

PRIME MINISTER CHAIRS CCS MEET,
Defence Minister meets services chiefs

ARMED FORCES GET INSTRUCTIONS
for enhanced combat readiness, operations

SHAH GOES TO SITE OF ATTACK
near Pahalgam, meets victim families, survivors

The first step

Govt suspends Indus treaty, expels Pak advisors, cancels visas, closes Attari



Prime Minister Narendra Modi chairs a meeting of the CCS in New Delhi, Wednesday, April 23.

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

UNDERLINING THE "the cross-border linkages of the terrorist attack" near Pahalgam that killed 26 people, India Wednesday put on hold the Indus Waters Treaty, expelled diplomats and top defence officials from the Pakistan High Commission in Delhi, cancelled all visas granted to Pakistan nationals under a SAARC scheme and directed them to leave in 48 hours, and shut the Attari-Wagah border. It also withdrew its own advisors and staff from its mission in Islamabad.

This full-scale diplomatic retaliation by Delhi is the strongest since 2019 when the diplomatic strength was reduced by half from 110 to 55. Now it has been

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THE 5 DECISIONS

- Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 put on hold
- Attari Integrated Check Post shut
- SAARC visa scheme for downgraded diplomatic relations with Pakistan by reducing the mission strength by half, expelled diplomats and top defence officials from the Pakistan High Commission in Delhi, cancelled all visas granted to Pakistan nationals under a SAARC scheme and directed them to leave in 48 hours, and shut the Attari-Wagah border.
- Military advisers in Pak mission to leave
- High Commission strength cut to 30

THE EDITORIAL PAGE

GRIEF & HEALING

In wake of Pahalgam outrage, there is need to remember: Way forward must build on hard-won gains in Kashmir

PAGE 12



Himanshi Narwal, wife of Navy Lieutenant Vinay Narwal who was killed in the terror attack near Pahalgam, at the cremation ground in Karnal on Wednesday, Jasbir Malhi.

Wedding, honeymoon, cremation: 'Never thought it would turn into a nightmare'

VARINDER BHATIA & JASBIR MALHI
CHANDIGARH, KARNAL, APRIL 23

April 16: Destination wedding, Mussoorie. April 19: Wedding reception, Karnal. April 21: Honeymoon, Kashmir. April 23: Cremation, Karnal. BARELY A week after Vinay



Lieutenant Vinay Narwal

Narwal and Himanshi started living the great Indian dream, hand in hand, it was over. All that remained was a chilling image that

captured the horror of Tuesday's terror attack in J&K: Vinay's body stretched out on a brown patch in the picturesque Baisaran valley in Pahalgam; Himanshi seated, listless, nearby; a black backpack overturned.

In a video from the spot, Himanshi is heard saying, "I was eating bhel puri with my husband. A man came over and

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Terrorists targeted innocents & religion, there will be a strong response: Rajnath

DIVYA A, AMRITA NAYAK DUTTA & LIZ MATHEW
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

AS BODIES of tourists killed in the terror attack near Pahalgam were flown to homes across the country Wednesday, grief gave way to anger and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, who underlined that lives of "many innocent citizens" were lost in "a cowardly attack by terrorists who made religion a target (*dharma ko nishana banate huay*)", assured the nation of a "strong response".

He said the government "will take every step that is necessary and appropriate". "And we will

E Clear, firm message to Pak

WITH THE world rallying behind India, the government is sending several options, military and diplomatic. Rajnath Singh's promise of a "strong response" is a firm message to Pakistan which has refused to turn off the terror tap.

not only trace those who perpetrated this incident. We will also

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United in grief: Kin of IB officer in Bengal, IAF corporal in Arunachal

SWEETY KUMARI & DEBRAJ DEB
KOLKATA, AGARTALA, APRIL 23

ALL MORNING, there has been a steady stream of visitors pouring into the Mishra residence on Baghmundi Road, ward number 5 of Purulia's Jhalda town, and the house of Tage Haiyang at Taging village in Arunachal Pradesh's Lower Subansiri district. Although in two different parts of India, both sets of visitors have



Manish Ranjan Mishra, 41; (right) Tage Haiyang, 30

one thing in common — neither knows what to say to the families

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Pak denies any role, India points out cross-border attack links

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

A DAY after 25 tourists and a local resident were killed in a terror attack in J&K's Pahalgam, Pakistan claimed that it had "nothing to do with it" — a denial that left Indian officials unconvinced with initial investigations suggesting the presence of "foreign nationals" among the attackers.

Later, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri underlined that "cross-border linkages of the terrorist attack" were brought out in the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) meeting Wednesday.

"We have absolutely nothing to do with it. We reject terrorism in all its forms and everywhere," Pakistan Defence Minister Khwaja Asif told a Pakistani TV channel when asked about the deadliest terror attack on civilians in India since Mumbai 26/11. Pakistan's Foreign Ministry spokesperson said, "We are concerned at the loss of tourists' lives in an attack in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir. We extend our condolences to the next ones of the deceased and wish the injured a speedy recovery."

Significantly, the attack comes a week after Pakistan Army chief General Asim Munir's statement that Kashmir is Islamabad's "jugular vein". The remark had drawn a sharp response from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) at the time, and is now being viewed in Delhi as a "preemptive threat".

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5 terrorists, including 3 from Pak, behind attack, indicates probe

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY, MAHENDER SINGH MANRAL & BASHAARAT MASOOD
NEW DELHI, SRINAGAR, APR 23

AT LEAST five terrorists, including three from Pakistan, are suspected to have opened fire on tourists at the Baisaran valley meadow in Pahalgam Tuesday, *The Indian Express* has learnt.

According to sources, eyewitness accounts and intelligence reports suggest that at least two of the attackers are suspected to be local militants.

"The Urdu that they (the foreign terrorists) spoke is from certain parts of Pakistan... At least two local militants are suspected to be accompanying them," an officer from the security establishment told *The Indian Express*.

Authorities have released sketches of at least three terrorists

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Shah at the attack site near Pahalgam, Wednesday, PTI.

J&K TERROR ATTACK

WON'T SPARE CULPRITS: SHAH 3 THANE COUSINS AMONG DEAD

VILLAGE MOURNS ITS 'BRAVEHEART' 'RED COLOUR ON PAPA'S HEAD'

PAGES 4, 10, 11, 19

Tourists clamour to leave Valley, Omar says heartbreaking

NAVEED IQBAL
SRINAGAR, APRIL 23

"OUR GUESTS are unfortunately returning to their homes wrapped in shrouds." Speaking at the funeral of Adil Hussain, the only local killed in the Pahalgam terror attack, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah had this to say about 25 tourists from across the country being gunned down a day earlier.

The impact of the attack on Kashmir Valley became clearer on Wednesday, as tourists clamoured to take the first flight or train home and popular destinations saw a sharp drop in footfall. Srinagar and several parts of J&K, meanwhile, observed a shutdown of schools and businesses to express solidarity with the victims. Senior government officials

BUSINESS AS USUAL

By UNNAY



said "50-60%" of bookings for this season had been cancelled. At Pahalgam, where the daily footfall is 15,000 or more, just 100-odd tourists remained on Wednesday.

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'Sin to stay silent': Srinagar to Jammu, towns shut down, people turn out in solidarity, protest attack

PAGE 1 ANCHOR

BASHAARAT MASOOD, NAVEED IQBAL & ARUN SHARMA
PAHALGAM, SRINAGAR, JAMMU, APRIL 23

IT'S A sin to stay silent; those who come to enjoy with their families should not have to return in a coffin; all of Kashmir is speaking in one voice, rejecting violence.

A day after the terror attack that killed 26 civilians in Pahalgam, the chorus from the ground in Jammu and Kashmir is loud and clear.

From Pahalgam to Srinagar in Kashmir, and Kishwar to Doda in Jammu, massive protests and shutdowns were observed Wednesday, marking the first time in three decades that militant killings have triggered outrage on such a scale.

In Pahalgam, around 800 people — many of them from the tourism and hospitality industry — observed a total shutdown and



Shutdown in Srinagar to protest the terror attack. Shuaib Masoodi

took to the streets holding placards condemning the killings. "We want to tell the world and the attackers that we stand with the tourists," Mushtaq Ahmad, president of the Pahalgam Hoteliers and Guesthouses Association, told *The Indian Express*. "The protests were necessary to tell the attackers that such attacks can't be tolerated. It is not that our livelihood has been hit, we can have other means, but it's a sin to stay silent."

In Srinagar, the Ghanta Ghar (clock tower) in Lal Chowk

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Govt suspends Indus treaty, expels Pak advisors, cancels visas, closes Attari

further reduced to 30. In 2019, the High Commissioners were withdrawn - Pakistan made the first move following the abrogation of Article 370, and India followed suit.

Briefing reporters Wednesday, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) met on the evening of Tuesday to discuss the suspension of the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. It was attended by Home Minister Amit Shah, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval, and the Secretary, and Secretaries of the ministries of Home, Defence, Finance and External Affairs.

"The CCS was briefed in detail about the terrorist attack on April 22 in the Indian city of Baramulla, 25 Indians and one Nepali citizen were killed, A number of others sustained injuries. The CCS condemned the attack in the strongest terms and expressed its deepest condolences to the families of the victims and hoped for the early recovery of the injured," he said.

"Strong expressions of support and solidarity have been received from many governments around the world, which have unequivocally condemned this terror attack. The CCS recorded its appreciation for such sentiments, which reflect zero tolerance for terrorism," he said.

"In the briefing to the CCS, the

cross-border linkages of the terrorist attack were brought out. It was noted that this attack came in the wake of the successful holding of elections in Union Territory and its steady progress towards economic growth and development," he said.

Recognising the seriousness of this terrorist attack, the CCS decided upon the following measures, Misri said, and listed five retaliatory steps.

First, "the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 will be held in abeyance with immediate effect, until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism."

India had already initiated the process of scrapping the Indus Waters Treaty - it had survived three wars and terror attacks including the Mumbai 26/11 in 2008 and Pulwama in 2019 - in the last couple of years.

On August 30 last year, India had sent a formal notice to Pakistan seeking a "review" of the Indus Waters Treaty. The notice was issued under Article XII (3) of the treaty. Earlier, in January 2023, India had issued a notice to Pakistan for modification of the treaty. The 2024 review notice was qualitatively different and a step higher than the 2023 notice.

Now, they have decided to set it aside and made it conditional to Pakistan's actions on terrorist infrastructure.

Second, Misri said, "the

Integrated Check Post Attari will be closed with immediate effect. Those who have crossed over with valid endorsements may return through that route before 01 May 2025." This will impact businessmen and Pakistan nationals who have come to India with the Wagah border, on foot. This will include medical patients. They have been given a week's time. Third, Pakistani nationals will not be permitted to travel to India under the SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme (SVES) visas. Any SVES visas issued in the past to Pakistani nationals will be cancelled. Currently, any Pakistani national currently in India under SVES has 48 hours to leave India," he said. The SVES was launched in 1992. The leaders at the Fourth Summit (Islamabad, 29-31 March 1998), while realising the importance of having people-to-people contact, among the peoples of SAARC countries, decided that certain categories of dignitaries should be exempted to a special travel document, which would exempt them from visas within the region.

As directed by the Summit, the Council of Ministers regularly kept under review the list of entitled categories. Currently, the list included 24 categories of entitled persons, which include dignitaries, judges of higher courts, parliamentarians, senior officials, businessmen, journalists, sportsmen.

Fourth, Misri said, "the Defence/Military, Naval and Air Advisors in the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi are declared Personae Non Grata. They have a week to leave India. India will be withdrawing its own Defence/Naval/Air Advisors from the Indian High Commission in Islamabad. These posts in the respective High Commissions will be replaced by five support staff of the Service Advisors will also be withdrawn from both High Commissions."

This is a significant step as they were viewed as official channels of communication between the armed forces and the intelligence agencies of the two countries.

Fifth, he said, "The overall strength of the High Commissions will be brought down to 30 from the present 55 through further reductions, to be effected by 01 May 2025."

This would include the expelled defence services officers and personnel and their staff. This reduced strength, by almost half, would mean that there will be skeletal staff at the missions in Delhi and Islamabad.

Misri said "the CCS reviewed the overall security situation and directed all forces to maintain high vigil. It resolved that the perpetrators of the attack will be brought to justice and their sponsors held to account. As

with the recent extradition of Tahawwur Rana, India will be unrelenting in the pursuit of those who have committed acts of terrorism, or conspired to make them possible."

Faced with the deadliest terror attack on civilians in the country since the 26/11 attacks, New Delhi looked at a bouquet of options before taking the call. The couple took a flight to Kashmir from Delhi.

According to Narwal's friends and neighbours, Narwal was also looking forward to celebrating his 27th birthday on May 1, for which they had planned a grand event. Two days later, he was scheduled to travel to Kochi, where he was based, along with Himanshi.

But on Wednesday evening, outside Narwal's home in Sector 7 of GT Road in Karnal city, decorative hangings, henna stains on the walls and a garland of mango leaves at the entrance bore witness to what had been. There were also the white texts and trails of despair that echoed to the reality.

"I never imagined my grandson would leave me like this," said Narwal's grandfather, Hawa Singh, who retired from the BSF before serving with Haryana Police. "He always wanted to join

asked if he [Narwal] was Muslim. When he said no, the man shot him dead." On Wednesday evening, as the last rites were being conducted at Narwal's hometown of Karnal in Haryana, she said, "We never thought this trip would turn into a nightmare."

Late last month, Indian Navy officer Lieutenant Vinay Narwal took leave for 40 days for his wedding and birthday celebrations. On April 4, he got engaged to Himanshi, who is pursuing a PhD. Following their wedding days later, the couple took a flight to Kashmir from Delhi.

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the defence forces since his college days. He could not clear the Combined Defence Services examination, so he took the Services Selection Board examination and got into the Navy three years ago."

Narwal's father Rajesh Kumar (54) works as a superintendent at the Customs department in Panipat and his mother Asha Devi (51) is a homemaker. His twin sister is preparing for the civil services examination in Delhi.

Family members said Narwal's wedding was fixed with Himanshi, who also conducted online coaching classes for students, around two months ago. "His 27th birthday falls on May 1. Now, that date will forever haunt us," said Narwal's father, Rajesh Kumar. Himanshi's father, Sunil Kumar, said: "Days ago, I adorned her hands with henna and chura (bridal bangles). Today, I have no words to console her."

Vinay's sister, Shristi, asked, "What was my brother's father saying?"

Later, as Narwal's body arrived, the huge crowd that had gathered started raising slogans: "Bharat Mata Ki Jai", "Vinay Narwal Arun Rate", "Pakistan Murda Ka".

The cremation in Model Township Puri was attended by Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, Speaker Harinder Kalyan, Ministers Shyam Singh Rana and Harpal Singh Cheema, and senior officials including representatives of the Indian Navy.

"The government stands with you. We will ensure swift justice," Saini said.

According to Narwal's friends and neighbours, Narwal had initially planned to visit Switzerland for the honeymoon but switched to Kashmir after he was denied permission to go abroad.

"For the wedding festivities went on for 10 days. He was such a lovely boy," said Narwal's next-door neighbour, Seema Sharma, said. "It all happened so suddenly, like someone's evil eye had struck them. I can't imagine what his family is going through."

Narwal was born in Bhushi village in Karnal, but the family shifted to Sector 7 in the city around 15 years ago. He studied at Saint Kabir School in Karnal and did his Bachelor's in Engineering in Delhi.

Earlier Wednesday, Karnal MLA Jagmohan Anand and Minister of Agriculture, Sushil Kumar, reached Narwal's residence and met his family members. In a statement, spokesperson for the Navy said, "Adm Dinesh K Tripathi, IFCNS, 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 condolences to the family during this moment of unimaginable grief."

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• Kin of IB officer, IAF corporal

that have just seen the lives of their young sons being snuffed out by the terror attack in Baramulla in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir.

Manish Ranjan Mishra, 41, and Tage Haiyang, 30, were among the 26 men - mostly tourists but also some who were shot dead by unidentified gunmen in Pahalgam, one of Kashmir's most popular tourist spots. The attack has drawn widespread condemnation both inside and outside India.

While Manish was a section officer in the Intelligence Bureau and working in Hyderabad, Haiyang was a corporal in the Indian Air Force's Srinagar base. The oldest of three sons of Mangalesh Mishra, a retired headmaster of Jhalda Hindi High School whose family is originally from Rohitas in Bihar, Manish joined the IB in 2014-15.

He was in Jammu and Kashmir for a pilgrimage to the Vaishno Devi Temple with his wife and two young children and was meant to head there from Kashmir when the attack occurred. His family said, adding that they were meant to join him at the shrine.

"He was shot dead in front of his shocked wife and children, his younger brother Vineet, 36, says, his voice shaking in a soft spoke. "The news reached us Tuesday afternoon. They were on their way to the Vaishno Devi temple from Kashmir... We too had begun our journey, eager to join them, only to be forced back by this devastating news."

Those who knew him, remember him as calm, polite and soft spoken. "Always the teachers' delight," Sanjay Gupta, a teacher officer, says.

Similar grief and shock now engulf the house of Tage Haiyang in Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang village. Posted in Srinagar for the last five years in IAF's

ground staff and married for just about a year, Haiyang had only been transferred to Assam and was enjoying a holiday with his wife before joining air force base at Dibrugarh when the attack occurred.

"We were in shock yesterday," his younger brother told to Laling told the media. "We tried to get in touch with our sister-in-law but she was severely traumatised - they killed him in front of her."

While he was lying was studying at Don Bosco College, Itanagar, some five years ago that Haiyang came across an advertisement for the IAF and immediately decided to appear for an interview despite his family's advice against it. He got the job and joined the forces even before he took the final examination.

"He's always been talented, always excelling in his studies. We told him to pursue higher education but he was interested in the armed forces," his brother says, adding that his older brother was in the Indian Army.

At Jhalda town, Manish's family and friends have gathered at his family said, adding that they were meant to join him at the shrine.

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• 2 terrorists, including 3 from Pak, behind attack: Probe

and announced a reward of Rs 20 lakh for any information about the terror attack.

Highly placed sources said one of the suspects is believed to have been involved in an attack on an IAF convoy, which claimed the life of a corporal rank personnel last year. The other is believed to have been from Bijbehara and Thokpora, Kulgam. They went to Pakistan in 2017 and returned to the Valley last year. Information has been received that they received training in the region. They were associated with the Jaish-e-Mohammed, and initial investigation suggests that the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish al adideen executed this attack," said a source from a central agency.

Sources, however, said these were all based on inputs and it is yet to be confirmed if they were actually involved. Sources also said much of initial information is based on the sighting of eyewitnesses and the fact that they were verified with concrete evidence.

Another source says they are probing the involvement of a top Lashkar commander Saifullah Kasuri aka Saifullah Khalid, who has been involved in several terror attacks for nearly two decades now. He is a close aide of 26/11 Mumbai attack mastermind Hafiz Saeed, sources said.

All attackers are believed to have been in the higher reaches of the Pir Panjal range, and search operations are underway by the Army, the central paramilitary forces and J&K police.

The attackers are suspected to have had on body cameras - "A normal tourist would not have a camera," said a police officer from the J&K police said.

"All attacks in Jammu in the past three years have been shot through body or gun-mounted cameras. These devices are used for propaganda purposes, but they have come out with propaganda material using the footage," this officer said.

It's still not clear how the attackers entered Kashmir and for how long they have been in the Valley. "It is still being ascertained. There are indications based on existing vulnerabilities on the border," he said.

der, and some inputs that have been received, but nothing is confirmed. Agencies are verifying the details, and the border is being checked for signs of infiltration," an officer said.

A team of senior National Investigation Agency (NIA) officers reached the crime scene on Wednesday. The agency is likely to take over the investigation from the local police. The FIR filed in connection with the attack states,

The police station has received information that unidentified terrorists, the direction of their masters sitting across the border and by acquiring illegal weapons, opened indiscriminate fire on tourists."

"A team of senior officers of the NIA, led by an Inspector General-rank officer, has reached Pahalgam and will visit the crime scene. They have been asked to provide assistance to the local police and examine statements of all witnesses," a source said.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah visited the Baisaram meadow, the site of the attack, and also held security review meeting with the officers of the Intelligence Bureau and Army in Srinagar. He also met victims of the attack.

Shot in head and chest

Calling it "cold-blooded murders", a senior officer probing the attack told *The Indian Express* that most of the victims were shot in the head and chest. "At least 12 victims had head injuries from close range," another officer said.

The attackers appeared to have the jungle and went back in once the camouflage was over. "We found a motorbike without a number plate nearby, but it is unlikely that this was used to ferry the terrorists," said an officer probing the attack. He described the area as a meadow where tents and plastic chairs have been kept for tourists, who come and roam around. Some local vendors sell kahwa, chips and biscuits, but the area is largely populated by tourists, who either walk from the Pahalgam market 5-6 km away or

come on horseback.

"This is a large and dense jungle that connects the Pahalgam one side to Chandanwari on the other. Depending on where the terrorists fled, they could have even reached TRF," the officer said.

Asked why security agencies didn't pick up the movement of terrorists in such a major tourist spot, the officer said the modus operandi of the terrorists has changed drastically, making it difficult to keep tabs. "For example, there is not a single local tourist active in the entire Anantnag district," he said. "We had inputs about some movement, but not in this particular area. We were anticipating an attempt to carry out a terror attack on the railways or non-local workers, and we had taken preventive measures accordingly," he said.

"These terrorists operate in small groups and do not come out of the jungles even in minus 10 degrees Celsius. They don't use any gadgets, so there is no possibility of gathering technical intelligence. Besides, they keep on moving. For example, if there is input about the presence of a group of terrorists in the forests of Sonamarg, by the time we respond, they have already shifted to another area. Within a few days, they could be in the upper reaches of Pahalgam or even Bandipora. It is all covered through the jungles," the officer said.

He said the influx of tourists, especially in Pahalgam, is massive. "There is not a single parking spot available. People have been driving straight to Pahalgam with their families. The tourists also take ponies to travel to different places around town; it is difficult to keep track," he said.

Another police officer said the attackers appear to have infiltrated through the forest, having connected through mountains and dense forests to many places and provides a natural shelter for militants," a senior police officer said.

"The militants can move through forests towards Kolemarg and Kishtwar. They can also move towards Balatal and Sonamarg the other side," he said.

• 'Sin to stay silent': Srinagar to Jammu, towns shut

became the focal point of protests as politicians, traders and civil society members convened to collectively condemn the attack. Dozens of tourists, members from different hoteliers' associations in Kashmir urged people not to cancel their Valley visit.

As silent march by members of the civil society took place at Abdullah Bridge in Srinagar, where protesters were gathered in solidarity with the victims' families. "It is terrible that unarmed civilians bear the brunt of situations and policies that they have no control over," said Anura Agila, a senior lawyer and leader of the protest. "A person who chooses to come here to have a few moments of joy with their families should not have to go back in a coffin."

The protest will head across the Jammumarg, too, by people cutting across religious and political lines. At 3.30 pm, employees of the J&K government and Public Sector

Undertakings across the region marked two minutes of silence in respect and solidarity. In the Muslim-dominated areas of Kishtwar and Doda, protesters held demonstrations demanding "strictest action" against the attackers.

In a post on X, J&K Minister Omar Abdullah called the attack "barbaric and senseless act of terrorism," saying it had "no place in our society."

"We condemn it in the strongest possible terms. No moment the precious lives lost. No amount of money can ever compensate the lives of loved ones, but as a mark of support and solidarity, the J&K Government announces an ex-gratia of Rs 10 lakh each for the families of the deceased, Rs 2 lakh for those seriously injured and Rs 1 lakh for those with minor injuries," he said, adding that arrangements for the transport of victims back to their homes have been made.

• Pak denies role, India points to cross-border attack links

Delhi is also cynical about Islamabad's denial on Wednesday evening as the Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow group of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror outfit, is said to have claimed responsibility for the terror attack. According to security officials, the statements of victims and eyewitnesses indicate the role of at least four terrorists, including two believed to be "foreign nationals," in the attack.

Last week, addressing the Overseas Pakistani Convention in Islamabad last week, Munir had said: "Our stance is absolutely clear; it (Kashmir) was our jugular vein, it will be our jugular vein, we will not forget it. We will not leave our Kashmiri brothers in their heroic struggle."

Responding to questions on Munir's remarks, MEA's official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, had said: "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."

Sources said India is looking at all strategic and security options now - as was evident from Prime Minister Narendra Modi's quick meeting soon after the terror attack in Delhi Wednesday morning after he visited Saudi Arabia. During the meeting, Foreign Secretary who did not accompany Modi to Saudi Arabia, briefed the Prime Minister, NSA Ajit Doval and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar about the situation in Kashmir.

• There will be a strong response, says Rajnath

also visited the Government Medical College (GMC) Hospital in Anantnag in the afternoon and met some of the injured admitted there.

After laying wreaths on the bodies of those killed in the attack, Shah, in a post on X, said: "With a heavy heart, paid last respects to the deceased of the Pahalgam terror attack. Bharat will not bend to terror. The culprits of this dastardly terror attack will be spared."

The Home Minister later interacted with families of those killed and survivors of the attack. He assured them that the security forces would leave no stone unturned to bring the perpetrators to account.

In New Delhi, BJP sources said there are growing calls for retribution and the attack "perpetrators and actors behind the scenes" will be given "a befitting reply."

Party sources underlined that the world was rallying behind India - from US President Donald Trump's phone call to Prime Minister Modi to statements from Israel and even Taliban-ruled Afghanistan - and the government would soon deliver a "a strong response."

At the BJP headquarters, leaders have been flooded with messages from the public, calling for a befitting reply. Several party leaders linked the Pahalgam terror attack to Pakistan Army chief Asim Munir's recent remark of Kashmir being Islamabad's "jugular vein". The remark, which had drawn a sharp response from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), is now being viewed in Delhi as a "preemptive threat."

Islamabad last week, Munir had said: "Our stance is absolutely clear; it (Kashmir) was our jugular vein, it will be our jugular vein, we will not forget it. We will not leave our Kashmiri brothers in their heroic struggle."

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Responding to questions on Munir's remarks, MEA's official spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal, had said: "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."

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29 APR. 2 PM | 22 APR. 11 AM

GTB NAGAR, DELHI

17 APR. 6 PM | 30 APR. 8 AM

AHMEDABAD	BENGALURU	BHOPAL	CHANDIGARH	HYDERABAD	JAIPUR	JODHPUR	LUCKNOW	PUNE
7 MAY	6 MAY	6 MAY	18 MAY	7 MAY	7 MAY	7 MAY	6 MAY	7 MAY

हिन्दी माध्यम **दिल्ली** 6 MAY. 11 AM | 22 APR. 11 AM **जयपुर** 10 APR **जोधपुर** 17 MAR

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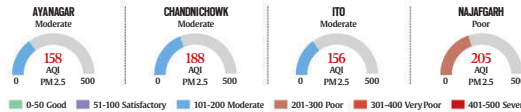
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4 THE CITY



PAHALGAM TERROR ATTACK

Saved by sheer luck, was just 10 steps away from meadow's exit, recalls couple

SAMAN HUSAIN
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

"WE HAD just reached Pahalgam. Everything was so serene. We bought *bhelpuris* and were sitting in a quiet corner, soaking in the view when suddenly, we heard gunshots. People started screaming and running," says Mihir Soni, who along with his newlywed wife Komal found a corner to hide before making their way out of Baisaran — the meadow where 26 people were gunned down by militants on Tuesday.

Mihir (26) and Komal (25) from Jaipur were among the many survivors who landed at Terminal 3 of Delhi Airport on Wednesday. Many others, all tourists from Kashmir who were lucky enough not to be at Baisaran at the time of the attack, also arrived at the airport, cutting short their trip.

What saved them, says Komal, was sheer luck. "We were just 10 steps away from the exit of the meadow. We hired a pony, paid Rs 4,000 and got out of there as fast as we could. On the way to Pahalgam market, there were no security personnel, there was one to help us."

It was only when they reached Pahalgam market that the security personnel came to know about the attack, she adds.

Komal recalls that in the thick of the chaos, they had seen Navy officer Lieutenant Vinay Narwal and his wife Himanshi at the meadow. "They walked right past us. They had arrived at the same time and bought *bhelpuris* from the same vendor before us. We later heard that the officer was killed."

Abhishek Kakran (33) and his family, who were in the area, saw bodies being carried away in front of their eyes. They were at Chandanwari market, 2 km away from the spot where the attack took place. "We saw bodies and the injured were being carried away. By then, news had already reached home. Our relatives had started calling but couldn't reach us because there was no network. The market started shutting down," says Abhishek.

"We went on to cancel our stay. The local residents were extremely helpful — the drivers, the travel agent, everyone was there was us," he adds.

Mohammad Ismail (40) and

Survivors, tourists from Kashmir land at Delhi Airport, cutting short trips



(From top) Newlyweds Mihir and Komal; Gurgaon-based couple Iyoti and Sachin Garg, and Mohammad Ismail and Ayub Peerzade at the airport on Wednesday. Saman Husain

Ayub Peerzade (39) from Thane, who had taken a train to Kashmir with two other college friends, says they visited Pahalgam a day before the attack.

"We were in Pahalgam till 5 pm on 6 pm. On Tuesday, while walking around Lal Chowk in Srinagar, we sensed something was wrong — shops were shutting down, people were rushing. Then we came to know what has happened... I was numb," says Ayub.

Back at Srinagar airport, chaos gave way to caution. "There were long queues, so much security. A camp had been set up outside for people to sit," Mohammad says.

Another group who landed at Delhi was a family of five from Hyderabad's Sangareddy Township. They had visited Kashmir as a part of a larger pilgrim group of 45.

Rajita (42) describes the dual disasters that upended their trip. "We had gone for *darshan* at Jwala Devi temple. On way, a cloudburst in Ramban blocked the roads. We had to spend a night on the roadside. It was tough, but we pushed through." But when the news of the terror attack came, "we booked our flights immediately. We planned to visit Pahalgam too... now, I thank God that rain stopped us from going there."

Iyoti (43) and Sachin Garg (50), a couple from Gurgaon, were in Gulmarg when the attack took place. "We had visited Pahalgam before Gulmarg. We were lucky. But even from a distance, we felt the fear. Local residents were scared too — not just for themselves but that tourism will be affected," says Sachin.

The DHCBA strongly condemns the dastardly and cowardly terrorist attack on the lives of innocent tourists at Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir and such heinous acts challenging the unity, integrity,

and sovereignty of our Nation," read an official circular.

"The members are requested to wear black ribbons while appearing in the court, as a mark of protest against this terrorist attack," the circular added.

The New Delhi Bar Association (NDBA) in Patiala House Court requested lawyers to assemble in the Central Hall at the Court complex to pay homage to the "departed souls".

"It is with profound sorrow that, on behalf of NDBA members, we express our deepest condolence to the families of innocent citizens who lost their lives in the 'Brutal Terrorist Massacre' in Pahalgam, Kashmir on 22/04/2025," read the NDBA circular.

"We stand in solidarity with the victims and their families and strongly condemn the cowardly act of violence," it added.

Pray that he has the best afterlife ever, says wife of Navy officer killed in attack

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

KISSING THE coffin of Navy officer Lieutenant Vinay Narwal, who was among those killed in the terrorist attack in Pahalgam on Tuesday, his wife Himanshi broke down, as the coffin was placed at the Delhi Airport on Wednesday afternoon. The couple had got married on April 16 and were in Pahalgam for their honeymoon when tragedy struck.

"I pray that his soul rests in peace and he has the best afterlife ever. We will make him proud everyday..." Himanshi said, as Navy officers, her family members and Delhi Chief



Chief Minister Rekha Gupta with Himanshi at the Delhi Airport on Wednesday. ANI

Minister Rekha Gupta gathered around her. The wreath-laying ceremony for Lt Narwal, who was among

the 26 people killed in Pahalgam, was held at the Cargo Terminal of the airport. Commodore Saurabh Thakur and other Navy

officials paid tribute to Narwal at the airport. Officers also accompanied the family to Karnal for Lt Narwal's final rites.

Gupta, along with Cabinet colleague Ashish Sood, and Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva, were present at the airport when the bodies of many those killed in the attack reached the city.

Assuring support to their kin, Gupta said, "The government of India stands with you in this time of crisis and will provide every possible support to help you restart their lives."

Later in the day, Gupta announced that all public programmes of the Delhi government would be cancelled. "Paying tribute to the civilians

martyred in the cowardly terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, I postpone all public programs to be held on 23 April and 24 April," she posted on X.

Delhi BJP meanwhile, said in a statement, "The brutal killing of 27 Indians by terrorists in Pahalgam, Jammu & Kashmir, yesterday has plunged the entire nation into mourning, sorrow, and outrage. There is immense grief and anger among the people of Delhi as well as leaders and workers of the Delhi BJP who are united with the people of the country in mourning."

The Delhi BJP, too, has cancelled all scheduled political programmes for two days.

Prayer meetings, candlelight vigils held to condemn Pahalgam terror



At a candlelight vigil held by AAP at Jantar Mantar on Wednesday. Amit Mehra

PRAGYNESH
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

DELHI SAW candlelight vigils and prayer meetings on Wednesday as hundreds gathered to pay homage to the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack.

At a candlelight vigil held by AAP at Jantar Mantar, party's Delhi convenor Saurabh Bharadwaj lashed out at the BJP-led Centre. "Since 2014, every year, a terror incident has happened in our country. You took away the law and order of Kashmir by making it a Union territory and removing Article 370. This is a failure of the government," Bharadwaj said, adding that the attack was the result of an intelligence failure.

A group led by right-wing Hindu Jagran Manch, meanwhile, raised slogans against the Pakistani Army while chanting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's name. "There might have been intelligence failure. But the Opposition is doing politics," said Dinesh Jangra, a member.

A prayer meet by Bhartiya Sarva Dharma Sansad was held at the Imam house on IG Marg.

"Peace is a land of peace. Anyone who believes in any religion has to stand up today against this," said Acharya Goswami, who attended the meet with religious leaders from other communities.

OUTSIDE PAKISTAN HIGH COMMISSION



Security personnel on alert across New Delhi on Wednesday.

Black ribbons, assemblies: Lawyers condemn attack

NIRBHAY THAKUR
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

LAWYERS ACROSS Delhi on Wednesday condemned the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam — the deadliest such incident involving civilians in the country since the Mumbai 26/11 shooting — in which 26 people were killed on Tuesday.

Condemning the terror strike, the Delhi High Court Bar Association (DHCBA) in Patiala House Court requested lawyers to wear black ribbons while appearing in court.

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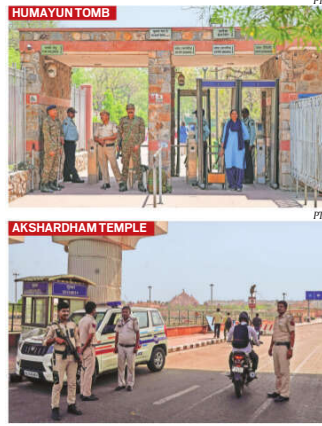
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"We stand in solidarity with the victims and their families and strongly condemn the cowardly act of violence," it added.



HUMAYUN TOMB

AKSHARDHAM TEMPLE

NBW against Patkar in defamation case moved by L-G

NIRBHAY THAKUR
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

A DELHI court on Wednesday issued a non-bailable warrant (NBW) against social activist Medha Patkar for not furnishing probation bonds in a 24-year-old defamation case moved against her by Delhi Lieutenant Governor (L-G) VK Saxena.

The Delhi High Court had on Tuesday refused Patkar's plea to stay for two weeks the proceed-

ings for execution of a probation bond linked to the case, and had asked her to approach the trial court. "On the next date, if the convict fails to comply with the terms of order on sentence dated 08/04/2025, the court will be constrained to reconsider the benevolent sentence and will have to alter the order on sentence," noted Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Vishal Singh of Saket court in his order dated April 23.

"The present application asking for a stay on the execution of

the probation bond) is frivolous and vexatious and is only calculated to hoodwink the court. The present application is, therefore, dismissed," he added.

On April 8, ASJ Singh had granted the activist a one-year probation in the case, noting that Patkar, the leader of Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA), had received awards for her work and that the offence committed by her was not grave enough to warrant imprisonment.

Earlier, the court had dis-

missed Patkar's appeal against her conviction in the defamation case filed in 2000, where she had allegedly called Saxena — who then headed an NGO in Gujarat — a "coward" and alleged his involvement in hawala transactions.

On May 24, 2024, a magistrate court had held Patkar's statements defamatory and sentenced her to a five-month jail term on July 1. However, ASJ Singh had suspended the sentence and granted her bail on July 29 last year.

The defamation case stems

from a press release issued by Patkar on November 25, 2000. While Saxena's NGO had actively supported the Sardar Sarovar Project of the Gujarat government, the NBA was leading a movement in opposition. In the press release, Patkar had alleged that Saxena, who was then the president of NGO National Council of Civil Liberties, was supporting the NBA in secrecy. She alleged that he had given a cheque to NBA and it bounced. The case was now heard on May 3.

REGULAR DISCUSSIONS on mob lynchings of Muslims across India and communal riots, leading them to procure arms and ammunition to prepare for "jihad" through PM Kisan scheme; encouraging youngsters to "avenge atrocities" on Muslims; conducting a physical training programme in Uttar Pradesh; and preparing local bombs — This was how an Al Qaeda-inspired terror module, set up by a "radicalised" Jharkhand-based group, allegedly planned to ensure safety, four chargesheet filed by the Delhi Police Special Cell before a court in February has said, it is learnt.

Officers said the Special Cell has claimed that two persons who were a part of the module were "beneficiaries of PM Kisan" scheme and had used the money to buy arms for terror activities.

From alleged weapon procurement in Ranchi to receiving physical training at Bulandshahr in Uttar Pradesh and weapons training at Bhiwadi on the Rajasthan-Haryana border, the

DELHI POLICE SPECIAL CELL CHARGESHEET

Al Qaeda-inspired terror module: How Jharkhand-based group was planning terror attacks in India

SAKSHICHAND & NIRBHAY THAKUR
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

Special Cell chargesheet has outlined how 11 people from different villages of Ranchi allegedly got together to plan a pan-India terror conspiracy, they added.

The Special Cell filed a supplementary chargesheet in the case Monday. "Requisite sanction (under Section) 7 of Explosive Substances Act against accused... has been filed by way of supplementary chargesheet," stated the April 21 order of Additional Sessions Judge Hardeep Kaur of Patiala House Court.

"The same is taken on record and is tagged with main chargesheet... So far as sanction (under Section) 45 of UAPA is concerned, learned Additional Public Prosecutor for state submits that all steps to obtain sanction under Section 45 of UAPA have been taken... but the sanction is still awaited," ASJ Kaur added.

The accused have been identified as Anamul Ansari (32), Shahbaz Ansari (32), Aliat Ansari (35), Hasan Ansari (32), Arshad Khan (26), Umar Farooq (20), Dr Ishiyaq Ahmad alias Captain (49), Mohd Rizwan (40), Moti-Ul-Rehman (40), Mohd Rahmatullah (30) and Faizan Ahmad (47).

Ishiyaq Ahmad was radicalised in his college days, said po-

lice. "In 2021, he came in contact with a person on Telegram, using the ID 'Big Cat'. They shared the same ideology and believed that atrocities are being done on Muslims in India and wanted to avenge the same. 'Big Cat' asked Ahmad through chat to prepare more people physically and mentally to fight for Jihad."

The Special Cell has claimed that the accused would build shelters in secluded places to train young Muslims without being noticed by the police. It added that during training at Bulandshahr, Ahmad met 'Big Cat' in Delhi and discussed procuring weapons.

"The 'Big Cat' sent an arms dealer to Hazaribagh for a meeting. Accused... finalised the purchase of AK-47 at Rs 5-6 lakh," it alleged, said officers.

Officers said the chargesheet has alleged that the accused stayed at a rented accommodation at Bhiwadi on the Rajasthan-Haryana border. On August 21 last year, they received "dummy weapon training".

They were arrested a day later, the police said, and their hands, hand grenades, rifles, and bomb-making material were found on them.

Saini inspects Haryana's first 'Complete Streets' initiative

ABHIMANYU HAZARIKA
GURGAON, APRIL 23

HARYANA CHIEF Minister Nabaj Singh Saini on Wednesday inspected the state's first 'Complete Streets' initiative, also referred to as 'Model Streets', in Gurgaon's Udyog Vihar.

Comprising 5-m-long pavements on either side, the project has been implemented along Sanath Road and Gali 7 in Udyog Vihar, covering a stretch of 2.4 km with a width of 30 m. This road connects Old Delhi Road to the Airtel office on National Highway 48.

The project, worth around Rs 23 crore, was funded by the Gurgaon Metropolitan Development Authority, the

city's civic body, the state district and Raadhika Foundation. Private partners such as Nagaraj, Maruti Suzuki, and SafeExpress have also contributed.

Saini said that the initiative reflects the state government's commitment that every section — be it child, elderly, woman or disabled — should get the right to walk safely and with dignity. "Walking, cycling, or taking the bus in Gurgaon will no longer be just a necessity — it will be a pleasant experience," he added.

The 'Complete Streets' model, he said, will serve as an example not only for Haryana but for the entire country.

Key features of the project include wide and shaded footpaths for pedestrians, safe track for cyclists, bioswales — vege-



The project has come up along Sanath Road and Gali 7 in Udyog Vihar, Gurgaon. Express

tated channels designed to capture, treat, and infiltrate storm water run-off — for rainwater harvesting, and the preservation of 700 mature trees.

In addition, over 20,000 flowering plants have been planted to ensure safety. Four trained street marshals have been deployed around the clock.

When *The Indian Express* visited the spot in the afternoon, vehicular traffic was running smooth. Those waiting for their appointments near the Passport Seva Kendra in the area appreciated the shaded seating available right outside the building. "I hope the streets don't get en-

cumbered or are taken over by bikes during peak hours," a man who works with a tech company in the area said.

PENSION SCHEME TO WOMEN IN DISTRESS

WCD dept identifies 25,000 ineligible women receiving aid

GAYATHRI MANI
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

AS PART of an ongoing verification process, the Women and Child Development (WCD) department has identified around 25,000 ineligible women receiving financial assistance under Delhi Pension Scheme to Women in Distress, said officials.

Under the scheme, the government provides a monthly financial assistance of Rs 2,500 to widows, as well as divorced, separated, abandoned, deserted, and destitute women who are 18 years old and above. Around 3.5 lakh beneficiaries are currently registered under the scheme, said officials.

The department had started the process last October to check for duplicity and verify the eligibility criteria of beneficiaries. "The drive was started to ensure that only eligible women from poor families, especially those who genuinely need the money, avail the financial assistance," said an official.

Officials said that so far, around 60% of the beneficiaries have been verified and the process is ongoing. "During the verification process, we found around 25,000 women who did not meet the criteria and were availing the scheme illegally. They have now been removed from the list of beneficiaries," the official added.

"This is one of the reasons why there has been a delay in disbursing money under this scheme for the last two months. The department has now released the money to three dis-

ALL ABOUT THE SCHEME

₹1,000 cr Budget allocated	3.8 lakh women registered under scheme	60% beneficiaries verified so far
Around 25,000 ineligible beneficiaries identified		
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Widow, divorced, separated, abandoned, deserted or destitute women Aged above 18 Residents of Delhi for a minimum of 5 years Should have single-operated Aadhaar linked account with any bank in NCT of Delhi only Annual income less than ₹1 lakh Should have Aadhaar card Must not be receiving pension or financial assistance from Central or state govt, MCD, NDMC and other governmental or local bodies or any other source 		

tributed funds will be released to the remaining in a few days following the verification process," said the official.

The AAP has accused the BJP government of halting the payment of pension under the scheme and demanded that the money be released immediately.

Speaking to mediapersons on Tuesday, AAP Delhi convenor Saubh Bharadwaj said, "It has been over two months since the BJP government took over the administration in Delhi, yet the most vulnerable sections of society - particularly destitute women - are being neglected. These include widows, women abandoned by their families, or those who are otherwise helpless. Their pension has not been released for the last two months."

He alleged that he has received information that the

government intends to discontinue the scheme. "If you stop a widow's pension, how is she expected to run her home or manage her basic needs? It will become nearly impossible for her to survive," he said.

The scheme was launched in 2010 with women in the 18 to 60 age group scheduled to get a financial assistance of Rs 1,500. In 2017, the eligibility criteria was changed.

Now, an adult beneficiary receives Rs 2,500 for her whole life. In its March Budget, the Delhi BJP government had allocated Rs 1,000 crore for the scheme.

The financial assistance is transferred directly to the beneficiary on a monthly basis through Electronic Clearing Service (ECS) under Reserve Bank of India (RBI) or Public Financial Management System (PFMS).

'HUGE QUANTITY OF SEWAGE ENTERING YAMUNA'

Conduct third-party audits of all 37 STPs: Minister to DJB

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

DELHI WATER Minister Parvesh Sahib Singh on Wednesday directed the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) to conduct a third-party audit of all 37 sewage treatment plants (STPs) in the Capital.

Noting that "a substantial amount of untreated sewage is still entering the Yamuna," the Minister said, "We have directed the DJB to carry out a third-party

audit of all the STPs to get more clarity on the installed treatment capacity and the actual treatment being carried out...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 issued to improve and expand the sewerage treatment network."

The DJB officials also noted that 30 out of the 37 STPs are operated by private companies un-



Parvesh Sahib Singh issued directions Wednesday

der outsourcing arrangements. To this, the Minister instructed all such operators to ensure compliance with installed capacity and quality standards.

During a recent review meeting, the Minister was apprised of the current sewage treatment capacity and status of ongoing rehabilitation and upgradation works of the STPs, according to an official statement by the Minister's office.

Delhi is set to enhance its sewage treatment capacity by 200.5 million gallons per day (MGD) through a combination of new construction and upgradation of existing facilities, as per officials.

This includes 92 MGD from 40 new STPs, 10 MGD from a new STP at Delhi Gate, and 98.5 MGD through the upgradation and capacity increase of 14 existing STPs.

Currently, 18 out of 37 operational STPs are undergoing performance upgrades. Additionally, three new STPs at Sonia Vihar, Delhi Gate, and Okhla are expected to contribute around 47 MGD, significantly boosting the city's sewage treatment infrastructure.

वित्त मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Quarterly Return Monthly Payment (QRMP)

A step towards ease of doing business for small taxpayers having Aggregate Annual Turnover up to ₹ 5 Crore during the F.Y. 2024-25

The eligible taxpayers who wish to avail the QRMP scheme may opt in by performing the following steps on the GST portal (www.gst.gov.in)

Log in to the Taxpayers' Interface

Go to Services > Returns > Opt-in for quarterly return option

Taxpayers already availing QRMP Scheme are not required to reapply for the Scheme

Benefits

- File GST Statements/Returns in FORM GSTR-1 & GSTR-3B just once in a Quarter
- Easily opt in and opt out of the Scheme
- Enjoy the convenience of a Flexible Invoice Furnishing Facility (IFF)
- Pay monthly Tax conveniently using Fixed Sum Method (Pre-filled Challan) or Self-Assessment Method (actual tax due after adjusting ITC) in the first two months of a Quarter
- Self Assessment of ITC & Tax once every Quarter

Last date to opt for QRMP Scheme from Q1 of F.Y. 2025-26 is



30th April, 2025

Eligible registered person can opt in for any quarter from first day of second month of preceding quarter to the last day of the first month of the quarter.

For more details, please refer to Notification No. 81 to 85/2020-Central Tax & Circular No. 143/13/2020-GST all dated 10.11.2020



GST RETURN FILING: Its Fast, Easy and Simplified



Please scan for more details on QRMP SCHEME

Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs

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CBIC India

Ensure 24X7 waste disposal at all landfill sites: CM to officials

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

CM REKHA Gupta chaired a high-level review meeting regarding the status of landfill sites on Wednesday in the presence of the officials concerned from the MCD and the Urban Development Department.

Expressing dissatisfaction with the slow progress at the Ghazipur landfill site, the CM

asked officials to carry out work at ear-footing, to increase the number of modern machines, and ensure round-the-clock waste disposal operation at all three landfill sites. A detailed action plan was presented to speed up work.

Directives have also been issued for the expansion of waste-to-energy plants at Okhla and Tehkhand and promptly start the construction of proposed waste-to-energy plants in Narela and Ghazipur.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform the general public as per the information provided by my client, Mrs. Rajshree Swami, wife of Mr. Arnil Swami, residing at 4803 Raven Bluff Lane, Katy, Texas 77494, U.S.A., that an Apartment bearing No. 902 A, The Magnolias, DLF Phase V, Gurugram-122002 (hereinafter referred to as the said property), was registered in the name of Mr. Arnil Swami, son of Late Mr. Narinder Mohan Swami, and Mrs. Rajshree Swami, wife of Mr. Arnil Swami, both residing at 4803 Raven Bluff Lane, Katy, Texas 77494, U.S.A.

Mr. Arnil Swami passed away on 13.08.2024 vide death certificate bearing state file number 142-24-139845. That Late Mr. Arnil Swami left behind a registered Will vide registration no. 55 dated 31.05.2018 registered with the Sub-Registrar, Gurugram in favor of Mrs. Rajshree Swami with respect to the said property. That on the basis of said will, Mrs. Rajshree Swami has approached the Department of Urban Local Bodies/MCG, Gurugram, for necessary up-dation of record with respect to the aforementioned apartment.

Any person having any objection to the above may submit their representation, if any, to the Department of Urban Local Bodies/MCG, Gurugram, or to the undersigned, within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Sd/-
BHUPINDER YADAV
ADVOCATE
Email: bhupinderadvocate@gmail.com
Mob. No. +91-7873587308



Notice

It is informed to all applicants who applied for the vacant positions of Associate Professor for the Faculty of Pharmacy (U.P.U.M.S. Sahib, Faridkot) in connection with advertisement No. 37/U.P.U.M.S./Paramedical/ Pharmacy-2024-25 dated 20 June, 2024, that the advertisement is hereby cancelled. Remaining positions of the other faculties remain the same.

Registrar

IRCON INTERNATIONAL LIMITED
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e-Tender Notice
e-Tender Number: IRCON/2018/DFCL-CTP-12e-Tender/Disposal of Scrap/08-088 Date: 23.04.2025
Tenders in Single Packet bid System are invited from bidders meeting qualifying requirement for the work as set out below under no. as under: 1. e-Tender for Disposal of M.S. Scrap Materials (Cut Pieces of rails, Channels Plate & beams etc.) & Scrap P-wy Materials (C-Clamps, Fish Plate, Fish plate bolt & nut, ERG etc.) lying at New Archel Depot & New Pajhar Depot at DFCL-CTP-12 Project on ASIS WHERE IS BASIS.
Last Date & Time of Bid Submission: 13.05.2025 at 15:00 Hrs.
For further details, visit website at <https://www.tenders.gov.in/govtprocureapp>. Compendium, if any, would be hosted only on the website. For any clarification, contact the office of undersigned or following General Manager, Plot No. 17/2, Vishnu Nagar, W. Ayappa Temple, address: Ashu Park Road, Patna, Dist. Vaishali, Gujarat-386007. Email: shashank@ircon.com

Ministry of Commerce & Industry
Government of India

Shri Piyush Goyal
Hon'ble Minister for Commerce & Industry,
Government of India

🕒 3:30 pm 📅 Thursday 24th April, 2025

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CAQM CLAMPS DOWN ON POLLUTING VEHICLES

From Nov 1, no entry in Delhi for transport vehicles flouting norms

SOPHIA MATHEW
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

COMENOVEMBER 1, all transport commercial goods vehicles not compliant with BS-VI, CNG, LNG, or EV (electrical vehicle) standards will be banned from entering Delhi, unless the vehicles are registered in the Capital, the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) has directed. As the CAQM issued fresh directions on Wednesday to curb the menace of polluting vehicles, it also cited "limited progress" in imposing end-of-life or over-aged vehicles across Delhi-NCR.

The decision to restrict the transport vehicles, as per the directive, was made "considering the high pollution load from commercial vehicles and the associated ill-effects of emissions owing to such vehicles entering Delhi-NCR."

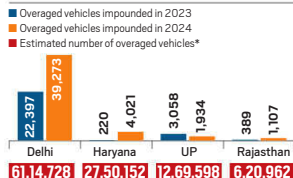
From July 1, fuelling of identified overaged vehicles will be banned across all fuel stations in the city, among other stringent measures announced by the CAQM.

This ban will extend to five high vehicle density (HVD) districts — Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar, and Sonapat — from November 1 and across the rest of NCR from April 1, 2026, as per the CAQM directive. Diesel vehicles, older than 10 years, and petrol vehicles, older than 15 years, are not allowed to ply in the Capital.

Over the last two years, the



OVERAGED VEHICLES IN DELHI-NCR & DATA ON IMPOUNDED VEHICLES



Source: Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas
*As of March 2025

government has resorted to seizing these vehicles and scrapping them, if necessary. The Commission noted that despite several past orders, action on the ground has been sluggish.

Delhi has been piloting a solution involving Automated Number Plate Recognition

(ANPR) camera systems, now being installed at all 520 fuel stations in the city.

These systems capture and display vehicle registration details in real-time. These are integrated with the centralised VAHAN database to identify old vehicles and those lacking a valid Pollution

Under Control Certificate (PUCC), and relay audio alerts when a non-compliant vehicle is detected.

All fuel stations in Delhi are required to install these systems, as per the Commission's latest directive, by June 30, 2025; by October 31 in the five HVD districts; and across the rest of NCR by March 31, 2026. "We will strictly follow the CAQM directions... 95% of the work is complete to install the ANPR cameras. The identification of polluting vehicles at the border entry points will also be intensified," said Delhi Environment Minister Manoj Kumar Singh on Wednesday.

Earlier, the BJP government had planned to stop giving fuel to old vehicles by April 1, but pending structural changes at a few fuel stations delayed the implementation, said officials.

With respect to the restrictions on transport vehicles, exceptions will be made for vehicles carrying essential goods or services, but only until October 31, 2026, after which only CNG, LNG, EV or BS-VI diesel vehicles will be permitted. BS-VI, or Bharat Stage VI, is the latest set of emission standards in India for vehicles, which came into effect on April 1, 2020.

The CAQM has said that the action based on the overaged vehicles needs to be reported by the agencies concerned to the Commission on a monthly basis, and quarterly action taken reports need to be furnished on action taken against polluting vehicles that enter Delhi.



SCORCHING HEAT

Visitors at the India Gate on Wednesday, when Delhi recorded a maximum temperature of 39.6 degrees Celsius. Amit Mehra

CLAT UG 2025 ENTRANCE EXAM

Revise marksheet, list of selected candidates in four weeks: HC to consortium of NLUs

SOHINI GHOSH
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

AFTER EXAMINING 17 disputed questions in the Common Law Admission Test (CLAT) undergraduate entrance exam, the Delhi High Court on Wednesday directed the Consortium of National Law Universities (NLUs) to revise its marksheet and notify the final list of selected candidates within four weeks. In effect, the

17 questions, candidates stand to benefit the most from the revised answer to four questions.

The division bench of Chief Justice D.K. Upadhyaya and Justice Tushar Rao Gedela was dealing with a batch of petitions where the aspirants had disputed the answer key published by the Consortium. While the bench accepted some objections, it also rejected some. The final answer key for the CLAT UG 2025 entrance exam for four paper sets was published on December 7, 2024, after the test was held on December 1, 2024. Initially, a provisional answer key was published on December 2, 2024, and candidates had time to file their objections until 4 pm the next day.

Of the 17 questions the bench examined, it ruled that one was out of the syllabus and held that it be treated as excluded and withdrawn. In two other questions, the Consortium admitted that it had erred. It said that it had given the

Medanta Hospital gets show cause notice in rape case

Gurgaon: The Haryana government has issued a notice to the Medanta Hospital in Gurgaon, seeking its reply on the alleged violation of human dignity and privacy after a flight attendant claimed she was sexually assaulted while on ventilator support at the facility.

The show cause notice to the medical director of the hospital was issued by Gurugram Civil Surgeon Dr. Alka Singh on the directions of Haryana Health and Family Welfare Minister Arvi Singh Rao. Officials said the hospital has been directed to submit its reply within five working days.

A technician of the hospital has been arrested in the case. The woman has alleged that she was admitted to Medanta Hospital on April 5. The next day, a man carried out digital rape on her in the hospital's room, where two other nurses were present but did nothing to stop him, she has claimed. PTI

Wrong option as an answer to one of the two questions without correction or reply.

It further stated that "no fault can be found with the candidates for giving correct or incorrect answers," conceding that consequential benefits may be granted to all the candidates who had attempted this question.

In the second question, the Consortium said "that an error had crept into the various sets handed over to the aspirants."

Amid growing demand for its housing schemes, DDA records Rs 1,371-cr surplus in year 2024-25

EXPRESSNEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

THE DELHI Development Authority (DDA) has posted a record surplus of Rs 1,371 crore in financial year 2024-25 — primarily owing to a growing acceptance of its housing schemes — marking an increase of 169% over last year's surplus of Rs 511 crore, a statement issued by the DDA said on Wednesday.

This is the second consecutive year when DDA has recorded surplus revenue under the General Development Account (GDA) reversing the revenue deficit trend of 12 consecutive years, the statement added.

The surplus was largely driven by the sale of over 8,500 housing units, generating a revenue of more than Rs 3,100 crore in 2024-25, it said.

The DDA said the turnaround began under the guidance of Lieutenant Governor V.K. Saxena. Saxena, who is the chairman of the DDA, took charge in May 2022.

at a time when the DDA was incurring "huge losses" mainly due to a large number of unsold inventory of flats, the statement said.

In 2022-23, the GDA was in a substantial loss of Rs 1,304 crore. It, however, registered a significant surplus of Rs 511 crore in 2023-24 for the first time in 12 years, it added. According to the data up to March 31, DDA has registered a steep and steady upward trend in the actual surplus in the GDA. In 2024-25, the total receipts under the GDA stood at Rs 3,477 crore, while the total expenditure was Rs 2,106 crore.

"The growth in GDA is primarily on the back of rising trajectory of the housing receipts, from Rs 665 crore in 2022-23 to Rs 2,398 crore in 2023-24, which is an upswing of about 260% in the total housing collections," the DDA said.

Key reforms undertaken by DDA included shifting to a first-come first-serve model, scrapping ownership restrictions, and launching a professional marketing strategy.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
Directorate of State Motor Garages
Bemina Bypass Srinagar - New Plot Jammu
Phone No. 0191-2346097 (J), 0191-2493309 (S), Website: jangm.gov.in
Fax: 0191-2346105(0), 0191-2494733(S), E-mail: dsongang@gmail.com

It is notified for the information of the General Public, Interested Parties and the State Motor Garages Department is going to conduct a Forward Auction on the GeM Portal (e-Auction) of the following Condemned Vehicles / Unserviceable Stores of various Government Departments vide Auction ID No. 20550 w.e.f. 07-05-2025 (10:00:00) to 08-05-2025 (12:00:00) :-

S. No.	Sl. No.	Name of the Department	Vehicle No.	Make	Model	Location of Vehicle
1	01	State Motor Garages Department (Baramulla District)	JK01M 0457	Tavera	2008	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
2	02	Principal Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Baramulla	JK05A 6567	Tata Sumo	2007	Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Shabkote Baramulla
3	03	Director Horticulture Gardens & Parks Kashmir	JK02AE 5032	Tata 407	2007	Polo Ground Park Srinagar
4	04	Secretary J&K Board of Technical Education	JK02V 0617	Maruti Van	2004	Govt. Polytechnic College Gogri Bagh Srinagar
5			JK01M 2375	Swarna	2008	University of Kashmir South Campus Ferozganj Anantnag
6			JK01K 5960	Swarna	2007	University of Kashmir South Campus Ferozganj Anantnag
7			JK01H 9781	Maruti	2004	University of Kashmir South Campus Ferozganj Anantnag
8			JK01M 4310	Bohler	2004	University of Kashmir South Campus Ferozganj Anantnag
9			JK01A 0924	Ambassador	2008	University of Kashmir South Campus Ferozganj Anantnag
10			JK01A 0457	Maruti	2004	University of Kashmir South Campus Ferozganj Anantnag
11			JK01M 5012	Tata	2009	University of Kashmir South Campus Ferozganj Anantnag
12			JK01M 4442	Bohler	2009	University of Kashmir South Campus Ferozganj Anantnag
13			JK01M 4182	Ambassador	2008	University of Kashmir South Campus Ferozganj Anantnag
14			JK01M 4466	Tavera	2008	University of Kashmir South Campus Ferozganj Anantnag
15			JK01M 9973	Nabindra	2009	University of Kashmir South Campus Ferozganj Anantnag
16			JK01C 5944	Tata Bus	1997	Regional Research Institute of Unani Medicine Naseem Bagh Srinagar
17			JK01M 6587	Gypsy	2008	Regional Research Institute of Unani Medicine Naseem Bagh Srinagar
18			JK01C 5944	Tata Bus	1997	Regional Research Institute of Unani Medicine Naseem Bagh Srinagar
19			JK01D 0498	Maruti	2004	Regional Research Institute of Unani Medicine Naseem Bagh Srinagar
20	06	Deputy Director of Health Services, Institute of Unani Medicine Srinagar	JK01D 0498	Maruti	2004	Regional Research Institute of Unani Medicine Naseem Bagh Srinagar
21	07	Chief Executive Officer Lolab Bhang Development Authority	JK09 7610	Bohler	2011	CEO Lolab Bhang Development Authority Srinagar
22			JK04A 8850	Maruti Van	2008	District Youth Services & Sports Bhang
23	08	Services & Sports J&K	JK04A 8850	Maruti Van	2008	District Youth Services & Sports Bhang
24			JK04A 8850	Maruti Van	2008	District Youth Services & Sports Bhang
25	09	Principal Government College of Physical Education Ganderbal	JK01J 7406	Maruti Omni	2008	Government College of Physical Education Ganderbal
26			JK01M 2561	Tata LP Bus	2009	GMC Boys Hostel Bemina Srinagar
27	10	Principal Government Medical College Srinagar	JK01M 0498	Ambassador	2008	Govt. Medical College Kanargar Srinagar
28			JK01S 1375	Ambassador	2012	Govt. Medical College Kanargar Srinagar
29			JK01K 1955	Ambassador	2006	Govt. Medical College Kanargar Srinagar
30			JK01M 0409	Omni Van	2008	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
31			JK01K 1955	Ambassador	2006	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
32			JK01L 5818	Ambassador	2008	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
33			JK01M 6434	Tata Bus	2008	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
34			JK01M 6434	Tata Bus	2008	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
35			JK01M 6434	Tata Bus	2008	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
36	11	Principal SKIMS Medical College & Hospital Bemina Srinagar	JK01M 4737	Tata 407	2008	SKIMS Medical College JVC Bemina Srinagar
37			JK01M 3971	Ambulance	2008	SKIMS Medical College JVC Bemina Srinagar
38			JK01L 5837	Tata	2007	SKIMS Medical College JVC Bemina Srinagar
39			JK01M 4911	Tata	2009	SKIMS Medical College JVC Bemina Srinagar
40			JK02AF 1004	Corolla	2007	SKIMS Medical College JVC Bemina Srinagar
41			JK02AF 1004	Corolla	2007	SKIMS Medical College JVC Bemina Srinagar
42			JK02AF 1004	Corolla	2007	SKIMS Medical College JVC Bemina Srinagar
43	12	Registrar General High Court of J&K and Ladakh	JK01B 3175	Toyota	1995	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
44			JK02AC 7303	Ambassador	2006	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
45			JK01L 4006	Maruti	2004	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
46			JK02W 1938	Gypsy	2004	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
47			JK09 0656	Ambassador	2006	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
48			JK02AC 7303	Ambassador	2006	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
49			JK01B 4004	Maruti	2004	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
50			JK01C 7843	Gypsy	1997	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
51	13	Director Urban Local Bodies Kashmir	JK01G 8249	Ambassador	2003	Directorate of Urban Local Bodies Center Bemina Bypass Srinagar
52	14	Director State Welfare Kashmir	JK01K 8413	Jeep	1986	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
53			JK01C 2082	Jeep	1983	State Motor Garages Bemina Srinagar
54			JK01A 9747	Swarna	2008	ICAR Central Institute of Temperate Horticulture Afield Rangbeh Srinagar
55	15	Central Institute of Temperate Horticulture Srinagar	JK04B 0252	Scorpio	2009	ICAR Central Institute of Temperate Horticulture Afield Rangbeh Srinagar
56	16	Director AYUSH J&K	JK02AG 5440	Gypsy	2007	Director AYUSH Office Srinagar
57	17	Managing Director J&K SC ST BC Development Corporation	JK02H 3651	Ambassador	1996	Divisional Manager J&K SC ST BC Development Corporation Srinagar
58	18	Chief Wildlife Warden J&K	JK01P 1850	Scorpio	2010	Chief Wildlife Warden Srinagar
59	19	Chief Executive Officer Manshal Development Authority	JK01K 9822	Scorpio	2007	Waller Manshal Development Authority Manshal Bhandpora
60			JK02AE 3761	Ambassador	2007	Geology and Mining Department Workshop Bemina Srinagar
61	20	Director Geology and Mining Department J&K	JK01H 7881	Tata Truck	2008	Geology and Mining Department Workshop Bemina Srinagar
62			JK01H 5316	Maruti	2004	Geology and Mining Department Workshop Bemina Srinagar
63			JK01W 1938	Gypsy	2004	Geology and Mining Department Workshop Bemina Srinagar
64	21	Chief Executive Officer Livestock Development Board Kashmir	JK01M 5988	207	2009	CEO Livestock Development Board Shalimar Srinagar
65			JK01M 5988	207	2009	CEO Livestock Development Board Shalimar Srinagar
66			JK01C 6123	Omni Van	1997	Divisional Manager J&K SC ST BC Development Corporation Srinagar
67			JK02G 7400	Gypsy	1997	Divisional Manager J&K SC ST BC Development Corporation Srinagar
68			JK01D 1333	Toyota	2003	Divisional Manager J&K SC ST BC Development Corporation Srinagar
69	22	Director Fisheries J&K	JK01D 1544	Bohler	1997	Director Fisheries Office Srinagar
70			JK02Q 5071	Bohler	2001	Director Fisheries Office Srinagar
71			JK01E 1860	Tata Sumo	2000	Office of the Assistant Director Fisheries Bemina Srinagar
			JK01 8017	Bohler	1991	Office of the Assistant Director Fisheries Bemina Srinagar

72			JK03B 4552	Sumo Vicks	2009	Office of the Assistant Director Fisheries Bemina Srinagar
73			JKD 7608	Jeep	1986	Office of the Assistant Director Fisheries Bemina Srinagar
74	23	Director Sheep Husbandry Department Kashmir	JK01N 0288	Gypsy	2009	Directorate of Sheep Husbandry Lal Mandi Srinagar
75			JK01N 0289	Omni Van	2009	Directorate of Sheep Husbandry Lal Mandi Srinagar
76	24	Director Accounts and Treasuries Kashmir, Principal Govt. Dental College and Hospital Srinagar	JK01N 0374	Tata 407	2009	Saddar Veterinary Residency Road Srinagar
77			JK01W 0601	Bohler	2014	Govt. Dental College & Hospital Shireen Bagh Srinagar
78	25		JK01M 6469	Tata LP 407	2008	Divisional Commissioner Kashmiri Office Tankipora Srinagar
79			JKB 7413	Royal Enfield	1979	Divisional Commissioner Kashmiri Office Tankipora Srinagar
80			JK01H 8467	Yamaha Libero	2004	Teahill Office Budgam
81			JK04B 1485	Gypsy	2009	Teahill Office Pattan
82			JK05 1992	Gypsy	1997	Teahill Office Pattan
83			JK05 1419	Jeep	1997	Irrigation Colony Sumbal Sonwari Bandipora
84			JK01C 8453	Gypsy	1997	Teahill Office Doore
85			JK02K 3404	Gypsy	1998	Teahill Office Puhagam
86			JK01M 8858	Gypsy	2008	Teahill Office Doh Pora Kulgam
87	26	Financial Commissioner (Revenue) J&K	JK05 2679	Gypsy	1998	Teahill Office Chaser 1 Shila
88			JK04C 6682	Gypsy	2012	Teahill Office Chaser 1 Shila
89			JK01 1896	Gypsy	1997	Teahill Office Bijbehara
90			JK01H 9720	Gypsy	2009	Teahill Office Kangam
91			JK02AK 7200	Gypsy	1998	Teahill Office Kangam
92			JK01C 7336	Gypsy	1997	Teahill Office Kangam
93			JK01 0868	Jeep	1989	Teahill Office Kangam
94			JK01D 7403	Maruti Van	1999	Teahill Office Kangam
95			JK01C 8098	Tata Mini	1999	Teahill Office Kangam
96			JK02D 5342	Gypsy	1993	Teahill Office Kangam
97			JK01K 2525	Tata Goods Carrier	2007	Teahill Office Kangam
98			JK01 5630	Maruti Omni	2012	Teahill Office Kangam
99			JK01K 1607	Bohler	2006	Teahill Office Kangam
100			JK01 5603	Bohler	2005	Teahill Office Kangam
101	27	Indian Red Cross Society J&K	JK01E 9474	Bohler	2001	Teahill Office Kangam
102			JK01B 3184	Gypsy	1993	Teahill Office Kangam
103			JK01H 3188	Gypsy	1993	Teahill Office Kangam
104			JK01 6620	Standard	N.A.	Teahill Office Kangam
105			JK01 8247	Ambulance	407	Teahill Office Kangam
106			JK03A 1201	Omni Van	2004	Teahill Office Kangam
107	28	Director Forest Protection Force J&K	JK02AL 1743	Hero Honda	2009	Teahill Office Kangam
108			JK02AL 5650	Tata SFC	2007	Teahill Office Kangam
109			JK01F 5834	Gypsy	2001	Teahill Office Kangam
110			JK01 5166	Tata Water Tanker	2002	Teahill Office Kangam
111	29	Chief Engineer Jal Shakti PHE Kashmir	JK01L 1646	Water Tanker	2007	Teahill Office Kangam
112			JKD 7305	Water Tanker	1986	Teahill Office Kangam
113			JK01M 0502	Ambassador	2008	Teahill Office Kangam
114	30	Chief Engineer Jal Shakti Irrigation Jal Shakti Cable Car Corporation Kashmir	JK01J 7429	Ambassador	2006	Teahill Office Kangam
115			JK01H 7670	Gypsy	2004	Teahill Office Kangam
116	31	Managing Director J&K Cable Car Corporation	JK01 6189	Scorpio	2005	Teahill Office Kangam
117			JK01M 5751	Gypsy	2009	Teahill Office Kangam
118			JK01D 5236	Bohler	2003	Teahill Office Kangam
119			JK01G 5239	Bohler	2003	Teahill Office Kangam
120			JK01K 5693	Bohler	2007	Teahill Office Kangam
121			JK01 6231	Ambassador	2007	Teahill Office Kangam
122	32	Vice Chancellor SKAUST Kashmir	JK01D 0239	Ambassador	2007	Teahill Office Kangam
123			JK01K 0123	Ambassador	2007	Teahill Office Kangam
124			JK01K 9260	John Deere (Tractor)	2007	Teahill Office Kangam
125			JK01K 4554	Tata LPT T-200	2006	Teahill Office Kangam
126			JK01G 7684	Ambassador	2011	Teahill Office Kangam
127			JK01H 4970	Maruti Omni	2009	Teahill Office Kangam

9 Govt & Politics

DELHI CONFIDENTIAL



MUTED AFFAIR

A DAY after the Pahalgaon terror attack, an event planned for Wednesday to launch a department of biotechnology-funded HPV testing kit was a muted affair. Initially, there were talks that the event, which was attended by the Union Minister Anit Shah did not participate in the 'Save Earth' conclave on bamboo and sustainability, organised by Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture and Latur-based Phoenix Foundation. The Delhi government, too, postponed an event to launch 330 electric-buses, which Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav and Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta were to attend.

MOURNING, MISS

AMID A three-day national mourning following the death of Pope Francis, senior ministers could not attend International Earth Day engagements on Tuesday. Union Home Minister Anit Shah did not participate in the 'Save Earth' conclave on bamboo and sustainability, organised by Indian Chamber of Food and Agriculture and Latur-based Phoenix Foundation. The Delhi government, too, postponed an event to launch 330 electric-buses, which Union Environment Minister Bhupendra Yadav and Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta were to attend.

POLL ANXIETY

BJP MEMBERS in the Delhi unit hopeful of being elected as district presidents are anxious due to lack of clarity on the election for the 14 posts. The party is currently in the process of electing 256 mandal presidents – posts a notch below that of a district president. The election for the mandal presidents is mandated to be accomplished before the process to elect district presidents can begin.

RSS-linked body in US to release film to debunk 'caste bias'

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

AS LEADER of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi continues to push the caste narrative, raising it even during visits abroad, US-based organisation Indic Dialogue, run by a former RSS member, has come out with a documentary suggesting that caste discrimination in India is exaggerated.

The documentary, titled 'The Caste Bias', is scheduled to be released on Friday in Delhi. It has been funded by Indic Dialogue, and is being promoted in the national capital by the Centre for Social Development (CSD), an organisation that has been active in debunking it through testimonies of priests from temples across India. For the past few years, the RSS

has been pursuing a social harmony project as a bulwark against the caste narrative of the Opposition. The project not only involves granting access to Dalits to temples and community wells across India, but also creating a sense of Hindu unity in public discourse. Indic Dialogue, founded by former RSS member Vijay Sinha and funded by a group of Indians in the US, regularly organises talks, events and funds documentaries close to Hindu ideology. Around the theme of protests over the CAA, it had released a documentary on the plight of Hindu migrants from Pakistan and Bangladesh. Its talks have seen participation by RSS leader Ram Madhav and lawyer J Sai Deepak, among others.

The CSD was established in 2014 by Fulwara, who claims 90% of its members are Dalit and tribal professors of Delhi University.

The documentary has been directed by Nikhil Singh, an IIT alumnus, who studied filmmaking in the US and runs an ad-film-making company in Mumbai.

'IRREGULARITIES' IN LIQUOR SALE

HC dismisses pleas by TN, TASMAL, directs ED to go ahead with its probe

DEEPTIMAN TIWARY
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

THE MADRAS High Court Wednesday dismissed a petition filed by the Tamil Nadu government seeking directions to restrain the Enforcement Directorate (ED) from conducting searches in the state without the consent of the state government. The Tamil Nadu government had filed the plea in connection with a case of money laundering that the central agency had registered against Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation Limited (TASMAL) for alleged irregularities in sale of liquor in the state. The agency had conducted searches on the premises of the company, which is wholly owned by the state government, on March 6 and 8. The ED probe is based on over 40 FIRs registered in the matter by the Tamil Nadu Vigilance Department.

TASMAL had in a related petition prayed to court to direct the ED not to harass its officials. The

court, which had dubbed the petition with that of the state government and another one, rejected all prayers and directed the ED to go ahead with its probe. The argument that there must be a precondition of getting the consent from the state government before conducting searches is completely illogical and bereft of conscience. How can a raid or search be conducted in a state government owned company in a surprise manner if permission is to be obtained beforehand? How can a search by an investigating agency even hold good if such absurd conditions are made? It is against basic principles of the criminal justice system," the bench of Justice SM Subramanian and Justice K Rajasekar said.

The writ petitions had argued that ED's power of search and enquiry "in relation to a predicate offence arising out of and within territorial limits of a state without the consent of the concerned state, is violative of basic structure of federalism".

The court said that "the PMA

operates within its own statutory framework and does not require the consent of the state government to exercise its powers". The HC order also said there was a "strong disconnection" between the averments and the relief sought for in the writ petitions. "The petition alleges that few officers were harassed as they were detained during a search, but the relief sought is to direct the respondents not to enter and conduct searches at any premises of the government of Tamil Nadu. How can such a petition even be maintainable?" the court said.

Calling the argument "alarming", the court said that "such petitions ought to be dismissed at threshold".

The court also justified seizure of mobile phones of TASMAL officials during ED searches. "The seizure of mobile phones is directly and inextricably related to the investigation and search under PMA for the purpose of collection of evidence for gathering material to unearth the offence of money laundering and

prosecute the offenders," it said. It found the argument of the petitioners that seizure of mobile phones was violative of the Right to Speech as "absurd". It said this was like saying "impounding of a vehicle under the Motor Vehicles Act is violative of the Right to Freedom of Movement." The court also rejected allegations of harassment, illegal detention and long duration of questioning by ED officials. "This submission finds no merit as nowhere has any of the aforementioned officials filed a complaint stating that they were coerced. ... How can both the Government of Tamil Nadu and TASMAL file an affidavit stating that such coercion happened when there is no material to prove the same?" the court asked.

The court said that people have to wait for hours and days to get their work done in government departments, but the entire government had come knocking on the court doors because some of its officials had been questioned for a few hours.

'Post or freedom? You decide': SC ultimatum to TN minister Balaji

ANANTHAKRISHNAN
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

THE SUPREME Court Wednesday gave an ultimatum to Tamil Nadu Minister Senthil Balaji, facing money laundering charges, to decide whether he preferred to step down as minister or have his bail cancelled. "We are giving choice. You decide. Freedom or post," Justice AS Oka presiding over a two-judge bench told Senior Advocates Mukul Rohatgi and Kapil Sibal who appeared for Balaji. The bench also comprising Justice A G Masih was hearing a plea by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) seeking cancellation of the bail granted to Balaji in connection with the cash for jobs scam.

The court granted Balaji time till April 28 to take a decision. The SC had granted bail to him on September 26, 2024 noting that the trial was unlikely to begin soon and that he had already spent over an year in custody. Just three days after on September 29, 2024, he was reinstated as a cabinet minister in the DMK government headed by M K Stalin.

The ED subsequently approached the SC seeking cancellation of his bail on the ground that he is influencing witnesses.

Hearing it earlier, the SC bench expressed distress about Balaji being reinstated as minister few days after being granted bail.

Wednesday, Sibal argued that there was no chance of him influencing witnesses as the trial in the predicate offence, of which the money laundering case is an offshoot, is likely to start only in January 2026.

"We don't agree because past record says so," said Justice Oka adding "there is already a finding recorded by this court how he has used his influence and clout as a minister." He added, "If people are people are going to play with process of law like this..."

The senior counsel also contended that the terms of the current DMK government will expire in May 2026.

But Justice Oka said, "this is



Tamil Nadu Minister Senthil Balaji

all politics. We don't know next government be my continue, we don't know."

The bench noted that it had adjourned the hearing thrice in the hope that Balaji would take a decision.

"We are giving you choice in the beginning between the post and freedom. On three occasions we have granted you opportunity to make a statement," said Justice Oka.

Sibal suggested that the trial may be moved out of the court, but Justice Oka said, "that will not serve the purpose. There are 1000 witnesses."

Justice Oka sought to remind that Balaji was not granted bail on merits but on possible violation of Article 21 rights, "what's troubling us is for the first time in case of PMA we have applied a law that if it is not going to commence we grant bail. This order we followed consistently."

To the argument that he had never said in the court that he is not a minister, Justice Oka said, "if you are making such submissions you are telling us we should not have granted bail."

The court pointed out that one of the grounds for granting bail was Balaji's submission that he was no more a minister. "Now you bring about a change within two days of order granting bail. This is not the way to deal with the court... This we will not tolerate. We are giving choice – freedom or post. Otherwise you are making mockery of the process." As the bench showed no signs of relenting, Sibal agreed to take a final decision by April 28 on whether he preferred to remain on bail or remain a minister.

The SC will hear the matter next at 2 pm on April 28.

Procedure of High Court to modify punishment totally untenable, says SC as it junks order

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday said the procedure adopted by the Allahabad High Court in reviewing and modifying the conviction of three persons was "totally untenable" and set it aside.

A bench of Justices B R Gavai and Augustine George Masih referred to Section 362 of the erstwhile CrPC and said the provision stipulates once the judgement and final order was signed disposing of a case, no court was allowed to alter or review the same except to correct a clerical or arithmetical error.

"We fail to understand as to how the high court, in the present against the caste narrative of the Opposition. The project not only involves granting access to Dalits to temples and community wells across India, but also creating a sense of Hindu unity in public discourse. Indic Dialogue, founded by former RSS member Vijay Sinha and funded by a group of Indians in the US, regularly organises talks, events and funds documentaries close to Hindu ideology. Around the theme of protests over the CAA, it had released a documentary on the plight of Hindu migrants from Pakistan and Bangladesh. Its talks have seen participation by RSS leader Ram Madhav and lawyer J Sai Deepak, among others.

The CSD was established in 2014 by Fulwara, who claims 90% of its members are Dalit and tribal professors of Delhi University. The documentary has been directed by Nikhil Singh, an IIT alumnus, who studied filmmaking in the US and runs an ad-film-making company in Mumbai.



VANCE AT TAJ MAHAL

US Vice President JD Vance, Second Lady Usha Vance and their children at Taj Mahal in Agra on Wednesday. The Taj Mahal is amazing. A testament to true love, human ingenuity and a tribute to the great country of India. "Vance wrote in the visitors' diary."

India, Saudi Arabia condemn terrorism, hail ties

SHUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

IN A strongly-worded message to Pakistan, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday condemned "cross-border terrorism", and called on all States to reject the use of terrorism against civilians. In this context, the two sides condemned terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations, and 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.

Returning to the emphasis on particular race, religion or culture, it said.

Wednesday morning, instead of on Wednesday night.

The joint statement specifically condemned the attack, as it said, "Both sides strongly condemned the gruesome terror attack in Pahalgaon, Jammu and Kashmir on 22 April 2025, which claimed the lives of innocent civilians. In this context, the two sides condemned terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations, and 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. Returning to the emphasis on particular race, religion or culture, it said.



PM Narendra Modi with Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, in Jeddah.

"They welcomed the excellent cooperation between the two sides in counter-terrorism and the joint financing. They condemned cross-border terrorism, and called on all States to reject the use of terrorism against other countries, dismantle terrorism 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 rockets to commit terrorist acts against other countries," it said. This followed the terror attack in Kashmir's Pahalgaon, where 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed.

On Tuesday, Modi delayed his scheduled meeting with the Saudi crown prince by at least two hours to assess the situation in Kashmir. The PM, who held bilateral talks with the Saudi crown prince, skipped an official dinner before returning home on Tuesday night.

The Muslim World League,

based in Makkah, also condemned the terrorist attack.

During the talks, Modi and MBS 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 in the past few years," it said. "The two sides agreed to exchange visits, including high-level visits, and training exchanges, to strengthen the security and stability of the region," the statement said.

FULL REPORT ON www.indianexpress.com

SC ruling on TN Bills, BJP MPs' attack on Court raise a question: are Governors needed?

No action taken so far against the errant MPs. This is curious, as BJP is not known to dilly-dally once it has decided. And Nishikant Dubey's remarks were no small matter



THE NEERAJ CHOWDHURY COLUMN

Weekly insight into what's changing in national politics, and why

WHILE POWER is devolving to communities which have been on the margins in what constitutes a growing democratisation of our polity, the institutions that undergird India's democracy are coming under increasing strain. An order and observations by the Supreme Court in two recent cases, and the response they provoked, have brought this into sharp focus again.

In the first instance, a Bench of Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan said that a governor cannot sit indefinitely on Bills sent to him for assent, and must send them back within three months at the most. This includes Bills sent by a Governor

to the President of India for approval. The apex court was hearing a case about the 10 Bills passed by the Tamil Nadu Assembly and awaiting Governor N R Ravji's assent for years – with the latter, in a sense, exercising veto power over decisions made by a duly elected state government.

The other case on which the Supreme Court's intervention drew a response from the Executive side concerned the newly amended Waqf Act, which has drawn protests by the Muslim community across the country. Chief Justice of India Sanjay Khanna, heading a Bench hearing several petitions against the Act, said he was inclined to stay some of its contentious provisions, including on appointment of non-Muslims to Waqf boards and on Waqf-by-law properties.

Following the Court's observations, the government asserted that it would not take any action on the contentious provisions till

the next hearing, on May 5. However, where the government feared to tread, senior BJP members and MPs Nishikant Dubey and Dinesh Sharma rushed in. Dubey alleged overreach by the Judiciary into the domain of Parliament by setting timelines for clearance of Bills. He also wondered how judges could tell the President of India what she should do, when it's she who appoints them under the Constitution – he may have a point there.

In the past too, politicians of different hues have spoken out against judicial activism, and they have a right to do so. However, Dubey's four-time MP, the Act, said he was inclined to stay some of its contentious provisions, including on appointment of non-Muslims to Waqf boards and on Waqf-by-law properties. Following the Court's observations, the government asserted that it would not take any action on the contentious provisions till

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J&K TERROR ATTACK

THE VICTIMS

1. Sushil Nathaniel (Madhya Pradesh)
2. Syed Adil Hussain Shah (Jammu and Kashmir)
3. Hemant Suhas Joshi (Maharashtra)
4. Vinay Narwal (Haryana)
5. Atul Srikant Mone (Maharashtra)
6. Niraj Udhwani (Uttarakhand)
7. Bitan Adhikari (West Bengal)
8. Sudip Neupane (Nepal)
9. Shubham Dwivedi (Uttar Pradesh)
10. Prashant Kumar Satpathi (Odisha)
11. Manish Kanjan Mishra (Bihar)
12. N Ramachandran (Kerala)
13. Sanjay Laxman Lele (Maharashtra)
14. Dinesh Mirania (Chhattisgarh)
15. Sameer Guha (West Bengal)
16. Dilip Desale (Maharashtra)
17. J C Chandramauli (Andhra Pradesh)
18. Madhusudan Somisetty (Karnataka)
19. Santosh Jagdale (Maharashtra)
20. Manjunath Rao (Karnataka)
21. Kaustubh Ganbote (Maharashtra)
22. Bharat Bhushan (Karnataka)
23. Smit Parmar (Gujarat)
24. Yashish Parmar (Gujarat)
25. Tage Haiyang (Arunachal Pradesh)
26. Shailesh Himmat Kathaliya (Gujarat)

6 FROM MAHARASHTRA AMONG DEAD



Bodies of Hemant Joshi, Atul Mone and Sanjay Lele were brought back, in Mumbai on Wednesday. Deepak Joshi

‘Three cousins shot in the stomach, head and chest in front of families’

VIJAY KUMAR YADAV
MUMBAI, APRIL 23

TERRORISTS KILLED Rajashree Akul's sister's husband and two of his cousins point blank in front of her as they opened fire at tourists near Pahalgalam on Tuesday. "She (Rajashree's sister) thought he would survive, but he didn't," Rajashree said a day after the attack.

Her brother-in-law Atul Mone went to Kashmir with his maternal cousins Sanjay Laxman Lele and Hemant Joshi and their families on April 20. They first went to Ahmedabad by train and took a flight to Kashmir from there. Mone was travelling with his wife Anushka, 35, and daughter Richa, 18. Lele was with his

wife Kavita, 46, and son Harshal, 20. Joshi, 44, was travelling with his wife Monica, 45, and son Dhruv, 16.

Rajashree, a resident of Kalyan in Mumbai and a music teacher, went to Anushka's house in Samrat Chowk, Dombivli (West), after speaking to her over the phone. "My sister told me that a terrorist shot her husband (Mone) in the stomach. They shot Lele in his head and Joshi in his chest. They were targeting only men," she said.

Mone worked as a senior section engineer in Central Railway (CR) and lived in Dombivli (West) in Thane district. Joshi and Lele also lived in the same area.

Rajashree said Harshal, Lele's son, broke the news of Mone's death to her only on Wednesday

morning. Harshal and Dhruv have suffered bullet injury to his finger.

Rajashree's husband, Rahul Akul, said that after they came to know about the terror attack, they contacted the helpline number in Jammu and Kashmir, as none of their relatives who were in Kashmir were answering their phones.

"Later, I tried to contact Harshal and he confirmed by messaging that three of them — Mone, Lele and Joshi — were killed in the terror attack," Akul said.

'It has shattered my sister's life'

Akul said Harshal told him the terrorists were in army-like uniforms. "They asked, 'Tum koun ho?' Hindu ho?" After identifying the people by their reli-

gion, they killed them," he said. "They should get the death penalty. A terrorist organisation is behind the heinous crime. After 26/11 (Mumbai attacks), it's the biggest on civilians. Families should be financially settled by the government," he added.

Rajashree said her sister is a homemaker. "Her daughter Richa is studying in junior college and wants to pursue CA. This tragic incident has destroyed everything. It has shattered my sister's life. How will she and her daughter survive now? They will now be financially dependent on others," she said.

Rajashree said the Mone family is from Dapoli, and her family is from Chiplun. "We were planning to go to Konkan this May for a get-together."

PM will retaliate with extreme steps: Fadnis

Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnis said on Wednesday that the perpetrators won't go unpunished and that Prime Minister Narendra Modi would track down the mastermind and "retaliate with extreme steps".

Detailing the state government's plans to bring back the tourists stranded in J&K after the attack, Fadnis said in Mumbai, "We are continuously monitoring the developments with the Jammu and Kashmir government." He added that Cabinet minister Girish Mahajan has headed to Srinagar to coordinate with local authorities. He said that the families of the deceased will be given a compensation of ₹5 lakh each.

58-yr-old Indore man asked wife to hide before he was shot dead

ANAND MOHAN J
BHOPAL, APRIL 23

SUSHIL NATHANIEL, a 58-year-old LIC branch manager from Indore, had last met his extended family over Good Friday and did not tell them about his family's private getaway in Pahalgalam.

His wife, son and daughter walked around the picturesque Valley. Suddenly, the trip turned to a nightmare, as screams and sounds of gunshots engulfed the area. The family last saw Nathaniel, on his knees, being shot by a terrorist.

His daughter Akanksha, 30, sustained injuries after being shot in the leg, while his wife Jennifer, 54, and son Austin, 21, survived.

The family had travelled to Kashmir on April 21 to celebrate Jennifer's birthday.

Nathaniel was born in Indore, and belonged to a Christian family. He was married to Jennifer, a government school teacher in Khatipura, and together they raised two children: Akanksha, a Class I officer at the Bank of Baroda in Surat, and Austin, a badminton player.

Sushil also cared for his grandfather, a Second World War veteran, who is now hard of hearing, shouldering significant responsibilities with a steady resolve.

Sushil worked as a branch manager at LIC's satellite office in Alirajpur, a role he took on with dedication. Recently promoted, he was eager to prove himself, known for his hard work and patience. Colleagues valued his calm demeanor, as he explained tasks to agents without losing his temper, earning him respect and camaraderie in the office.

The family's last gathering before the trip was at a church on Good Friday, where they spoke

briefly and looked forward to Easter. Sushil, nearing the end of a three-year stint in Alirajpur, was excited to return to Indore permanently. The trip to Pahalgalam was a small family affair, kept private.

Jennifer had revealed what transpired to her brother-in-law Vikas over the phone.

Vikas said, "Akanksha and Austin were ahead near a gate. Sushil needed to use the restroom. Jennifer was with him. It was then that terrorists confronted them. Sushil acted quickly and asked Jennifer to hide, and faced the attackers alone. Forced to kneel, he was asked his religion. He replied that he was Christian and, when pressed to recite the Kalma, he could not. The terrorists shot him dead". Akanksha, caught in the violence, was shot in the leg and has been hospitalised.

The news reached Sushil's brother Vikas when Austin called at 9:30 pm, saying, "Papa ko goli lag gayi, papa ki death ho gayi hai" (Papa has been shot. He's dead)". Akanksha, clinging to hope, told *The Indian Express*, "I am searching for my father. That's all I want."

Refusing surgery, she insisted on seeing her father's body one last time. She is accompanying his remains back to Indore.

Susan Nathaniel, a relative, said, "When terrorists are caught, they are put in jails and given death sentence after years. Government should take proactive steps to ensure this doesn't happen." On her nephew's death she emphasised that "humans have a right to live, regardless of religion."

She has requested that Austin be given a job in Sushil's place at LIC. "Indore collector has assured Vikas that the administration will provide assistance. Sushil had many family responsibilities. The government should ensure Austin gets a job," she said.

Jaipur man killed in attack worked in Dubai, was in India for a wedding

HAMZA KHAN
JAIPUR, APRIL 23

NIRAJ UDHWANI, 33, worked in Dubai and had come to India with wife Ayushi and some friends to attend a wedding in Shimla.

"After the wedding, while the others left, Niraj and wife went to Pahalgalam to holiday for a couple of days. They were supposed to head back to Dubai in a few days," said his uncle Bhagwan Das Udhwani.

Niraj was among the 26 people killed by terrorists Tuesday. On Wednesday, as grieving family members waited for his body to arrive at their Jaipur home, Niraj's mother Jyoti was heartbroken. "Those who shot him, the thing they have done, the same should be done with them," she told reporters.

"There have been other incidents in the past too. What was the fault? What was the fault of the innocents? Today my son has gone, tomorrow it could be someone else," Jyoti said.

She said Niraj last visited the family in Jaipur during Sankranti.



Niraj Udhwani, 33, and wife Ayushi

"They don't get leave easily; he was never to attend a wedding in Shimla. He called me on April 21 while boarding a flight to Srinagar (from Chandigarh), saying that he is going to Kashmir. He had said that he will return to Chandigarh on April 25 and will get on a Dubai flight from there itself."

Uncle Dinesh Udhwani said Niraj arrived in India about a week ago. "We got to know about the attack Tuesday evening, when Ayushi called Niraj's father Bhagwan Das saying that he has been shot in the terrorist attack. She said she had been shifted to Srinagar and didn't know about his whereabouts or health."

Kishore, who works in the Income Tax Department, then sought help from his counterparts and locals for information on his brother. "So, we inquired from our sources and hospitals

and got to know that Niraj had died. Kishore and Kishore's wife then left for Delhi immediately, from where they went to Srinagar," Dinesh said.

Bhagwan Das said Ayushi told him that the terrorists "were asking names and shooting the men and separating the women and children".

Niraj was the son of Bhagwan's elder brother Pradeep Kumar Udhwani, who died a few years ago. While Kishore lives in Jaipur with their mother Jyoti, Niraj worked in Dubai.

Niraj and Ayushi got married in February 2023. He studied at The Indian High School in Dubai, returned to India for his UG and accounting courses, before heading to the UAE again for a job. He worked as the finance manager at Cognita Schools in Dubai.

In the evening, Niraj's body was brought back. Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat accompanied Niraj's family in the flight from Delhi to Jaipur. CM Bhupendra Patel said he spoke to Niraj's family members over the phone, is expected to pay his respects Thursday.

SWEETY KUMARI
KOLKATA, APRIL 23

WHAT WAS meant to be the cherished final day of a family vacation in Kashmir turned into a tragedy for the Guha family of Behala, Kolkata.

Sameer Guha, a central government employee, had travelled to the region with his wife Shabri and their daughter, a Class 12 student. Their planned return to home on Wednesday would never materialise for Sameer, as his life was cut short in the terror attack in Pahalgalam on Tuesday afternoon.

News of the incident reached their Kolkata residence in the Palli, a bank manager at the time, plunging their home on Jagat Chowdhury Road into profound grief. Relatives had been desperately trying to reach Sameer after initial reports of the attack surfaced. Finally, the devastating call came from the family's driver.

Shabri made a phone call of a few seconds to her brother. "Everything was over in an instant!"



Sameer Guha was a central government employee

"(They were saying) *inko chorna nai hai inko chorna nai hai...* and they killed my husband," she would later tell me, dishevelled.

Neighbours who spoke to Shabri and her daughter in the aftermath described their shock and inconsolable grief.

"(The daughter) told us that they suddenly heard gunshots in the distance and a few people surrounded them. As soon as they arrived, they told everyone to lie down on the ground. Everyone had guns in their

hands. They lay down in fear. Then the militants all selectively shot a few people, all male, including Sameer Guha. They said *Modi ka aadmi hai...* and gunned him down," Archana Gajendra told mediapersons.

Sameer's trip, which began on April 16, was a planned family getaway — his first ever to Kashmir.

Kolkata Mayor Firhad Hakim visited the grieving family on Wednesday morning, offering relatives condolences and support.

Sameer was not the only from Bengal to fall victim to the attack: Bitan Adhikari, a resident of Baishnabghata Patuli in Kolkata, and Manish Kanjan Mishra, from Balda in Purulia, also lost their lives, leaving behind more families.

"It is a cowardly act. Very disappointing. Where was central intelligence? The Home Minister is a flop Minister. They said after the abrogation of Article 370, Kashmir is safe. Everyone believed them and went for a vacation, now who shall take the responsibility?" said Hakim.



Personnel at the site of the terror attack, Wednesday. PTI

Gujarat man was to return from Kashmir a day after birthday

KAMAL SAIED
SURAT, APRIL 23

SHAILISH HIMMAT Kathaliya would have turned 46 on Wednesday. He had planned to return from Kashmir after celebrating his birthday. Now, in Mota Varachha of Surat, all arrangements for his funeral procession have been prepared at his uncle's house, where they contacted his wife Shital and helped her out with the procedures.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Kishan Kathaliya said, "Our entire family has shifted to Surat, while Shailesh was earlier staying in Surat and he had purchased a bungalow in the Katargam Chikwadi area. However, due to the transferable job of a Class I officer at the SBI, he had to move to different states and districts. He was in Mumbai at the Andheri branch for the last year, and before that, he was in Jaipur, Rajasthan. He takes his family wherever he gets transferred. He had given his house in Surat on rent."

He said, "All our family and relatives are settled in Surat, so we have decided to carry out the final rites in Surat city. My uncle and father Himmat bhai also had come down to Surat early in the morning. Shailesh's mother passed away a couple of years ago."

Shailesh's father Himmatbhai Kathaliya came down to Surat from his Dhufaliya village in Lathi taluka on Wednesday morning to receive the body.

Family members said that Shailesh's cousin Mayur and two others had on Tuesday afternoon learnt about the death of Shailesh and later in the evening, they left for Mumbai. They later reached Srinagar, where they contacted his wife Shital and helped her out with the procedures.

Speaking to *The Indian Express*, Kishan Kathaliya said, "Our entire family has shifted to Surat, while Shailesh was earlier staying in Surat and he had purchased a bungalow in the Katargam Chikwadi area. However, due to the transferable job of a Class I officer at the SBI, he had to move to different states and districts. He was in Mumbai at the Andheri branch for the last year, and before that, he was in Jaipur, Rajasthan. He takes his family wherever he gets transferred. He had given his house in Surat on rent."

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EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
BENGALURU, APRIL 23

BHARAT BHUSHAN, along with his family, had travelled to Kashmir from Bengaluru on Friday.

When the nightmare began unfolding on the meadow near Pahalgalam and the terrorists shot him, Sujatha, 37, scrambled with their three-year-old son, trying to put as much distance as possible between them and the deadly attack. Tuesday in which 26 people were killed.

Sujatha's mother Vimala said, "My daughter is a doctor. She realised he was dead. She took the mobile phone and purse and ran. We spoke to her around 2.45 pm."

Sujatha told her family members that a gunman approached the family members and asked for their names and religion. The family members said that upon learning that they were Hindu, the terrorists shot Bhushan in the head from a close range in front of his wife and child.

The boy reportedly screamed, "There's red colour coming from papa's head", as Sujatha began running away with him. The Army later took the mother and son to a safe location.

Speaking to the mediapersons, Vimala said, "They apparently asked if the men were Hindus before they opened fire... They didn't shoot women and children, but shot the men. They shot shooting until they hit the



Manjunath Rao and his family were in Kashmir to celebrate his son's exam performance

ground." Bhushan, who lived in the Mahalaxmi area in Bengaluru, had been working in Haveri district. His father Channaveera retired as deputy director of Public Instruction, and lives in Bengaluru

with mother his Shaalakumari. Sources said that Bhushan was a family friend of former Karnataka Speaker K B Kolwad and IIA Prakash Kolwad. A software engineer, Bhushan was managing his family's diagnostic centre in Bhadrappa Layout in Bengaluru.

Another family from Karnataka, the Raos were elated after their son Abhijeet, 18, scored 98% in his 2nd PU exams, and booked a trip to Kashmir to celebrate the achievement.

Manjunath Rao, 47, a realtor from Shivamogga, and his wife Pallavi, a bank manager at the Birur branch of the Mahad Area Market Branch Cooperative Society, travelled to Kashmir with Bhushan on Saturday. Two days

before the family was scheduled to return, Manjunath was shot dead by terrorists.

That morning, Abhijeet had not eaten and Manjunath stepped out around 2.50 pm to buy snacks when he was shot in the head in front of Pallavi.

Pallavi, who witnessed the attack, said the terrorists appeared to be targeting Hindus. With Manjunath lying in a pool of blood, the mother and son pleaded with the terrorists to kill them too. One of the attackers reportedly replied, "Nahin marengi, Modi ko boldo" (won't kill you, tell Prime Minister Modi).

In a video posted on social media by Pallavi, the couple could be seen enjoying a shikara ride and expressed happiness regarding

the arrangements made by a travel agency.

Manjunath's mortal remains are expected to be sent back from Srinagar Wednesday evening. Speaking to the media, she said, "My husband died right in front of me. I couldn't cry or react — I couldn't even comprehend what had just happened."

Manjunath's mother Sumathi, 80, is yet to learn of the horrific news. His father was a manager at MAMCOS, where Pallavi works now.

Another person Shashi Kumar Naik, 65, who hails from the state, suffered a fracture due to a fall, while Abhija M Rao has sustained minor injuries. CM Siddaramaiah said over 40 people were stranded after the attack.

J&K TERROR ATTACK

A Pahalgam village mourns its 'braveheart', and what comes next — 'a bullet to our chests, our livelihood'

BASHAARAT MASOOD
HAPAT NAR (PAHALGAM),
APRIL 23

"OUR HEARTS are swollen with pride," says Mohammad Ashraf Shah as other mourners nod. "Adil gave his life to save the tourists. This is what you call Kashmiri."

Syed Adil Hussain Shah, 29, was among those killed in Tuesday's terror attack in Baisaran in Pahalgam — the only local among the 26 deceased, who was shot trying to stop the militants.

On Wednesday, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah attended Adil Hussain's funeral, at his remote Hapat Nar village, some 35 km from Baisaran. In a post shared on X by his aide, Abdullah wrote: "I visited Baisaran today to offer 'fatha' (prayer after burial) for braveheart Shah, who was shot dead while trying to snatch a weapon from one of the terrorists in a courageous attempt to protect the tourists he had ferried on horseback... Adil (Shah) was the

sole breadwinner, and his extraordinary bravery and sacrifice will forever be remembered. At his modest single-storey house in Hapat Nar, that's the consolation his family, including his wife, parents, and five younger siblings, is holding on to. Among villagers huddled around, the talk is about the 29-year-old's "courage and valour". Younger brother Syed Naushad Shah, who gets intermittent work as a tourist driver, said they don't know exactly what happened at Baisaran, except what they heard of how Adil died. "At a Srinagar hospital, a woman tourist told me he was killed when he confronted the militants. She told me Adil dropped to the ground to save himself when the militants opened fire on her father from point blank range. But as she too fell down, Adil confronted the militants, asking them why they were killing innocents. She said the militants then fired at him too."

Adil was shot thrice, with his blood piercing his neck and a third his shoulder. Naushad said they got to know



J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah consoles the father of Syed Adil Hussain Shah, in Anantnag district, Wednesday. PTI

Adil's father Syed Haider Shah said the 29-year-old left home as usual at 8 am Tuesday for work. "He would go to Baisaran and ferry tourists on a pony. He didn't have his own pony, and the owner gave him Rs 400-Rs 500 a day for ferrying tourists. Last week, because of the rains, he hadn't been to work for three days."

Naushad said they got to know

what had happened only in the evening, several hours after the militants struck around 2 pm. "I was in Chandanwari with some customers when I heard about the attack... I called up Adil but his phone was not reachable. I rushed home straight away and called him again. This time his phone rang, but there was no response."

Naushad then went to the

police station and finally Pahalgam in search of Adil, and was told that among the dead was a local ponywallah. His heart sank, said Naushad. "I asked them for details. They said his name was Abid Hussain. It resembled my brother's name. I asked them to cross-check, and they confirmed it was Adil."

Adil's body was shifted to Srinagar, and Naushad was asked to go there. It was at Srinagar's SMHS Hospital that he met the tourists who had been attacked, one of whom told him how Adil had died.

The body reached home on Wednesday afternoon, with hundreds attending Adil's funeral. Abdullah assured Adil's family that his government would take care of them. Expressing his sorrow at what had happened, the CM added: "The tourists came to have a good time here and were sent back in coffins. A poor labourer left home to earn, but died."

As they mourned the 29-year-old, villagers also talked in hushed voices about how the terror attack would have a cascading effect. Over a thousand households in Hapat Nar and surrounding villages alone depend on earnings from the tourists who come to Pahalgam, working as ponywallahs, taxi drivers or labourers, or at restaurants.

On Wednesday, many of them were on the streets — besides hoteliers, traders and residents — protesting against the attack. Schools stayed shut and shops downed shutters. Several people held night vigils while a two-minute silence was observed by government employees.

"It was not a bullet fired at tourists," said Ashraf, who runs a tourist cab. "It was a bullet fired at our chests, a bullet fired at our livelihood."

Almost every young man from our village works in Pahalgam, Ashraf added. "We earn Rs 500 a day, it gets spent by the evening, and the next morning we leave for Pahalgam again. This is how these villages live and survive."



Union Home Minister Amit Shah meets family members of those killed in the terror attack in J&K's Pahalgam. PTI

'Will not bend to terror': Shah vows action

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
SRINAGAR, APRIL 23

UNION HOME Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday asserted that the country will not bend to terror and that those responsible for the killing of tourists in Pahalgam will not be spared.

After laying wreaths on the bodies of those killed in the terror attack, he said on X, "With a heavy heart, paid last respects to the deceased of the Pahalgam terror attack."

"Bharat will not bend to terror. The culture of this dastardly terror attack will not be spared," the Union Home Minister said. Shah laid wreaths on the coffins of the victims of the terror attack at the Police Control Room here.

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

He assured them the security forces would leave no stone unturned to bring the perpetrators of the deadly attack to the book, officials said.

Shah also visited Baisaran meadows, the scene of gruesome killing of 26 people near

Pahalgam.

Later, in another post, the Shah said that every Indian feels the pain of those who lost their loved ones in the terrorist attack and that words cannot express this sadness.

"I assure all these families and the whole country that these terrorists killing innocent people will not be spared," he said.

Shah arrived within hours of the attack Wednesday night and was briefed about the situation by Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police Nalin Prabhat.

The Home Minister also chaired a security review meeting, which was also attended by the Lieutenant Governor.

Shah reached the Baisaran meadows in a helicopter and was given a briefing by security officials.

Shah was told about the sequence of events and the possible routes the terrorists took to reach the popular tourist spot, which is surrounded by thick pine forests, sources said.

DCP Nalin Prabhat and GoC of Army's 15 Corps Lieutenant General Prashant Srivastava were among the senior officers who were present at the site.

3 from Jharkhand, MP arrested over controversial posts

Ranchi, Bhopal: Two persons from Madhya Pradesh and one from Jharkhand were arrested Wednesday for allegedly posting controversial remarks over the terror attack in J&K.

Mohammad Naushad (31), a resident of Bokaro, was arrested after former Bokaro MLA Vinod Kumar Naresh reportedly alerted the local police about the post. Naveen Singh, officer-in-charge of Balidih police station, said, "He has been booked under sections 152, 186(1A), 186(1B), and 186(1C) of BNS. We are also monitoring other accounts attempting to hurt national sentiments through offensive posts," he said.

In MP's Damoh district, police said Wasim Khan and Tanveer Qureshi were arrested for posts which could incite tension between communities. They have been booked under Sections 353(2), 196, 299, and 3(5) of BNS for promoting enmity and disrupting harmony. "The communication in the posts hinted they could hurt religious sentiments and promote enmity between two groups," said a police officer. **ENS**

SITHARAM CUTHS SHORT VISIT TO US, PERU

Washington, New York: Following the terror attack, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is set to visit the US and Peru and will depart for India at the earliest, an official statement said Wednesday.

Sitharaman arrived in the US Sunday for a six-day visit, after which she will head to Peru to travel to Peru for a five-day trip.

Earlier, PM Narendra Modi, who was on an official visit to Saudi Arabia, also cut short his two-day visit and departed for New Delhi Tuesday night. **PTI**

Kharge: Not a time for partisan politics, must come together to ensure justice

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

AFTER LEADERS of Opposition of both the Houses of Parliament spoke to Union Home Minister Amit Shah and J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah about Pahalgam terror attack, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Wednesday said it is not a time for "partisan politics" and "is a moment for collective resolve to ensure justice for those who lost their lives and for their grieving families".

The Congress leader said that the Congress Working Committee (CWC) will meet in Delhi on Thursday to discuss the matter. Congress communication in charge Jairam Ramesh said that Leader of Opposition in LS Rahul Gandhi "has cut short his US visit" and will attend the CWC meeting.

Speaking in Bengaluru, Kharge said the Congress "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," said Kharge. He was accompanied by Congress leader Pawan Khera, and Karnataka Deputy CM D K Shivakumar and AICC general secretary (J&K) and Rajya Sabha MP Minister Hussain.

"Since the horrific Chattisingphora massacre in 2000, this is among the most brazen and outrageous attempts by terrorists and separatists. We firmly reiterate, those who murdered

PROMINENT MUSLIM BODIES CONDEMN TERROR ATTACK

New Delhi: Prominent Muslim organisations Wednesday strongly condemned the Pahalgam terror attack and sought action against the culprits. The AIMPLB has suspended its campaign against the new Waqf law for three days as a mark of solidarity with the bereaved families. AIMPLB president Maulana Khalid Saifullah Rahmani denounced the attack and urged the Centre to take strict action against those responsible. Jamaat-e-Islami Hind (JIH)'s president Syed Sadatullah Husaini said that there can be no justification for such a barbaric act.

"These responsible must be brought to justice and given the harshest punishment," Husaini said. **ENS**

dered unarmed and innocent civilians cannot be human," said Kharge.

Kharge said, "We must give a fitting response and in this matter we all are one and we will fight". The Rajya Sabha Leader of Opposition Minister Hussain said the government "will use its full strength to hunt down the terrorists".

Meanwhile, AICC general secretary for organisation K C Venugopal reached Srinagar and paid tribute to the deceased.



SRINAGAR SHUTS

Shops closed amid a bandh call against the terror attack in Srinagar on Wednesday. PTI

Row over Vadra's remarks, BJP calls it 'language of terrorists'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

BJP ON Wednesday mounted an attack on Robert Vadra following his comments suggesting that non-Muslims were attacked in Pahalgam as terrorists feel Muslims are being "mistreated" in the country.

Vadra told ANI that he was "deeply concerned" by the current "state of our country". "Firstly, I feel terrible and my heartfelt condolences are for the people who have died in this terrorist act... The terrorist acts are a weak way to highlight a cause... It is a weak act. I think surely it is time that all governments need to come together," said Vadra.

"When this terrorist act took

place, they (terrorists) were looking at IDs, people who were non-Muslims were attacked and messages were given to the PM. Why is this happening? Because, they are feeling that Muslims are being mistreated in our country," Vadra said.

"I see that minorities are sidelined. When they are praying, they are not allowed to do so on their roofs. If they are in abundance praying on a Thursday or Friday and there is a spillover on the roads, they are stopped, there are surveys of mosques," he told PTI.

Hitting back, the BJP accused him of "speaking the language of the terrorists" and justifying the barbaric act. "Robert Vadra's remarks are completely condemnable," BJP national spokesperson Nalin Kohli told PTI.

"This is the same language that terrorists always use to justify their terrorism. It's clear from Robert Vadra's remarks that he wants to do politics on such a gruesome terror attack when the entire country is united against it," Kohli said, demanding an apology from Vadra.

BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh said, "Robert Vadra's statements are not only ignorant but dangerous. By targeting the Modi government in the wake of a massacre sponsored by anti-national forces, he has exposed the deeply problematic mindset within Gandhi families." BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla said even as the country was mourning, Congress had begun to "defend Pakistan sponsored Islamic Jihad". **WITH PTI**

Vance dials PM Modi, condemns terror attack

SUBHAJIT ROY
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

US VICE President J D Vance spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday and strongly condemned the Pahalgam terror attack which took place on Tuesday, the Ministry of External Affairs said.

"Vice-President J D Vance called PM Narendra Modi and strongly condemned the dastardly terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir," MEA official spokesperson Randhir Jaishwal said.

Vance conveyed his deepest condolences 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 US is ready to provide all assistance in the joint fight against terrorism. PM Modi thanked Vice-President Vance and President Trump for their messages of support and solidarity," Jaishwal said in a social media post.

Oppose terror in all forms: China; neighbours condemn attack, bat for regional peace

DIVYAA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

WITH GLOBAL leaders rallying behind India in the wake of the terror attack in which 26 people were killed, China on Wednesday came out in support of India and called for "opposite terrorism in all forms". Chinese Ambassador Xu Feihong said, "Shocked by the attack in Pahalgam and condemn (it). Deep condolences for the victims and sincere sympathies to the injured and the bereaved families. Oppose terrorism of all forms."

France President Emmanuel Macron also condemned the attack and extended his condolences. "A heinous attack has struck India, claiming the lives of dozens of men and women from all walks of life. We share the profound sorrow of the victims' families, to whom I extend my heartfelt condolences," he said.

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer said that the horrific terrorist attack in Kashmir was "utterly devastating." "My thoughts are with those affected, their loved



A candlelight vigil in Amritsar on Wednesday. PTI

ones, and the people of India," he said on X.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz called the attack in Kashmir "utterly devastating." "My thoughts are with those affected, their loved ones, and the people of India," Scholz said.

The European Union also pledged its support to India. EU President Ursula von der Leyen said that the "vile terror attack in Pahalgam today stole so many in-

nocent lives". "Yet I know that India's spirit is unbreakable. You will stand strong in this ordeal. And Europe will stand with you," she said in a post on X.

Messages expressing support to India and condemnation poured in from neighbouring countries — Bangladesh, Maldives, Nepal and Afghanistan. A statement by Afghanistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson was issued by its Mumbai consulate con-

demning the attack and expressed sympathy to the families of those who lost their lives. "Such acts threaten the security and stability of the region," it said.

Maldives, with whom India saw a chill in ties a couple of years ago, but witnessed a turnaround later, also came out to "strongly condemn the terrorist attack in the city of Pahalgam." "Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations is a threat to peace, security and human dignity. People must have the freedom to live, travel, and explore the world without fear," said Maldives' Foreign Minister Abdullah Khaleel.

Bangladesh also strongly condemned the terror attack and extended deepest condolences to the families of the victims. A statement issued by the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs also reiterated its commitment to the global fight against terrorism.

Nepal PM KP Sharma Oli also expressed condolences, while also noted with concern the possible loss of one of its citizens. "Deepest condolences to the victims of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam. Nepal stands firmly with India & strongly



As the Home Minister, you handled several internal security crises. What do you think the government should do now?

Undoubtedly, the first thing is to launch a massive manhunt for the terrorists and apprehend them. Secondly, as this appears to be a case of the failure of local intelligence sources, the government should thoroughly review the readiness of local sources to provide information to the police and security personnel. It is difficult to police such a vast country or a sensitive state in the absence of local information/intelligence.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has called the attack a direct assault on the Indian State and demanded a befitting response. What do you think can be done?

It is for the government to weigh different options and choose the most effective one. The Congress will support the government's decision.

The Congress has asked the government to convene an all-party meeting on the attack. What does the party plan to suggest in the meeting, if it is called?

The Congress president (Kharge) said the all-party meeting should be convened after the information and facts are gathered. The Congress will offer its views on the basis of the facts and information collected.



There is a very wide consensus on fighting terror. However, there may be a few people who support violent actions. Violence, if condoned, will create conditions favourable for terrorist acts. We must oppose terror and violence everywhere.

Congress has been repeatedly demanding that Centre restore J&K's statehood. Do you think restoration of statehood will stabilise the security situation in the UT?

The restoration of statehood is a separate issue but is absolutely necessary. Not restoring it breeds resentment. However, it is nothing to do with terrorist incidents. If statehood is restored, the first responsibility will lie with the state government and that may help in fighting terrorists.

12 The EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE
LOVE LOOKS NOT WITH THE EYES,
BUT WITH THE MIND.
— WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY
RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

GRIEF & HEALING

In wake of Pahalgalam outrage, there is need to remember: Way forward must build on hard-won gains in Kashmir

THE SIGNAL FROM the terrorists who rained bullets on tourists on Tuesday, killing in cold blood 26 people at Pahalgalam, one of the Kashmir Valley's most visited destinations, is unmistakable. They aimed to derail the economic revival underway in J&K and to set the clock back in the Union Territory. Tourism has been at the heart of the resurgence in the Valley. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha have all spoken of the tourist economy being the result of, and becoming, a harbinger of, a deepening peace. The fact that a popularly elected government, led by the National Conference, came to power last year, and the fact that the election saw an impressive voter turnout, added to the stirrings of hope and optimism. It's clear that the scripting of a new Kashmir story has bred anxiety among the malevolent powers across the country's border, and their proxies. It may be no coincidence, therefore, that the deadliest attack in the Valley in more than 25 years came close on the heels of one of the nastiest dog whistles in recent times on Kashmir by the Pakistani security establishment. Addressing the Overseas Pakistani Convention last week, Army Chief Asim Munir referred to Kashmir as Islamabad's "jugal vein" and invoked the two-nation theory.

Accountability for the attacks should be fixed urgently. As it mounts a search for the perpetrators of Tuesday's attack and takes steps to fix the gaps in security, the government shouldn't ignore the signs of a worrying shift — pilgrims, migrants, and now, tourists have become target targets. The militants have also evidently timed their strikes to garner maximum publicity. In June last year, for instance, they ambushed a bus carrying pilgrims from the J&M Modi and his council of ministers were being sworn in. In October, terrorists gunned down six migrant workers and a doctor, less than a week after the Omar Abdullah government assumed office. Now, the Pahalgalam attack has coincided with the visit of US Vice President JD Vance and PM Modi's trip to Saudi Arabia, one of the most influential pilgrims in the Islamic world.

Nothing can compensate those who lost their loved ones on Tuesday. But the best tribute to these killed in the terror strikes would be for the Centre and state governments to reiterate their commitment to providing a fear-free environment to the people of J&K, and to those who visit the UT. The *shikam* owner, the cab driver, owners and employees of hotels and inns, entrepreneurs, workers — indeed, everyone has a stake in peace. As the government goes back to the drawing board, it will need the support of all these stakeholders. Care must be taken by all at scrupulously eschew any rhetoric that might be seen as inflammatory — because any attempts to play on divides would only mean playing into the hands of the terrorist. Instead, the government and civil society actors must draw on the economic and security gains of the past six years and take forward the story of *nujo* Kashmir. As the government probes the attack to bring the guilty to book, it may have to navigate the escalatory ladder. In doing so, it must keep in mind that Pakistan frames international isolation, both economically and diplomatically. The day after, as Delhi frames a response, it must factor in the fact that the world is on India's side — and the nation is united, in grief and in healing.

THE RECASTING

Amid global tumult, JD Vance's visit framed convergence of interests, build on gains of PM Modi's America trip

US VICE PRESIDENT JD Vance's four-day visit to India came at a crucial juncture, amid profound changes in Washington's approach to the world. The optics of the visit, as well as Vance's speech in Jaipur on Tuesday, must be seen in the context of the gathering apprehensions around the Donald Trump administration's trade policy, its rethinking of the US's role in the world, its hardening stance on immigration. Against this backdrop, the images of the Vance family sightseeing, the play on the Indian connection through Second Lady Usha Vance, and the photogenic warmth of the meeting with PM Narendra Modi, with the couple's three children participating, have led to a perceptible softening. The tenor of the trip has been in stark contrast to the hard and stark stance taken by the V-P in Europe during the Munich conference earlier this year. His speech in Jaipur only underlined this.

The US V-P announced that the Terms of Reference (ToR) for a bilateral trade agreement have been finalised. He spoke of deepening defence cooperation and about offering the latest defence equipment, notably the F-35 fighter jet. He also made a case for exporting US hydrocarbons to India, and partnering in energy exploration as well as emerging technologies, including AI. The Trump administration remains consistent in its approach to the Indo-Pacific — there has been clarity on the China challenge from Trump's first term through to the Biden administration. Vance's welcoming of India's leadership of the Quad is important in this context.

Vance has sought to frame bilateral ties in terms of a convergence of interests, free from what he sees as the shibboleths of a defunct ideology. He drew a line between the Trump-Vance outlook and the "faded ideas" of their predecessors and their "attitude of preachiness, and condescension". The takeaway from Vance's visit — just over two months after the Modi-Trump summit in Washington — will be that, amid the unsettling and rebalancing, India may have more room for manoeuvre. The challenge now is to build on this momentum amid the tumult in the global economic and strategic order that threatens prolonged uncertainty.

THE MARRIAGE PLOT

A letter addressed to the Bard's wife hints at a partnership sturdy enough to survive separation and speculation

LIKE ANY GOOD Shakespearean revelation, this comes not with thunder and lightning, but in ink and parchment. A crumpled letter has upended one of literary history's long-held assumptions — that William Shakespeare abandoned his wife Anne Hathaway in Stratford-upon-Avon while he made his fortune in London. Analysed by professor Matthew Steggle of the University of Bristol, the fragment found in the binding of a book in Hereford Cathedral's library and addressed to "Good Mrs Shakspeare" suggests Anne may have been far more present in his life than the myth of the forsaken provincial wife allows: It is an appeal to her by a London widow to repay the money entrusted to Shakespeare by her husband.

Biographers have chipped away at Anne's agency over the centuries. She has been cast variously as a supportive wife bringing up their three children in the countryside while running the family brewery, a woman of weary estrangement, a harriard who forced Shakespeare into marriage because she was pregnant with their child. But what if Shakespeare's creative life and their marriage weren't at odds? What if Anne was *Sonnet 137's* "fair truth" — not an absence in his story, but its quiet anchor? In his world, Shakespeare had bequeathed "my second best bed with the furniture" to Anne, interpreted by later scholars as a snub. But in the Elizabethan world, the second-best, often the marital bed, symbolised fidelity; the "best" was usually kept in the guest room as a status symbol.

From Viola to Portia to even Lady Macbeth, Shakespeare's heroines were women of agency and complexity. His domestic story may lack the sweep of legend, but it may have been something richer — a partnership sturdy enough to survive separation, sonnets and speculation.



HASEEB A DRABU

THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT has and will react to the massacre in the meadows of Pahalgalam. The Union government will no doubt respond to it. The security establishment will retaliate in appropriate measure. As they all must, each in their own way. But it is not only about the government. What are the people of Kashmir to do? The massacre of tourists is as much against the government as it is against the people.

Every Kashmiri is shocked into silence and speechless in shame. He is grieving. She is mourning. They are burdened with self-reproach. He doesn't have a face to show. She doesn't have the heart to condone. They are numbed by the assault. The air hangs heavy with lament. Kashmir and Kashmiris today find it difficult to come to terms with this brutality.

He desires peace. She deserves peace. They demand peace.

There has been an all-round condemnation as there always has been. Already, political parties, trade bodies, business associations and professional groups have protested against the inhuman carnage. The Valley observed a shutdown, a complete Kashmiri bandh. All this is, of course, a must, but it is good enough? More needs to be done by the civil society of Kashmir. It is imperative that peace beyond condemnation and disapproval.

True, the unprecedented boom in tourist activity has been cut short cruelly; the economic shock will pan out and linger on for months, if not years to come. The revival of trade and commerce, which accounts for 40 per cent of the local economy, has been suddenly and brutally cut short and the livelihood of lakhs of families has been seriously impaired. Last week, a hailstorm damaged and destroyed the apple crop and impaired the livelihood and prosperity of lakhs of Kashmiris. J&K is in for serious economic distress.

The recent surge in investment — official figures for investments in 2023-24 are almost Rs 3,500 crore with Rs 1.75 lakh

Kashmir's soul has been sinned against in Pahalgalam. Atonement must be a collective effort

The break from the immediate past of the past three decades and the building of an alternative narrative cannot only be political or governmental. It has to be social. The foundation of a social movement for peace, with dignity and development alongside, but distinct from the ongoing political efforts by all stakeholders, has to be laid by the masses. The engagement of people at the grassroots in the process of peace activism has to be based on conviction and values, not ideologies. Such a people's initiative will not be a reaction to episodic violent events, but proactive and enduring with a multi-generational engagement.

crore in the works with the potential to create 6.06 lakh jobs — will now be in jeopardy. While there is a staggering economic loss, the real loss is much more. Kashmir can survive without the income from tourism, but it can't live with its societal value system being as severely damaged and compromised as was done in Pahalgalam.

Tourists from all parts of the country, the backbone of this industry, are not just transactional beings for Kashmiris. Their presence has generated not just income but, over the years, also built robust and enduring social connections with the rest of the country. Indeed, as was recognised by the Amman Declaration in 2000, travel and tourism are the foremost global peace industry. Historically, in Kashmir, tourists have been ambassadors of socioeconomic integration with the mainland, respectful of differences and cultural diversity, which has resulted in the revitalisation and regeneration of native cultures.

The land of unparalleled beauty has borne witness to unspeakable pain. The Pahalgalam massacre has cut through like a physical wound that will take a long time to heal. How can such brutality stain a place that is known for its humanity and hospitality? This was on display in full force even after the attack, with the locals carrying the injured on their backs to the hospitals. The massacre at Pahalgalam has dimmed the light of the collective spirit of Kashmiris.

Yet, amidst the grief, the soul and sentiment of Kashmir must be articulated in more decisive and strident expressions. It can't be a whisper of an appeal to the resilience and values of its people. The collective voice has to be raised against barbarity, thereby making it a decisive turning point. What is needed is a demonstration of complete unacceptability, a public expression of positive assertion against the blatant violation of the basic values, principles and social norms that have defined Kashmiri society for centuries.

The break from the immediate past of

the past three decades and the building of an alternative narrative cannot only be political or governmental. It has to be social. There is a need for civic engagement, ensuring the involvement of individuals as members of the liberal and tolerant society that Kashmir has historically been. The foundation of a social movement for peace, with dignity and development alongside, but distinct from the ongoing political efforts by all stakeholders, has to be laid by the masses. The engagement of people at the grassroots in the process of peace activism has to be based on conviction and values, not ideologies. Such a people's initiative will not be a reaction to episodic violent events, but proactive and enduring with a multi-generational engagement.

Run through civil society networks, such a movement will mobilise campaigns by reaffirming and spreading collective values and beliefs. The public expressions of outrage and positive assertion must reverberate from all institutions of civil society, be they shrines, schools or mosques. It is the soul of Kashmir that has been bruised, battered, and sinned against in Pahalgalam. The atonement in private sought by every Kashmiri today will become a collective effort for a peaceful, liberal and tolerant society. From there, a people's narrative will emerge.

In parallel, it needs to be proactively ensured that the estranged relationship manifesting itself as distrust and disconnect between the state and society is obliterated. The state's assertiveness and authority depend on its efficacy. This, in turn, earns legitimacy and compliance and forms a strong social contract between the two. Neither the state nor civil society can deliver in isolation. Civil society has to ensure that ethnic, racial and religious identities do not become reasons for contention.

The writer is former finance minister of Jammu & Kashmir

HARD TO STOMACH

The state must tackle food adulteration, not put onus on citizens

RITUPARNA PATGIRI

FOOD IS ONE of the most significant aspects of our social and cultural lives, and both state and society play crucial roles in determining nutrition and health-related policies. From mid-day meals in schools to government-sponsored functions, decisions around food are often governed by social and political constructions rather than nutritional requirements. In most cases, the question of health often takes a back seat.

As per the recent National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5, 2019-21), in children under five, the rate of stunting is at 35.5 per cent, wasting at 19.3 per cent and underweight prevalence at 32.1 per cent. Despite such evidence, nutrition and public health remain neglected. A similar apathy about food quality may explain why there is no outrage over food adulteration, which should be a grave concern for public health.

In the 1990s, it was common to hear stories about adulterated milk. In 2025, the adulteration of food, including milk, remains a problem. For instance, the National Survey on Milk Adulteration in 2011 revealed that 70 per cent of the milk samples that were tested in India did not meet the standards of food safety. Water is the main adulterant in milk. Other adulterants include salt, detergents and glucose.

In recent times, there have been alarming reports on food adulteration in several other items of daily consumption like paneer, watermelon, spices, etc. News reports from different parts of the country, like Delhi, Mumbai, and Noida, have revealed that the

market is flooded with "fake paneer". The most common adulterants include starch, detergents, synthetic milk, acetic acid, etc. Eating adulterated food items can lead to severe health consequences like food poisoning, sometimes even death.

The prevalence of adulterated food should set alarm bells ringing in a country that is grappling with both communicable and non-communicable health issues. India is often known as the diabetes capital of the world, with around 77 million people above 18 suffering from this non-communicable disease. A recent study by the Indian Council of Medical Research and the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation, Chennai, has attributed this to the kind of food Indians eat. The higher number of diabetes is closely connected to the fried and ultra-processed foods that are consumed. The use of low-quality oil is also a contributing factor. Edible oil is also one of the most adulterated food items in the country. Adulterants such as rice bran oil, argemone oil and artificial allyl isothiocyanate are added to mustard oil.

The case of adulteration in spices is even more striking. In April 2024, Hong Kong suspended the sale of certain MDH and Everest spice blends because of the presence of large amounts of ethylene oxide, a cancer-causing pesticide. It is not an exaggeration to state that Indian soft power, especially its culinary capital, is synonymous with its spices. Made-in-India spices, considered to be one of the major exports, are widely sold worldwide. Apart from health impacts, the country's interna-

tional reputation suffers when these cases come up. The European Union has already raised concerns about the presence of ethylene oxide in chilli peppers and peppercorns from India. It even banned 400 items for heavy contamination between 2019 and 2024.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has been conducting raids and sample tests and cancelling the manufacturing licences of many manufacturers. People have also been directed to be wary of purchasing adulterated products, check carefully and preferably eat items like paneer at home. But such measures are not enough. By saying that citizens must be aware and eat at home, the obligation to ensure food is safe and healthy is shifted from the state to the individual. This is particularly difficult to achieve in a country that still has a large population of poor and uneducated people. The problem calls for better farming, processing and packaging practices. Producers at every level need better training and knowledge about safe food practices. The FSSAI must ensure stricter implementation across India, as many states do not have the infrastructure to do so. There is also a need to look at the permissible levels of pesticides in food and to rethink food quality and its relationship with health. We must develop the concept of food literacy to fight nutritional and health hazards.

The writer teaches Sociology in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Guwahati



APRIL 24, 1985, FORTY YEARS AGO

LONGOWAL VISIT

THE GOVERNMENT IS likely to adopt its strategy on Punjab after the visit of the Akali Dal president, Harchand Singh Longowal, to the capital. Longowal is visiting Delhi and the SGPC president, Gurcharan Singh Tohra, is likely to accompany him. The government is concerned over the proposal put forward by Tohra to demolish the Akal Takht.

20 KILLED IN GUJARAT

AT LEAST 20 persons were killed in police firing and other violent incidents (unofficial sources put the toll at over 50) and over 15 re-

ceived bullet, knife or burn injuries as the situation in Ahmedabad turned very grave with large-scale arson, looting and communal clashes reported from hitherto peaceful labour localities. Indefinite curfew was extended to Bapunagar, Rajivnagar and Ghatampur. The police fired over 135 rounds at the mobs.

MAINTENANCE LAW

A DIVORCED MUSLIM woman is entitled to maintenance from her husband under Section 125 of the Criminal Procedure Code, a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court held. A five-judge bench, presided over by Chief Justice V V Chandrachud, emphasised that

there was no conflict between the provisions of the CrPc and the Muslim personal law on the question of the Muslim husband's obligation to maintain his divorced wife.

DDA MAFIA

AMARAFFO petty contractors, junior employees of the Delhi Development Authority and local thugs allegedly controls the tender filing centres of the authority in various parts of the city. The *modus operandi* is frightening. Members of the mafia surround the boxes kept at the offices of various engineers and intimidate contractors who go to deposit the tenders and do not pay money to them.

THE IDEAS PAGE

The road from Pahalgam

There can be no magical solution to the 'Kashmir issue' as long as Pakistan provides support to separatism. But we need to remember, in this moment, that there has been movement towards normalcy

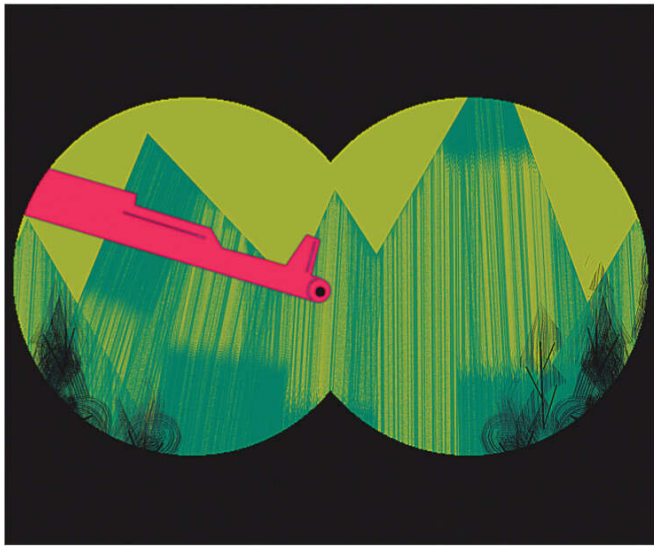


THE ATTACK AT the Baisaran meadow near Pahalgam, where at least 25 tourists and a Valley resident were killed, reflects a significant departure in the trajectory of terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K). It is a breakdown of the unwritten compact between virtually all terrorist groups operating in the now Union Territory and the larger population there — that tourists would not be targeted. Virtually every family in the Valley is directly or indirectly dependent on tourism, and a collapse of the industry would inflict unendurable hardships on the entire population. Thus, even at the peak of terrorism in J&K, through the 1990s and early 2000s, tourists were excluded as targets of terrorist operations. Even in several years that saw high levels of violence, tourism was not allowed to collapse entirely. There were, of course, occasional aberrations. The South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP), for instance, records a total of 24 incidents targeting tourists since 2000, of which 13 were incidents of killing, resulting in 44 fatalities. This excludes the latest incident in Pahalgam. Significantly, these numbers include Hindu pilgrims, who have never been part of the "implicit compact" excluding tourists as targets of terrorism.

Beyond this — and the inevitable impact the Pahalgam incident will have on the tourist industry in J&K — this most recent terrorist outrage represents no radical departure from the trajectory of the past. The incident will certainly trigger a process of adaptation on the part of the security forces, as well as at least temporary circumscription of tourist activities. Beyond this, it is unlikely to have any lasting impact on the trajectory of terrorism in the state.

It is useful to recall, here, that the flurry of incidents in the Jammu region in June-July 2024, including the attack on a bus carrying Hindu pilgrims at Reasi, had provoked widespread commentary on the "strategic shift" from the Valley to the Jammu region, which had purportedly been "peaceful" before these attacks. Jammu had, in fact, recorded 59 fatalities in 2023. So there is no evidence for such a shift. There was a dilution of the state's deployment in the region, and a consequent weakening of the security grid. Terrorists were facing an increasingly difficult operational environment in Kashmir, and found a few opportunities to remind the Indian state of their presence in Jammu. The security vulnerabilities were addressed, and preceding patterns of terrorism — with the Valley dominating — persisted.

The most significant damage the Pahalgam incident will inflict is on the Centre's narrative of the restoration of "normalcy" after the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019. At the time, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) promised "zero terrorism" in the Union Territory, and boastful assertions of burgeoning tourism as an index of such success were made — 23.6 million tourists visited J&K in 2024. The



CR Sasikumar

number was expected to be exceeded in the current year before the Pahalgam incident. Clearly, however, such "normalcy" and "zero terrorism" remain elusive.

But what is "normalcy"? J&K has been a theatre of terrorism for over 35 years — and at least 16 of these years saw a high-intensity conflict, with each of these recording at least 1,000 fatalities. The violence peaked in 2001, with 4,011 fatalities (all data from SATP), and bottomed out at 121 in 2012 — the point at which major political initiatives should have been launched. Instead, fatalities escalated from this point, hitting 452 in 2018, going down to 283 in 2019 — with a complete lockdown after the Centre's action on Article 370 — to rise again to 321 in 2020. Thereafter, a steady trajectory of decline has been registered, down to 127 fatalities in 2024.

There can be no magical "solution" to the "Kashmir issue" as long as Pakistan continues to provide support to separatism and a measure of alienation persists in the UT. But a "solution" is already in play. The drop in fatalities from 4,011 to 127 is, itself, a "solution" — a major success, and within a theatre of protracted conflict, a measure of "normalcy".

Significantly, from a situation where up to 7,000 terrorists rampaged across the state, often in individual armed groups numbering in the 100s, authorities estimate the total strength of active terrorists in J&K at 76 in March 2025, including 59 foreign and 17 local terrorists. This, again, given the background, represents "normalcy" in a long-troubled region.

The Pahalgam attack is, no doubt, an un-

Significantly, from a situation where up to 7,000 terrorists rampaged across the state, often in individual armed groups numbering in the 100s, authorities estimate the total strength of active terrorists in J&K at 76 in March 2025, including 59 foreign and 17 local terrorists.

This, again, given the background, represents "normalcy" in a long-troubled region.

acceptable outrage, and there will be consequences. Pakistan has sought to deny involvement, but all present indications suggest the involvement of the Resistance Front (TRF), a front organisation of the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). The scale and nature of the operation, as well as the profile of the participating terrorists, at least three of whom have already been named by authorities, clearly indicate TRF/LeT involvement, built on Pakistani state support, if not immediate planning and oversight.

A number of options for retaliation exist, and it may be tempting to resort to patterns preferred by the current administration in the past — the surgical strike in the wake of the Uri terrorist attack (2016), or the Balakot air strike in the wake of the Pulwama bombing (2019). These would be theatrical events that could be exploited for partisan political purposes, but with dubious operational or strategic consequences. Hysterical elements in the electronic and social media have also raised cries for open war, with little concern for capacities, capabilities and costs, or for the wider regional security environment. It is, however, covert retaliation that has the largest potential for impact, without the risks of sliding down the slippery slope to unforeseen escalation. These are decisions that must be taken unhurriedly, within a strategic framework, and not within a mindset of vengeful rage or a calculus of domestic political advantage.

The writer is founding member and executive director, Institute for Conflict Management and executive director of the South Asia Terrorism Portal

WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"The US president's continued attacks on the Fed chair over the weekend have only added to a flight from US equities, bonds and the dollar itself."

— THE GUARDIAN

Why govt should acquire BluSmart

Integrating it into the Sahkar

Taxi cooperative can be a blueprint for green growth



DAVINDER SANDHU

THE ABRUPT SUSPENSION of BluSmart's operations has impacted clean mobility ambitions and the livelihoods of over 10,000 drivers. With financial misconduct allegations against its founders coming to the fore, the company's services were halted across Delhi-NCR, Mumbai, and Bengaluru, affecting both employees and a growing base of loyal customers. While the legal system rightly pursues accountability from the promoters for alleged diversion of funds, the workforce and public assets built through this venture need not be abandoned.

This crisis offers a good opportunity for the Indian government to step in, acquire BluSmart, and integrate it into the Sahkar Taxi cooperative platform that is in the process of being rolled out. Such a move would protect livelihoods, preserve vital green urban transport assets, and further India's mission of democratic economic empowerment through cooperative ownership.

Founded in 2019, BluSmart emerged as India's pioneering all-electric ride-hailing platform. Operating a fleet of over 8,000 electric vehicles, the company quickly gained attention for its environmentally friendly service model, transparency in pricing (fixed fares with no surge), and a zero-cancellation policy. These customer-centric features differentiated BluSmart in a crowded and often exploitative app-based transport market.

According to the company's last available disclosures, BluSmart had raised over Rs 500 crore from investors and had partnered with major vehicle manufacturers and real-estate firms to establish charging hubs. Its app had over one million downloads.

With over 10,000 drivers suddenly out of work, many of whom had left jobs with traditional aggregators for BluSmart's cleaner and more ethical platform, the shutdown is not just a corporate failure — it's a crisis. Most drivers did not own the EVs they operated and are now unable to drive for other services. Government acquisition would preserve these jobs and inject confidence in the growing EV-based mobility workforce.

India's climate goals under the updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) target a 45 per cent reduction in emission intensity of GDP by 2030. Urban transport is a key sector in this transition. BluSmart's fleet, which contributed significantly to reducing carbon emissions in metros, cannot be left to disuse. With the Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Hybrid and Electric Vehicles in India Phase II (FAME-II) scheme nearing its end, retaining existing EV infrastructure is more crucial than ever.

One of BluSmart's key strengths was service reliability: No cancellations, real-

time cab tracking, and uniform pricing irrespective of demand spikes. These were appreciated by urban professionals, women, and elderly passengers who valued predictability and safety. Integrating these practices into Sahkar Taxi can elevate the practice of public expectations from ride-hailing services.

Announced in early 2025 by Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah, the Sahkar Taxi scheme seeks to establish a nationwide cooperative of taxi drivers who jointly own and manage the ride-hailing service. This model aims to counterbalance the commission structures of private aggregators, under which drivers often earn less than 40 per cent of the fare collected. Under Sahkar Taxi, drivers will be members of Primary Transport Cooperatives and receive profit dividends, training, and welfare support.

The scheme is to be supported by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC), with startup capital from the Ministry of Cooperation. As per the government's initial estimates, Phase I will induct 20,000 driver-owners. Acquiring BluSmart's fleet and staff can give this plan a ready base and strong urban launchpad.

BluSmart's infrastructure — including EVs, charging stations, and IT backend — can be merged into Sahkar Taxi to immediately scale up operations in three major metros. The retained workforce, including skilled drivers, backend operations staff, and tech developers, can be given the opportunity to continue under the cooperative framework, subject to due diligence.

To ensure sustainability, the government can initially hold majority ownership through a holding special purpose vehicle (SPV), while gradually transitioning to a driver-owned model over a five-to-seven-year period. During this phase, a roadmap for disinvestment to cooperative societies and state federations can be developed in consultation with NITI Aayog and the ministries of Road Transport and Highways and Heavy Industries.

This transition model has global precedent. In Spain's Mondragon Corporation and Italy's Emilia-Romagna region, government-backed cooperatives emerged as highly resilient during financial crises. India can learn from these and craft an exit that ensures long-term financial health and participative governance.

BluSmart's demise is a cautionary tale about rapid scaling without internal accountability. But it is also a reminder that innovation in mobility and environmental responsibility should not be hostage to individual misconduct. As India races to build greener, more inclusive cities, integrating BluSmart into the Sahkar Taxi cooperative is not just a rescue plan — it is a transformative blueprint for future mobility.

If the government seizes this moment, it will be doing more than just salvaging a service. It will be sending a strong signal that India is ready to back ethical, green, and people-centric business models with institutional strength. The future of mobility could well be electric — and cooperative.

The writer is co-founder and board chair at Prims Partners



RITUL GAUR AND MANSI KEDIA

THIS YEAR'S BUDGET announcements reaffirm the government's continued focus on a Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)-led approach for digital transformation, with continued allocations for Aadhaar and other ongoing digital missions for health and urbanisation. Many of these DPIs are now several years old, especially Aadhaar and UPI, which have scaled to serve millions across the country. Linked to 1,206 schemes, not only has Aadhaar benefited millions, government estimates also project fiscal savings of over 3 lakh crore (until March 2023). Despite this success, the government shies away from appropriate pricing of DPI services. Is scaling and diffusion of DPI the concern?

DPI's advocates have often likened its purpose and application to physical infrastructure such as roads. When governments invest in building highways, they trigger spillover gains through growth and employment opportunities in adjoining areas. Similarly, DPIs such as Aadhaar have delivered beyond their immediate purpose. The recently announced Aadhaar Authentication for Good Governance Rules, 2025 expand the scope and utility of authentication to include private services.

Aadhaar-based authentication was launched in 2009, but was kept free of cost until December 2019. The fee structures were revised downwards in 2023, and cur-

The right price

It is necessary for digital public infrastructure to be viable and sustainable

rently vary by user type — telecom service providers pay Re 1 for e-KYC and other private entities pay Rs 3, while it's free for government entities. Revenues from authentication services and self-service updates accounted for less than 40 per cent of expenditure in 2022-23. This explains the continued fund allocation to Aadhaar, not only for capital upgradation, but also for operations and maintenance.

UPI still mandates zero-cost services for basic peer-to-peer and merchant transactions, but has a nuanced fee structure for advanced services. For prepaid wallet instruments, merchants pay interchange fees on transactions above Rs 2,000, with rates varying by sector from 0.5 per cent to 1.1 per cent. Wallet loading also incurs service charges for transactions exceeding Rs 2,000. This approach may have contributed to UPI's adoption across the economy, but it comes with substantial operational costs — Rs 781 crore in marketing and a 188 per cent increase in product incentives, amounting to Rs 367 crore. The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) presents a similar case. Despite massive growth, the latest financials show a deficit of Rs 19,561.70 lakh, against total expenditure of Rs 21,027.33 lakh in 2023-24. DigLocker (budgeted at Rs 4,071 crore for FY 2025-26), is completely subsidised at the moment. With over 47 crore users, it offers free services despite the IT Rules, 2016 (Rule 15) allowing

for service charges.

The sobering story of poor financial viability is plaguing all DPIs. The initial nudge to scale adoption at zero prices has left the government with a sticky situation that risks eroding high-value common goods. In 1968, Garrett Hardin, an American ecologist, argued that individuals acting in their own self-interest can deplete shared resources — popularly known as the tragedy of the commons. Free services may eventually lead to overuse and perhaps, misuse of the common infrastructure. Since UPI is free of charge, users don't hesitate to make multiple micro transactions. This places technical pressure on the infrastructure, leading to performance issues. Additionally, fee prohibitions hurt commerce. In UPI's case, two tech giants now control 80 per cent of transactions, because larger companies can afford zero-fee models that are cross-subsidised through adjacent services. This undermines DPI's purpose as open infrastructure by creating de facto gatekeepers.

International experiences demonstrate that thoughtful pricing models not only prevent resource depletion but also create sustainable digital ecosystems. Singapore's PayNow adopted a flexible merchant fee approach that provides incentives for small vendors. Jordan's CIIQ applies a 1 per cent merchant fee to ensure efficient utilisation of infrastructure.

The government is not blind to these concerns. The RBI's discussion paper (2022) on payment system charges indicates that merchant fees may be under consideration. The expanded scope of authentication under the 2025 Aadhaar Rules also raises expectations of a relook at pricing authentication services. The launch of Entity Locker, the enterprise equivalent of DigLocker, may also find more people favouring the "ability to pay" for a service. This may eventually nudge DigLocker services to be priced, too.

Borrowing from the theory of multi-sided markets, DPIs, like other platform markets, allow for price levels to be strategically chosen for different groups of users — suppliers and consumers. Given the strong direct and indirect network effects that DPIs such as Aadhaar, UPI, DigLocker and ONDC have created, participation can continue to increase by setting prices that balance the needs of different groups. Public value maximisation may require some subsidisation, as already provided in building the infrastructure, but they need to be operationally viable. Let us be misunderecclusion, but to seek efficiency, by using appropriate pricing principles.

Gaur is policy advisor, Digital Impact Alliance and Kedia is senior fellow, ICRIER. Views are personal

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PAHALGAM ATTACK

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Terrorists kill tourists in Kashmir' (IE, April 23). This is a moment of great tragedy and profound sorrow for our country. The mass-casualty attack has disproved the government's claim of the long-restive region's return to normalcy. The revocation of J&K's special semi-autonomous status and the bifurcation of the erstwhile state into Union Territories have not helped solve the Kashmir problem and address the causes of militancy. There can be no act of inhumanity worse than taking another person's life. The government must react after a cool-headed assessment despite the widespread anger and calls for decisive action. There is no alternative to peaceful coexistence.

G David Milton, Maruthanadode

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Terrorists kill tourists in Kashmir' (IE, April 23). That terrorists chose one of the Valley's most iconic tourist destinations — just as the season was beginning — underscores their sinister intent to spread fear, disrupt normalcy, and damage livelihoods dependent on peace and tourism. The timing, coinciding with significant diplomatic and regional developments, further complicates the security landscape. This attack is a reminder that such threats must be met with both strategic intelligence and unwavering resolve. The Union and J&K governments must work together to provide strong assurances to the tourism sector and local communi-

ties, whose confidence is vital for stability. Equally important is the need to reject communal narratives.

Vandana Chopra, Chandigarh

VANCE IN INDIA

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'New give and take' (IE, April 23). US Vice President JD Vance's visit to India with his family has been more a personal visit than an official one. It is the first time one talks were held between him and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Moreover, the media gave details of his visit to Akshardham temple, Jaipur and then Agra. The Prime Minister left for Saudi Arabia in accordance with an already fixed itinerary the very day after Vance's arrival. India so far has made no comments over the issue of tariffs imposed by US President Donald Trump. Delhi should tactfully discuss the issue of tariffs rather than adopting a wait-and-watch policy.

Ravinder Kumar Jain, Ludhiana

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'New give and take' (IE, April 23). In recent times, India has sought to make its ties with the United States a pillar of its foreign policy strategy, just as the US has looked to India to counterbalance China. With the world in turmoil due to Trump's tariffs, India will be doing itself a favour by containing China's trade surplus. After all, this is the time of a big reset in global trade and India must approach strategies around trade in a comprehensive manner.

Kholan Das, Kolkata

PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF ACCUSED PERSON

See Section 82 Cr.P.C.

Whereas complaint has been made before said that accused person(s) Kuldeep Singh, S/o: Gurmeet Singh, R/o: Rzc-118 Gali No. 9 Dabri Ext. New Delhi has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in FIR No. 314/18, U/s: 129/55 G.ACT, P.S.: Sagarpur, Delhi and it has been taken to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused person(s) Kuldeep Singh, cannot be found and whereas it has been shown to my satisfaction that the said accused person(s) Kuldeep Singh, has absconded (or is concealing himself to avoid the service of the said warrant), Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused person(s) Kuldeep Singh, of FIR No. 314/18, U/s: 129/55 G.ACT, P.S.: Sagarpur, Delhi is required to appear before the Court to answer the said complaint on or before 24.05.2025.

By Order
Ms. Isha Singh
Judicial Magistrate, First Class-03
18, First Floor, Main Building
Patiala House Court, New Delhi

DP516/SW2025
(Court Matter)

**NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE**

Name of Work Hot Dip Galvanizing on ground Connections
Qty. in Kg 22500 Kg (Approx)
Tender Closing Date & Time 15.05.2025 at 15:00 hrs
Website Address for Complete Tender details www.reps.gov.in

Serving Customers With A Smile 1198/2025

**MAHILHA ARTHIK VIKAS MAHAMANDAL (MAVIM),
Government of Maharashtra Undertaking**

Geha Nirman Bhawan (MHADA) Mezzanine Floor,
Kalyanagar, Bandra (East), Mumbai - 400 051.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Ref No.: MAVIM/PMO/2024-25 Date: 24-04-2025

Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal (MAVIM) invites Request for Proposal for "Hiring a consultancy agency for Assessment of current projects, current budgets to identify gaps and opportunities to better mainstream gender and development of training modules and material on gender budgeting geared towards government officials".

For detailed RFP document visit Website: <https://www.devnetgobindia.org>
Last Date & Time for submission: Till 23rd May, 2025 at 3.00 pm.

By,
Managing Director,
MAVIM, Mumbai

**NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)**

N.L.T. No. 294741

Name of Work and its location "CAMC" of VTL machine at RCMK Sonapat

Approx. Cost of work (Rs. Thirty-Seven Lacs Thousand Five Hundred Seventy-Six and paise Forty-Five Only)

Earnest Money Rs. 741000/-

Completion period of Work 36 months of date of issue of Letter of Acceptance.

Cost of tender document on cashless post NIL

Date and Time for submission/ Closing of tender Above 15:00 hrs on 14.05.2025

Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen

No. 294741 Dated: 23.04.2025

Serving Customers With A Smile 1206/2025

UJVN LIMITED

H.O.: "UJJWAL", Mahanagar Bagh, G.M.S. Road, Dehradun-248008
Telephone: 9135-2783808, Fax: 9135-2783808
CIN No. U49101UR200815SG025886, Website: www.ujvn.com

Letter No: 285 e-Tender Time Extension Notice-1 Date: 23/04/2025

Due to unavoidable circumstances the date of submission and opening of tender invited by the office of the Executive Engineer (Maintenance), MB-II, Chinyalsaur (Uttarakash) is hereby extended as follows:-

Tender No: 45/EE (M)/MB-II/2024-25

Name of work / Supply/Services: Maintenance for Hydro-Mechanical and Electro-Mechanical works of Dharaasu Power House for the period of 06 months.

Last date for submission of bids on website: 03.05.2025 up to 16:00 Hrs.

Last date of submitting hard copy of documents in the office of Executive Engineer (Maintenance), MB-II, Chinyalsaur (Uttarakash): 06.05.2025 up to 16:00 Hrs.

Date of opening of bids on website: 07.05.2025 at 11:00 Hrs

For further & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal <http://ukenders.gov.in>

Executive Engineer (Maintenance)

"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

STATE INFRASTRUCTURE & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF UTTARAKHAND LTD.

25, Sector-18, Industrial Road (IT Park), Dehra Dun, U.P. India
Phone No. 0135-2789190, Fax No. 0135-2789169, Web site: www.sildcl.com

NIT No. 192,193,194,195,196,197/SIDCUL/2025 Date 23.04.2025

Short Term Tender Notice

सिडकुल के औद्योगिक आचरण (कोइदा, काशीपुर, पटनाग, एच सिसारगंज) में थो साईड/आउटआफ अथवा शुल्क रेटेशन में केनोपी डिमाण कायद हेतु इच्छुक बोलोदाता के घान हेतु 06 नम नितियाय दिनांक 15.05.2025 के अरान्त 02.00 बजे तक e-tendering द्वारा आमंत्रित की गयी है। विस्तृत मिति नोटिफिकेशन के वेबसाइट www.sildcl.com पर उपलब्ध है। www.sildcl.com पर दिनांक 28.04.2025 से रजिस्ट्रार के कार्यालय है। इस समय में यथा आवश्यक **Corrigendum** केवल उक्त Website पर ही upload किये जायेंगे।

Managing Director

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. JHS/Br/L/2025-26/02 Date 21.04.2025

E-Tender Notice

Dy.Chief Engineer(Bridge/Line)Jhansi, North Central Railway, Jhansi for and on behalf of President of India invites open E-Tenders on the prescribed forms for the under noted work:-

Tender No.-Br./JHS- 2025-02, Name of work: Construction of office for Dy.CE/Br/Line/JHS, XEN/Br/Line, AXEN/Br/Line & S&E/Br/Line and Depot of S&E/Br/L/JHS.

Approx. Cost of work: ₹ 7,80,56,951.98/-

Bid Security (Earnest Money): ₹ 141,70,00/-

Date of closing of tender: 15.05.2025

Completion Period: 06 Months

Eligibility Criteria for Similar work: Any civil engineering work.

Note: (1) The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on Website www.reps.gov.in up to 15:00 hrs on the due date of tender opening i.e. 15.05.2025. (2) Bids entered in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (3) Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightaway ignored and shall not be considered. (4) Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. (5) Payment of Bid Security (Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)) in respect of e-tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway or bank guarantee only. (6) In case of any difficulty/helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. (7) Tender on line can be submitted up to 15:00 hrs on dated 15.05.2025.

North central railways www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

**कार्यालय परियोजना प्रबंधक, सुनिट-30
कांस्ट्रक्शन एवं डिजाइन सर्विसेज**

उत्तर प्रदेश बल निगम (गणराज्य)
(अ 90 स्टेशन का उपकरण)

युनान नं-2025 का निगम विभाग
निकल एच.आर.सी. विभाग, शाहजपुर
Visit us at www.cdsup.org
Call: 7802521445
E-Mail Id: pnunit30@npsl@gmail.com

निविदा सूचना नं. 640/E-Tender/81
दिनांक: 21.04.2025

ई-निविदा सूचना

उत्तर प्रदेश बल निगम, की ओर से अंगोपस्थापित राय Survey, Collection of Data, Preparation of Integrated Urban Storm Water Drainage Master Plan (RWSMP) and other allied works for Municipal Corporation Shahjapur / Development Authority Area in District- Shahjapur, Uttar Pradesh, India हेतु निविदा सूचना दिनांक 21.04.2025 से ई-निविदा परामर्शित की गयी है। उक्त सूचना हेतु ई-निविदा सूचना दिनांक 21.04.2025 से दिनांक 14.05.2025 तक 15:00 बजे के बाद उक्त प्रदेश सरकार की e-procurement वेबसाइट <https://etender.up.nic.in> से डाउनलोड किये जा सकते हैं तथा ई-निविदा दिनांक 14.05.2025 को 17:00 बजे तक एच.एस., सुनिट - 30, उ.प्र. बल निगम (गणराज्य), शाहजपुर में निविदा कोणी नवीन। ई-निविदा प्रजन का शुल्क **₹. 25,000 (रु. 20,000.00 + GST 25%)** अर्जित करने होगा।

निविदा से सम्बंधित विस्तृत विवरण निगम की वेबसाइट www.cdsup.org पर प्रोक्चोरमेंट पोर्टल <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर उपलब्ध है। सूचना शुद्धि पत्र (Corrigendum) <https://etender.up.nic.in> पर ही अलोका किये जायेंगे, इन्का पुक्के से कोई प्रमाणन नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदावेबसाइट को सक्तर ही जाते है कि वे उक्त वेबसाइट का सम्य-समय पर अवलोकन करते रहे।

By Dy Chief Electrical Engineer/Project
461-AJ/25 North-Western Railway, Jhansi

**NORTH WESTERN RAILWAY
CORRIGENDUM No.-1**

Open E-TENDER NOTICE (Two Packet System without e-RA) Name of work: Design, Supply, Erection, Testing and Commissioning for upgradation of Electric traction system from 1 x 25 KV to 2 x 25 KV traction system alongwith modification of existing OHE for 160 kmph in RE-AWR-BKI, BKJ-JP, JP-PL-MD & RE-RGS-FL Sections of Jampur Division of North Western Railway. (Total 381.43 RKM/1210.82 TKM) Closing Date & Time of Submission of on-line E-Tender: 15.05.2025 on 13:00/02:05 in continuation of Tender Notice No. NWRE/Proj/2x25KV/JUP/01 (Two Packet System without e-RA) with tender Closing date 13/05/2025 (15:00 Hrs.), published in newspapers on dated-12.04.2025 & 13.04.2025 The following Corrigendum is hereby issued: Date of Closing of E-Tender will be 16/05/2025 (15:00 hrs.)

By Dy Chief Electrical Engineer/Project
461-AJ/25 North-Western Railway, Jhansi

**NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE**

Open tender through E-tendering are invited by Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer TRS, Electric Loco Shed, Khananpura Yard, Northern Railway, Saharanpur (Jammu Division) for and on behalf of the President of India from the registered tenderer on website www.reps.gov.in for the following work upto 11:00 hrs on the date of closing shown against the work and will be opened thereafter:-

Open Tender No.: ELS-SRE-2025-26-T-01

Name of work Dismantling and overhauling of ELGI make RR20100CGM type work

Date of Closing/Opening 15.05.2025

Approx. Cost Rs. 81.76,029.80

Earnest Money Rs. 1,63,500/-

Completion period 02 Year

Validity period 60 Days

Cost of tender Free of cost for downloading from IREPS & 5000/- for obtaining from Sr. DEE/TRS/SRE office.

1. Tenderer(s) should have Class-II Digital Signature Certificate to participate in E-Tendering of Works Tenders. 2. Tenderers are required to upload self-attested scanned copies of all related eligibility documents as per conditions. 3. Taxes & Charges will be applicable as per extant rule. 4. For details, please log on IREPS website www.reps.gov.in.

E-TENDER NOTICE No. ELS-SRE-2025-26-T-01, Dtd. 23.04.2025 1216/2025

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

**Tamil Nadu Power Generation Corporation Ltd
Notice Inviting Tenders (E-Tendering Process)**

Specification No.	Tender Inviting Authority	Name of the work
OT 09	CEMTPS-II	Design Supply Erection and Commissioning of PDFAES Phase II system with 16 nos. of 50/70HP capacity Pp.

For details of works / Procurement / Due date of submission / Opening, viewing and downloading of e-tenders, please visit websites. www.tnpgcl.org, www.tenders.tn.gov.in, www.tenders.tn.gov.in
DIPR/1681/Tender/2025

Office: Government College Sidhralai-District Gurugram

To lease agricultural land

The general public is informed that the Government College Sidhralai (Gurugram), in its possession, wants to lease 82 Kanal 04 Marla agricultural lands (arable land) for one year (01May 2025 to 30 April 2026). The process for leasing of agricultural land will be held in the college campus on Monday, April 28, 2025 at 11.00 am. Interested parties can obtain terms and conditions from the office of Government College Sidhralai on any working day for leasing agricultural land.

No. 34146/HR/Y Principal

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER, MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, GWALIOR (M.P.)

Naryankrishnan Shrivastava Bhawan, Near Taran Pushkar, City Centre, Gwalior
Tel No. - 0751-2483800, 4080352, Fax No. - 0751-2434249

NIT No. 2025-JAD-39904-2/MFGMC/109/2049/LPH/2025 Gwalior, Date: 17.04.2025

सम्मान्य 08 अप्रैल 271 Notice Inviting Tender for the work 22-04-2025

On behalf of Gwalior Municipal Corporation, M.P. online tender rate bids for the following work are invited on portal <http://www.mptenders.net> (separate from registered Contractors and completed firms).

Description of works	Estimate Amount (In Rs.)	Completion Period (In Days)
Survey and Design of laying of sewer network including Providing, Laying, Testing, and Commissioning of sewer lines in un-surveyed and different Area of Ward No. 6L, 02.03.04.05.06.07 in Gwalior Vidyanagar.	3,62,69,126.00	06 months Excluding rainy season

Interested bidders can view the NIT of portal <http://mptenders.net>. The bid document can be purchased only on online from dated 17.04.2025 to 02.05.2025 and can be submitted 02.05.2025 up to 5.30 P.M.

Executive Engineer,
Water Supply, Gwalior Municipal Corporation, Gwalior

KANPUR NAGAR NIGAM
Motijheel, Kanpur.

Phone: 2551416, 2531215 Fax: 2531662

E mail: Kanpur_nagar.nigam@yahoo.co.in

Website : kmc.up.nic.in

**E-Tender Notice
(TWO BID SYSTEM)**

Kanpur Nagar Nigam invites E-tender for 2 years under the provisions of "KANPUR NAGAR NIGAM (AKASH CHIHIN, VIGYAPANO KA VINIYAMAN AUR NIVANTRAN AVAM ANUGYAPTI SHULK NIRDHARAN AUR VASOOL) UPVIDHI 2020" in Kanpur Nagar Nigam limits (except private properties) which devide in 6 zonal area. The description of pole kyosk and advertisement group are provided in the tender document on the U.P. Govt's e-procurement website i.e. <https://etender.up.nic.in>.

Procedure for tender are below :-

- ✓ Date of Online opening Bid - 25.04.2025
- ✓ Last Date and time of participation for online Bid - 05.05.2025 Upto 3:00 P.M.
- ✓ Last Date and time for opening Technical Bid - 05.05.2025 Upto 4:00 P.M.
- ✓ Qualified participants of bid can participate separately in all or any sectors and advertisement groups in two bid system.
- ✓ Participants of Bid can be present at the time of opening the bid at Kanpur Nagar Nigam Head Office, Motijheel.
- ✓ Details Of Sector Boundaries Within Municipal limits and groups for advertisement categories are available in the tender document on the <https://etender.up.nic.in>.

details of advertisement, of sectors and advertisement groups, Minimum Base Price, tender cost and security money :-

MEDIA TYPE - POLE KIOSK					
ZONE	NO OF SITES	ANNUAL ANUGYAPTI SHULK (IN RS.) (NON REFUNDABLE)	MINIMUM BASE PRICE	SECURITY MONEY (REFUNDABLE)	TENDER COST (IN Rs.) (NON REFUNDABLE)+ GST
1.	200	446	11,59,600	62,980	100000+GST
2.	900	2007	47,06,192	51,56,192	450000+GST
3.	400	892	21,40,800	23,40,800	1,17,040
4.	100	223	7,13,600	7,63,600	38,180
5.	600	1338	35,32,320	38,32,320	1,91,616
6.	500	1115	33,33,920	36,03,920	1,80,196
TOTAL	2700	6021	156,06,432	169,56,432	8,47,822

The details for submission of e-bids will be available in the tender document on the U.P. Govt's e-procurement website i.e. <https://etender.up.nic.in>

> TENDER COST AND SECURITY MONEY can be deposited separately in H.D.F.C. BANK- CIVIL LINES KANPUR A/c No. 1271000237228, IFSC Code: HDFC0000127 by NEFT/RTGS for online mode payment.

Any further communication regarding this Tender or any amendment will remain available only on <https://kmc.up.nic.in>.

Node Officer (Advertisement)	Add. Municipal Commissioner	Municipal Commissioner
Nagar Nigam Kanpur	Nagar Nigam Kanpur	Nagar Nigam Kanpur

KANPUR NAGAR NIGAM
Motijheel, Kanpur.

Phone: 2551416, 2531215 Fax: 2531662

E mail: Kanpur_nagar.nigam@yahoo.co.in

Website : kmc.up.nic.in

**E-Tender Notice
(TWO BID SYSTEM)**

Kanpur Nagar Nigam invites E-tender for 2 years under the provisions of "KANPUR NAGAR NIGAM (AKASH CHIHIN, VIGYAPANO KA VINIYAMAN AUR NIVANTRAN AVAM ANUGYAPTI SHULK NIRDHARAN AUR VASOOL) UPVIDHI 2020" in Kanpur Nagar Nigam limits (except private properties) which devide in 6 zonal area. The description of cantilever and advertisement group are provided in the tender document on the U.P. Govt's e-procurement website i.e. <https://etender.up.nic.in>.

Procedure for tender are below :-

- ✓ Date of Online opening Bid - 25.04.2025
- ✓ Last Date and time of participation for online Bid - 05.05.2025 Upto 3:00 P.M.
- ✓ Last Date and time for opening Technical Bid - 05.05.2025 Upto 4:00 P.M.
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- ✓ Participants of Bid can be present at the time of opening the bid at Kanpur Nagar Nigam Head Office, Motijheel.
- ✓ Details Of Sector Boundaries Within Municipal limits and groups for advertisement categories are available in the tender document on the <https://etender.up.nic.in>.

details of advertisement, of sectors and advertisement groups, Minimum Base Price, tender cost and security money :-

MEDIA TYPE - CANTILEVER B2B					
ZONE	NO OF SITES	AREA (IN SQ METER)	MINIMUM BASE PRICE	SECURITY MONEY (REFUNDABLE)	TENDER COST (IN Rs.) (NON REFUNDABLE)+ GST
1.	20	743.2	4276240	213812	10000+GST
2.	30	1114.8	5754548	288774	15000+GST
3.	37	1374.92	7171560	358578	18500+GST
4.	22	817.52	4949120	247456	11000+GST
5.	29	1077.64	6300880	315044	14500+GST
6.	54	2006.64	10735760	536788	27000+GST
TOTAL	192	7134.72	3,91,79,040	19,58,952	96000+GST

The details for submission of e-bids will be available in the tender document on the U.P. Govt's e-procurement website i.e. <https://etender.up.nic.in>

> TENDER COST AND SECURITY MONEY can be deposited separately in H.D.F.C. BANK- CIVIL LINES KANPUR A/c No. 1271000237228, IFSC Code: HDFC0000127 by NEFT/RTGS for online mode payment.

Any further communication regarding this Tender or any amendment will remain available only on <https://kmc.up.nic.in>.

Node Officer (Advertisement)	Add. Municipal Commissioner	Municipal Commissioner
Nagar Nigam Kanpur	Nagar Nigam Kanpur	Nagar Nigam Kanpur

epaper.indianexpress.com

KANPUR NAGAR NIGAM
Motijheel, Kanpur.

Phone: 2551416, 2531215 Fax: 2531662

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- ✓ Details Of Sector Boundaries Within Municipal limits and groups for advertisement categories are available in the tender document on the <https://etender.up.nic.in>.

details of advertisement, of sectors and advertisement groups, Minimum Base Price, tender cost and security money :-

MEDIA TYPE - UNIPOLE					
ZONE	NO OF SITES	AREA (IN SQ METER)	MINIMUM BASE PRICE	SECURITY MONEY (REFUNDABLE)	TENDER COST (IN Rs.) (NON REFUNDABLE)+ GST
1.	45	1672.2	8302360	415118	22500+GST
2.	41	1523.56	5988440	299422	20500+GST
3.	48	1783.68	7680640	384032	24000+GST
4.	31	1151.96	5821800	291990	15500+GST
5.	67	2489.72	11705200	538526	33500+GST
6.	70	2601.2	10173200	508660	35000+GST
TOTAL	302	11222.32	3,91,36,960	24,56,848	151000+GST

The details for submission of e-bids will be available in the tender document on the U.P. Govt's e-procurement website i.e. <https://etender.up.nic.in>

> TENDER COST AND SECURITY MONEY can be deposited separately in H.D.F.C. BANK- CIVIL LINES KANPUR A/c No. 1271000237228, IFSC Code: HDFC0000127 by NEFT/RTGS for online mode payment.

Any further communication regarding this Tender or any amendment will remain available only on <https://kmc.up.nic.in>.

Node Officer (Advertisement)	Add. Municipal Commissioner	Municipal Commissioner
Nagar Nigam Kanpur	Nagar Nigam Kanpur	Nagar Nigam Kanpur

CHINA TARIFFS MAY BE BETWEEN 50-65%: WALL STREET JOURNAL REPORT ‘White House would consider cutting tariffs on Chinese goods as part of talks’

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, APRIL 23

THE TRUMP administration would look at lowering tariffs on imported Chinese goods pending talks with Beijing, a source familiar with the matter said on Wednesday, adding that any action would not be made unilaterally. The source's comments followed a *Wall Street Journal* report that the White House is considering cutting its tariffs on Chinese imports in a bid to de-escalate tensions. China tariffs could come down from their current level of 145 per cent to between 50 per cent and 65 per cent, the paper said, citing a White House official. "We are going to have a fair deal with China," Trump told reporters on Wednesday, but did



US President Donald Trump at the North Lawn of the White House in Washington, D.C., on Wednesday. Reuters

not address the specifics of the report. His remarks followed optimistic comments he made on Tuesday that a deal to lower tariffs was possible. White House spokesperson

Kush Desai said any reports on tariffs were "pure speculation" unless they come directly from Trump.

US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said both countries see the current rates as unsustainable, but said he does not know when any negotiations might start.

Wall Street jumps

Meanwhile, Wall Street's main indexes rose on Wednesday as investors welcomed signs of a thaw in the US-China trade war. At 12:01 p.m. ET, the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 560.70 points, or 1.43 per cent, to 39,747.68, the S&P 500 gained 97.84 points, or 1.85 per cent, to 5,385.60, and the Nasdaq Composite gained 448.25 points, or 2.75 per cent, to 16,748.67.

India-US BITA talks begin in Washington

New Delhi: The meeting between the chief negotiators of the Bilateral Trade Agreement (BITA) between India and US after the finalisation of terms of reference got underway on Wednesday, in Washington with both sides aiming to iron out issues for a faster deal over the next three days. The Indian team led by chief negotiator Rajesh Agrawal left for the US earlier this week. During the meetings both sides will try to gauge the level of ambition each one has on liberalising trade. FE

‘Trump has killed WTO, challenged the rule-based international trading’

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump has sparked off a global trade war by raising tariff walls on imports. Trump's decision to replace a rule-based global trading regime that was put in place with the setting up of the World Trade Organization by a regime of bilateral trade negotiations will be damaging for the American and the world economy, former Union Finance Minister YASHWANT SINHA, who held the post when BJP's Atal Bihari Vajpayee was the Prime Minister, said in an interview with VIKAS PATHAK. Dissatisfied with India's attempt to strike a trade deal with the US, Sinha says India should have gone to the WTO, talked to like-minded countries and resisted Trump's unilateralism. Edited excerpts:



Former Union Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha. The Express

How do you view the reciprocal tariffs US President Donald Trump is imposing on nations? Do you think it is a sound policy for the US?

It's only not a good policy either for the US or the world. It was after a great deal of effort that the international community agreed to a proper rule-based international trading order. For six years, trade talks went on between the countries of the world under the Uruguay round and after that there was a meeting of all the countries in Marrakesh, where the decision was taken to form the WTO.

Before that there was GATT, or General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, which was also continuously trying to make the international trading order as rule-based as possible.

There were difficulties, especially between the developed and the developing countries, where the demands were dissimilar and there was conflict of interest on various issues — and mainly on agriculture and intellectual property rights. It was after a great deal of effort that the world was able to agree on a workable solution.

This was finally arrived at in Marrakesh, Morocco in 1994, and the decision was taken to form the WTO. This agreement came into effect from January 1, 1995, as far as I remember. After that, all the trade disputes were being referred to the WTO, and the adjudicating body of the WTO used to decide the matter.

Now, the first challenge that Trump has mounted is to this rule-based international trading arrangement. For all practical purposes he has killed the WTO, which is playing no role. And all countries of the world, in particular the major trading partners of the US, are either negotiating a trade deal with the US at a bilateral level, like India is doing, or standing up to this unilateral action, like China or Canada. So, Trump has made a major mistake by challenging a global order that has been in existence for 30 years or more. He is out to make the international order based on consensus of the past and believes in unilateralism. He is looking at bilateral trade balance. When you are trading with the whole world, you can't say that I must have a bilateral balance with every country in the world. You lose some here, and gain some there, and then look at the final picture.

THE EXPRESS INTERVIEW WITH YASHWANT SINHA FORMER UNION FINANCE MINISTER

What do you think were the advantages of the rule-based global trade order? How will its undoing play out nationally and globally?

The whole world was busy lowering tariffs. As Finance Minister, I said in Parliament that we will bring tariffs down to Asean levels. I said this because if you raise tariffs you are making imports more expensive, and that will add to the cost of production in your country, which will raise prices and make your exports more costly. Domestic prices will also go up. So, it is not a good policy either for a country or for the world to raise tariffs. It hurts consumers the most in the country that is imposing those high tariffs and affects the global trading order. Trump is making a serious mistake and I am glad the public has started in the US against this.

How will the trade war impact China, the US and the world in general? There are already fears that China might begin to dump its products in other countries, including India. India has just imposed a 12 per cent safeguard duty on some steel products due to dumping fears...

Every country has provision for anti-dumping duty, and if you feel that any country is dumping something in your country, you can legitimately levy anti-dumping duty. That device is available for China tries to dump anything. The other point is that in this war we are a minor player. China and the US are the major players, and much will depend on the outcome of this rivalry between China and the US. Already, China and the European Union are coming closer. When the global order changes, there will be new alignments. It is likely that the US will be isolated. I think in this worst possible match, China will emerge the winner and might even overtake the US as the major trading partner for the world.

Are you satisfied with the way India has handled the Trump administration so far in context of tariffs?

There were options before every country. One option was

that if you impose higher tariffs on us, we will reciprocate by imposing higher tariffs on you. The second way was that we will go out in the world and form alliances against you. The third way was to negotiate and ask for mercy. India has opted for the third option. Internationally, we are not doing anything with friendly countries to stand up to the US. We are trying to negotiate a deal bilaterally which might, we think, bail us out. How far this will succeed I don't know, but along with the US there is a great danger of India also getting isolated in the international community by this approach. In fact, India should have been in the lead role in the global community in negotiating with the US instead of negotiating a bilateral agreement.

But do you also see advantages accruing to India in some sectors as an unintended consequence of this trade war that we did not start?

Where will be the advantage? If at all there is some advantage, it will only be with the US. You remember the generalised system of preferences (GSP)? It's a concept that is now forgotten, but India used to get GSP preferences under the WTO, and also from the US. America abolished it some years ago and we accepted it. So, gradually we have lost the advantages we had in the US market and the area vacated by us has gone to other countries.

What are the steps you think India should immediately take in response to Trump's tariff war?

My personal preference will be for India to go to the WTO, insist on a rule-based global trading order, build an alliance of willing countries and face up to the situation. India has to face the situation with determination, not ask for mercy from the US. Where is the WTO in all this? Its only statement was that there will be no recession as a result of this. But it's doing nothing against the unilateralism of Trump.

But isn't it true that Indian stock markets have been relatively stable despite the global uncertainty?

There has been a momentary pause in a momentary basis. If at noon they feel that something has happened, it will either go up or go down. The markets did suffer as a result of the Trump tantrums. But now they are recovering in the hope that India will be able to negotiate a satisfactory bilateral agreement. **FULL REPORT ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM**

World Bank sees FY26 growth at 6.3% on global weakness, policy uncertainty

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

THE WORLD Bank has cut India's growth forecast by 0.4 percentage points to 6.3 per cent from 6.7 per cent for the current financial year 2025-26 citing global economic weakness and policy uncertainty. It is seen slowing from 6.5 per cent growth estimate (70 per cent earlier) in FY25, the Bank said in its latest South Asia Development Update on Wednesday.

The broader Nifty 50 rose 0.67 per cent, or 161.7 points, to close at 24,328.95. **ENS**



Delegates at the World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings at the IMF headquarters in Washington. AP

financial year 2025-26 and by 0.2 percentage points to 6.3 per cent from 6.1 per cent for the next financial year 2026-27.

The estimates are lower than the 6.5 per cent growth projection by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for FY26.

As per the RBI, the real GDP growth for India for 2025-26 is seen to be lower than the earlier projection of 6.7 per cent, with Q1

growth seen at 6.5 per cent; Q2 at 6.7 per cent; Q3 at 6.6 per cent; and Q4 at 6.3 per cent.

"Multiple shocks over the past decade have left South Asian countries with limited buffers to withstand an increasingly challenging global environment," said Martin Raiser, World Bank Vice President for South Asia.

FULL REPORT ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM

EXPLAINED Estimates lower than 6.5% RBI projection

THE ESTIMATES are lower than the 6.5 per cent growth projection by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for FY26.

'GDP: Tariffs may shave up to half a percentage point'

Washington: The direct hit from tariffs introduced by Donald Trump's administration on India could shave up to 0.2-0.5 percentage points from GDP growth, Finance Secretary Ajay Seth said on Wednesday. "Now there is a sign that we grow about 6.5 per cent in the current year," said Seth, speaking at a Hudson Institute event in Washington. **REUTERS**

Watches, handbags, paintings, other luxury items to attract 1% tax collected at source

AANCHAL MAGAZINE
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

WRIST WATCHES, handbags, antiques, paintings, sculptures, sunglasses, home theatre systems, shoes and sportswear priced over Rs 10 lakh will now face a Tax Collected at Source (TCS) levy of 1 per cent at the point of sale effective Tuesday.

The high announcement to bring in some goods, apart from motor vehicles, into the ambit of TCS was announced in the July 2024 Budget and was to be implemented from January 1 this year. The Income Tax Department has notified the categories of other items now. The move is expected to help the tax authorities to trace the sale of such luxury goods and antiques, painting, sculpture; any col-

I-T DEPT NOTIFIED RULE ON APRIL 22

In a notification dated April 22, the Income Tax Department has notified the new rules for the levy of TCS on sales of these luxury items priced over Rs 10 lakh.

"This notification operationalises the government's intent to enhance monitoring of high-value discretionary expenditure and strengthen the audit trail in the luxury goods segment. It reflects a broader policy objective of expanding the tax base and promoting greater financial transparency. Sellers will now be required to ensure timely compliance with TCS provisions, while buyers of notified luxury

goods may experience enhanced KYC requirements and documentation at the time of purchase. Although the luxury goods sector may undergo some transitional challenges, this measure is expected to promote formalisation and improved regulatory oversight over time," Sandeep Jhunjhunwala, tax partner at Nangia Andersen LLP said.

The Budget for 2024-25, presented in July 2024, had mentioned amendment of Section 206C of the Income Tax Act. The Finance Act, 2024 had stated that a seller of a motor vehicle priced above Rs 10 lakh or any other goods, as may be specified by the central government by notification, will have to collect 1 per cent TCS from the buyer on the sale consideration as income tax.

Mati Carbon wins \$50 mn in XPRIZE Carbon Removal Competition

VIVEK SURENDRAN
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

MATI CARBON, an Indian-led climate initiative, has secured the \$50 million grand prize in the XPRIZE Carbon Removal competition, outshining over 1,300 teams from 112 countries.

Their model seems simple, but is quite complex. They use an Enhanced Rock Weathering (ERW) model, which captures carbon dioxide (CO2) while boosting crop yields for smaller farmers.

This offers a rare synergy of environmental and social impact. Mati operates in India, Tanzania, and Zambia, and has partnered with over 16,000 farmers since 2022. They aim to reach 30,000 by year-end, with



Shantanu Agarwal, Mati Carbon's founder and CEO

a bold vision to impact 100 million by 2045.

Shantanu Agarwal, Mati Carbon's founder and CEO, and Jake Jordan, chief science officer, outlined their mission. "This XPRIZE win validates our science and commitment to smallholder

farmers who bear the brunt of climate change," he said. "But scaling in India, with its fragmented landholdings and uneven infrastructure, is a massive challenge."

Mati's ERW process involves spreading pulverised basalt—a volcanic rock—on farmlands, accelerating a natural weathering process that captures atmospheric CO2 and stores it as bicarbonate in groundwater and oceans for over 10,000 years. The process forms a weak acid from rainwater and CO2, breaking down the rock faster than natural weathering, "Jordan explained. "It's like dissolving powdered sugar versus a sugar cube." The basalt also releases nutrients, enhances soil fertility and results in healthier crops and better yields.

HITESHVYAS
MUMBAI, APRIL 23

THE DECLINE in crude oil prices amid heightened trade related uncertainties will ease pressure on domestic inflation, which is likely to align to the target during the current financial year (FY26), RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said at the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) meeting held on April 7-9, the minutes released on Wednesday showed.

The government has mandated the MPC to maintain control on inflation, with a target of 4 per cent within a band of +/- 2 per cent.

Malhotra said the imposition



of tariffs will have two implications on inflation - On the upside, uncertainties may lead to possible currency pressures resulting in imported inflation, and on the downside, slowdown in exports growth will further soften commodity and crude oil prices, which would ease the pressure on inflation.

"Overall, favourable factors for the inflation outlook outweigh those with possible adverse impact and should drive further disinflation in the headline CPI. It is expected that inflation will be well aligned to the target during the current financial year," the RBI Governor said. In the April meeting, the six-member MPC unanimously decided to reduce the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6 per cent and also decided to change the monetary policy stance from 'neutral' to 'accommodative'. One basis point (bps) is one-hundredth of a percentage point. The second consecutive monthly decline in the MPC had slashed the repo rate by 25 bps. "When consumer price inflation

is decisively around its target rate of 4 per cent and growth is still moderate and recovering, monetary policy needs to nurture domestic demand impulses to further increase the growth momentum," Malhotra said.

The retail inflation, or CPI, declined to 3.3 per cent in March 2025 from 3.6 per cent in February, marking the fourth consecutive monthly decline and the lowest reading since August 2019.

The Governor said the Indian economy remains relatively less exposed and better placed to withstand spillovers from global growth slowdown, with its growth driven largely by domestic demand. **FULL REPORT ON WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM**

BRIEFLY

Osamu Suzuki excellence centre to be set up in India

New Delhi: Suzuki Motor Corporation and Matsui Suzuki India Ltd on Wednesday announced a proposal to set up Osamu Suzuki Centre of Excellence in India in honour of late Osamu Suzuki, the former chairman of the Japanese steel car major. **PTI**

MEIL gets order from NPCIL for 2 nuclear reactors

New Delhi: Megha Engineering & Infrastructure Ltd (MEIL) on Wednesday said the company has received an order worth about Rs 13,000 crore from the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd (NPCIL) for supplying two nuclear reactors of 700 megawatt (MW) each. **PTI**

GACL flags off first dispatch of Benzyl Chloride from Dahej

New Delhi: Chlor-alkali major Gujarat Alkali & Chemicals Limited (GACL) has flagged off the first lot of Benzyl Chloride on 21 April 2025. The flag-off was done virtually by Avantika Singh, IAS, Minister, Industries, in the presence of senior executives of GACL and others. **ENS**

18 THE WORLD

TOP OF THE WORLD



PM Lawrence Wong in Singapore, Wednesday

SINGAPORE

211 candidates in fray for early general polls

Singapore: A total of 211 candidates will contest 92 out of 97 parliamentary seats in Singapore's upcoming General Election, scheduled for May 3. One Group Representation Constituency was returned uncontested following the close of nominations on Wednesday. The ruling People's Action Party (PAP), which has ruled the city-state since it gained independence in 1965, was the only party to field candidates in all 97 seats in 33 constituencies. Its largest opponent, the Workers' Party, is fighting for 26 seats across eight constituencies. The Workers' Party is led by Secretary General Pritam Singh, who served as the Leader of the Opposition in the previous parliament. PTI

CHINA

3 new astronauts to be sent to space station

Beijing: China will launch three astronauts to its space station on Thursday — coinciding with its 10th Space Day — to replace their colleagues manning the station for the past six months. It was announced on Wednesday. The Shenzhou-20 crewed spaceship is scheduled to be launched at 5:17 pm Thursday (Beijing Time) from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Centre in north-west China, the China Manned Space Agency (CMSA) spokesman Lin Xiqiang told the media at the centre, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. PTI

TURKEY

6.2 earthquake shakes Istanbul, dozens injured

Istanbul: More than 150 people were injured when they jumped from buildings in Istanbul on Wednesday as one of the strongest quakes in years hit the city. Many people gathered in parks and others sat on doorsteps, or stood outside their homes in the centre of Istanbul as aftershocks from the magnitude 6.2 quake on the European side of the city continued to be felt. "It started with a big tremor all of a sudden and we felt it very strongly," said Istanbul resident Bediye Aygün, sitting in a park. REUTERS

PROPOSAL TO FREEZE TERRITORY ALONG CURRENT FRONT LINES

Vance proposes Ukraine plan favouring Russia, Rubio pulls out of London talks

MICHAEL D SHEAR & MARK LANDLER
LONDON, PARIS, APRIL 23

VICE PRESIDENT JD Vance Wednesday called on Ukraine to accept an American peace proposal that closely mirrors longstanding Russian demands, including a "freeze" of territorial lines in the three-year war, acceptance of the annexation of Crimea by Russia and a prohibition on Ukraine becoming a NATO member.

It was the first time a US official had publicly laid out a ceasefire deal in such stark terms.

The aggressive push for a deal by the US is a blow to Europe, who have spent the last several weeks attempting to support Ukraine by brokering peace talks. The first effort convened last week in Paris and another session was set to start on Wednesday in London before US Secretary of State Marco Rubio announced Tuesday night that he would no longer attend. Rubio's decision to pull out prompted UK's foreign secretary, David Lammy, to decide that he, too, would not attend.

Vance, speaking in India, said the US would "walk away" from the peace process if both parties refused to accept the terms.

"We've issued a very explicit proposal to both the Russians



Rescuers work at the site of a Russian airstrike in Sloviansk in Donetsk region on Wednesday

and the Ukrainians, and it's time for them to either say yes or for the US to walk away," Vance said. "The only way to really stop the killing is for the armies to both put down their weapons, to freeze this thing and to get on with the business of actually building a better Russia and a better Ukraine."

Vance's comments came hours after Zelenskyy said his country will never accept Russia's 2014 occupation of Crimea as legal. He also said that Ukraine could

not accept any prohibition against becoming part of NATO. Trump chided Zelenskyy on Wednesday for saying Ukraine would not recognize Russia's occupation of Crimea: "This statement is very harmful to the Peace Negotiations with Russia," Trump said.

The threat by Vance to walk away from peace talks were similar to comments last week from Rubio and from President Trump.

On Wednesday, Vance said that under the US proposal,

"We're going to freeze the territorial lines at some level close to where they are today... The current lines, or somewhere close to them, is where you're ultimately, I think, going to draw the new lines in the conflict," he said. "Now, that means the Ukrainians and the Russians are both going to have to give up some of the territory they currently own."

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov Wednesday welcomed Vance's remarks.

EXPLAINED

Kremlin's careful moves

THE KREMLIN's signals are carefully calibrated to make matters difficult for Zelenskyy. Ukraine leadership has repeatedly signalled that it could not legally recognise a Russian seizure of Crimea or any of its other territory. But Russia is banking on the idea that Ukraine is weary after over three years of war and its proposal is a reasonable counter to Western suggestions that there should be an immediate and full ceasefire to allow wider negotiations.

"Our interactions are ongoing but, to be sure, there is a lot of nuances around the peace settlement that need to be discussed," Peskov said.

Peskov Wednesday said the London meeting fell through because of an apparent lack of progress in the talks before that. "They did not manage to move closer on some of the issues, that's why that meeting did not take place," he said.

NYT, WITH REUTERS INPUT

Israeli airstrike on school kills 23 as Arab mediators seek long-term Gaza ceasefire

ASSOCIATED PRESS
DEIR-AL-BALAH, APRIL 23

AN 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 a five to seven year truce and the release of all remaining hostages, officials said 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



Palestinians mourn those killed in an Israeli strike on Yaffa School in Gaza City on Wednesday

meanwhile said Israel's seven-week-old blockade on all imports to Gaza, including food,

was "intolerable," in unusually strong criticism from 3 of its closest allies.

Iran says US energy sanctions show 'lack of goodwill' in talks

REUTERS
DUBAI, APRIL 23

NEW U.S. sanctions against Iran's energy sector point to Washington's "lack of goodwill and seriousness" over dialogue with Tehran, Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesperson said on Wednesday ahead of Iran-U.S. nuclear talks this weekend.

On Tuesday, Washington targeted an Iranian liquefied petroleum gas magnate with sanctions, which fall within the scope of President Donald Trump's "maximum pressure" campaign and its objective to drive Iranian oil exports to zero.

"The continued imposition of sanctions against various economic sectors of Iran is in clear



Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, Reuters file

contradiction with the U.S. claim for dialogue and negotiation and indicates the lack of goodwill and seriousness of the U.S. in this

regard," Esmail Baghaei said in a statement shared on Telegram.

Both high-level and expert-level talks are to take place this Saturday in Oman to begin drawing up a framework for a potential deal over Iran's disputed nuclear programme.

On a visit to Beijing where he met Chinese Vice Premier Ding Xuexiang, Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi told Iran's state media it was too early to judge the outcome of Iran-U.S. talks, which he said were going in the right direction.

"We are cautiously optimistic and if the Americans continue to stay in a constructive way and avoid any unrealistic, undisable demands, I am confident we can conclude a good deal at the end," Iran's top diplomat added.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas called on Hamas to release the hostages in order to "break Israel's pretexts" for continuing the war. He reiterated his demands that Hamas give up their arms, referring to them as "sons of dogs" during a speech in West Bank.

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.

Israel 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.

Musk to cut back DOGE work amid criticism, falling Tesla sales

REUTERS
APRIL 23

TESLA CEO Elon Musk said on Tuesday he would cut back significantly the time he devotes to the Trump administration from next month and spend more time running his many companies. The move comes as Musk's involvement in the so-called Department of Government Efficiency — where he has led efforts to cut federal jobs — has become a political lightning rod, fueling unrelenting protests and vandalism at Tesla showrooms. Investors have raised concerns about Musk spending too little time managing Tesla, where sales have nosedived.

"The large slog of work necessary to get the DOGE team in place and working with the government to get the financial house in order is mostly done," Musk told analysts on a conference call. But he said he still intended to spend some 40% of his time on DOGE.



Pope Francis's body is carried into St Peter's Basilica at the Vatican on Wednesday

Pope Francis's body placed in St Peter's Basilica

CRISPIAN BALMER & JOSHUA MCLEWEE
VATICAN CITY, APRIL 23

THE BODY of Pope Francis, laid out in an open coffin, was carried in a solemn procession from his residence within the walls of the Vatican City to St Peter's Basilica on Wednesday. Red-hatted cardinals, bishops, candle-carrying friars and helmeted Swiss Guards walked slowly into the vast, sunlit square in front of the basilica as a choir chanted psalms and prayers in Latin while a bell tolled.

The body of the 88-year-old pope, who died two days ago in his rooms at the Santa Marta guesthouse after suffering a stroke, was held aloft on a wooden platform by 14 white-gloved, black-suited pallbearers.

As the coffin crossed St Peter's Square, a crowd of several thousand broke into repeated applause — a traditional Italian sign of respect at such events.

"He's like a member of the family. Somebody very close to our hearts, somebody who made the Church very accessible to everybody and inclusive to everybody," said Rachel McKay, a pilgrim from Britain.

Francis, who had only recently left hospital after five weeks being treated for double pneumonia, last appeared in public Sunday, when he lighted onlookers by being driven around the packed square in his white, open-topped papal mobile. Vatican officials rushed on Wednesday to help the pall-

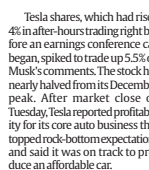
ISRAELI FOREIGN MINISTRY DELETES CONDOLENCES POST

Jerusalem: Israeli Foreign Ministry deletes pope condolences post. The ministry refused to comment on its decision to post and then quickly deleted the post on X, which said: "Rest in peace, Pope Francis. May his memory be a blessing." According to Israeli media, ambassadors were furious over the deleted post. Francis was critical of Israel's war in Gaza but had also called on Hamas to release the hostages and condemned the rise in antisemitism. AP

bearers carry the coffin up a stone incline, before the procession passed through St Peter's giant bronze doors and into the hushed interior of the ornate, cavernous church. Francis's body will lie in St Peter's Basilica until Friday.

His funeral is set for Saturday and will draw heads of state and government from around the world, including U.S. President Donald Trump, who clashed repeatedly with the pope on social issues such as immigration.

Leaders from Italy, France, Germany, Britain, Ukraine, Brazil, EU institutions and Francis' home nation of Argentina have also confirmed their presence, amongst many others. REUTERS



Protest against Elon Musk's DOGE at a Tesla showroom in New York on Monday

But the EV maker said it would have to reassess its growth forecast in three months because it was "difficult to measure the impacts of shifting global trade policy on the automotive and energy supply chains" and that "changing political sentiment could have a meaningful impact on demand for our products in the near-term," it said.

on the stage of the amphitheater.

Mohammed Awad, 36, a hawker, said all of the fighting had made the city unlivable. "We had Afghans, Iranians, Russians, Hezbollah, Chechens," he said. "They all passed through Palmyra." He had been working at the site since he was a child, and learned enough English, Russian, Italian, Spanish, German, French and Japanese to have basic conversations — and to make sales. He longed for tourists to return. "Every day we see foreigners, two or three of us," he said. "But we hope that they will come back in buses, like they used to." NYT

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITE WAS IMMENSELY DAMAGED FROM SYRIA'S INSURGENCY AND MUCH MORE FROM ISIS ATTACKS

Palmyra, Syrian city that survived for 2,000 years, bears the brunt of civil war

ADAM GOLDMAN & ARIC TOLER
WASHINGTON, APRIL 20

THE TOWERING stone columns of the ancient city of Palmyra in central Syria rise majestically from the desert sands, lining the main avenue that once connected its temples, markets and amphitheatre. Its hilltop castle still provides commanding views of the city's remains, which are so well preserved that they have attracted explorers, archaeologists and tourists for hundreds of years. But up close, the damage from

Syria's 13-year civil war is clear: historic arches felled by explosions, statues defaced and temples reduced to heaps of rubble. Since rebels toppled Bashar al-Assad in December, effectively ending the war, Syrians and rare international tourists have been visiting Palmyra to take in one of the country's most stunning heritage sites and ponder how it may fit into Syria's future.

There was civilization in this place, and despite the shelling and destruction, there is still civilization," said Ziad Alissa, a Syrian doctor who lives in France and visited Palmyra one recent day.

A loud boom shook the ground as he spoke. He and his friends jumped. Locals said it was the explosion of a land mine planted during the war, one of two such blasts heard and felt that day.

Syria's conflict brutalized historic sites scattered across a land central to many ancient Middle Eastern civilizations. The historic souks, caravansaries and mosques of Aleppo are largely in ruins. Displaced families have sought refuge in long-abandoned towns and temples in the northwest. And in the ancient city of Apamea, dozens of treasure hunters with pickaxes and metal



Palmyra was integrated to the Roman Empire in 1st Century AD

detectors have been digging near the site's famed colonnade.

Palmyra "was one of the most important cultural centers of the ancient world," according to UNESCO, which designated it a World Heritage Site in 1980.

Palmyra was an oasis community integrated into the Roman Empire in the first century AD that grew into a key stop along the Silk Road and was ruled for a time by Queen Zenobia. Its blend of Greek, Roman and Persian architecture remained influential for centuries as it fell under Byzantine, Arab and French control. After the civil war began in 2011, Palmyra's strategic

location rendered it a battleground between anti-government rebels, Syrian forces, the Russian military and Afghan militiamen backed by Iran.

Those forces all left their marks on the city, but the Islamic State militant group, which seized Palmyra in 2015, carried out a campaign of deliberate destruction, driven by its extremist aversion to depictions of the human form and monuments to any faith. They also toppled the triple arch gateway — the Monumental Arch — at the start of the colonnade, and filmed young militants shooting dead 25 government soldiers



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If there are questions of current or contemporary relevance that you would like explained, please write to explained@indianexpress.com

EXPLAINED ECONOMICS

EXPLAINED STRATEGY AND FOREIGN POLICY

MARKETS REBOUND AS BESSENT SAYS TRADE WAR WITH CHINA UNSUSTAINABLE

UDIT MISRA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

THE BIGGEST news coming out of Washington on Tuesday was the report of the US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent telling investors that "no one thinks the current status quo" of prohibitively high tariffs between China and the US "is sustainable". Further, as CNBC reported, Bessent reportedly assured investors that "there will be a de-escalation" in the trade war between the two largest economies of the world in the "very near future".

The news reports lifted investor sentiment as US stock markets shot up — temporarily at least. By the time trading stopped benchmark indices in the US had regained most of the ground they lost on Monday. The government bond yields also fell a bit and most significantly, the weakness in the US dollar also abated.

More tariff action continues

Bloomberg reported that the US will impose up to a whopping 3.521% tariffs on solar imports from Asian countries such as Vietnam, Thailand and Malaysia.

On the other hand, South China Morning Post (SCMP) reported that "China has released an action plan to promote the use of the yuan and its own payment system in international trade, as it seeks to reduce its dependence on the dollar amid an escalating trade war with the United States."

The plan aims to leverage Shanghai's role as a global financial hub to promote the use of the Chinese currency, especially in trade involving countries in the Global South, according to the SCMP report.

Impact on global economy

To be sure, these tariffs and counter-



TRUMP TARIFFS
DAILY DECODE

www.indianexpress.com/explained

tariffs are imposing a stiff cost for the global economy. The International Monetary Fund's World Economic Outlook, which was released on Tuesday, cut the global growth forecast significantly.

"The swift escalation of trade tensions and extremely high levels of policy uncertainty are expected to have a significant impact on global economic activity. Under the reference forecast that incorporates information as of April 4, global growth is projected to drop to 2.8 per cent in 2025 and 3 per cent in 2026 — down from 3.3 per cent for both years in the January 2025 WEO Update, corresponding to a cumulative downgrade of 0.8 percentage point, and much below the historical (2000-19) average of 3.7 per cent."

The IMF states that the "first priority should be to restore trade policy stability and force mutually beneficial arrangements." On that front, however, there was less actual movement and more assurances. Karoline Leavitt, Donald Trump's Press Secretary, said that "President's trade team is working at Trump-speed" to ensure deals can be made. In particular, with reference to a trade deal with China, she said that "the President and his administration is setting the stage for a deal with China".

Desperate step in desperate times: Pak's intent behind Pahalgam attack

The terror attack near Pahalgam comes at a time when Pakistan finds itself increasingly isolated on the international stage. It is an act of desperation, one which India must respond to with a cool head

EXPERT EXPLAINS

SHYAM SARAN

A DAY after the Pahalgam terror attack, India on Wednesday announced a slew of diplomatic measures against Pakistan, including the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty, expulsion of Pakistani personnel from India, and closure of the Attari border post.

Officially, Islamabad has denied any involvement. But initial investigations, and more importantly, the larger geopolitical context in which the attack has taken place, leave little doubt about Pakistan's role.

Pakistan in dire straits

Pakistan today is a country in dire straits. Consider the following facts.

■ For years, Pakistan was a key partner to the United States with regards to its objectives in Afghanistan — there could neither be war nor peace in Afghanistan without Islamabad's support. With Washington pulling out of Kabul in 2021, the leverage that Pakistan enjoyed with the Americans is mostly gone.

And as it faces a crippling economic crisis, the US has not stepped in to bail Pakistan out, as it had repeatedly done in the past.

■ The Gulf states too have refused to open up their coffers. There is fatigue among the Gulf states about having to repeatedly bail Pakistan out, and a sense that Islamabad has not given them much in return for doing so over the years.

■ Even China has seemingly grown impatient with Pakistan. Beijing has poured in billions of dollars to develop infrastructure in Pakistan as a part of its flagship Belt and Road Initiative. But many of China's projects in Pakistan remain stalled today.

Corruption and inefficiency aside, Pakistan's inability to deliver on security promises has been responsible: in recent years, a number of Chinese engineers and project supervisors have been killed by Baloch terrorists. Although China remains Pakistan's biggest patron, the two countries' bilateral relationship is not what it used to be even in the very recent past.

■ The Taliban regime in Kabul has not been the client state Pakistan had hoped it would be. Instead, it has turned rather hostile. Regions bordering Afghanistan have witnessed a spate of attacks on both civilians and military personnel.

Far from providing "strategic depth" to Pakistan against India, Taliban-ruled Afghanistan has become a serious security vulnerability.

■ Pakistan's border with Iran has not been much better. Just last week, eight Pakistani migrant workers were shot dead in Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province by a Baluch militant outfit. Last year, both countries targeted alleged "terrorist sanctuaries" on the other side of the border with missile strikes.

Such is the situation with its western neighbours today that some analysts would say Pakistan's border with India is its most peaceful one at the moment.



The terror attack in Pahalgam came a week after Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munir went on an anti-India rant in Islamabad. YouTube/JSRP Official

All in all, Pakistan's economy is in doldrums, its security situation is deteriorating, even as it feels more and more marginalised and isolated on the international stage.

'India taking advantage'

In the eyes of Islamabad, India is taking advantage of Pakistan's dire situation by isolating and marginalising it. New Delhi, in recent years, has acted as if Pakistan simply does not matter, that it is but a minor distraction for a country with ambitions of becoming a superpower.

This is perhaps most obvious with regard to India's Kashmir policy, which treats Pakistan as a non-factor that is in no position to interfere with the largely successful attempts to bring stability and prosperity to the region. Contentious as it may be, the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019, which revoked Kashmir's special status, was the strongest signal that India is looking to fully integrate the region with the rest of the country, regardless of Pakistan's oft-stated position on the matter.

And in recent years, there has undoubtedly been a steady improvement in the economy and daily lives of Kashmiris, who ultimately benefit from stability in the region, regardless of their personal opinion of the ruling dispensation in Delhi.

A record number of tourists from all over India have been flocking to Kashmir as the ultimate bellwether of "normalcy".

New Delhi has also successfully pushed the US to "de-hyphenate" its relations with India and Pakistan. That US Vice President JD Vance is currently on an official visit to India, with Pakistan being nowhere on his itinerary is proof of this fact.

Moreover, as India improves its ties with other Islamic countries in the Gulf, Pakistan has been little more than a silent spectator. It is noteworthy that the attack in Pahalgam took place while Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on an official visit to Saudi Arabia, a country which had been a steadfast ally to Pakistan during its wars with India, especially in 1971.

Pakistan's desperate gambit

It is in this context that one can see a cer-

tain logic behind why Pakistan would take this rather desperate step. The terror attack in Pahalgam is essentially an attempt by Pakistan to assert that it is still a regional power which cannot simply be ignored or cast away as a non-factor, and the sense in India that "Pakistan does not matter" is misplaced.

This appears to make sense in the light of Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munir's statements last week, in which he repeatedly invoked the logic of the "two-nation theory".

"Our religions are different, our customs are different, our traditions are different, our thoughts are different, our ambitions are different. That was the foundation of the two-nation theory that was laid there. We are two nations, we are not one nation," General Munir said at the Overseas Pakistani Convention in Islamabad on April 15.

Beyond trying to shore up support for the beleaguered Pakistani establishment, this was essentially Munir saying that Pakistan is a country with its own identity, and thus has its own place in the world, which cannot be ignored and belittled.

In his statements, Munir also invoked Kashmir, which he referred to as the "jugular vein" of Pakistan. "Our stance is absolutely clear, it was our jugular vein, it will be our jugular vein, we will not forget it. We will not leave our Kashmiri brothers in their heroic struggle," he said.

The attack in Pahalgam, can thus also be seen as an extension of Munir's statements from last week: it is to let India, Pakistan wants the world to know that it is still a critical player in the region, and has the capacity and capability to cause a serious security situation with potentially global ramifications, to prevent which there is no choice but to engage with Islamabad.

And even if the world reacts negatively to Pakistan — indeed countries from around the

world have issued unequivocal condemnations of the terror attack — (Pakistan hopes) this will prompt greater engagement with it, if only as a bad actor. Amid its current international isolation, engagement of any kind would probably be received by Islamabad as a win.

India's path forward

The first order of business for India is to analyse what went wrong. Where their lapses in the security arrangements? Were we too complacent? How can such attacks be prevented in the future so that tourists continue to travel to Kashmir without fear or trepidation?

An honest assessment is necessary to ensure that the progress Kashmir has been witnessing is not undone. And the Centre must leave aside its political differences with the National Conference, avoid a "blame-game", and make the elected government an active stakeholder in this process.

Internationally, in the immediate term, India will certainly try to ensure that Pakistan remains isolated. If Pakistan believes that terror is a way to force other countries to engage with it, India will make sure that it is not.

With regards to retaliating against Pakistan, what is most important is that no action be taken based on emotions and public sentiment.

In the medium- to long-term, the attack should prompt India to rethink the assumption that Pakistan has been completely neutralised, and does not matter anymore. I have always believed that India has to engage with Pakistan. To completely isolate a neighbour with which it shares a 3,000 km border makes no sense. We have to continue talking to Pakistan, if only to know what it is thinking.

Moreover, New Delhi must appreciate that there is no one Pakistan. There is the Pakistani establishment, the elected government, as well as the people of Pakistan. Each constituency needs to be dealt with differently, and even if India has frayed relations with one of them, say the Army, it should continue to engage with the others.

At the end of the day, India's long-term policy vis-à-vis Pakistan and Kashmir has to be centred around the world to know that it is still a critical player in the region, and has the capacity and capability to cause a serious security situation with potentially global ramifications, to prevent which there is no choice but to engage with Islamabad.

And even if the world reacts negatively to Pakistan — indeed countries from around the

Shyam Saran served as India's foreign secretary from 2004-06. Based on a conversation with Arjun Sengupta

INDIA'S RIVERS POSE HEALTH RISKS DUE TO ANTIBIOTIC POLLUTION: STUDY

EIGHTY PER CENT of the total length of India's rivers could be posing environmental and health risks due to antibiotic pollution, a new study found.

Along with India, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Vietnam, and Pakistan are among the countries facing similar risks due to antibiotic pollution, the research, published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS)* Nexus, said.

The issue is that antibiotics — they help fight bacterial diseases — are not completely metabolised while passing through the body. They are also not completely destroyed or removed by most wastewater treatment facilities.

Potentially 315 million people in India could be exposed to environmental risks arising from rivers contaminated with an-



PAPER CLIP

NEW RESEARCH

tibiotics, according to the study, which measured the quantities of 21 antibiotics at 877 river locations globally.

Findings highlight the need for appropriate wastewater management plans and improving current practices, the researchers said.

Regulations and guidelines on the use of antibiotics also need to be updated, with a particular focus on high-risk sub-

stances and locations that pose the greatest risk, they said.

Most high-risk areas were noted to coincide with places where antibiotics are readily available without prescription and are sometimes used preventively, according to the study. Previous studies have estimated human consumption of antibiotics to have increased by 65% between 2000 and 2015.

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Why India's suspension of 65-year-old Indus Waters Treaty is significant

HARIKISHAN SHARMA
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

THE INDUS Waters Treaty (IWT), which has survived four wars, decades of cross-border terrorism against India by Pakistan, and a long history of antagonism between the two countries, was suspended for the first time by New Delhi on Wednesday.

India made its decision a day after the attack on tourists near Pahalgam, in which Pakistani terrorists killed 26 people.

"The Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 will be held in abeyance with immediate effect, until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism," Foreign Secretary Vikram Misra said on Wednesday evening.

Among the slew of diplomatic actions against Pakistan announced by India — including the closure of the Attari border post, cancellation of visas, and the expulsion of several Pakistani personnel from India — the suspension of the IWT may have the most far-reaching ramifications.

What is the Indus Waters Treaty?

The IWT was signed in Karachi on September 19, 1960, following nine years

of negotiations between India and Pakistan. The Treaty has 12 Articles and 8 Annexures (from A to H).

According to the provisions of the Treaty, all the water of the "Eastern Rivers" of the Indus system — Sutlej, Beas and Ravi — shall be available for the "unrestricted use" of India. Pakistan shall receive water from the "Western Rivers" — Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab.

So why is Wednesday's decision by India significant?

The decision to suspend the IWT will straightaway give more options to New Delhi on how to use the waters of the Indus river system.

"For instance, India can immediately stop sharing water flow data with Pakistan. There will be no design or operational restrictions on India for the use of the water of the Indus and its tributaries. Also, India can now create storage on the Western Rivers, Indus, Jhelum and Chenab," PK Saxena, former Indian Commissioner for Indus Waters, told *The Indian Express*.

India can also stop visits by Pakistani officials to the two hydroelectric projects currently under construction in Jammu & Kashmir — the Kishenganga WEP on

Kishenganga, a tributary of the Jhelum, and the Ratle WEP on the Chenab — Saxena said.

"India can undertake reservoir flushing (a technique used to remove accumulated sediment from reservoirs by releasing water through low-level outlets to scour out the sediment and transport it downstream) on the Kishenganga project, which will increase the life of the dam," he said.

However, the suspension will not have an immediate impact on the flow of water to Pakistan for a few years at least. India does not currently have the infrastructure to either stop the flow of water into Pakistan, or to divert it for its own use.

Can Pakistan trigger any arbitration clause under the IWT in response to India's decision to suspend the Treaty?

The Indus Waters Treaty lacks an exit clause, meaning neither India nor Pakistan can legally abrogate it unilaterally. The Treaty has no end date, and any modification requires the consent of both parties.

But while the IWT cannot be exited, it does contain a dispute resolution mechanism: Article IX, along with Annexures F and G, lays out procedures for raising griev-

ances — first before the Permanent Indus Commission, then a neutral expert, and eventually, a forum of arbitrators.

Pakistan is yet to issue an official response to India's suspension of the IWT. However, in a 2016 interview with *Dawn* newspaper, a former Pakistani federal law minister, Ahmer Bilal Soofi, had said that arbitration may not offer much recourse if India chooses not to follow the Treaty.

"In case India 'revokes' the treaty, it literally means it has shunned it. The dispute resolution mechanism under the Treaty, which is a part of the IWT, will be of no use and assistance to Pakistan. It is limited to a dispute under the treaty and not meant to provide for specific performance of the treaty itself," Soofi had told *Dawn*.

"Since there is no provision in the IWT about its suspension or termination, there is no avenue that Pakistan can approach for 'revival' of the treaty. Nor can Pakistan approach the International Court of Justice seeking specific performance to implement the Treaty because of the Indian reservation given under the ICJ statute that bars the filing of a case by Pakistan against India. In

other words, Pakistan will not be left with any peaceful mechanism for seeking performance of the treaty by India," Soofi said.

Have India and Pakistan taken any other recent actions over the Treaty?

The two hydroelectric projects in Jammu and Kashmir have been a bone of contention between India and Pakistan for years now, leading New Delhi to issue a notice, in January 2023, to Islamabad seeking the "modification" of the Treaty.

This was the first such notice in more than six decades of the Treaty's existence. In September 2024, India sent another notice to Pakistan on this matter.

Pakistan objects to the design features of the two hydroelectric projects. Although they are "run-of-the-river" projects, which generate electricity without obstructing the natural flow of the river, Islamabad has repeatedly alleged that these violate the IWT.

In its January 2023 notice to Pakistan, New Delhi cited Islamabad's continued "intransigence" in implementing the Treaty.

The September 2024 notice by New Delhi sought the "review and modification" of the IWT. The word "review", according to experts, effectively signalled India's intent to revoke, and renegotiate the Treaty.

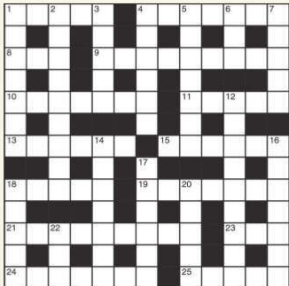
Both notices were issued under Article XII (3) of the IWT which states that "the provisions of this Treaty may from time to time be modified by a duly ratified Treaty concluded for that purpose between the two Governments".

In January this year, the Neutral Expert appointed by the World Bank in 2022 under the terms of the IWT, decided that he was "competent" to adjudicate on the differences between India and Pakistan regarding the design of two hydroelectric projects. This was a major win for India.

The Expert, Michael Lino, decided after holding three meetings with the parties concerned. During the meetings, Pakistan submitted that the "Points of Difference" raised by India did not fall within "Part I of Annexure F" of the Treaty, effectively taking the issue outside the remit of the Neutral Expert. India, on the other hand, had argued that these fell "squarely and entirely" within the aforementioned part of the Treaty, making the Neutral Expert "duty-bound" to render a decision on their merits.

In a press note, the Expert said: "Having carefully considered and analysed the Parties' submissions, the Neutral Expert, finding that he should proceed to render a decision on the merits of the Points of Difference."

CROSSWORD 5658



- ACROSS**
- Sort of a stew left over? (5)
 - The silver is twice as celebrated as the golden one (7)
 - Drink and possibly eat (3)
 - Gives up an office from a basic date (9)
 - He should be left to revise the tale (7)
 - Smooth plane (5)
 - One eats it as a matter of course (6)
 - Compiling a programme takes time and trouble (6)
 - Wrongly I am in some way extremely suspicious (5,2)
 - A revolution is starting (7)
 - Man to speak to for capital investment (5)
 - Champion of the pack (3)
 - Conscientious observation of little weight (7)
 - Row upon row of drawers? (5)
- DOWN**
- The strength of the current? (7)
 - The revolutionary fork-lift? (9)
 - A way to get out of the Geneva Declaration (5)
 - Ties part of the Bible (6)
 - Combination lock in case it is left undone (7)
 - The whole or just part of a sale (3)
 - Kind of support a painter may need (5)
 - Point out to five how to make good (9)
 - Relaxed in the deep USA (7)
 - Sportsman seen at the bank (7)
 - The people superior to me in the lower shelf (5)
 - Remains after a fiery departure (5)
 - Small picture I sent out (5)
 - Some manner of music (3)

Solutions Crossword 5657 Across: 1 Shortbread, 8 Bile, 9 White, 10 Look on, 11 Tudor, 12 Nettie, 14 Fennel, 17 Rodin, 19 Utopian, 21 Counter, 22 Lakes, 23 Excise duty Down: 2 Holdout, 3 Rites, 4 Boring, 5 Epistle, 6 Oatred, 7 Represents, 8 Island rock, 13 Luvatic, 15 Croquet, 16 Indus, 18 Douse, 20 Ogled

JUMBLED WORDS

Given below are four jumbled words. Solve the jumbles to make proper words and move them to the respective squares below. Select the letters in the shaded squares and give them to get the answer for the jumbled given. To marry is to get a new life - Dean Inge (9)

MOLAR **HKOONU**

RSWIL **AAANBC**

Solutions: MOLAR: MARS, LARMA, LARMA, LARMA, LARMA, LARMA, LARMA, LARMA, LARMA. HKOONU: HONOUR, HONOUR, HONOUR, HONOUR, HONOUR, HONOUR, HONOUR, HONOUR, HONOUR. RSWIL: RISE, RISE, RISE, RISE, RISE, RISE, RISE, RISE, RISE. AAANBC: ANA, ANA, ANA, ANA, ANA, ANA, ANA, ANA, ANA.

OVER THE HEDGE by Michael Fry & T Lewis



CALVIN & HOBBS by Bill Watterson



MARVIN by Tom Armstrong



SUDOKU 5934

Difficulty Level 2s Instructions To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

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

Difficulty Level 1s = Very Easy, 2s = Easy, 3s = Medium, 4s = Hard, 5s = Very Hard, 6s = Genius

SOLUTION SUDOKU 5933

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

DAY TODAY

BY PETER VIDAL

ARIES (Mar 21 - Apr 20)
The Moon's relationship with your sign is a strong signal that you will have to take very great care with all partnership and matrimonial matters. Partners are unlikely to be fobbed off with excuses, so you could be put on the spot, at last.

TAURUS (Apr 21 - May 21)
You may well feel a little hurt or betrayed, but today's stars urge you to put the past behind you and get on with practical affairs. There is no point at all in raking over matters which are best left alone. Also, perhaps it's time to be kind and let someone else off the hook.

GEMINI (May 22 - June 21)
A lively Moon is a pleasant presence in your chart. By reducing your general level of irritability, it could make you much more sympathetic to others, increasingly able to charm partners, and hence that much more successful. With friends on your side, a number of obstacles will soon disappear.

CANCER (June 22 - July 23)
In a strange and somewhat perverse way, you are probably enjoying this period. Mars' movement through intense regions of your chart brings out your latent conservatism, your feeling that many things are best left as they are. And maybe that's no bad thing.

LEO (July 24 - Aug 23)
Take all due care, and attention with financial matters, especially because if anyone is going to lose money or be over-charged, it's you! You should also take a practical attitude to social arrangements, and ignore the frankly impossible.

VIRGO (Aug 24 - Sep 23)
Mercury, your planetary ruler, is beginning to make itself very precise, and a chance remark or encounter could give you the lever you need to force new items onto the agenda at home and at work. First, you have to stand back and give someone some space to sort themselves out.

LIBRA (Sep 24 - Oct 23)
Sensitive planetary activity brings out your confidence. In particular, it makes you increasingly sure of your ideas, and it gives you the necessary poetic skill to express yourself to good effect. That alone has to make the future worth waiting for.

SCORPIO (Oct 24 - Nov 23)
Personal dynamics are increasingly complex, as you are only too well aware. Other people have only been able to put you down in the past because you have allowed them. Now it is definitely the right time to pay more attention to your own needs and aspirations and lead a full life.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov 24 - Dec 23)
The Moon is about to get you thinking, and make you realise that physically, financially and emotionally, you need to redefine your centre of gravity. For now, all you should do is plan. Action can be left until later, even if sooner than you think.

CAPRICORN (Dec 24 - Jan 20)
The Sun and Mars are now in a relationship which signifies a great deal of intensity on your part. You also seem to be suffering from an attack of doubt or a lack of confidence. Get on with things until you succeed.

AQUARIUS (Jan 21 - Feb 19)
Your emotional situation is looking ever more buoyant, but everything revolves around the choices you allow yourself to take. At the heart of all your feelings is the question of commitment, and the need to decide whether to go, or to stay, or to ditch.

PISCES (Feb 20 - Mar 20)
Today's lunar alignments may grant you a temporary respite from difficult personal choices, and you may find respite in dealing with business matters, or just in going out to search for bargains. One piece of advice though, be sure to get value for money.

Government of Rajasthan
Office of the DSO JHALAWAR
Email: Dsooffice-jha-rj@nic.in Jhalavar, Phone 07432-204445
File no. : 1967 Date: 17-4-25

SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING E-BID 05/2025-26
e-Bids for selection of Handling and Transportation of Food grains Under PDS from FCI Depots in District Jhalavar are invited from interested bidders up to 25.04.2025 till 01 pm Jhalavar Office. The bidders who bid may be visited on the procurement portal <http://www.mpsindia.gov.in> or <http://www.mpsindia.gov.in> of the state. The approximate value of the contract is Rs. 20000000 (Twenty Crores).
Jhalavar, 17-4-25
JHALAWAR

CENTRAL SILVER PLANT
KHADI AND VILLAGE INDUSTRIES COMMISSION
Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
(Govt. of India)
Kichawar Road, Sehore (M.P.) - 466001

TENDER NOTICE
Central Silver Plant, KYC, Ichhawar Road, Sehore (M.P.) invites sealed tenders for Annual contract for transportation of Cotton Bales from various places of the country to Sehore (MP).
Tender forms @ 200/- can be obtained from our office on any working day or download our website till 13-05-2025 at 10:00 AM and Tenders can be submitted till 13-05-2025 by 11:00 AM and will be opened on 13-05-2025 at 2:30 PM on our office. Bidder may be present at the time of opening of bids. KYC reserve the right to reject or cancel any or all tenders without assigning any reason therefor. For any dispute, the jurisdiction for justice will be at Sehore (MP).
Details can also be seen from our website: www.kvic.org.in

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता
सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग, नृत्य नगर
प्रमाणक: 48 दिनांक: 9/4/25

समोक्षित विज्ञापन संख्या 05/2024-25
प्रमाणक को विज्ञापन संख्या 05/2024-25 के तहत 27.05.2025 के द्वारा प्रमाणक विभाग में अधीक्षण करने से अनिवार्य बतलाने से निम्न शर्तों पर विज्ञापन कराया जा रहा है।

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1.	विज्ञापन विभाग कार्य विभाग को विज्ञापन 01.04.2025 (समोक्षित) संख्या: 9.30 नये संख्या 20.04.2025 (समोक्षित) संख्या: 6.00 नये संख्या 27.04.2025 (समोक्षित) संख्या: 9.30 नये संख्या 27.04.2025 (समोक्षित) संख्या: 6.00 नये संख्या	विज्ञापन विभाग कार्य विभाग को विज्ञापन 01.04.2025 (समोक्षित) संख्या: 9.30 नये संख्या 20.04.2025 (समोक्षित) संख्या: 6.00 नये संख्या 27.04.2025 (समोक्षित) संख्या: 9.30 नये संख्या 27.04.2025 (समोक्षित) संख्या: 6.00 नये संख्या
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PROCLAMATION REQUIRING THE APPEARANCE OF A PERSON ACCUSED
See Section 82 Cr. P.C.
Whereas complaint has been made before me that accused person(s) **Amit Chouhan S/o Kishan Singh, R/o: H-18 Rajul Gardi Colony Near Behta Hajipur, Unit Ghazabad, UP** has committed (or is suspected to have committed) the offence in FIR No. 32908/2021, U/S: 379/41134 IPC, PS: Nand Nagri, Delhi and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest thereupon issued that the said accused person(s) **Amit Chouhan**,

21 SPORT

PLAYING TODAY

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE

RCB vs RR, 7:30 pm

Live on JioHotstar & Star Sports network.

Fourth win, third spot

Opening bowling combination triggers SRH collapse before Rohit Sharma leads routine chase

SYNOPSIS: MI's new-ball bowlers land the initial punches on SRH, which the side could not recover from, despite Klaasen's heroics with the bat.

TANISHQ VADDI
HYDERABAD, APRIL 23

AFTER INITIAL jitters, Hardik Pandya's men have now found the right plan to fully utilise the firepower in the squad as they registered their fourth consecutive win to continue their mid-season surge.

For the third game in a row, the bowlers did the job for Mumbai Indians, restricting the opposition to a below-par total, before the batters made a mockery of the chase. As for Par Cummins' side, it was another forgettable night as their batting woes came back to haunt them again.

Hunting in pairs

Both Deepak Chahar and Trent Boult almost perform a similar role in T20 cricket: take the new ball and get whatever little swing is on offer. Against Sunrisers Hyderabad, both of them executed their bowling plans to the "T".

Though it was Boult who picked the first wicket, it was Chahar who had set the tone in the opening over. He was around the off-stump channel, pegging away at the good-length area. Abhishek Sharma and Travis Head, who love to stamp their authority from ball one, just did not get a ball to hit.

The breakthrough came on the eighth ball of the innings when the new-ball half-tracker which Head, instead of cutting - one of his most productive shots - tried to manufacture something that wasn't there, and the ball took the toe-end on the way to Naman Dhir at wide third mark.

The muddled thinking did not end there. Ishan Kishan soon followed, deeming himself out despite anyone hardly appealing for a leg-side catch. The umpire was not initially going to give it out, but soon changed his mind and raised the finger as Kishan started walking back. No spike was seen on the snickometer later.

Then Abhishek cut one straight to the point fielder as Boult slipped a knuckle-ball after realising the wicket was holding a bit, and Chahar picked up Nitish Kumar Reddy to match Boult's two wickets in the Powerplay.

These setbacks reduced SRH to 24/4 in the Powerplay. Boult went down in the final over to pick two more with perfect yorkers.

Klaasen soars

It was 2019 when Alzarri Joseph, with his six wickets, helped Mumbai to bundle out SRH for 96 at this very ground. At 34/5 on Wednesday, they were in danger of breaking that dubious record. But it was Klaasen's 44-ball 71 that saved their blushes on the night.

Wednesday was not the first time SRH has needed Klaasen to deliver this season, and despite the impressive innings, the team management would be wondering whether it came too late to salvage their season.

The South African came into bat in the fourth over of the innings, and it required a different knock from him than what he is used to playing for franchise or country.

Both Chahar and Boult were bowling a testing spell at that stage, and Klaasen had to ride the tough stage out while his partners kept walking back to the pavilion.



Rohit Sharma underscoring his new-found form with 70 runs off 46 balls against SRH on Wednesday. *Sportzpics/BCCL*

No edge, still Ishan walks off

New Delhi: IPL cricket fell to farcical levels early in the game between Sunrisers Hyderabad and Mumbai Indians at Uppal when Ishan Kishan walked off when hardly any of the opposition appealed for a caught-behind decision.

He had indeed not touched the ball and even the umpire was initially not inclined to support the appeal. Deepak Chahar's delivery swung down the legside and umpire Vinod Seshan was extending his arms to signal a wide when Kishan started to walk towards the dressing room. What ensued over the next few seconds was a comedy of errors. Seeing the umpire preparing to call a wide, Ishan tried to get back into his crease, confusing Seshan further.

He gestured to raise his right index finger more than twice, only to abort. When he did eventually give Kishan out, the batsman sheepishly walked off without ever contemplating taking a review. Mumbai Indians skipper Hardik Pandya came over to tap Kishan on his helmet as

he made his way to the pavilion. Upholding the spirit of the game would have won him some fairplay points, if only he had indeed edged the ball.

After a few deliveries had passed, when the snickometer was finally shown, it proved that the ball had edged everything.

The episode was symptomatic of the brainless batting the SRH top order displayed.

The powerplay saw some bizarre batting from the hosts in the face of some disciplined bowling, in conditions which provided just a hint of swing, but Kishan walking off without edging the ball takes the cake.

They were so inclined to hit the ball in the air, as if they saw no fielders at all. KL Rahul's exploits against Lucknow Super Giants on Tuesday showed players are often more motivated to perform against their former franchise. Ishan, on the other hand, did his former team a big favour by offering his wicket basically for free. **ENS**



STANDINGS

	M	W	L	T	Pts	NRR
GT	8	6	2	0	12	1.104
DC	8	6	2	0	12	0.657
MI	9	5	4	0	10	0.673
RCB	8	5	3	0	10	0.472
PBKS	8	5	3	0	10	0.177
LSG	9	5	4	0	10	-0.054
KKR	8	3	5	0	6	0.212
RR	8	2	6	0	4	-0.633
SRH	8	2	6	0	4	-1.361
CSK	8	2	6	0	4	-1.392

Super Kings, continued from where he had left off. It was a sluggish surface which played into his hands.

As soon as the ball was pitched back-of-length, he had all the time in the world to slap it through that mid-wicket region. Despite Jaydev Unadkat, playing in place of Mohammed Shami, getting rid of Ryan Rickelton cheaply, the outcome was never really in doubt.

Will Jacks, coming in at No 3, opened his account with a six over mid-wicket, as he proceeded to stitch a 64-run partnership with Rohit, taking the game out of SRH's reach. Though Zeeshan Ansari had Jacks holding out to long-on, the SRH shoulders had already dropped.

Incoming batsman Suryakumar Yadav ensured that the hosts were put out of their misery with more than four fours left. Their fourth successive win took Mumbai Indians third on the points table and improved their Net Run Rate to 0.673.

BRIEF SCORES: Sunrisers Hyderabad 143 for 8 in 20 overs (Klaasen 71, Manohar 43; Boult 4/26) lost to Mumbai Indians 146 for 3 in 15.4 overs (Rohit 70, Surya 40; Unadkat 1/25) by seven wickets

Rohit closes it out

A score of 143 was never going to be enough on the night. Rohit Sharma, coming into form in the last game against Chennai

How KL Rahul turned around his T20 game: by having fun in IPL

VENKATA KRISHNA B
CHENNAI, APRIL 23

ON THE eve of Delhi Capitals match against Chennai Super Kings at the MA Chidambaram Stadium, Kuldeep Yadav went about mesmerising his teammates for a while until KL Rahul padded up and walked into the nets. For the next 20-odd minutes, all the eyes turned into the 33-year-old batsman, who used his feet to come down and loft the wily spinner, brought out the slog-sweeps, reverse-sweeps and made Kuldeep look no different to the rest.

As Rahul walked back, one could hear him say "that was fun". It is the theme that played out in Dubai during the Champions Trophy that was held just weeks before the IPL began, where in almost every India net session, Rahul captivated with his effortless hitting. On those slow, challenging decks, Rahul's strike rate stood at 97/50.

Thankfully for India, in the big picture scheme of things, Rahul is having fun not just at the nets but also in the matches. This IPL for Delhi Capitals, Rahul is showing how far he has developed as a middle-order batsman. Not so long ago, Rahul's comments "strike-rates are overrated" had become a meme material. In a T20 era where strike-rates took precedence over other variables, it appeared Rahul was stuck in a different era. Perhaps still sticking to the game-plan that India had embraced till they were humbled in the 2022 T20 World Cup.

That semi-final outing against England remains Rahul's last T20 appearance for India. When India decided to move on, it was interesting that they decided to do so without him, for it also happened to be the period where the then think-tank including Rohit Sharma and Rahul Dravid had earmarked Rahul as a finisher in 50-over format. A batsman, who India thought wasn't capable of giving starts at the top with fielding restrictions in place, was considered good enough to bat at No 5 and provide the impetus in the death overs. Rahul was a transformed batsman since then, now demoted to No 6, an even more challenging role in ODIs where he would get to face minimum deliveries most often.

But in T20s, when he went back to opening with Lucknow Super Giants, time and again the criticism levelled against Rahul was he got into a shell. In three seasons with the franchise, he went at a strike-rate: 135.38, 113.22 and 136.13. While it has made many feel he was a liability in T20s, more so after India not even looking at him in the shorter format, his stocks haven't gone down. During the last IPL auctions as he entered the auc-



KL Rahul is the top-scorer for Delhi Capitals in IPL with 323 runs. *Sportzpics/BCCL*

"I think somewhere along the way I lost that fun of hitting boundaries and hitting sixes. I wanted to take the game deep, deep, deep and that somehow stuck in my head," Rahul told Kevin Pietersen on IPL website.

tion pool, there was fierce bidding between Royal Challengers Bengaluru, Kolkata Knight Riders and Chennai before Delhi bought him for Rs 14 crore.

"I think somewhere along the way I lost that fun of hitting boundaries and hitting sixes. I wanted to take the game deep, deep, deep and that somehow stuck in my head," Rahul told Kevin Pietersen on IPL website. "But now I have realised I need to go back... cricket's changed, and T20 cricket, especially, is only about hitting boundaries. The team that has more boundaries and sizes ends up winning the game," he added.

Now, with his fifth different franchise in Delhi Capitals, Rahul seems to be finding the game that went missing. He may no longer be the opener, instead transforming himself into a versatile batsman who could be slotted anywhere and still get the job done with minimal fuss.

It is also worth recounting, this is his first IPL since 2019, where he isn't leading the team. And this is the first season since 2018 - when he was striking at 158.41 - that Rahul's strike-rate has crossed the 150 mark as he has been going at 153.81 this season, his first as a middle-order batsman.

An increase in the strike-rate hasn't happened because of blind sloggish. If anything, he is doing it in the most authoritative style, by taking the attack to the opposition. If his take down of Noor Ahmad swayed the game in Delhi's favour in Chennai, at his home ground M Chinnaswamy Stadium, he was at his punishing best against Josh Hazlewood. On Tuesday, playing his former franchise Lucknow, he killed the chase in the middle-overs going after Ravi Bishnoi with a trademark slog-sweeps.

Except for the strike-rate, it is hard to find any tweaks he has made to his compact technique. "I am not thinking too much about the game, not thinking about taking it deep or any of that stuff, just see the ball and try to be aggressive and put the pressure on the bowler and the opposition and just enjoy hitting boundaries," Rahul said.

Watching Rahul these days, it is hard to disagree. He is having fun in the middle. And watching him bat has been fun too.

CHESS QUEEN

How 'free-spirited' Humpy lost and found motivation to play at top level

SHIVANI NAIK
PUNE, APRIL 23

YOU COULD be someone that dreams in black-and-white checks since forever that you can remember and go onto very close to World No 1 in women's chess. But one sleepless night with mosquitoes swarming the hotel room of the event you are competing in can still throw all plans into disarray.

Good thing that Koneru Humpy has enough experience in swatting away such irritants and keeping her poise.

Fighting from extremely precarious situations in the penultimate round to hold onto a draw after blundering, the 38-year-old, did well to secure a Knight-ending against Nurgul Salimova and finished tops jointly with Chinese Zhu Jiner on 7/9 points. A better tie-break score however gave India's finest women's chess player, the title win at Pune's Women's Grand Prix.

5.6 million tuned in on the live online broadcast over the 9 rounds - a record for any women's Grand Prix, but the chess chatrooms crescendoed with over 1000 on the FIDE feed as Humpy rode a rollercoaster to ensure the win. Zhu Jiner had won her final round earlier, while Humpy had to tie up the decisive result against the Bulgarian, and she kept it clinical.

While the Candidates spot wasn't sealed,

Humpy reckons she has rediscovered her sharpness in the classical format, which had gone missing last year.

"It's been a long time since I did well in classical. I had struggled the whole of last year, losing heavily, so I was happy to improve in that format," she said. "The upturn started after winning the Rapid world title," she added. She was top of the charts at the Monaco Grand Prix too, ringing in 2025.

At 38, stringing together wins is not as breezy or stomping as it used to be. But the Rapid world title ignited a spark that had been dulling, as her confidence slowly transferred to the longer format. She wasn't unaware of the fading light, the flagging motivation, which is why she saw each win over younger, snappier opponents as a stride forward in rediscovering her verve, finding her groove.

Motivated to play

"After the second rapid title, I felt motivated to play again. Chess wasn't such a burden when I was younger, it was challenging. But I've started feeling the buzz especially when I beat talented youngsters, some 15-20 years younger than me," she says. "It feels reassuring to get those wins," she stresses.

No one would've faulted her had she moved on to a calmer life, having achieved more than most women in the world have in chess. But the claws had stayed sharp with



Women's GM Koneru Humpy won the Pune Grand Prix on Wednesday. *FIDE*

the world title missing, though there's no hint of desperation of time and opportunities passing her by. "I'm not really bothered about qualification for Candidates. I'll follow other Grand Prix results like normally, but no stress. Will focus on my tournaments in

Norway and USA."

All this last week, she has played with the sort of free spirit of someone not trying to prove any point. Humpy was always an attacking player, not playing unduly safe, but her first classical win against Zhuravskiy

5.6 million tuned in on the live online broadcast over the 9 rounds - a record for any women's Grand Prix, but the chess chatrooms crescendoed with over 1000 on the FIDE feed as Humpy ensured a title win.

guard riposte in the draw against Alina Kashlinskaya was the mark of someone whose mind was composed and not wavering under deadline pressure. She converted a very small advantage against Zhu into a win and kept resisting doggedly against Alina, drawing out a blunder in an attentional draw. "It was a good tournament in Pune except the poor game yesterday (Tuesday). That was a complete mistake," she would say, though she had held her ground and reckoned fortune favoured her courage.

Push for strong support system

The push to qualify for Candidates first - she still can in multiple ways - and the world title, is a little more emotive for the Indian chess fraternity as the upcoming women's World Championship cycle is viewed similar to how Sachin Tendulkar chased the 50 over World Cup in 2011.

Pune's GM Abhijeet Kunte who has followed Humpy's career for years says she deserves a strong support system - a complete team, comparable to what the Chinese WGMs get, once she makes the Candidates cut.

"She's playing really well, relaxed and confident, with no desperation. But for the world title push, she should form a complete team - coach and seconds of course but also an elite level mentor who addresses the long term problems that have kept her from winning. She is extremely well motivated, but we need to put together a crack team for her extending all support to help her fight," he says.

Humpy hasn't spoken particularly about who her previous teams have been, in earlier title pursuits. But Pune could be a start of a renewed impetus as she finds glee and grit in the classical format.

Mobbed by fans in hundreds who hiked up to a private club property, all waiting for the old-fashioned autographs on posters and cutouts with her pictures as well as chess sets, Humpy knows she has a huge following rooting for her.

The online buzz peaked as she raced to win her 7th point. She's feeling groovy about the classical gig too - she doesn't need the world title badly, but sitting back relaxed and coolly calculating, she could be in the best frame of mind to go after it too.

BRIEFLY

Super Cup: Inter Kashi knock out BFC

Bhubaneswar: Inter Kashi knocked Bengaluru FC out of the Super Cup in penalty shootouts after both sides were locked 1-1 in regulation time. Ryan Williams gave Bengaluru FC the lead in the 61st minute but Inter Kashi equalised through Matija Babovic in the 87th minute to take the match to the shootout. Inter Kashi won 5-3 in the shootout. David Humana Munoz, Bijoy V, Nikola Stojanovic, Aritra Das and Matija Babovic scored their penalties for Inter Kashi, while Ryan Williams, Sunil Chhetri and Jorge Pereyra Diaz were the successful penalty takers for BFC. **PTI**

Asian youth Boxing: 6 Indians enter semis

Amman: Rudraksh Singh Khaidem (46kg) showed technical superiority on his way to a flawless 3-0 win over Kyrgyzstan's Aidar Musaev as all six Indians in action on Wednesday advanced to the semifinals of the Asian U-15 & U-17 Boxing Championships. In the men's U-15 category, Harshi (37kg) and Sanchit Jayani (46kg) secured commanding 5-0 victories, while Sanskar Vinod Atam (35kg) posted a solid 4-1 win. Prkshit Balahra (40kg) eked out a hard-fought 3-2 win over Mongolia's Akhmyetkhan Nursalyem. In the women's U-15 section, Milly Meirani (43kg) dominated Yeldana Abdigan of Kazakhstan with a 5-0 verdict. **PTI**

DP World Tour launch \$4 million India event

New Delhi: DP World and the DP World Tour have launched the DP World India Championship, a new USD4 million tournament, which will be the largest prize-fund event to be held in the country. The event, co-sanctioned with the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI), will take place at the Delhi Golf Club from October 16-19. The championship will be the eighth of nine events in the 'Back 9' phase of the 2025 Race to Dubai, building towards the season-ending DP World Tour Playoffs and culminating in the DP World Tour Championship at Jumeirah Golf Estates in Dubai. **PTI**

David challenges Goliaths

SAI coach, sports psychologist Keerti Tiwari coaches young long jumper David P to push his limits

NIHAL KOSHIE
KOCHI, APRIL 23

IT IS easy to mistake **Keerti Tiwari** for an athlete. She is in good shape, is lithe, and might as well have been one of the fellow jumpers egging on the participants in the men's long jump. However, it turns out she's a Sports Authority of India (SAI) coach with a Master's degree in sports psychology from NIPE in Gwalior, a deemed sports university. She's on her feet every other minute during competition, reviewing each jump and quickly giving feedback to athletes.

At the Maharaja's College Ground during the men's long jump final, Keerti is focused on David P, a 23-year-old. On paper, David is not the favourite in a field that includes national record holder Jeswin Aldrin. Because of recent hamstring strains, David and Aldrin are not at their best. Aldrin took the lead in the second round with 7.83 metres, but David came roaring back with 7.94m in the fourth to clinch the gold medal.

Though none of the jumpers in the final qualified for the Asian Championships or crossed the 8-metre mark, an interesting battle on the cards is expected as the season progresses. Commonwealth Games silver medalist Sreeshankar Murali is set to return in about three months after knee surgery. David could emerge as the dark horse and give the experienced jumpers a run for their money.

"This year or next year I will break (the national record)," David said. The long jumper from Salem has no idols. "See, I want people to take my name like Mike Powell's," he said confidently.

Keerti was the first person he thanked for winning the gold. The Keerti-David coach-trainee partnership, which has been in place for three years, is starting to reap rewards. "He jumped 7.94 metres in his first major competition of the year which is a good sign. I believe he can jump 8.20 metres this year," Keerti said.

But David knows that his ambitions of making it big depend on staying as injury-free as possible. Because of injuries—a quadriceps tear and a hamstring tear, David, a junior Federation Cup gold medalist in 2021, missed the whole of last year. He thanks the coach, his physio and the Olympic Gold Quest team for



David P secured a 7.94m jump to defeat Jeswin Aldrin. *Reuters*

being patient and supporting him during the injury phase. "Other sponsors tend to get impatient with athletes but I didn't face any such issues."

Keerti, 32, is aware she is one of the youngest coaches on the Indian athletics circuit. Her coaching philosophy is about being collaborative rather than being dictatorial. Five athletes she trains are competing at the Federation Cup.

"Some are speed jumpers, some are power jumpers. I have to be athlete-centric. I am not like 'I have said this, so you must do as I say.' When it comes to workouts, I discuss with the athletes and we come to a decision. Athletes have to be happy with the workout and also trust the coach. Only then will we see good results. If I am a dictator then it could even result in injury for the athletes," Keerti said.

A former 400-metre runner, Keerti participated at the All India University level but didn't medal. She was struck by the shortage of good coaches, especially women. "One of my mentors told me if you are so interested in

VITHYA BOOKS ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIPS BERTH

VITHYA RAMRAJ, the Asian Games bronze medalist, improved the meet record in women's 400m hurdles at the Federation Cup Senior Athletics Championships and in the process qualified for next month's Asian Athletics Championships.

Vithya clocked 56.04 seconds to win the gold medal at Maharaja's College

Stadium in a final that had just four participants.

Vithya's winning time was better than the previous meet record of 57.21 seconds clocked by Saritaben Gayakwad in 2019 in Patiala.

The qualifying standard for the Asian athletics championships was 57.80 seconds. **ENS**

DAY 3 RESULTS (All Finals)

MEN: 3000m steeplechase (Asian Q time 8:39.17): 1. Sunil Jolya Jinalkha (Gujarat) 8:43.82, 2. Vikram Singh (Army) 8:44.30, 3. Rohit Verma (Haryana) 8:44.80; **400m hurdles** (Asian Q time 49.19 seconds): 1. Yashas P (Karnataka) 49.32 seconds, 2. Subhas Das (Jharkhand) 51.08 seconds; **Hammer throw** (Asian Q mark 71.80m): 1. Damneet Singh (Reliance) 68.30m, 2. Praveen Kumar (Rajasthan) 63.84, 3. Gurdev Singh (Punjab) 60.78m.

WOMEN: 400m hurdles (Asian Q time 57.80 seconds): 1. Vithya Ramraj (Tamil Nadu) 56.04 seconds, 2. Anu R (Kerala) 58.26 seconds, 3. Ashwini R (Tamil Nadu) 1:02.41; **3000m steeplechase** (Asian Q time 9:48.48): 1. Manju Ajay Yadav (Madhya Pradesh) 10:34.08, 2. Nikita (Rajasthan) 10:51.96, 3. Chanchal (Haryana) 11:10.40; **Triple jump** (Asian Q mark 13.68m): 1. Niharika Vashistha (Punjab) 13:49.5m, 2. Sandra Babu (Jharkhand) 13:48m, 3. Sheena NV (Kerala) 13:25m; **Shot put** (Asian Q mark 16.89m): 1. Vidhi (Uttar Pradesh) 16:10m, 2. Srishti Vig (Delhi) 16.06m, 3. Shiksha (Haryana) 16.05m.

coaching you should take it up," Keerti said. "Having a Masters in sports psychology is an advantage because I can read their state of mind when athletes are on the runway."

She gets her validation when the athletes win medals. So far, she believes she is on the right track, guiding athletes like David at SAI's National Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru. "I feel proud when I stand in the pavilion and see my athletes on the podium. When they win medals I also get the confidence that I am doing the right thing," the coach said.

Avoiding tuitions

David turned to sports to avoid 'special class' at school and tuition. He convinced his parents to enroll him in the 'Do-or-Die' track and field academy in Salem. "They wanted me to focus on something, instead of tuition, they said 'ok' to athletics. I was happy," David said.

However, for a year he kept his parents in the dark about where he actually was. "I loved playing street cricket. I was a bowler. I didn't go for athletics training," David ultimately ran out

of luck when a neighbour spotted him playing on the streets and informed his parents. His furious mother disrupted the street cricket match and gave him a whacking with a rope in front of everyone.

That was the end of his cricket. But his parents were still willing to give him another opportunity in athletics. His poor marks in Class 10 exams gave his father Patturaj, a mechanic, and mother Jayaseeli no other option. "My two older sisters were good students. One of them got 98 per cent and the other 95 per cent. I got only about 50 per cent. After Class 10 results I took up athletics seriously. In Class 11 he jumped 5.50m and by Class 12 it was 7.45m," David said. The gamble to give his all in athletics has paid off. The medals apart, his parents are overjoyed that he has got a steady job.

"I am with the Southern Railways and posted at Erode. I am the first person from my family to get a Central government job," David said. His next aim: to cross the 8-metre mark consistently even as he aims for the national record.

Pak athletes' visa delay prompts postponement of SAFF C'ship

PRITISH RAJ
NEW DELHI, APRIL 23

THE SOUTH Asian (SAFF) Senior Athletics Championships have been postponed for the second time in seven months, ostensibly due to the delay in granting visas to the Pakistani contingent. The tournament was scheduled from May 3-5 at the Birsu Munda Athletics Stadium, Ranchi, but is now expected to be held in the second or third week of June.

The tournament was originally scheduled for October 4-6, 2024, but was postponed a few weeks before the event. "Reference to the Circular dated 4 April 2025 regarding South Asian (SAFF) Senior Athletics Championships scheduled to be held from 3rd to 5th May 2025 at Ranchi, Jharkhand, India. In this regard, it is informed that the South Asian (SAFF) Senior Athletics Championships 2025 have been postponed, and the new dates will be announced soon," a letter signed by Athletics Federation of India (AFI) secretary Sandeep Mehta read.

The event was expected to bring athletes from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives together in a three-day event. The team from Bhutan had already arrived in Ranchi and were training.

While there is no reason given for the postponement, *The Indian Express* has learnt that the postponement has been triggered by the delay in granting visas to Pakistani athletes. A list of 43 athletes, including reigning Olympic javelin champion Arshad Nadeem, was sent by Pakistan. "There was a delay in the visa process of Pakistani athletes, and that is why the event has been postponed," a source close to the development informed.

The event can't be held after the first week of next month, as the elite athletes will be preparing for the Asian Athletics Championships beginning on May 27 in Gumi, South Korea. "There is no clarity on the new dates of the tournament, but the event will likely be pushed to the second or third week of June, depending on the clarity on the visas of Pakistani athletes," the source added.

Apart from Arshad Nadeem, the fastest South Asian sprinter and Birmingham Commonwealth Games bronze medalist Yupun Abeykoon of Sri Lanka and 2022 Asian Games 400m bronze medalist Aruna Darshana of Sri Lanka have confirmed their participation for the event.

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