362	13
KKR	12	5	6	-0.193	11
LSG	11	5	6	-0.469	10
SRH	11	3	7	-1.192	7
RR	12	3	9	-0.718	6
CSK	12	3	9	-0.992	6

Anshul Kamboj, who sealed the chase with a boundary.

As he walked off unbeaten on 17 from 18 balls, the Eden

crowd rose one last time, savouring what could be a farewell flourish from their most beloved finisher.

Earlier, Vaibhav Arora and Moeen Ali struck in the first two overs before Harshit Rana picked up wickets in back-to-back overs to leave CSK reeling at 56/4 inside five overs.

New signing Urvil Patel, a like-for-like replacement for the injured Vansh Bedi, launched a blistering counter-attack, smashing Moeen Ali for two sixes and a four off his first three balls. Urvil continued his onslaught against Rana, striking a four and a six, before falling for a fiery 11-ball 31 (1x4, 4x6) in his debut innings.

The collapse deepened when Varun removed Ravindra Jadeja (19) in his first over, reducing CSK to 62/5 by the end of the powerplay. Fortunately for the visitors, the asking rate remained manageable.

From a precarious 60/5, Brevis launched a stunning counter-attack in the 11th over, smashing 30 runs off Vaibhav Arora to flip the script in CSK's chase.

BRIEF SCORES

KKR: 179 for 6 in 20 overs (Ajinkya Rahane 48, Andre Russell 38; Noor Ahmad 4/31) lost to CSK: 183 for 8 in 19.4 overs (Dewald Brevis 52, Shivam Dube 45; Vaibhav Arora 3/48, Varun Chakaravathy 2/18)

TAIPEI OPEN

Srikanth, Ayush, Mannepilli, Unnati enter second round



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Taipei, May 7: Star Indian shuttler Kidambi Srikanth started his campaign on a bright note with a straight game win as he, along with a host of other youngsters, progressed to the second round of the Taipei Open Super 300 Badminton Tournament here Wednesday.

World No 61 Srikanth, who is battling an extended lean patch, dispatched fellow Indian Sankar Subramanian, a 2022 world junior championships silver medallist, 21-16 21-15 to enter the second round.

The 32-year-old, a silver-medallist at the 2021 World Championships, will face another Indian Ayush Shetty, a 2023 world junior championships bronze medallist.

Ayush, who reached the semifinals of the Orleans Masters, produced a stunning show, upsetting third seed and world number 13 Lee Chia Hao of Chinese Taipei 21-17 21-18 in 50 minutes. Chia-hao was runner-up at the All England Championships in March.

The 2023 National Games gold-medallist Tharun Mannepilli produced a gritty show, outwitting Japan's Shogo Ogawa 21-17 19-21 21-12 in 70 minute clash to set up a meeting with Indonesia's Moh Zaki Ubaidillah.

Meiraba Luwang Maisnam, however, went down 21-23 12-21 to Canada's Brian Yang.

In women's singles, Unnati Hooda, winner of two super 100 titles -- 2022 Odisha Masters and 2023 Abu Dhabi Masters, beat compatriot Anupama Upadhyaya 21-13 21-17 to also reach the second round. She will face Taipei's Lin Sih Yun next.

Aakarshi Kashyap, however, faltered in the opening hurdle, going down 9-21 12-21 to Taipei's Hung Yi-Ting in a one-sided contest.

Anmol Kharb and Rakshitha Sree Santhosh Ramraj will play later in the day.