

India repels Pak drone attacks at 26 places

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: India Friday night repelled fresh drone attacks from Pakistan at 26 locations in the country's north and west including Srinagar airport, as it accused Islamabad of using its civilian planes as a "shield" for its aerial strikes endangering their flights.

As Pakistan targeted several cities for the third consecutive night, this time from Baramulla in north Kashmir to Bhuj in Gujarat, the government said Islamabad had launched between 300 and 400 Turkish drones across 36 locations from Leh to Sir Creek in its failed attempt to target Indian military installations Thursday night.

"Drones have been sighted at 26 locations ranging from Baramulla in the north to Bhuj in the south, along both the International Border and the Line of Control with Pakistan," military officials said. The drone strikes in locations that included airports and airbases have been successfully thwarted, they added.

Besides Baramulla, Srinagar and Bhuj, the locations included Awantipora, Nagrota, Jammu, Ferozpur, Pathankot, Fazilka, Lalgarh Jatta, Jaisalmer, Barmer, Bhuj, Kuarbet and Lakhi Nala.

An armed drone targeted a civilian area in Ferozpur, resulting in severe injuries to members of a local family, officials said.

Drone attacks on Srinagar airport and Awantipora air base were thwarted late Friday, while blasts were heard in Jammu and parts of the south Kashmir region, defence officials said in Srinagar.

It was a second straight night of darkness and fear for locals of several border districts as sirens wailed upon spotting of aerial threats from Pakistan



CAUGHT IN CONFLICT: A man searches for his belongings among debris after his house was damaged amid the ongoing military conflict between India and Pakistan, at Uri in Baramulla district, Jammu & Kashmir, Friday

PTI PHOTO

- Pak targets several cities for third night
- Islamabad using Turkish drones against India
- Pakistan using civilian planes as shield
- Attack on Srinagar airport thwarted
- Members of a family injured in Ferozpur

32 AIRPORTS SHUT TILL MAY 15: DGCA

New Delhi: Thirty-two airports across northern and western parts of the country, including Srinagar and Amritsar, have been closed for civilian flight operations till May 15, according to the civil aviation regulator. The decision, announced early Saturday, comes in view of the military conflict between India and Pakistan that continued unabated since India's May 7 strikes on terror camps and Pakistan's subsequent shelling of border areas. The Airports Authority of India (AAI) and relevant aviation authorities have issued a series of Notices to Airmen (NOTAMs) announcing the temporary closure of 32 airports across northern and western India for all civil flight operations. The airports include Adhampur, Ambala, Amritsar, Awantipur, Bathinda, Bhuj, Bikaner, Chandigarh, Halwara, Hindon, and Jammu. Other airports are Jaisalmer, Jamnagar, Jodhpur, Kandla, Kangra (Gaggal), Keshod, Kishangarh, Kullu Manali (Bhuntar), and Leh, according to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation. Ludhiana, Mundra, Naliya, Pathankot, Patiala, Porbandar, Rajkot (Hirasar), Sarsawa, Shimla, Srinagar, Thoise and Uttarlai are the remaining airports to be shut, the release said.

establishment to take stock of the security situation.

Modi met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, and the three service chiefs and the Chief of Defence Staff to strategise over the future course of action. Earlier in the day, he held interactions with veterans, including former chiefs of the three services, taking their feedback on the

current situation.

At a media briefing, Misri slammed Pakistan's provocative and escalatory actions to try and target Indian cities and civilian infrastructure using drones last night.

Most drones were downed using kinetic and non-kinetic means, said Col Sofiya Qureshi of the Army and Wing Commander Vyomika Singh of the Indian Air Force

(IAF) at the briefing.

The two military officials said Pakistan used its civilian airliners as a 'shield' as it did not close its civil airspace during its attempts to attack Indian installations with drones and missiles May 7, knowing fully well that the strikes would elicit a swift response from India.

"On the night of May 8-9, Pakistan carried out large-scale violations of Indian airspace, attempting to target military infrastructure with 300-400 drones across 36 locations from Leh to Sir Creek," said Singh.

"Indian forces neutralised many drones using kinetic and non-kinetic means. An armed UAV strike on Bhatinda was also thwarted," she said.

Tension between the two neighbours soared after the Indian armed forces Wednesday conducted precision strikes targeting terror launchpads in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) in response to the April 22 attack by terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed.

BSF foils infiltration bid, kills 7 terrorists

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Jammu, May 9: The Border Security Force (BSF) Friday said it has foiled an infiltration bid from across the India-Pakistan International Border in Jammu, killing at least seven terrorists and destroying a Rangers post.

The terrorists were engaged around 11 pm Thursday in Samba district after a 'big group' of terrorists was detected by the 'surveillance grid'. This infiltration bid was supported by fire from Pakistan Rangers post Dhandhar, a BSF spokesperson said.

He said the troops neutralised the infiltration bid, killing 'at least' seven terrorists and caused 'extensive' damage to the Dhandhar post. Officials said there could be more terrorists, who could have been neutralised.

The BSF also shared a thermal imager clip of the firing and 'destruction' of a bunker of the said post where a heavy machine gun of the Rangers was mounted. The force is on high alert in the wake of the current hostilities between the two countries following the Pahalgam terrorist attack of April 22 and India's strike on terror targets in Pakistan and PoK in retaliation.

IMF approves \$1bn loan for Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Islamabad, May 9: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) Friday approved the immediate disbursement of about \$1 billion to Pakistan under the ongoing Extended Fund Facility, the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) here said.

"Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed satisfaction over the approval of a \$1bn dollar instalment for Pakistan by the IMF and the failure of India's high-handed tactics against it," according to a statement issued by his office.

India earlier raised concerns over the efficacy of IMF programmes in the case of Pakistan, given its poor track record, and also on the possibility of misuse of debt financing funds for state-sponsored cross-border terrorism.

New Delhi opposed the IMF's proposal to extend fresh loans of \$2.3 billion to Pakistan, saying they could be misused for financing state-sponsored cross-border terrorism.

IRREGULAR by MANJUL



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that were effectively engaged by the armed forces.

From Srinagar and Jammu to Punjab's multiple districts and Jaisalmer and Jodhpur in Rajasthan, a vast stretch of the border areas plunged into darkness with public announcements made, urging people to switch off their lights as a precautionary measure.

Heavy cross-border shelling was also underway along the International Border in Suchetgarh and Ramgarh sectors of Jammu and Samba districts.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said Pakistan's strike on places of worship and its 'preposterous' attempts to put the blame on Indian armed forces is reflective of Islamabad's

evil design and efforts to deceive and mislead the world.

Citing Pakistan's attack on a gurdwara in Amritsar and its subsequent attempt to blame it on Indian armed forces, Misri said Islamabad's thinking that India would attack its own cities is the kind of 'deranged fantasy' that only the Pakistani state can come up with.

Two people were killed after Pakistani troops resorted to heavy shelling in areas near the Line of Control (LoC) in J&K, officials said. With this, the death toll due to shelling from across the LoC in the recent days rose to 18.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a high-level meeting with the top defence

COASTAL SECURITY TIGHTENED: CM

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 9: Amid India-Pakistan military conflict, Odisha has tightened security along its coast and around key installations such as the missile testing centre in Chandipur and the Jagannath temple in Puri, Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi said Friday.

Both the defence facility and the 12th-century shrine are near the coastline. Though the coastal state is far from the Pakistan border, there is a threat perception from the Bay of Bengal, Majhi said.

The state government, in collaboration with the Centre, has taken all steps to protect vital installations in the state, the chief minister said on the sidelines of a programme here.

"In the case of Odisha, there is no such threat from Pakistan. However, we have some key installations like the missile testing range at Chandipur, the Puri temple and other places which could be potential targets through water route in the Bay of Bengal. Coastal security is therefore tightened," Majhi said.

Another round of a high-level meeting is being held to re-



Police personnel stand guard at Srimandir in Puri, Friday amid tight security in the wake of the ongoing military conflict between India and Pakistan

PTI PHOTO

inforce security measures, he said. "Strict security checks will be implemented... measures are being taken to seal sensitive areas," Majhi said.

India has been eliminating terrorists by launching Operation Sindoor after the Pahalgam

massacre, he said, adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is leading the world in the fight against terrorism.

"India has been successfully countering the attack from Pakistan, but they have failed to stand before our retaliation,"

the CM said.

Majhi urged the people of Odisha not to panic over the situation but remain cautious.

He also assured them that the state is well prepared to safeguard its citizens and vital installations.

Investors lose ₹7L-crore in 2 days as markets tumble

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Investors' wealth eroded by ₹7 lakh crore in two days as stock markets became jittery following the escalation of the India-Pakistan conflict.

India Thursday night swiftly thwarted Pakistan's fresh attempts to strike military sites with drones and missiles, including in Jammu and Pathankot, after foiling similar bids at 15 places in northern and western regions of the country as tensions soared between the two countries.

Extending its previous day's decline, the 30-share BSE benchmark gauge Sensex tanked 880.34 points, or 1.10 per cent, to settle at 79,454.47, in a largely range-bound trading.

The NSE Nifty dropped 265.80 points, or 1.10 per cent, to 24,008.

In two days, the BSE benchmark tumbled 1,292.31 points, or 1.60 per cent.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms eroded ₹7,09,783.32 crore to

₹4,16,40,850.46 crore (USD 4.86 trillion) in two days.

"A conflict was anticipated but the market was not expecting the situation to intensify, raising concerns about its duration. However, it is still projected to be a short-lived confrontation, given the strategic advantage and the opponent's weak economic standing. Interestingly, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) continued to invest in the Indian market until yesterday (Thursday), while retail investors remain slightly cautious at the moment," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Ltd, said.

"Domestic factors continued to weigh on Indian markets even as global indices stayed firm, as rising tension due to Indo-Pak conflict prompted investors to flee local equities," Prashanth Tapse, Senior VP (Research), Mehta Equities Ltd, said.

As many as 2,522 stocks declined while 1,343 advanced and 145 remained unchanged on the BSE Friday.

IPL suspended

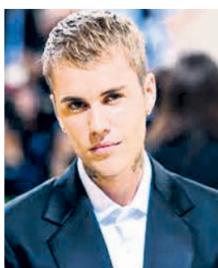
PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: The Indian Premier League (IPL) was Friday suspended because of the deepening military confrontation between India and Pakistan with the BCCI saying that national interest trumps other considerations at a time when the country is responding to a terror attack and unwarranted aggression from across the border.

A cloud of uncertainty had loomed over the future of the ongoing edition since the cancellation of Thursday's match between Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals in Dharamsala midway following air raid alerts in neighbouring cities of Jammu and Pathankot.

"The BCCI has decided to suspend the remainder of the ongoing IPL with immediate effect for one week," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia stated in a press release, after early information from the Board suggested that the suspension was indefinite.

leisure



BIEBER SHUTS DOWN DIVORCE RUMOURS

Hailey Bieber's solo appearance at the 2025 Met Gala ignited marriage trouble rumours with Justin Bieber, who was absent, watching hockey at home. Despite speculation fueled by his absence, Justin publicly displayed affection by posting Hailey's photos on Instagram with flirty captions, seemingly dismissing divorce gossip.

STAN, WOODALL TO STAR IN BURNING RAINBOW FARM

Actors Sebastian Stan and Leo Woodall are set to star in The Order's upcoming film titled, *Burning Rainbow Farm*. According to the entertainment news outlet *Deadline*, the film is directed by Justin Kurzel, best known for films like *Snowtown*.



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ARIES
Today, you may receive some kind of material support from family. It is probably for a wise cause, so be sure to use it accordingly, says Ganesha. You may spend the evening with those very loved ones who have supported you.

TAURUS
There is a strong prospect that you will work extremely hard to prove yourself at your workplace today, predicts Ganesha. At times, the returns may not be in proportion to your efforts. You will unwind at the end of the day with a happy and content feeling, expects Ganesha.

GEMINI
Today is an important phase in your life. You will be making a few crucial decisions. At work, you will come up with several fresh ideas, which, along with your willpower, form the winning concoction for your company. In the evening, you may spend a few extra bucks on comforts and entertainment, says Ganesha.

CANCER
A very hectic day for you! Today, you may have too much work to do, and taking even a coffee break may not remain an option. You will be forthright in dealing with issues and nothing will escape your sharp observation. You will be able to manage your work well, and finish it on time.

LEO
The Libra in you gives you substantial balancing prowess, says Ganesha. So, it should come as no surprise that you are fabulous when it comes to balancing people and their interests and giving equal attention to everyone. Make it a point to revive your social contacts even if it takes all afternoon. Ganesha foresees big business parties on the cards for you later in the evening. On a more cautionary note, your spare-time actions might result in considerable expenditure. Curb expensive hobbies.

VIRGO
Work like a thrill to have your contribution noticed, says Ganesha. However, do not expect appreciation in the same degree. Unwind at the end of a long day with the solace of putting in your best.

LIBRA
There are indications that today, you may want to take a break from your humdrum routine in order to recharge your batteries. It is an essential change that we all need from time to time, says Ganesha. Finances may improve sometime later in the day. Children, if any, may be a source of joy in the afternoon. Ganesha says you will get rather emotional towards the end of this fruitful day.

SCORPIO
Life's not too slow nor too fast: you are going steady and strong, feels Ganesha. On the career front, simply grin and bear it all. Workplace efficiency will improve today. At home, you will be happy and content and more importantly - at peace, says Ganesha.

SAGITTARIUS
A mixed bag of fortunes in store today, says Ganesha. At work, expect the unexpected and overlook the expected. Don't you worry if you stumble there, says Ganesha, for the evening promises to be ecstatic and a fitting finale to a rather muddled day.

CAPRICORN
A couple of fascinating developments on the family front will fill the air with excitement, and will keep you pleasantly occupied throughout the day, says Ganesha. Your outstanding efforts at work will be rewarded adequately, but you will need to be extra careful while executing plans as you may commit mistakes that will do irreparable damage.

AQUARIUS
As the day begins, you will be irritated and troubled by the most trivial of matters. But you won't let it hamper your pace and sincerely pursue your goals. Evening promises some kind of monetary windfall. Make full use of opportunities on the career front, if any, says Ganesha.

PISCES
Today is a day devoted to matters of the heart as well as your heart. So, while you will probably be busy during the day keeping tabs on the refurbishments you have planned for your residence, the evening should probably see you in a romantic setting murmuring sweet nothings to your soul mate, says Ganesha.



'Art can wait, India comes first'

CHENNAI: Keeping in view the recent developments at the country's borders, the unit of director Mani Ratnam's *Thug Life*, featuring Kamal Haasan in the lead, Friday decided to postpone the audio launch function of the film which was originally scheduled to be held May 16 this year.

Actor Kamal Haasan issued a statement, which he shared on his X timeline.

The eminent actor said, "Art can wait. India comes first. In view of the developments at our nation's border and the current state of heightened alert, we have decided to reschedule the audio launch of *Thug Life*, originally planned for the 16th of May."

The actor further said, "As our soldiers stand firm on the frontlines with unflinching courage in defence of our motherland, I believe it is a time for quiet solidarity, not celebration. A new date will be announced at a later, more appropriate time."

Stating that at this time, our thoughts are with the brave men and women of our armed forces who stand vigilant, safeguarding our nation, the actor said, "As citizens, it is our duty to respond with restraint and solidarity. Celebration must make way for reflection."

Thug Life, directed by Mani Ratnam, features Kamal Haasan in the lead. The film will also feature actors Silambarasan, Trisha, Joju George, Ashok Selvan and Abhirami in pivotal roles.

LOS ANGELES: National Award-winning actress Kangana Ranaut is all set to make her debut in Hollywood, as she has landed her first leading role in the horror drama *Blessed Be the Evil*.

According to the synopsis, the film follows a Christian couple who, after experiencing a devastating miscarriage, purchase an abandoned farm with a dark past. Their love and faith are soon tested by a malevolent presence.

The project, from Lions Movies, will see Kangana star alongside Teen Wolf star Tyler Posey and Scarlet Rose Stallone, reports *variety.com*.

Production is set to begin this summer in New York, with producers specifically noting they chose U.S. locations to "avoid running into any uncertainties stemming from the recently announced Trump industry tariffs."

Director Anurag Rudra of *Tailing Pond* fame will helm from a screenplay he co-wrote with Gatha Tiwary, president and founder of Lions Movies.

Ranaut brings considerable star power to the project. She is not only a celebrated actor with four National Film Awards and four Filmfare Awards, but also a filmmaker and politician currently serving as a Member of Parliament in India's Lok Sabha.

Her directorial effort *Emergency*, in which she portrayed Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, received worldwide theatrical release earlier this year.

Kangana to make Hollywood debut

ANANYA not afraid to fall

MUMBAI: It was in 2019, when her debut film *Student Of The Year 2* released. Actress Ananya Panday, who has completed six years in Hindi cinema, said that when she started off she was nervous and now she is not afraid to try.

"I was 19 when I started. I was nervous, starry-eyed and still figuring out who I was", she said.

The actress added: "Now, I think I've grown into a version of myself who's not afraid to try, to fall, to rise and to keep surprising people. I'm still learning."

"I don't have all the answers, but I know I want to keep getting better and to pick roles that challenge me, scare me a little, and keep giving me butterflies"

Student of the Year 2 is a sports romantic comedy film directed by Punit Malhotra and produced by Karan Johar's Dharma Productions. A standalone sequel to the 2012 film *Student of the Year*, it stars Tiger Shroff, Tara Sutaria, Ananya Panday, and Aditya Seal. It marks the debuts of both Tara and Ananya in Hindi cinema.

She was last seen in the courtroom drama *Kesari Chapter 2*, starring Akshay Kumar and R. Madhavan.



What's in a name-Apparently everything!

Old Mac Donald had a farm, ee-eye, ee-eye-oh, and on that farm, he had a duck.....here a quack, there a quack, everywhere a quack, quack.....and so goes the 1925 rhyme. Cut to 2025, what do we have! Here a Dham, there a dhoom, everywhere a dhoom-dhaam.

The controversy over the self-styled labelling of the newly constructed 21st century Digha temple as Jagannath Dham will hopefully be laid to rest soon with retraction of the faulty epithet denoting it, following valid clarification by religious honchos "Here in Puri is the *only* Jagannath Dham" as indicated in scriptures of yore.

For all the 'dhoom' and buzz it managed to create, last heard, Digha temple is after all a replica of the 12th century Puri shrine. The temple that has apparently been modelled in the lines of THE Puri Jagannath temple not only borrowed from the religious rituals of the latter (courtesy the guidance offered by a



few Puri temple servitors), but has also installed the Nilachakra atop and neem-wood idols inside- all, a moving testament to the saying by Oscar Wilde- "Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery."

There is something so unique about the original that men in vain try to emulate it. But nothing ever takes away or diminishes the supremacy of the original. In fact, more the imitations, more the heart yearns for the original. And here it is the faith and devotion of millions at play! Anyway, gross fallout of the

incident, could only be a furtherance of Mahaprabhu's glory and 'dhoom-dhaam' celebration and propagation of Jagannath Culture, as guidelines that hopefully align Jagannath shrines across India with Puri temple operations emerge.

About time! The net fallout is issue of SOPs for temple servitors with one servitor in the net already. No surprise! As for timber used to craft the wooden idols, regardless of replicas, Puri idols reverberate with original Dham-timbre (quality/character) that draws devotees like no other.

Strangely, last seen, gateway to heaven or not, gateway to pleasure was positively ensured by locating 'female vibrators in Digha,' courtesy the temple navigation map advertised prominently in several news-papers. Hari- Bol!

PEANUTS



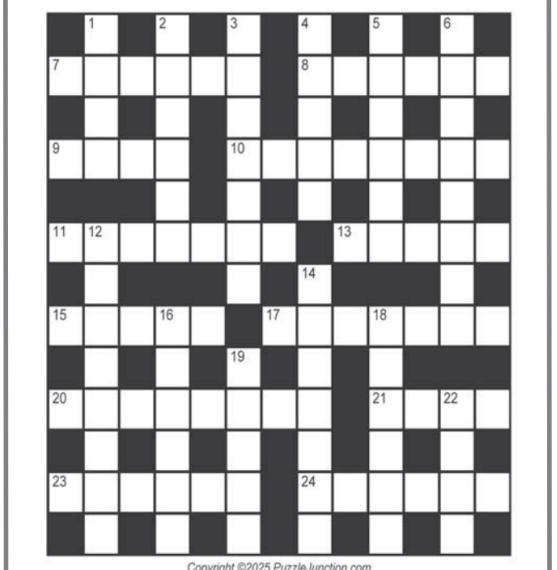
CALVIN AND HOBBS



BREVITY



CROSSWORD



- Across**
- 7 "Have I been here before?" (4,2)
 - 8 Fix
 - 9 Canine tooth
 - 10 Ghent natives
 - 11 Light lager
 - 13 Pile up
 - 15 Timeworn
 - 17 Wrack
 - 20 Cites
 - 21 Strip of wood
 - 23 Japanese attire
 - 24 Gives way
- Down**
- 1 Epsilon follower
 - 2 Guffaws
 - 3 Mishandles
 - 4 Practice
 - 5 Orthopedic device
 - 6 Acme
 - 12 Fearless
 - 14 Sports uniforms
 - 16 Embrocation
 - 18 Card carrier
 - 19 Up and down toys (2-3)
 - 22 Shipshape

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.

	5	3						1
2								5
9		1						
	9	2			3			
			2			9		5
6					8		7	3
4		8			9			6
			3					
		5		8	6			

SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD

L	I	A	I	S	O	N	R	O	B	E		
I	C	P	O	E	A	C						
A	C	S	T	Y	A							
C	R	S										
A	R	C	H	E	S		H	A	Z	A	R	
F	E											
R	A	N	C	O	U	R		C	E	D	A	R
I	T	C	O	H								
C	A	R										
A	I	R	E	E	V	E						
A	C	H	E									

SUDOKU

1	5	2	9	8	3	4	6	7
8	3	7	6	5	4	1	9	2
9	4	6	7	1	2	8	3	5
2	8	4	5	3	1	9	7	6
5	9	3	4	7	6	2	8	1
6	7	1	2	9	8	3	5	4
4	1	8	3	6	7	5	2	9
7	2	9	8	4	5	6	1	3
3	6	5	1	2	9	7	4	8

CHECK FOR SOLUTIONS OF THE PUZZLES TOMORROW

downtown

POLITICKLE by MANJUL



Dham row: Fresh SJTA notice to servitor for attending Digha event

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Puri, May 9: The Shree Jagannath Temple Administration (SJTA) Friday issued another show cause notice to senior servitor Ramakrushna Dasmohapatra, asking him to explain the reason behind his active participation in the consecration ceremony of the Jagannath temple at Digha in West Bengal.



Dasmohapatra, secretary of Daitapati Nijog (a group of servitors who are considered bodyguards of the Srimandir deities), was among over 55 servitors of the 12th century shrine who participated in the inaugural session of the Digha temple. Dasmohapatra was seen in photographs and videos taking a lead role in performing rituals at the Digha temple in the presence of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. The Digha temple was inaugurated on Akshaya Tritiya April 30. "The pictures and videos of Dasmohapatra participating in

the inauguration programme of the Sri Jagannath Temple in Digha and leading the group of servitors have been widely circulated in various media. It has come to our attention that during the inauguration of the Digha temple, a plaque was put up to this effect with the inscription 'Jagannath Dham-Digha', the notice mentioned. Stating that Puri is the holy abode of the supreme deity Sri Purusottam Jagannath, the notice said that according to scriptures, it is one of the most important 'dhams' among the four 'dhams' of India. "Despite being aware of this as a senior servitor of Lord Jagannath temple, his participation in

the inaugural session of the Digha temple has created confusion among the devotees regarding the tradition of the temple and has hurt the religious sentiments of countless Shri Jagannath devotees," the notice said. Therefore, the SJTA wanted to know as to why did he (Dasmohapatra) participated in a programme titled 'Jagannath Dham-Digha' as a senior servitor of the 12th century shrine in Puri. "Whether you (Dasmohapatra) had protested before the Digha Temple Trust Board opposing the mention of 'dham' in the plaque," the notice asked. The fresh show cause notice asked Dasmohapatra to submit an explanation to the SJTA chief administrator Arabinda Padhee, who is a senior IAS officer, within two days of receiving the notice. "If a satisfactory explanation is not received within this time, action will be taken under the Sri Jagannath Temple Act, 1955," the notice said.

36 programmes for 'Viksit Odisha' by 2036

AGENCIES

Bhubaneswar, May 9: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Friday said his government has prepared 36 flagship programmes to build a prosperous and 'Viksit Odisha' by its centenary year in 2036. Majhi said this at a consultation workshop on preparation of Vision Odisha 2036 and 2047 documents here Friday. "A prosperous Odisha will be built by 2036. For this, 36 programmes have been prepared. Odisha will be made a \$500 billion economy by its centenary," the CM said. He said that 36 top priority programmes have been identified to make a significant impact in key sectors by 2036. This

is a strategic initiative termed as '36 for 36', which will accelerate the journey of growth of Odisha, Majhi added. The CM said that the programmes will be taken up with a 'whole of government' approach to realise the vision. Clear-cut programmes will be prepared and steps will be taken in 36 areas such as economy, industry, education, health, infrastructure, agriculture, tourism, science and research, innovation, women empowerment, rural development, tribal welfare, Odia language, culture and promotion of Odia 'Asmitha' (pride), he said. Steps will be taken to ensure all kinds of basic amenities reach the people in the lower stratum of society by 2036, he

said. The government has taken an ambitious resolution to make Odisha a prosperous state by 2036. Besides, Odisha will also play an important role in achieving the goal of making India a developed nation by 2047, Majhi said. He said that the vision document is a roadmap for the dreams of 4.5 crore people of the state and a promise for future generations. Stating that the preparation of the vision document has reached the final stage, Majhi said the draft is ready and the final document will be prepared after consulting with experts. Three regional workshops will be held in Sambalpur, Balasore and Jeypore in the coming days, he said.

3 held for assault, robbery bid

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 9: The Baliana police Friday arrested three miscreants for allegedly assaulting a motorcyclist and the pillion rider in a bid to rob them Thursday night. Baliana police station IIC Anil Kumar Parida identified the arrested trio as Jogeswar Bhoi, 27, Brundaban Bhoi, 25, and Balaram Bhoi, 25. They are residents of Paribasudeipur village. The police seized iron rods and some incriminating objects which the miscreants used while making the robbery attempt, Parida said. The IIC said Murali Palei and his friend (name not disclosed) were travelling back to their homes in Paribasudeipur village on a motorcycle at around 10:30 pm Thursday when the trio stopped them near Bananihari Temple. They allegedly asked Palei and his friend to part with their cash and valuables. When they resisted, the trio assaulted them with iron rods, Parida said, adding that Palei suffered serious injuries on his arms in the attack. Seeing a profusely bleeding Palei, the attackers panicked and fled the scene on a motorcycle, the IIC said. He said following the receipt of information, the Baliana police launched a hunt and nabbed them from Olarbindha village Friday morning. The accused were booked under BNS Section 309 (6), and produced in a local court Friday for remand.

Ministry of External Affairs
Government of India

KAILASH MANASAROVAR YATRA

Ministry of External Affairs invites
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WAQF CONSULTATION

Ready to address doubts, if any: CM

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Bhubaneswar May 9: Asserting that the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 was 'just and purposeful', Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi has called upon communities to come forward with their doubts, if any, to be clarified and resolved. Majhi said this while addressing a consultation programme on the new Waqf Act attended by over 250 delegates from different religions and districts Thursday evening. "There are a lot of misconceptions surrounding the Act. However, the provisions therein are just and purposeful. If you have any suggestions, efforts will be made to resolve them," Majhi told the audience, adding that the Waqf Act is intended for the welfare of the poor, helpless minorities. Stating that the Odisha government has no hesitation in discussing the new legislation, Majhi said, "I am always ready to listen to you, everyone



should work together to build a prosperous Odisha. Regardless of caste and religion, we are all Odias." The consultation programme organised by the Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Caste Development, Minorities and Backwards Classes Welfare Department witnessed delegates raising doubts over the new legislation. The Chief Minister said that before this law was implement-

ed, a Joint Parliamentary Committee held discussions with 284 stakeholders from various religious and social institutions. In addition, five minority commissions were consulted. Then the amendment Bill was discussed in detail in both Houses of Parliament and passed. It has amended the one-sided nature of the original law, he said. Majhi said, according to the Act, Waqf property should be used only for public benefit. The Chief Minister said that this amendment to the Waqf Act has emphasised the proper management and direction of the property. Due to this amendment, the rights of women and backward-class Muslims have been protected. He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has always stood for justice and equality for Muslim women. Majhi said that the new Waqf Act has enhanced the chances

of justice due to the provisions of different representation transparent management and the right to appeal to the High Court within 90 days. "The district Collectors have been given the responsibility to decide on the disputed properties. Therefore, it is hoped that everyone will be able to get speedy justice in this regard," he said. "I assure all that the Odisha government will protect the interests of all communities during the implementation of this law. We will continue to hold discussions with all stakeholders at the local level, and a fair and transparent process will be followed in resolving property disputes," the Chief Minister said. The consultation programme was also attended by Revenue Disaster Management Minister Suresh Pujari and Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Caste Development, Minority and Backwards Classes Welfare Minister Nityanand Gand.

AIIMS cancels employees' leaves

BHUBANESWAR: AIIMS Bhubaneswar Friday cancelled the leaves of all staffers, including those on vacation, and asked them to report to duty immediately in view of the prevailing situation in the country, an official order said. "In view of the impending situation, no leave of any kind, including vacation and sanction leave, is to be granted to any officer except on medical grounds, till further order," the order said. It said that the already sanctioned leave, if any, stands cancelled and the officers who are on leave are directed to resume their duties immediately. Therefore, all faculty members, residents and all other staff members and officers who are on leave as of date are hereby informed to report to duty immediately, the order said, adding that this will come into force with immediate effect.

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ଟୀକାକରଣ

ଠିକ୍ ସମୟରେ ସଠିକ୍ ଟୀକାଦେଇ ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଶିଶୁକୁ ସୁରକ୍ଷିତ ରଖନ୍ତୁ ।

୫ ବର୍ଷରେ ୭ ଥର

ଟୀକା ନେବାକୁ ଭୁଲନ୍ତୁ ନାହିଁ କୌଣସି ଥର

ଟୀକାକରଣ ସୂଚୀ

ବୟସ	ଟୀକା
ଜନ୍ମ ସମୟରେ	ବିଷଜି, ଓପିଜି, ହେପାଟାଇଟିସ୍-ବି (କଜୁ ମାତ୍ରା)
୬ ସପ୍ତାହ (ଦେହ ମାସ)	ଓପିଜି-୧, ପେଣ୍ଟାଭାଲେଣ୍ଟ-୧, ଏମ୍ଆରପିଜି-୧, ଆରଜିଜି-୧, ପିସିଜି-୧
୧୦ ସପ୍ତାହ (ଅଦେହ ମାସ)	ଓପିଜି-୨, ପେଣ୍ଟାଭାଲେଣ୍ଟ-୨, ଆରଜିଜି-୨
୧୪ ସପ୍ତାହ (ସାତେ ତିନି ମାସ)	ଓପିଜି-୩, ପେଣ୍ଟାଭାଲେଣ୍ଟ-୩, ଏମ୍ଆରପିଜି-୩, ଆରଜିଜି-୩, ପିସିଜି-୩
୯-୧୨ ମାସ	ଏମ୍ଆର-୧, ଭିଟାମିନ୍-କ***, ପିସିଜି ବୁଷ୍ଟର, ଜେଜି-୧***ଏମ୍ଆରପିଜି-୩
୧୬-୨୪ ମାସ	ଏମ୍ଆର-୨, ଭିଟାମିନ୍-କ***, ଡିପିଟି ବୁଷ୍ଟର-୧, ଓପିଜି ବୁଷ୍ଟର-୧, ଜେଜି-୨**
୫-୬ ବର୍ଷ	ଡିପିଟି ବୁଷ୍ଟର-୨
୧୦ ବର୍ଷ	ଟି.ଡି
୧୬ ବର୍ଷ	ଟି.ଡି
ଗର୍ଭବତୀ ମହିଳା	ଟି.ଡି-୧, ଟି.ଡି-୨, ଟି.ଡି ବୁଷ୍ଟର*

* ଯଦି ୩ ବର୍ଷ ଭିତରେ ଚିଟି/ଟିଟି ଟୀକାର ଦୁଇଟି ମାତ୍ରା ନେଇଥିବେ ।
** କେବଳ ଜେଜି ପ୍ରକାର ଜିଲ୍ଲା ମାନଙ୍କ ନିମନ୍ତେ
*** ଭିଟାମିନ୍-କ, ୯ ମାସରୁ ଆରମ୍ଭ ହୋଇ ୫ ବର୍ଷ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ପ୍ରତି ୬ ମାସ ବ୍ୟବଧାନରେ ଦିଆଯାଏ ।

ଆପଣଙ୍କ ଶିଶୁ ନେଇଥିବା ଟୀକା ଗୁଡ଼ିକ ଯୁ-ଡିଏନ୍ ଯୋଗାଣରେ ଅପଡେଟ୍ କରନ୍ତୁ ।

ସ୍ୱାସ୍ଥ୍ୟ ଓ ପରିବାର କଲ୍ୟାଣ ବିଭାଗ, ଓଡ଼ିଶା

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Bringing back students from north, west: CM



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 9: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Friday said that amid India-Pakistan military conflict, his government has made arrangements to bring back students studying in institutions from northern and western India. The state government's arrangement came after students studying at Central Sanskrit University in Jammu were ordered to vacate the campus. The Office of the Chief Resident Commissioner, New Delhi and Directorate of Odisha Parivar under the Odia Language, Literature and Culture department made the arrangements to bring back 114 Odia students studying at university to Odisha.

Some Odia students studying in Jammu were relocated to Delhi as a precautionary measure, and the first batch has already left for Odisha through

train from Delhi, Majhi told reporters.

The students studying at Jammu university were worried after Thursday night's drone attack launched by Pakistan.

A round-the-clock help desk has been set up at the Office of the Resident Commissioner in New Delhi and at the office of the Directorate of Odisha Parivar in Bhubaneswar.

The students may contact the control room set up at Resident Commissioner's office in Delhi on 7428135044 and 011-24679201. They can also contact the control room set up at Bhubaneswar (Contact number: 0674-2431945, 9583321964).

The state government has arranged a special train to shift the students from Delhi to Odisha, an official said.

Odia students studying in northern and western India may contact the helpline number in Delhi to avail the opportunity, the official said.

A round-the-clock help desk has been set up at the Office of the Resident Commissioner in New Delhi and at the office of the Directorate of Odisha Parivar in Bhubaneswar

A special team has been formed and officers have been given the responsibility to ensure the safe return of Odia students, said Higher Education minister Suryabanshi Suraj. The minister added that four senior officers and 16 support staff from the Directorate of Odisha Parivar and officers from the Office of the Chief Resident Commissioner, New Delhi, have been deployed for the safe return of the students. The concerned officers are monitoring the evacuation work. The aim is to ensure that Odia students reach Odisha safely by Saturday, the minister said.

A student from Sambalpur, Jitendra Prasad, said that all Odia students have come to Delhi from Jammu and Kashmir.



RATH YATRA PREP: Maharana servitors carve the hubs of the chariot wheels at Rath Yard on the Grand Road in Puri Friday

OP PHOTO

Be torchbearers of a better tomorrow: Guv

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 9: Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati Friday called upon members of Odisha State Bharat Scouts and Guides (OSBSG) to become torchbearers of a brighter future, stating that the nation needs their dedication, discipline, and values, now, more than ever.

Speaking at the state-level award ceremony of OSBSG at the New Abhishek Hall of Raj Bhavan here, Kambhampati praised the scouts and guides movement for nurturing responsible citizens through service, self-reliance, and moral integrity. First Lady, Jayshree Kambhampati was also present on the occasion.

"The Rajya Puraskar is not the end of your journey. It is a



milestone," the governor said, urging the young members to carry forward the values of kindness, honesty, and leadership in all their actions. As the chief patron of the OSBSG, the Governor expressed pride in the organisation's accomplishments and its strong presence even in remote areas of the state. He commended the Odisha state branch for winning several national-level awards.

He also acknowledged the dedicated efforts of scoutmasters, guiders, trainers, and volunteers in instilling timeless values such as compassion, respect for nature, teamwork, and service. At the event, OSBSG members were awarded in eight different categories. The Governor congratulated all the awardees and wished the organisation continued success in its future endeavours.

Joining as guest of honour, School and Mass Education and ST & SC Development Minister Nityananda Gond spoke about the role of Bharat Scouts and Guides in instilling discipline and teaching vital skills to navigate challenging situations.

Higher Education, Sports and Youth Services, and Odia Language, Literature, and Culture Minister Suryabanshi Suraj also graced the occasion and said, "The vision of a developed Odisha cannot be realised without your contribution, participation, and leadership."

OSBSG state chief commissioner Kali Prasad Mishra delivered the welcome address. Padma Shri Debi Prasanna Patanayak was honoured with the Utkal Jyoti Samman by Kambhampati during the event.

'Celebrate 50 yrs of croc conservation'

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 9: As India marks 50 years of the launch of its National Crocodile Conservation Project, the Orissa Environmental Society (OES) has urged the state government to officially commemorate this historic milestone.

In a letter addressed to Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi and Forest, Environment and Climate Change Minister Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia, OES working president Jaya Krushna Panigrahi called for state-level recognition of Odisha's extraordinary contribution to crocodile conservation.

Back in early 1970s, India's three native crocodile species — gharials, saltwater crocodiles, and mugger — are on the brink of extinction. With support from Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and UNDP, India launched its National Crocodile Conservation Project in 1975, selecting Odisha and Uttar Pradesh as pilot states. Odisha stood out as the only state where all three species existed in the wild.

Odisha Kudo Association seeks state recognition



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 9: A 70-member team, representing Odisha Kudo Association (OKA), comprising players, coaches, and officials, met CM Mohan Charan Majhi at Lok Seva Bhawan here Friday to push for official state recognition of Kudo—a mixed martial art, combining elements of judo, karate, and taekwondo.

The delegation emphasised Kudo's rising popularity and noted that several districts in

the state already have training centres. They appealed the state government to support the sport's development through formal recognition.

Majhi assured the group that the government would consider their request seriously and acknowledged the sport's benefits in promoting discipline and physical fitness. The meeting also saw the presence of Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida, Revenue Minister Suresh Pujari, and OKA's chief coach Nitai Shankar Guin.

Majhi gives nod to pension for 23 Emergency detainees

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 9: Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi Friday approved the proposal of providing pensions to 23 persons imprisoned under Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA) and Defense and Internal Security of India Rules (DISIR) during the Emergency period.

According to reports, 19 people under MISA and four under DISIR will receive increased pension.

Earlier, pension had been approved for 21 MISA detainees.

The process of honouring the sons of the soil has begun

by the CM, following which the pension amount has been increased.

These detainees will receive a pension of Rs 20,000 per month, while their medical expenses will be borne by the state government.

Significantly, many were arrested under various laws such as MISA, Defense of India Rules (DIR) and DISIR, and imprisoned for opposing the imposition of Emergency in the country.

It has been decided that all surviving freedom fighters will receive pensions and medical benefits from January 1, 2025.

Blood donation camp held at DPS Kalinga



Bhubaneswar: A blood donation camp was organised at Delhi Public School (DPS) Kalinga here in collaboration with Central Red Cross Blood Centre, Cuttack recently. The camp was organised May 7, marking the birth anniversary of Mahimanda Mishra, the founder of the educational institution, according to a release issued by the school. Members of the school management, and teaching and non-teaching staffs participated in the camp. Pro Vice Chairperson of DPS Kalinga Mala Mishra and executive trustee Sunaina Patro appreciated the enthusiasm shown by DPS Kalinga fraternity in stepping forward for this noble cause. School principal Suvabrata Mukherjee thanked the organisers for their excellent endeavour in serving the society.

WADERS FLOCK TO HIRAKUD FOR NESTING

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar/Sambalpur, May 9: Hirakud wetland has turned into an important breeding ground this summer, as thousands of migratory waders (commonly called shorebirds or water birds)—including Terns, Pratincoles, and other waders—laid eggs at approximately 26 islands, scattered across the region for nesting.

More than ten species of waterbirds such as River Terns, Gull-billed Terns, Little Terns, Oriental and Little Pratincoles, Little Ringed Plovers, Whiskered Terns, and several varieties of egrets have been observed laying eggs and nurturing their chicks.

Large breeding colonies of River Terns and Pratincoles are sighted in some islands. Mothers tirelessly guard eggs and hatchlings and juveniles

To bolster conservation efforts, a team comprising 9 squads, 4 frontline staff, and 2 speedboats has been trained to monitor bird behaviour and nesting patterns

from the scorching summer heat, engaging in post-fledging care throughout the day. The islands, which emerge from the receding waters of the Hirakud reservoir in the month of April, offers ideal conditions—isolation from predators, no human intervention, and abundant fish supply.

Although five Indian Skimmers—an IUCN Endangered



species, have been spotted among the flocks. But any nesting activity or sight is yet to be confirmed.

In order to protect the breeding sites and prevent disturbances, authorities from Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary have taken proactive steps. Over 100 red flags have been placed across nesting islands to alert

fishermen and raise awareness among the villages residing at nearby areas adjacent to the islands. A dedicated 'river patrol team' has been formed to ensure constant surveillance, while tourist boats are kept at bay, as their approach can likely cause birds to abandon nests, leaving eggs and chicks exposed to heat and predators,

said Hirakud Wildlife Division Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Anshu Pragyan Das.

The birds build shallow, camouflaged nests directly on sandy or rocky grounds. The eggs and chicks blend so well into the landscape, gets camouflaged, becomes nearly invisible to the human eye. The average gestation period for these birds ranges from 20 to 30 days, with incubation lasting 7 to 25 days. Mating, nesting, and chick-rearing began in April and is expected to continue over the next few months.

Shorebirds are among the most threatened bird groups, often preyed upon by stray dogs, snakes, raptors, and other predators. The Hirakud islands offer a rare sanctuary—distanced from human activity, livestock, and land predators such as jackals, hyenas, wild dogs, and wolves from Debrigarh Wildlife Sanctuary and adjacent shoreline.

To bolster conservation efforts, a team comprising 9 squads, 4 frontline staff, and 2 speedboats has been trained to monitor bird behaviour and nesting patterns.

"Chadhei Club" members from Sambalpur have also been instrumental in identifying nesting sites within human-influenced zones of the wetland and promoting their protection, according to Das.

A waterbird bird census conducted January 18, recorded 3.77 lakh migratory birds across the entire Hirakud Wetland—an increase of 35,000 from 2024. This growing population reaffirms the ecological significance of Hirakud, a designated Ramsar Site by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change in 2022.

WEATHER		
	BBSR	CTC
Max Temp	39.2°	38.8°
Min Temp	26.4°	25.6°
Humidity	74%	77%
Rainfall	Nil	Nil
FORECAST		
Mainly clear sky		

MARKET WATCH		
INDEX	VARIATION	
SENSEX	79454.47	↓ 880.34
NIFTY	24008.00	↓ 265.80
DOLLAR	85.53	↓ 0.09
EURO	96.30	↓ 0.49
GOLD	₹96,669	↑ ₹501
SILVER	₹96,861	↑ ₹349

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NCSUY exists only on paper 3 poachers held in Similipal

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, May 9: Nabakrushna Choudhury Secha Unnayan Yojana (NCSUY), an ambitious scheme to irrigate farmlands in state, has remained a non-starter even though more than seven years have elapsed to its announcement, according to reports.

The state government had approved this irrigation project November 23 in 2017, marking the birth anniversary of former chief minister Nabakrushna Choudhury. Initially, ₹635 crore was earmarked for its implementation in the first three years in Nabarangpur and Malkangiri districts. Subsequently, in April 2022, the government decided to expand the scheme across the state, aiming to rejuvenate lost command areas and create additional irrigation potential. However, despite the passage of more than seven years since its approval, the promises have largely remained on paper, leading to frustration among farmers.

The government had set a target of providing irrigation facilities across 100 per cent of agricultural lands in the state. Under this programme, efforts were being made to augment irrigation capacity, maintain canals, prepare crop calendars, ensure equitable water distribution, and strengthen water user associations.

Every year, significant investments have been made to build new irrigation channels, repair Odisha's group reservoirs, and revive management operations. Nevertheless, ma-



ny major, medium, and minor irrigation projects under the Water Resources department have become outdated, irrigating much less farmland than their designed capacities.

Under NCSUY, from 2020-21 to 2024-25, a total expenditure of ₹823.45 crore was proposed to restore 42,658 hectares of lost irrigated land and create additional irrigation potential over 7,442 hectares of farmland. However, due to underutilisation of the allocated funds, these objectives have been missed, according to complaints.

The government intended to fully implement the scheme across the state. Official notifications indicate that while there has been a slight reduction of 1.99 per cent and 3.4 per cent in the gaps between Irrigation Potential Created

(IPC) and Irrigation Potential Utilised (IPU), many major, medium, and minor irrigation projects of the Water Resource department continue to underperform relative to their design capacities.

Consequently, with an aim to increase the irrigated area beyond the original capacity and bridge the gap between potential created and utilised, expansion activities under several projects were proposed. Nevertheless, the benefits of the scheme have remained a far cry for the farmers.

It is widely acknowledged that a country's economy is dependent on the development of its farmers for which the state government has implemented numerous schemes aimed at boosting the agriculture sector. However, due to

administrative negligence, important initiatives like NCSUY have faltered, said local intellectuals.

In Jajpur district, many canal concrete-lining works could not be completed. As a result, irrigation facilities failed to reach the targeted agricultural lands at the tail ends. The district's Mega Lift Irrigation Project stands as another example, where irrigation was planned over approximately 12,800 hectares in nine blocks—Badachana, Bari, Dharmasala, Jajpur, and Rasulpur among them.

Yet, not a single project has become fully operational so far. Consequently, farmers have expressed disappointment over the lack of irrigation facilities during both Kharif and Rabi seasons under the Mega Lift Irrigation initiative.

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baripada, May 9: The Forest department has successfully apprehended poachers using artificial intelligence (AI) integrated TrailGuard cameras installed in the Similipal National Park for wildlife protection. Acting on footage from the cameras, forest officials arrested three poachers and forwarded them to court.

The accused were identified as Lachhu Murmu, 48, Madhusudan Murmu, 38, and Ghashiram Tudu, 35, all residents of Juha village under Bangiriposi police station limits. Authorities have seized three single-barrel country-made guns, 17 cartridges, and various hunting tools from them.

A case has been registered under the Wildlife Protection Act, and an additional case will be lodged under the Arms Act, 1959, for illegal possession of firearms, according to Samrat Gouda, Deputy Director of south division of Similipal Tiger Conservation Project.

The poachers, who were arrested Thursday, were forwarded to the Chief Judicial Magis-



trate's court in Baripada, which sent them to judicial custody.

Reportedly, the AI cameras installed in the forest captured images of the poachers as they entered the core area of the reserve. Based on these images, the forest officials launched an investigation using intelligence sources. Once the identities and addresses of the accused were confirmed, raids were conducted at their homes, leading to the recovery of country-made guns and hunting gear.

Similipal Tiger Reserve is the first reserve where TrailGuard AI system has shown success as an 'anti-poaching tool'.

However, the poachers' behaviour shows little sign of change even after the area was declared a national park. Despite AI surveillance, use of watchtowers and all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), patrols by police and forest personnel along with sniffer dogs, and the implementation of strict laws, poachers continue to infiltrate the core zone for illegal hunting.

Environmentalist Sanjukta Basa emphasised the need for greater awareness among such poachers, especially after the declaration of the national park.

Pregnant woman killed by hubby's 2nd wife over tiff

POST NEWS NETWORK

Baipariguda, May 9: A 27-year-old pregnant woman was allegedly murdered by her husband's second wife following a long-standing family dispute in Doraput village, under Dashmantpur panchayat in the Baipariguda police limits of Koraput district.

The victim, Satyabati Barik, was found dead with severe injuries to her head. Satyabati, who was five months pregnant, was reportedly killed during a domestic altercation. Her father, Jahan Harijan, filed a complaint Friday at the Baipariguda police station, alleging foul play. Acting on the complaint police registered a case (102/25) and launched an investigation.

Police detained the primary suspects — the accused woman Bajayanti Barik, and husband Binod Kumar Barik. The body was recovered and scientific teams were deployed to investigate the matter. A post-mortem examination was pending.

According to police sources, Satyabati and Binod had married eight years ago. Relatives and local villagers, demanding justice and strict punishment for the accused, staged a protest by placing her body on National Highway 326 outside the Baipariguda police station. The demonstration continued for several hours before the body was seized by the police.



Forest personnel to file case diaries as stricter wildlife rules enforced



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhanjanagar, May 9: Stricter wildlife rules have been enforced in Odisha as forest personnel are now authorised to file case diaries in wildlife crime investigations.

The matter came to the fore at a training camp on wildlife and forest law held recently on the Lal Singh Nursery premises under the North Ghumusar forest division in Bhanjanagar of Ganjam district. The event aimed to educate forest personnel on the handling and processing of wildlife crime cases under the newly amended legal framework.

Advocate of the Orissa High Court and former honorary wildlife warden Ashok Pattnaik led the session, explaining the provisions of the revised wildlife rules. The Central government amended the Wildlife Protection Act in 2022, and the state government has implemented its own modifications to the 1974 version of the law, which came into force in Odisha April 30, Pattnaik said.

The revised regulations are significantly stricter than previous ones. Notably, forest personnel are now authorised to file case diaries in wildlife crime investigations. The rules mandate the use of specific forms for inventory, complaint filings, and crime descriptions.

Under the new guidelines, any accused caught within a tiger reserve, following conviction, will face fines ranging

from a minimum of ₹5 lakh to a maximum of ₹50 lakh along with imprisonment of three to seven years. However, any wildlife crime committed outside the reserve will attract penalty of ₹25,000 up to ₹1 lakh.

Pattnaik also emphasised that the updated national laws including the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita (BNS), and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam (BSA), all enacted in 2023 will now be applicable to forest offences.

Another resource person Rajendra Pradhan, a government advocate at the Bhanjanagar court, said many accused previously exploited legal loopholes to escape punishment. The new rules will make prosecution and conviction more straightforward, provided that forest personnel are aware of the law and correctly apply its provisions.

Divisional Forest Officer Himanshu Shekhar Mohanty inaugurated the training camp as the chief guest. In the second half of the session, Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF) Rashmi Ranjan Sain provided detailed instructions on how to write and maintain case diaries.

Other officials present included ACF Bibek Das, advocate Dhurba Tripathy, Mujagada forest ranger Bimbardhar Sahu, and central forest division officer Prithviraj Pradhan. Foresters Anup Bisoi and Jeevan Tripathy assisted in the programme.



READY TO RESPOND: Fire Services Department of Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) and CISF personnel conducted a large-scale mock drill on the plant premises as per an advisory issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs

Vehicle carrying Kendu leaves seized; 2 held

POST NEWS NETWORK

Jajpur, May 9: A vehicle carrying 14.80 quintals of kendu leaves was seized by the Odisha Vigilance Forest Wing near Sukinda in Jajpur district Friday. The estimated value of the seized vehicle and kendu leaves is approximately ₹11.94 lakh.



The driver, Prashanta Mirsha of Godimunda village, and the helper, Papuna Pradhan of Mankachua village — both under Handapa police station in Angul district — were arrested and produced in court. A case (1/2025) has been registered at the Sukinda forest range.

According to sources, the Cuttack forest division received credible information that kendu leaves were being illegally transported to another state in the vehicle. Acting on the tip-off, a vigilance raid was conducted with assistance from the Sukinda range officer.

Coastal villagers in Kendrapara dwell in dread of advancing sea

Chorus grows for urgent strengthening of coastal embankments

PNN & AGENCIES

Kendrapara, May 9: Frequent ingress of tidal waves into seaside villages in coastal Kendrapara district has emerged as a serious threat to both life and property, local residents said.

According to villagers, the tidal waves are destroying farmlands, damaging roads, and eroding building foundations. They claim that the waves have assumed alarming proportions, significantly disrupting agriculture—the primary source of livelihood in the region.

Residents warn that unless the embankments are urgently

reinforced, the damage could worsen in the near future. The threat spans from Talachua panchayat in Rajnagar block to Batighar panchayat in Mahakalapara block in the district.

Several areas, including Gajaria, Utikana, Keradagada, Padmanavapur, Gopalpur, Rajgarh, Gadadharpur and Baragaon, are already facing similar threats.

During full moon and new moon phases, high tidal surges cause seawater to breach embankments and flow into villages, particularly affecting the banks of the Brahmani, Kharasrota, Gobari, and Hansua riv-

ers. As a result, various crop varieties are being destroyed by saline water intrusion.

In response to the growing threat, the state government had established a Coastal Embankment Division office in Aul in 2004. This office was tasked with protecting coastal embankments across the Aul, Rajkanika, Rajnagar, and Mahakalapara blocks.

A joint administrative survey was conducted in April 2022 to assess the impact of natural calamities on human settlements in the affected areas. The survey team included the then district collector, departmental officials, tehsildars, and block development officers (BDOs).

However, despite the findings, no significant steps have been taken to strengthen the coastline.

Environmental expert Ganesha Samal and rights activist Sagar Jena emphasised that the Coastal Embankment Division is responsible for maintaining a total of 744.47 km of embankment: 111.53 km in Aul, 237.62 km in Mahakalapara, 302.12 km in Rajnagar, and 93.20 km in Rajkanika sub-divisions.



भारत सरकार GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
अंतरिक्ष विभाग DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
भारतीय अंतरिक्ष अनुसंधान संगठन INDIAN SPACE RESEARCH ORGANISATION
राष्ट्रीय सुदूर संवेदन केंद्र NATIONAL REMOTE SENSING CENTRE
बालानगर, हैदराबाद BALANAGAR, HYDERABAD 500 037

Advt. No/NRSC/RMT/1/2025 DT. 10.05.2025

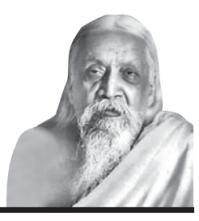
National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), one of the constituent Centres of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), Department of Space (DOS) invites ONLINE applications for the post of Scientist/Engineer 'SC' under the following disciplines :-

Sl. No.	Disciplines	No. of Posts
01	Forestry & Ecology	02
02	Geoinformatics (MSc based)	02
03	Geology	05
04	Geophysics	02
05	Urban Studies	06
06	Water Resources	04
07	Geoinformatics (M. Tech based)	10

For eligibility criteria, detailed advertisement and to apply Online please visit <https://www.nrsc.gov.in>

Opening Date for On-line Registration :	10.05.2025 (1000 Hrs)
Closing Date for On-line Registration :	30.05.2025 (1700 Hrs)
CBC-49112/11/0002/2526	

It is only by the touch of the Absolute that we can arrive at our own absolute.



SRI AUROBINDO

Bureaucratic Flex

On May Day, while the rest of us were honouring workers of the world, the Haryana government quietly launched a department that sounds like it belongs in a Christopher Nolan film: the Department of Future.

No manifesto, no press conference, not even a cryptic mission statement—just a surprise government notification assigning two IAS officers, Amneet P Kumar and Dr Aditya Dahiya, to lead the charge into... well, no one's quite sure where.

Naturally, this sparked equal parts curiosity and amusement in bureaucratic circles. Some are wondering if it's about long-term policy planning or AI governance. Others are betting on climate change, youth innovation, or just a very well-titled office for interdepartmental coordination. Given that one officer is also handling Fisheries and Archives, and the other juggles Parliamentary Affairs and Personnel, it's hard to tell if this is serious futurism or an administrative afterthought.

Now, before we laugh too hard, it's worth noting that the idea of a future-facing government wing isn't entirely outlandish. Countries like the UAE have full-blown Ministries of the Future—with budgets, AI roadmaps, and moonshot visions. But those departments usually come with vision documents, not just job titles.

Still, the name alone is a bureaucratic flex. "Director, Department of Future" will look great on a business card—and LinkedIn, even better. Let's just hope the department doesn't end up like most visions of the future: perpetually postponed.

Red beacon and red flags

Puja Khedkar has finally resurfaced. After playing a 282-day game of hide-and-seek with the Pune Police, the former IAS probationer accused of forging disability and OBC certificates has resurfaced and reported for questioning. Her case had already caused a storm last year—remember the Audi, the red beacon, and the VIP tantrums before she'd even completed training? What followed was even murkier: a trail of alleged fraud, sacking from service, and then, well... radio silence until now.

What's truly concerning isn't just the accusations but how long she was allowed to vanish without consequence. For nearly ten months, this high-profile case went cold. No sightings, no real pressure, no public updates. If a regular citizen attempted this action, they would likely be tracked, detained, and served with a legal notice promptly. So, what gave Khedkar this extraordinary leeway?

That's the real question, and one that shouldn't get buried under procedural updates and bureaucratic mumbo-jumbo. Was there quiet protection? Political shielding? Institutional indifference? Or are we expected to believe she just slipped through the cracks?

This isn't just about Puja Khedkar. It's about how our system selectively forgets, forgives, and sometimes even facilitates misconduct, especially when it wears a government badge. If this case is allowed to fizzle out again, it won't just be her reputation that's damaged; it'll be public faith in the steel frame of our civil services. And that's a lot harder to recover than one elusive babu.



BABUDOM BYTES
Dilip Cherian

FOCUS OP SINDOOR

A RATTLED CHINA

Indian armed strikes as part of Operation Sindoor on nine sites in Pakistan and Pakistan Occupied Kashmir on May 7 in the aftermath of the attack on tourists in Pahalgam on April 22, have rattled China. Lin Jian, the foreign ministry spokesperson of China, described the Indian military strikes as "regrettable". Beijing called on India and Pakistan "to avoid worsening the situation" and "remain calm and exercise restraint".



Srikanth Kondapalli

FOR CHINA, PAKISTAN AND ITS ARMY ARE A GOOD BET THAT HELPS BEIJING BALANCE INDIA AND POWER EQUATIONS IN THE REGION

This call for restraint may seem to be at odds with China's sabre-rattling in the Taiwan Straits and against the Philippines in the South China Sea. But here it would not like an escalation in the face-off between the two South Asian nations given their proximity to China. Besides, there is also China's extensive cultivation of interests in Pakistan. China's assistance has been a pillar of support for Pakistan, a position mirrored by the Chinese media. China's State-run media agency Xinhua said at least 26 people were killed and 46 injured after India carried out strikes on "six civilian settlements in Pakistan".

Chinese support is linked to the number of stakes Beijing has in Pakistan. Since 1963, after the border clashes with India, Beijing assiduously built relations with Islamabad. In March 1963, China received portions of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir and Gilgit and Baltistan and incorporated large swathes of lands in Aghil, Shimshal, Ruksam and Sakshgam, in addition to occupying 38,000 square kilometers of Aksai Chin. With so much land, China has heightened interests in the current India-Pak standoff. China has also built an "all-weather" road from



With \$52 billion in investment in CPEC projects, over \$20 billion in arms supplies, several billion dollars in aid and loans, China today feels 'entitled' to intervene in Pakistan as it has a high stake in the country

Kashgari Xinjiang to Islamabad to further its connection to Pakistan.

China has contributed to arming Pakistan by transferring weapons worth more than \$20 billion. These constitute over 80 percent of China's arms transfers world-wide, thus making Pakistan the single largest recipient of Chinese arms. For instance, the latest supplies of JF-17 fighter aircraft, drones, space-based support, beyond visual range PL-15A air-to-air missile systems and others, were pitched against India in the last few days.

China has also provided support to Pakistan at the UN Security Council #1267 committee on counter-terrorism and avoiding any proscription of Pakistan-based terrorists. After the Pahalgam terror attack, China's backing helped water-down the UN Security Council resolution on the incident.

However, this is contrary to China's position on countering terrorism. When nine Chinese engineers and technicians were killed at the Dasu hydroelectricity project by terrorists on July 24, 2021,

the communist party-backed Global Times called for missile strikes on terrorists in Pakistan. China today is contemplating the establishment of "police stations" across Pakistan to counter this menace, even as the Pakistan army has dedicated one division of troops to protect China-funded infrastructure projects. China is also stationing thousands of "security guards" in the region.

China's analysts suggest that these "security guards" are to protect its interests in these restive regions, even though they may also potentially come under the cross-fire between the armed forces of India and Pakistan in any kinetic shoot down. There are a few "red lines" that have been laid down for their intervention in the region. These include any killing of Chinese citizens in this cross fire and any damage to CPEC projects.

China's analysts have criticized India for keeping the Indus Water Treaty in abeyance and also invoked the UN resolutions on Kashmir. However, China itself has never signed water treaties with any of its lower riparian States. Also, Chi-

na was not a UN member when Resolution #47 was passed on April 21, 1948, whose Article 1 actually called Pakistan to withdraw from Kashmir as a precondition for plebiscite.

Five days after the terror attacks at Pahalgam, China's foreign minister Wang Yi spoke to his Pakistani counterpart and advocated "swift and fair investigation" and said that "conflict does not serve the fundamental interests of either India or Pakistan, nor does it benefit regional peace and stability". Though China itself may not entertain any "fair investigation" into terror attacks on its soil, it does look out for a way out of rising tension and conflict.

China's policy makers and analysts do not see any problem with Pakistan, nor is much stock placed on democracy, civil society, the judiciary or the media. For China, Pakistan and its army are a good bet that helps Beijing balance India and power equations in the region.

With \$52 billion in investment in CPEC projects, over \$20 billion in arms supplies, several billion dollars in aid and loans, China today feels "entitled" to intervene in Pakistan as it has a high stake in the country, particularly at a time China has been feeling the heat of President Trump's mounting tariffs. It is also confronted with the relocation of several multinational companies like Apple from China to other destinations in South Asia and India. In such a situation, China could also do with supportive countries like Pakistan. India needs to address this issue.

The writer is Professor in Chinese Studies at Jawaharlal Nehru University
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SPECTRUM JOURNALISM

Defending our rights is becoming deadlier

The harassment, detention, torture, and eventual murder in 2006 of Anna Politkovskaya, a Russian investigative journalist who exposed government corruption, the horrors of the Second Chechen War, and the increasingly autocratic regime of Russian President Vladimir Putin, is the subject of a new film, *Words of War*. This tribute to Politkovskaya's courage was released in the United States on the eve of World Press Freedom Day – a day intended to celebrate a pillar of democracy. But for me, the day has increasingly become one of mourning rather than celebration, because what happened to Politkovskaya is becoming the norm.

My organization, the Committee to Protect Journalists, found that 2024 was the profession's deadliest year since the CPJ began collecting data in 1992: at least 124 journalists and media workers were killed, two-thirds of them Palestinians killed by Israel. Moreover, 361 journalists were in jail, a near-record high that reflects the growing efforts to criminalize journalism and journalists not only in autocracies but also in supposed democracies, or those that –



Jodie Ginsberg

EVERY JOURNALIST'S MURDER IS AN ATTACK ON OUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE AGAINST REPRESSIVE REGIMES

until very recently – enjoyed a relatively free press.

In Hong Kong, the 77-year-old British media entrepreneur Jimmy Lai languishes in prison on national-security charges. Lai, the founder of the pro-democracy newspaper *Apple Daily*, has been largely held in solitary confinement for the past four years and, if convicted, will almost certainly die behind bars.

His foreign lawyers have been harassed, intimidated, and threatened with sanctions – tactics used against lawyers representing other wrongfully detained journalists and media leaders, such as Guatemalan editor and journalist José Rubén Zamora.

Such intimidation becomes rampant when crimes against reporters go unpunished. For example, Israel is responsible for a record number of journalist killings, yet a report published by the CPJ in May 2023 found that, over the course of 22 years, no one had been held accountable. Nor has the international community responded to demands for accountability in Israel's war in Gaza, where foreign media have been denied access.

This matters because journalists everywhere play an

essential role in investigating official wrongdoing, reporting the adverse effects of war and environmental devastation, and identifying risks to people's health, well-being, and freedom. Politkovskaya, for her part, brought attention to the human-rights abuses being committed in Chechnya, including the disappearance and torture of civilians, and the Kremlin's lies about the war.

But she is only one of many journalists whose work cost them their lives. Daphne Caruana Galizia, who relentlessly exposed government corruption in Malta, was killed by a car bomb in 2017. Dom Phillips, a British freelance journalist who reported on the devastating effects of illegal drug trafficking, mining, and logging on indigenous communities in Brazil, was shot dead while on a 2022 reporting trip in the Amazon.

Everyone should care about these horrific deaths, because there is a direct link between the type of corruption exposed by Galizia and Phillips, and the amount governments spend on citizens. In other words, without reporters willing to hold those in power accountable, we will remain ignorant of the myriad ways

governments, businesses, and cartels are abusing the system, thereby leaving us worse off.

For years, many people have shrugged when powerful people belittle the work of journalists, jail them under false pretenses, or murder them with no consequence. Many bought into the comforting narrative that these were exceptions or, as many have smugly assured themselves in the West, that this couldn't possibly happen here.

The truth is that attacks on the press are always a precursor to further restrictions on civil society.

Politkovskaya's murder came long before Putin's invasion of Ukraine, the killings of his political opponents Boris Nemtsov and Alexei Navalny, and the torture and murder of Ukrainian journalist Viktoriya Roshchyna. We must stop thinking – and acting – as if the safety of journalists is a concern only for the media. Every journalist's murder is an attack on our first line of defense against repressive regimes.

Jodie Ginsberg is CEO of the Committee to Protect Journalists.
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WISDOM CORNER

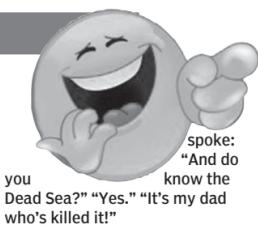
- Necessity is blind until it becomes conscious. Freedom is the consciousness of necessity.** KARL MARX
- The real tragedy of the poor is the poverty of their aspirations.** ADAM SMITH
- While I am interested both in economics and in philosophy, the union of my interests in the two fields far exceeds their intersection.** AMARTYA SEN

THIS DAY IN HISTORY

- 1502:** On this day in 1502, master navigator and admiral Christopher Columbus, long considered the "discoverer" of the New World, set sail from Cádiz, Spain, on his fourth and final voyage, hoping to find a passage to Asia.
- 1936:** Seven months after invading Ethiopia and driving Emperor Haile Selassie I into exile, Italy annexed Ethiopia as part of Italian East Africa.
- 1958:** Alfred Hitchcock's psychological thriller *Vertigo*, starring James Stewart and Kim Novak, premiered in San Francisco and became widely regarded as one of the greatest movies ever.
- 1960:** The U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved the first birth control pill.

LOL BRAG ABOUT PARENTS

An Army brat was boasting about his father to a Navy brat. "My dad is an engineer. He can do everything. Do you know the Alps?" "Yes," said the Navy brat. "My dad has built them." Then the naval kid



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



OrissaPOST
B-15, Rasulgarh Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010

Disseminating misinformation

Sir, Even as tension between India and Pakistan remains high and retaliatory hostilities continue, a great deal of fake stories and news about it are doing the rounds on social media and some news channels. Warmongers and those who celebrate the conflict and fight between the two countries create stories and videos at their whims and fancies and share at will on social media. Similarly, some news channels also disseminate misinformation about the fight. They even go to the extent of telecasting videos taken from other warfronts and thereby mislead people. Those who indulge in passing on such misinformation must understand the gravity of their actions. A country at war with another has to take into account a lot of things before the fight. India is fighting against Pakistan not for people's entertainment and excitement but to prove something. It has to send a message to its rival through the fight. The Indian government has issued an advisory saying that people should avoid sharing unverified information and rely on official sources for authentic information. People must refrain from passing on misinformation and stand united at a time when the country is faced with a crisis.

Venu GS, KOLLAM

Avinash Godbole, DEWAS(MP)



We have launched this scheme to provide BWSSB (Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board) water at an affordable rate to counter the tanker mafia. A 4,000-litre tanker is priced at Rs 660 and a 6,000-litre tanker at Rs 740
DK SHIVAKUMAR | DEPUTY CHIEF MINISTER, KARNATAKA

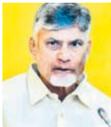
J&K: RESIDENTS FROM 3 BORDER DISTRICTS SHIFTED TO BUNKERS

Thousands of people living near the Line of Control in three border districts of Kashmir have been evacuated following heavy shelling by Pakistani troops. The people living along the Line of Control in Baramulla, Kupwara, and Bandipora districts have been shifted to bunkers or other locations, officials said



of the day quote

There is no place for terrorism in this nation. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will take strict action



N CHANDRABABU NAIDU | CHIEF MINISTER, ANDHRA PRADESH

It is the duty of the state government to visit the people in border areas of the state in this hour of crisis to share the agony faced by them



BHAGWANT MANN | CHIEF MINISTER, PUNJAB

In view of the prevailing situation, all types of leave for officers and employees of all departments and offices of the state government, as well as Boards, Corporations, Panchayats, Municipal Corporations, and autonomous and grant-in-aid institutions, have been cancelled with immediate effect



BHUPENDRA PATEL | CHIEF MINISTER, GUJARAT

Enhance civil defence measures: Govt to states

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: In view of an ongoing military conflict between India and Pakistan, the Centre has asked all states to give emergency procurement power to the heads of the civil defence authorities so that they can make the required purchases in case of an emergency situation.

In a communication to the chief secretaries of all states and Union territories, Director General of Fire Services, Civil Defence and Home Guards Vivek Srivastava said preparing the civil administration and adopting precautionary measures against hostile attacks in the states and Union territories are governed by the Civil Defence Act and Rules, 1968.

Citing the current hostile-attack scenario, the attention of the chief secretaries was drawn to section 11 of the Civil Defence Rules, 1968 that empowers the states to take certain measures deemed necessary for the protection of people and properties from injury or damage or for ensuring the due maintenance of vital services in the event of a hostile attack.

The communication said the funds of the local authority shall be applicable to the payment of the charges and expenses incidental to such compliance, and priority shall



JP Nadda reviews health infrastructure

NEW DELHI: Union Health Minister JP Nadda Friday reviewed health infrastructure preparedness of hospitals in the country Friday amid the ongoing India-Pakistan military conflict and directed officials to ensure all medical emergency response systems are fully equipped and functional. An official statement said the minister stressed the need to establish ground-level linkages with all state governments, especially those with international borders, to provide immediate healthcare services in case of emergencies. In the backdrop of a military conflict with Pakistan, Nadda said a 24x7 control and command centre in the health ministry should monitor ongoing efforts and support states.

be given to such compliance over all other duties and obligations of the local authority. "I shall be grateful if section 11 of the CD (Civil Defence) Rules, 1968, can be invoked

and necessary emergency procurement powers to the director civil defence of your state/UT may be granted so that efficient implementation of the necessary precautionary measures can be implemented," the communication said.

There has been a rising military conflict between the two neighbouring countries following India's strikes on multiple locations in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) on Wednesday and Pakistan's attempts to hit Indian military sites on Thursday, which were thwarted by the Indian armed forces. The Indian strikes were carried out in the wake of the April 22 terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam in which 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed.

I&B min stresses on responsible reporting

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw Friday underscored the importance of factual and responsible reporting, particularly when India is engaged in a military standoff with Pakistan.

Vaishnaw interacted with senior editors from the print media and urged them to refrain from relying on unverified sources for information related to the conflict. The minister also advised the electronic media to refrain from live coverage or real-time reporting of defence operations and movement of security forces.

He asked the mediapersons to strictly adhere to the advisory issued by the Union information and broadcasting ministry. Vaishnaw made it clear that the action taken by the Indian Armed Forces was against terrorism and not any country or community.

India and Pakistan are engaged in a military standoff after the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam April 22. The Indian Armed Forces launched strikes on nine terror sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) under Operation Sindoor early on Wednesday.

India repulsed drone attacks launched by Pakistan at various military installations from Leh to Sir Creek Thursday night as well as Friday.

Evacuation underway in border districts of Jammu



People leave with their belonging for safe places following shelling by Pakistani troops, at Uri in Baramulla district, Friday

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Jammu, May 9: People are being evacuated from at least five districts in the Jammu region bordering Pakistan amid a continued cross-border shelling, which has left 18 dead and wounded nearly 60 wounded this side.

Thousands have so far been shifted to safe places to relief camps.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, along with Deputy Chief Minister Surinder Choudhary and Minister Satish Sharma, visited relief camps in Jammu, Rajouri, and Samba districts to oversee arrangements and reassure displaced families.

"Eight to ten thousand border residents have been evacuated from the Rajouri-Poonch belt," Sharma said, adding, food and medical facilities are being provided to them there.

The shelling follows Indian missile strikes on nine sites across Pakistan and PoK in response to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam that killed 26 civilians, mostly tourists.

Pakistan has since almost unabatedly lobbed shells across the Line of Control and International Border, causing damage in Poonch, Mankote, Mendhar, Nowshera, Akhnour, RS Pura, Arnia, Samba, and Kathua, and several other areas.

Abdullah also visited relief centres in Mishriwala, Nagbani, Bishnah, and Thandi Khui, urging officials to stay alert and responsive.

People living along the Line of Control in Poonch, Mankote, Mendhar, Nowshera, Laam, Balakote, Sunderbani, Akhnour, and along the International Border in Garkhal-Khour, Marh, RS Pura, Arnia, Samba, Hiranagar, and Kathua are being evacuated, officials said.

"Pakistan won't be able to

Abdullah reviews relief measures

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah Friday night chaired a meeting to review relief efforts and preparedness in border districts following intense cross-border shelling.

The meeting was attended by his advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, Minister Satish Sharma, divisional commissioners from Jammu and Kashmir, deputy commissioners of affected districts, and the Principal Government Medical College and Hospital, Jammu, a spokesperson said.

Abdullah was briefed on evacuation efforts, relief camp arrangements, and security measures. Officials informed him that food, medicines, shelter, and even recreational activities for children are being provided in camps, the spokesperson said.

Nodal officers have been deployed to coordinate facilities, and control rooms are operational in affected areas.

Deputy commissioners reported on ground assessments, identification of vulnerable villages, and dissemination of public alerts through video and audio messaging.

Abdullah stressed the need for effective grassroots communication to ensure that timely information reaches the public.

break the spirit of Indians," Choudhary said, amid evacuation.

Condemning Pakistan's aggression, Omar Abdullah said, "India reserves the right to defend its people and territory with full strength."

SHORT TAKES

Two held for posting provocative content

Jaipur: Two men were arrested in Rajasthan's Churu and Barmer districts for allegedly sharing provocative content and Army movement footage on social media, police said Friday. In Churu, 22-year-old Asif Khan from Bajragsar was arrested by the Sardarshahar police Friday for posting provocative anti-national content on social media platforms, Superintendent of Police (SP) Jai Yadav said. He said the cyber desk team had been closely monitoring social media in view of heightened tensions along the India-Pakistan border.

T'gana CM donates one month salary to NDF

Hyderabad: Telangana Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy Friday said he would be donating one month's salary to the National Defence Fund and is considering a similar proposal for Congress MLAs and MLCs against the backdrop of Operation Sindoor. "As an Indian first, I have decided to make a very modest contribution of one month's salary to the #NationalDefenceFund for the efforts of our country's brave Armed Forces to wipe out terrorism, and safeguard our borders and people," Revanth Reddy said in a post on 'X'.

Three asphyxiated in tubewell in Nuh

Gurugram: Three people died and another was injured after being exposed to poisonous gas from a well in Haryana's Nuh district Friday, police said. The incident took place around 10 am in Mandikhera village when 19-year-old Monis, from Muradbas village, went inside a well for cleaning, they said. He soon fell unconscious due to exposure to the poisonous gas. In an attempt to rescue him, Rashid (40), Sameer (20), and Shauker (24), all residents of Mandikhera, entered the well, they added.

'Bomb threat' to cricket stadium in Chennai

Chennai: A "threat" has been received, which claimed that a bomb would be detonated if cricket events were to be held here, police said Friday. An investigation has been ordered, a police official said, adding the threat was made via an e-mail, which warned against cricket events at the M A Chidambaram stadium here.

Rana sent to Tihar till June 6

NEW DELHI: A Delhi court Friday sent 26/11 Mumbai attack accused Tahawwur Hussain Rana to Tihar Jail till June 6. The court remanded Rana to judicial custody after he was produced before special National Investigation Agency (NIA) judge Chandar Jit Singh a day before his custody with the NIA concluded. He was remanded to the judicial custody on the agency's plea. Rana, a close associate of 26/11 main conspirator David Coleman Headley alias Daoud Gilani, a US citizen, was brought to India after the US Supreme Court on April 4 dismissed his review plea against his extradition to India. On April 11, the court sent him to NIA custody for 18 days. On April 28, the court extended by 12 more days Rana's NIA custody.

CENTRE WARNS TRADERS OF HOARDING FOOD ITEMS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: The government Friday said the country has ample food stocks to meet domestic demand but warned traders and wholesalers against hoarding of essential food items creating artificial shortage.

The warning came as the conflict between India and Pakistan widened with Pakistan resort-

ing to unprovoked shelling and drone attacks in border towns. In a social media post, Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi also urged citizens not to panic or rush to the markets to purchase foodgrains. "Don't believe in propaganda messages regarding food stocks in the country. We have ample food stocks, far exceeding required norms. DONT PAY HEED TO SUCH

MESSAGES". "Traders, wholesalers, retailers or business entities which engage in trading of Essential Commodities are directed to cooperate with Law Enforcement agencies. Any person indulging in hoarding or stockpiling, shall be prosecuted under relevant sections of the Essential Commodities Act," Joshi said.

Later in an official statement, Joshi asserted there

is no shortage of essential commodities in the country. Meanwhile, Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan Friday reviewed the food stock situation in the country as well as preparedness for ensuring kharif sowing season which starts with the onset of monsoon rains.

The agriculture minister directed officials to be prepared to assist farmers in border-

ing states with sowing operations to ensure that they do not face difficulties due to the ongoing conflict between India and Pakistan. Elaborating on the food supply situation, the food ministry said the current rice stock stands at 356.42 lakh tonne against a buffer norm of 135 lakh tonne. Similarly, wheat stock is 383.32 lakh tonne against a buffer norm of 276 lakh tonne.

WOMEN ARMY OFFICERS

Let's not bring their morale down: SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: The Supreme Court Friday asked the Centre not to release from service Short Service Commission women Army officers challenging the denial of permanent commission to them asking not to "bring their morale down" in "the prevailing situation".

A bench of Justices Surya Kant and N Kotiswar Singh which posted a batch of pleas filed by 69 officers for hearing in August, said they should not be released till the next hearing.

"In the prevailing situation let's not bring their morale down. They are brilliant officers, you can use their services somewhere else. This is not the time that they be asked to roam around in the Supreme Court. They have a better place to be and serve the coun-



try," Justice Kant said. Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, said it was an administrative decision based on a policy to keep the armed forces young. She urged the top court not to grant any stay on their release and said the Indian Army needed young officers and every year only 250 personnel were granted permanent commission. Senior advocate Maneka Gu-

ruswamy, appearing for colonel Geeta Sharma, referred to the case of Colonel Sofia Qureshi, one of the two women officers who had briefed the media on the Operation Sindoor May 7 and 8. Guruswamy said Colonel Qureshi had to approach this court for a similar relief related to permanent commission and now she has made the country proud. The bench without commenting much on the submission said the case before the top court was purely a legal one, having nothing to do with the achievements of the officers.

In its February 17, 2020, the top court said absolute exclusion of women from all positions, except staff assignments, in the Army was indefensible and their blanket non-consideration for command appointments without any justification couldn't be sustained in law.

OFFICE OF THE BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER, DHENKANAL SADAR, DHENKANAL							No.i-85
Mail Id. ori-bdhenkanal@nic.in							
Tender Call Notice No. BDO/DHENKANAL SADAR/01/2025-26							
Sl. No.	Name of the Work	Approximate Value of work	Cost of Bid Documents	Class of Bidder	EMD 1%	Period of Completion (In Month)	
1	Construction of Additional Class Room at Govt. U.P.S. Kankadahada of Sadar Block	Rs. 14,63,487.20	Rs. 4000	"C" & "D" Class	Rs. 14635.00	4 Calendar Months	
2	Construction of Additional Class Room at Govt. P.S. Tenua, Bhopur of Sadar Block	Rs. 14,43,080.89	Rs. 6000.00	"C" & "D" Class	Rs. 14431.00	4 Calendar Months	
3	Construction of Addl. Class Room at Govt. P.S Balyamba of Sadar Block	Rs. 14,56,254.99	Rs. 6000.00	"C" & "D" Class	Rs. 14563.00	4 Calendar Months	
4	Construction of Additional Class Room at Ramachandra Govt. HS Talabarkote of Sadar Block	Rs. 12,31,612.06	Rs. 6000.00	"C" & "D" Class	Rs. 12316.00	4 Calendar Months	
5	Construction of Additional Class Room at Bansidhar Nodal High School, Bhalibalkateni of Sadar Block	Rs. 12,31,744.60	Rs. 6000.00	"C" & "D" Class	Rs. 12317.00	4 Calendar Months	
6	Construction of Additional Class Room at Satyabadi Nodal High School, Mangalpur of Sadar Block	Rs. 12,30,132.22	Rs. 6000.00	"C" & "D" Class	Rs. 12301.00	4 Calendar Months	
7	Construction of Additional Class Room at Batabihari Bidyapitha Tarava of Sadar Block	Rs. 12,09,499.92	Rs. 6000.00	"C" & "D" Class	Rs. 12095.00	4 Calendar Months	
8	Construction of Additional Class Room at Govt. High School, Sankarpur of Sadar Block	Rs. 12,21,914.97	Rs. 6000.00	"C" & "D" Class	Rs. 12219.00	4 Calendar Months	
9	Construction of Additional Class Room at Sarangadhar Nodal High School, Belkiri of Sadar Block	Rs. 12,11,406.97	Rs. 6000.00	"C" & "D" Class	Rs. 12114.00	4 Calendar Months	
10	Construction of Additional Class Room at Govt. High School Kaimati of Sadar Block	Rs. 13,10,954.50	Rs. 6000.00	"C" & "D" Class	Rs. 13109.00	4 Calendar Months	

For detailed information please visit the website <http://dhenkanal.odisha.gov.in>

Sd./- Block Development Officer
Dhenkanal Sadar

OIPR-19433/11/0003/2526



Police and security personnel during a mock drill behind the Taj Mahal in Agra in light of the ongoing military conflict between India and Pakistan, Friday



Members of a family move to a safe place in Uri, Jammu & Kashmir



Congress leaders and supporters in Chennai carry the Indian tricolours as they march during a rally to express solidarity with the Indian armed forces



Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah meets displaced border residents at a shelter camp



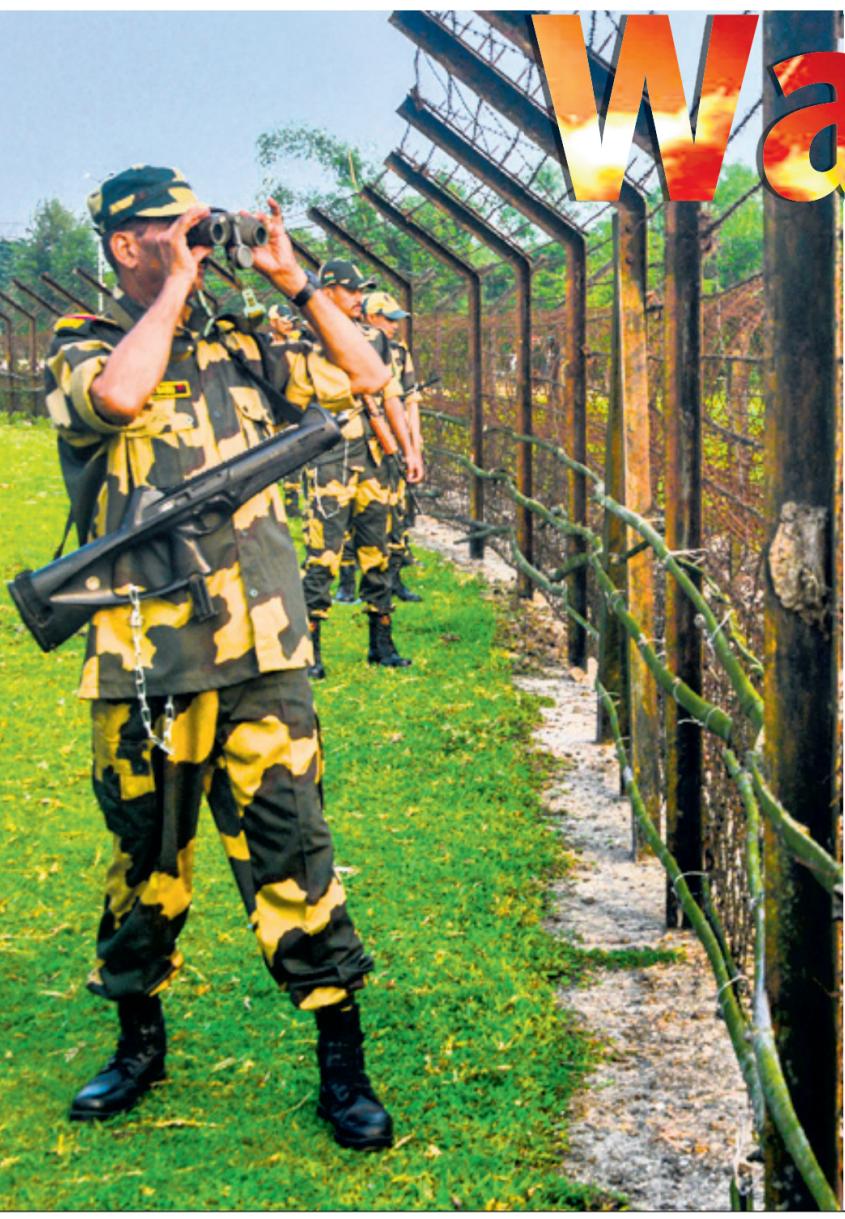
People from various villages along the India-Pakistan border collect food at a temporary shelter in Jammu



View of blackout enforced in Amritsar, Punjab. Apart from Amritsar, the blackout was enforced in Ferozepur, Pathankot, Hoshiarpur, Fazilka, Muktsar and Sangrur

War against terror

Tensions between India and Pakistan soared significantly following India's Operation Sindoor on early Wednesday in response to the Pahalgam attack April 22 that had cross-border linkages, Pakistan's subsequent unsuccessful attempt to attack 15 Indian cities



India has ramped up diplomatic offensive against Pakistan following the military conflict, with its Ambassador to the US Vinay Kwatra saying that the country is at war with the terrorists and will bring justice to victims of the Pahalgam terror attack by holding the "lowlifes, subhuman monsters" accountable.

Separately, Indian envoy to the UK Vikram Doraiswami said India's response to Pakistan's original conflict escalation with the terrorist attacks in Pahalgam was "precise, targeted" and focussed solely on terror infrastructure but Islamabad has chosen to continue to escalate the matter instead of taking an "off-ramp" to end the crisis.

Tensions between India and Pakistan soared significantly following India's Operation Sindoor early Wednesday in response to the Pahalgam attack April 22 that had cross-border linkages and Pakistan's subsequent unsuccessful attempt to attack 15 Indian cities.

"April 22 was the most heinous terrorist act," Kwatra said in an interview with CNN Thursday. "It is nobody's case to say that these terrorists should be

Indian envoy to the UK Vikram Doraiswami said India's response to terrorist attacks in Pahalgam was "precise, targeted"

given a free pass, and that's precisely what we did the day before yesterday, held them accountable," Kwatra said and described India's action as "a very precise, calibrated, measured response to these terrorists."

"We are at war with the terrorists, and we will, as I said, bring justice to the victims and hold them account-

able," he said, answering a question if India is at war with Pakistan. "Our foremost objective in this was (to) hold these lowlifes, subhuman monsters accountable and bring justice to the victims."

India's High Commissioner to the UK Doraiswami, who was interviewed by a series of UK media outlets Thursday to present India's stance on the rising tensions between India and Pakistan, told 'Sky News' that the international community can intervene by pointing out the opportunity for an off-ramp to Pakistan.

He displayed an image live on air of US-designated Jaish-e-Mohammad terrorist Abdur Rauf leading prayers for the terrorists killed in Operation Sindoor, also presented during a briefing by Foreign Secretary Vikram Mistry in New Delhi.

Asked if India fears a further escalation,

tion of conflict in the region, the envoy asserted that the "original escalation" is Pakistan-sponsored terror groups attacking and shooting civilians in Pahalgam on April 22.

"Our response thereafter was precise, targeted, reasonable and moderate. It was focused principally and solely on terrorist infrastructure. We did not strike the Pakistani military establishment. We did not strike national infrastructure, and we made it abundantly clear... that the object of this exercise was clearly to avoid military escalation - a fact actually acknowledged in a left handed way, of course, by the Pakistani side in terms of their own official statements which said that the airspace hadn't been violated," said Doraiswami. Responding to a question on explosions being heard in Kashmir, Kwatra said Pakistan has again decided to stand with the terrorists. "Rather than take action against them, they are essentially lending them support,"



he said. To a comment that Pakistan has denied involvement in the attacks, Kwatra said that "denial and obfuscation" have always been the first part of Pakistan's strategy. PTI

QUICK CLICK

PM Modi interacts with armed forces veterans

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi Friday held an extensive interaction with a number of veterans, including former chiefs of the three services, amid the ongoing conflict with Pakistan, officials said. The veterans included former chiefs of the army, air force and the navy, besides other retired officers who have served the country, they said. The conflict with Pakistan intensified with the armed forces responding proportionately and adequately to Pakistani attempts to target Indian installations on the intervening night of May 8 and 9. Pakistan violated Indian airspace to target the military installations, Wing Commander Vyomika Singh said at a briefing.

J&K woman killed in heavy Pak shelling from across LoC

Srinagar: A woman was killed and two of her family members injured in heavy shelling by Pakistani troops from across the Line of Control (LoC) targeting Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla and Kupwara districts, officials said Friday. They said the Indian Army has responded proportionately to the Pakistani aggression. Pakistani troops violated the ceasefire along the LoC and resorted to heavy shelling in the civilian areas of the Uri sector in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Thursday night, officials said. Multiple areas of Uri, including Sillkot, Boniyar, Kamalkote, Mohra and Gingle, were targeted with heavy shelling that damaged several structures and forced people to flee, they added.

Patrolling intensified

Pithoragarh: Patrolling has been intensified along the India-Nepal border in Uttarakhand's Pithoragarh and Champawat districts following a military flare-up between India and Pakistan in the wake of Operation Sindoor. "We have increased the number of patrolling teams in cooperation with the SSB and asked them to intensify checking at the entry points on the main bridges on the India-Nepal border in the district," Pithoragarh SP Rekha Yadav said Friday.

Lammy speaks to Jaishankar

New Delhi: As the conflict between India and Pakistan spirals, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar Friday held a phone conversation with his British counterpart David Lammy and conveyed to him that there must be "zero-tolerance" to terrorism. The Jaishankar-Lammy conversation came against the backdrop of efforts by India's strategic partners to reduce tensions between New Delhi and Islamabad.

Enhanced security at airports

New Delhi: Enhanced security measures have been put in place at airports across the country, and some flights have been impacted, while airlines have advised passengers to reach airports well in advance before their scheduled flight departures. DIAL, the operator of the country's largest and busiest airport IGIA in the national capital, Friday said operations are normal.

Delhi tests Air raid sirens

New Delhi: Delhi PWD minister Parvesh Verma Friday said air raid sirens will be installed at multiple high-rise buildings across the national capital amid a military conflict between India and Pakistan. The civil defence directorate carried out testing of an air raid siren installed atop the multistorey PWD building in ITO Friday afternoon.

CCPA issues notices to 13 e-commerce players for illegal sale of walkie talkies

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Government watchdog CCPA has issued notices to 13 e-commerce players like Amazon and Flipkart for illegal sale of walkie-talkie devices on their platforms, which could raise security concerns at a time of military conflict between India and Pakistan.

In an official statement Friday, the government said the Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued 13 notices to leading digital marketplaces against the illegal listing and sale of walkie-talkies on e-commerce platforms.

These platforms are: Amazon, Flipkart, Meesho, OLX, TradeIndia, Facebook, Indiamart, VardaanMart, Jiomart, Krishnamart, Chimiya, Talk Pro Walie Talkie and MaskMan toys.

The crackdown focuses on the sale of walkie-talkies without proper frequency disclosure, licensing information, or Equipment Type Approval (ETA), constituting a violation of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.

Earlier, Union Food and Consumer Minister Pralhad Joshi in a social media post said: "The sale of non-compliant wireless devices not



only breaches statutory obligations but may also pose significant risks to national security operations."

These violations contravene multiple legal frameworks, including the Consumer Protection Act, Indian Telegraph Act, and Wireless Telegraphy Act, he said. In its preliminary analysis, CCPA has found 467 listings of walkie-talkies on Amazon, 314 on Flipkart, 489 on Meesho, and 423 on TradeIndia, indicating the widespread scale of the issue.

The regulator has sought information regarding the name and contact details of each seller, product URLs and listing IDs of the walkie-talkie devices, details of frequency specifications and the number of units sold per listing from January 2023 to date. "The illegal sale of walk-

ie-talkies is a matter of public safety concern. We have found an alarming volume of listings of these devices on e-commerce websites," CCPA Chief Commissioner Nidhi Khare told PTI. The guidelines will be drafted soon in view of the rampant non-adherence to existing legal provisions by e-commerce entities, she said.

The minister said the CCPA will issue formal guidelines under Section 18(2)(l) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, aimed at strengthening compliance and consumer safeguards in digital marketplaces. Sellers have been directed to adhere strictly to all applicable regulatory standards to uphold consumer rights and prevent unlawful trade practices, he added.

Soldier martyred in Pak shelling

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Amaravati, May 9: A soldier from Andhra Pradesh has been killed in the heavy shelling by the Pakistan Army along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir.

Murali Nayak of the Sri Sathya Sai district lost his life in the indiscriminate shelling by the Pakistan Army. The jawan, hailing from Kallithanda village under Gaddamthanda panchayat, was on duty on the front lines. His mortal remains are expected to reach his native place Saturday.

It was immediately not clear if Nayak was killed in the shelling on Wednesday or Thursday. The martyred jawan was unmarried.

Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu has expressed shock over the soldier from the state being martyred.



Sirens wail through night; locals on western front gripped by fear

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi/Chandigarh, May 9: It was a second straight night of darkness and fear for locals of several districts on India's western border as sirens wailed Friday upon spotting of aerial threats from Pakistan that were effectively engaged by the armed forces.

From Srinagar and Jammu to Punjab's multiple districts and Jaisalmer and Jodhpur in Rajasthan, a vast stretch of the border areas plunged into darkness with public announcements made, urging people to switch off their lights as a precautionary measure.

Blasts were heard in the Jammu region and south Kashmir as well as in Pathankot, Ferozepur and Jaisalmer. Residents in Punjab's Gurdaspur and Tarn Taran's Patti area too re-

ported sound of explosions, although there was no official confirmation on its cause. Air raid sirens blared in Ferozepur, Pathankot, Amritsar and Hoshiarpur districts, sending people into a tizzy. Officials said a blackout was enforced in Ferozepur, Pathankot, Amritsar, Hoshiarpur, Fazilka, Muktsar and Sangrur.

It was the second consecutive night of blackout amid the sound of blasts for Pathankot residents. "Keep lights switched off. Keep the lights of mobile phones, cameras and inverter sets switched off. Cover windows with curtains. Cooperate with the district administration. We are for here your safety," and official announcement was sounded in the district.

Blasts were heard and sirens sounded in the Jammu region and south Kashmir as many parts of the Union Territory plunged in-



to darkness. In Srinagar, mosque loudspeakers were used to convey to locals to switch off their lights.

Multiple aerial threats coming from Pakistan were intercepted in Jaisalmer for a second consecutive night, prompting security forces to issue a red alert and clamp blackouts in several border districts, creating panic among residents. Sirens rang out in Pokaran, and

a complete blackout was imposed in the region. The blackout in Jodhpur, originally scheduled to begin at midnight, was implemented immediately. Barmer, Sriganganagar, and Phalodi also went completely dark. The border districts had woken up to a tense morning, hung heavy with the wail of air raid sirens and foreboding of what the day would bring. Schools remained shut as did most

How armed forces protected nation against missiles, drones

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: India deployed Barak-8 missiles, S-400 Triumph air defence systems, Akash surface-to-air missiles and indigenously developed anti-drone equipment in thwarting Pakistan's attempts to hit 15 Indian cities Wednesday night, official sources said Friday.

Pakistani military attempted to target Awantipura, Srinagar, Jammu, Pathankot, Amritsar, Kapurthala, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Adampur, Bhatinda, Chandigarh, Nal, Phalodi, Uttarlai, and Bhuj using missiles and drones.

Every single one of those missiles was intercepted or neutralised and none reached its intended target, the sources said. The Pakistani military attempted to target the Indian cities in response to India's Operation Sindoor under which nine terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir were smashed early Wednesday. "The Integrated Counter-Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) Grid, S-400 Triumph systems,

Barak-8 missiles, Akash Surface-to-Air Missiles, and DRDO's anti-drone technologies came together seamlessly to create an aerial shield that held firm," said a source.

"India didn't stop at defending. It retaliated with speed and precision. Operation Sindoor saw the Indian Armed Forces strike deep into Pakistani territory, destroying an HQ-9 air defence unit in Lahore and damaging key radar infrastructure," the source said.

India's rapid, coordinated response showcased the strength of its air defence ecosystem, built over the past 11 years under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and "exposed the hollowness" of the Pakistani air defence system, the sources said.

These platforms, combined with the strategic deployment of Rafale fighter jets equipped with SCALP and HAMMER missiles, demonstrated India's capability to project power with surgical precision, they said.



businesses. Pawan Kumar, a resident of Amritsar, said, "While we spent an anxious night, things were back to routine during the day."

A few residents in Ferozepur told PTI Videos that they were more apprehensive of the rumours making the rounds. In Bathinda, a local told PTI Videos, "Gunshots kept up till midnight as we sat home in a complete blackout. We spent the night in fear, but things were calm in the morning."

Baldev Chand, an elderly man in Chandigarh who stuck to his routine morning walk Friday, said while there were some anxious moments the previous night, there was nothing to worry about given the way the Indian armed forces thwarted Pakistan's attempts. The UT administration later sounded a fresh air raid siren, appealing to people to remain indoors.

international



War gives rise to hatred, while non-violence is a message of love, brotherhood and peace. Even today, I firmly stand on the philosophy of non-violence of the great Bacha Khan Baba

AIMAL WALI KHAN
CENTRAL PRESIDENT, PAKISTAN'S AWAMI NATIONAL PARTY

BANGLADESH'S INTERIM GOVT MULLING TO BAN HASINA'S PARTY

Bangladesh's interim government vowed a quick decision on banning Sheikh Hasina's Awami League after NCP student activists rallied overnight outside Chief Professor Muhammad Yunus's residence demanding its dissolution



Pak talks to Iran, Saudi to defuse tensions

Minister for Information Atta Tarar claimed that at least 29 drones were intercepted since Wednesday until Thursday evening, with an additional 48 shot down overnight and into Friday

DIPLOMACY PUSH



Islamabad, May 9: Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif Friday said the government is engaged in daily diplomatic contacts with countries, including Iran, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, China, and Qatar, in efforts to de-escalate the situation in the region.

Speaking on the floor of the National Assembly, Asif also claimed that the recent drone attacks by India were intended for reconnaissance purposes rather than immediate strikes, the Express Tribune newspaper reported.

Indian drones were allowed to enter a "safe limit" before intercepting and neutralising them to avoid compromising sensitive locations, he claimed.

Minister for Information Atta Tarar claimed that at least 29 drones were intercepted since Wednesday until Thursday evening, with an additional 48 shot down overnight and into Friday.

India, however, Friday said that Pakistan sent 300-400

drones in 36 locations from Leh to Sir Creek last night to target Indian military installations and the drones were shot down by the Indian military.

Tensions between India and Pakistan soared significantly following India's Operation Sindoor on early Wednesday in response to the Pahalgam attack April 22 that had cross-border linkages and Pakistan's subsequent unsuccessful attempt to attack 15 Indian cities.

Asif said that the government is engaged in daily diplomatic contacts with countries including Iran, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, China, and Qatar, in efforts to de-escalate the situation.

His comments came as Saudi Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel Al-Jubeir arrived in Islamabad after a visit to New Delhi.

Jubeir later visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mohammad Ishaq Dar received him, state-

'No direct communication between India, Pakistan'

LAHORE: No direct communication has occurred between India and Pakistan amid the ongoing tensions between the two neighbours, Pakistan's military spokesperson said Friday.

Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director General Lt Gen Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry made the comment while addressing a press conference here.

Responding to a question, Chaudhry said, "I can confirm that no direct communication has taken place between the national security advisers of Pakistan and India."

When a journalist pointed out that Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar had claimed such contact

had occurred, Chaudhry denied it, saying that any indirect communication falls under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is better positioned to comment on diplomatic efforts.

Chaudhry also claimed without providing any evidence that Pakistan neutralised 77 Israeli drones sent by India, and said, Pakistan reserves the right to retaliate "at a time, place and means of our choosing."

Friday, Pakistan launched a fresh drone attack targeting 26 locations - from Jammu and Kashmir to Gujarat. India thwarted these attempts by the Pakistan military to target military installations, officials said.

India-Pakistan conflict offers rich intelligence opportunity for China



REUTERS

Hong Kong, May 9: The conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir offers a potentially rich intelligence harvest for China in its own rivalry with India as it gleans data from its fighter jets and other weapons used in action by Pakistan.

Security analysts and diplomats say China's military modernisation has reached a point where it has the ability to deeply scrutinise Indian actions in real time from its border installations and Indian Ocean fleets as well as from space.

"From an intelligence perspective, this is a rare target of opportunity right on China's borders involving a key potential adversary," said Singapore-based security analyst Alexander Neill.

Two US officials said a Chinese-made J-10 Pakistani jet fighter shot down at least two Indian military planes - one of them a French-made Rafale fighter. India has not acknowledged the loss of any of its planes while Pakistan's defence and foreign ministers have confirmed the use of J-10 aircraft but not commented on which missiles or other weapons were used.

The aerial clash is a rare opportunity for militaries around the world to study the performance of pilots, fighter jets and air-to-air missiles in active combat, and use that knowledge to prepare their own air forces for battle.

Competing regional giants and nuclear powers, India and China are widely seen as long-term strategic rivals, sharing a 3,800 (2,400 mile) Himalayan border that has been disputed since the 1950s and sparked a brief war in 1962.

The most recent standoff - that started in 2020 - thawed in October as the two sides struck a patrolling agreement.

Security analysts say both sides have taken steps to strengthen their military facilities and capabilities along the border, but it is also from

above that China packs an intelligence gathering punch.

The London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) notes that China now fields 267 satellites - including 115 devoted to intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance and a further 81 that monitor military electronic and signals information. It is a network that dwarfs its regional rivals, including India, and is second only to the US.

Pakistan has previously said it has an "all-weather strategic, cooperative partnership" with China. India has not commented on the issue, but its top diplomat in Britain, High Commissioner Vikram Doraiswami, told Sky News Thursday that China's relationship with Pakistan was not a concern for India.

"China requires a relationship with all of its neighbours, that includes us," he said.

MISSILE DEPLOYMENTS

Chinese military intelligence teams would be eager to garner information on any Indian use of air defences and launches of cruise and ballistic

missiles - not just in terms of flight paths and accuracy but command and control information, analysts and diplomats say.

Any deployment of India's BrahMos supersonic cruise missile - a weapon it developed jointly with Russia - would be of particular interest, some analysts say, given they do not believe it has been used in combat.

China has also beefed up its intelligence gathering at sea. It has been increasingly active in the Indian Ocean in recent years, with China deploying space tracking ships as well as oceanographic research and fishing vessels on extended deployments, open source intelligence trackers say.

Regional diplomats say that while the Chinese navy has been relatively cautious about extensive warship deployments into the Indian Ocean, still lacking a broad network of bases, it actively seeks intelligence with these other vessels.

Analysts believe China's extensive satellite network deployed

India seen as long-term strategic rival of neighbouring China

Open source intelligence trackers note Chinese fishing boats near Indian naval drills

No role to play beyond facilitator: WB Prez on Indus Water Treaty

New Delhi: World Bank President Ajay Banga has said that the multilateral agency has no role to play beyond a facilitator in the Indus Water Treaty signed between India and Pakistan in 1960 for sharing of waters of Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab. India has suspended the decades-old Indus Water Treaty in the wake of the killing of 26 tourists in a terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam April 22. "We have no role to play beyond a facilitator. There's a lot of speculation in the media about how the World Bank will step in & fix the problem, but it's all bunk. The World Bank's role is merely as a facilitator," the PIB said in post on X quoting World Bank President, Ajay Banga.

Pak's shipping industry faces challenges

Karachi: Pakistan's shipping industry is facing disruptions due to rising tensions with India following the Pahalgam terror attack. India has restricted international shipping lines carrying Pakistani cargo from using its ports, leading to longer transit times and increased freight costs. Some foreign shipping companies also plan to impose an Emergency Operational Recovery Surcharge (EORS) later this month. Pakistan Ship's Agents Association (PSAA) Chairman Mohammad Rajpar criticised the restrictions as "unwarranted and against international conventions," warning that the additional charges would hurt Pakistan's exports.

Khan's party files petition seeking his release from jail

Islamabad: Jailed former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan's party Friday filed a petition in the High Court here seeking his release from jail, claiming a threat to his life due to the impact of the prolonged detention on his health and in view of the current situation with India. Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf party, in a WhatsApp message, said that the party's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur approached the Islamabad High Court for the release of the party founder. Khan, 72, has been incarcerated in Adiala Jail of Rawalpindi, the garrison city, since mid-2023 in connection with multiple cases. "The Islamabad High Court has been approached for the release of Imran Khan. An application has been filed by Chief Minister KP Ali Amin," the party said.

Pakistan Woman officer held for criticising army, govt

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Laure, May 9: A woman government officer in Pakistan was arrested Friday for criticising the Pakistan Army and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif-led government in a WhatsApp group, amid the military conflict with India.

According to the FIR, the National Cyber Crime Agency has booked and arrested National Database Registration Authority (NADRA) officer Hina Sheikh for passing derogatory remarks about the Pakistan Army (for its role in military conflict with India) and government of Pakistan in a WhatsApp group under sections 20, 24(A), 26A of the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act (PECA).

The FIR further says the woman officer in question incited the general public against the Pakistan Army and the state. The alleged posts made by Hina are "a mischievous act of subversion to create rift between institutions of the state and general public to harm the state of Pakistan and the reputation of the Pakistan Army."

It says Hina induced the general public to commit offences against the state on the ground of spreading anarchy, division in the social fabric, and hatred between the people of Pakistan. The Sharif government recently arrested several social media vloggers, journalists, civil society members and Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf activists under PECA for critical posts against the Pakistan Army and the government.

The journalist bodies, civil society and opposition parties have termed the PECA a "draconian law" and demanded its repeal forthwith.

INDIA-PAK TENSIONS

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New York, May 9: Amid escalating tensions between India and Pakistan, the US has said it is not going to get involved in a war that's "fundamentally none of our business".

While the US cannot control India and Pakistan, it can encourage the two nuclear-armed neighbours to de-escalate, Vice President JD Vance said in an interview with Fox News Thursday.

"Look, we're concerned about any time nuclear powers collide and have a major conflict," Vance said when asked how concerned the Trump administration is about a potential nuclear war between India

None of our business: Vance



and Pakistan. Vance quoted US President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Marco Rubio who have

said that Washington wants the tensions to "de-escalate" as quickly as possible.

"We can't control these countries though. Fundamentally, India has its gripes with Pakistan. Pakistan has responded to India. What we can do is try to encourage these folks to de-escalate a little bit. But we're not going to get involved in the middle of war that's fundamentally none of our business and has nothing to do with America's ability to control it," the vice president said.

"America can't tell the Indians to lay down their arms. We can't tell the Pakistanis to lay down their arms. And so we're going to continue to pursue this thing through dip-

lomatic channels. Our hope and our expectation is that this is not going to spiral into a broader regional war or, God forbid, a nuclear conflict, but sure, we're worried about these things. But I think the job of diplomacy, but also the job of cooler heads in India and Pakistan is to make sure this doesn't become a nuclear war. If it happened of course it would be disastrous. Right now we don't think that's going to happen," he said.

Vance, Second Lady Usha Vance and their three children were on their first official visit to India when terrorists killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir April 22.

With Xi at his side, Putin marks WW2 victory as Ukraine war grinds on

REUTERS

Moscow, May 9: Russia marked the 80th anniversary of the Soviet Union's victory over Nazi Germany in World War Two Friday with a major military parade that went off without any reports of Ukrainian attacks despite three years of devastating war.

President Vladimir Putin, the longest-serving Kremlin chief since Josef Stalin, stood beside China's Xi Jinping, several dozen other leaders and Russian veterans on a roofed tribune beside Lenin's mausoleum as Russian troops marched past.

Putin said Russia would never accept attempts to belittle the Soviet Union's decisive role in defeating Nazi Germany, but that Moscow also recognised the part played by the Western allies in defeating Adolf Hitler.

"The Soviet Union took upon itself the most ferocious, merci-

less blows of the enemy," Putin said.

"We highly appreciate the contribution of the soldiers of the Allied armies, the members of the resistance, the courageous people of China, and all those who fought for a peaceful future to our common struggle."

Putin made no criticism of the West and referred only in passing to the Ukraine war, Europe's deadliest since World War Two, but it haunted the celebration.

More than 11,500 troops were lined up in ranks on Red Square, including 1,500 who have fought in Ukraine. Drones - the biggest technological innovation of the war - were paraded for the first time, as well as tanks and intercontinental Yars missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

Ukraine attacked Moscow with drones for several days this week, though there were



■ Putin and Xi attend Red Square parade **■ Soviet Union lost 27 million people in WW2** **■ Putin praises Western Allies' contribution** **■ Ukraine war calmer amid Russian ceasefire**

Trump calls for 30-day ceasefire

no reports of major attacks on Moscow Friday amid a 72-hour ceasefire declared by Putin.

The Soviet Union lost 27 million people in World War Two, including many millions

in Ukraine, but pushed Nazi forces back to Berlin, where Hitler committed suicide and the red Soviet Victory Banner was raised over the Reichstag in 1945.

Chinese Communist Party historians say China's casualties in the 1937-1945 Second Sino-Japanese War were 35 million. The Japanese occupation caused the displacement of as many as 100 million Chinese people and significant economic hardship, as well as the 1937 Nanjing Massacre, during which an estimated 100,000 to 300,000 victims were killed.

MOSCOW PARADE

Nazi Germany's unconditional surrender came into force at 11:01 pm May 8, 1945, marked as "Victory in Europe Day" by Britain, the United States and France. In Moscow it was already May 9, which became the Soviet Union's "Victory Day" in what Russians call the

Great Patriotic War of 1941-45.

For Russians - and for many of the peoples of the former Soviet Union - May 9 is the most sacred date in the calendar, and Putin has sought to use memories of World War Two to unite Russian society, especially amid the war in Ukraine.

The Kremlin says the attendance of Russian allies such as Xi, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and several dozen leaders from the former Soviet Union, Africa, Asia and Latin America shows Russia is not isolated even if Moscow's former WW2 Western allies want to stay away.

Chinese troops took part in the parade, and Putin shook hands with North Korean officers, praising them for their fighting skill. North Korean troops have helped Russia fight an incursion into its western Kursk region by Ukrainian forces seeking a bargaining chip in any peace talks.



In certain parts of the country, rumours are spreading, causing people to rush to collect essential food items and other daily necessities, we have more than enough stock of everything required across the country

PRALHAD JOSHI | UNION MINISTER

INDIA MOVES TO CUT TARIFF GAP

India has offered to slash its tariff gap with US to less than 4% from nearly 13%, in exchange for an exemption from President Donald Trump's "current and potential" tariff hikes, as both nations move fast to clinch a deal as per officials. This move might bring down trade barriers between India and US



of the day quote

There are many potential barriers like evolution of the feedstock logistics, the financing gaps, regulatory coordination which needs to be addressed in forums like this, which provide us with an opportunity to understand these kind of gaps in a much better manner and address them through both government as well as industry-led initiatives in this sector

SANTOSH KUMAR SARANGI | MNRE SECRETARY

Asia index shines a spotlight on quality businesses that have demonstrated consistent dividend payouts a hallmark of financial resilience, capital discipline, and shareholder commitment

ASHUTOSH SINGH | MD AND CEO, ASIA INDEX

There is an increase in sales in war affected markets, however, it is for FMCG, mainly food items

LALIT AGARWAL | MD, V-MART

Q4 RESULTS

UBI profit jumps

Mumbai: State-owned Union Bank of India's March quarter net profit jumped 50 per cent to Rs 4,985 crore, and a top official Friday said RBI's rate cuts will keep its net interest margins under pressure going forward. The bank had earned a net profit of Rs 3,311 crore in the same quarter previous fiscal. Total income rose to Rs 33,254 crore in the quarter as compared to Rs 31,058 crore in the same period a year ago. The bank reported net-interest income Rs 9,514 crore in the March quarter, while the 18 per cent growth in non-interest income at Rs 5,559 crore.

Britannia sales rise

New Delhi: Bakery food company Britannia Industries Ltd has reported a 4.2 per cent rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 559.13 crore for the March quarter of FY25, despite subdued demand and a challenging operating environment. The company had posted a net profit of Rs 536.61 crore in the same quarter a year ago. Its revenue from the operation increased 8.9 per cent to Rs 4,432.19 crore in the March quarter from Rs 4,069.36 crore in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Swiggy's loss doubles

New Delhi: Food delivery and quick commerce platform Swiggy Friday reported widening of consolidated net loss during the March quarter to Rs 1,081.18 crore, due to significant investments in quick commerce. The company had reported a net loss of Rs 554.77 crore on a consolidated basis in the year-ago period. Swiggy's revenue from operations rose to Rs 4,410 crore during the January-March period, as against Rs 3,045.5 crore a year earlier.

ABB profit surges

New Delhi: Electrification and automation major ABB India Ltd Friday posted a 3 per cent rise in net profit to Rs 474 crore during the March quarter compared to the year-ago period, primarily on the back of higher revenues. The company follows January-December financial year and reported profit after tax of Rs 474 crore at the end of Q1 CY2025 (January-March 2025) as compared to Rs 460 crore in Q1 CY2024. ABB's cash reserve reaches at Rs 5,756 crore in Q1 2025.

Equity MF flow dips to year low in April

Slow momentum catches market inflow as the trade is clubbed with tariff war and Indo-Pak tensions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Inflow in equity mutual funds dipped 3.24 per cent to Rs 24,269 crore in April as concerns over potential US tariffs and a shift in investor preference toward debt and hybrid strategies weighed on sentiment.

This was the fourth consecutive month of decline in inflow in equity funds amid continued market volatility against the backdrop of escalating tensions between India and Pakistan following the Pahalgam terrorist attack.

Also, the latest fund infusion by investors marks the 50th consecutive month of net inflows into the segment.

Despite the decline, Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) contributions remained robust, registering a record Rs 26,632 crore in inflows in April, higher than Rs 25,926 crore in the preceding month, data released by Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) Friday showed.

"The steady increase in SIP contribution was driven by a steady increase in the number of contributing accounts, which now total 8.38 crore. This continued growth reflects the rising preference among investors for mutual funds as a disciplined and effective tool for long-term savings," Venkat Chalasani, Chief Executive at AMFI said.

Apart from equity, debt funds registered an inflow of Rs 2.19 lakh crore in the month under review after seeing a withdrawal of Rs 2.02 lakh crore in March. Overall, the mutual



Short-term volatility in equity markets is likely but constructive on India's structural long-term growth story, which continues to demonstrate resilience amid global uncertainties

ANKUR PUNJ | MD, EQUIRUS WEALTH

fund industry experienced an infusion of Rs 2.77 lakh crore in April after the typical quarter-end outflows of Rs 1.64 lakh crore in the preceding month.

The inflow has lifted the industry's assets under management to a record Rs 70 lakh crore as of April from Rs 65.74 lakh crore at March-end.

According to the data, equity-oriented mutual funds saw an inflow of Rs 24,269 crore in April, lower than Rs 25,082 crore in March. In February, such funds witnessed an inflow of Rs 29,303 crore, Rs 39,688 crore in January and Rs 41,156 crore in December.

The decline in inflow is due to concerns over potential US tariffs and a shift in investor preference toward debt and hybrid strategies, Ankur Punj MD of Equirus Wealth said.

In April, mid-cap and small-cap mutual funds continued to attract investor interest, with inflows of Rs 3,314 crore and Rs 4,000 crore, respectively. Large-cap funds received Rs

2,671 crore as compared to Rs 2,479 crore in March.

Additionally, hybrid funds saw recovery in April attracting Rs 14,247 crore after an outflow of Rs 946 crore in the preceding month.

On the debt front, the rebound was broad-based, with 12 out of 16 debt mutual fund categories reporting net inflows.

"The surge in April inflows also reflects a return to normalcy and reaffirmed confidence in fixed income instruments, particularly among corporates redeploying idle cash following year-end disbursements," Nehal Meshram, Senior Analyst - Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, said.

Liquid funds witnessed highest net inflows of Rs 1.18 lakh crore, reversing more than 89 per cent of its March outflows. Similarly, overnight funds and money market funds attracted Rs 23,900 crore and Rs 31,507 crore respectively, as short-term instruments regained favour amid stable monetary conditions and strong liquidity.

The significant inflows also extended to ultra short and low duration funds, which gained Rs 26,734 crore and Rs 9,371 crore respectively. However, Gold exchange traded funds (ETFs) witnessed a net outflow of nearly Rs 6 crore in April on profit booking.

Stock market plummets

Uncertainty rising among traders as fears of escalation loom

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 9: Stock market benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty tumbled over 1 per cent each on Friday as tensions soared between India and Pakistan, fuelling fears of a wider conflict.

Besides, steep losses in reality, financial and utility stocks also dented investor sentiments, traders said.

Extending its previous day's decline, the 30-share BSE benchmark gauge tanked 880.34 points or 1.10 per cent to settle at 79,454.47, in a largely range-bound trading. As many as 2,522 stocks declined while 1,343 advanced and 145 remained unchanged on the BSE, NSE Nifty dropped 265.80 points or 1.10 per cent to 24,008.

Thursday, India swiftly baffled Pakistan's attempts to strike military sites with drones and missiles, including in Jammu and Pathankot, after foiling similar bids at 15 places in northern and western regions of the country as tensions soared between the two countries.

"A conflict was anticipated, but the market was not expecting the situation to intensify, raising concerns about its duration. However, it is still projected to be a short-lived confrontation, given the strategic

advantage and the opponent's weak economic standing.

"Interestingly, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) continued to invest in the Indian market until yesterday, while retail investors remain slightly cautious at the moment," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

Meanwhile, the Sensex firms like ICICI Bank, Power Grid, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, HDFC Bank, Reliance Industries, Bajaj Finserv, Adani Ports, Mahindra & Mahindra and NTPC saw a fall.

Titan Company climbed over 4 per cent higher after the Tata group firm reported a 13 per cent increase in its consolidated profit after tax at Rs 871 crore in the March quarter, driven by robust sales.

On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark dropped 1,047.52 points or 1.30 per cent, and the Nifty declined 338.7 points or 1.39 per cent.

"Benchmark indices extended their downward trajectory for the second consecutive session on May 9, as heightened geopolitical tensions overshadowed otherwise constructive global cues. On a weekly basis, both the Sensex and Nifty posted losses exceeding 1 per cent, reflecting broader risk-off sentiment," according to Bajaj Broking Research.



Forex reserves drop to \$ 686 bn

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai, May 9: India's forex reserves dropped \$ 2.065 billion to \$ 686.064 billion for the week ended May 2, the RBI said Friday. In the previous reporting week, the overall kitty had increased \$ 1.983 billion to \$ 688.129 billion.

For the week ended May 2, foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased \$ 514 million to \$ 581.177 billion, the data released Friday showed.

Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves. Gold reserves decreased \$ 2.545 million to \$ 81.82 billion during the week, the RBI said.

The special drawing rights were down \$ 30 million to \$ 18.558 billion, the apex bank said.

Celio opens first ever store in City

POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 9: Celio, the premium French menswear brand, announced the opening of its very first store in Bhubaneswar at Utkal Galleria Mall Friday. The 1600 sq ft outlet aims to transform the menswear shopping experience by combining modern style with Parisian sophistication.

This store was inaugurated by BJP leader Jagannath Pradhan with manager Dulal Chandra Sahu, and National sales head Manoj Bhatija.

With this launch, Celio celebrates the opening of its 69th store in India, reinforcing its growing footprint across the country. This new store in Bhubaneswar brings Celio's signature collection to the city, offering a wide selection of stylish casual wear, elegant formal, and essential accessories.

The collection highlights 100% breathable linen outfits, co-ord sets, linen trousers, easy-going



shorts, relaxed-fit jeans, printed shirts, polos, T-shirts, and one of the largest anime-themed ranges, featuring popular titles like Naruto and Demon Slayer.

Satyen Momaya, CEO of Celio India, said, "We are delighted to bring Celio's legacy of Parisian fashion to the vibrant city of Bhubaneswar. As a hub of culture and emerging modernity, Bhubaneswar is the perfect location for our newest store. This launch reinforces our commitment to expanding our

footprint in India and offering fashion-forward, high-quality, and accessible menswear to discerning consumers. We look forward to welcoming shoppers to an elevated retail experience that merges international trends with everyday wearability."

With this launch, Celio continues to accelerate its growth in India, delivering innovation, customer-first experiences, and cutting-edge menswear trends to the modern Indian man.

PSBs set record, earn ₹1.78L-crore in FY25

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: Public sector banks' cumulative profit rose to a record level of Rs 1.78 lakh crore in the fiscal year ended March 2025, registering a growth of 26 per cent over the previous year.

All 12 public sector banks had earned a total profit of Rs 1.41 lakh crore in FY24.

The year-on-year increase in profit in absolute terms rose by about Rs 37,100 crore in FY25.

Out of the total profit of Rs 1,78,364 crore earned during the FY25, market leader State Bank of India (SBI) alone contributed over 40 per cent of the total earnings, as per the published numbers on stock exchanges.

SBI logged a net profit of Rs 70,901 crore in FY25, 16 per cent higher than the previous fiscal (Rs 61,077 crore).

PSU banks shun rumours, say ATMs well stocked

New Delhi: Dismissing rumours, public sector banks including State Bank of India and Punjab National Bank Friday said their ATMs are fully functional, well-stocked, and that digital services are operating smoothly. The announcements came against the backdrop of reports on social media that ATMs are likely to be shut in the coming days on account of rising tension between India and Pakistan. They also said that all their digital services are operating smoothly. "All our ATMs, CDMS/ADWMS and digital services are fully operational and available for public use," State Bank of India, said in a post on X.

Bank of India registered a 45.9 per cent rise to Rs 9,219 crore.

Pune-based Bank of Maharashtra posted a 36.1 per cent improvement in its net profit to Rs 5,520 crore, followed by Chennai-based Indian Bank with a 35.4 per cent rise to Rs 10,918 crore in FY25.

PSB is a turnaround story from record losses of Rs 85,390 in FY18 to record profit in FY25. The doom-to-bloom story of the public sector banking industry can be attributed to the initiatives and spate of reforms undertaken by the government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, along with former finance minister Arun Jaitley, his successor Nirmala Sitharaman and financial services secretary Rajiv Kumar and his successors.

The government has implemented a comprehensive 4R strategy: Recognising NPAs transparently, Resolution and recovery, Recapitalising PSBs, and Reforms in the financial ecosystem.

'Adequate fuel in stock, avoid rush'

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi, May 9: India has ample stocks of petrol, diesel and cooking gas LPG, and there is no need for panic buying, oil companies assured the public Friday.

State-owned Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) released separate statements to suppress fear and anxiety in public.

Their statement came after social media was flooded with posts and videos showing people queuing at petrol pumps to stock fuel as tensions between India and Pakistan escalated. "Indian Oil has ample fuel stocks across the country and



our supply lines are operating smoothly. There is no need for panic buying, fuel and LPG is readily available at all our outlets." IOC said in a post on X (social media platform)

Tensions between India and Pakistan escalate tension and fear in public. This had led to unnecessary rush in border states.

BPCL and HPCL said sufficient petrol, diesel, CNG, and LPG are available across

nationwide.

"All BPCL fuel stations and LPG distributorships across its nationwide network are operating smoothly and are fully equipped to meet the energy needs of consumers. There is no cause for concern or panic buying. Our supply chain operations remain robust and efficient, ensuring uninterrupted supplies. We urge all customers to remain calm. BPCL remains steadfast in its commitment to energy accessibility and reliability," it said.

The three firms advised the citizens to stay calm and avoid unnecessary rush, which will help the company in keeping their supply lines running seamlessly and ensure uninterrupted fuel access for all.



In percentage terms, Delhi-based Punjab National Bank reported the highest net profit growth of 102 per cent to Rs 16,630 crore, followed by Punjab & Sind Bank with a 71 per cent rise to Rs 1,016 crore.

During the year, all 12 public sector banks (PSBs) reported a rise in profit.

Among the banks, which recorded over 40 per cent annual jump in their net profit are Central Bank India with a 48.4 per cent growth to Rs 3,785 crore, while UCO Bank posted a 47.8 per cent rise to Rs 2,445 crore and

IPL SUSPENDED FOR A WEEK

Soaring Indo-Pak tensions force IPL suspension; BCCI says national interest above all else

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

New Delhi, May 9: The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) confirmed that the IPL 2025 has been suspended with immediate effect, albeit for one week in the wake of the India-Pakistan border tensions. The board added that the new schedule and venues of the tournament will be announced in due course after assessing the situation.

"Further updates regarding the new schedule and venues of the tournament will be announced in due course after a comprehensive assessment of the situation in consultation with relevant authorities and stakeholders," said BCCI Secretary Devajit Saikia in an official statement.

The decision was taken by the BCCI Friday after cross-border tensions intensified Thursday night, leading to blackouts in Jammu, Udhampur and Pathankot, as air strikes and drones from Pakistan took over the skies. It led to the game between Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals being called off at the HPCA Stadium in Dharamshala

after just 10.1 overs of the first innings was completed.

With the airport in Dharamshala and other north Indian cities closed, the players and support staff members of both PBKS and DC, along with match officials, commentators, broadcast crew members and other key IPL-related personnel were evacuated from Dharamshala by a bus taking them to Jalandhar Friday morning, where a special train organised by the tournament is now taking them to New Delhi.

The BCCI further said the decision was taken by the IPL Governing Council, comprising Saikia and IPL Chairman Arun Dhimal, after due consultation with all key stakeholders following the representations from most of the franchisees, who conveyed the concern and sentiments of their players and also the views of the broadcaster, sponsors and fans.

"While the BCCI reposes full faith in the strength and preparedness of our armed forces, the Board considered it prudent to act in the collective interest of all stakeholders. At this critical juncture, the BCCI



stands firmly with the nation. We express our solidarity with the Government of India, the Armed Forces and the people of our country."

"The Board salutes the bravery, courage, and selfless service of our armed forces, whose heroic efforts under Operation Sindoor continue to protect and inspire the nation, as they lead a resolute response to the recent terrorist attack and the unwarranted aggression by Pakistan's armed forces."

With the BCCI saying IPL 2025 has been suspended for one week, it is yet to be known if an alternate window to host the rest of the tournament will be present immediately or not and what would be the venues of the remaining games. As of now, IPL 2025 has completed 58 games, with 12 matches left to play in the league stage and followed by the playoffs.

While cricket remains a national passion, there is nothing greater than the Nation and its sovereignty, integrity, and security of our country. The BCCI remains firmly committed to support all efforts that safeguard India and will always align its decisions in the best interest of the nation

DEVAJIT SAKIA | SECRETARY, BCCI

All ten franchises have been informed of the tournament's suspension for one week by the BCCI and will start making plans to ensure the safe departure of all players, support staff and crew members once the MEA advisory comes Friday evening. Not the first IPL disruption

IPL resumption: Why scrapping of Asia Cup is best option for BCCI

New Delhi: The currently suspended Indian Premier League's 16 remaining games can be completed during a 10 to 12 days window in September as the Asia Cup is now uncertain due to the rising armed hostilities between India and Pakistan.

It would be a miracle if Asia Cup, which is supposed to be hosted by India (at a supposedly neutral venue), goes ahead given the raging conflict which was triggered by the killing of 26 people in a terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam. The nearly non-existent sporting ties are unlikely to resume at any level till tensions ease.

The Asia Cup was given a 19-day window in September where at least two Indo-Pak matches were to take place apart from the possibility of a final clash between the bitter rivals which would have assured the broadcasters of high advertising revenue.

"It is extremely bad optics if cricket continues when there is a possibility of war with a rogue nation (Pakistan). Sports can continue when everything is normal. Plus it is very natural for foreign play-

ers and coaches to be wary and wanting to return home," a senior BCCI official told PTI on condition of anonymity after the league was suspended indefinitely Friday. Incidentally, the Asian Cricket Council is now headed by Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Mohsin Naqvi and the onus will be on him to deal with financial losses that the Asia Cup cancellation would cause. It is understood that the BCCI top brass' decision to suspend the league was well thought out call as only a handful of matches are left which can be completed in a 10-day window with possible double-headers.



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In 2020, the tournament was played in the UAE in September, instead of the usual April-May window, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The next year, the event began in India in a bio-bubble but was halted when players began testing positive for the deadly infection. The league was even-

OPTIONS FOR BCCI

The IPL has a dedicated window from March end to May end during which no international cricket is scheduled allowing the best of world cricket to ply their trade in the league. Now that the schedule has gone haywire, the BCCI will have to explore the available options. The Indian team will be touring England from first week of June to first week of August and that schedule cannot be changed. The only period that looks good right now is between the second and fourth week of September where the BCCI can also negotiate with the various cricket boards to allow their players (except for freelancers who don't need permission) to come back and complete the assignment.

ually completed in the UAE in September that year.

It remains to be seen how the BCCI will complete the ongoing edition after this break.

The Indian team is scheduled to be in England next month for a five-match Test series that will end in the first week of August.

16th KIIT Int'l Chess Festival inaugurated



POST NEWS NETWORK

Bhubaneswar, May 9: The 16th KIIT International Chess Festival 2025, organised by KIIT-DU under the aegis of the All-India Chess Federation (AICF), was inaugurated Friday at KIIT.

Inaugurating the event as Chief Guest, eminent Indian tennis star, Olympian, and Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Awardee Leander Paes said, "The vision of Dr Achyuta Samanta, Founder of KIIT & KISS, for education and sports education is truly unique. The sports infrastructure and training facilities at KIIT & KISS are excellent. Dr Samanta is a great visionary and a role model for all. His contribution to bringing global sporting events to India is immense." He thanked Dr Samanta for creating KIIT & KISS as a leading hub for sports education, adding, "It is my responsibility to take KIIT & KISS sports to the global stage."

In his presidential address, Dr Samanta said, "KIIT & KISS have made a remarkable contribution to promoting chess and elevating Odisha to the international chess stage. We have always supported sports and sportspersons. KIIT & KISS are the only institutions in India to have developed such vast, world-class sports infrastructure and training facilities. We aim to double this infrastructure in the coming year."

Over 1200 players, including international arbiters, international masters, and grandmasters from 42 countries, including India, are participating in the event. This is for the first time players from 42 countries are participating in an international chess tournament. The total prize money is Rs 60 lakhs, making it the second-highest prize pool ever offered in a chess tournament in India. A total of 436 prizes will be awarded across three categories.

KHELO INDIA YOUTH GAMES

Kho-kho: Odisha girls bag gold, boys clinch silver

INDO-ASIAN NEWS SERVICE

Gaya, May 9: Odisha girls pulled off a massive upset by beating defending champion Maharashtra in a close encounter 34-31 in Kho-kho competition of the Khelo India Youth Games 2025 Bihar at the BIPARD Sports Complex here Friday. Maharashtra, however, had sweet revenge and also maintained its dominance in the boys' final, beating Odisha 34-25.

The girls' final was fiercely contested. Led by an outstanding performance by Samarnika Sahu, who scored 12 points, Odisha emerged victorious. This win marked redemption for Odisha, which had to settle for silver in the 2024 edition in Tamil Nadu. This time, the team wrote a new chapter in Odisha's sports history.

The win was hard-earned. Odisha was trailing 10-16 at one stage but showed incredible resilience and fighting spirit to come back strong to clinch the title.

The Odisha girls coach

Kho-kho: Odisha girls bag gold, boys clinch silver

The win marked redemption for Odisha, which had to settle for silver in the 2024 edition



Chaudhury Parthasarathi Mohapatra was jubilant after the final. "Last time we lost to them. This time, the instruction was clear to play without any pressure. We have a good bunch of junior and senior players. I am really thrilled that our team beat the formidable Maharashtra," Mohapatra told SAI Media.

"This is a historic performance by our girls. They have shown immense determination and skill. We won

gold two years ago, and we're back on top. The Odisha Government has been giving us great support, and this result is a testament to that," he said. "We came with one goal -- to become champions. Our girls turned that vision into reality," he added.

Parthasarathi Mohapatra, who coaches athletes at the High Performance Centre (HPC) in Puri, pointed out that this was not the first time Odisha had challenged Maharash-

tra's dominance. "Over the last three to four years, Odisha has defeated Maharashtra several times. This performance proves that we're not just contenders -- we're serious challengers."

In contrast, the boys' final followed a different script. Odisha's boys, despite a strong start, couldn't keep pace with the experienced Maharashtra team and eventually lost 34-25, securing the silver medal.

"We were aiming for two gold medals, but I'm happy the boys gave their best and won silver. It's still a big achievement. Maharashtra is a very strong team with a great track record, but Odisha's steady rise in Kho-kho is due to the hard work of our players and the development efforts of the Government," he said.

The boys' bronze went to Karnataka and Punjab. Karnataka saw off Punjab under the minimum chase rule for some extra bragging rights. The girls' bronze went to Punjab and Delhi, with the former winning under the minimum chase rule after a 2-2 tie.

Man Utd, Spurs set up all-English Europa League final

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Manchester, May 9: For Manchester United or Tottenham, a miserable campaign will end in Europa League glory.

Despite both teams languishing in the bottom half of the Premier League, the Champions League is now just one game away.

That's the reward on offer after the two troubled English clubs advanced to the final of Europe's second-tier competition Thursday.

United beat Athletic Bilbao 4-1 in the semifinal second leg at Old Trafford and won 7-1 on aggregate. Tottenham won 2-0 away at Bodø/Glimt to seal a 5-1

aggregate victory.

It sets up an all-English Europa League final for the second time in six years after Chelsea beat Arsenal to lift the trophy in 2019.

"If we don't win the final, it means nothing for us," United coach Ruben Amorim said. "It's hard to describe what it's like to be manager of this club. You want to give them (the fans) something, because we've been so disappointing in the Premier League."

United came back from 1-0 down at halftime against Bilbao, with Mason Mount coming off the bench to score twice after the break. Casemiro and Rasmus Hojlund were also on target. Dominic Solanke and Pedro

Porro struck for Tottenham against Bodø/Glimt in Norway.

The final is in Bilbao May 21. "It's an unbelievable feeling," Spurs defender Micky van de Ven said. "We've had a tough season, but we're one game away from winning silverware."

A major title, alone, would be enough to salvage what has otherwise been a season to forget for both United and Spurs. But the added prize of a place in the lucrative Champions League would put the winner back among Europe's elite next term.

That hasn't looked likely for either team for most of the campaign as they have languished closer to the relegation zone than the top five.



United is 15th in the standings having lost a club record 16 games in the Premier League. It is also certain to record its worst-ever points total in the modern era, as well as its lowest finish.

For Tottenham, it's even worse -- sitting one place below United after a club record-equaling 19 losses in the Premier League.

Now, one of those teams has the chance to effectively erase

their woeful domestic form by winning the final, which will be the fourth time they have faced each other this season.

Spurs won all three of the previous encounters -- twice in the league and also in the English League Cup.

"We are struggling, both of us, so I don't know what is going to happen," Amorim said. "That is a good thing and a bad thing with this team. I never know."

It is United's third Europa League final in eight years, having won the competition in 2017. United won the FA Cup last year and the League Cup in 2023 and this would be a third trophy-winning season in a row.