

**Pakistan invites diplomatic** strike for Pahalgam carnage

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday her reviewed security situation in the wake of the Pahalagam terrorist attack Idling 26 people and took stock of preparedness prevent recurrence of such incidents. He was also briefed during the Cabinet Committee on Security (CSC) meeting about the ongoing operations to track down the perpetrators of the dastardly act and overall plans to enhance the security grid in Jammu and Kashmir. Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath, External Affairs rime Minister Narendra Modi on

Defence Minister Rajnath, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and National

Security Advisor(NSA)Ajit Dowal took part in the high level meeting that went on for over two-and-a-half hours. The prime minister has vowed that these behind the attack will not be spared and brought to justice. Among those also present at the crucial meeting were Cabinet Secretary T V Somanathan, Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri, besides the prime minister's two principal secretaries P K Mishra and Shaktikanta Das.

Earlier in the day, Home Minister Shah sited Baisaran in Pahalgam, the site Earlier in the day, Flome Millister onan visited Baisaran in Pahalgam, the site where terrorists struck on Tuesday evening, as well as the hospital where some of the injured were being treated.

Security Advisor(NSA) Aiit Doyal took part Incidentally, Prime Minister Modi, who cut short his visit to Saudi Arabia and return to New Delhi on Wednesday morning, v

to New Delhi on Wednesday morning, was briefed about all aspects of the incident at the airport by Jashankar. Doval and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misi. Meanwhile, Rajnath Singh cautioned people responsible for the "cowardly terrorist attack" on innocent citizens in Pahalgam will soon get a "strong response" to their nefarious acts on Indian soil, in the first clear indication of India's possible response to the massacre. While vowing a befftting reply, he also said India will not only hunt down the people who perpetrated the attack but will also

ple who perpetrated the attack but will also trace those "sitting behind the scenes" who



Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairing a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) on Wednesday. At least 26 people were killed in a terror attack in Pahalgam of Jammu and Kashmir PTI

had conspired to carry out the deadly act on the Indian soil. The defence minister made these assertions while delivering the annual Arjan Singh Memorial Iecture here. Hours before the address, the Defence Minister reviewed the scurity sit-uation in Jammu and Kashmir that was attended by NSA Doval and Chief of Defence Staff(CDS)General Anil Chauhan,

Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi, Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K Tiripathi and Air Chief Marshal A P Singh. Also present in the meeting was Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh. "Yesterday, in Pahalgam, our country lost many inno-cent citizens in a cowardly attack by ter-rorists tareeting religion. rorists targeting religion.

wednesday took a siew of illeasures including Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 in abeyance with immediate affect till Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism.

for cross-border terrorism.

Announcing these steps, Foreign Secretary
Vikram Misri said "Recognising the
seriousness of this terrorist attack, the Cabinet
Committee on Security (CCS) decided upon the
following measures — The Indus Waters Treaty
of 1960 will be held in abeyance with
immediate effect until Pakistan credibly and
immediate effect until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-bo

. dlv. the check post Attari will be closed. Those who have crossed over with valid crosed. Indice who have crossed over with valid endorsements may return through that route before 1st May 2025. Thirdly, Pakistani nationals will not be permitted to travel to India under the SAARC visa Exemption scheme.

### Why tourists and why Pahalgam?

pespite launching a massive manhunt to track down the footprints of perpetrators behind the brutal massacre of tourists in the South Kashmir area of Pahalgam, the security forces could not find anything significant during the day.

Ground reports claimed helicopters and drones scanned the Baisaran forest area over Pahalgam in search of the terrorists but failed to track down their footbrints.

footprints.

Preliminary reports indicated a group of four Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorists, including two locals, executed the terror plot at the behest of their Pakistan-based handlers to disrupt the peak tourist season and spread the reign of terror in the region.

The two locals, involved in the attack, have been identified as Aadil Thakur of Palishbare and Lauff Shakher days (1981).

Bijbehara and Aasif Sheikh of Tral.

Reports also claimed the terrorists were armed with sophisticated AK rifles, armour-piercing bullets, and helmet-mounted cameras to record the

'barbaric' strike on the Indian tourists holidaying at a famous picnic spot.
Before launching the targeted strike, the terrorist handlers had carefully zeroed in on the Baisaran meadow, a popular hotspot for tourists during the peak summer season.

The terrorists were well aware of the fact that none of the security personnel were deployed at the tourist hotspot, and they could freely target the tourists as 'sitting ducks'

Since the objective was to derail the blooming tourist season in the valley, the terrorists took advantage of the complact security environment in the region. The terrorists were well aware of the fact that none of the security personnel were deployed at the tourist hotspot, and they could freely target the tourists as 'sitting ducks'.

The Balsaran meadow located for

The Baisaran meadow, located six kilometers uphill from the main town of

only became a death trap for tourists but also provided enough time to the terrorists to flee the area without coming on the radar of the security forces.

After the attack took place around 2.30 p.m. on Tuesday, the security forces arrived at the location after about an hour. The terrorists exploited the time lag to their advantage and vanished into the deep jungles before the security forces could launch any counter terrorist operations in the area.

The absence of a road network and undulating terrain further delayed the arrival of security forces and others to rescue the injured after the terrorists opened free on tourists.

cue the injured after the errorisos opened fire on tourists.

Eyewitness accounts and initial reports suggested the terrorists had a free run for about 15 to 20 minutes in the area.

According to ground reports, several injured succumbed to their injuries due injured succumbed to their injuries aue to excessive blood loss as they could not be shifted to the nearby hospital in the absence of direct road connectivity between Pahalgam and Baisaran.

Continued on >> P2

### Will not bend before terror: Amit Shah

Shaken by the brutality of the Pahalgam massacre, which left 26 younded on Tuesday, ordinary Indians have united in grief and rage, demanding swift retallation against the perpetrators from the government. Echoing similar sentiments, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday asserted that the country will not bend before terror and that those responsible for he killing of tourists at Pahalgam will not be spared. Selective targeting of fourists, belonging to one faith, has not only devastated families but also shaken the public conscience.

devastated families but also shaken the public conscience.

To register their protest against the barbaric strike, people across Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday observed a complete shutdown. Across the Valley, political, religious, social and professional organisations condemned the killing of tourists at the famous Baisaran meadow of Pahalgam. Protests were held in several parts of Jammu city, with many protesters raising



Jammu and Kashmir

anti-Pakistan slogans and demanding surgical strikes to destroy terror bases in the neighbouring country. Before the mortal remains of tourists were dispatched to their native places, the Union Home Minister attended the wreath-laying ceremony in Srinagar.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah also paid their tributes to the victims

The Home Minister later interacted with families of the slain persons and other survivors of the attack

#### The ByStander

# Tourists evacuate, airlines called to action



day after the terror attack in Pahalgam, over 6,000 passengers departed Srinagar between 0600 hrs and 2300 hrs, as tourists rushed to leave Jammu and Kashmir, Artines were also directed to waive cancellation and rescheduling fees. Meanwhile, nearly 90 per cent bookings for Jammu and Kashmir have been cancelled by tourists over safety concerns.

over safety concerns.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has instructed airlines to temporarily operate more flights out of Srinagar to handle the rush of tourists who want to cancel their holiday and leave Jammu and Kashmir in the wake of Tuesday's terror attack.

Airlines were also advised to waive cancellation and rescheduling fees. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation

(DGCA) has issued advisory to airlines to "take swift action" to increase flights to and

The Ministry of Civil Aviation has instructed airlines to temporarily operate more flights out of Srinagar to handle the rush of tourists who want to cancel their holiday

want to cancet meir nonday from Srinagar to facilitate evacuation of stranded tourists. IndiGo, Air India and Spicelet are operating a total of seven extra flights in addition to their normal scheduled services from Srinagar.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation asked the arilines to ensure there is no surge in airfares on the Srinagar route, and airlines will be operating additional flights to the city. Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu on Wednesday said that strict instructions were given to airline comparise to avoid any fare surges, and that fares nies to avoid any fare surges, and that fares are being monitored and kept at reasonable

levels. His comments also came against the backdrop of some websites apparently

levels. His comments also came against the backdrop of some websites apparently showing ticket prices of over \$50,000 for flights to Srinagar. Terrorists struck at a prime tourist location in Pahalgam in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 people, mostly tourists, and injuring several others. Among the deceased were two foreigners-one each from the UAE and Nepal- and two locals. "In the aftermath of the incident in Pahalgam, there is an unexpected demand from tourists seeking to return to their homes. In this regard, the airlines are advised to take swift action to increase the number of flights in response to heightened demand and also to ensure uninterrupted connectivity from Srinagar to various destinations across India, facilitating evacuation of stranded tourists," read the DGCA advisory released on Wednesday, April 23.

#### Pakistan, China and Bangladesh shed crocodile tears for India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES New

Ady after the Pahalgam attack in which 26 people were killed, Pakistan, China and Bangladesh on Wednesday condoled the deaths of tourists. "We are concerned at the loss of tourists lives in an attack in Anantnag district. We extend our condolences to the near ones of

extend our condolences to the near ones of the deceased and wish the hijured a speedy recovery." Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson said in Islamabad responding to media queries about the attack. Terrorists opened fire in Pahalgam on Izusday afternoon, killing 26 people, mostly tourists, in what is the deadliest attack in the Valley since the Pulwama strike in 2019. On Tuesday, The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy of the banned Pakistanbased Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), claimed

responsibility for the attack. Officials said it was possible the terror group members had crossed over from Kishtwar in Jammu and reached Baisarat through Kokernag in south Kashmir. Days earlier, Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munir described Kashmir as Pakistans' yiugular vein', triggering a sharp response from New Delhi. 'Our stance is very clear, it was our jugular vein, it will be our jugular vein, it will be our jugular vein, and we will not forget it. We will not leave our Kashmiri brothers in their heroic struggle'.' General Munir said while addressing the first Overseas Pakistanis Convention in Islamabad on April 15. The event was also attended by Prime Minister Shebus Sharif, senior ministers and Pakistanis living abroad. India had slammed Munir's remarks.

# Come winter, welcome entry ban on all vehicles registered outside Delhi

RAJESH KUMAR New Delhi

In a move to tackle the high pollution load from commercial vehicles entering Delhi, the Commission of Air Quality Management (CAQM) on Wednesday issued an order banning on entry of all wehicles from November 1, 2025. Only BS-VI diesel, CNG, LNG and electric goods vehicles including Light Goods Vehicles (LGVs), Medium Goods Vehicles (HGVs), and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), will be allowed entry into Delhi from that date, the commission said in an order. The CAQM said the order will apply to all such wehicles registered outside Delhi.

The Commission has also issued order

The Commission has also issued order The Commission has also issued order not to give fuel to End of Life (EGL) vehicles, identified through the Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras or other such systems installed at the fuel pump stations from June 1, 2025 in Delhi and Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gautam Budh Nagar and sonipat will ban the fuel from November 1, 2025 and from April 1, 2026; it will be applicable in the rest of the national capital review.

applicable in the rest of the national applicable in the rest of the national capital region. According to experts, transport is the key contributors to air pollution in Delhi. There were 79.5 lakh vehicles registered as of March 31, 2023. Of these, 20.7 lakh were private cars. The total number of vehicles registered in Delhi was 1.2 crore, with 33.8 lakh being private cars, as per the Delhi Statistical Handbook 2023. the Delhi Statistical Handbook 2023. The ever-growing vehicular traffic in Delhi - NCR has been a prime contributor to the enhanced vehicular emissions in the region and such large number of vehicles also cause traffic congestions and jams at major intersections and critical public places, thereby further enhancing the pollutant load from vehicular emissions. "Such non-BS-VI compliant

Trom ventcular emissions.

"Such non-Bs-V1 compliant transport/commercial goods vehicles' carrying essential commodities' providing essential services shall' however be permitted to enter Delhi, but only for a limited period up to October 31, 2026 beyond which goods /services shall also have to be catered only through CNG / LNG / BV / Bs-VI diesel vehicles. Transport Department' Traffic Police in Delhi & the NCR States may accordingly widely disseminate this direction amongst all stakeholders and ensure strict compliance wee, fol. 11.1 - 2025 through compliance w.e.f. 01.1 1 -2025 through compliance w.e.f. 01.1 1 -2025 through effective implementation/enforcement measures at all border entry points to Delhi and regular monitoring/review of the same Quarterly Reports on the action taken by the concerned agencies shall be furnished to commission," reads te order. However, non-BS VI vehicles carrying

essential commodities or providing essential services will be granted temporary exemption until October 31,

temporary exemption until October 31, 2026. After that, even essential services must switch to cleaner fuels.

The CAQM said commercial vehicles, especially older diesel ones, significantly contribute to Delhi-NCRs air pollution, particularly during winter. The decision is aligned with the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), which already restricts entry of polluting whiches during high-pollution days. The commission has directed the transport departments and traffic police in Delhi and neighbouring states to ensure strict enforcement of this order at all 126 border entry points and 52 toll plazas equipped with



Automatic Number Plate Recognition

Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras, Quarterly compliance reports must be submitted by all implementing agencies, the CAQM said.

There is no restriction on entry of Dissel goods vehicles to BS-V1 standards and all vehicles running on LNG, CNG or electric vehicles into Delhi at any point in time of the year.

"WHEREAS, the ever-growing vehicular traffic in Delhi — NCR has been a prime contributor to the enhanced vehicular emissions in the region and such large number of vehicles also cause traffic congestions and jams at major intersec-tions and critical public places, thereby further enhancing the pollutant load from vehicular emissions;

Whereas, within the vehicular sector. Whereas, within the vehicular sector, while transport/commercial goods vehicles are generally reported to be utilised extensively, these are often poorly maintained and thus are significantly high on emissions; WHEREAS, it has been established through various assessment studies that all classes of transport/commercial goods vehicles —

LGVs' MGVs and FIGVs particularly those with pre-BS-VI standards have significantly higher emission potential and these while passing through NCR areas and moving into Delhi contribute adversely to the overall whicular pollution load in the entire NCR, it said. On the barring fuel to overaged vehicles, the Commission ordered not to give fuel to such whicles (End of Life-Foll yehicles, identified through the Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras or other such systems installed at the fuel pump stations from June 1, 2025 in Delhi and Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gautam Budh Nagar and sonipat will ban the fuel from November 1, 2025 and from April 1, 2026, it will be applicable in the rest of the national capital region. 'Immediate to result a control of the property of the property

the fuel from November 1, 2025 and from April 1, 2026, it will be applicable in the rest of the national capital region. 'Immediate itegal action should be taken in respect of such Bol. vehicles, including impounding and further disposal in accordance with RVSF Rules, 2021 and other extant policies of the respective State Governments and the GNCTD. There are 61, 14,728 overaged vehicles in Delhig 27,561,521 in Haryana; 12,695.986 in UP and 6,20,962 in Rajasthan. "Traffic surveillance cameras installed on major roads which facilitate the traffic police to challan whiches for traffic violations and the Integrated Command Control Centers for traffic management in NCR cities/districts shall also be used for supplementing action against Eol. vehicles found plying on roads, using camera feeds from strategic traffic points/ inter-sections. Transport Department of GNCTD and the NCR States may accordingly widely disseminate this direction amongst all stakeholders including fuel stations and ensure its strict compliance tions and ensure its strict compliance through effective implementation enforcement measures," it said.

# Families return empty-handed from paradise lost

wo newly married grooms, serving from the street of the st

shot him from point-blank range, abruptye nding their six-day-old marriage.
Blood splattered on her face, Himanshi
could be heard saying in a video on
Tuesday: "We were having bhelpuri when
a man came and shot my husband."
On Wednesday, Lieutenant Narwals
body was brought to Delhi in a coffin and
Himanshi stood beside it. "I pray that his
soul rests in peace.. We will make him
proud in every way," she sobbed, stopping
to hug the coffin." It is because of him that
the world is still surviving. And we should
all be proud of him in every way,. in every all be proud of him in every way... in every way," she said, bowing repeatedly before the coffin — the officer's peaked cap atop it —

to pay her respects before being helped away by her family members scorted her, Himanshi gave him a farewell salute, shouting Jai Hind.

An Intelligence Bursau (IB) officer An Intelligence Bursau (IB) officer An Intelligence Hind awa among the outside in Hyderabad was among the outside the terror attack in Kashmir on Thesday, Manish Ranjan, a native of Bishar, was shot dead in front of his wife and children. The IB officer, posted in Hyderabad, was on a Leave Travel Concession (LTC) visit with his family. Manish Ranjan was posted in the ministerial section of the IB's Hyderabad office. He was set to visit the Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine in the Jammur region. Before he could embark on a spirtual Journey, his life too was cut short by the terrorists' bullets, and his family members, who were waiting to join him in Katra, are now preparing to perform his last rites. Shubbam Dwivedi, a 30-year-old newly married man from Kanpur, was among 26 tourists killed in the terror attack, leaving his family and friends distraught and devastated. He was having a good time with his wife and sister-in-law when terrorists opened fire at tourists around eateries, said survivors in his family travelling with him simile and saferies.

astated. It was nawny a good unit when terrorists opened fire at tourists around eatries, said survivors in his family travelling with him. Their return was scheduled for Wednesday, April 23.

Prashant Satpathy 23.

Prashant Satpathy 23.

Prashant Satpathy 34.

Prashant Satpathy 35.

Prashant Satpathy 36.

Prashant Satpathy, and their eight-year-old son when the attack occurred. In the sudden chaos, Prashant was hit, leaving his wife and child in shock. The incident has thrown his family into distress.

Syed Adil Hussian Shah, worked as a pony ride operator at Pahalgam's Baisaran



Jammu: Less than 24 hours after a brutal terrorist attack in Pahalgam, alert troops of the Indian Army on Wednesday foiled an infiltration bid along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district, by and Kashmir's Baramulla district, by neutralising at least two heavily armed

infiltrators. In the evening, another encour broke out between a joint team of security forces and terrorists in the south Kashmir

"On 23 Apr 2025, approximately 2-3

meadow. On Tuesday, he was shot dead when he tried to shield the tourist he was

when he tried to shield the fourist ne was with and attempted to snatch a killer's gun. Syed Haider Shah, a heartbroken father, said those responsible for the carnage must face the consequences. "My son went to Pahalgam yesterday to work, and around

area Sarjeevan at Uri Nala, Baramulla (in north Kashmir)," the Chinar Corps posted on X around 8 am. The "alert troops challenged and intercepted" the infiltrators, resulting in a

An hour later, it said that two terrorists had

An nour rater, it saw una the terrorists in-been "eliminated".

"A large quantity of weapons, ammunition and other war-like stores have been recovered from the terrorists, "the Chinar Corps said. The operation is in progress, it added

3 pm, we heard about the attack. We called him, but his phone was switched off. Later, at 4.40 pm, his phone turned on, but no one answered. We rushed to the police station, and that's when we learned that he had been shot in the attack.

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah

Wednesday attended his last rites. "What can I say? Our guests had come for holi-days. Unfortunately, they have been sent in coffins. This young man (Shah) worked hard to earn a living. He left home for work. Unfortunately, we returned his body in a coffin. But we have heard he did not die just like that. He proved his bravery. He tried to stop the attack, he probably tried to snatch a gun and then was targeted. We will have to take care of his family. I have come to assure them that the administration is with him. We will do what we can," he said.

Asavari Jagdale, 26, the daughter of a Pune-based businessman, recounted how terrorists confronted her father, Santosh Jagdale, demanding he recite an Islamic verse. When he failed to recite, they shot him, first in the head, then behind the ear, and finally in the back.

"We were a group of five people, including my parents. We were in Baisaran Valley near Pahalgam and were at a spot called Mini Switzerland when the firing began," Asavari Jagdale said.

"We immediately rushed to a nearby tent for protection. So did six to seven others (tourists). We all lay down on the ground as protection against the firing, which we then assumed out, Chaudhari, tu bahar as a ja, targeting my father," she recalled. They accused the group of supporting PM Modi. They even made some statements to deny that Kashmiri millitant kill innocent people, women and children, she said. "They then asked my father to recite an Islamic verse (probably the Kalma). When he failed to do so, they pumped three bullets into him, one on the head, one

behind the ear and another in the back," Asavari asserted."My uncle, who was beside me, was also shot multiple times. Several other men at the spot were gunned down as well," she added. Asavari, her mother, and another female relative were spared. It was because the

Assarai, her mother, and another female relative were spared. It was because the attackers claim they don't harm women she said. A realtor from the Shivamogga region of Karnataka was also among hose killed in the gruesome attack on Tuesday. Manjunath Rao, 47, his wife Pallavi Rao, and their son Abbijeya, 18, were in Pahalgam when the firing occurs in the afternoon. In a phone call to a relative, Deepa, in Shivamogga, Pallavi said hey initially thought it was an exercise of the armed forces. However, ten minium state, Pallavi found Manjunath's body lying in a pool of blood. Pallavi told her relative that her husband died of a single shot fired at his head by a man in regular clothes as soon as they atepped off a tourist bus and entered the meadowland. A 58-year-old ILC regional manager from Indore lost his life in the Pahalgart enrovist attack on Tuesday while his daughter and wife got injured.
Alirajpur ILC regional manager Sushi alive the control of the part of the control of the part o

daughter and wife got injured.
Alirajpur LIC regional manager Sushil
Nathaniel, along with his wife Jennifer (54),
who is a government school teacher, and
daughter Akanksha (34) had gone to
Kashmir on April 21 for a vacation.
Recalling the incident, Sushils brother
Vikas Nathaniel said, "My brother was
roaming with his wife and daughter in
Pahalgam when terrorists attacked them.
He was asked to recite an 14-barin revower

Pahalgam when terrorists attacked them. He was asked to recite an Islamic prayer. When he was informed that he was a Christian, he was shot dead while his daughter was shot in her leg. His wife, Jennifer, also got injured while trying to evade the terror attack."

### Raj Thackeray condemns Pahalgam terror attack

ondemning the terrorist attack in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) Chief Raj Thackeray on Wednesday the Centre to retaliate against the terrorists involved in Tuesday's attack along the lines of an operation undertaken by Israel

against Palestinian militants after the 1972 Munich terrorist attack.

1972 Munich terrorist attack.

In a statement posted on micro-blogging site "X", Raj said: "Maharashtra Navnirman Sena strongly condemns the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. Maharashtra Navnirman Sena pays heartfelt tribute to those who lost their lives in this incident... This incident is very seri-

ous and the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena will fully stand by the government in this situation." The Central Government should now take such measures against these attackers that even the next 10 generations of these attackers will shudder to remember them.. In 1972, during the Munich Olympics, Palestinian terrorists attacked Israel fabletes.. After this, Israel

killed these terrorists, the masterminds of killed these terrorists, the masterminus or this attack, in such a way that terror was instilled in the minds of the Palestinian people for a long time. India and Israel have good relations," the MNS chief said. "We hope that the Centre will follow in the footsteps of the Israeli government and eliminate these terrorists and their support-ers forever," Raj said. "While reading news

reports about this attack, a shocking thing came to light... An eyewitness said that the reports about this auacs, a shocking time came to light... An eyewitness said that the attackers asked the other person's religion while firing... Is this your excuse? As I often say in my speeches, if anyone comes against our Hindus in this country, we will against our Hindus in this country, we wun all come together as Hindus and attack them... Wherever the masterminds behind these attackers are hiding they must know that our power is," the MNS chief saide. "The Centre government abrogated Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir. After that, the situation seemed to be get-

ting a little better and the influx of tourists had increased. If such an attack happens, who will buy land in Kashmir in the future and start industries?

happens, who will ouy into in Namumin the future and start industries? Therefore, the central government should think about this and take concrete action," Raj said.

"I have no doubt that the central government will be tough in its retaliation... and all the political parties in this country will stand behind them... Maharashtra Navnirman Sena will stand by the Government," Raj added.

#### Will not bend before terror: Amit Shah

the security forces would leave no stone unturned to bring the perpetrators of the deadly attack to book.

On his arrival in Srinagar late Tuesday evening, Shah was briefed about the situation by Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat. The Home Minister separately chaired

ascurity review meeting, which was also attended by the Lieutenant Governor and senior officers of the Indian army, police, and others.

Posting a message on X, Amit Shah said, "With a heavy heart, paid last respects to the deceased of the Pahalgam

terror attack. "Bharat will not bend before terror. The culprits of this dastard-ly terror attack will not be spared," he said. The attack was one of the biggest ter-ror attacks in the region after the abro-said of Article 370 in 2019.

aid. Congress MP KC Venugopal and ammu-Kashmir Congress President Tariq Hameed Karra also paid tribute to the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack

the victims of the Pahangam terror attack during the ceremony. Later, the Home Minister arrived at the Baisaram meadow, the site of the attack that claimed the lives of innocent tourists, sending shockwaves across the nation. Despite a huge presence of security personnel on ground zero, an uneasy calm prevailed in the picturesque mead-

gation of Article 370 in 2019.
While he took stock of the ground situation along with senior army and police officers, the combing operations continued in the region to hunt down the perpetrators behind the massacre.

Before returning to New Delhi, Amit Shah also visited a hospital in Anantnag to enquire about the condition of the persons injured in the Pahalgam terror attack.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir government on Wednesday announced

an ex-gratia of Rs 10 lakh for the fami-lies of each of those killed in the Pahalgam terror attack on Tuesday. The chief minister said no amount of

The chief minister said no amount of money can ever compensate for the loss of loved ones, but as a mark of support and solidarity, the J-K government announces an ex gratia of Rs 10 lakh each of the families of the deceased.

The chief minister also announced Rs 2 lakh for those seriously nigured, and Rs 1 lakh for those with minor injuries. All arrangements have been made to transport the mortal remains of the deceased back to their homes in a dignified manner, Abdullah said.

#### Pakistan, China and Bangladesh...

Continued from ➤ P1 "How can anything foreign be in a jugular vein? This is a Union territory of India. Its only relationship with Pakistan is the vacation of illegally occupied territories by that country," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Pandhir laivawl said.

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Anadhir Jaiswal said. Meanwhile, Beijing "strongly con-demned" the terror attack and said "China has noted the reports," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun told a media briefing here white responding to a query on the attack. "We strongly condemn the attack. "We strongly condemn the attack. China firmly opposes all forms of terror-ism. We mourn for the lives lost and express sincer sympathies to the breawed families and the injured," he said. Separately, Chinese Ambassador to India Xu Feihong also condemned the

attack. "Shocked by the attack in Pahalgam and condemn," he posted on social media. "Deep condolences for the victims and sincere sympathies to the injured and the bereaved families. Oppose targetism of all forms." he added rorism of all forms," he added

terrorism of all forms," he added. Bangladeski interim government led by Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus strong-ly condenned the terrorist attack and reaf-firmed its unwavering stance against terrorism. In a social media post, Yunus standi, "Excellency: Please accept my deep-est condolences over the loss of life resulting from the terrorist attack that took place in Kashmir's Pahalgam." "We strongly condemn this heinous act. Let me reaffirm Bangladesh's resolute stand against terrorism," the Chief Adviser added. The attack has drawn widespread international condemnation.

international condemnation.

#### Pakistan invites diplomatic strike for Pahalgam...

Cantinued Irom > P1 "This extremely inhuman act has plunged all of us into deep grief and pain," defence minister Rajnath Singh said. "From this platform, I assure the countrymen that in view of the incident, the government of India will take every step that is necessary and appropriate." And we will not only trace those who perpetrated this incident. We will also reach out to those who, sitting behind the scenes, have conspired to carry out the nefarious act on the soil of India," Rajnath Singh said.

The defence minister said "India is such an old civ-ilization and such a big country that it cannot be intim-idated by any such terrorist activities." The people responsible for such acts will get a strong response in the near future," he asserted.

the near future," he asserted.

In the context of cross-border terrorist incidents, Rajnath Singh said: "History is witness to the withering away of nations not due to the action of the adversary, but due to the result of their own misdeeds. I hop people across the border look at lessons of history more closely."He described the attack in Pahalgam as "extremely inhuman" that has "left all of us in deep grief

and pain". "First of all, I express my deepest condolences to all the families who have lost their loved ones. In this sad time, I pray to God for the peace of the departed

"I would like to reiterate India's firm resolve that we have a zero tolerance policy against terrorism. Every citizen of India's united against this cowardly act, be said. The high-level meeting chaired by the defence minister discussed all possible aspects of the situation that emerged in Jammu and Kashmir following the terror attack, the sources said, declining to share further details. It is learnt that Rajnath Singh directed the armed forces to enhance their combat readiness and increase the intensity of anti-terror operations. In the meeting, Army Chief General Dwivedi presented a detailed overview of the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir including deployment of his forces. The defence minister has also cancelled his two-days scheduled visit to Ladakh in view of the situation arising out of the terror attack in Kashmir's Pahalgam. He was to visit Ladakh on April 25 and 26, sources said. In another development, US Vice President] D Vance uis. "I would like to reiterate India's firm resolve that we

spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday and strongly condemned the Pahalgam terror attack. In the phone conversation, Vance conveyed to Modi that the United States stands with the people of India in this difficult hour. 'Vice President J D Vance call Prime Minister Narendra Modi and strongly condemned the dastardly terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal

The US Vice President conveyed his deepest condo-lences on the loss of lives and reiterated that the US stands with the people of India in this difficult hour, he said. 'He expressed that the United States is ready to pro-vide all assistance in the Join fight against terrorism.' PM thanked Vice President Vance and President PM thanked Vice President Vance and President Trump for their messages of support and solidarity," Jaiswal said in a social media post. Vance held wide-rang-ing talks with Modi in New Delhi on his first day's visit to India.

The Central government is likely to convene an all-party meeting tomorrow, April 24. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh to chair the meeting, according to sources.

Continued from >> P1 At the same time, the security agencies on Wednesday released the sketches of three men suspected to be involved in the terror attack that killed 26 people, mostly tourists,

near Pahalgam in south Kashmir. The men are Asif Fauji, Suleman Shah and Abu Talha, officials said. The three terrorists also had code names — Moosa,

Why tourists and why Pahalgam?

Yunus and Asif — and were involved in terror-related incidents in Poonch. The sketches were prepared with the help of survivors, they said. The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow outfit of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba terror group, claimed responsibility for the attack on Tuesday afternoon.

# In a first, Indus Treaty suspended

Continued from ➤ Pl Any SPES visas issued in the past to Pakistani nationals are deemed cancelled. Any als are deemed cancelled. Any Pakistani national currently in India under SPES visa has 48 hours to leave India. Fourthly, The Defence, Military, Naval, and Air Advisors in the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi are declared persona non grata. They have a week to leave India. Also, India will be withdrawing its own Defence. Navy and Air advisors from the Indian High Commission in Islamshad These noxis in the respec-

Islamabad. These posts in the respec-tive High Commissions are deemed

tive High Commissions are occurs-annulled, he said.
Overall strength of Indian, Pak high commissions will be brought down to 30 from the present 55 through further reductions, Misri said.
Giving details about the CCS meet, Misri said the Primet Minister was briefed in detail on Pahalgam terror attack.

таск. The CCS condemned Pahalgam attack in strongest terms and expressed its deepest condolences to families of

its deepest condolences to families of victims.

In briefing to Cabinet Committee on Security on Pahalgam attack, cross-border linkages of terrorist attack were brought out, he said. It was noted that Pahalgam attack came in wake of successful holding of JK polls and its steady progress towards eco-nomic growth, the Foreign Secretary said

said.

He also said strong expressions of support and solidarity were received from many governments around world,

The Foreign Secretary said.

The CCS reviewed overall security situation, directed all forces to maintain high vigil, he said adding the CCS resolved that perpetrators of Pahalgam attack will be brought to justice and their sponsors held to account.

Moreover, India will be unrelenting in pursuit of those who have committed acts of terror, or conspired to make them possible, the Foreign Secretary said.

In January this year, the Neutral iia. In January this year, the Neutral

Expert appointed by under the terms of Expert appointed by the World Bank under the terms of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) decided that he is "com-petent" to adjudicate on the differ-ences between India and Pakistan regarding the design of two hydroelec-tric projects in Jammu and Kashmir, vindicating New Delhi's long-held position.

vindicating New Defins iong-uses position.

"The decision upholds and vindicates India's stand that all the seven questions that were referred to the Neutral Expert, in relation to the Kishenganga and the Ratle hydroelectic projects, are differences falling within his competence under Treaty," Ministry of External Affairs had stated.

The IWT was signed by India and Pakistan on September 19, 1960 to determine the distribution of the waters of the Indus and its tributaries. It was signed in Karachi by then

waters of the Indus and its tributaries.
It was signed in Karachi by then
Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and
then Pakistan President Ayub Khan
after nine years of negotiations
arranged by the World Bank.

#### Tourists evacuate, airlines called to action April 30 on these sectors, according to a

Continued from >> P1 The advisory also called upon airlines to be considerate of cancet upon airlines to be considerate or passengers caught in unforeseen circum-stances. "The airlines are also requested to consider waiving cancellation and resched-uling fees and provide all necessary assis-tance to tourists facing unexpected circum-stances and challenges during this difficult time," it added.

stances and challenges during this difficult time," it added.

The country's largest airline IndiGo said that in view of the emergent situation, it has taken steps to keep the fares moderated. The minister also emphasised that constant efforts are being made to ensure safe travel of tourists from Srinagar. "In addition to the four extra flights already announced, three more flights to Delhi have been added for today — IndiGo 6E 3103 (Dep: 1800, Arrs: 1930), IndiGo 6E 3103 (Dep: 1800, Arrs: 1930), and a Spicelet flight scheduled to depart at 10:30 PM," he said in a post on X. All airlines operating from Srinagar have waived cancellation and rescheduling charges to support passengers.

support passengers.

"Food and water are being provided at the airport, and an extra tent has been set

up outside for those waiting. Between 6 am and 12 pm today, Srinagar Airport handled 20 departures with 3,337 pax," Naidu said. The minister also said that he is personally monitoring the situation and is in constant touch with the home ministry as well as airline operators.

as airline operators.

IndiGo said that to support those travelling to/from Srinagar, it is offering waivers for cancellation fees or reschedul-"IndiGo has added special flights to

"IndiGo has added special tights to Srinagar from Delhi and Mumbai with immediate effect and will be operating these over and above the regular schedule of 160 weekly flights from / to Srinagar from various parts of India," the airline, which operates 20 flights daily connecting Srinagar with various Indian cities, said in a statement. statement.

Air India is operating one additional

Air India is operating one additional flight each from Srinagar to Delhi and Mumbai. It has five flights from Delhi and Mumbai to Srinagar daily. The airline is also offering complimentary rescheduling and full refunds on cancellations to pas-sengers with confirmed bookings till

post on X.

Spicelet, in a post on X, said it is operating an additional flight and also extending waivers on rescheduling and cancellations for Srinagar flights till April 30. It will be applicable for bookings made on or before April 22. Akasa Air, in a post on X, said passengers who wish to cancel their bookings will be provided with a full refund at no additional charge for all flights departing between April 23 and 29 to/from Srinaear.

Srinagar.
"Guests booked to travel on Air India "Guests booked to travel on Atr India Express flights from or to Stringar until 30th April 2025 are being offered the flex-billity to reschedule their travel with a com-plete waiver of date change fees and fare difference," the airline said in a post on X. According to the airline, passengers may also opt to cancel their bookings and receive a full refund to their original mode of navment.

of payment.

Travel Agents Federation of India
(TAFI) President and Nomad Travels
CEO Ajay Prakash said in the short term,
tourism in J&K will take a significant hit

due to the attack. "As TAFI, we pledge to support tourism in J&K, and we are con-fident that it will recover very quickly," he said. Travel agencies in Delhi reported that nearly 90 per cent bookings for Kashmir have been cancelled, while some tourists are negotiating to shift their plans to alter-native destinations. "We had a few bookings from families. Even but and fillsht tickets; to hotele.

"Who and flooking from families."

The man and flooking from families. From hard flooking from families. From hard flooking from hard flooking from hard flooking from the moment the news of the terror attack broke, we started receiving calls for cancellations." Dev., the owner of Kusha Travels, said. Another travel agency, swatik Travels, said Kashmir is not just the first-choice destination for Delhites, wastik Travels, said Kashmir is not just but also very popular among the tourists visting Delhi, many of whom plan onward trips to the valley.

"It is not just Delhi residents cancelling their plans—tourists already in the cap-

their plans — tourists already in the cap-ital are also calling off their Kashmir trips, even though hotel tariffs are at a peak this summer. People are cancelling regardless of the cost," said the owner of Swastik Travels.

# Candlelight vigils across Delhi for Pahalgam victims

Aday after 26 people died in a dastardy terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, people from all walks of life in Delhi came together to express solidarity with the victims forugh candleight marches and protests on Wednesday, Traders' bodies on Mednesday, Traders' bodies on April 25 as a mark of protest against the Pahalgam terror attack and to express solidarity with the victims. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) held a candleight vigil at Jantar Mantar, where the party's Delhi unit chief Saurabh Bharadwaj condemned the terror strike, the deadliest in the Kashmir Valley since the 2019 Pulwama tatack. Terrorists never attacked tourists attack. Kashmir Valley since the 2019 Pulwama attack. "Ferorists never attacked tourists in Kashmir before. This is the first time such an incident has taken place. All the victims were innocent. The entire coun-try is grieving. The government must take strict action against the perpetrators, Bharadwaj said. The Congress' youth wing held a candle march at its Raisina Road office. Several traders' associations across Several traders' associations across

Several traders' associations across the national capital also joined in the condemnation, staging protests with black ribbons tied around their arms. They announced a Delhi Bandh on April 25 and held their own candlelight march. In a post on X, the New Delhi Traders'



ernous and cowardly act of violence terrorism perpetrated in Pahalgam rday, targeting innocent lives. We ad our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families who suffered unimag-inable loss."

inable loss."

During the demonstration, protesters held placards with slogans such as 'Doshiyon ke khilaf karwayi karo' (take action against the guilty), 'Begunahon ka balidaan nahi sahega Hindustan' (India will not tolerate the sacrifice of innocents)

and 'Katleaam band karo' (Stop the mas-. They also carried posters featuotos of the victims and their fa

ing photos of the victims and their lamiles, which had been circulating online.

The Chandni Chowk Traders Association held ad demonstration outside the Town Hall, while the Federation of Sadar Bazaar Traders protested near Qutub Road. Paramjit Singh Pamma, president of the Federation of Sadar Bazaar Traders, expressed deep sorrow

had shaken the entire nation. "We are a country with diverse reli-

"We are a country with diverse reli-gions, but terrorism knows no religion. A terrorist is a terrorist," said Rakesh Kumar Yadav, Secretary of the Federation of Sadar Bazaar Traders.

or sadar Bazaar Traders.

The traders' associations have called on the central government to take strong and decisive action against terrorism.

Rajiv Batra, president of the Chandni Chowk Traders Association, said, "We

this terror attack. We stand with the govrnment and support their efforts."
Sanjiv Mehra, president of the Khan
Market Traders Association, announced

that the market would be closed on Thursday in solidarity with the victims. The traders also plan to hold a candlelight ndemnation of the terror attack also

echoed in universities across Delhi. At Jawaharlal Nehru University, all major student unions -- the RSS-backed ABVP,

leaning AISF -- came together for a joint candle march inside the campus to con-demn the attack. Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) offered a

Jamia Millia Islamia (JMI) offered a poignant tribute to victims by linking their Earth Day observance with the tragedy. The university planted 26 trees — one for each life lost — in the front lawns of its administrative block, "Jamia Millia Islamia condemns the heinous terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's ror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's to the (beravedy) families," the university said in a statement. It also announced that the memorial trees would receive to the (bereaved) families," the university said in a statement. It also announced that the memorial trees would receive proper upkeep and the university would hold an annual remembrance event to honour the victims.

The Delhi Vyapar Mahasangh expressed deep sorrow and anger over the killing of innocent tourists in what it described as a peaceful region.

According to it, the call for a bandh has been supported by nearly all major trade bodies in the city. The move is intended to express solidarity with the victims and condemn the violence that has shaken the

to express solidarity with the victims and condemn the violence that has shaken the nation, it said. "We request all traders, shopkeepers, and business owners to vol-untarily shut their establishments on April 25 as a mark of respect to the victims and to send a strong message that acts of ter-rorism are unacceptable," the trader body said in a statement.

# CM Gupta, BJP president pay homage to Navy officer



CM Rekha Gupta pays tribute to Indian Navy's Lt. Vinay Narwal after his mortal remains were brought at the cargo terminal of IGI Airport in New Delhi on Wednesday Denion Wednesday

Fitims of the Pahalgam terror attack Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, in a post on X, said all public programmes scheduled on April 23 and 24 were postponed as a mark of condolence towards those "martyred" in the cowardly terrorist attack of Tuesday in Pahalgam. Earlier, the Chief Minister laid a wreath at the mortal remains of Narwali and was also seen trying to comfort wife. At least 26 persons — mostly tourists — were killed by terrorists on Tuesday at the Baisaram meadows in Pahalgam. In a heart wrenching video,

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

elhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta, accompanied by Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva paid homage to Pahalgam terror attack victim navy officer Lieutenant Vinay Narwal, whose body was brought to the Indira Gandhi International airport from Kashmir on

Wednesday.
The Delhi government on Wednesday
postponed all its public programmes for
two days as a mark of tribute to the vic-

his wife was seen weeping inconsolably while bidding an emotional farewell to her husband, who was killed in the attack. Thop his soul rest in peace. He lived a good life. He made us really proud, and we should keep this pride in every way, she said with trembling voice as she broke down. The couple got married on April 16 and was holidaying in Pahaleam. Pahalgam

Pahalgam.

Among those killed in the attack was
26-year-old Narwal, a resident of Karnal
in neighbouring Haryana, who was
holidaying with his wife in Pahalgam.
Narwal got married recently. His mortal remains will be taken to Haryana's
Karnal. MLA Jagmohan Anad met his
family in Karnal. Family members of late
may officer were seen weeping, bugging
the MLA and begging with folded
hands.

hands.

Earlier on Wednesday, the Indian Navy, condemned the attack, extending condolences to the families of the victims."Adm Dinesh K Tripathi, CNS, and all Personnel of the Indian Navy are and all Personnel of the Indian Navy are shocked and deeply saddened by the tragic loss of Lt Vinay Narwal, who fell to the dastardly terror attack in Pahalgam. "We extend our heartfelt con-dolences to his family during this moment of unimaginable grief. The Indian Navy also stands in solemn sol-idarity with all others who lost their lives in this heinous act of violence," read a post by the Navy.

posted on X, "Deeply anguished to learn about the terrorist attacks on tourists in Kashmir's Pahalgam. My thoughts are with those who lost their close ones and prayers for the swift recovery of those injured. These coward-ly, barbaric attacks will not go unan-

swered."
The Chief Minister assured the fam

swered."
The Chief Minister assured the families of the victims that the Government of India stands with them in this time of crisis and will provide every possible support to help them restart their lives. In honor of the victims, Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva announced the cancellation of all previously scheduled political programs of the Delhi BJP on April 23 and 24.

The mortal remains of some of the Indians killed in Pahalgam reached Delhi Airport today en route to their hometowns, where tributes were paid on behalf of the Delhi Government and the Delhi BJP. Narwal's neighbour Naresh Bansal said, "After the marriage, everyone was celebrating and was in a happy mood. And now suddenly this sad news comes." Another neighbour Seema recalled that there were grand celebrarecalled that there were grand celebra-tions at his home and not just the Narwal nons at his home and not just the Narwal family, but the entire neighbourhood was celebrating after the wedding. "They were planning a honeymoon in Switzerland, but decided to go to Kashmir instead, taking into account the leave he had, we can't imagine what his family is going through," she said

### Security tightens amid J and Kterrorist attack

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE | New Delhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi Legister New Service as tightened up security in the national capital on Wednesday, following Tuesday's terrorist attack in Kashmir's Pahalgam that killed at least 26 people, officials said.

According to the officials, their focus is particularly on the tourist hotspots and border checkpoints of the city, where checking and surveillance have been intensified.

"Security has been beefed up at the famous tourist spots such as the Red Fort, India Gate, Qutub Minar, Humayun's Tomb, Bangla Sahib gurdwara, Lotus Pemple, Akshardhani, Lehih Haat INA, National Museum, Jantar Mantar, Hazrat Nizamuddin Aulia Dargah, Raighat and Safdarjung Tomb, among others," the police officer said.

cer said.

He added that the police have also stepped up security outside of the Metro stations, bus terminals, railway stations, malls and marketplaces across

the capital.

The security outside the Pakistan
High Commission in the capital has
also been beefed up.

Traffic movement has also been regulated in the sensitive zones, officials

said. The alert coincides with the ongoing visit of US Vice-President JD Vance for which security has already been strengthened in Delhi and

been strengthened in Delhi and other cities.

The security cover includes major marketplaces in Delhi such as Chandni Chowk, Sadar Bazaar, Lajpat Nagar, Saojini Nagar and Rajouri Garden, among others.

"We have deployed barricading and metal detector checking at various places.

"Foot patrolling teams and police personnel in plain clothes have been pressed into service," another senior According to the officials, their

focus is particularly on the tourist hotspots and border checkpoints of the city, where checking and surveillance have been intensified

Terrorists opened fire at the Baisaran neadow near the resort town of Pahalgam in Anantnag district on Tuesday afternoon, killing 26 people, mostly tourists, in what is seen as the deadliest attack in the Valley since the Pulwama strike in 2019.

### Audit of city STPs ordered

Taking a decisive step towards cleaning the Yamuna River, Delhi Water Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma has directed the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) to conduct a third-party audit of all 37 existing Sewage Treatment Plants (STP8) in the city. In a recent review meeting with the sewage management wing of

ST existing Sewage Treatment Praints
(STRs) in the city, in a recent review meeting with the sewage management wing DB, the Minister was apprised of the current capacity and status of ongoing rehabilitation and upgradation works across the capital's sewage infrastructure.

We have directed the DB to carry out a third-party audit of all the STPs to get more clarity on the installed treatment capacity and the actual treatment before carried out. Verma said on Wednesday.

Out of the 37 STPs currently operational, 18 are undergoing upgradation to improve their performance. Additionally, three new STPs at Sonia Vihar, Delhi Gate, and Okhia are expected to enhance the overall sewage treatment capacity by approximately 47 million gallons per day

(MGD)."A substantial amount of untreated sewage is still entering the Yamuna. The
Delhi government is committed to reducing this pollution load through comprehensive interventions.

The audit is one such step—once the
reports are in, further directives will be
sisued to improve and expand the sewerage treatment network." the Minister
added. As part of the Delhi government's
continued efforts, the 2025-26 budget
includes Rs 500 crore alloated for STP
repair and modernisation, along with an
additional Rs 250 crore earnarked for
replacing old and damaged sewer lines.
Official salo noted that 30 out of the 37
STPs are operated by private companies
under outsourcing arrangements.

The Water Minister has instructed all
such operators to ensure compliance with

The water Minister has instructed air such operators to ensure compliance with installed capacity and quality standards. Earlier this month, Verma had announced that Asia's largest wastewater treatment facility at Okhla—developed by DJB with a capacity of 564 MLD—has been made fully operational.

### Vijender, Om Birla discuss modernisation of Assembly

elhi Assembly Speaker Vijender

elhi Assembly Speaker Vijender Gupta, in a meeting with his Lok Sabha counterpart Om Birla on Wednesday, discussed transforming the historic Vidhan Sabha building into a national heritage site.

Gupta met the Lok Sabha speaker and talked about reinforcing the efforts being made for the preservation and modernisation of the Delhi Assembly, according to a statement from the Assembly secretariat. The meeting at the Parliament Secretariat also focussed on elibrary and archival digitisation,

Parliament Secretariat also focussed on e-library and archival digitisation, strengthening the institutional frame-work and infrastructure of the assembly. Gupta apprised Birla about the ongo-ing initiatives at the Vidhan Sabha, par-ticularly the efforts to elevate the historic Assembly complex to the stature of a

The meeting at the Parliar Secretariat also focussed on elibrary and archival digitisation, strengthening the institutional framework and infrastructure of the assembly

Infrastructure of the assembly mational heritage. Birla directed the immediate initiation of a plan to convert the Delhi Vidhan Sabha library into a fully digital facility.

This transition will significantly enhance public access to legislative documents and ensure the long-term preservation of institutional knowledge. In a show of strong support, Birla instructed the Lok Sabha Secretariat to extend all possible assistance to the Delhi Assembly in its endeavours, the statement added.

#### MCD implements integration of birth certificates with DigiLocker

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has implemented the integration of birth certificates with Digil.ocker. This initiative has been accomplished in collaboration with the IT Department and NIC or MCD. It marks a significant step toward digital governance under the 'Digital India' mission, ensuring secure and easy access. MCD officials said that the facility is also an integral part of the '100 Days Vikisti Delhi Programme', which has now been effectively brought into action. The MCD officials said that with the move citizens can now download their

The MCLD officials said that with the move citizens can now download their birth certificates anytime, anywhere via DigiLocker. This will reduce dependence on physical copies and visits to government offices. Digital availability of documents will also reduce the risk of loss,

tampering, or duplication, thereby improving transparency and speeding up processes and this facility will be beneficial in processes like school admissions, passport issuance, Aadhaar registration, and more.

"This will help in direct integration with Duil older simulifies properiods."

"This will help in direct integration with Digil Locker simplifies paperwork, awing both time and effect paperwork, awing both time and effect paper and staff. Promoting paperless operations, this initiative also contributes to environmental sustainability. The initiative sets a benchmark for digitising other essential documents and strengthens the e-Governance framework," they said. This development is expected to significantly enhance citizen convenience and reinforce the government's commitment to digital transformation. MCD will also conduct awareness campaigns to ensure widespread adoption of this facility among the public, they said.

# DDA posts ₹1,371 crore surplus in fiscal year 2024-25 on record flat sales

elhi Development Authority (DDA) on Wednesday said it post-core in financial year (FY) 2024-25 due to sale of housing units. The civic body also said led by impressive sale of housing units. 8,500 flats sold with revenue over ₹3,100 core were earned in current FY. Giving details, officials said having remained in red for over a decade, the DDA posted a surplus of ₹1,371 crore. This is the second consecutive year when DDA has recorded revenue surplus. In 2023-24, DDA had recorded a surplus of ₹1,511 crore under the General Development Account (GDA), thereby reversing the revenue deficit trend for 12 consecutive years.

Consecutive years.

The massive surplus this year is primarily on account of the unprecedented sale of housing units across all categories at various locations.

According to the data received on 31 March, 2025, there has been a steep and steady upward trend in the actual surpluses registered in the General Development Account (GDA). In 2024-25, the total receipts under GDA stood at ₹3,477 crore. receipts under GDA stood at ₹3,47/ crore, while the total expenditure was ₹2,106

while GDA was in substantial loss of Rs While GDA was in substantial loss of Rs. 1,304 crore in the financial year 2022-23, it registered a thumping surplus of ₹511 crore in 2023-24, which was for the first time in the last twelve years. This further augmented to a record surplus of ₹1,371 crore in the GDA during the financial year 2024-25, thereby registering a growth of 169 per cent as compared to the year 2023-24.

Thus from a loss making entity, DDA has transformed into a substantive profit

making organisation in just two years, ie from 2022-23 to 2024-25. Notably, GDA account is the main account of DDA and deals with transac-

tions relating to disposal of Houses and shops, license fees from built up proper-ties, management of sports complexes, etc. Officials said when Lt Governor (LG) VK Saxena took charge in May 2022, the DDA was incurring huge losses mainly due to huge unsold inventory of DDA flats.

Thus from a loss making entity, DDA has transformed into a substantive profit making organisation in just two years. ie from 2022-23 to 2024-25

In the very first Authority meeting that he chaired after taking over the reins of DDA, Saxena took strong exception of the consistent losses and asked DDA officials to take corrective measures to curb the losses and make DDA financially self-sus-tainable.

working in a mission mode under Saxena's guidance and introduced a host of inno-vative initiatives and people-friendly mea-sures that resulted in a complete turn-around of the agency.

sures that resulted in a complete turn-around of the agency.

The growth in GDA is primarily on the back of rising trajectory recorded by the housing receipts from \$665 crore in the year 2022-23 to \$7,2398 crore in the year 2023-24 which shows a steep impressive upswing of about 260 per cent in the total housing collections. This further exceed-ed to \$3,15° crore in the financial year 2024-25.

It is noteworthy that total housing col-lection in the last two financial years viz 2023-24 and 2024-25 have stood at \$5574 crore which is 25 per cent more than the collections of only \$4,460.00 crore in the last eight financial years from 2015-16 till 2022-23.

Sports receipts have also registered an impressive upscale with collections steadily rising from ₹77 crore in the financial

year 2022-23 to ₹89 crore in the financial year 2023-24 to ₹111 crore in the financial year 2023-24 to ₹111 crore in the financial year 2024-25. Under supervision of the LG, DDA introduced a number of measures to enhance customer experience and boost the sale of housing units. The token money was substantially increased to attract only serious buyers, from lottery system, the mode of allocation was changed to first come first server auction, which gave buyers their choice of flats. Besides, housing regulations were amended, removing the restriction of owning a property in Delhi for applying in DDA Housing Scheme. In addition to these a professional marketing strategy adopted by DDA for the first time, also helped the sale. Single window enquiries on web site, seamless information to buyers and handing over all moments belief and convention focuseurs.

mation to buyers and handing over all property related and ownership documents to the buyer helped generate customer con-fidence and trust towards DDA.

The most striking feature that has taken place in the last three years is the increased focus on Narela, where DDA had huge inventory of flats. The Lt Governor has placed significant impetus on civic infrastructure in the sub-city, with many

inse places assimitate impetus our training to the property of the pipeline. The upcoming Education Hub with all university campuses, proposed International Sports Complex, institutions, court complex, policing and enhanced connectivity, have played a catalytic role in making Narela a preferred choice of buyers. Apart from these laying of foundation stone for the Rithala-Narela-Kundli corridor of the Delhi Metro has also enhanced its locational advantage. The combination of these factors has contributed in the sale of housing units and DNA has achieved all times records of dis-

DDA has achieved all times records of disposal of over 8,500 flats in the financial year 2024-25 with revenue over ₹3,100

# Modi, Saudi Prince condemn terrorism

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Pandi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman have stressed that terrorism and violent extremism remain among the gravest threats to humanity and there cannot be any justification for any act of terror for any reason whatsoever, according to a joint statement issued on Wednesday. The two leaders have stressed the need to prevent access to weapons, including missiles and drones, to commit terror acts against other countries.

Modi decided to cut short his two-day visit to Saudi Arabia and departed for New Delhi on Tuesday night following a terror attack in Kashmir's Pahalgam, where 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed. He was originally scheduled to return to India on Wednesday night.

"Both sides strongly condemned the gruesome terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir on 22 April, 2025, which claimed the lives of innocent civilians. In this context, the two sides condemned terrorism and violent extremsin in all its forms and manifestations, and emphasised that this remains one of the

in all its forms and manifestations, and emphasised that this remains one of the

emphasised that this remains one of the gravest threats to humanity.

They agreed that there cannot be any justification for any act of terror for any reason whatsoever, the statement said.

"They rejected any attempt to link terrorism to any particular race, religion or culture. They welcomed the excellent



Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Saudi ArabiaÂ's Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud in Jeddah

cooperation between the two sides in counter-terrorism and terror financing, it added. The two leaders condemned cross-border terrorism and called on all coun-ries to reject the use of terrorism against others, dismantle terror infrastructure where it exists and bring perpetrators of terrorism to justice swiftly.

Both sides stressed the need to prevent access to weapons including missiles and drones to commit terrorist acts against other countries," the statement said. On Tuesday, India Prime Minister Narendra Modi delayed his scheduled meeting with the Saudi crown prince by at least two hours to assess the situation

in Kashmir. The prime minister, who held bilateral talks with the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, skipped an official dinner before returning home on Tluesday night. During the talks, the two sides appreciated the deepening of the defence ties as a key pillar of the strategic partnership and welcomed the creation of a Ministerial Committee on Defence Cooperation under the Strategic Partnership Council.

"They noted with satisfaction the growth of their joint defence cooperation including numerous firsts, like the first ever Land Forces exercise SADA TANSEEQ, two rounds of the Naval Exercises AL MOHED AL HINDI, many high-level visits, and training exchanges, towards ensuring the security and stability of the region," the statement said. "They welcomed the outcomes of the 6th meeting of the Joint Committee on Defence Cooperation held in Riyadh in September 2024, noting the initiation of staff-level talks between all three services.

Both sides also agreed to enhance defence industry collaboration," it added. Noting the continuing cooperation achieved in security fields, both sides high-lighted the importance of this for better security and stability.

"They also emphasised the importance of furthering cooperation between both sides in the areas of cybersecurity, maritime border security, combating transnational crime, narcotics and drug trafficking," the statement said.

### Declare Pakistan 'terrorist organisation': Kapil Sibal

A sserting that Pakistan was behind the Pahalgam terror attack, Rajva Sabha MP Kapil Sibal on Wednesday urged the government to declare Pakistan a "terrorist organisation" and file prosecution against that courry in the International Criminal Court to give a message to the world that this is unacceptable. The terror attack at a prime tourist is unacceptable (action in Pahalgam in south Kashmir on Tuesday left at least 26 people dead and several others injured. MP Kapil Sibal cited Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munit's remarks

MP Kapil Sibal cited Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munir's remarks describing Kashmir as Pakistan's "igua-lar vein" to assert that it is clear that Pakistan is behind it. "Ifs a very well-thought-out, well-planned terrorist attack because the Baisaran (meadow) valley is just half an hour away from Pahalgam, which is a high-security zone. Those who attacked knew you can't reach the Baisaran valley from Pahaleam excent on noises and it

knew you cant reach the Baisaran vailey from Pahalgam except on ponies and it will take time to reach there," the Independent Rajva Sabla MP said. This attack is claimed by the Resistance Front (TRP), a shadow group of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror group, and Lashkar-e-Taiba is in Pakistan, he said.

Amit Shah) to include Pakistan as a ter-orist organisation under the terror act. Just as other heads of state are being Just as other heads of state are being prosecuted in the international court, we should also file prosecution in the international criminal court that will give a message to the rest of the world as well as to the 14 billion people in India that we are not going to accept all this and urge the international community as well as America to boycott Pakistan," MP Kapil Shah said.

"This (Pakistan) is a failed state. It has become a terrorist state if von somosor

become a terrorist state if you sponsor terrorism in this fashion," MP Kapil Sibal said.

Sibal said. Sibal said the intent of the terrorists was to instil fear in the minds of the people so that tourists don't go to Jammu and Kashmir. Tit is so well planned, when they reached there, they segregated the men from the families. They knew that this was a place where non-Kashmir is go, non-locals are there, innocent people are there. With the statement of the Pakistan gen-real, it is clear that Pakistan is behind it.

With the statement of the Pakustan gen-eral, it is clear that Pakistan is behind it, and this should not be accepted," the former Union minister said.

The entire country stands by the government, and I am glad the PM cut short his wisit, and the home minister is on the spot to take this forward," MP Kapil Sibal said.

#### PM's visit to Kanpur cancelled

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh on Thursday to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for devel-opment projects has been cancelled in

opment projects has been cancelled in light of the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, officials said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was scheduled to visit Kanpur on April 24 to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for development projects worth over ₹ 20,000 crore.

20,000 crore.

However, in light of Tuesday's terror attack that claimed a number of lives, including that of Shubham, a courageous young son of Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, and keeping in mind the sombre mood and sentiments of the people, the event has been cancelled, officials said.

As a mark of respect, it was considered appropriate to defer any celebratory or formal public engagement in Kanpur during this period of grief, the

officials said. Shubham Dwivedi, a 31-year-old busi-Shubham Dwivedi, a 31-year-oid dusi-nessman from Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh who got married just two months back on February 12, was among those gunned down in Pahalgam.

The terror attack at a tourist location

in Pahalgam in south Kashmir on Tuesday left at least 26 people dead and several others injured.

As a mark of respect, it was considered appropriate to defer any celebratory public engagement in Kanpur

Officials said that the Prime Minister Narendra Modi will attend a pre-sched-uled official programme in Madhubani, Bihar, on the occasion of Panchayati Raj Divaso an April 24.

The official programme will also see participation from people across the country via video conference.

# Make choice between post, freedom: SC to TN minister

The Supreme Court on Wednesday told DMK leader V Senthil Balaji to make a choice "between post and freedom" as it warned him of cancelling freedom" as it warned him of cancelling bail if he did not step down as minister in Tamil Nadu. A bench of Justices Abhay S Oka and Augustine George Masih took exception to the fact that Balaji was reinstated as a Tamil Nadu cabher minister days after getting bail in a money laundering case related to the "cash-for-job" scam. "There is grave apprehension that release to the "cash-for-job" scam. "There is grave apprehension that he post (minister) and freedom. What choice you wall interfer and will influence witnesses. You have to make a choice between the post (minister) and freedom. What choice you want to make, you tell us," it said.

it said.

The top court referred to a previous judgment which recorded that he forced people to withdraw complaints against him. Grant of bail did not mean power to influence witnesses, it noted.

"When you were a Minister, categorical findings have been recorded against you in the manner in which you brought about settlement and the proceedings are quashed. Grant of bail does not mean power to influence witnesses. In the past you have influenced witnesses," the bench said. The top court, as a result, offered him said. The top court, as a result, offered him a choice. "So, you have to make a choice between the post and the freedom. Such drastic findings are recorded against you in capacity as a minister," the bench said. The court was hearing pleas to recall Balaji's bail on the ground that he influenced witnesses in the case.

enced witnesses in the case.

The top court found a prima facie case against Balaji based on his past conduct which showed he "interfered and influenced" with extensess.

"Now, you have gone back to the same position where as a minister you will be able to influence. We have granted you bail on totally different grounds. You must remember one thing. He had not been

granted bail on merits. He had been grant-ed bail on possible violation on Article 21 of the constitution. What signal are we sending when you hold office of minister?" it asked. Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing Balaji, said there was no direct

representing Balaji, said there was no direct finding against his client. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, on behalf the Hamil Nadu government, said the trial could be shired out of the state if there was any possibility of influencing the wit-nesses. The court disagreed, saying no pur-pose would be served. Solictior general Tushar Mehta, appear-ing for the Enforcement Directorate, descreed to its effects of the solic the second to the second property of t

ing for the Enforcement Directorate, referred to its affidavit alleging Balaji influenced the witnesses.
"We will record it in the order that we

"We will record it in the order that we have made a mistake by ignoring the judgements against you, because the entire hearing proceeded on the footing that he is no longer minister. We will accept our mistake," Justice Oka offered.

When Sibal submitted there was no pos-

sibility of Balaji influencing witnesses, the top court remarked, "You (Balaji) are preventing witnesses from coming."

The Supreme Court also expressed apprehension about politicians misusing the liberal bail jurisprudence developed by

the liberal bail jurisprudence developed by the court in money laundering cases.

"What troubles us is for the first time in case of PMLA, we have applied a law that if a case is not going to commence we will grant bail. This order is being followed consistently. When we read the order of the trial court and the high court, we were told that he is no longer minister," it noted.
The bench went on, "Therefore, we ignored the allegation based on the judgement of the property o

ignored the allegation based on the judge-ments on the ground that he is no longer minister. Now you bring about a change within few days of order granting ball and he is again the minister. This is not the way to deal with the court. After that don't blame us that this court is not liberal in granting ball. You know how difficult it is to get bail in PMLA."

### SC condemns terrorist attack in Pahalgam

the Supreme Court on Wednesday expressed anguish and strongly condemned the heinous terrorist attack that targeted tourists at Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, Judges and the lawyers in the top court paid tributes to victims by observing a moment of silence. In a full court meeting held on Wednesday morning, the top court unan-imously adopted a resolution denouncing the act of terror, the Supreme Court said

the act of terror, the Supreme Court said in a statement.

"This diabolical act of mindless violence has shaken the conscience of all and is a stark reminder of the brutality and inhumanity that terrorism unleashes," it said.

The top court resolution went on, "The Supreme Court of India pays its respect-ful tribute to the innocent lives snuffed out brutally and prematurely while also expressing its heartfelt condolences to the breaved families. May the departed souls rest in peace and may those who were injured recover soon. The nation stands with the victims and their families in this hour of indescribable grief."

The attack on tourists, the statement said, who were merely enjoying the nati-

Kashmir, is undoubtedly an affront to the values of humanity and the sanctity of life and the court strongly condems the same. To honour the memory of the victims and express solidarity with their families, the Supreme court judges, advocates, court saffers, and all others present in the top court aside from its registry observed at two-minute selence at around 2 pm when the courts assembled in the post-lunch session.

A circular was also issued by the A circular was also issued by use Supreme Court registry saying at around 2 pm, judges, lawyers, staffers and other persons present in the court and in the reg-istry will observe the period of silence. In a related act of solidarity, lawyers and over 300 members of the Supreme Court Bar Association assembled in the Supreme Court's lawn in solidarity with victims of the terror attack.

the terror attack. SCBA unequivocally condemned the

SCBA unequivocally condemned unbarbaric and cowardly terrorist attacks per-pertated against innocent tourists in the peaceful region of Pahalgam. "We mourn the tragic loss of lives and express our deepest condolences to the families of the victims. Our thoughts and prayers are with those injured, and we wish

the values of humanity. Targeting unarmed, innocent civilians is an act of unpardonable swapery," a SCBA resolution said. Even the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association condemned the "The association stands in unwavering solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir, an integral part of our country and the nation as a whole."

To honour the memory of the victims and express solidarity with their families, the Supreme Court judges, advocates, court staffers observed a two-minute

A statement of the Delhi High Court Bar

A statement of the Delhi High Court Bar Association, on the other hand, chastised the heinous act "challenging the unity, integrity and sovereignty" of the country. Terrorists struck a tourist location in Pahalgam in south Kashmir on Tuesdav killing at least 26 people, mostly tourists, and injuring several others. The deceased included two foreigners —from the UAE and Nepal —and two locals.

### Pahalgam attack: Rahul speaks with Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

— adder of Opposition Rahul Gandhi
on Wednesday said he had spoken
with Home Minister Amit Shah,
Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister
Omar Abdullah and Congress' J8K until
resident Tariq Karra about the horrific
Pahalgam terror attack to get an update
on the situation.
Gandhi asserted the families of victims
deserve justice and our fullest support.
"Spoke with HM Amit Shah, J8K CM
Omar Abdullah, and J8K PCC President
Tariq Karra about the horrific Pahalgam
terror attack. Received an update on the
situation," the former Congress chief, who
is on a US visit, said in a post on X.
The families of victims deserve justice
and our fulles support, he said.
The Congress on Tuesday had asked
the government to take accountability for
the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir
instead of making "bullow actination" on the

the government of acke accountamy for the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir instead of making "hollow claims" on the situation being normal in the Union Territory and demanded that an all-party meeting be called to take political parties into confidence. The opposition party denounced the terror attack as a blot on



prime tourist location of Pahalgam in prime tourist iocation of Panagam in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 people and injuring several others, according to officials. The 26 dead included two foreigners - from the UAE and Nepal - and two locals, officials said. Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has described the terror

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Gandhi had said the news of tourists being killed and injured in the cowardly terrorist attack in Pahalgam was extremely condemnable and heartbreaking. Texpress my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and hope for beedy recovery of the injured, he said. "The whole country is united against terrorism." said Rahul Gandhi.

# Film stars condemn Pahalgam terror attack call it 'cowardly' act

In y film stars including Shah Ruth Khan, Kareena Kapoor, Sunny Deol, Vicky Kaushal and Mohanlal have condemned the Pahalgam terror attack on Tuesday and extended condolences to the families of the deceased. Shah Rukhi Khan on Wednesday described he terror attack as an "Inhumane act of violence" and expressed deepest condolences for the grieving families of the victims. Terrorists targeted a prime tourist location in Pahalgam in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 people, mostly tourists.

Tuesday, killing at least 26 people, most-ty tourists.

It is the worst attack in Kashmir since the Pulwama strike in 2019 when 40 CRPF personnel were killed.
Shah Rukh shared a post on social media to condemn the attack. "Words fail to express the sadness and anger at the treachery and inhumane act of violence that has occurred in Pahalgam. "In times like these, one can only turn to God and say a prayer for the families that suffered and express my deepest con-delences. May we as a Nation, stand unit-ed, strong and get justice against this heinous act," he worte. Kareena said in a social media post,

"Beyond heartbroken for the victims and their families. Praying for the lives lost. #Pahalgam." Hope the culprits behind "this heinous act" are brought to justice, said Kaushal. "Can't imagine the pain of the family members of those who lost their

Kaushal. "Can't imagine the pain of the family members of those who lost their loved ones in the absolute inhumane act of terrorism in Pahalgam. My deepest condolences and prayers," he added.

Earlier, Akshay Kumar, Sonu Sood, Sanjay Dutt, Kamal Haasan, and Ritesh Sidhwani condemned the terrorist attack. Nani, who shot for his Telugu film "Hit: The Third Case" in Pahalgam three months ago, said he was speechless.

"Over 200 people team for almost 20 days. Pahalgam Was like a dream. The place, the people and the warmth.

Why?" he wrote in a social media post. In a post, "Pushpa 2" star Allu Arjun said he was heartbroken.

"Such a beautiful place with kind hearted people. Condolences to all the families, near and dear of the victims. May their innocent souls rest in peace. Truly Heart breaking (sic)" he wrote. Actor Suniel Shetty said in his post it was an attack on "the soul of Kashmir and its centuries-old legacy of hospitality".

"Prayers for the injured. Let us stand united in condemning such brutality and



Anupam Kher, Sanjay Dutt, Ajay Devgan

demand swift justice. The perpetrators must face the full force of the law, Shetty said. Actor Sumy Deol said it was high time that ending terrorism became a pri-rity, "Its victins are only innocent people, humans need to look within thenselves. I stand with the affected families in this hour of grief. Pahalgam Terrorist Attack," he wrote in Hindi.

"My heart goes out to the victims of the

Pahalgam terror attack. It is devastating to witness such crudty. No cause can ever jus-tify the taking of innocent lives. To the grieving families, your sorrow is beyond words. Please know that you are not alone. The entire nation stands with you in nourning. Let us hold on to each other a little tighter and never let go of the hope that peace will prevail even in the face of darkness, Malayalam superstar Mohanlal Pahalgam terror attack. It is devastating to

said in his post. Actor-filmmaker Ajay Devgn said he was shocked to hear about the terrorist attack. "The victims and their families were innocent souls, and what happened is heartbreaking and purely evil. My thoughts and prayers are with them," he said in his corful media not.

My thoughts and prayers are with them," he said in his social media post. TV star Shoaib Ibrahim, who was vacationing in Pahalgam with actor-wife Dipika Kakar and son Ruhaan hours before the attack, on his Instagram Stories said they had left Kashmir in the morning. "Hig usys, I all have been concerned for our well-being, Hum sab safe hain theek hain, aaj hi morning me we left Kashmir (We all are safe and sound, we left Kashmir (We all are safe and sound, we left Kashmir (We all are safe and sound, we left when the safe and sound we reached the safe and sound we have the s Kashmir (We all are safe and sound, we left Kashmir this morning), and we reached Delhi safely. Thank you for all the concern' Ibrahim wrote on Tuesday. Actor Sidharth Malhotra termed the Pahalgam terrorist attack 'a cowardly act'. "Thave full faith in our armed forces and I'm sure they will do the needful and ensure justice. My prayers and thoughts are with the families of the innocent victims. I all Hud!" Molhotre said

with the families of the innocent victims. Jai Hind!" Malhotra said.

An emotional Anupam Kher shared a selfie video on social media with the cap-tion: "Wrong. Wrong! Pahalgam massacre! Words are incompetent today!! #Pahalgam."

#### very unfortunate: **Nayab Singh Saini**

PARVESH SHARMA 
Gurugram

This attack is

PARVESH SHARMA Gurugram

n the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said that this attack is very unfortunate. No amount of condennation is enough, He said that I'm this hour of grief, the government stands with the famillies of those who have lost their lives in this incident.

I will pray to God to give place to their brave souls at his lotus feet. Strict action should be taken against those who carried out this heinous incident so that no one else thinks twice before doing this, he said. "The cowardly terrorist attack on tourists in Pahalgam is under the control of this boar of grief. The government is fully with the families who have suffered. No one who carried out this stuppl and disgusting

tamilies who have sutfered. No one who carried out this stupid and disgusting act will be spared," he said. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Vinay Narwal (26), a resident of Karnal, Haryana, also died in the terrorist attack. He had mar-ried Himanshi Narwal on April 16.

# Pahalgam terror attack sparks national outcry

Several Chief Minister and political figures on Wednesday condemned the Pahalgam terror attack and expressed condelences to the families of the deceased.

Assam government is making all arrangements to bring back a survivor family of the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir, the Chief Minister's Office(CMO)said.

"The@CMOfficeAssam has spoken to a survivor from Assam of the dastardly

Office(CMO)said.
"The@CMOfficeAssam has spoken to a survivor from Assam of the dastardly #PahalgamTerrorAttack and has taken a full brief of the incident which they have faced yesterday," the CMO said in a social

faced yesterday," the CMO said in a social media post.
"The entire family's return to the State is being arranged on priority and the Government of Assam is in touch with the Govt of India to bring the family back to Assam at the earliest," it added. Meanwhile, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the images of coffins are hearthreaking and have shaken the nation's conscience.

biswa sarina satul me images or coimis and conscience.

The people of Assam join Adarniya @AmitiShah ji in offering our prayers for departed. This nefarious attack will be avenged and the perpetrators will not be spared. India will never forget and never forgive!" he said in a series of posts. Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said those responsible for the "cowardly" attack on tourists in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahaligam will not be spared. "We strongly condemn the cowardly and planned attack on tourists... Those who have committed this act will not be spared, and strict action will be taken

against them," Saini told reporters in Gurugram, asserting that the Centre's resolve to fight against terror is firm. Among those killed in the attack was 26-year-old Indian Navy officer Lieutenant Vinay Narwal, a resident of Haryana's Karral, who was bolidaring with his Karnal, who was holidaying with h wife in Pahalgam. Narwal got marrie

wife in Pahalgam. Narwal got married recently.

On Wednesday, Saint imade a video call to Narwals grandfather, who sought from Prime Minister Narendra Modi exemplary unishment for the perpetrators and firm action to weed out terrorism. "Today. I have lost my grandson, tomorrow it can be someone else," he said while speaking to chief minister Saint. Haryama Assembly Speaker Harvinder Kalyan, who is a BJP MLA from Gharaundia it Karnal district, also reached Karnal city to be with the bereaved family. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee confirmed that three persons from the state were killed in the terror attack.

Describing it to be a "grim hour" for the Describing it to be a "grim hour" for the

terror attack.

Describing it to be a "grim hour" for the state, Banerjee said her government was making all the arrangements to get family members of the victims back home from ly members of the victims back nome nom. New Delhi and she was personally over-seeing it. "As per the latest updated infor-mation made available to us, three persons from our state have died in the most unfor-tunate Kashmir violence," Banerjee said in social media post. The three deceased are Bitan Adhikari

of Baishnabghata in Kolkata, Samir Guha of Sakher Bazar in Kolkata and Manish Ranjan of Jhalda in Purulia district.

"All arrangements are being put up by our administration at Delhi Airport to help



Security personnel near the site of the Pahalgam terror attack in Anantnag district, Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday. At least 26 people were killed in the terrorist attack on Tuesday

the family members of the victims and their onward journey to Kolkata. Flight is likely to arrive in Kolkata at 8.30 pm today,"

likely to arrive in Kolfata at 8.30 pm Today," she said. The resident commissioner's office in Delhi is in touch with the famisise of the chief minister said.

Extending her condolences to the families of those killed in the attack, Baneriee said that her government is standing by them in the crisis." Agrim hour for all of us," she said. A two-minute silence was observed on Wednesday at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami in Dehradun to pay tribute to the victims of the terror attack at Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir.

Jammu and Kashmir. The meeting chaired by Dhami and

attended by senior officials, including Garhwal Commissioner Vinay Shankar Pandey, Secretary to CM Shallesh Baghauli and Secretary to CM Shallesh Baghauli and Secretary (housing and energy); R Meenakshi Sundaram was held at the chief minister's official residence.

Conveying his deep condolences to the families that lost their loved ones in the attack, Dhami said, 'My deep condolences to the bereaved families on behalf of the people of Uttarakhand. This cowardly attack is not only an attack on innocent people but also on the culture, peace and values of humanity of our country."

"The attempts by terrorists to disturb Jammu and Kashmir will never succeed. A befilting reply will be given to this mis-

and several other BJP leaders and activists on Wednesday held a protest in Hyderabad against the Pahalgam terror attack, raising slogans calling for an attack against

Against the faming for an attack against Distinct of the Control o

with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the union government in the backdrop of the terror attack.

The chief minister underscored that the

Modiand the Centre in their commitment to safeguard India's sovereignty and responding to terrorism with "firm and decisive action".

Further, he mourned the death of JC Chandra Mouli and Madhusudhan in the

attack, who were of Telugu origin.
"Our thoughts and prayers are with their families during this time of profound grief, and I pray they find the strength to endure this immense loss," added Naidu, who is

scheduled to receive Mouli's body in Vizag later on Wednesday. RJD leader Tejashwi Yadaw described the terror attack as "very painful" and termed the killing of tourists as "unthinkable". He said, "One of the deceased happens to be from Bihar, but posted in Hyderabad. We offer condolences to all bereaved family members. The reference was to Manish Ranjan, an Intelligence Bureau official, whose father had migrated to West Bengal long ago. Ranjans wife and children, who were accompanying him at the tourist spot in Jammu and Kashmir, survived the attack. Arunachal Pradesh Governor Lt General Infamental Pradesh Governor Lt General Great of the Article of the Article State of t

dian Navy Lt. Vinay Narwal's wife breaks down while paying tribute to her husband after his

#### Navy officer killed in J and K

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Chandigarh

arried just a few days ago, 26-year-old Indian Navy officer Lieutenant Vinay Narwal was holidaying with his wife in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam when terrorists shot bin dead

him dead.

Hailing from Bhusli village in Karnal district, Narwal's family was presently liv-

district, Narwal's family was presently liv-ing in Kamal Civ.

The Indian Navy also confirmed
Navyalso confirmed
Navyalso confirmed
Naval's death in the terror attack.

"Adm Dinesh K Tripathi, #CNS and all
Personnel of the Indian Navy are shocked
and deeply saddened by the tragic loss of
It Vimay Narval who fell to the dastardly terror attack in Pahalgam. We extend our
heartfelt condodences to his family during
this moment of unimaginable grief.
"The #IndianNavy also stands in solemn
solidarity with all others that lost their lives
in this heinous act of violence. Our

in this heinous act of violence.Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims' families and we pray for the swift recov-ery of those injured," the Navy said in a social media post.

Narwal's neighbour Naresh Bansal said the officer had recently got married.

"After the marriage, everyone was cel-ebrating and in a happy mood. And now suddenly this sod news comes," he said about the terror attack incident. Another neighbour Seema recalled that there were grand celebrations at his home and not just the Narwal family, but the entire neighbourhood was celebrating after the wedding. She told reporters in Karnal that Narwal

did his engineering and later cleared the exams to became an officer in the Indian

Navy.
"They were planning a honeymoon in

"They were planning a honeymoon in Switzerland, but decided to go to Kashmir instead taking into account the leave he had, we can't imagine what his family is going through," she said. "We saw videos where a girl was crying and pleading with the terrorists to kill her too but they told her they were sparing her so that she can tell (PM Narendra) Modi what happened," she said without elabo-rating.

rating.

At least 26 persons — mostly tourists —
were killed by terrorists on Tuesday at the
Baisaran meadows in Pahalgam in one of
the worst terror attacks on civilians in
Kashmir in the past many years.

# Ujjain Collector breaks norm with chair for citizens

In a gesture that quietly speaks volumes, Ujjain district Collector Roshan Kumar Singh is drawing praise for a simple but significant move-placing a chair in front of his desk during public hearing so that complainants can sit and speak comfortably.

Singh, a 2015 batch 1AS officer, assumed charge as Ujjain's Collector on April 15. At his very lirs Jan Sunwai (public hearing) in the district, held on Tuewday as mandated across Madhya gesture that quietly speaks volumes

Tuesday as mandated across Madhya Pradesh, Singh instructed his staff to place

complainants stand while presenting their grievances, while the Collector and revenue officials remain seated—a prac-tice often criticised for its symbolic imbalance

mbalance.
While talking to The Pioneer, Singh downplayed the gesture. "People come with problems—some of them serious and deeply personal. The least we can do is offer them a seat and a sense of dignity," says Ujjain Collector Roshan Kumar Singh, explaining the thought behind his simple yet impactful change during public hearings.

While public hearings are a regular fea-ture in all district Collectorates of Madhya Pradesh, Singh's approach has reignited the debate about why such a small act of

the debate about why such a small act of empathy has remained so rare.

This is not the first time Singh has introduced people-centric innovations. During his tenure as Vidisha Collector, he took a proactive approach to resolving complaints under the CM Helpline. Going beyond the standard protocol, he personally reached out to complainants through random calls to verify if their issues were genuinely resolved and to assess their satisfaction levels.

Kumar Singh served as the Chief Executive Officer of the Morena District Executive Ornicer of the Morena District Panchayat and was later appointed Commissioner of the Ujjain Municipal Corporation in 2022. He subsequently served in the Public Relations Department in Bhopal before taking charge as Collector of Vidisha. Now in Ujjain, Singh continues to uphold a governance style that prioritizes

accessibility, humility, and a genuine connection with the public—a refreshing approach in a system often seen as hierarchical and distant.

#### 'I'm alive for a reason', says terror attack survivor

ha alias Kishori Waghulade, who works as a casual announcer with the All India Radio (AIR) in Maharashtra's Jalgaon city, feel she must have done something good in life to have survived the deadly terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's

attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam town. Visting Pahalgam was admiring the natural beauty of Baisaran meadows, a prime tourist location, when gunshots rang in the air on Tuesday afternoon. The meadows in the upper reaches of Pahalgam soon turned into a site of carnage where 26 people, mostly tourists, were gunned down by terrorists. "I must have done something good in life, that's why I am still alive," she told her husband after surviving the terror

her husband after surviving the terror attack. Her husband, Tushar Waghulade, speaking from Jalgaon, said his wife went to Kashmir with a group of friends on April 15. "The group was in Pahalgam. I had not been in touch with her for two days because of work. When I called her

around 2 pm on Tuesday, she said there around 2 pm on Tuesday, she said there was firing and a terror attack was taking place. She told me she was safe and would contact me later," he said. Tushar Waghulade said he sensed the gravity of the situation from her voice. "She sounded shaken. Then she cut the call. I understood how serious it was," he said. They spoke again in the evening.

"Between 7.30 pm and 8 pm, she told me she was fine. She mentioned ambulances and that more security the resonated.

me she was fine. She mentioned ambulances and that more security personnel were arriving. She said some tourists had died, but her group was safe, "Tushar Waghulade maintained. Yetesh Sudhir Parmar, a resident of Gujarafs Bhavnagar, who was killed in the terrorist attack at Pahalgami na Anantnag district of Jammu & Kashmir "She told me that during the afternoon call there was a load noise and people were panicking. After she hung up. I assumed her group had been moved to a safer place," he said.
They first hit tourists in vehicles and

They first hid tourists in vehicles and ambulances and later shifted everyone to a safe place about 1.5 km from the attack site. Many tourists spent the night there," he said.

### Three Gujarat tourists killed in terror attack





PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Ahmedabad

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Ahmedabad There tourists halling from Gujarat were among the 26 persons killed in a terror attack in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir Sa hantang district, officials said on Wednesday. The Gujarat administration was in touch with the Centre and the Jammu and Kashmir government to bring back the bodies, state Health Minister Rushikesh Patel told reporters. Shailesh Kalathiya from Surat, Yatish Parmar and his son Smit Parmar from Bhavnagar were among the 26 persons killed in the horrific terror attack in Pahalgam on Tuesday, as per officials. "Three persons from Gujarat — two from Bhavnagar and one from Gurat — were killed in the attack, while two weighted in the control of the control o

injured. The victim hailing from Surat lived in Mumbai.

"We are in touch with the Centre and Jammu and Kashmir government to bring back the bodies. We have also started efforts to bring back other tourists who survived the attack," Patel said.

seeh Pamar residents of Gujara's Bhavvagar, in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir Pi Kalathiya (44), belonging to Chikuwadi area in Surat city, shifted to Mumbai a few years back after he was transferred there, according to officials. "Kalathiya's cousin told us that he shifted to Mumbai four years ago due to job transfer. He had gone to Pahalgam with his wife and two children. His wife and children are safe, 'Surat disaster management departments' revenue officer Sajid Merujay said. Yatish Parmar and his son Smit Parmer, residents of Kaliyabid area of Bhavnagar city, were a;pa mong those killed in the Pahalgam terror attack, district collector Manish Kumar Bansal said. The two were among 19 persons from

The two were among 19 persons from Bhavnagar who went to Kashmir on April 16 to attend religious preacher Morari Bapu's discourse there, according to sources. Terrorists struck at a prime tourist location in Pahalgam in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 persons, mostly tourists and injuring several others. Security has been beefed up across the valley, especially at vital tourist spots.

# UP announces DA hike for 5th and 6th Pay Commission employees

In a significant decision aimed at eas-ing the financial burden on government employees, the Uttar Pradesh govern-ment has approved a hike in dearness allowance (DA) for staff receiving salaries under the 5th and 6th Pay Commissions. The announcement, made through an offi-cial end or issued by the Addition (Chief cial order issued by the Additional Chief Secretary (Finance), is expected to bene-Secretary (Finance), is expected to bene-fit thousands of employees across the state, including teachers, technical staff, and urban local body workers. According to the revised structure, the DA for employees under the 5th Pay Commission has been increased by 11 per-

cent, raising the rate from 455 percent to
466 percent for Saisc pay. Employees falling
under the 6th Pay Commission will see a
6 percent like, bringing their total DA to
252 percent from the earlier 246 percent.
These rates reflect the government's
effort to account for the rising cost of living and inflationary trends that have
impacted employees still serving under
older pay structures. The enhanced DA will
be paid in cash starting from April 1, 2025.
For the period between January 1 and

be paid in cash starting front appril 1, 2025. For the period between January 1 and March 31, 2025, the amount will be credited to the employees General Provident Fund (GPF) accounts or other designated future savings instruments. This method ensures that the fiscal burden is

managed prudently while still securing the benefit for the employees. The increase will cover a wide category of employees, including state government personnel, staff of government-aided educational institutions, technical institute employees, and regular and full-time staff employed by urban local bodies.

These are employees who, for various administrative or structural reasons, have

administrative or structural reasons, have not been transitioned to the 7th Pay Commission and continue to work under previous regimes. While, Vitek Kishore, leader of the State Government Employees Association, welcomed the move but said more needed to be done to bring parity. "This increase in dearness allowance is a

welcome step. Our long-standing demand has finally been addressed and it will provide financial relief to a large section of employees. We urge the government to consider bringing all employees under the The Pay Commission to ensure uniformity in compensation and benefits. Employee unions, associations have been pressing for the revision for several months, arguing that stagnant allowances were eroding real income, particularly as inflation and cost of essential commodities have risen sharply. This announcement comes at a crucial time, towards new fiscal year and reflects its intent to maintain administrative harmony and employee satisfaction.

### Kanpur plunged into grief over Shubham Dwivedi's death in Pahalgam terror attack

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ Kanpur

A deep pall of sorrow hangs over Kanpur as news of the death of Shubham Dwivedi, a young man from the city killed in the recent terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, spreads through his locality. The 28-year-old, who had gone to the Valley for a short vacation with his wife, was shot in the head by terrorists in a brutal assault that claimed over two dozen civilian lives. Shubham had only recently stepped into a new chapter of his

updates from the family.

year. The attack has left not just his family, but an entire neighborhood in mourning.

"He was full of life, always ready to help everyone," said Rajesh Sinha, a neighbour who had known Shubham since childhood.

"We just attended his wedding celebrations in February. Who knew that would be attending his funeral so soon?"

Locals gathered outside Shubham's home in Govind Nagar on Wednesday morning, many in tears, as they awaited

have been told the body will be handed over in a couple of days after official procedures, he said.

The incident has triggered outrage and sorrow in equal measure. Local social groups have demanded that the government take strict action against terror outfits responsible for the attack.

"This is not just about Shubham. He represents every Indian civilian who

represents every Indian civilian dares to dream, travels for peace, and falls victim to mindless violence," said Shailendra Mishra, a local youth activist who plans to hold a peace march in

Shubham's memory.

The attack, which took place in Pahalgam, has been attributed to a group with suspected links to Lashkare-Tabla. Home Minister Amit Shah visited the attack site and assured that the perpetrators would be brought to justice.

As the Dwivedi family prepares to receive Shubham's mortal remains, Kanpur stands united in grief—remembering a young life snatched away too soon, and demanding that such blood-shed never be repeated again.

Meanwhile, Prime Narendra Modi

has cancelled the programme scheduled in Kanpur on April 24 in the wake of Pahalgam terror attack where 26 people were gunned down. The Prime Minister was scheduled to visit Kanpur on April 24 to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for development projects worth over ₹20,000 crore.

ore. However, in light of the recent terror

attack that claimed a number of lives, including that of Shubham, who hails from Kanpur, the event has been cancelled.





# Editor's

#### **Humanity dies** in Pahalgam

Terrorists slaughter 28 tourists - a tragic reminder that terror still haunts the Valley

one of the deadliest terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir since the rogation of Article 370 in 2019, 28 tourists were massacred on abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, 28 tourists were massacred on Tuesday in the tranquil Baisaran meadow near the popular hill resort of Pahalgam. The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy terror outfit of the Pakistana-based Lashkar-Falba (Est), claimed responsibility. This attack has not hyshocked the nation but also reopened deep-seated concerns about the fragile security scenario in Kashimi. The tourists, who included honeymooners, families, and two foreign nationals—from hepal and the UAE- were gumed down in a sudden gun-fire. Despite existing security measures, including checkpoints and patrols, the attackers managed to infiltrate and execute their mission with clinical precision, raising serious questions about intelligence and on-ground pre-paredness.

are actions in single priors questions about intelligence and on-ground preparedness.

This incident is not an isolated act of violence but appears deeply orchestrated. It coincided with two significant geopolitical events. The visit of US Vice President, DV Jance to India and Prime Minister Narendra Moris diplomatic mission in Sauld Arabia. Additionally, it followed a combative speech by Pakistani Army chief General Asim Munir, intensifying suspicions that the attack was calibrated to internationalise the Kashmir issue and portray the region as a nuclear flashpoint. The synchronicity is disturbingly emissioned to the Chitisinghpora massascre in 2000, where 35 Sikhs we nurdered days before US President Bill Clinton's visit.

By targeting funtise — synchronic or a stable Kashmir and provode commission of the Chitisinghpora of normalizy and economic recovery—the terroists aimed to derail the narrative of a stable Kashmir and provode compared to the control of the contr This incident is not an isolated act of violence but appears deeply

Investment in education, job creation, tourism infrastructure, and inclusive governance empowers local communities, weakens recruitment for terror networks, and fosters a sense of belonging among youth. A region that thrives economically is harder to radicalise. Most critically, it is time to revisit and reinforce the security architecture surrounding tourism. Tourists — once regarded as ambassadors of peace and economic revival — have now become targets. This demands a thorough overhaul of safety protocols, sepecially in remote and high-traffic areas like Pahalagam. The aim is not to deter tourism, but to residue confidence. Kashmir must not once again become a hostage to fear.

**Leaderspeak** 

The dastardly killing of innocent, unsuspecting tourists by

terrorists in Pahalgam yesterday around 2:30 PM has deeply hurt, shocked, and saddened us all. The Congress Party

unequivocally condemns this cowardly act of terror and those

responsible for it in the strongest possible terms. This attack

is a direct assault on the unity and integrity of our nation. MALLIKARJUN KHARGE, PRESIDENT, CONGRESS PARTY

# Political fault lines shift in Bihar

With caste dynamics, coalition equations, and leadership challenges all in play, the stage is set for a high-stakes political showdown between the NDA and the Mahagathbandhan

he Bihar polls at the end of the year are pretty unpredictable. Currently, there will be no cakewalk for the BJP, RID, Congress or the ID(U). The churning is quietly taking place in Bihar politics. There could be a potential shift in power dynamics. The BJP, Blyaning second fiddle to the Janata Dal (United) for the past two decades, is eying a lead role. The RJD wants to form the government of the RJD wants to form the spart year to the state of the RJD wants to form the spart year to the state of the result of the population, and the upper caste is only 15.52 per cent. Of the Backward Classes comprise 27.12 per cent of the population, and the upper caste is only 15.52 per cent. Of the Extremely Backward Class sepondation and the want of the Extremely Backward Class sepondation and the Left part of the Extremely Backward Class sepondation. In the last Assembly polls, upper castes, around 15 per cent of the population, dominated ticket distribution in many parties, around 15 per cent of the seat to the population, dominated ticket distribution in many parties, around 15 per cent of the seat of Congress gave 40 per cent of the seat of the population in the 120 Blhar assembly elections, the Mahagathbandhan did not win a simple majority in the 243-member 12 seats The he Bihar polls at the end of the

In the 2020 Bihar assembly elections, the Mahagathbandhan did not win a simple majority in the 243-member legislative assembly, missing it by just 12 seats. The RJD was the largest party in the House but could not form the government.

For the 2025 polls, ID(U) has confirmed Nitish Kumar as the chief ministerial face. The well-known poll expert Prashant Kishor predicted that Nitish Kumar would end his political career. The RJD has experted that Nitish Kumar would end his political career. The RJD has Kishor predicted that Nitish Kumar would end his political career. The RJD has opted for its leader, Tejaswi Yadav. Congress has not opened its cards yet. A series of meetings between Congress and the RJD, which began this month, continues.

The Janata Dal (United) party and the BJP coalition currently rule Bihar. Nitish Kumar's deteriorating health, caste balance, and the functioning of the alliance make Bihar politically unpredictable. Even if the



, his health issues could significantly impact the election outcome. The JD(U) wants to bargain for more seats with the BJP. In 2020, the JD(U) ran for 115 seats but only won 43. In contrast, the BJP ran for 110 seats and won 74. The MahagadbandhNn, which consists of RID.

which consists of RJD Congress, and some smaller parties, poss stiff opposition. The RJD and top Congress leaders met in Delhi last week to advance the alliance.

the alliance.

Political realignments since 2020 — the VIP Joining the MGB, the LJP aligning with the NDA and the Rashtriya Lok Samata Party merging into the JD(U) — complicate the poll picture.

A key development since 2020 has been the change in the power equation within the NDA, with the BJP emerging stronger. The BJP has strategically cultivated non-dominant other backward classes (OBCs) and non-dominant Dalit communities.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah visit-

ed Bihar for two days. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Bihar. RJD chief Lah Prasad Yadav made a surprising announcement, stating that he is open to reconciling with his socialist ally, Nitish Kumar. In response to this mischievous statement, Nitish remarked that he had inadvertently aligned with the RJD. Tejashwi Yadav, however, asserted that there is no place for Nitish in the Mahagathbandhan. Many believe that Nitish, known for his U-turns, could switch sides.

The INDIA opposition bloc has appointed Tejashwi Yadav, the Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD) leader and former Bihar Deputy Chief Minister, as head of its coordination committee for the upcoming Bihar Assembly elections. This decision was made during a meeting of the six alliance partners in Patta on April 17.

The Congress and Left parties in the Mahagathbandhan are worried that the RJD will wait until the last minute to finalise seat-sharing agreements. The Congress party is unhappy with the weak constituencies it was given in 2020. It only won 19 out of the 70 seats it contested in the last election. The CPI(ML), which did

well in 2020, wants a larger share of seats. Since 2005, the RID has had difficulty regaining power, except for short periods in 2015 and 2022. Currently, Tejashwi Yadav has two main tasks. First, he needs to expand the support beyond its core groups of Muslims and Yadavs to include other Muslims and Yadavs to include other castes. This involves a stronger grassroots campaign, as the traditional voting trends are changing. The Congress has not developed younger leadership in Bihar. Its old core groups of Muslims and Dalits have shifted to other parties. The party has launched the 'Samvidhan Leadership Programme' to eye marginalised communities.

ntites.

The main parties face challenges both within their groups and from outside, and a significant political change is expected. A point to note is that Nitish Kumar's EBC is intact and challenges the RJD-

Congress alliance.

There could be many more changes before November; they would be interesting to watch. In politics, one week is said to be long. Six months is really long.

(The author is a popular columnist. Views are personal)

# Why EQ matters more than IQ

# OSECOND pinion

BY SHARMILA VAIDYA

In my most rewarding 26 years of experience working as an educator, I have had the privilege of working with students from diverse backgrounds and in different educational settings. It is during this period I started administering the state mandated IQ tests. These tests were administered to measure an individuals cognitive abilities, mostly logical reasoning, memory and verbal mathematical aptitude. They tell us how well someone can solve abstract problems under specific conditions.

I was surprised to see how these standardised tests categorised and measured individuals by numbers and scores often disregarding their potentials, experiences and abilities, making it inherently biased.

This realisation prompted me to explore what IQ, intelli-

ing it inherently biased.

This realisation prompted me to explore what IQ, intelligence and success fully mean in the real world. Hence, I decided to conduct as small survey. To got a fair sampling, I included people of different backgrounds - educators, parents, students, homemakers and professionals.

My questions were:

1. What qualities make you see someone as intelligent?

2. Do you think people with low IQ can be successful?

1 was pleasantly surprised to see the responses from the survey. According to the survey - some of these qualities were,

-someone who is empathetic, creative, problem-solving, curious, open to ideas, a good communicator, accepting without being judgmental. and many more. Most people also believe that individuals with lower IQ scores can achieve success-especially when they possess strong emotional intalliance (EQ).

[EQ]. Based on this survey I concluded that there was a shift in

Based on this survey! Concluded that there was a shift in people's perception from [Q to EQ. 1n general, the meaning of intelligence exceeded beyond the confinement of standardised test. In order to get a broader understanding of intelligence I started researching the different types of intelligences as per psychological theory.

In the 1980s, Harvard psychologist, Howard Gardner proposed a theory that broke away from the "one-size-fits-all" model of intelligence. He introduced eight distinct types of intelligences that reflected the diverse ways humans learn, express themselves, and solve problems. These were:
Linguistic Intelligence: Word savyy like, writers, stoytellers Logical: Mathematical Intelligence: Analytical thinkers, like scientists and engineers

scientists and engineers

Musical Intelligence: Musically inclined, like musicians,
Kinesthetic Intelligence: Physical grace and skill like,

Milestreta Manager dancers Spatial Intelligence: Visual and spatial thinkers like architect and artists

Spatial Intelligence: Visual and spatial unified in the about tests and artists: Interpersonal Intelligence: People skills and empathy like, therapists, teachers, and leaders. Intrapersonal Intelligence: Deep self-understanding like philosophers and spiritual leaders

Naturalistic Intelligence: Attunement to nature, like, gardeners and environmentalists.

Among other psychologists that followed, Daniel Goldman played an important role in introducing the concept of Emotional Intelligence, which includes empathy, self-awareness and emotional regulation which demonstrated that EQ plays an important role in personal success.

Together, these theories encourage us to look beyond IQ scores and appreciate the depth and diversity of human potential. Hence, even if one wasn't considered academically intelligent and didn't fit in the traditional high IQ "cooke cutter" mould, many have been very successful and have contributed to society at large. Examples include:

Thomas Edison was considered "difficult" in school and reportedly had very little formal education. His teachers thought he was slow or unable to learn. Despite this, he became one of the most prolific inventors in history.

Walt Disney was reportedly fired from a newspaper job for

one of the most prolific inventors in history. Walt Disney was reportedly fired from a newspaper job for "lacking imagination," and he struggled cacdemically. His success came through storytelling, creativity, and persistence. Therefore, we must reconsider the tendency to label someone as Jazy or unintelligent based solely on conventional standards. I believe my experience along with research and survey findings strongly support this perspective, which is aptly captured in the quote: "A high [D may open a door, but emotional intelligence determines how far you'll go once you walk through it?" through it

# Letters to the Editor

#### **National Panchayat Day**

Madam — The evolution of Panchayat Raj System

Madam — The evolution of Panchayat Raj System in India can be traced back to ancient Vedic period. On 24 April 1993 Fanchayat Raj system in India cane into effect with the enactment of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act on 22/23 December 1992, was ratified by state legislatures and came into effect on 24 April 1993. To mark the establishment of Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) in India through constitution, "National Panchayat Raj Day" is observed every year on 24 April to promote grassroots democracy, rural development, inclusive governance, women empowerment, ensure accountability and transparency, strengthening local governance, and empower rural communities.

The decentralisation of power, e-governance, apacity building, and financial oversight are some of the corresponsibilities of PRIs in India. This day mainly focus on chancing participatory governance, rural uplifument, rural women empowerment, and digital transformation in village-level administration.

of Self-governance. Currently, there are nearly 2.63 lash Panchayuts, 31.47 lash decelor prepresentatives of PRIs of which 14.54 lash are women. It is important for achievent in charge a great of the charge of the contraction of

Panchayats, 51.47 fakil elected representatives of PKIs of which 14.54 lakh are women. It is important for achiev-ing inclusive growth and addressing issues like climate change and rural-to-urban migration.

#### **Contempt plea against Dubey**

Madam — The Supreme Court on Tuesday 22 April said

Madam — The Supreme Court on Tuesday 22 April said it will hear next week a contempt plea filed against BJP MP itshikant Dubey for his controversial remarks blaming Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna for "civil wars" in the country.

The matter was brought before a Bench comprising Justice B.R. Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih by a lawyer who highlighted that the Attorney General had not responded to the request for sanction to initiate contempt proceedings.

"The remark is viral. Dubey says CJI responsible for civil wars. No reply from Attorney (Generally, the lawyer said) prompting Justice Gavai to respond, "List it next week." Dubey had sharply criticized the judiciary, claiming that if the Supreme Court continues to frame Jaws, then Parliament and state assembles might as well be shut down. His comments came after the Centre assured the court that it would hold of on implementing controversial provisions of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, following Judicial Script of the Court of the Centre assured the court that it would hold of man upon the provision of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, following Judicial Script of the Court of the Cour

Party president J.P. Nadda caned the statements person-al opinions and reiterated the BJP's "utmost respect for the judiciary," instructing party leaders to refrain from such remarks in the future.

BHAGWAN THADANI I MUMBAI

#### Mangoes can be a health risk!

Madam - Mango is a fruit rich in flavor, nutrition, and

Maddin — Mango is a fruit rich in mavor, fluction, and energy. It contains essential vitamins such as A and C, along with iron—nutrients that are highly beneficial for the eyes, skin, and immune system. However, consuming mangoes before their natural sea-son posses serious health risks, especially when they are arti-ficially ripened using harmful chemicals like calcium car-bide

This chemical accelerates the ripening process unnaturally, but is toxic compounds can damage the stomach, liver, and nervous system. Prolonged exposure or consumption may lead to ulcers, nausea, and in severe cases, even increase the risk of cancer.

It is therefore wise to prefer naturally ripened mangoes and prioritize health over momentary pleasure. Naturally ripened mangoes are available only during the proper mango season. The ones found in markets before that time are often treated with hazardous substances to enhance their appearance and ripen them prematurely. In fact it is the duty of the Government that no food item is sold which is a health risk. is a health risk

Those who indulge in this practice must be behind the bars.So, for now, stay away from your "beloved" mango— and choose health over desire. A little patience today can ensure a safer and sweeter tomorrow!

ABDUL MBOOD I MUMBAI

#### **PAHALGAM ATTACK: TERRORISTS ARE ENEMIES OF ENTIRE MANKIND**

nce again Kashmir is lying in blood. It is very sad to note that were killed and several were injured by the Terrorist. The gruesome attack should be condemned by each and every one. The Government boasted a lot after a lot after abrogation of Article 370 that the terrorism will come to an end in Jammu and Kashmir. After the rhetoric of Amit Shah and PM Narendra Modi that there is normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir the attack has proved that the Central Government has failed miser-Central Government has failed miser-ably to crumble down the terrorism. While many tourist were enjoying a peaceful afternoon amidst snow-capped peaks and pine forests the mil-itants had split blood in Pahalgaun. itants had split blood in Pahalgaun. This an direct attack on the Indian state. The entire nation is in great shock. Previously in the gruesome ter-ror attack in Jammu and Kashmir over 43 brave soldiers were killed. Every now and then many innocents people's

are being killed by terrorism. Now killing of 26 tourist is act of barbarians killing of 26 tourist is act of barbarian and act of cowardice and assault on the values of humanity.

Conceded that there can be genuine grievances of the people and individuals but violence is certainly not an option for redressal. It is a crime against humanity and has to be con-

option for telessar. As a sum-against humanity and has to be con-demned by one and all. The terrorists are the enemies of entire mankind and they do not belong to a particular religion or particular country. All religions are great and love should be the universal religion. I request the Government to take stringent action against those are behind the terror attack. My sympatities to the families and prayers to the injured. At this moment the nation must stand by the ramiles of the brutally killed innocent people and make all efforts to bring the culprits and give them exemplary punishment. ZAKIR HUSSAIN [KAZIPE

ZAKIR HUSSAIN | KAZIPET

Please send your letter to the letterstopionee@gmail.com. In not more than 400 words
We appreciate your feedback.

B. MADHUSUDHAN REDDY I KARIMNAGAR





# **WAVES 2025: Redefining global media diplomacy**

WAVES weaves together storytelling, technology and international cooperation to reshape the global media and entertainment. This summit marks a decisive leap into a future where India leads with innovation, cultural capital and strategic foresight



ome May 1st, India has truly arrived with the WAVES Entertainment Summit being held in Mumbai from 1st to 4th of May 2025. The summit being held in Mumbai from 1st to 4th of May 2025. The summit being held in Mumbai from 1st to 4th of May 2025. The summit being held in Mumbai from 1st to 4th of May 2025. The summit being held in Mumbai from 1st to 4th of May 2025. The summit was the summar and the National Museum of Indian Cinema, highlighing Indian cinema as a powerful medium of global outreach and soft power, calling it a "silent force" that shapes global perceptions and connects cultures. He emphasised cinemas spotential to promote film tourism, inviting international filmmakers to explore India's diverse landscapes. The design of WAVES is an unusual convergence of like-mind-eness of M&E stakeholders; individuals or institutions that think alike in carving out a landscape that will be suited for the global fraternity responsible for creating content and its consumption. WAVES 2025 brings a bold new phase of soft power diplomacy, focusing on transformative and technology, driven partnerships, Innovation in this segment is bound to create a new buzz for foreign policy tie-ups, carried forward on the wings of emerging tools such as Artificial Intelligence (Al), Virtual Reality (VR), and immersive content ecosystems. The diverse participation at WAVES will open unprecedented avenues for multilaere al cooperation and dalogue across critical area of unowledge sharing, media geogenement, soft in provides India with an unparalleled opportunity to assert global leadership in the creative domain; by fusing its creativity quotient, strategic foresight, oa sent global leadership in the creative domain; by fusing its creativity quotient, strategic foresight and cultural capital into a soft power matrix that fosters goodwill and purposeful international collaboration.

At the heart of WAVES 2025 lies its evocative trapsition itself as a global M&E powerhouse. As a summit that seeks to reimagine communication follomacy, on

Toutiness of Egypty pation.

WAVES has quietly but effectively given a new meaning to soft power diplomacy wherein all constituents that create charisma associated with knowledge sharing and storytelling play a critical role in bilateral or multilateral cooperation. It is married to meaning that diplomacy role in bilateral or multilateral cooperation. It would be appropriate to mention that diplomacy will adorn new wings of change based on creativ-



ity, innovation and the spirit of collaboration WAVES will truly be the "Mahakumbh" of ideas opportunities, experiences and knowledge shar ing

ing.

The philosophical underpinning of WAVES 2025 can be distilled into the 7 Cs of Communication: Clarity, Conciseness, Concreteness, Correctness, Coherence, Completeness, and Courtesy. These seven pillars not only ensure effective storytelling but serve as diplomatic principles guiding cross-border media collaboration. They offer a timeless framework as

offer a timeless framework as we enter an era where com-munication is the new cur-rency of power, diplomacy, and development. With narratives shap-ing geopolitics, trade, and international perception, there is a pressing need for a Global Media Charter, a

CHAITANYA K
PRASAD

A Global Media Canaffer, a
binding commitment from
nations to protect freedom of creative expression,
foster diverse storytelling,
practices. WAVES 2025 causer ethical medio
filis transformative shift. In a world increasingly
waverand by a diotial influence and alsowithing. governed by digital influence and algorithmic reach, a unified declaration will help navigate the

THE SUMMIT ALSO AIMS TO INCREASE INDIA'S GLOBAL MARKET SHARE IN MEDIA, ATTRACT MAJOR INVESTMENTS, AND ENCOURAGE CO-PRODUCTION

BETWEEN INDIAN AND INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS. BY BRINGING TOGETHER CREATORS, INVESTORS, AND POLICYMAKERS, WAVES OFFERS A SHARED SPACE TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND GROW IDEAS

ethical dilemmas of deepfakes, information dis-order, and cultural homogenisation. It's not just-about content anymore; it's about cultural conti-nuity, technological responsibility, and global unity through creative collaboration.

WAVES isn't just about short-term buzz, it's about building something lasting, It understands that media and entertainment (M&E) isn't a quick.

about outning sometiment (M&E) isn't a quick fix but a long-term strategic play. At its heart is a clear goal: to make India the global content hub and a net exporter of stories. With its rich cultural diversity and languages, india has all the ingredients to build a strong intellectual property base that resonates worldwide. The summit also aims to increase India's global market share in media, attract major investments, and encourage co-production between Indian and international players. By bringing together creators, investors, and policymakers, WAVES offers a shared space to build partnerships and grow ideas. Platforms like WaveKcelerator and WAVES Bazzaar will help startups and innovators scale up and plug into global markets.

tips ain innovates scare of an experimental analysis. An analysis of a markets WAVE 2025 is designed to be a complete WAVE 2025. The Global Media Dialogue brings perior ministers and appolisymaters from around the world to exchange ideas. The Thought Leaders Track will host key sessions exploring future trends and challenges in media.

In the Exhibition Zone, companies will show-case the latest in gaming, animation, VR, and AI. The WAYES Bazaar will act as a meeting ground for buyers and sellers to find the right, collaborators, Wave-Keelerstor will give startups a chance to pitch live and attract investors.

The Bharat Pavilion will spottight India's storytelling journey; from folk tales to futuristic formats. The Creato Sphere will feature masterdasses, creators' meet-ups, and the grand finale of the Create in India Challenge. And finally, a series of cultural performances will bring together talent from across the globe, blending tradition with innovation.

WAVES is expected to drive real outcomes, from new content partnerships and global investments to job creation and policy support. It will help position India as a creative and tech-savy media partner for the world. With cutting-edge tech on display, including AI tools and immersive experiences, the summit will also show how India is shaping the future of media.

By promoting co-productions, content exchanges, and new distribution deals, WAVES could help Indian stories travel further. It also gives international stakeholders a chance to build deal connections with Indian recators-paving the way for shared growth and innovation. Most importantly, it sets the stage for India to lead the way in global media diplomacy.

The timing couldn't be better. According to the EY-FICCI 2025 M&E Report, India's media sexected to touch INR 2.7 trillion in 2025.

Digital media now makes up 33% of total revenue, with digital ads growing fast. OTT platorms grew by 18%, driven by regional stories finding global fans. The report projects that the way in global media diplomacy.

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created.

India is no longer on the sidelines of the global media conversation, it is setting the agenda. With WAVES 2025, India is articulating a bold creative vision for the world: one that transcends platforms, breaks silos, and builds coalitions of creators. WAVES 2025 isn't just another summit, it is a cultural declaration, a geopolitical realignment of media narratives, and a commitment to connect not just creators, but countries, cultures, and communities.

and communities.

By placing communication at the heart of global partnerships, WAVES brings together not only markets but also minds and meanings. The world is watching, and India is ready to lead.

# Reclaiming our humanity: A call to connection in a fragmented world

Amid global turmoil, Danish explorer Thor Pedersen's journey to every country without flying stands as quiet proof that kindness and shared humanity endure - even in the unlikeliest places. It's a story of contrast, conviction, and hope

Septuagenarian McGilchrist McGilchrist, a world-renowned philosopher, psychiatrist and neuroscientist, recently addressed a symposium titled The Future of Humanity, where he delved into some of the most pressing questions at the heart of our existence-the existence of what is good, beautiful, and true. Reflecting on his life-time, he observed that these fundamen-tal transcendental values have been

tar transcendental values have been increasingly sidellined, decried, debased, and even destroyed. "It is not just that we are distracted from the truth," he noted, "but we demand protection from it, lest it thurt us-in. case life itself hurts us."



Us."

This observation resonates

This observation resonates

This observation resonates

the property of the process of the process

where the very essence of humanity-compassion, love, and concern-seems to be vanishing at an alarmig rate.

In our hyper-competitive socio-political environment, every sphere of life-familial, social, professional, and spiritual-is under strain. Systems meant to support them are collapsing. Yet amid this bleakness, glimmers of hope remain, our such beacon is a traveller's journey-machine the procession of the human spir.

Take the journey of Thor Pedersen, a Danish explorer. Thor is the only person in history to travel to every country in the world without flying. Between 2013.

Danish explorer. Thor is the only person in history to travel to every country in the world without flying. Between 2013 and 2023, he wisted over 200 nations-India being his 168th using only ships, trains, buses, and other ground or seabased transport. His journey was more than a feat of endurance; it became a profound exploration of humanity, transcending borders, cultures, and beliefs. At the heart of his experience lay a simple truth: "People are just people." Wherever he went, he met ordinary peo-

ple truth: "People are just people." Wherever he went, he met ordinary people living ordinary lives-finding joy in food, music, and sports, and valuing safety and stability over political and religious

divides. Across every border he crossed, he was met with kindness and generosity. Strangers offered him meals, shelter, contacts, translations, or simply a smile when he needed it most-true to the spirit of our shared humanity.

His realisation deepened when he observed: 'If we reduce people to numbers and statistics, we create distance and lose empathy. Divide and conquer is an age-old strategy, and it works well-but at what cost? We can keep dividing the world until, eventually, we all sit alone.'

However, the Danish globetrotter's voyage was not without challenges. He encountered a few unpleasant incidents and individuals along the way, threatened by drunk, armed, and hostile men, battling cerebral malaria, and being held at gunpoint. While all this, however, did not dishearten him, we are reminded of Gandhiji's profound words: 'You must not lose faith in humanity; is like an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean

are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty."
Thor's journey, devoid of privilege and elitism-underscores vital truths:
a) Even if gentleness and kindness seem to be in decline, they continue to thrive quietly at the grassroots.
b)Though humanity struggles to find its rightful place in a world consumed by the relentless pursuit of power, pleasure, and profit, it is not lost - only marginalised.
c) As we glamorise wealth, we risk losing the very qualities that define us as human-compassion, care, and cooperation.

History bears witness to countless individuals who, in moments of crisis, be it accidents, tragedies, or desperate need - step forward uninvited, saving lives and rekindling faith in humanity. Though often overlooked, their actions quietly pull humanity back from the brink. That said, the world remains enmeshed

in grave, interconnected crises-war, inequality, poverty, climate change-all demanding collective will. Saldy, world leaders, despite their promises, continuous to ignore the catastrophic plight of millions. As they routinely gather to design an ostensibly better future, they remain either unable or unwilling to respond-revealing not just a failure of meaningful action, but a failure of intent.

Grim Realittes

For long, we have viewed the world as manipulable and controllable-ripe to be bent to our will. Therefore, few doubt that many crises plaguing our world are not mere accidents of fate or unavoidable circumstances; they are often the deliberate outcomes of power-driven agendas. Fueled by greed, ruthless self-interest, and an insatiable thirst for domination, these forces ignite brutal conflict, widespread deprivation, environmental devastation, racism, and religious extremism-creating

a reality steeped in suffering and division. Poverty, an affront to human dignity, heightens vulnerability to abuse. Tied to climate change, it's set to intensify-new research led by Dr Timothy Neal (University of New South Wales) warns the average person could be 40% poorer if global temperatures rise by 4°C. Shockingly, those who hold power-whether in struggling countries, developing economies, or even the most developed nations-have often abandoned humanity as the foundation of governance. Opportunistic toxic politics and hybrid forms of authoritarianism continue to destroy the sacred ground of human dignity, pushing aside the cardinal principle that must guide all leadership: People Over Everything.

Even the COVID-19 crisis-exposing vulnerabilities and inequities-failed to instil lasting solidarity. Human dignity remains dispensable.

What of more grim realities?

According to the Geneva Academy, more than 45 armed conflicts are currently raging across the Middle East and North Africa. Africa follows closely, with over 35 non-international armed conflicts (NIACs). Asia remains a battle-ground for 19 such conflicts, while Europe contends with seven.

Bleak as it may seem, this is a call to action-one urging us to deepen our commitment to humanistic values, where every life is worthwhile, wanted, and wel-comed.

comed.

While it may be simplistic to expect everything to align perfectly with the humanistic way, it is crucial to recognise the deeper causes of suffering, distress, and anguish within the fabric of human

and anguish within the fabric of human society-locally, nationally, and globally. In an age of deep disillusionment, we must remember: the world is not merely a map of borders, but a shared home. As Professor Harvey Whitehouse of Oxford reminds us: "Remembering that we are all related and experience many of the same challenges could be the key to solving global problems-from intergroup conflicts to poverty and the climate crisis."

What kind of world do we want to live if If we fail to address this, we risk slid-

in? If we fail to address this, we risk slid-ing into a soulless existence-a world full in? If we fall to address this, we risk slid-ing into a soulless existence-a world full of people, yet empty of humanity. We may exist, but we will not truly live. The degradation of humanity is not inevitable. Though messiness and imperfection are part of what makes us human, it is in our ablity to reclain substantive conversation and enrich our relationships, based on humanistic virtues. Our hearts and minds-feeling, willing, knowing, sensing-must not grow numb to the suffering that surrounds us. We must not be swayed by eloquent words, empty rhetoric, or the shallow display of symbolism. Only through real, tangible action can we reclaim what is slipping away—the very essence of our shared humanity.

The imperative of our times: Reawakening our humanity—Embracing what matters most-People, planet, and our shared future.

Embracing what matters mos planet, and our shared future.

(The writer is columnist and author. He is former Deputy General Manager, India International Centre, Delhi. Views expressed are personal)



# WORLD 08

# **US lawmakers condemn J-K attack** British PM condemns

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA | New York

S lawmakers, prominent India-US bodies and members of the Indian-American community US bodies and members of the Indian-American community on Wednesday strongly condemned the horrific terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir, asserting that perpetrators should be brought to justice.

"I send my condolences to the people of India in the aftermath of the horrific attack in Kashmir and hope those responsible will be brought to justice. Soon. Terrorism is never folerated," US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Senator Jim Risch said in a post on X. Terrorism skilled 26 people, mostly tourists, in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam on Tuesday, in what is the dead-liest attack in the Valley since the Pulwama strike in 2019.

In a call with Modi, who was on a two-day State visit to Saudi Arabia, US President Donald Trump strongly condemned the terror attack and expressed full support to India to bring to justice the perpetrators of the "heinous attack."

Deputy Secretary at the Department of condemned the terror attack and expressed to the preparators of the "heinous attack."

perpetrators of the "heinous aftack."
Deputy Secretary at the Department of
State Christopher Landau said the US
strongly condemns" the terrorist attack
in Kashmir and "stands resolutely alongside India. Sending very heartfelt condolences to all Indians, and especially those
who have lost their loved ones in this
heinous attack on tourists and civilians."
Senator Bill Hagerty said the US stands
with India. "I condemn the shocking
attack today by Islamic terrorists who
murdered dozens of people in Pahalgam,
Jammu and Kashmir."

The "terrorist attack in Kashmir is a deeply disturbing. is a deeply disturbing reminder that hreat posed to civilized nations by ter-im remains acute," Senator Ted Cruz

He added that the US will stand with

He added that the US will stand with India and Prime Minister Modi "as they bring these terrorists to justice." Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi said he is heartbroken by the horrific attack on innocent tourists in Kashnamoorthi 'We must stand united against terrorism in all its forms and bring the perpetrators justice," he said. Representative Ro Khanna, Congressman Shri Thanedar.

w justice, he said.

Representative Ro Khannedar,
Congressman Shri McCormick,
Congressman Greg Murphy,
Congressman Greg Murphy,
Congressman Jimmy Patronis,
Representative Bill Huizenga and
Representative Marc Veasey also condemned the terrorist attack and offered condolences and prayers to the families of the victims.

Senator Rick Score Live

of the victims.

Senator Rick Scott said he and his wife
Ann are devastated to hear of the "evil terrorist attack" in Pahalgam, India. "The US

rorist attack' in Pahalgam, India. "The US stands with India as we pray for those who lost loved ones or were injured in this unimaginable attack." Vivek Ramaswamy, who was a 2024 presidential primary candidate and had briefly co-headed the Department of Government Efficiency along with billioniare Elon Musk, termed the attack "hor-rific" and extended condolences to the families of those who diad

rinc and extended condonences to the families of those who died. Khanderao Kand, Chief of Policy and Strategy at the Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies, strongly con-

While India will continue to remain resilient in the face of such adversity, this unfortunate incident is a sobering reminder, of just why the US-India defence and security

partnership remains vital to stand up to such adversaries

- US-INDIA STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FORUM

demned the terrorist attack, saying both the US and India have been burned by state-sponsored terror.

"The world must stand united to eradicate terrorism in all its forms, everywhere and states directly or indirectly sponsoring or promoting such acts of terrorism must not only be condemned but also sanctioned with stoppage of any aid to them, especially military. India has been subjected to an ongoing war of terror syonsored by Pakistan agencies, operators, terror groups and agencies, he said.

The US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) strongly condemned the dastardly attack, saying it was a reminder of the constant threat of terrorism that continues to lutr from both state and non-

continues to lurk from both state and non

continues to lurk from both state and non-state nefarious actors.

"While India will continue to remain resilient in the face of such adversity, this unfortunate incident is a sobering reminder, of just why the US-India defence and security partnership remains vital to stand up to such abominable adversaries and anticipate and prevent fur-ther attacks both on Indian soil or to its strategic partners and assets overseas," USISPF said, adding that it is a shame that the picturesque town of Pahalgam has

w been marred with the bloody horrors

now been marred with the bloody horrors of this heinous attack. Former advisor to President Joe Biden and Co-Chair for the Economic Subcommittee for Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (AANH-

Subcommittee for Asian American and Antive Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (AANH-PI) Commission Ajay Bhutoria too condemned the terrorist attack in Kashmir. "My prayers go out to the victims and their families. Left suntle against terroris". Hindus Advancing Human Rights Initiative (HAHRI), an arm of HindupACT, unequivocally condemned the attack, with its executive director Rahul Sur saying that the "world has been warned repeatedly about this Islamic fundamentalism. It must be crushed. It is time to sanction Pakistan."

The Kashmiri Overseas Association (KOA) condemned the terror attack in Pahalgam and said the 26 tourists were executed by Islamist terrorists by targetting solely for their Hindu faith. The Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) unequivocally condemned the terrorist action, with GOPIO International President Prakasion. The Gobbol International President Prakasion of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) unequivocal stand by each time the president prakasion of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) unequivocal stand by each time the president prakasion of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) unequivocal stand by each time the terrorist action, with GOPIO International President Prakasions and the president Prakasions and the president Prakasion and the properties of the properties of the properties of the properties and the properties of the propert

ngnt against terrorism in all its forms and wherever it occurs. "The Indian Diaspora will remain united with the Government of India's efforts to combat terrorism," he

# Kashmir terror attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA a London

Pritish Prime Minister Keir Starmer has condemned the terrorist attack in Kashmir, joined by Foreign Secretary David Lammy who described it as a "cowardy" act.
They took to social media to express their shock as the death toll rose to 26 in the Pahalgam attack on Tuesday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi cutting short his Saudi Araba visit to return to New Delhi on Wednesday.
"The horrific terrorist attack in Kashmir today is utterly devastating, My thoughts are with those affected, their loved ones, and the people of India," said Starmer in a post on his X handle.
Lammy also took to the platform a little earlier with his reaction: "I am appalled by the horrific and cowardly terrorist attack on Kashmir earlier today. My thoughts are with all of those affected, especially those who have lost loved ones.

The Commonwealth Secretary—earned Stiffeth worlow for the principle of the control of the commonwealth Secretary—earned Stiffeth worlow? Both worlow for the principle of the commonwealth Secretary—earned Stiffeth worlow? Both worlow for the principle of the commonwealth Secretary—earned Stiffeth worlow? Both worlow for the principle of the commonwealth Secretary—earned Stiffeth worlow? Both principle of the commonwealth Secretary—earned Stiffeth worlow?

The Commonwealth Secretary General, Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, issued a statement to say the organisation "stands in solidarity with the people of India at this

in sondarthy with the people's state itime."

"We are united in our determination today. The Commonwealth speaks with one voice that the terrorists will not succeed in their divisive mission to undermine our Commonwealth Charter values of peace, inclusiveness, tolerance, respect and understanding. "We reiterate our absolute condemna-tion of all acts of terrorism in whatever

form or wherever they occur or by whomsoever perpetrated, with the consequent tragic loss of life and human suffering; she said.

The official UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) travel advisory for the region, which advises against all travel to the region, remains unchanged.

"FCDO advises against all travel to the region of Jammu and Kashmir (including Pahalgam, Gulmarg, Sonamarg, the city of Srinagar, and the Jammu-Srinagar national highway)," it reads.

Meanwhile, diaspora groups in Britain have also been taking to social media to express their shock and horror at the gunning down of innocent tourists in the popular scenic resort.

"FISI UK strongly condemns the horrific terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, and demands immediate action oe nsure those responsible are brought to justice. Such a sinister agenda will never succeed—they must be held to account," said a statement from the Priends of India Society International (FISI) UK.

Terrorists struck at the prime tourist location in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 people, mostly tourist location in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 people, mostly tourist location in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 people, mostly tourist, and injuring several others. The deceased include two foreigners, from the UAE and Nepal, and two locals.

The bodies of the 26 victims were brought to the Government Medical College (GMC) in Srinagar early on Wednesday and then taken to the Police Control Room where Home Minister Annt Shah laid wreaths on them.

### US forest fire forces thousands to evacuate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Barnegat

Assumed to the state of the sta fast-moving wildfire still burning ir

update at a news conference late Wednesday morning. The Jersey Central Power and Light

≺wo security personnel guarding a

Two security personnel guarding a polio vaccination team were shot dead by unidentified gummen on Wednesday in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province, police said. The incident took place in the Teeri area of?!Mastung district, where Levise personnel protecting the polio vaccination team were attacked by masked gunmen, Assistant Commissioner Akram Harifal told the media.

told the media.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. However, militants frequently target polio vaccinators in

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA | Karachi

The site of the fire is near alpaca farm. The farm said in a Facebook nost that the property wasn't threatened and all of the animals were safe. The blaze is the second major forest fire in the region in less than a week

Company cut power to about 25,000 cus-tomers at the request of the Forest Fire Service and the wildfire's command post Tuesday evening, including thousands in Barnegat Township. The company said on X that it doesn't expect to restore the power before Wednesday. "This is for the safety of crews battling the fire," the company said. The fire in the Greenwood Forest Wildlife Management Area burned more than 34 sq km of land, fire officials said. The blaze, burning in Ocean and Lacey Company cut power to about 25,000 cus

Pakistan, terming them un-Islamic and against Sharia.
"One of them died on the spot while the

"One of them died on the spot while the ther expired as he was moved to a hospital," Harifal said.

He said that security for the polio vaccination teams has been increased after the attack. This is not the first time that security personnel providing security to polio vaccination teams have been killed in Pakistan. In the past, even female health workers have been attacked and killed.

Prime Minister Shebbaz Sharif condemned the attack on the polio vaccination.

demned the attack on the polio vaccina-tion team, the state-run Radio Pakistan reported.

Gunmen kill two personnel guarding

polio vaccination team in Pakistan

Townships in Ocean County, was only about 10% contained Tuesday night, the fire service said. The cause of the fire was

under investigation.

There were no immediate reports of

There were no minimum.

injuries.

Debi Schaffer was caught in gridlocked traffic after evacuating with her two dogs while her husband agreed to stay with their 22 chickens, The Press of Atlantic City

reported.
"I wanted to take them in the car with

"It wanted to take them in the car with me; can you imagine 22 chickens in a car?" she told the newspaper.

Around her Waretown house it was "like a war zone," she said, describing smoke, stens and the buzz of helicopera. The site of the fire is near an alpaca farm. The farm said in a Facebook post that the property wasn't threatnend and all of the animals were safe.

The blaze is the second major forest fire in the region in less than a week.

Terrorists who harm the lives and prop

erties of innocent people are enemies o humanity and will be brought to justice,

e said. Such incidents cannot deter the govern

such incuents cannot deter the govern-ment's commitment to eradicating polio from the country, he said, adding that the anti-polio campaign will continue with determination. Balochistan government spokesperson Shahid Rind condemned the attack, say-ing 'a thorough investigation into the inci-dent was underway'.

"The provincial government will not allow the polio campaign to be sabotaged under any circumstances," he added.

# Harvey Weinstein's rape retrial set for opening statements

PRESS TRUST OF HOIA II leve york

Ive years after Harvey Weinstein's original \*MeToo trial delivered a searing reckoning for one of Hollywood's most powerful figures, the ex-studio boss is on trial again after an appeals court threw out the landmark rape conviction. Opening statements are for Wednesday in a trial that could take six weeks. It's happening at the same tender to the state of the tender of th

tional allegation from a woman who wasni involved in the first case.

The jury counts seven women and five
men — unlike the seven-man, fivewoman panel that convicted him in
2020 — and there's a different judge.

The #McFloo movement, which exploddin 2017 with allegations against
Weinstein, has also evolved and ebbed.
At the start of Weinstein's first trial,
chants of "rapist" could be heard from
protesters outside. TV trucks lined the
street, and reporters queued for hours to
get a seat in the packed courtroom. His
lawyers decried the "carnival-like atmosphere" and fought unsuccessfully to get
the trial mowed from Manhattan.
This time though, over five days of jury
selection, there was none of that.
Those realities, coupled with the New
York Court of Appeals' ruling last year
prison sentence — because the judge
allowed treatingney about allowed.

vacating ins 2020 conviction and 25-year prison sentence — because the judge allowed testimony about allegations Weinstein was not charged with — are shaping everything from retrial legal



strategy to the atmosphere in court.
Weinstein, 73, is being retried on a
criminal sex act charge for allegedly
forcibly performing oral sex on a movie
and TV production assistant, Miriam
Haley, in 2006 and a third-degree rape
charge for allegedly assaulting an aspiring actor, Jessica Mann, in a Manhattan hotel room in 2013. Weinstein also faces a criminal sex act

Weinstein also faces a criminal sex act charge for allegelly forcing or al sex on a different woman at a Manhattan hotel in 2006. Prosecutors said that the woman, who hasn't been named publicly, came forward days before his first trial but wasn't part of that case. They said they revisited her allegations when his conviction was thrown out. The Associated Press does not generally identify people alleging sexual assault unless they consent to be named as 'false and Mann have done.

be named, as Haley and Mann have done. Weinstein has pleaded not guilty and denies raping or sexually assaulting any-

one. His acquittals on the two most serious charges at his 2020 trial — predatory sexual assual and first-degree rape — still stand. Lindsay Goldbrum, a lawyer for the unnamed accuser, said Weinstein's retrial marks a "pivotal moment in the fight for accountability in sex abuse cases" and a "signal to other survivors that he system is catching up — and that it's worth speaking out even when the odds seem insurmountable".

This time around, the Manhattan district attorney's office is prosecuting Weinstein through its Special Victims Division, which specialises in such cases, after homicide veterans helmed the 2020 version. At the same time, Weinstein has added several lawyers to his defence team — including lennifer Bonjean, who is involved in appealing his 2022 rape conviction in Los Angeles. She helped Bill Cosby get his conviction overturned and defended R Kelly in his sex crimes case.

#### International students are piling up wins in US courts

njan Roy, from Bangladesh, was studying with friends at Missouri State University when he got an email that turned his world upside down. His legal status as an international student had been terminated, and he was sudden-ly at risk for deportation. "I was in literal shock, like, what the hell is this?" said Roy, a graduate student in computer science

shock, like, what the hell is this?" said Roy, a graduate student in computer science. At first, he avoided going out in public, skipping classes and mostly keeping his phone turned off. A court ruling in his reason turned off. A court ruling in his reason that the status being restored this week, and he has returned to his apartment, but is still asking his roommates to screen visitors. More than a thousand international students have faced similar disruptions in recent weeks, with their acadenic careers—and their lives in the US—thrown into doubt in a widespread carcakdown by the Trump administration. Some have found a measure of success in court, with federal judges around the country issuing orders to restore students legal status at least temporarily. In addition to the case filed in Atlanta, where Roy is among 133 plantiffs, judges have issued temporary restraining orders in states including New Hampshire, Wisconsin, Montana, Oregon and Washington. Judges have denied similar requests in some other cases, saying it was not clear the loss of status would cause irreparable harm.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said last nonth the State Department was revol-

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said last month the State Department was revolking visas held by visitors who were acting counter to national interests, including some who protested Israel's war in Gaza and those who face criminal charges.

But many affected students said they have been involved only in minor infractions, or it's unclear altogether why they were targeted. The attorney for Roy and his fellow plaintiffs, Charles Kuck, agued the government did not have legal grounds to terminate the student's status. He speculated in court last week the government is trying to encourage these students on the student's status. He speculated in court last week the government is trying to encourage these students of the student's status of the student's status of the student's status of the student's status of the student's the student's the student's status of the s

another country. At least 1,100 students at 174 colleges

At least 1,100 students at 174 colleges, universities and university systems have had their visas revoked or their legal sta-tus terminated since late March, accord-ing to an Associated Press review of uni-versity statements, correspondence with school officials and court records.

# London talks on ending Ukraine war pared down

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA . Kviv

A planned meeting Wednesday between top US, British, French and Ukrainian diplomats to push for a peace deal between Russia and Ukraine was scrapped at the last minute amid little sign of progress in international efforts to end the more than three-year

war.

UK Foreign Secretary David Lammy announced the talks in London would involve only lower-ranking officials after the US State Department said Tuesday that Secretary of State Marco Rubio was unable to attend because of a scheduling

unable to attend because of a scheduling issue.

Rubio's abrupt cancelation raised doubts about the direction of the negotiations, It came as Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zebensy ruled out ceding territory to Russia as part of any potential pacea egreement, calling it a nonstarter. The Ukrainian leader spoke Tuesday in response to reports the Trump administration was proposing a deal that would allow Russia to keep occupied Ukrainian territory as part of a potential peace agreement. Even achieving a limited, 30-day ceasefire has been beyond the reach of negotiators, as both sides have continued to attack each other in a grinding war of attrition along the 1,000-km front line and launch long-range strikes.

attrition along the 1,000-km front line and launch long-range strikes.

A Russian drone struck a bus carrying workers in Marganets, in eastern Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region on Wednesday morning, killing seven women and two men, regional head Serhii Lysak wrote on

During similar talks last week in Paris, US officials presented a proposal that included allowing Russia to keep control of occupied Ukrainian territory as part of a deal, according to a European official privy to talks

his Telegram channel. More than 40 people were injured, he said. Lysak published photos of a bus with

Lysak published photos of a bus with its windows blown out and shards of glass mixed with blood spattered on the bus floor. President Donald Trump has pushed for an end to the war and said last week that negotiations were "coming to a head". That negotiations were "coming to a head". That the US might soon back away from negotiations if they don't progress. Rabito had indicated that Wednesday's meeting could be decisive in determining meeting could be decisive in determining.

meeting could be decisive in determining whether the Trump administration

whether the Trump administration remains engaged. Those still attending the meeting includ-ed retired Lf Gen Keith Kellogg, Trump's envoy for Ukraine and Russia. Andrii Yermak, the head of Ukraine's presidential office, said on X that a dele-gation including him, Foreign Minister Andrii Sybila and Defence Minister Rustem Umerov had arrived in London for the talks despite the alterations

Vladimir Putin.

Some European allies are wary of the American proposal for Ukraine to exchange land for peace. But an official said there's also acknowledgment by "The path to peace is not easy, but Ukraine has been and remains commit-ted to peaceful efforts," Yermak said.

Officials would "discuss ways to achieve a full and unconditional ceasefire as the first step toward a comprehensive settle-ment and the achievement of a just and

ment and the achievement of a just and lasting peace."

US special envoy Steve Witkoff was expected to visit Moscow again later this week, according to Russian officials.
The abrupt change of plans in London came amid growing speculation that the US will press Ustraine to cede territory to Russia as part of a potential peace agree-ment - a possibility that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Tuesday asain ruled out.

ment - a possibility that Ukrainian President Volodymy Zelensky on fluesday again ruled out. During similar talks last week in Paris, US officials presented a proposal that included allowing Russia to keep control of occupied Ukrainian territory as part of a deal, according to a European official familiar with the matter. Zelenskyp upshed back against that during an appearance in Kyiv, saying: "There is nothing to talk about: it is out land, the land of the Ukrainian people." Russia, meamwhile, has effectively rejected a US proposal for an immediate and full 30-day halt in the fighting by imposing farreaching conditions. Trump said repeatedly during his election campaign last year that he would have been dealed to end the war 'in 24 hours' upon taking office. But he has expressed rustrain upon taking office. But he has expressed rustrain upon taking office. But he has expressed rustrain upon taking office. But he has expressed rustrains upon taking office. But he has expressed rustrains upon taking the more family and further than the contraint of the contraint of the proposal for all Ukraine to the hourstrain approacal for. Ukraine to

some allies that Russia is firmly entrenched

some allies that Russia is firmly entrenched wholly or partially in five regions of Ukraine - Crimea, Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson.

If the goal is to obtain a ceasefire immediately, "it should be based on the line of contact as it is," said a senior French official. The official was not authorised to be publicly named and spoke on the condition of anonymity according to French presidential policy.

Still, Ukraine's territorial integrity and aspirations to strengthen ties with the rest

presidential policy.

Still, Ukrainės territorial integrity and aspirations to strengthen ties with the rest of the continents are a top priority for the Europeans, the European official said.

Britain had downplayed expectations of a breakthrough in London, but says this is an important week for diplomatic efforts to stop the fighting.

Western analysts say Moscow is in no rush to conclude peace talks, because it has battlefield momentum and wants to capture more Ukrainian land.

Zelenskys yaid Tuesday that Ukraine's delegation heading to the UK had a mandate to discuss only an unconditional or partial ceasefire, where prepared to sit down for talks in any format.

Authority of the control of the cont

Associated Press was unable to verify whether a ceasefire was in place along the roughly 1,000-km front line.

# WORLD 09

# 6.2 earthquake hits Istanbul

n earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 6.2 shook Istanbul and other areas on Wednesday, Turkiye's magnitude of 6.2 shook Istanbul and other areas on Wednesday, Turkiye's magnitude of 6.2 shook Istanbul and other areas on Wednesday, Turkiye's magnitude of 1.2 shook of 1.2

which is on tenterhooks due to the looming threat of a major earthquake. Panicked residents rushed from their homes and buildings into the streets. The disaster and emergency management agency urged people to stay away from buildings. Lepla Ucara, a personal trainer, said she was exercising with her student on the 20th floor of a building when they felt intense shaking. "We shook incredibly. It threw us around, we couldn't understand what was happening, we didn't think of an earthquake at first because of the shock of the event," she said. "It was very scarry." Sento Bara, is 51-year-old resident who fled to a park nearby his house, told The Associated Press he was with his children in the living room of his flat on the third floor of an apartment building when he heard aloud noise and the building started shaking. "We immediately protected ourselves from the earthquake and waited for it to pass, then calmly walked away from the house." Sari said. Of course, we were scared during the

calmly walked away from the house," Sar said. "Of course, we were scared during the earthquake. We were worried that it would continue. Since the (great) Istanbul earth-

quake is (still) an expected earthquake, our

#### 'My children were little scared'

My children were little scared¹
Cihan Boztepe, 40, was one of those who hurriedly fled to the streets with his family in order to avoid a potential collapse. Boztepe, standing next to his sobbing child, told AP that he was living in Batman province, an area close to the southern part of Turkiye where the 2023 quakes hit, and that Wednesday's tremor felt weaker and that he wasn't as cared.
"At first we were shaken, then it stopped, then we were shaken again. My children were alittle scared, but I wasn't. We quickly gathered our chings and went down to a safe place. If it were up to me, we would have sheady returned home." Turkiye's interior minister. Ali Yerlikaya, said the authorities had not cold Haber Turk television that there had been reports of damage to buildings. He told Haber Turk television that there had been reports of damage to buildings. The told that is the single transport of the single tra

derelict and abandoned former residential building in this historic Fathli district, which houses the Blue Mosque and the Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque, had collapsed. Kemal Cebi, the mayor of Kucukcekmece district in western Istanbul, told NTV there were "no negative developments yet," but reported traffic jams, and said many buildings were already at risk due to the area's density.

#### Urban reconstruction projects

Turkiye is crossed by two major fault lines Turkiye is crossed by two major fault lines, and earthquakes are frequent. A magnitude 7.8 earthquake on Feb 6, 2023, and a second powerful tremor hours later, destroyed or damaged hundreds of thousands of buildings in 11 southern and southeastern provinces, leaving more than 53,000 people dead. Another 6,000 people were killed in the northern parts of neighbouring Syria.

Istanbul was not impacted by that earthquake, but the devastation heightened fears of a similar onuse, with eveners citing the city's

of a similar quake, with experts citing the city's proximity to fault lines.

PUBLIC NOTICE

LOST & FOUND

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A n overnight Israeli strike on a school-turned-shelter in Gaza City killed 23 people, as Arab mediators worked on a proposal to end the war with Hamas that would include mediators worked on a proposal to end the war with Hamas that would include a five to seven year truce and the release of all remaining hostages, officials said on Wednesday. There was no immediate Israeli comment on the strike, which set several tents ablaze, burning people alive. The military says it only targets militants and blames civilian deaths on Hamas because its fighters are embedded in densely populated areas. France, Germany and Britain meanwhile said Israel's seven-week-old blockade on all imports to Gaza, including food, was "intolerable," in unusually strong criticism from three of the country's closest allies. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas called on Hamas to release the hostages in order to 'Bock Israel' spretexts' for continuing return than hostages in order to 'Bock Israel' spretexts' for continuing the war. He refull heart sample from the continuing as peech in the West Bank. Abbas, who heads the Western-backed Palestinian Authority, has no influence over Hamas but is seeking a role in postwar Gaza.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Deir al-Balah

#### A vearlong truce and a

PUBLIC NOTICE tam Avtar, Son of Late Shri Ram

Egypt and Qatar are still developing the proposal, which would include the gradual withdrawal of Israeli forces

from the entire strip and the release of Palestinian prisoners, according to an Egyptian official and a Hamas official who spoke on condition of anonymi-ty because they were not authorised to brief media.

Israeli strike on school-turned-shelter kills 23

ief media. rael ended a ceasefire with Hamas last brief media. Israel ended a ceasefire with Hamas last month and has vowed to continue the war until all the hostages are returned and Hamas is either destroyed or disarmed and sent into exile. It says it will hold parts of Gaza indefinitely and implement President Donald Trump's proposal for the resettlement of the population in other countries, which has been widely rejected internationally. Hamas has said it will only release the dozens of hostages it still holds in return for Palestinian prisoners, a complete Israeli withdrawal and a lasting casesfire, as called for in the now-defunct agreement reached in January. A Hamas delegation arrived in Cairo late Tuesday to discuss the evolving proposal.

The Egyptian official said the proposed true, with international guarates, would has the breven five and seven years, and that a committee of politically independent technocrats would govern Gaza—a measure Hamas has

cally independent technocrats would govern Gaza — a measure Hamas has accepted. The Hamas official said the militant group is open to a long-term truce that includes the complete with-rawal of Israeli forces and international guarantees, naming Russia, China, Turkey or the United Nations Security Council as possible guarantors.

#### Hamas must be destroyed or removed; Israel-US

There was no immediate commen

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences

Sadiq Road, Faridkot -151203 Ph. 01639-256232, 256236

E-TENDER NOTICE

RUBLIC NOTICE

Known to all that my client Smt. Kavita owner
of the PLOT NO. 79, AREA 50 SQ. YDS.
KHASRA NO. 12/12 R 12/13, RAZA PUR
KHURD, SAINK ENCLAVE PART-III, MOHAN
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from Israei onicias, bit. and out any arrangement that would allow Hamas to preserve its influence in Gaza and rearm. The Trump administration, which has also been involved in the ceasefire talks, has said it fully supports

Israel's position.
Israel and the US have pressed Hamas Israel and the US have pressed Hamas to accept a temporary truce in which it would immediately release several hostages in return for vague promises of talks on a more permanent ceasefire. Hamas has rejected those proposals asys it won't disarm as long as Israel occupies Palestinian territory. The Hamas official said the group does not trust either Netanyahu or the US after they shattered the existing casefire they shattered the existing ceasefire agreement, which had facilitated the

agreement, which had facilitated the release of over 30 hostages. The Egyptian official said mediators had the impression that President Donald Trump wants a deal before he visits the region next month. Trump will travel to Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates from May 13 to May 16. to May 16

#### France, Germany condemn Israeli food blockade

Israel I food blockade
Israel ended the ceasefire last month by launching a surprise bombardment across the territory that killed hundreds of Palestinians. Ground forces have expanded a buffer zone along the border, encircled the southern city of Rafah and now controls around 50 per cent of the territory.

Israel says the military operations and the tightened blockade are tactics to pressure Hamas to release hostages.

Registrar

#### **Afghan Taliban Government** condemns J and K attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA | Islamabad

A fighanistan's Taliban government on Wednesday condemned the terror attack on tourists in Jammu and Kashmir, saying such incidents undermine efforts to ensure regional security and stability. In a statement, the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Abdul Qahar Balkhi also rupessed condelences to the bereaved

Spokesman Abdul Qahar Balkhi also expressed condolences to the bereaved families. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan categorically condemns the recent attack on tourists in the Pahalgam region of Jammu and Kashmir, and expresses condolences to the bereaved families," he said. Balkhi said "such incidents undermine efforts to ensure regional security and stability."

Terrorists killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in Jammu and Kashmir's

Terrorists killed 26 people, mostly tourists, in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam on Tuesday, in the deadliest attack in the Valley since the Pulwama strike in 2019.

The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow outfit of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba terror group, claimed responsibility for the attack. According to sketches released by the security agencies, three men — identified as to security agen-cies, three men — identified as Pakistanis — are believed to be involved in the attack.

#### **Jordan bans** Muslim **Brotherhood**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

ordan announced Wednesday a sweeping ban on the Muslim Brotherhood that could include shutting down the country's largest opposition party, after accusing the group of planning attacks.

The Islamic Action Front, a political party linked to the regionwide Brotherhood, won the most seats in parliamen-tary elections held last year against the backdrop of mass protests against Israel over its war with Hamas. Jordan banned the Muslim

Jordan banned the Muslim Brotherhood a decade ago but officially licensed a splinter group and continued to toler-ate the Islamic Action Front while restricting some its activwine restricting some its activities. It was not immediately clear how far the latest ban would go. Police surrounded the party's headquarters after Wednesday's announcement and were searching it.

The Interior Ministry said the Muslim Brotherhood is

now considered an illegal organisation and announced organisation and amounted as ban on any political activi-ties related to the group and the closure of its offices. It said efforts to confiscate the group's assets would be accel-erated. "It has been proven that members of the group pagestate in the dark and

erated. "It has been proven that members of the group operate in the dark and engage in activities that could destabilize the country," the ministry said. "Members of the dissolved Muslim Brotherhood have tampered with security and national unity, and dissurpted security and public order."

It said a son of one of the group's leaders had joined others in trying to manufacture and test explosives to be used against security forces, without providing names or further details. Last week, Jordan said it had arrested 16 people accused of manufacturing short-range missiles, possessing explosives and automatic weapons, concealing a ready-to-use missile, and illegally recruiting and training people. The government said the accused belong to what it called "unificensed groups," referring to the Muslim Brotherhood. The Brotherhood denied the allegations and said it was committed to Jordan's security. Jordan is a dos Western ally that has long been seen as a bastion of stability in the

Jordan is a close Western ally that has long been seen as a bastion of stability in the volatile Middle East. It borders Israel, the occupied West Bank, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia, and is hosting refugees from multiple conflicts.



CHANGE OF NAME I, Mrs. Usha Balachandra Menor

W/o Late Lt Cdr Satish Tipnis R/o 104, The Great Eastern Retreat, Kirloskar Marg, Model Colony, Pune, Maharashtra-411016 Have Changed my name from Usha Menon (Tipnis) To Usha Balachandra Menon for all Future purposes.

PD(1916)C

I. Smt Nomita. Mother of-I, Smt Nomita, Mother of-No.6497699K HAV/ASH Partha Ghosh, R/o-Vill/PO- Natagram, Teh- Bongaon, Dist- North 24 Parganas, W.B.- 743249, have changed my name from Smt Nomita to Namita Ghosh, vide affidavit dated 23/04/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1917)C I, JC-858076M Nb/Sub(DS) Ashok Khot, R/o- Vill-Kurniwadi, PO- Kurni, Teh-Hukkeri, Dist- Belagavi, Karnataka- 591221, have iid property.
SAHIL ARORA (ADVOCATE)
ffice No.107, First Floor, M.S. Chambers,
Aruna Park, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-110092
Mob.: +91-9811912277 Hukkeri, Dist- Belagavi, Karnataka- 591221, have changed my daughters name from Vaishnavi to Vaishnavi **PUBLIC NOTICE** Khot, vide affidavit dated 23/04/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1918)C

I. IC-736185K Nb/Sub litendra I, JC-736185K Nb/Sub Jitendra Kumar, R/o-Vill/PO- Chathera, Teh- Siyana, Dist- Bulandshahr, U.P- 203405, have changed my daughter's name from Kumari Disha to Disha, vide affidavit dated 32 04.3025 before Nature dated 23.04.2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1919)C I, No.6498176X HAV/ASH Jogender Singh, R/o- Vill & Post- Baseri Chahar, Teh-Kiraoli, Dist- Agra, U.P. 283122, declare that Anita Devi is my Wife, in my service documents her D.O.B. Is wrongly written as 29/10/1986, whereas his correct D.O.B. is 29/10/1988,

I, Laxmi Devi, W/o Shri Rampal, R/o House Number -69, Bharola Village, Adarsh Nagar, Delhi-110033, that, i, have changed my Name Lachhami Devi to Laxmi Devi.

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE
Invitation of Tenders through E- Procurement system
Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and or the President of India, invites E-Tenders brough e-procurement system for

S.N	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
1	09243322A	Side Buffer Casing	1015 NOS	13.05.2025
2	06255004A	Square Hollow Section 400x400x20mm	373 MT	19.05.2025
3	19252213	IOH Maintenance Kit	21 NOS	26.05.2025
4	07243462	Pad For Secondary Suspension For LHB Coaches	1594 NOS	28.05.2025

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 1209/25

I, Ram Avtar, Son of Lale Shri Ramesh Chandar, was the owner of a property situated a! Trilokiya Apartment, Address 29, Trilokiya Adarsh Apartment, I.P. Extension, New Delhi 110992. I have sold the said property of Mrs. Shweta Jain. The property was free from all encumbrances and bank or financia al Share Certificate

OF COACHES
Tender Notice No.: GEM/2025/
B/6154972: Dated: 21-04-2025.
E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work.
Name of work: Mechanized Cleaning of Coaches of through passing trains at Kathair Platform during natt under Clean Train Station (CTS) scheme for a period of the Coaches of through passing trains at Kathair Platform during natt under Clean Train Station (CTS) scheme for a period of the Coaches of through passing trains at Coaches of the Coaches of th

NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY

Detailed
Det SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

mand Notice Dated: 14.08.2024, Date of Possession: 21.04.2025 rount of Demand Notice: Rs.69,06,799.06/-as on 13.08.2024

also of Property; "J. Plince And Parcel Of Della-U-lp Property No. 14-6-1, Measuring Area 165 Sg sorteness SIM, 1-50ft, 1.E. 133-79 Mines, Princh/Govered Ayes 111.83 Sq. Mircs. Consisting Of your Cum Dinning Round, Three Bed Rooms, Cree Enthern, Two Collect-Sim Oo Scroom Flows, In Care Land Will Descript, Tay Water, Will Septian Meres, Alongowith Rights, To the Con-tractive Property Collection of the Collection of the Collection of the Collection of the William Collection of the Collection of

Date: 21 04 2025 Place: Delhi Authorised Officer, CLIX HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED

NORTHERN RAILWAY

TENDER NOTICE

ef Electrical Engineer (Const), Northern Railway, Shivaji Brid on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tend

Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract of 1 no. 500kVA of work both and and location of more than 1 no. 500kVA Desdet (in CEE/CITK) office 8 in shalled in the office complex of CAO/CIK Cate, 2 no. and location office) and 1 no. 30kVA D.G sets installed in office of DiceE/CIKSD Rolfsfor Three years.

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, BHOPAL Water Work Department oration Rest House, Shyamla Hills, Bhopal Ph. No. 0755-2701669

Municipal Corpo

NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER
or the following works. The bidder can obtained detailed information an Online tenders are being invited for the following works. The bidder can obtained detailed intuttriauder documents on website <a href="http://mptenders.gov.in">http://mptenders.gov.in</a>.

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VACANCIES

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NORTHERN RAILWAY Invitation of Tender through

# E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems) N.I.T. No. 294741 Name of Work and its location

Cost of Tender document on ca ed: 23.04.2025 Serving Customers With A Smile

PUBLIC NOTICE

Upto 15:00 hrs on 14.05.2

suring 3.34 acres at Sector 83, falling in the Residential Plottec ny, Sector 81 to 85, Gurugram, in accordance with the provision of ise No. 113 of 2008 dated 01.06.2008 granted by Director, Town 8 ountry Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh.

And whereas, several individuals have made bookings / entered into purchase agreement for allotment of property in the said commercial site (hereinafter referred as allottees).

site thereinafter referred as allottees).
And whereas, the earlier approved building plans vide Memo no. ZP-664
A/AD(RA)/2016/6554 dated 1602/2018 are now proposed to be revised,
for which DTCP, Haryana has granted in-pinciple approval for the
revision in building plans vide Memo no ZP-664-I/QK)/2024/APT/
dated 2304/2025.
Accordingly, vide this Public Notice, objections/suggestion, if any
are hereby invited from any of the allottees on the revised building
plans. The earlier approved building plans & revised building plans
(approved in principle) are available for perusal on our website
www.vatlikoollections.com and a our site office and in the office of
Senior Town Planner, Sector-14, Gurugram, Haryana.
In case of any objection on the revised building plans, the allottee may

case of any objection on the revised building plans, the allottee ma le his/her objections/suggestion in the office of Senior To ector 14. Gurugram, Haryana and in the office of the undereigned at Unit 0.4-0.02, Ground Floor, Block A, INXT City Centre, Sector 83, Gurugram, aryana within 30 days of the publication of this notice, falling which it hall be assumed that there are no objections to the proposed revision in he building plans.

#### छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल <sub>पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19,</sub> नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.) // सर्व संबंधित को सूचना //

गास्त सरकार, प्रयोक्तण, वन एवं त्वाचा प्रियति को सूपना [// मास्त सरकार, प्रयोक्तण, वन एवं जवलायू प्रियति मंत्राकल द्वाच जारी ई. आई.ए. नोटिफिकेशन, 2006 (यथा - संशोधित) के तहत् सर्व संबंधित को सूपित किया जाता है कि मेसले चुनति सिंह, ग्राम- राटाकाट, तहतील- आरंग, जिला - रायपुर (छ-ग्र.) दिख्त तक्सरा क्रमांक 887 (या.ट), कुल क्षेत्रफर न 10 केट्यट में प्रस्तावित के रायदारणीय स्वीकृति बाबल, लोक सुनवाई दिनाक- 2405.2025 को ग्रास्त 11-00 को से स्थान ग्राम- राटाकाट, तहसील- आरंग, जिला- स्वयपुर (छ.न.), दिख्य सामस्कीय रिक्त भूमि खसरा नंबर 757 में नियत की गई है। यह मी सूपित हो कि लोक सुनवाई के दौरान भारत सरकार, ध्योवरण वन एव जलाव्या पृथिवती मंत्राव्या, नई दिल्ली के ऑफिस मेगोरपड़ा F No.22-25/020-14.॥ दिनाक 14.09,2020 तथा कोनोना वाईस्स के निवस्त्रण एवं ठिकाम है। शास्त्र ना अंति 14.09.2020 तथा कोरोना वाईरस के नियंत्रण एवं रोकथाम हेत शासन द्वारा जार्र

14.00.2020 तथा कोरोना चाईस्स के नियंका एवं रोकथान हेतु शानत बाजा जारी समस्त दिशा-निर्वेश का अवश्रण पालन करण्या जाना अनियादी होगा ।

ई.आईए. नोटिफिक्षण, - 14 सितन्बर, 2006 (तथा. संकोधित) के अनुमार संविधित व्यक्तियों के अवलोकन पठन हेतु झारण ई.आईए. रिसोर्ट, कार्यपालक सार हिन्दी एवं अर्वारों भागा तथा सी.डी. (सामप्ट कॉगी) आरमेश्वर रास्त सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु पिक्तिन मंत्रात्य, और बाग रोड, नई हिन्दी, (कीशून केंग्री कार्यपालक सार हिन्दी एवं अर्वार प्रावद स्थावर अरम्प्र अरहा ना पर्यावर अरम्प्र अरहा ना स्वावर करा कार्यावर करोन्दर स्थावर स्थावर अरहार प्रावद स्थावर प्रावद स्थावर प्रावद स्थावर प्रावद स्थावर प्रावद स्थावर आरम्पर, स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर अर्थार स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर आरम्पर, स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर आरमेश, जिला स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर आरमेश, किला स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर अर्थार होता स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर अर्थार होता स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर आरमेश स्थावर स्यावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थावर स्थार स्थावर राबपुर, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, कार्यालय, कार्यालय रादायाल, राक्षाला - आरों, ग्रांकिस बिलिंडा, रायपुर, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, इन्तीयमाव पर्यावरण संस्थाण मंडल, न्यू जॉफिस बिलिंडा, रिंग रोड़ नं. - 2, टाटीबंच, रायपुर, जिला - रायपुर (इ.ग.) एवं मुख्यालय, इन्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संस्थाण मंडल, पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, ायपुर में रखी गई है।

सदस्य सचिव छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर (छ.ग.

# Will not to raise stake in Vodafone Idea: Scindia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA III New Delhi

Increase its shareholding in Vodafone Idea (VIII.) as it does not want the telecom operator to turn into a public sector undertaking (PSU). Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has said.

Sending out a strong message to Vodafone Idea, Scindia said in an interview that it is now the telosy bot to ensure it performs. After the recent conversion of Rs. 36,950 crore of outstanding, spectrum auction dues into equity, the government now loads 48.99 per cent shares in Vodafone Idea Lid. Prior to this, the government's stake was about 2.26 per cent.

It is pertinent to mention that any additional stake could potentially turn the company into a PSU - bringing it under the administrative control of the government which would then get to appoint the board. Also the company would come under the

purview of CAG and other oversight bodies, under such circumstances. "It is now their (VILS) job to ensure that they perform. Government today has 49 per cent of the company. There is no intension for the government to make that into a PSU. So we will stick to 49 per cent, Scindia said. On his assessment of impact of dues conversion on VILS health and future competitiveness, specially given wide skepticism that the telco may still struggle to meet future payment obligations, the minister said: "That question should be directed at VIL... It is now their job to ensure that they perform."

Analysts laim that government of under though dues-to-equity conversion may ease near-bliquidity constraints, but that structural challenges remain for the operator survival. On the issue of MTNLs on bank loans, the minister noted has assubstantial land bank and inch that same will be moneitised for clues-to-equity conversion may ease near-bliquidity constraints, but that structural challenges remain for the operator survival. On the issue of MTNLs on bank loans, the minister noted has a substantial land bank and inch that same will be moneitised for clues of banks and debt.

"MTNL now has a large amount of a sea the terms of its land bank." We are the survival. The survival of the same will be moneitised for clues of banks and debt.

"MTNL now has a large amount of a sea the terms of its land bank." We are the survival and the survival of the surv

ment relief to Vodatone Idea into through dues-to-equity conversion may ease near-term liquidity constraints for the the telco, but that structural challenges remain for the operator with factors like stabili-sation of subscriber base, tariff hikes, long-pending debt raise, and further relief on dues being vital for the telco's long-term

conversion may ease near-term

survival. On the issue of MTNI's default on bank loans, the minister noted that it has substantial land bank and informed that same will be monetised for clearing dues of banks and debt.

"MTNL now has a large amount of asset base in terms of its land bank. We are today base in terms of its land bank. We are today progressing on that. And through NLMC - National Land Monetisation Committee - that land will be divested and through the proceeds of that land, all dues to banks and debt will be taken care of," Scindia assured. He did not specify timelines that may be involved for such monetisation, and said he is persuing the matter. "NLMC is under DIPAM and the Finance Ministry. I am pursuing with them. As soon as that's done that will be taken care of," the minister said.

them. As soon as that some that win be taken care off; the minister said at staterrun telecom firm MTNL has defaulted on bank loans worth ₹8,346.24 crore from seven public sector banks, according to a statutory filing by the company over the weekend. The loss-making public sector telecom firms total debt obligations reached ₹33,568 crore as on March 31, 2025, according to the filing dated April 19. The total loan default includes ₹3,634.22 crore of debt raised from Union Bank of India, ₹2,7444 crore of Indian Overseas Bank, ₹1,077.34 crore of Bank of India, ₹464.26 crore Punjah National Bank, ₹3500.5 crore from State Bank of India, ₹265.30 crore from UCO Bank and ₹180.3 crore along with principal and interest payment.

The defaults in loan payment occurred

between August 2024 to February 2025. The total debt on the company comprises ₹8,346 crore bank loan, Rs 24,071 crore sovereign guarantee (SG) bond, and loan of ₹1,151 crore from Department of igh guarantee (SG) bond, and loan 151 crore from Department of m (DoT) for paying SG bond inter-he minister said Bharat Sanchar

of \$1,151 crore from Department or Telecom (DED') for paying \$5 bond interest. The minister said Bharat Sanchar Nigam Lid (BSNL) has scripted an "amazing turnaround" and lauded it for delivering a "stellar performance." It's been an arduous task and it has been an amazing turnaround. I must, on this occasion, also thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his belief in BSNL and providing those relief packages for BSNL without which we would have not seen this day, \$5 cindia said. BSNL during in the October to December quatter of FY25 has delivered net profit (\$262 crore) for the first time in 18 years. After 27 quarters, we posted net profit. Li is my firm belief that as we roll out 4G on an 'Atmanisthar' solution. Only the fifth in the world to do so (there are only four other countries that have pro-

duced 4G technology)...India has produced 4G technology. We are rolling out 100,000 towers. As of date, 90,000 towers have been installed; he said. About 74,000 towers have been commissioned. "It is my fervent hope that by July or so, we will roll out the balance towers. We then have to stabilise the nature of the product of the produ

that by july or so, we will roil out the balance towers. We then have to stabilise the network. Then as a next step, ensure quality of service. The number of call drops, the amount of latency, the humber of interproprises. And once that is stabilised, then I intend to move the 4G network, convert that into a 5G network, The said additional equipment, include BTS, to graduate BSNL from 4G on to 5G.

"The next step would be then to also strengthen this network. So that's the path forward But I think it is important to keep BSNL customer-centric. We are also putting in place a number of software so that we can connect with the consumer, as customer service is paramount to us," the Minister stated.

#### Jitendra Srivastava appointed CMD of REC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE Gurgaon

ritendra Srivastava, IAS, has assumed charge as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of REC Limited on April 22, 2025.

April 22, 2025.
On 18th April 2025, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) appointment Strivastrava, who is an IAS from Bihar Cadre (2000 Batch), as the CMD of REC.
This appointment has been made in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary to the Government of India, under the Ministry of Power.

Strivastrav

of Power.

Srivastava is a seasoned civil servant with over two decades of distinguished service. Over the year3rs, he has held several key administrative and leadership roles across the Government of India and the Government of Bihar. Srivastava has served as Joint Secretary in the Department of Drinking Water and



Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti from Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti from January 2023 onwards. Earlier, he served as Secretary to Govt. of Bihar in Home Department and Public Health Engineering Department (PHED). He holds a Ba. (Hons) in Economics from Delhi University's Hansraj College and MBA (Finance) from Cochin University of Science and Technology.

# Pahalgam terror attack: Hospitality industry braces for Kashmir travel booking cancellations

Anticipating largescale travel booking cancellations for Jammu and Kashmir in the aftermath of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, aggregators on Wednesday said they are working with arilines and hotels to offer free date change and cancellation waivers to travellers. Hospitality industry players expect the terror attack to sow fear in the minds of tourists who were keen to wist Jammu and Kashmir, adversely affecting the livelihoods of people in the state who are dependent on tourism. At least 26 people—mostly tourists - were killed by terrorists on Tuesday at the Baisaran meadows in Pahalgam.

"As per the early observations, flight can-

ows in Pahatgam.
"As per the early observations, flight can-cellations jumped 7x, and a drop in future bookings by nearly 40 per cent," said Manjari Singhal, Chief Growth and

Hospitality industry players expect the terror attack to sow fear in the minds of tourists who were keen to visit Jammu and Kashmir, adversely affecting the livelihoods of people in the state

Business Officer, Cleartrip, "As travellers navigate this difficult situation, our teams are working round the clock with airline and hotel partners to provide flexibility and assistance on bookings' cancellations. Our on-ground team is doing everything in their capacity to offer support to travellers. We remain committed to providing continued assistance to both our customers and partners during this difficult time," a MakeMyTrip spokesperson said.

EaseMyTrip Chairman and Founder Nishant Pitti said, "In light of the ongoing situation in Srinagar, we at EaseMyTrip are fully committed to supporting our customers who are travelling uncertainty this situation may cause and are here to minimise any inconvenience to your travel plans. To ensure flexibility, we have extended free change and cancellation wakers for all bookings made on or before April 22, applicable for travel up to April 30°.

FAITH (Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality) General

Indian Tourism and Hospitality) General Secretary Rajiv Mehra said for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, tourism is no just a livelihood, it is their pride, their lega

cy and their hope.
"This attack has not only harmed innocent lives but has also dealt a cruel blow to the thousands of families who depend

on tourism to survive. From houseboat owners and hoteliers to local guides and artisans, every individual in this chain of warmth and welcome is affected," he

observed.

Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO) also expressed its deep anguish and pain on selected targeting of tourists in Kashmir by a group of terrorists, saying it strongly condemns the cowardly terror attack 'which is clearly designed to deeply impact tourism in Kashmir and create an atmosphere of Fear.'

We are shocked and appalled at these attacks in our country. Since 2020, the J&K region has seen a steady upswing in tourism numbers going from 3 million in

tourism numbers going from 3 million in 2020 to close to 24 million in 2024. This 8x huge surge in tourists impacts and improves the lives of the long-tail of the tourism industry and leads to the prosperity of the locals.

#### Rupee falls 25 paise to settle at 85.44 against **US dollar**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Mumbai

the rupee depreciated 25 paise and settled for the day at 85.44 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, on surge in crude oil prices and importer demand for the American currency.

and importer ucusary.

Gross traders said the American currency.

Forex traders said the American currency recovered, supported by Donald Trump's softened stance — particularly towards the Federal Reserve and China. However, positive domestic markets and weak US dollar index and foreign fund inflows supported the domestic unit at lower levels. lower levels.
Forex traders said the market found sup-

Forex trades said the market found sup-port after Trump on Tuesday backed off from threats to fire FED Chair Jerome Powell after days of intensifying criticism against him for not cutting rates. Trump also signalled the possibility of lower tar-if's against Chin for not cutting rates. Trump also signalled the possibility of lower tar-fit's against Chin of the discovery of the domestic unit opened at 85.24, and touched an intra-day low of 85.52 against the greenback. The unit ended the session at 85.44 (provisional), registering a loss of 25 paise over its previous closing level. On Tuesday, the rupee settled lower by 4 paise at 85.19 against the US dollar. "We expect the rupee to trade with a positive bias amid risk on sentiments in the global markets and FII inflows. Overall weakness in the US dollar may also sup-port the rupee.

# **Alcohol industry seeks** uniform taxation for sector



Chalc on Wednesday urged the government to introduce uniform taxation for the sector and allow promotion of heritage spirits like 'Mahua' and 'Feni' globally, saying such reforms are vital to boost exports and health indian brands compete internationally. Deepak Roy, Chairman at Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Industry (CIABC), also said that the government should allow the industry to communicate freely with its consumers.

consumers.

With the government's help, Indian heritage spirits can be promoted in international markets, as they have great potential in India and globally, he said.

Roy was speaking at the AlcoBev India

ROY was speaking at the Autober United 2025, the industry conclave organised by CIABC here.

"One segment that can really make it happen is the Indian heritage spirits. When "Tequild can be synonymous with Mexico, Sake' with Japan and Soju' with Korea, the same we can achieve internationally with Tend' or Washual, which have seen that the same was the sa a rich cultural legacy. We need to get out of the old mindset and promote Indian

heritage spirits," he said. He added that different taxation lev-els in states are a big challenge for the

industry.
"There is no cohesive strategy for the Indian alcoholic beverage industry. The industry needs a uniform taxation mechanism which will propel the growth," he added.

# EU fines Apple 500 million Euros and Meta 200 million in separate cases

uropean Union watchdogs fined Apple and Meta hundreds of milions of euros Wednesday as they

Happle and Meta hundreds of millJlions of euros Wednesday as they
stepped up enforcement of the 27nation bloc's digital competition rules.

The European Commission imposed
a 500 million euro (USD 571 million)
fine on Apple for preventing app makers from pointing users to cheaper
options outside its App Store.

The commission, which is the EUs
executive arm, also fined Meta
Platforms 200 million euros because it
forced Facebook and Instagram users
to choose between seeing personalised
ads or paying to avoid them.

The punishments were smaller than
the blockbuster multivillion-euro fines
that the commission has previously
slapped on Big Tech companies in
antitrust case.

Apple and Meta have to comply with
the decisions were expected to the comtiments," the commission said.

The decisions were expected to dead.

ments," the commission said.

The decisions were expected to come in March, but the self-imposed dead-line slipped amid an escalating trans-Atlantic trade war with US President Donald Trump, who has repeatedly complained about regulations from Brussels affecting American companies.

The penalties were issued under the EUS Digital Markets Act, also known

as the DMA. It's a sweeping rulebook that amounts to a set of do's and don'ts

designed to give consumers and business-es more choice and prevent Big Tech "gate-keepers" from cornering digital markets. The DMA seeks to ensure "that citizens

have full control over when and how their data is used online, and businesses can freely communicate with their own cus-tomers," Henna Virkkunen, the commis-sion's executive vice-president for tech sov-ereignty, said in a statement.

The commission said it ordered Apple to remove technical and commercial restrictions that prevent developers from steering users to other channels, and to end non-compliant' conduct

"The decisions adopted today find that both Apple and Meta have taken away this free choice from their users and are required to change their behaviour," Virksunen said. Both companies indicated they would appeal, Apple accused the commission of "unfairly targeting" the iPhone maker, and said it "continues to move the goal posts" despite the company's efforts to comply with the rules. Meta Chief Global Affairs Officer Joel Kaplan said in a statement that the "Commission is attempting to handicap successful American businesses while allowing Chinese and European companies to operate under different standards." In a press briefing in Brussels, commis-

to operate under different standards."
In a press breifing in Brussels, commission spokespeople sought to tamp down concerns that the penalties would inflame trade tensions.
We don't care who owns a company. We don't care where the company is located," commission spokesperson Thomas Regnier told reporters. "We are totally agnostic on that front from a European

Union." "And be it a Chinese company, be an American company, or be it a European company, outli have to play by the rules in the European Union."

In the App Store case, the Commission had accused the iPhone maker of imposing unfair rules preventing app developers from freely steering consumers to other channels. Among the DMA's provisions are requirements to let developers inform customers of chaeper purchasing options and direct them to those offers.

The commission said it ordered Apple to remove technical and commercial restrictions that prevent developers from steering users to other channels, and to endough the company of the company is the company and the Commission continues to move the goal posts every step of the way," the company said. The EU's Meta investigation centred on the company's strategy to comply with strict European data privacy rules by giving users the option of paying for ad-free versions of Facebook and Instagram.

Users could pay at least 10 euros could pay at least 10 euros could pay at least 10 euros counted to the company it doesn't allow users to excrise mount before showing add to users. Regulators took issue with Metás model, saying it doesn't allow users to excrise their right to "freely consent" for look of the restriction of the presonal data from its various services, which also include Facebook Marketplace, WhatsApp, and Messenger, to be combined for personalised ads. Meta rolled out a third option in November giving Facebook marketplace, whatsApp, and Messenger, to be combined for personalised ads if they don't want to pay for an ad-free subscription.

#### '90 per cent IT and security experts report cyberattacks'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE New Delhi

New research from Rubrik Zero
Labs has traced that Indian organisations are facing a wave of cyberattacks. In the past one year, 80 percent
of Indian organisations that experienced
a ransomware attack paid a ransom to
recover their data or to stop the ransomware attack. Significantly, 52 per cent
of Indian organisations paid a ransom due
to date actorion threats while 44 per cent
of Indian organisations propried that
cyber attackers successfully affected their
backup and recovery options.
Accepting that cyberattacks are a constant threat, the RZL research, "The
State of Data Security in 2025: A
Distributed Crisis," also notes that 65per
cent of organisations in India store their
entity of the properties of the security of the contents (on-premises, Cloud, or SaaS)
while SSper cent respondents say that one
of the biggest challenges they face in
securing their data is securing sensitive
data across multiple environments. As

data across multiple environments. As many as 44 per cent of Indian organisa-tions reported that cyber attackers suc-cessfully affected their backup and recov-

ery options. The consequences of these attacks were that 29 per cent of respondents reported financial losses, 31 per cent noted reputational damage and loss of customer confidence, and 36 per cent experienced a forced leadership change following a cyber incident.

"The State of Data Security in 2025: A Distributed Crisis" is based on insights from over 1,600 IT and security leaders across 10 countries (half of whom were ClOs or CISOs) from the US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Japan, Australia, Singapore and India. From India 125 IT respondents participated in the survey conducted by Wakefield Research. "The State of Data Security 12 2021-5. A Distributed Crisis" and security 12 2021-5. A Distributed Crisis and security leaders reported cyberatuseks in the past year. It also reveals the hazards that hybrid environments are creating leading to a cloud security crisis that organisations are unprenant of noadfress.

ards that hybrid environments are creat-ing, leading to a cloud security crisis that organisations are unprepared to address. "Many organisations that move to the cloud assume their providers will handle security," said Joe Hladik, Head of Rubrik Zero Labs.

# Markets rise for 7th day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA - Mumbai

PRESS TRUST OF HODA Mumbal

Stock markets extended the winning run to seventh day on Wednesday with benchmark BSE Sensex jumping 520 points to close above 80,000 level for the first time in four months driven by strong gains in IT and auto shared. Stock strong gains in IT and auto shared points or 0.65 per cent to settle 480,116.49, the highest closing level since December 18. During the day, it surged 668.96 points or 0.82 per cent to 80.254.55.

The NSE Nitty rallied 161.70 points or 0.67 per cent to 24.32.895.
Foreign fund inflows and positive global trends also boosted the market sentiment, analysts said.

Among the Sensex firms, HCL Techsurged the most of a 18 per cent increase in consolidated margorities of the properties of the sense of the sense of the sense of the sense of the contract value of about 72.550 correct.

Tech Mahindra. Tata Motors, Infosys. Abindra & Mahindra. Tata Consultance Mahindra & Machindra. Tata Motors, Infosys. Abindra & Mahindra. Tata Motors, Infosys.

Tech Mahindra, Tata Motors, Infosys, Iech Manindra, Iata Motors, Infosys, Mahindra & Mahindra, Iata Consultancy Services, Tata Steel, Bharti Airtel and Maruti were also among major gainers. Banking shares witnessed a sell-off after recent sharp gains with leading pri-

vate lender HDFC Bank dropping by 1.98 per cent to emerge as the biggest loser among Sensex shares. Kotak Mahindra Bank, State Bank of India, Axis Bank, ITC and UltraTech

India, Axis Bank, ITC and Ultra'lEch Cement were also among the laggards. In Asian markets, South Koreak Kospi index, Tolyo's Nikket 225 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled in the positive territory. Shanghai SSE Composite ended marginally lower. Markets in Europe were trading significantly higher. US markets bounced back sharply on Tuesday. Nasdaq Composite surged 2,71 per cent, Dow Jones Industrial Average jumped 2.66 per cent and \$&P 500 rallied 2.51 per cent.

jumped 266 per cent and S&P 500 rallied 251 per cent. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth 71.290.43 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data. "The Indian equity market sustained its positive momentum, driven by better outcome from the latest set of IT results and optimistic forward-looking comments. However, profit-booking was bide in financials after the recent sharp rally. "While US-China trade tensions appear to be easing, a rally in US tech stocks has

to be easing, a rally in US tech stocks has further bolstered overall global market sen-timent," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

GNDU. NSE ACADEMY LAUNCH **MBA IN FINANCIAL ANALYTICS** 

Three-year Moll with NSE Academy to launc MBA in Financial Analytics, blending acade rigor with industry insights. The program wi live projects, certifications, and practical tr starting this academic session.





SYSTEM

Amntsar: Guru Nanak Dev University's Hindi Department, in collaboration with the Central Hindi Directorate, held a two-day national seminar titled "Indian Knowledge System: A Multidimensional Legacy", highlighting India's rich literary and philosophical traditions. Eminent scholars and cultural figures from

# Man City scores late winner to beat Aston Villa 2-1

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Manchester

Peg Guardiola celebrated wildly as Manchester City took a big step toward Champions League qualification with a 2-1 victory over Aston Villa to the Premier League. With clenched fists, the City manager roared with delight after Matheus Nunes struck deep into stoppage time at the Ethad Stadium.

"I was so happy. I have to admit it," Guardiola said after a win that could help salvage at roubled season for his once dominant team.

The late winner moved four-time defending league champion City up to third in the standings, with the top five securing a place in European club soccer's top competition. Nunes fired home from a tight angle in the fourth minute of added time after Jeremy Dokus low cross through the box. The game had looked destined to one in a draw after Bernardo Sluva's first-half goal had been canceled out by a Marcus Rashford penalty.

There is still likely to be a tense battle for the Champions League with a clutch of teams in contention going into the final weeks of the season and just four points separating third to seventh in the standings. But Cliy's fate is in its own hands after a troubled campaign that saw its title defense unraved before Christmas and its hopes of winning the Champions League end in the playoffs.

A top-five finish would go some way to ending the season on a high — and Guardiola's celebration was evidence of just

ending the season on a high — and Guardiola's celebration was evidence of just



how important the win could prove to be.
"We have a lot of pressure for the club
to go to the Champions League," said
Guardiola, whose City team won the
competition for the first time in 2023.

"If we win the next four games, it will

have been so important," he added. Victory moved City up to 61 points above Nottingham Forest in fourth Newcastle in fifth. Chelsea is sixth

England's top flight will be given a bonus

fifth Champions League place because of the performances of English teams in Europe this season. Both City and Villa have played a game more than their top-five rivals. But City knows a perfect record from its remaining four league

games would guarantee a place in next season's Champions League.

It would be the 15th season in a row that City has qualified for the competition and would provide an uplifting finale to a campaign that brought an end to Guardiola's recent dominance of English soccer.

There is likely to be a rebuild in the off-season, with Kevin De Bruyne leaving and Silva and Illay Gundogan also in the latter stages of their careers. But it was Silva who provided the opener for City in the seventh minute from close range after Omar Marmoush's cutback. Rashord had already hit the post for Villa by that point after bursting into the box seconds after kickoff. And the on-loan Manchester United forward was on the score sheet in the 18th — equalising from the penalty

United forward was on the score sheet in the 18th — caualising from the penalty spot following a VAR review of Ruben Dias' foul on Jacob Ramsey in the box. Defeat was a blow to Villa's hopes of making it back-to-back seasons in the Champions League after returning to the competition for the first time in 41 years this term and advancing to the quarterfinals. 'Of course, today we lost, but there are still matches to play, still points to play (for). We will have chances to get the Champions League,' Villa manager Unai Emery said.

Champions League, Villa manager Unal Emery said.

"I am happy how we are reacting, how every player is facing the moment we are (in)." Both City and Villa are also in the senifinals of the FA Cup. Villa plays Crystal Palace on Saturday, and City plays Nottingham Forest on Sunday.

#### **Andre Agassi** to play at US **Open Pickleball Championships**

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA | Nanles (US)

A ndre Agassi collected two of his cight Grand Slam tennis titles at the US Open and now he'll be competing at a different racket event with that name.

Agassi, who retired from professional tennis in 2006 after playing his last match at Flushing Meadows, will line up alongside teenager Anna Leigh Waters in the mixed pro division at the US Open Pickleball Championships next week in Naples, Florida.

Agassi, who turns 55 next week, has participated in made-for-Ty pickleball exhibitions with other former tennis players and can be seen pitching pickleball equipment via social media. This will be his first professional pickleball appearance.

He wan the tennis US Open in 1904.

will be his first professional pickleball appearance.
He won the tennis US Open in 1994 and 1999, completed a career Grand Slam by winning at least one championship at each of that sports majors and was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 2011. It was announced earlier this month that Agassi will be a studio analyst for TNT'S ports during the semifinals and finals at the French Open this year.
Pickleball is a mix of tennis and ping pone that uses baddles and a wiffeball.

pong that uses paddles and a wiffleball.

#### Can't afford any slip-up, need to start winning games: Dravid

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Bengaluru

ead coach Rahul Dravid on Wednesday acknowledged that Rajasthan Royals cannot afford another slip-up after sliding to eighth on the JPL points table and his team has "no option" other than start "winning games quickly." The Royals will come up against an in-form Royal Challengers Bengaluru at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium here on Thursday, and another reversal will make it really tough for them to nourish play-off aspirations.
"It's a very important game for us, in

make it really tough for them to nourish play-off aspirations.
"It's a very important game for us, in fact, every game from here on in, as the position we find ourselves in, we can't afford to make many mistakes. This stage is a tournament. . just over half way, we find ourselves at the bottom half of the bable," Dravids ad in the pre-match press conference.

in the Parade said in the pre-match press conference.

"We've got to start dimbing that table quickly and we've got to start winning games quickly. There are no options, no chances of slipping up anymore', he added. Dravid accepted that the Royals have not fared well in runch situations in this tournament despite playing excellent cricket in patches.

"We know we have to play well to lent cricket in patches. It was still alive in this tournament whose well alive in this tournament, who we've lost a couple of close games coming into this, but we've played some good cricket as well. "It's one of those tournaments where a few balls going here or there and we might have been in a slightly different position. But you need to play well in those critical moments and it hasn't happened for us,' he noted.

The Chinnaswamy stadium pitch has unusually favoured bowlers more in this IPI. than the batters, but Dravid hopes for a change of character on Thursday.

The chinnaswamy stadium pitch has unusually favoured bowlers more in this IPI, than the batters, but Dravid hopes (or a change of character on Thursday, which is the control of the pitch). But I think every surface will be different. The wicket I'm seeing here, from at least what I can make of it, looks like a really good wicket. "So, I can't really say how those wicket slooked in earlier games, but the track that's been produced for this one looks actually to be a very good cricket wicket and I think it should be a pretty high scoring game," he added. actually to be a very good crie et and I think it should be a p scoring game," he added.

#### Sanju is getting assessed

Dravid said regular RR skipper Sanju Samson's fitness is getting assessed on a daily basis. Samson will miss the match against RCB with an abdominal niggle.

"Sanju, I think, sort of picked up a bit of a side issue with the game against Delhi (Capitals) and he couldn't play the last game and in this game as well. He was-n't fit and our medical team sort of did-

in fit and our medical team sort of did-n't rule him fit to play this game.
"So, we took the decision and the med-ical advice to not risk him to travel — make two more flights and be here. We kept the physio back so that we can treat him and try and get him back as quick-ly as we possibly can. We're looking at it on a day-to-day basis." The former India coach did not give any specific time-line for Samson's return.

We've got to start climbing that table quickly and we've got to start winning games quickly. There are no options, no chances of slipping up anymore

- RAHUL DRAVID, RR HEAD COACH

"I have no time-line to give as to when exactly he will be fit, but we're trying our best, you know, obviously we've got to play here, after this we've got a game on (April) 27th and we've got a few games quickly and then we've got a gap.
"So, we'll just have to see how it goes. Honestly, he was not fit for this game and he didn't travel here," he added.
Dravid said Riyan Parag has stepped in effectively as the caratian for he side in

he didn't travel here," he added.
Dravid said Riyan Parag has stepped in effectively as the captain of the side in the absence of Samson despite a few matches not going the team's way.
"Sanju is still the captain of the team and Riyan is the vice-captain and he stepped in really well. I think Riyan had captained four of the games, even in the first three games, in fact, Sanju wasn't able to field because of the finger injury.
"Some of those games haven't been easy, especially the high-scoring ones, like the game against Sunrisers Hyderabad. But I think he's done a good job." The 52-year-old said Parag has remained collected in the face of a tough old like the PIL captaincy.

"I think he's been really good, calm of the standard of the standard of the game really well, So for someone who's so young and just starting out in his captaincy, I think he's he would be supported the starting out in his captaincy, I think he's he you know, adapting well to it. Of course, the team needs to play well for him," he said.

# World Cup Olympics of cricket, says Steve Waugh

A t a time when the relevance of ODIs has become a topic of debate, former Australian captain Steve Waugh has batted for the format, saying

Naugh has batted for the format, saying that it would never lose significance as the quadrennial World Cup is akin to the "Olympics of cricket". In an interaction with select media on the sidelines of the Laureus World Sports awards here, Waugh said despite the pressure of shorter formats, DDIs are holding ground as was evident from the record viewership garnered by the 2023 World Cup. "Everyone seems to think one-day crickets not going to survive, but then you have the World Cup and it's huge and the trainings are massive and people love it and fall back in love with the game. Then it dies down for a couple years and we go

down for a couple years and we go through the same scenario," Waugh said. "So right now, somehow we're manag-ing to fit three formats of the game in and there's pressure of T10 maybe coming in, there's pressure of T10 maybe coming in, so could be four, four formats of cricket. I don't know how that's all going to get

managed, but right now it seems to be going okay. "World Cup is significant for one-day cricket. It's pretty much the Olympics, to play (the World Cup) every four years," he added. Cricket will have its four years," he added. Cricket will have its share of spotlight in the actual Olympics as well when it makes a comeback to the Games after more than 100 years in the

Games after more than 100 years in the 2028 Los Angles edition. Waugh also offered his views on other issues concerning international cricket right now, including the obvious Indian dominance in the administration of the sport and the revenue sharing arrangement that favours big Test-playing nations. A recent study by the World Cricketers Association (WCA) claimed that the BCCI currently receives 38.5 per cent of the global cricket revenue, and recommended the figure be brought down to 10 per cent to ensure fairer distribution.

per cent to ensure fairer distribution.
Calling for equal pay for all Test players regardless of nationality, Waugh said:
"If you play a Test match, every player who
plays a Test match should have equal pay. plays a Test match should have equal pay. "No one listened to me, but I said that in 1999 in an article, that every Test match

player should get paid the same. You play a Test match, the fee should be exactly the same," added the 59-year-old. The report also highlighted the congest-ed international schedule, with overlapping bilateral and domestic leagues making it dif-ficult to macan player workload and team bilateria and domestic leagues marking it dif-ficult to manage player workload and team commitments. When pointed out that only the IPL has a designated window, Waugh was candid. "BCCI runs world cricket, that's why they have their own window. Simple."

#### Bumrah among best but unfair to compare others with him

Among players, Waugh hailed Indian pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah as one of the finest pacers of modern era, but said it would be unfair to assess other Indian feet boules.

it would be unfair to assess other Indian fast bowlers using the same yardstick. "Bumrah obviously is one of the best bowlers of this modern era, if not of all time. It's very hard when you're judging the other players on him because he's at the elite level. But India have got plenty of backup and plenty of quick bowlers, he felt. Bumrah has led India's pace attack almost single-handedly for quite a while

and remains one of the most feared bowlers across formats. However, frequent injury concerns have plagued his career in recent times. The 31-year-old was India's standout performer during the four-match Test series in Australia, which the visitors lost 1-3. "There's plenty of Indian bowlers out there. Obviously, Bumrah had areat series (in Australia). Mohammed)

visitors tost 1-3. Theres plenty of Indian bowlers out there. Obvoisaly, Bummah had a great series (in Australia). (Mohammed) Siriq did pretty well and some of the young guys coming through, 'he said. With Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli in the twilight of their international careers, both are eyeing the 2007 DOI World Cup as their swansong. The duo has already announced their retirement from T20is. Waugh, said their participation will depend on 'form, fitness and motivation'. "I'm not sure. I mean I don't follow their careers that closely but they've both been incredible cricketers for India," the former skipper said when asked if he sees them playing a role in the 2027 edition. Every career has got to end at some stage. They've both been outstanding and they're still world-class players now but lots of things coming up.

#### Barcelona beat Mallorca 1-0 to increase Spanish League Lead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Madrid

ani Olmo scored early in the sec-ond half as Barcelona defeated Mallorca 1-0 to increase its Spanish league lead.

The home win on Tuesday gave the

The home win on Tuesday gave the Catalan club a seven-point lead over Real Madrid, which visits Getale on Wednesday. Bacceton, seeking its first league title since the second of the seeking its first league title since the second half at Montjuic stadium, with the second half at Montjuic stadium, with the paymaker finding the net from inside the area. It was the third consecutive victory for Barcelon at in the league. The Catalan side had 40 attempts on goal, while Mallora had only four — none on target "We created many scoring opportunities and we should have taken advantage of them, but that's soccer," Barcelona midfielder Gavi said.

"We can't always score easily. We insisted until we finally scored and that's what's important."

what's important." Mallorca, which has only two wins from Mallorca, which has only two wins from its last nine matches, stayed in seventh place. Barcelona and Madrid will meet in the Copa del Rey final on Saturday in Seville. Barcelona coach Hansi Flick made several changes to his starting lineup, with forward Ansu Fati making his first league

start in nearly six months. Striker Robert Lewandowski was absent because of a muscle injury. "We played a great match," Gavi said. "I'm happy for the players who rotated and got to play."

Espanyol draws at Valencia

winning streak ended with a 1-1 draw at Valencia, which has drawn two in a row

after three straight victories.

The result left both teams tied on 39 oboints, though Espanyol has a game in hand. Valencia was in 14th place, just behind Espanyol. Also Wednesday, Celta /igo hosts fifth-place Villarreal, and Las

Palmas visits fourth—place Athletic Bilbao. Relegation-threatened Alaves welcomes nimb-place Real Sociedad. On Thursday, third-place Atletico Madrid hosts midtable Rayo Vallecano, while sixth-place Real Betis visits last-place Valladolid, which has lost 12 of its last 13 matches.

### 15 selected for NCOEs from ASMITA sub-junior hockey league

ive under-16 girls from Mizoram are among the 15 hockey players selected by the Sports A. Twe under-16 girls from Mizoram are among the 15 In hockey players selected by the Sports Authority of India to be inducted into the various National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs). Seen as the building block for women's hockey in India, the girls have been chosen after the conclusion of the 2024-25 season of the ASMITA leagues matches. The 15 selected for training at the NCOEs include three players from Haryama and two each from Jharkhand and Odisha, besides girls from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh.
Plush Dubey, hockey's High Performance Director for

Outsian, residue signs in infilmating a radiusal, saanaalaan and Uttar Pradesh, Plyush Dubey, hockey's High Performance Director for SAI and Khelo India, said these girls have been chosen keeping future Olympics in mind.

"We have to think of a pathway and these girls have the potential to make it to the senior national team. In the last three-four years, SAMITA has provided the opportunity to see so many players in action and this is a wel-come change in our hockey ecosystem. This did not exist before," said Dubey.

He added that many players like Sunglita Toppo, Suista.

before," said Dubey.

He added that many players like Sunelita Toppo, Sujata
Kujur and Sakshi Rana have emerged from this hockey league and are now representing India.

Six teams featuring 120 under-16 players took part in the ASMITA sub-junior hockey leagues final phase.

A total of 17 matches were played in the Rs 15.5 lakh

prize money event. SAI Shakti won the team champiprize money event. SAI Shakti won the team champi-onship for the third consecutive time beating Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy 2-1 in the final match at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium here. Mizoram's ascendency in women's hockey has been quite startling. For the first time in its history, the tiny North-eastern state, known for its footballers and box-

The 15 selected for training at the NCOEs include three players from Haryana and two each from Jharkhand and Odisha, esides girls from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh

res, won a bronze medal in the senior national women's hockey championship in Panchkula.

Dubey said the Mizoram girls have shown immense improvement in the last five-six years and credit goes to the coaches who are working at the SAI centre in Thenzawl. Laforthuamia, a 2009 junior India player, said young girls are taking interest in hockey and some 40 are training at the SAI centre.

Mizoram have found a unique way to attract young-sters to nlaw bookey. The image and profile of current

sters to play hockey. The image and profile of current Indian women's team player and Tokyo Olympian Lalremsiami have been used in advertisements and social media to attract girls to participate in trials.

"The response has been fairly good from the villages. Two of our girls – Lalthantluangi and Lalrinpuii – are ASMITA products and are junior Indian team members.

ASMITA products and are junior Indian team members. They are a great advertisement for us and we are very happy that five Mizoram girk shave been selected for training at NCOEs," said Lalrothuami.

"Our players need more competitive exposure and better training ecosystem. In terms of skills, all players are more or less equal but Mizo girls are stronger and have the stamina. We hope they will utilise the facilities at NCOEs well." However, selection at NCOEs does not guarantee long-term membership. There are two assessments servy year and players are judged on the three basic parameters —physical strength, sports science tests and skills. The following players have been selected:

For NCOE Lucknow: Shweta Upadhyay (Haryana), Rashi (Haryana).

For NCOE Mumbai: Ladinpuii (Mizoram), Binia Carketta (Jakrikand), Sameli Burh (Odisha), Salmi Jadia (Odisha).

For NCOE Delhi: Tulashi (Andhra Pradesh). Pearlin For NCOE Delhi: Tulashi (Andhra Pradesh).

For NCOE Delhi: Tulashi (Andhra Pradesh), Pearlin Karnataka), Vanlarinluii (Mizoram), Lalnulfelli

(Karnataka), vaniarintun (Mizoram), Lainuirein (Mizoram), For NCOE Sonipat: Diya (Haryana).
For NCOE Shopal: Aradhana Rajbhar (Utar Pradesh), Shivani Khalko (Jharkhand).
For NCOE Kolkata: Loicy Lalthanpuii (Mizoram), Lalfakwami (Mizoram).

#### Give BCCI Hundred stake to unlock Indian plavers: Lancashire CEO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA | London

The England and Wales Cricket Board should bring on board the BCCI as a "minority ownership partner" of The Hundred in order to attract Indian players to the tournament, Lancashire CEO Daniel Gidney has said,

according to a report. Even though Indian men's players are not issued 'No Objection Certificates' to not issued 'No Objection Certificates' to play outside the IPL, the T20 league own-ers have expanded their footprint across the globe, and have stakes in SA20 (South Africa), ILT20 (UAE) and Major League Cricket (USA). According to ESPNCricinfo, Gidney believes 'aligning interests' would be the way to bring Indian players to compete in The Hundred.

"It hink if Spossible IFI was the ECR

"I think it's possible. If I was the ECB, I'd be talking about perhaps bringing the BCCI in as a minority ownership part-ner in the tournament as a whole. If you do that, then you are aligning interests," he said. While Indian men's players fea-

ture only in the IPL, the country's women cricketers, including captain Harmanpreet Kaur and Smriti Mandhana, have featured in England's The Hundred and Australia's Women's Big Bash League.
"That is probably your best chance of getting (Indian) players in The Hundred. It comes down to the will, and the individuals on both sides,' Gidney said.
"The BCCI have been really successful with protecting their brand and by making sure they don't plan any T20 tournaments anywhere in the world..."
"If I was the BCCI, then I would have to say I would need a significant incentive to relax the current policy because that has been extraordinarily successful and has grown the IPL into the massive commercial entity that it is," he said.
The report added that the Lancashire CEO was in India recently to finalise a deal with RPSG Group, which will see them acquire a 70 per cent stake in the Manchester Originals and run the franchise as a joint venture. ture only in the IPL, the country's

# Indian athletes condemn Pahalgam terror attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Mew Delbi

India's sporting fraternity oscillated between grief and rage as it joined the nation in condemning the deadly terrorist attack in Pahalgam with some demanding that the country should cut all sports ties with Pakistan.

On Tuesday, terrorists opened fire at a prime tourist location in south Kashmir's Pahalgam, killing at least 26 civilians and injuring several others. The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow group of the banned Pakistan-based Lasikar-Taiba (LeT) terror group, has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli expressed shock as they mourned the loss of lives.

The affected families must be going through an unimaginable ordeal — India and the world stand united with them at the proposed of the control of the victims. Praying for peace and strength of millies all those who lost the families of the victims. Praying for peace and strength of millies all those who lost the families of the families of the families of the insert and institute to be served for their cruel act," Kohli oseted on his Instararu.

to families all those who lost their lives and justice to be served for their cruel act." Kohli posted on his Instagram. Similar sentiments were expressed by other top players such as Jasprit Bumrah and Suryakumar Yadav. Pacer Mohammed Siraj posted an emotional message in which he called for justice.

which he called for justice.
"To target and kill innocent civilians in
the name of religion is pure evil... No cause,
no belief, no ideology can ever justify such
a monstrous act. Yeh kais ladai hai...Jahaan
insaan ki jaan ki koi keemat hi nahi (what



The affected families must be going through an unimage — India and the world stand united with them at this da

sort of a fight is this in which there is no value for human life)," he asked.

value for human life). he asked.
"I hope this madness ends soon and
these terrorists are found and punished,
without mercy'he added. Former India
cricketer Shreevats Goswami wrote a
strongly-worded post, demanding an end
to all sporting ties with Pakistan.
"And this is exactly why I say — you
don't play cricket with Pakistan. Not now,
Not ever. When BCCI or the government
refused to send India to the Champions
Trophy in Pakistan, some had the audactity to say, 'Oh, but sport should rise above

politics," Goswami wrote

.Murdering innocent Indians seems to

"...Murdering innocent Indians seems to be Pakistans national sport and India should respond with zero tolerance and not with bats and balls," he added. While India has not played bilateral cricket with Pakistan since 2012–13, and the BCCI declined to send its team for the Champions Trophy earlier this year, other Indian teams have continued to travel to Pakistan for international events.

Goswami, who had recently visited Pahalgam, said he had sensed hope and peace returning to the valley.



Praying for the families of the deceased. Those responsible for this will pay. India will strike

— GAUTAM GAMBHIR, INDIAN CRICKET TEAM HEAD COACH

"And now... This bloodshed again. It breaks something inside you. It makes you breaks something inside you. It makes you question how many more times we're expected to stay silent, stay "sporting," while our people die. No more. Not this time," he added. An "outraged" Olympic bronze medal-winning boxer and ruling BJP member Vijender Singh also called for firm "action."

"Our brawe soldiers will definitely give a befitting reply to this cowardly attack in the coming times. In the presence of the brave sons of Mother India, the plans of those who want to disturb the peace in

Jammu and Kashmir will never succeed," he asserted. Indian cricket team head coach and BJP MP Gautam Gambhir wrote, Praying for the families of the deceased. Those responsible for this will pay, India ulstike. "Iwo-time Olympir medal-winning badminton player PV Sindhu top-enned down an emotional post." My heart aches for the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack. So much hoss. No reason, no cause can ever instifts such brustlits. Jammu and Kashmir will never succeed."

much loss. No reason, no cause can ever justify such brutality. "To the families left behind — your grief is beyond words, but you are not alone. We

are with you. In these dark moments, may we find strength in each other, and never let go of the hope that peace will return!" Sindhu wrote. Olympic gold medallist duo of javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra and Abhinav Bindra prayed for the victims. "Heartbroken by the tragic attack in Jamma & Kashmii. Prayers for the victims and their families," Chopra wrote. "Heartbroken by the horrific terror is attack in Pahalgam. My thoughts are with the victims and their families. Terror has no place in our world, we must stand united against hatred and violence," Bindra added. The attack is the deadliest terrorist act in the valley since the 2019 Pulwams strike. "Strongly condemn this cowardly act by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists. India stands united with our brave Army, I&K Police, and Paramilitary forces in the fight against terrorism. Justice will prevail," said former India all-rounder Suresh Raina. "My heart goes out to family members of all those who lost their lives in dastard-yattack. This can't be forgiven," former India spinner Harbhajan Singh wrote. Olympic medal-winning former hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejssh, shuttler Sain Ashwal and two-time world champion

olympic media-winning former nock-ey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, shuttler Saina Nehwal and two-time world champion boxer Nikhat Zareen also called for justice.

DOXET NIKHAI ZAREN ASSOCIATED INSTITUTE.

"Condemnation is not enough, justice must follow. Our hearts bleed for Pahalgam. Terror must never win, Prayers for all affected in the Pahalgam attack," Sreejesh wrote.

Zareen added, "Those who attack inno-

cents attack humanity itself. Strongly con-demn the cowardly terror attack in Pahalgam. Justice must be swift."

#### No fireworks in MI vs SRH match: players to sport black armbands

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Hyderaba

The players of Sunrisers Hyderabad and Mumbai Indians will wear black armbands during their IPL match which will not feature cheerleaders and

which will not feature cheerleaders and fireworks here on Wednesday to mourn the victims of the terrorist attacks. Pahalgam that caused 26 deaths. The teams will also observe a minute's slence to pay their respects to those affect-ed by the incident that has drawn inter-national condemnation. "The players of two teams will wear black armbands and observe a minute's silence in memory of all those who lost their lives in the terrorist attack in Kashmir's Pahalgam," a BCCI source told to media

source told to media.

"As a mark of respect there would be no cheerleaders on the sidelines of MI vs SRH game. No crackers will be burst," added. Terrorists opened fire on civilians at the popular tourist location in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 persons and injuring several others.

The Resistance Front (TRF), which is a part of the banned Pakistan-based LeT ter-

part of the banned Pakistan-based Le I ter-ror group, claimed responsibility for the attack. The attack has drawn strong con-demnation from across the world. The demination from across the world. The BCCI also issued a statement to condenin the "ghastly and cowardly" attack. "The cricketing community is deeply shocked and anguished by the tragic loss of inno-cent lives in the gruesome terror attack at Pahalgam yesterday." BCCI secretary Devajit Saukis asid. "On behalf of the BCCI, while condemn-ing this chartle, and convertige to the with the properties of the properties of the properties of the pro-ting this chartle, and convertige out with

ing this ghastly and cowardly act with strongest possible words, I extend our heart strongest possible words, I extend our heart-felt condolences to the berieved families and prayers for the departed souls. In sharing their pain and girf, we stand hand in hand at this hour of tragedy, he added. The Indian cricket team snape he blateral cricket with Pakistan after the 2008 Mumbai terro attacks and recently refused to tour the country for the Champions Trophy, prompting the ICC to make provisions for a neutral venue in Dubai.

# We never press panic button: CSK CEO

hennai Super Kings as a franchise never presses the panic button and there is not much to worry about despite the five-time champions' ordinary run in the current season IPI, its CEO Kasi Viswanathan told to media on Wednesday. CSK have lost a record five games in a row this season and more than halfway into the tournament, find themselves at the bottom of the points table with six losses in eight games.

hallway into the outrimment, into uncaselves at the bottom of the points table with six losses in eight games. They have lacked firepower in the batting department and captain Ruturaj Gaikwad's absence due to an injury has only made it worse for the storied outfit. CSK CEO has also spoken about his team's run in IPL 2025.

"We have not been performing up to the mark. We are trying to improve and we we will try do well in the next few games. We have never pressed the panic outton in our franchise is not like that, it is just a game," Viswanathan told to media. MS Dhonii shock leading the side in Gaikwad's absence but as head coach



a magic wand and can't change the team's fortunes overnight.
Following the defeat to Mumbai Indians, CSK find themselves in a mustwin situation in their remaining six games with Dhoni already speaking about the planning for 2026.

tournament? "See, it's not the question of anybody. It's a question that the team should do well and not just one individ-ual. We don't talk to the team management.

ual. We don't take to the team management.
Dhoni will do what is right for the team.
"What we are expecting as administrators is good performance by the team and we don't criticise our team at all," he added.

### Current focus to win IPL with DC: Abishek Porel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Lucknow

Like any other cricketer from the country, young Delhic Japitas openied and the country young Delhic Japitas openied to the property of the prop

Mitchell Marsh (45) sharing 87 runs for

Mitchell Marsh (45) sharing 87 runs for the opening stand in 10 overs.

But DV bowkers made a brilliant But DV bowkers made a brilliant But DV bowkers made and the standard (473) leading from the front to restrict LSG to 159 for 6, a target which Porel feels was gettable. "The wicket was very good, so 160 score was a bit less, so we had that in mind that we need to chase these runs. Good toss to win. There was not much difference but the skipper took a good decision," Porel said.

"They (LSG) got runs initially but we knew we can restrict them in middle overs. We had good spinners so we backed ourselves and made a comeback with some good bowling in the second half of their innings after a second half of their innings after a

econd half of their innings after a

bright start.
"Let's give credit where its due. I think
Delhi Capitals' bowlers assessed the
conditions better. They made a very
good comeback."

# RCB eye home improvement against struggling Rajasthan Royals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Bengaluru

Struggling to find form in their own den, Royal Challengers Bengaluru IPI campaign at home when they meet a floundering Rajasthan Royals here on Thursday. RCBs three defeats at the Chinnaswamy Stadium in as many matches offer one of the biggest paradoxes of this edition. An outfit that has steam-rolled omposition in all parts of the rolled opposition in all parts of the country has been left chasing shadows in

country has been left chasing shadows in their own backyard.

The RCB batters have appeared strange-ly subdued and their bowlers seem to have forgotten the lengths to adopt here.

Central to that woeful run is the changed character of the 22-yard strip here which has offered some grip to the bowlers. The Bengaluru batters are yet to find the right tempo to tide over the slow-

ness in the pitch, as they seem to have been caught in the dilemma of whether

been caught in the dilemma of whether to step on the gas or not. It's evident in the team's totals here so far — 169/8, 1637 and 95/9 (14 overs). They have scored over 9-10 runs an over in other venues, but here the rate has dropped down to 7-8 runs an over. Their mainstay Virat Kohil has been in decent form this season, averaging 64, but more would be expected of Phil Salt, Devdutt Padikkal and skipper Bail Patidar The inconsistent bounce is

Rajat Patidar. The inconsistent bounce is holding back the RCB batters, particularly after the Power Play segment and, hopefully, they will find the rhythm against RR.

#### Avoid mid-table tussle

RCB currently have 10 points to be placed at third on the table but Punjab Kings and Lucknow Super Giants also have 10 points. Mumbai Indians are quietly sneak-

ing up the ladder with eight points. If they win against Sunrisers Hyderabad then MI too will have 10 points and can displace RCB (4.7) from the third slot on account

of better net run rate (4.8). Therefore, a favourable result will help RCB to stay above the possible mid-table logjam of four teams with 10 points.

#### RR's turmoils

Raiasthan have a messy house to deal with Rajasthan have a messy house to deal with an abdominal injury that earlier forced him to skip the game against Delhi Capitals as well. Continue to lead the Royals, who are currently tottering at eighth on the table with four points, in the absence of their regular capital. Their front-line batsmen — Yashasvi listual Brace, Shiroun Hatswar and

r front-line batsmen — Yashasvi Parag, Shimron Hetmyer and Rana — are in reasonable form

despite six defeats in eight matches and the start made by young Vaibhav Suryavanshi is also encouraging. However, the bowlers' lack of penetration has hurt

Such the advantage of the content of

Teams
Royal Challengers Bengaluru: Rajat
Patidar (capt), Phil Salt, Virat Kohli, Liam
Livingstone, Jitesh Sharma (w), Tim David,
Krunal Pandya, Bhuvuneshwar Kumar, Josh
Hazlewood, Suyash Sharma, Yash Dayal,
Devdutt Padikal, Rasikh Dar Salam,
Manoj Bhandage, Jacob Bethell, Swapmil
Singh, Lungh Sydid, Romario Shepherd,
Nuwan Thushara, Mohit Rathee, Swastik
Chikara, Abhimandan Singh,
Rajasthan Royals: Yashasvi Jaiswal,
Jiyan Parag (capt), Nitish Rana, Dhruv
Jurel, Shimron Hetmyer, Wanindu
Hasaranga, Jofra Archer, Waheesh
Theekshana, Sandeep Sharma, Tushar
Easthyande, Shubham Dubey, Kumar
Kartikeya, Vudhvir Singh Charak, Kunal
Singh Rathore, Akash Madhwal, Fazalhaq
Farooqi, Kwena Maphaka, Ashok
Sharma, Vabhav Suryavanshi, Sanju
Samson (injured).

# Rahul left last season's baggage, will do well for DC: Pujara

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA - New Delhi

Interest of the Section of the Secti

TimeOut.

"He doesn't want to think about the past and wants to enjoy his batting and be in his zone, rather than think about what went wrong when he was playing for the LSG team." It's good to move on, which will also help him play well for DC and even for the



Indian team. Because, lately, he is someone the India team also relies on, the way he's batting." Under Rahul's captaincy LSG had reached the play-offs in 2022 and 2023 seasons. However, the Lucknow outfit finished seventh last season.

Sanjiv Goenka also deteriorated last year. In a video that went viral on social media, Goenka was seen publicly reprimanding the former Lucknow captain after a defeat. A few months later, the 33-year-old was released by the franchise ahead of the mega auctions. At DC, the wicketkeeper batter,

one of the most consistent players in the IPL, has emerged as the leading run scorer this season, scoring 323 runs in seven innings. "Even as a person, he looks a lot more mature now, he understands his agame very well. We have seen a different KL. Rahul this season. When he started (Against LSG), he didn't look that (fluid), but still he picked it up." Pujara said.
Former England opener Nick Knight added that the absence of captaincy tesponsibilities may also be contributing to Rahul's freedom with the bat. "Captaincy can do funny things to you — sometimes you thrive on it, sometimes it's a burden. Whether that's had any impact, of not being captain now, just being free and being able to play the match situation." Knight said.
We've got this obe captain in ricket that "We've got this obe captain. That's not always the case, it it? I'm not saying that's the case with KI. Rahul, or even Rishabh Pant, but he's batting with so much freedom and looks relaxed in the creak of the decay with so much freedom and looks relaxed in the case with KI. Rahul, or even Rishabh Pant, but he's batting with so much freedom and looks relaxed in the case with KI. Rahul, or even Rishabh Pant, but he's batting with so much freedom and looks relaxed in the case.

#### Sri Lanka women bring in several changes for Tri-Series

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA Colombo

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA © colombo

I ri Lanka on Wednesday announced
a 17-member squad for the upcomone of the colombia of the

Veteran Chamari Athapathth will continue to lead the side, while medium pacer Malki Madara, who had impressed in her debut T20I against New Zealand, has received a maiden ODI call-up

Sri Lanka will open their campaign against India on Sunday. The final is scheduled for May 11.

Sri Lanka squad: Chamari Athapaththu (c), Vishmi Gunaratne, Harshitha Samaravickrama, Nilakshi Silva, Kavisha Dilhari, Anushka Sanjeewani, Hasini Perera, Piumi Wathsala, Manudi Nanayakkara, Dewmi Wathsala, Manka Ranaweera, Inoshi Fernando, Hansima Karunaratne, Rashmika Sewawandi, Malki Madara, Sugandika Kumari, Achini Kulsuriya.

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