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Pakistan invites diplomatic strike for Pahalgam carnage

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday here reviewed security situation in the wake of the Pahalgam terrorist attack killing 26 people and took stock of preparedness to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

He was also briefed during the Cabinet Committee on Security(CCS)meeting about the ongoing operations to track down the perpetrators of the dastardly act and overall plans to enhance the security grid in Jammu and Kashmir.

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

Earlier in the day, Home Minister Shah visited Baisaran in Pahalgam, the site where terrorists struck on Tuesday evening, as well as the hospital where some of the injured were being treated. Incidentally, Prime Minister Modi, who cut short his visit to Saudi Arabia and returned to New Delhi on Wednesday morning, was briefed about all aspects of the incident at the airport by Jaishankar, Doval and Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri.

Meanwhile, Rajnath Singh cautioned people responsible for the "cowardly terrorist attack" on innocent citizens in Pahalgam will soon get a "strong response" to their nefarious acts on Indian soil, in the first clear indication of India's possible response to the massacre.

While vowing a befitting reply, he also said India will not only hunt down the people who perpetrated the attack but will also trace those "sitting behind the scenes" who had conspired to carry out the deadly act on the Indian soil. The defence minister made these assertions while delivering the annual Arjan Singh Memorial lecture here. Hours before the address, the Defence Minister reviewed the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir that was attended by NSA Doval and Chief of Defence Staff(CDS)General Anil Chauhan, Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi, Navy Chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi and Air Chief Marshal A P Singh.

Also present in the meeting was Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh. "Yesterday, in Pahalgam, our country lost many innocent citizens in a cowardly attack by terrorists targeting religion.

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

IN A FIRST, INDUS TREATY SUSPENDED

New Delhi: Adopting a tough stance a day after the Pahalgam terrorist attack, India on Wednesday took a slew of measures including Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 in abeyance with immediate affect till Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism.

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

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

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Why tourists and why Pahalgam?

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Srinagar

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

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

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

The two locals, involved in the attack, have been identified as Aadil Thakur of Bijbehara and Aasif Sheikh of Tral.

Reports also claimed the terrorists were armed with sophisticated AK rifles, armour-piercing bullets, and helmet-mounted cameras to record the 'barbaric' strike on the Indian tourists holidaying at a famous picnic spot.

Before launching the targeted strike, the terrorist handlers had carefully zeroed in on the Baisaran meadow, a popular hotspot for tourists during the peak summer season.

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

Since the objective was to derail the blooming tourist season in the valley, the terrorists took advantage of the complacent security environment in the region.

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

The Baisaran meadow, located six kilometers uphill from the main town of Pahalgam in the Anantnag district, not only became a death trap for tourists but also provided enough time to the terrorists to flee the area without coming on the radar of the security forces.

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

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

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

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

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Will not bend before terror: Amit Shah

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Srinagar

Shaken by the brutality of the Pahalgam massacre, which left 26 tourists dead and 17 others wounded on Tuesday, ordinary Indians have united in grief and rage, demanding swift retaliation against the perpetrators from the government.

Echoing similar sentiments, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday asserted that the country will not bend before terror and that those responsible for the killing of tourists at Pahalgam will not be spared. Selective targeting of tourists, belonging to one faith, has not only devastated families but also shaken the public conscience.

To register their protest against the barbaric strike, people across Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday observed a complete shutdown.

Across the Valley, political, religious, social and professional organisations condemned the killing of tourists at the famous Baisaran meadow of Pahalgam.

Protests were held in several parts of Jammu city, with many protesters raising anti-Pakistan slogans and demanding surgical strikes to destroy terror bases in the neighbouring country.

Before the mortal remains of tourists were dispatched to their native places, the Union Home Minister attended the wreath-laying ceremony in Srinagar.

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

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

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Union Home Minister Amit Shah visiting the site of the Pahalgam terror attack in Anantnag district, Jammu and Kashmir. PTI

The ByStander

Tourists evacuate, airlines called to action

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

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

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

Airlines were also advised to waive cancellation and rescheduling fees. The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued advisory to airlines to "take swift action" to increase flights to and from Srinagar to facilitate evacuation of stranded tourists. IndiGo, Air India and SpiceJet are operating a total of seven extra flights in addition to their normal scheduled services from Srinagar.

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

The Ministry of Civil Aviation asked the airlines to ensure there is no surge in airfares on the Srinagar route, and airlines will be operating additional flights to the city. Civil Aviation Minister K Rammohan Naidu on Wednesday said that strict instructions were given to airline companies to avoid any fare surges, and that fares are being monitored and kept at reasonable levels. His comments also came against the backdrop of some websites apparently showing ticket prices of over ₹50,000 for flights to Srinagar. Terrorists struck at a prime tourist location in Pahalgam in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 people, mostly tourists, and injuring several others. Among the deceased were two foreigners-one each from the UAE and Nepal-and two locals.

"In the aftermath of the incident in Pahalgam, there is an unexpected demand from tourists seeking to return to their homes. In this regard, the airlines are advised to take swift action to increase the number of flights in response to heightened demand and also to ensure uninterrupted connectivity from Srinagar to various destinations across India, facilitating evacuation of stranded tourists," read the DGCA advisory released on Wednesday, April 23.

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Pakistan, China and Bangladesh shed crocodile tears for India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ New Delhi/Islamabad/Dhaka/Beijing

A day after the Pahalgam attack in which 26 people were killed, Pakistan, China and Bangladesh on Wednesday condoled the deaths of tourists.

"We are concerned at the loss of tourists' lives in an attack in Anantnag district. We extend our condolences to the near ones of the deceased and wish the injured a speedy recovery," Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson said in Islamabad responding to media queries about the attack.

Terrorists opened fire in Pahalgam on Tuesday afternoon, killing 26 people, mostly tourists, in what is the deadliest attack in the Valley since the Pulwama strike in 2019.

On Tuesday, The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), claimed responsibility for the attack. Officials said it was possible the terror group members had crossed over from Kishtwar in Jammu and reached Baisaran through Kokernag in south Kashmir.

Days earlier, Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munir described Kashmir as Pakistan's "jugular vein," triggering a sharp response from New Delhi. "Our stance is very clear, it was our jugular vein, it will be our jugular vein, and we will not forget it. We will not leave our Kashmiri brothers in their heroic struggle," General Munir said while addressing the first Overseas Pakistanis Convention in Islamabad on April 15. The event was also attended by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, senior ministers and Pakistanis living abroad. India had slammed Munir's remarks.

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

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

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

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

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

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

However, non-BS VI vehicles carrying essential commodities or providing essential services will be granted temporary exemption until October 31, 2026. After that, even essential services must switch to cleaner fuels.

The CAQM said commercial vehicles, especially older diesel ones, significantly contribute to Delhi-NCR's air pollution, particularly during winter. The decision is aligned with the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP), which already restricts entry of polluting vehicles during high-pollution days. The commission has directed the transport departments and traffic police in Delhi and neighbouring states to ensure strict enforcement of this order at all 126 border entry points and 52 toll plazas equipped with Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras. Quarterly compliance reports must be submitted by all implementing agencies, the CAQM said.

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

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

"Whereas, within the vehicular sector, while transport/commercial goods vehicles are generally reported to be utilised extensively, these are often poorly maintained and thus are significantly high on emissions; WHEREAS, it has been established through various assessment studies that all classes of transport/commercial goods vehicles — LGVs' MGVs and FIGVs particularly those with pre-BS-VI standards have significantly higher emission potential and these while passing through NCR areas and moving into Delhi contribute adversely to the overall vehicular pollution load in the entire NCR," it said.

On the barring fuel to overaged vehicles, the Commission ordered not to give fuel to such vehicles (End of Life-EoL) vehicles, identified through the Automatic Number Plate Recognition cameras or other such systems installed at the fuel pump stations from June 1, 2025 in Delhi and Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Gautam Budh Nagar and sonipat will ban the fuel from November 1, 2025 and from April 1, 2026, it will be applicable in the rest of the national capital region. ' Immediate iegal action should be taken in respect of such BoL vehicles, including impounding and further disposal in accordance with RVSF Rules, 2021 and other extant policies of the respective State Governments and the GNCTD. There are 61, 14,728 overaged vehicles in Delhi; 27,50,152 in Haryana; 12,69,598 in UP and 6,20,962 in Rajasthan.

"Traffic surveillance cameras installed on major roads which facilitate the traffic police to challan vehicles for traffic violations and the Integrated Command Control Centers for traffic management in NCR cities/districts shall also be used for supplementing action against EoL vehicles found plying on roads, using camera feeds from strategic traffic points/ intersections. Transport Department of GNCTD and the NCR States may accordingly widely disseminate this direction amongst all stakeholders including fuel stations and ensure its strict compliance through effective implementation / enforcement measures," it said.

Delhi Noida border FILE PHOTO

Families return empty-handed from paradise lost

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Srinagar

Two newly married grooms, serving officers, businessmen, grandparents, and retired employees were among 26 tourists massacred by the terrorists in the picturesque meadow of Baisaran in Pahalgam on Tuesday.

A day later, the families returned home empty-handed from the lost paradise along with the mortal remains of their loved ones. Many among them could not even bid a last goodbye to each other, as terrorists pumped bullets from close range without allowing them to do so. A young Navy officer, Lieutenant Vinay Narwal, from Karnal in Haryana, is one of those killed in cold blood by the terrorists on Tuesday. He married Himanshi Narwal on April 16. The couple hosted a reception on April 19 and then left for Kashmir on Monday to enjoy their honeymoon.

A day later, when they were sitting together in the picturesque meadow of Baisaran in Pahalgam, enjoying 'bhelpuri', a heavily armed terrorist, after verifying the religious identity of Lieutenant Narwal, shot him from point-blank range, abruptly ending their six-day-old marriage.

Blood splattered on her face, Himanshi could be heard saying in a video on Tuesday: "We were having bhelpuri when a man came and shot my husband."

On Wednesday, Lieutenant Narwal's body was brought to Delhi in a coffin and Himanshi stood beside it. "I pray that his soul rests in peace... We will make him proud in every way," she sobbed, stopping to hug the coffin."It is because of him that the world is still surviving. And we should all be proud of him in every way... in every way," she said, bowing repeatedly before the coffin — the officer's peaked cap atop it — to pay her respects before being helped away by her family members.

Before a family member escorted her, Himanshi gave him a farewell salute, shouting "Jai Hind".

An Intelligence Bureau (IB) officer posted in Hyderabad was among the tourists killed in the terror attack in Kashmir on Tuesday. Manish Ranjan, a native of Bihar, was shot dead in front of his wife and children. The IB officer, posted in Hyderabad, was on a Leave Travel Concession (LTC) visit with his family.

Manish Ranjan was posted in the ministerial section of the IB's Hyderabad office. He was set to visit the Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine in the Jammu region. Before he could embark on a spiritual journey, his life too was cut short by the terrorists' bullets, and his family members, who were waiting to join him in Katra, are now preparing to perform his last rites.

Shubham Dwivedi, a 30-year-old newly married man from Kanpur, was among 26 tourists killed in the terror attack, leaving his family and friends distraught and devastated. He was having a good time with his wife and sister-in-law when terrorists opened fire at tourists around eateries, said survivors in his family travelling with him. Their return was scheduled for Wednesday, April 23.

Prashant Satpathy, a resident of Odisha's Balasore, was reportedly struck by a bullet during the attack. The deceased was on vacation with his wife, Priyadarshini Satpathy, and their eight-year-old son when the attack occurred. In the sudden chaos, Prashant was hit, leaving his wife and child in shock. The incident has thrown his family into distress.

Syed Adil Hussain Shah, worked as a pony ride operator at Pahalgam's Baisaran meadow. On Tuesday, he was shot dead when he tried to shield the tourist he was with and attempted to snatch a killer's gun.

Syed Haider Shah, a heartbroken father, said those responsible for the carnage must face the consequences. "My son went to Pahalgam yesterday to work, and around 3 pm, we heard about the attack. We called him, but his phone was switched off. Later, at 4.40 pm, his phone turned on, but no one answered. We rushed to the police station, and that's when we learned that he had been shot in the attack.

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

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

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

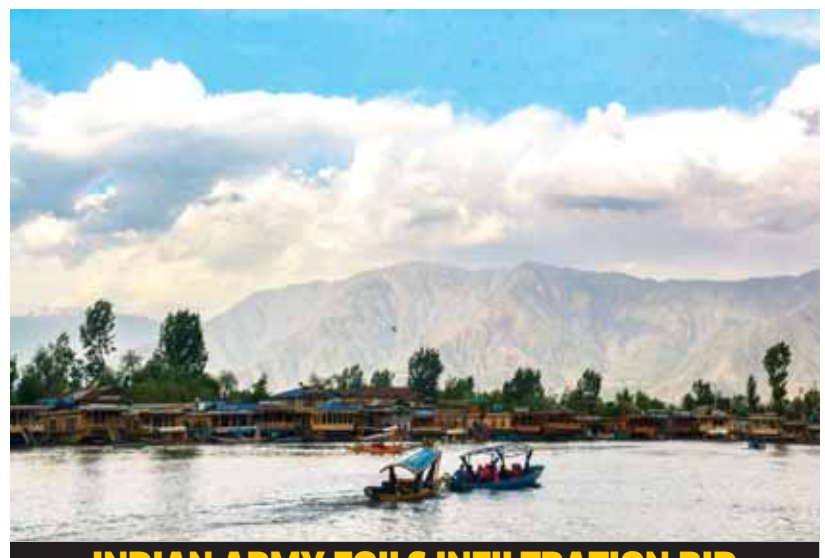
"We immediately rushed to a nearby tent for protection. So did six to seven others (tourists). We all lay down on the ground as protection against the firing, which we then assumed was between the terrorists and security personnel," Asavari said. Soon, the terrorists approached their tent. "They called out, 'Chaudhari, tu bahar aa ja,' targeting my father," she recalled. They accused the group of supporting PM Modi. They even made some statements to deny that Kashmiri militants kill innocent people, women and children, she said. "They then asked my father to recite an Islamic verse (probably the Kalma). When he failed to do so, they pumped three bullets into him, one on the head, one behind the ear and another in the back," Asavari asserted."My uncle, who was beside me, was also shot multiple times. Several other men at the spot were gunned down as well," she added.

Asavari, her mother, and another female relative were spared. 'It was because the attackers claim they don't harm women," she said. A realtor from the Shivamogga region of Karnataka was also among those killed in the gruesome attack on Tuesday. Manjunath Rao, 47, his wife Pallavi Rao, and their son Abhijeya, 18, were in Pahalgam when the firing occurred in the afternoon. In a phone call to a relative, Deepa, in Shivamogga, Pallavi said they initially thought it was an exercise of the armed forces. However, ten minutes later, Pallavi found Manjunath's body lying in a pool of blood. Pallavi told her relative that her husband died of a single shot fired at his head by a man in regular clothes as soon as they stepped off a tourist bus and entered the meadowland.

A 58-year-old LIC regional manager from Indore lost his life in the Pahalgam terrorist attack on Tuesday while his daughter and wife got injured.

Alirajpur LIC regional manager Sushil Nathaniel, along with his wife Jennifer (54), who is a government school teacher, and daughter Akanksha (34) had gone to Kashmir on April 21 for a vacation.

Recalling the incident, Sushil's brother Vikas Nathaniel said, "My brother was roaming with his wife and daughter in Pahalgam when terrorists attacked them. He was asked to recite an Islamic prayer. When he was informed that he was a Christian, he was shot dead while his daughter was shot in her leg. His wife, Jennifer, also got injured while trying to evade the terror attack."



INDIAN ARMY FOILS INFILTRATION BID

Jammu: Less than 24 hours after a brutal terrorist attack in Pahalgam, alert troops of the Indian Army on Wednesday foiled an infiltration bid along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district, by neutralising at least two heavily armed infiltrators. In the evening, another encounter broke out between a joint team of security forces and terrorists in the south Kashmir district of Kulgam.

"On 23 Apr 2025, approximately 2-3 terrorists tried to infiltrate through the general area Sarjeevan at Uri Nala, Baramulla (in north Kashmir)," the Chinar Corps posted on X around 8 am.

The "alert troops challenged and intercepted" the infiltrators, resulting in a firefight, it said.

An hour later, it said that two terrorists had been "eliminated".

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

Raj Thackeray condemns Pahalgam terror attack

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ Mumbai

Condemning the terrorist attack in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) Chief Raj Thackeray on Wednesday the Centre to retaliate against the terrorists involved in Tuesday's attack along the lines of an operation undertaken by Israel against Palestinian militants after the 1972 Munich terrorist attack.

In a statement posted on micro-blogging site "X", Raj said: "Maharashtra Navnirman Sena strongly condemns the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir. Maharashtra Navnirman Sena pays heartfelt tribute to those who lost their lives in this incident... This incident is very serious and the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena will fully stand by the government in this situation". "The Central Government should now take such measures against these attackers that even the next 10 generations of these attackers will shudder to remember them... In 1972, during the Munich Olympics, Palestinian terrorists attacked Israeli athletes... After this, Israel killed these terrorists, the masterminds of this attack, in such a way that terror was instilled in the minds of the Palestinian people for a long time. India and Israel have good relations," the MNS chief said.

"We hope that the Centre will follow in the footsteps of the Israeli government and eliminate these terrorists and their supporters forever," Raj said. "While reading news reports about this attack, a shocking thing came to light... An eyewitness said that the attackers asked the other person's religion while firing... Is this your excuse? As I often say in my speeches, if anyone comes against our Hindus in this country, we will all come together as Hindus and attack them... Wherever the masterminds behind these attackers are hiding, they must know what our power is," the MNS chief saide.

"The Centre government abrogated Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir. After that, the situation seemed to be getting a little better and the influx of tourists had increased. If such an attack happens, who will buy land in Kashmir in the future and start industries? Therefore, the central government should think about this and take concrete action," Raj said.

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

Will not bend before terror: Amit Shah

Continued from >> P1

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

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

The Home Minister separately chaired a security review meeting, which was also attended by the Lieutenant Governor and senior officers of the Indian army, police, and others.

Posting a message on X, Amit Shah said, "With a heavy heart, paid last respects to the deceased of the Pahalgam terror attack. "Bharat will not bend before terror. The culprits of this dastardly terror attack will not be spared," he said.

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

Later, the Home Minister arrived at the Baisaran meadow, the site of the attack that claimed the lives of innocent tourists, sending shockwaves across the nation.

Despite a huge presence of security personnel on ground zero, an uneasy calm prevailed in the picturesque meadow dotted with pine trees.

The attack was one of the biggest terror attacks in the region after the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.

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

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

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir government on Wednesday announced an ex-gratia of Rs 10 lakh for the families of each of those killed in the Pahalgam terror attack on Tuesday.

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

The chief minister also announced Rs 2 lakh for those seriously injured, and Rs 1 lakh for those with minor injuries.

All arrangements have been made to transport the mortal remains of the deceased back to their homes in a dignified manner, Abdullah said.

Pakistan invites diplomatic strike for Pahalgam...

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

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

In the context of cross-border terrorist incidents, Rajnath Singh said: "History is witness to the withering away of nations not due to the action of the adversary, but due to the result of their own misdeeds. I hope people across the border look at lessons of history more closely".He described the attack in Pahalgam as "extremely inhuman" that has "left all of us in deep grief and pain". "First of all, I express my deepest condolences to all the families who have lost their loved ones. In this sad time, I pray to God for the peace of the departed souls."

"I would like to reiterate India's firm resolve that we have a zero tolerance policy against terrorism. Every citizen of India is united against this cowardly act," he said.

The high-level meeting chaired by the defence minister discussed all possible aspects of the situation that emerged in Jammu and Kashmir following the terror attack, the sources said, declining to share further details.

It is learnt that Rajnath Singh directed the armed forces to enhance their combat readiness and increase the intensity of anti-terror operations.

In the meeting, Army Chief General Dwivedi presented a detailed overview of the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir including deployment of his forces.

The defence minister has also cancelled his two-day scheduled visit to Ladakh in view of the situation arising out of the terror attack in Kashmir's Pahalgam. He was to visit Ladakh on April 25 and 26, sources said.

In another development , US Vice President J D Vance spoke to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday and strongly condemned the Pahalgam terror attack.

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

The US Vice President 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 United States is ready to provide all assistance in the joint fight against terrorism. PM thanked Vice President Vance and President Trump for their messages of support and solidarity," Jaiswal said in a social media post. Vance held wide-ranging talks with Modi in New Delhi on his first day's visit to India.

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

Tourists evacuate, airlines called to action

Continued from >> P1

The advisory also called upon airlines to be considerate of passengers caught in unforeseen circumstances. "The airlines are also requested to consider waiving cancellation and rescheduling fees and provide all necessary assistance to tourists facing unexpected circumstances and challenges during this difficult time," it added.

The country's largest airline IndiGo said that in view of the emergent situation, it has taken steps to keep the fares moderated. The minister also emphasised that constant efforts are being made to ensure safe travel of tourists from Srinagar. "In addition to the four extra flights already announced, three more flights to Delhi have been added for today — IndiGo 6E 3203 (Dep: 1700, Arr: 1800), IndiGo 6E 3103 (Dep: 1800, Arr: 1930), and a SpiceJet flight scheduled to depart at 10:30 PM," he said in a post on X. All airlines operating from Srinagar have waived cancellation and rescheduling charges to support passengers.

"Food and water are being provided at the airport, and an extra tent has been set up outside for those waiting. Between 6 am and 12 pm today, Srinagar Airport handled 20 departures with 3,337 pax," Naidu said. The minister also said that he is personally monitoring the situation and is in constant touch with the home ministry as well as airline operators.

IndiGo said that to support those travelling to/from Srinagar, it is offering waivers for cancellation fees or rescheduling charges.

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

Air India is operating one additional flight each from Srinagar to Delhi and Mumbai. It has five flights from Delhi and Mumbai to Srinagar daily. The airline is also offering complimentary rescheduling and full refunds on cancellations to passengers with confirmed bookings till April 30 on these sectors, according to a post on X.

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

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

Travel Agents Federation of India (TAFI) President and Nomad Travels CEO Ajay Prakash said in the short term, tourism in J&K will take a significant hit due to the attack. "As TAFI, we pledge to support tourism in J&K, and we are confident that it will recover very quickly," he said. Travel agencies in Delhi reported that nearly 90 per cent bookings for Kashmir have been cancelled, while some tourists are negotiating to shift their plans to alternative destinations.

"We had a few bookings from families. From bus and flight tickets to hotels — everything was booked in advance. But the moment the news of the terror attack broke, we started receiving calls for cancellations," Dev, the owner of Kusha Travels, said. Another travel agency, Swastik Travels, said Kashmir is not just the first-choice destination for Delhiites, but also very popular among the tourists visiting Delhi, many of whom plan onward trips to the valley.

"It is not just Delhi residents cancelling their plans — tourists already in the capital are also calling off their Kashmir trips, even though hotel tariffs are at a peak this summer. People are cancelling regardless of the cost," said the owner of Swastik Travels.

Pakistan, China and Bangladesh...

Continued from >> P1

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

Meanwhile, Beijing "strongly condemned" the terror attack and said "China has noted the reports," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Guo Jiakun told a media briefing here while responding to a query on the attack.

"We strongly condemn the attack. China firmly opposes all forms of terrorism. We mourn for the lives lost and express sincere sympathies to the bereaved families and the injured," he said.

Separately, Chinese Ambassador to India Xu Feihong also condemned the attack. "Shocked by the attack in Pahalgam and condemn," he posted on social media. "Deep condolences for the victims and sincere sympathies to the injured and the bereaved families. Oppose terrorism of all forms," he added.

Bangladesh's interim government led by Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus strongly condemned the terrorist attack and reaffirmed its unwavering stance against terrorism. In a social media post, Yunus said, "Excellency: Please accept my deepest condolences over the loss of life resulting from the terrorist attack that took place in Kashmir's Pahalgam."

"We strongly condemn this heinous act. Let me reaffirm Bangladesh's resolute stand against terrorism," the Chief Adviser added. The attack has drawn widespread international condemnation.

Why tourists and why Pahalgam?

Continued from >> P1

At the same time, the security agencies on Wednesday released the sketches of three men suspected to be involved in the terror attack that killed 26 people, mostly tourists, near Pahalgam in south Kashmir.

The men are Asif Fauji, Suleman Shah and Abu Talha, officials said. The three terrorists also had code names — Moosa, Yunus and Asif — and were involved in terror-related incidents in Poonch.

The sketches were prepared with the help of survivors, they said.

The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow outfit of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba terror group, claimed responsibility for the attack on Tuesday afternoon.

In a first, Indus Treaty suspended

Continued from >> P1

Any SPES visas issued in the past to Pakistani nationals are deemed cancelled. Any Pakistani national currently in India under SPES visa has 48 hours to leave India. Fourthly, The Defence, Military, Naval, and Air Advisors in the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi are declared persona non grata. They have a week to leave India.

Also, India will be withdrawing its own Defence, Navy and Air advisors from the Indian High Commission in Islamabad. These posts in the respective High Commissions are deemed annulled, he said.

Overall strength of Indian, Pak high commissions will be brought down to 30 from the present 55 through further reductions, Misri said.

Giving details about the CCS meet, Misri said the Primet Minister was briefed in detail on Pahalgam terror attack.

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

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

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

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

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

In January this year, the Neutral Expert appointed by the World Bank under the terms of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) decided that he is "competent" to adjudicate on the differences between India and Pakistan regarding the design of two hydroelectric projects in Jammu and Kashmir, vindicating New Delhi's long-held position.

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

The IWT was signed by India and Pakistan on September 19, 1960 to determine the distribution of the waters of the Indus and its tributaries. It was signed in Karachi by then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and then Pakistan President Ayub Khan after nine years of negotiations arranged by the World Bank.

MoU inked to make C'garh a textile hub

STAFF REPORTER
RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh government signed an MoU with the Clothing Manufacturers Association of India (CMAI) in Mumbai to transform the state into a textile and apparel manufacturing hub, an official communique said on Wednesday.

The agreement is expected to boost economic development and generate substantial employment opportunities in the state.

Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai presented the state's vision for the textile sector to the investors and industrialists and invited them to invest in Chhattisgarh.

Over 350 reforms have been implemented to make the investment process seamless, he said.

Sai said that the MoU to set up an Apparel facilitation centre in Raipur would prove to be a milestone in boosting the textile sector in the state and opening doors to investment.

He also spoke about the state's recent approval to establish a campus of the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) in Nava Raipur. It will play a key role in nurturing talent and strengthening the state's textile ecosystem, he added.

On the need for skilled manpower, the Chief Minister said that advanced, technology-based courses are now being offered in ITIs, and renewed institutions like IIT and IIM in the state ensure a steady flow of skilled professionals to the industry.

"The natural kosa cocoon found in Bastar and Surguja is full of potential for textile development," he said.

"With institutions like NIFT and support from CMAI, branding and promotion of our handloom products will get a much-needed push, he said"

The textile sector is directly linked to rural self-employment, technology and skill development. The government has tried to promote MSMEs related to the textile sector, taking care of all these facilities in the new industrial policy, he said.

Congress to hold 'Samvidhan Bachao Yatra' from tomorrow

STAFF REPORTER
RAIPUR

The Congress in Chhattisgarh will organise a state-level 'Samvidhan Bachao Yatra' from April 25 in Bhilai city. AICC General Secretary and former Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel reviewed the plans with the Congress members of Durg division on Wednesday.

He and other former ministers also inspected the event site.

Protests erupt in C'garh over Pahalgam terror attack

STAFF REPORTER
RAIPUR

Protests erupted in Chhattisgarh on Wednesday over the terror attack in Pahalgam town of Jammu and Kashmir in which at least 26 people were killed.

A Raipur city-based businessman, Dinesh Mirania, was also killed. Pakistan-backed The Resistance Front (TRF), the proxy wing of Lashkar-e-Taiba, has taken responsibility for the attack.

Furious over the attack, youth Congress members burnt the flag of Pakistan and the effigy of terrorism in Raipur.

At the same time, the Machinery Merchant Association and traders from other areas took out a peace march. The Dhamtari District Advocates Association has passed a condemnation resolution.

Slogans against Pakistan were also raised in a protest against the attack in Bilaspur.

The body of Dinesh Mirania is being transported back to Raipur via flight.

A total of 77 people from Chhattisgarh are stranded in Kashmir—61 people from Raipur, 12 from Bhilai and two from Rajnandgaon. Efforts are on to get them back safely.

AIIMS-R performs Swap Kidney Transplant

STAFF REPORTER
RAIPUR

The All India Institute of Medical Sciences in Raipur (AIIMS-R) has successfully performed a Swap Kidney Transplant, an official communique said on Wednesday.

With this, AIIMS-R has become the first government institute of Chhattisgarh to perform this transplant.

A swap kidney transplant, also known as paired kidney exchange, is a procedure where two donors exchange kidneys with two recipients who are otherwise incompatible with their intended donors.

This allows two transplant surgeries to occur simultaneously, effectively doubling the number of transplants possible when there is a blood group or tissue mismatch.

Two end-stage renal disease (ESRD) patients from Bilaspur had been on dialysis for three years. They were advised to undergo kidney transplants, and wives came forward as donors.

But their blood groups did not match. The first pair of husband and wife had B+ and O+ blood groups; the second had blood groups O+ and B+.

To overcome this, the team at AIIMS Raipur arranged a swap transplant, wherein each donor donated her kidney to the other recipient, ensuring blood group compatibility and enabling successful transplantation.

The swap transplant was performed in March and both the donor and recipients are recovering well.

Dr Vinay Rathore said that about 15-20 percent of otherwise voluntary renal donors are rejected because of blood group or HLA antibody incompatibility.

Swap transplants are lifesavers for patients who have willing but incompatible donors, he said.

Dr Amit Sharma, HoD of Urology, said that the swap transplant is a logistical challenge as they require months of planning.

Scientists link fatty, sugary diets with impaired brain function

AGENCIES

In a significant study, researchers have linked fatty and sugary diets to impaired cognitive function. The team from University of Sydney looked at the relationship between high-fat, high-sugar (HFHS) diets, particularly those high in refined sugar and saturated fat, and first-person spatial navigation.

Spatial navigation is the ability to learn and remember a path from one location to another, a process that can approximate the health of the brain's hippocampus, said the study published in the International Journal of Obesity.

Dr Dominic Tran from the Faculty of Science's School of Psychology led the research, which found HFHS diets have a detrimental effect on some aspects of cognitive function.

It is likely those effects centre on the hippocampus, the brain structure important for spatial navigation and memory formation, rather than acting across the entire brain.

"The good news is we think this is an easily reversible situation," Dr Tran said. "Dietary changes can improve the health of the hippocampus, and therefore our ability to navigate our environment, such as when we're exploring a new city or learning a new route home."

The research team recruited 55 university students aged between 18 and 38.

Each participant completed questionnaires capturing their intake of sugary and fatty foods. They also had their working memory tested in a number recall exercise, and their body mass index (BMI) recorded.

The experiment itself required participants to navigate a virtual reality maze and locate a treasure chest six times. The maze was surrounded by landmarks that participants could use to remember their route. Their starting point and the location of the treasure chest remained constant in each trial.

If participants found the treasure in less than four minutes, they continued to the next trial. If they failed to find the treasure in this time, they were teleported to its location and given 10 seconds to familiarise themselves with that location before the next trial.

Those with lower levels of fat and sugar in their diets were able to pinpoint the location with a higher degree of accuracy than those who consumed these foods multiple times a week.

"After controlling for working memory and BMI, measured separately to the experiment, participants' sugar and fat intake was a reliable predictor of performance in that final, seventh, test," Dr Tran said.

Dr Tran said the results highlight the importance of making good dietary choices to maintain healthy brain function.

We've long known eating too much refined sugar and saturated fat brings the risk of obesity, metabolic and cardiovascular disease, and certain cancers. We also know these unhealthy eating habits hasten the onset of age-related cognitive decline in middle age and older adults.

"This research gives us evidence that diet is important for brain health in early adulthood, a period when cognitive function is usually intact," Dr Tran said.

Exhibition strives to inspire people to read

World Book and Copyright Day observed

STAFF REPORTER
NARAYANPUR

The Government Swami Atmanand College in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur district organised a book exhibition on Wednesday to mark World Book and Copyright Day.

College personnel urged the students and others to read books regularly to increase their mental strength, imagination, writing and communication skills and memory power.

Books help us take inspiration from failures and show the right path and provide us new ideas, they said. The day is observed on April 23 on the birth anniversaries of several literary giants whose works continue to inspire readers and writers across generations as well as develop a culture of community reading.

AAVAS FINANCIERS LIMITED
(CIN:L65922RJ2011PLCO34297) **Regd. & Corp. Office: 201-202, 2nd Floor, South End Square, Mansarovar Industrial Area, Jaipur. 302020**
SAPNE AAPKE, SAATH HAMAARA

POSSESSION NOTICE

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of **AAVAS FINANCIERS LIMITED** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred upon me under section 13(12) read with Rule 9 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued a Demand Notice calling upon the borrowers mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the respective notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrowers having failed to repay the amount, undersigned has taken possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on me under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 9 of the said rules on the dates mentioned as below.
The borrower andGuarantor in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the properties and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of the **AAVAS FINANCIERS LIMITED** for an amount mentioned as below and further interest thereon.

Name of the Borrower	Date & Amount of Demand Notice	Description of Property	Date & Type of Possession
KISHAN DAS MANIKPURI, RUKHMANI BAI MANIKPURI (A/C NO.) LNRPR02621-220206694	11 FEB 25 Rs. 505357/- 8 FEB 25	FLAT NO 504 5TH FLOOR, SEC 11B, BLOCK NO.- AH -01/B -3 KAMAL VIHAR RAIPUR CHHATTISGARH **ADMEASURING 322.37 SQFT**	SYMBOLIC POSSESSION TAKEN ON 22 APR 25

Place : Jaipur **Date: 24-04-2025** **Authorised Officer Aavas Financiers Limited**

IDFC FIRST Bank Limited
(erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited)
CIN : L65110TN2014PLC097792
Registered Office: - KRM Towers, 8th Floor, Harrington Road, Chetpet, Chennai- 600031.
Tel : +91 44 4564 4000 | Fax: +91 44 4564 4022

Notice under Section 13 (2) of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

The following borrowers and co-borrowers availed the below mentioned secured loans from **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited)** The loans of the below-mentioned borrowers and co- borrowers have been secured by the mortgage of their respective properties. As they have failed to adhere to the terms and conditions of the respective loan agreements and had become irregular, their loan were classified as NPA as per the RBI guidelines. Amounts due by them to **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited)** are mentioned as per respective notices issued more particularly described in the following table and further interest on the said amounts shall also be applicable and the same will be charged as per contractual rate with effect from their respective dates.

Sr No.	Loan Account No.	Type of Loan	Section 13 (2) Notice Date	Outstanding amount as per Section 13 (2) Notice
1	63638999	LOAN AGAINST PROPERTY	29.03.2025	8,99,516.13/-

NAME OF BORROWERS AND CO-BORROWERS : 1. RAM DULAR 2. HEMLAL BHARDWAJ 3. MANGALDAS BHARDWAJ 4. MANKI DEVI BHARDWAJ

PROPERTY ADDRESS : ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL OF LAND KHASRA NO. 179/3, AREA 0.081 HECTOR, SITUATED AT VILLAGE: MUCHMALDA, P.H.NO. 41, OLD RNM: BHATGAON, NEW RNM: SARSIWAK, OLD TEHSIL: BILAIGARH, NEW TEHSIL: BHATGAON, DISTRICT: BALODABAZAR-BHATAPARA, CHHATTISGARH-493559, AND **BOUNDED AS:-EAST: KHASRA NO. 179/1 (MOTI), WEST: KHASRA NO. 179/2 (MANOJ), NORTH: ROAD, SOUTH: SHARAD KESHARWANI**

You are hereby called upon to pay the amounts to **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited)** as per the details shown in the above table with contracted rate of interest thereupon from their respective dates and other costs, charges etc. within 60 days from the date of this publication, failing which the undersigned shall be constrained to initiate proceedings, under Section 13 (4) and section 14 of the SARFAESI Act, against the mortgaged properties mentioned hereinabove to realize the amount due to **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited).** Further you are prohibited under Section 13 (13) of the said Act from transferring the said secured assets either by way of sale/lease or otherwise.

Sd/- Authorized Officer
Date :24.04.2025 **IDFC FIRST Bank Limited (erstwhile Capital First Limited, amalgamated with IDFC Bank Limited and presently known as IDFC FIRST Bank Limited)**
Place : CHHATTISGARH

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT, E/M CIRCLE, RAIPUR (C.G.)

e-Procurement Tender Notice

Online tenders are invited on behalf of Governor of Chhattisgarh from contractors, C.G. P.W.D in new Registration system (unified Registration system) for the following work :-

NIT No.	Name of work	Probable amount of contract
06/SE E/M/2025 (1 Call) System Tender No Registered contractor class in "D" & above For Form "A" (Pereentage Rate Tender) Kurud, Distt. Dhamtari (C.G.)	Providing Utility Shifting(Line Shifting of 33 KV 11 KV & LT Line and Transformer DP and Electrification) from Kurud Charra-Katalbod-Nawagaon Road Upto 8.80 Km. Under CSPDCL Dn.	Rs 133.21 Lacs
07/SE E/M/2025 (I Call) System Tender No Registered contractor class in "D" & above For Form "A" (Percentage Rate Tender)	Providing Utility Shifting(Shifting of 11 KV & LT Line and Transformer DP and Electrification) from Sirri-Phusera-Karga-Chatoud Road Upto 9.60 Km. Under CSPDCL DC Maroud of CSPDCL Du-Kurud, Distt. Dhamtari (C.C.)	Rs 125.92 Lacs
08/SE E/M/2025 (I Call) System Tender No Registered contractor class in "D" & above For Form "A" (Percentage Rate Tender)	Providing Utility Shifting(Line Shifting of 33 KV 11 KV & LT Line and Transformer DP and Electrification) from Gadadih-Parkhanda-Gudguda-Nari Road Upto 12.20 Km. Under CSPDCL Dn. -Kurud Distt. Dhamtari (C.G.)	Rs 121.25 Lacs

Date of bid submission will be 08-05-2025
The tender documents can be downloaded from the web-portal http://eproc.cgstate.gov.in.Only those contractors/bidders, interested in bidding shall pay the tender document cost online.

G- 252600412/8
Superintending Engineer
P.W.D., E/M Circle Raipur (C.G.)

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Modi, Saudi Prince condemn terrorism

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman have stressed that terrorism and violent extremism remain among the gravest threats to humanity and there cannot be any justification for any act of terror for any reason whatsoever, according to a joint statement issued on Wednesday.

The two leaders have stressed the need to prevent access to weapons, including missiles and drones, to commit terror acts against other countries.

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

"Both sides strongly condemned the gruesome terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir on 22 April, 2025, which claimed the lives of innocent civilians. In this context, the two sides condemned terrorism and violent 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.

"They rejected any attempt to link terrorism to any particular race, religion or culture. They welcomed the excellent cooperation between the two sides in counter-terrorism and terror financing," it added. The two leaders condemned cross-border terrorism and called on all countries to reject the use of terrorism against others, dismantle terror infrastructure where it exists and bring perpetrators of terrorism to justice swiftly.

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

"Both sides stressed the need to prevent access to weapons including missiles and drones to commit terrorist acts against other countries," the statement said.

On Tuesday, India Prime Minister Narendra Modi delayed his scheduled meeting with the Saudi crown prince by at least two hours to assess the situation in Kashmir. The prime minister, who held bilateral talks with the Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, skipped an official dinner before returning home on Tuesday night. During the talks, the two sides appreciated the deepening of the defence ties as a key pillar of the strategic partnership and welcomed the creation of a Ministerial Committee on Defence Cooperation under the Strategic Partnership Council.

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

Both sides also agreed to enhance defence industry collaboration," it added.

Noting the continuing cooperation achieved in security fields, both sides highlighted the importance of this for better security and stability.

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

Declare Pakistan 'terrorist organisation': Kapil Sibal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Asserting that Pakistan was behind the Pahalgam terror attack, Rajya Sabha MP Kapil Sibal on Wednesday urged the government to declare Pakistan a "terrorist organisation" and file prosecution against that country in the International Criminal Court to give a message to the world that this is unacceptable.

The terror attack at a prime tourist location in Pahalgam in south Kashmir on Tuesday left at least 26 people dead and several others injured.

MP Kapil Sibal cited Pakistan Army Chief General Asim Munir's remarks describing Kashmir as Pakistan's "jugular vein" to assert that it is clear that Pakistan is behind it.

"It's a very well-thought-out, well-planned terrorist attack because the Baisaran (meadow) valley is just half an hour away from Pahalgam, which is a high-security zone. Those who attacked knew you can't reach the Baisaran valley from Pahalgam except on ponies and it will take time to reach there," the Independent Rajya Sabha MP said.

This attack is claimed by the Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow group of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror group, and Lashkar-e-Taiba is in Pakistan, he said.

"I would urge our home minister (Amit Shah) to include Pakistan as a terrorist organisation under the terror act.

Just as other heads of state are being prosecuted in the international court, we should also file prosecution in the international criminal court that will give a message to the rest of the world as well as to the 1.4 billion people in India that we are not going to accept all this and urge the international community as well as America to boycott Pakistan," MP Kapil Sibal said.

"This (Pakistan) is a failed state. It has become a terrorist state if you sponsor terrorism in this fashion," MP Kapil Sibal said.

Sibal said the intent of the terrorists was to instil fear in the minds of the people so that tourists don't go to Jammu and Kashmir. "It is so well planned, when they reached there, they segregated the men from the families.They knew that this was a place where non-Kashmiris go, non-locals are there, innocent people are there. With the statement of the Pakistan general, it is clear that Pakistan is behind it, and this should not be accepted," the former Union minister said.

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

PM's visit to Kanpur cancelled

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled visit to Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh on Thursday to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for development projects has been cancelled in light of the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, officials said.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was scheduled to visit Kanpur on April 24 to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for development projects worth over ₹ 20,000 crore.

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

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

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

The terror attack at a tourist location in Pahalgam in south Kashmir on Tuesday left at least 26 people dead and several others injured.

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

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

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

Make choice between post, freedom: SC to TN minister

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

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

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

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

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

"Now, you have gone back to the same position where as a minister you will be able to influence. We have granted you bail on totally different grounds. You must remember one thing. He had not been granted bail on merits. He had been granted bail on possible violation on Article 21 of the constitution. What signal are we sending when you hold office of minister?" it asked. Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing Balaji, said there was no direct finding against his client.

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, on behalf of the Tamil Nadu government, said the trial could be shifted out of the state if there was any possibility of influencing the witnesses. The court disagreed, saying no purpose would be served.

Solicitor general Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Enforcement Directorate, referred to its affidavit alleging Balaji influenced the witnesses.

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

When Sibal submitted there was no possibility of Balaji influencing witnesses, the top court remarked, "You (Balaji) are preventing witnesses from coming."

The Supreme Court also expressed apprehension about politicians misusing the liberal bail jurisprudence developed by the court in money laundering cases.

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

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

SC condemns terrorist attack in Pahalgam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

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

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

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

The attack on tourists, the statement said, who were merely enjoying the natural beauty of the "Crown Jewel" of India, Kashmir, is undoubtedly an affront to the values of humanity and the sanctity of life and the court strongly condemns the same.

To honour the memory of the victims and express solidarity with their families, the Supreme court judges, advocates, court staffers, and all others present in the top court aside from its registry observed a two-minute silence at around 2 pm when the courts assembled in the post-lunch session.

A circular was also issued by the Supreme Court registry saying at around 2 pm, judges, lawyers, staffers and other persons present in the court and in the registry will observe the period of silence.

In a related act of solidarity, lawyers and over 300 members of the Supreme Court Bar Association assembled in the Supreme Court's lawn in solidarity with victims of the terror attack.

SCBA unequivocally condemned the barbaric and cowardly terrorist attacks perpetrated against innocent tourists in the peaceful region of Pahalgam.

"We mourn the tragic loss of lives and express our deepest condolences to the families of the victims. Our thoughts and prayers are with those injured, and we wish them speedy recovery. These reprehensible acts of violence are a direct assault on the values of humanity. Targeting unarmed, innocent civilians is an act of unpardonable savagery," a SCBA resolution said. Even the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association condemned the attack.

"The association stands in unwavering solidarity with the people of Jammu and Kashmir, an integral part of our country and the nation as a whole."

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

A statement of the Delhi High Court Bar Association, on the other hand, chastised the heinous act "challenging the unity, integrity and sovereignty" of the country.

Terrorists struck a tourist location in Pahalgam in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 people, mostly tourists, and injuring several others.

The deceased included two foreigners —from the UAE and Nepal —and two locals.

Pahalgam attack: Rahul speaks with Shah

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday said he had spoken with Home Minister Amit Shah, Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah and Congress' J&K unit president Tariq Karra about the horrific Pahalgam terror attack to get an update on the situation.

Gandhi asserted the families of victims deserve justice and our fullest support.

"Spoke with HM Amit Shah, J&K CM Omar Abdullah, and J&K PCC President Tariq Karra about the horrific Pahalgam terror attack. Received an update on the situation," the former Congress chief, who is on a US visit, said in a post on X.

The families of victims deserve justice and our fullest support, he said.

The Congress on Tuesday had asked the government to take accountability for the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir instead of making "hollow claims" on the situation being normal in the Union Territory and demanded that an all-party meeting be called to take political parties into confidence. The opposition party denounced the terror attack as a blot on humanity and said it should not go "unanswered effectively". Terrorists struck a

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

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah has described the terror attack as "much larger than anything we've seen directed at civilians in recent years".

Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Gandhi had said the news of tourists being killed and injured in the cowardly terrorist attack in Pahalgam was extremely condemnable and heartbreaking. "I express my heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and hope for the speedy recovery of the injured," he said.

"The whole country is united against terrorism." said Rahul Gandhi.

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

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

It is the worst attack in Kashmir since the Pulwama strike in 2019 when 40 CRPF personnel were killed.

Shah Rukh shared a post on social media to condemn the attack. "Words fail to express the sadness and anger at the treachery and inhumane act of violence that has occurred in Pahalgam.

"In times like these, one can only turn to God and say a prayer for the families that suffered and express my deepest condolences. May we as a Nation, stand united, strong and get justice against this heinous act," he wrote.

Kareena said in a social media post, "Beyond heartbroken for the victims and their families. Praying for the lives lost. #Pahalgam." Hope the culprits behind "this heinous act" are brought to justice, said Kaushal. "Can't imagine the pain of the family members of those who lost their loved ones in the absolute inhumane act of terrorism in Pahalgam. My deepest condolences and prayers," he added.

Earlier, Akshay Kumar, Sonu Sood, Sanjay Dutt, Kamal Haasan, and Ritesh Sidhwani condemned the terrorist attack.

Nani, who shot for his Telugu film "Hit: The Third Case" in Pahalgam three months ago, said he was speechless.

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

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

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

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

Anupam Kher, Sanjay Dutt, Ajay Devgan FILE PHOTO

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

"My heart goes out to the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack. It is devastating to witness such cruelty. No cause can ever justify the taking of innocent lives. To the grieving families, your sorrow is beyond words. Please know that you are not alone. The entire nation stands with you in mourning. Let us hold on to each other a little tighter and never let go of the hope that peace will prevail even in the face of darkness," Malayalam superstar Mohanlal said in his post. Actor-filmmaker Ajay Devgn said he was shocked to hear about the terrorist attack. "The victims and their families were innocent souls, and what happened is heartbreaking and purely evil. My thoughts and prayers are with them," he said in his social media post.

TV star Shoaib Ibrahim, who was vacationing in Pahalgam with actor-wife Dipika Kakar and son Ruhaan hours before the attack, on his Instagram Stories said they had left Kashmir in the morning. "Hi guys, U all have been concerned for our well-being. Hum sab safe hain theek hain, aaj hi morning me we left Kashmir (We all are safe and sound, we left Kashmir this morning), and we reached Delhi safely. Thank you for all the concern." Ibrahim wrote on Tuesday.Actor Sidharth Malhotra termed the Pahalgam terrorist attack "a cowardly act".

"I have full faith in our armed forces and I'm sure they will do the needful and ensure justice. My prayers and thoughts are with the families of the innocent victims. Jai Hind!" Malhotra said.

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

This attack is very unfortunate: Nayab Singh Saini

PARVESH SHARMA ■ Gurugram

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

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

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Vinay Narwal (26), a resident of Karnal, Haryana, also died in the terrorist attack. He had married Himanshi Narwal on April 16.

Pahalgam terror attack sparks national outcry

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

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

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

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

"The entire family's return to the State is being arranged on priority and the Government of Assam is in touch with the Govt of India to bring the family back to Assam at the earliest," it added.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said the images of coffins are heartbreaking and have shaken the nation's conscience.

"The people of Assam join Adarniya @AmitShah ji in offering our prayers for the departed. This nefarious attack will be avenged and the perpetrators will not be spared... India will never forget and never forgive!" he said in a series of posts. Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini said those responsible for the "cowardly" attack on tourists in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam will not be spared.

"We strongly condemn the cowardly and planned attack on tourists... Those who have committed this act will not be spared, and strict action will be taken against them," Saini told reporters in Gurugram, asserting that the Centre's resolve to fight against terror is firm.

Among those killed in the attack was 26-year-old Indian Navy officer Lieutenant Vinay Narwal, a resident of Haryana's Karnal, who was holidaying with his wife in Pahalgam. Narwal got married recently.

On Wednesday, Saini made a video call to Narwal's grandfather, who sought from Prime Minister Narendra Modi exemplary punishment for the perpetrators and firm action to weed out terrorism. "Today, I have lost my grandson, tomorrow it can be someone else," he said while speaking to chief minister Saini.

Haryana Assembly Speaker Harvinder Kalyan, who is a BJP MLA from Gharaunda in Karnal district, also reached Karnal city to be with the bereaved family. West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee confirmed that three persons from the state were killed in the terror attack.

Describing it to be a "grim hour" for the state, Banerjee said her government was making all the arrangements to get family members of the victims back home from New Delhi and she was personally overseeing it. "As per the latest updated information made available to us, three persons from our state have died in the most unfortunate Kashmir violence," Banerjee said in a social media post.

The three deceased are Bitan Adhikari of Baishnabghata in Kolkata, Samir Guha of Sakher Bazar in Kolkata and Manish Ranjan of Jhalda in Purulia district.

"All arrangements are being put up by our administration at Delhi Airport to help the family members of the victims and their onward journey to Kolkata. Flight is likely to arrive in Kolkata at 8.30 pm today," she said. The resident commissioner's office in Delhi is in touch with the family members, the chief minister said.

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

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

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

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

"The attempts by terrorists to disturb Jammu and Kashmir will never succeed. A befitting reply will be given to this misdeed and the culprits will not be spared," he said. Union Minister G Kishan Reddy and several other BJP leaders and activists on Wednesday held a protest in Hyderabad against the Pahalgam terror attack, raising slogans calling for an attack against Pakistan.

Kishan Reddy, who wore a black dress as an expression of protest, said those responsible for the attack will not be spared. The government would take a decision to act against the terrorists, he said.

Terming the attack as a "cowardly act" in a statement issued in Shimla, Himachal Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu said such incidents were not acceptable in a civilised society and anti-social elements must be curbed at all costs.

Former Himachal Pradesh chief minister Jai Ram Thakur also condemned the terror attack and said "such cruelty" cannot be tolerated in a civilised society.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu said the TDP-led NDA government extends its solidarity with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the union government in the backdrop of the terror attack.

The chief minister underscored that the state government extends its support to Modi and the Centre in their commitment to safeguard India's sovereignty and responding to terrorism with "firm and decisive action".

Further, he mourned the death of JC Chandra Mouli and Madhusudhan in the attack, who were of Telugu origin.

"Our thoughts and prayers are with their families during this time of profound grief, and I pray they find the strength to endure this immense loss," added Naidu, who is scheduled to receive Mouli's body in Vizag later on Wednesday.

RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav described the terror attack as "very painful" and termed the killing of tourists as "unthinkable".

He said, "One of the deceased happens to be from Bihar, but posted in Hyderabad. We offer condolences to all bereaved family members."

The reference was to Manish Ranjan, an Intelligence Bureau official, whose father had migrated to West Bengal long ago.

Ranjan's wife and children, who were accompanying him at the tourist spot in Jammu and Kashmir, survived the attack.

Arunachal Pradesh Governor Lt General K T Parnaik (retired) termed the killing of innocent people as a "barbaric act of cowardice," and said such attacks are a direct assault on the composite and inclusive fabric of India, which binds the nation in unity and diversity.

On Corporal Tage Hailyang of the Indian Air Force, an Arunachal Pradesh resident who lost his life in the attack, Parnaik said the entire state stands united in mourning this irreparable loss, a Raj Bhavan statement said here.

Parnaik, who served in Jammu and Kashmir including as the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Northern Command, also wished a speedy and full recovery to those injured in the attack.

AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi alleged the Pahalgam terror attack was the result of an intelligence failure. He demanded the Narendra Modi government to fix accountability over the incident saying the attack is more dangerous, condemnable and painful than the similar incidents in Uri and Pulwama.

Indian Navy Lt. Vinay Narwal's wife breaks down while paying tribute to her husband after his mortal remains were brought at the cargo terminal of IGI Airport in New Delhi on Wednesday PTI

Navy officer killed in J and K

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Chandigarh

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

Hailing from Bhusli village in Karnal district, Narwal's family was presently living in Karnal city.

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

"Adm Dinesh K Tripathi, #CNS and all Personnel of the Indian Navy are shocked and deeply saddened by the tragic loss of Lt Vinay Narwal who fell to the dastardly terror attack in Pahalgam. We extend our heartfelt condolences to his family during this moment of unimaginable grief.

"The #IndianNavy also stands in solemn solidarity with all others that lost their lives in this heinous act of violence.Our thoughts and prayers are with the victims' families and we pray for the swift recovery of those injured," the Navy said in a social media post.

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

"After the marriage, everyone was celebrating and in a happy mood. And now suddenly this sad news comes," he said about the terror attack incident.

Another neighbour Seema recalled that there were grand celebrations at his home and not just the Narwal family, but the entire neighbourhood was celebrating after the wedding.

She told reporters in Karnal that Narwal did his engineering and later cleared the exams to became an officer in the Indian Navy.

"They were planning a honeymoon in Switzerland, but decided to go to Kashmir instead taking into account the leave he had, we can't imagine what his family is going through," she said.

"We saw videos where a girl was crying and pleading with the terrorists to kill her too but they told her they were sparing her so that she can tell (PM Narendra) Modi what happened," she said without elaborating.

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

Ujjain Collector breaks norm with chair for citizens

GIRISH SHARMA ■ Bhopal

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

Singh, a 2015 batch IAS officer, assumed charge as Ujjain's Collector on April 15. At his very first Jan Sunwai (public hearing) in the district, held on a Tuesday as mandated across Madhya Pradesh, Singh instructed his staff to place a chair for complainants. Traditionally, complainants stand while presenting their grievances, while the Collector and revenue officials remain seated—a practice often criticised for its symbolic imbalance.

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

While public hearings are a regular feature in all district Collectorates of Madhya Pradesh, Singh's approach has reignited the debate about why such a small act of empathy has remained so rare.

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

Prior to his posting in Ujjain, Roshan Kumar Singh served as the Chief Executive Officer of the Morena District Panchayat and was later appointed Commissioner of the Ujjain Municipal Corporation in 2022. He subsequently served in the Public Relations Department in Bhopal before taking charge as Collector of Vidisha.

Now in Ujjain, Singh continues to uphold a governance style that prioritizes accessibility, humility, and a genuine connection with the public—a refreshing approach in a system often seen as hierarchical and distant.

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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Mumbai

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

Visiting Pahalgam with a group of holiday-makers, Neha Waghulade was admiring the natural beauty of Baisaran meadows, a prime tourist location, when gunshots rang in the air on Tuesday afternoon. The meadows in the upper reaches of Pahalgam soon turned into a site of carnage where 26 people, mostly tourists, were gunned down by terrorists.

"I must have done something good in life, that's why I am still alive," she told her husband after surviving the terror attack. Her husband, Tushar Waghulade, speaking from Jalgaon, said his wife went to Kashmir with a group of friends on April 15. "The group was in Pahalgam. I had not been in touch with her for two days because of work. When I called her around 2 pm on Tuesday, she said there was firing and a terror attack was taking place. She told me she was safe and would contact me later," he said. Tushar Waghulade said he sensed the gravity of the situation from her voice. "She sounded shaken. Then she cut the call. I understood how serious it was," he said. They spoke again in the evening.

"Between 7.30 pm and 8 pm, she told me she was fine. She mentioned ambulances and that more security personnel were arriving. She said some tourists had died, but her group was safe," Tushar Waghulade maintained. Yetesh Sudhir Parmar, a resident of Gujarat's Bhavnagar, who was killed in the terrorist attack at Pahalgam in Anantnag district of Jammu & Kashmir"She told me that during the afternoon call there was a loud noise and people were panicking. After she hung up, I assumed her group had been moved to a safer place," he said.

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

Three Gujarat tourists killed in terror attack

(Left and right) Yetesh Sudhir Parmar and Smit Yetesh Parmar residents of Gujarat's Bhavnagar, who were killed in the terrorist attack at Pahalgam in Anantnag district of Jammu and Kashmir PTI

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Ahmedabad

Three tourists hailing from Gujarat were among the 26 persons killed in a terror attack in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district, officials said on Wednesday.

The Gujarat administration was in touch with the Centre and the Jammu and Kashmir government to bring back the bodies, state Health Minister Rushikesh Patel told reporters.

Shailesh Kalathiya from Surat, Yatish Parmar and his son Smit Parmar from Bhavnagar were among the 26 persons killed in the horrific terror attack in Pahalgam on Tuesday, as per officials.

"Three persons from Gujarat — two from Bhavnagar and one from Surat — were killed in the attack, while two were injured. The victim hailing from Surat lived in Mumbai.

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

Kalathiya (44), belonging to Chikuwadi area in Surat city, shifted to Mumbai a few years back after he was transferred there, according to officials.

"Kalathiya's cousin told us that he shifted to Mumbai four years ago due to job transfer. He had gone to Pahalgam with his wife and two children. His wife and children are safe," Surat disaster management department's revenue officer Sajid Merujay said.

Yatish Parmar and his son Smit Parmer, residents of Kaliyabid area of Bhavnagar city, were a;sp among those killed in the Pahalgam terror attack, district collector Manish Kumar Bansal said.

The two were among 19 persons from Bhavnagar who went to Kashmir on April 16 to attend religious preacher Morari Bapu's discourse there, according to sources.

Terrorists struck at a prime tourist location in Pahalgam in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 persons, mostly tourists and injuring several others. Security has been beefed up across the valley, especially at vital tourist spots.

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

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ Lucknow

In a significant decision aimed at easing the financial burden on government employees, the Uttar Pradesh government has approved a hike in dearness allowance (DA) for staff receiving salaries under the 5th and 6th Pay Commissions. The announcement, made through an official order issued by the Additional Chief Secretary (Finance), is expected to benefit thousands of employees across the state, including teachers, technical staff, and urban local body workers.

According to the revised structure, the DA for employees under the 5th Pay Commission has been increased by 11 percent, raising the rate from 455 percent to 466 percent of basic pay. Employees falling under the 6th Pay Commission will see a 6 percent hike, bringing their total DA to 252 percent from the earlier 246 percent.

These rates reflect the government's effort to account for the rising cost of living and inflationary trends that have impacted employees still serving under older pay structures. The enhanced DA will be paid in cash starting from April 1, 2025.

For the period between January 1 and March 31, 2025, the amount will be credited to the employees' General Provident Fund (GPF) accounts or other designated future savings instruments. This method ensures that the fiscal burden is managed prudently while still securing the benefit for the employees. The increase will cover a wide category of employees, including state government personnel, staff of government-aided educational institutions, technical institute employees, and regular and full-time staff employed by urban local bodies.

These are employees who, for various administrative or structural reasons, have not been transitioned to the 7th Pay Commission and continue to work under previous regimes. While, Vivek Kishore, leader of the State Government Employees Association, welcomed the move but said more needed to be done to bring parity. "This increase in dearness allowance is a welcome step. Our long-standing demand has finally been addressed and it will provide financial relief to a large section of employees. We urge the government to consider bringing all employees under the 7th Pay Commission to ensure uniformity in compensation and benefits."

Employee unions, associations have been pressing for the revision for several months, arguing that stagnant allowances were eroding real income, particularly as inflation and cost of essential commodities have risen sharply. This announcement comes at a crucial time, towards new fiscal year and reflects its intent to maintain administrative harmony and employee satisfaction.

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

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ Kanpur

A deep pall of sorrow hangs over Kanpur as news of the death of Shubham Dwivedi, a young man from the city killed in the recent terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam, spreads through his locality.

The 28-year-old, who had gone to the Valley for a short vacation with his wife, was shot in the head by terrorists in a brutal assault that claimed over two dozen civilian lives. Shubham had only recently stepped into a new chapter of his life—he was married on February 12 this year. The attack has left not just his family, but an entire neighborhood in mourning.

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

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

Locals gathered outside Shubham's home in Govind Nagar on Wednesday morning, many in tears, as they awaited updates from the family.

Some lit candles in the evening and held a silent prayer for the departed soul.

"Shubham was like a son to all of us. His death feels like a personal loss," said Sunita Verma, an elderly woman who lives two houses away from the Dwivedis.

"His wife is in shock. We just want her to know that the entire mohalla stands with her." Shubham's cousin Saurabh Dwivedi said the terrorists had allegedly asked names before opening fire.

"My sister-in-law called my uncle and said Shubham was shot in the head. We have been told the body will be handed over in a couple of days after official procedures," he said.

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

"This is not just about Shubham. He represents every Indian civilian who dares to dream, travels for peace, and falls victim to mindless violence," said Shailendra Mishra, a local youth activist who plans to hold a peace march in Shubham's memory.

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

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

Meanwhile, Prime Narendra Modi has cancelled the programme scheduled in Kanpur on April 24 in the wake of Pahalgam terror attack where 26 people were gunned down.

The Prime Minister was scheduled to visit Kanpur on April 24 to inaugurate and lay the foundation stone for development projects worth over ₹20,000 crore.

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

Editor's TAKE

Humanity dies in Pahalgam

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

In one of the deadliest terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019, 28 tourists were massacred on Tuesday in the tranquil Baisaran meadow near the popular hill resort of Pahalgam. The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy terror outfit of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), claimed responsibility. This attack has not only shocked the nation but also reopened deep-seated concerns about the fragile security scenario in Kashmir.

The tourists, who included honeymooners, families, and two foreign nationals—from Nepal and the UAE— were gunned down in a sudden gunfire. Despite existing security measures, including checkpoints and patrols, the attackers managed to infiltrate and execute their mission with clinical precision, raising serious questions about intelligence and on-ground preparedness.

This incident is not an isolated act of violence but appears deeply orchestrated. It coincided with two significant geopolitical events:The visit of US Vice President JD Vance to India and Prime Minister Narendra Modi's diplomatic mission in Saudi Arabia. Additionally, it followed a combative speech by Pakistani Army chief General Asim Munir, intensifying suspicions that the attack was calibrated to internationalise the Kashmir issue and portray the region as a nuclear flashpoint. The synchronicity is disturbingly reminiscent of the Chittisinghpora massacre in 2000, where 36 Sikhs were murdered days before US President Bill Clinton's visit.

By targeting tourists — symbols of normalcy and economic recovery—the terrorists aimed to derail the narrative of a stable Kashmir and provoke communal unrest across India. Since Article 370 was revoked, the Indian government has maintained a tight security apparatus in Kashmir, focusing on counter-insurgency and infrastructure development to boost tourism. While there has been a marked decline in local recruitment into terrorist groups, proxies like TRF have stepped up infiltration, especially using foreign fighters and sleeper cells.

The attack also underscores significant lapses. Despite heavy surveillance, there was no forewarning of this operation. The use of Army uniforms by terrorists highlights a dangerous tactic to bypass trust and checkpoints. Tourists, previously considered off-limits, are now being directly targeted, expanding the threat matrix. But the question is why now? Indeed it has to do with the arrival of US Vice President JD Vance. Pakistan may be attempting to paint Kashmir as unstable and urge foreign intervention.

Tourism in Kashmir has seen a resurgence post-370, contributing significantly to the local economy. Attacking tourists directly threatens this recovery. The brutal nature of the attack — execution-style killings — aims to spread fear and signal the reach and intent of the perpetrators.

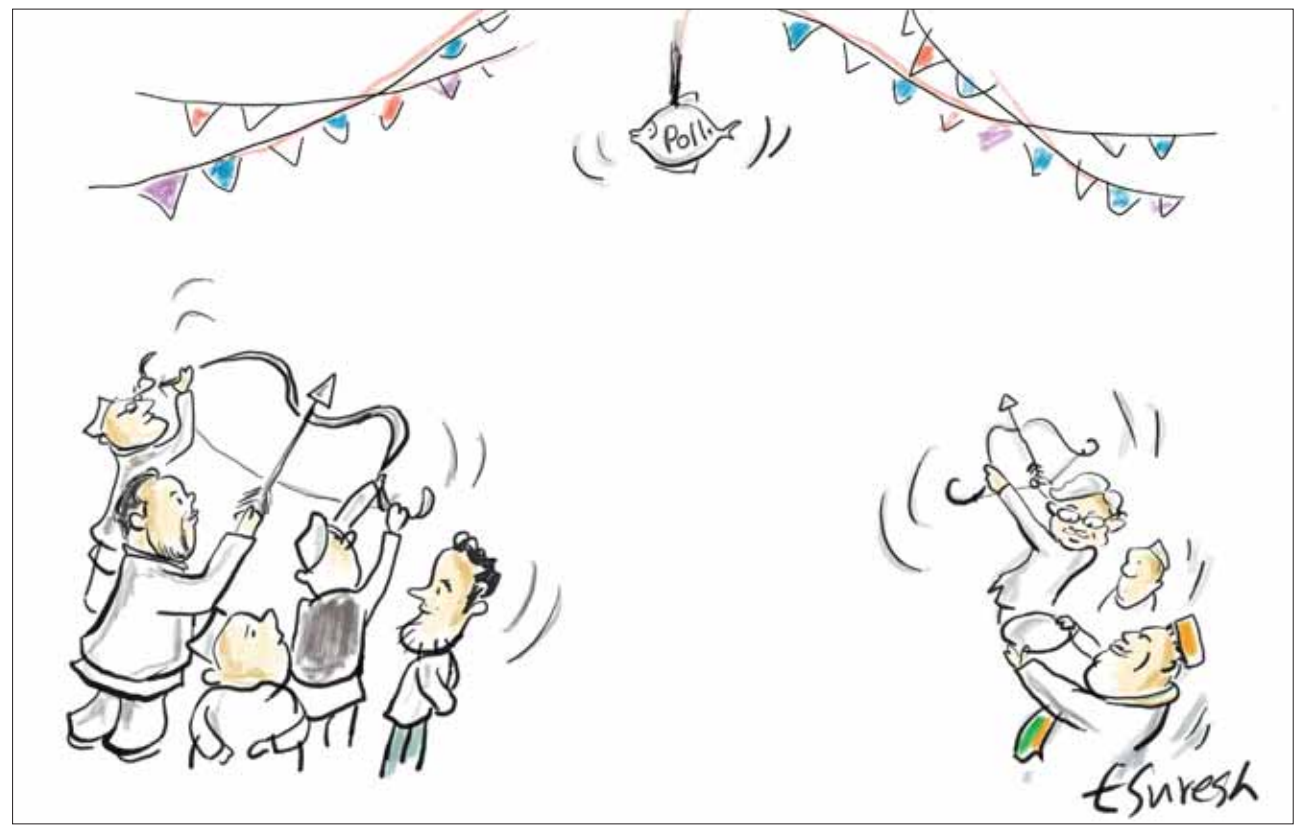
India now faces the dual challenge of responding decisively to terror while safeguarding the fragile gains in Kashmir. It is time to enhanced human intelligence and local collaboration to detect sleeper cells. Deployment of smart surveillance technologies in vulnerable areas is a must and should be taken on priority. In the wake of this unspeakable tragedy, India faces a critical inflection point — one that demands not just a military or tactical response, but a comprehensive strategic recalibration.

First and foremost, a robust diplomatic offensive is essential. India must intensify international pressure on nations that provide safe haven or support to terror outfits, directly or indirectly. This includes leveraging global forums such as the United Nations, and bilateral partnerships to isolate state and non-state actors that are responsible for terrorism. Silence and inaction on terror can no longer be diplomatically acceptable — strategic complacency must be met with unwavering clarity and consequence.

Second, the long-term antidote to terrorism lies not only in security but in stability. Continued economic development and civic engagement in Jammu and Kashmir are key to undermining extremist narratives. Investment in education, job creation, tourism infrastructure, and inclusive governance empowers local communities, weakens recruitment for terror networks, and fosters a sense of belonging among youth. A region that thrives economically is harder to radicalise.Most critically, it is time to revisit and reinforce the security architecture surrounding tourism. Tourists — once regarded as ambassadors of peace and economic revival — have now become targets. This demands a thorough overhaul of safety protocols, especially in remote and high-traffic areas like Pahalgam. The aim is not to deter tourism, but to restore confidence. Kashmir must not once again become a hostage to fear.

Political fault lines shift in Bihar

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



The Bihar polls at the end of the year are pretty unpredictable. Currently, there will be no cakewalk for the BJP, RJD, Congress or the JD(U). The churning is quietly taking place in Bihar politics. There could be a potential shift in power dynamics. The BJP, playing second fiddle to the Janata Dal (United) for the past two decades, is eyeing a lead role. The RJD wants to form the government.

Two crucial power groups are in the fight. On one side, the NDA and, on the other, the Mahagathbandhan, which comprises the RJD, Congress, and the Left parties. Intra-party and inner-party dynamics are in full swing.

The NDA and Mahagathbandhan are making calculated moves for a high-stakes political showdown. Encouraged by consecutive victories in states where the odds were against it, a revitalised BJP has now set its sights on Bihar after winning Delhi.

Bihar's caste politics is interesting. Backward classes comprise 63.13 per cent of the population, and the upper caste is only 15.52 per cent. Other Backward Classes comprise 27.12 per cent of the backward class category, while the Extremely Backward Class population numbered 36 per cent. Dalits comprise almost 19.65 per cent and

Yadavs account for 14.26 per cent. Kurmi, Nitish Kumar's Kurmi caste, also categorised as OBC, is 2.87 per cent of the population. In the last Assembly polls, upper castes, around 15 per cent of the population, dominated ticket distribution in many parties. BJP gave 47.3 per cent of its tickets to upper caste candidates, whereas Congress gave 40 per cent of its seats to upper castes.

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

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

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

KALYANI SHANKAR

The JD(U) wants to bargain for more seats with the BJP. In 2020, the JD(U) ran for 115 seats but only won 43. In contrast, the BJP ran for 110 seats and won 74. The MahagadbandhNn, which consists of RJD, Congress, and some smaller parties, pose stiff opposition. The RJD and top Congress leaders met in Delhi last week to advance the alliance.

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

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

Union Home Minister Amit Shah visited Bihar for two days. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Bihar.

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

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

The Congress and Left parties in the Mahagathbandhan are worried that the RJD will wait until the last minute to finalise seat-sharing agreements. The Congress party is unhappy with the weak constituencies it was given in 2020. It only won 19 out of the 70 seats it contested in the last election. The CPI(ML), which did well in 2020, wants a larger share of seats. Since 2005, the RJD has had difficulty regaining power, except for short periods in 2015 and 2022.

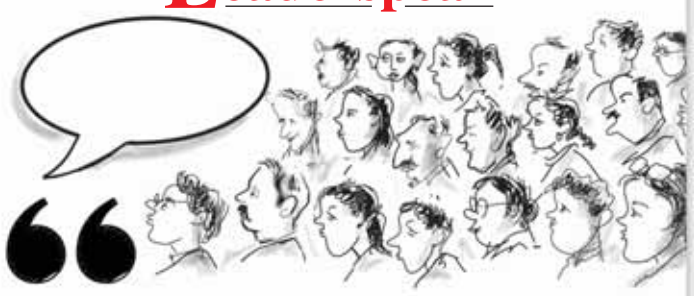
Currently, Tejashwi Yadav has two main tasks. First, he needs to expand the support beyond its core groups of Muslims and Yadavs to include other castes. This involves a stronger grassroots campaign, as the traditional voting trends are changing. The Congress has not developed younger leadership in Bihar. Its old core groups of Muslims and Dalits have shifted to other parties. The party has launched the 'Samvidhan Leadership Programme' to eye marginalised communities.

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

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

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

Leaderspeak



The dastardly killing of innocent, unsuspecting tourists by terrorists in Pahalgam yesterday around 2:30 PM has deeply hurt, shocked, and saddened us all. The Congress Party unequivocally condemns this cowardly act of terror and those responsible for it in the strongest possible terms. This attack is a direct assault on the unity and integrity of our nation.

MALLIKARJUN KHARGE, PRESIDENT, CONGRESS PARTY

Why EQ matters more than IQ

SECOND Opinion

BY SHARMILA VAIDYA

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

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

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

My questions were:

1. What qualities make you see someone as intelligent?
2. Do you think people with low IQ can be successful?

I was pleasantly surprised to see the responses from the survey. According to the survey - some of these qualities were, - someone who is empathetic, creative, problem-solving, curious, open to ideas, a good communicator, accepting without being judgmental ... and many more. Most people also believe that individuals with lower IQ scores can achieve success - especially when they possess strong emotional intelligence (EQ).

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

In the 1980s, Harvard psychologist, Howard Gardner proposed a theory that broke away from the "one-size-fits-all" model of intelligence. He introduced eight distinct types of intelligence that reflected the diverse ways humans learn, express themselves, and solve problems. These were:

Linguistic Intelligence: Word savvy like, writers, storytellers

Logical: Mathematical Intelligence: Analytical thinkers, like scientists and engineers

Musical Intelligence: Musically inclined, like musicians,

Kinesthetic Intelligence: Physical grace and skill like, dancers

Spatial Intelligence: Visual and spatial thinkers like architects and artists

Interpersonal Intelligence: People skills and empathy like, therapists, teachers, and leaders.

Intrapersonal Intelligence: Deep self-understanding like philosophers and spiritual leaders

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

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

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

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

Walt Disney was reportedly fired from a newspaper job for "lacking imagination," and he struggled academically. His success came through storytelling, creativity, and persistence.

Therefore, we must reconsider the tendency to label someone as lazy or unintelligent based solely on conventional standards. I believe my experience along with research and survey findings strongly support this perspective, which is aptly captured in the quote: "A high IQ may open a door, but emotional intelligence determines how far you'll go once you walk through it."

(The writer is an educator based in the US. Views are personal)

Letters to the Editor

National Panchayat Day

Madam — The evolution of Panchayat Raj System in India can be traced back to ancient Vedic period. On 24 April 1993 Panchayat Raj system in India came into effect with the enactment of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act on 22/23 December 1992, was ratified by state legislatures and came into effect on 24 April 1993.

To mark the establishment of Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) in India through constitution, "National Panchayat Raj Day" is observed every year on 24 April to promote grassroots democracy, rural development, inclusive governance, women empowerment, ensure accountability and transparency, strengthening local governance, and empower rural communities.

The decentralisation of power, e-governance, capacity building, and financial oversight are some of the core responsibilities of PRIs in India. This day mainly focus on enhancing participatory governance, rural upliftment, rural women empowerment, and digital transformation in village-level administration.

The Constitution of India recognises PRIs as "Institutions of Self-governance". Currently, there are nearly 2.63 lakh Panchayats, 31.47 lakh elected representatives of PRIs of which 14.54 lakh are women. It is important for achieving inclusive growth and addressing issues like climate change and rural-to-urban migration.

B. MADHUSUDHAN REDDY | KARIMNAGAR

Contempt plea against Dubey

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

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

"The remark is viral. Dubey says CJI responsible for civil wars. No reply from Attorney (General)," the lawyer said, prompting Justice Gavai to respond, "List it next week."

Dubey had sharply criticized the judiciary, claiming that if the Supreme Court continues to frame laws, then Parliament and state assemblies might as well be shut down.

His comments came after the Centre assured the court that it would hold off on implementing controversial provisions of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, following judicial scrutiny. The BJP was quick to distance itself from Dubey's explosive comments.

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

BHAGWAN THADANI | MUMBAI

Mangoes can be a health risk!

Madam —Mango is a fruit rich in flavor, nutrition, and energy. It contains essential vitamins such as A and C, along with iron—nutrients that are highly beneficial for the eyes, skin, and immune system.

However, consuming mangoes before their natural season poses serious health risks, especially when they are artificially ripened using harmful chemicals like calcium carbide.

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

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

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

ABDUL MBOOD | MUMBAI

PAHALGAM ATTACK: TERRORISTS ARE ENEMIES OF ENTIRE MANKIND

Once again Kashmir is lying in blood. It is very sad to note that atleast 26 people mostly tourist were killed and several were injured by the Terrorist. The gruesome attack should be condemned by each and every one. The Government boasted a lot after abrogation of Article 370 that the terrorism will come to an end in Jammu and Kashmir. After the rhetoric of Amit Shah and PM Narendra Modi that there is normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir the attack has proved that the Central Government has failed miserably to crumble down the terrorism. While many tourist were enjoying a peaceful afternoon amidst snow-capped peaks and pine forests the militants had split blood in Pahalgaun. This an direct attack on the Indian state . The entire nation is in great shock. Previously in the gruesome terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir over 43 brave soldiers were killed. Every now and then many innocents people's are being killed by terrorism. Now killing of 26 tourist is act of barbarians and act of cowardice and assault on the values of humanity .

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

The terrorists are the enemies of entire mankind and they do not belong to a particular religion or particular country. All religions are great and love should be the universal religion. I request the Government to take stringent action against those are behind the terror attack. My sympathies to the families and prayers to the injured. At this moment the nation must stand by the families of the brutally killed innocent people and make all efforts to bring the culprits and give them exemplary punishment.

ZAKIR HUSSAIN | KAZIPET

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

WAVES 2025: Redefining global media diplomacy

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

FIRST Column

Come May 1st, India has truly arrived with the WAVES Entertainment Summit being held in Mumbai from 1st to 4th of May 2025. The summit echoes the vision envisaged in 2019 by PM Modi in his speech at the inauguration of the National Museum of Indian Cinema; highlighting Indian cinema as a powerful medium of global outreach and soft power, calling it a "silent force" that shapes global perceptions and connects cultures. He emphasised cinema's potential to promote film tourism, inviting international filmmakers to explore India's diverse landscapes. The design of WAVES is an unusual convergence of like-mindedness of M&E stakeholders; individuals or institutions that think alike in carving out a landscape that will be suited for the global fraternity responsible for creating content and its consumption.

WAVES 2025 brings a bold new phase of soft power diplomacy, focusing on transformative and technology-driven partnerships. Innovation in this segment is bound to create a new buzz for foreign policy tie-ups, carried forward on the wings of emerging tools such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR), and immersive content ecosystems. The diverse participation at WAVES will open unprecedented avenues for multilateral cooperation and dialogue across critical areas of knowledge sharing, media engagement, storytelling ecosystems, and digital co-productions. It provides India with an unparalleled opportunity to assert global leadership in the creative domain; by fusing its creativity quotient, strategic foresight, and cultural capital into a soft power matrix that fosters goodwill and purposeful international collaboration.

At the heart of WAVES 2025 lies its evocative tagline: "Connecting Creators, Connecting Countries", a bold declaration of India's intent to reposition itself as a global M&E powerhouse. As a summit that seeks to reimagine communication diplomacy, one of its most awaited outcomes is the WAVES Declaration, a visionary charter that could reshape the media discourse globally.

Rarely has a platform attempted to knit together creativity, business, leadership, and soft power into a cohesive global identity. But WAVES seeks to do just that, with a Global Media Dialogue, a declaration of shared values, and a structured roadmap for the M&E industry that reflects the ethos of a borderless, tech-enabled, creatively interconnected world. The declaration will place communication-clear, coherent, and collaborative-at the centre of a new global information order, founded on equity, access, equality, and participation.

WAVES has quietly but effectively given a new meaning to soft power diplomacy wherein all constituents that create charisma associated with knowledge sharing and storytelling play a critical role in bilateral or multilateral cooperation. It would be appropriate to mention that diplomacy will adorn new wings of change based on creativity, innovation and the spirit of collaboration. WAVES will truly be the "Mahakumbh" of ideas, opportunities, experiences and knowledge sharing.

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

CHAITANYA K PRASAD

With narratives shaping geopolitics, trade, and international perception, there is a pressing need for a Global Media Charter, a binding commitment from nations to protect freedom of creative expression, foster diverse storytelling, and ensure ethical media practices. WAVES 2025 can be the birthplace of this transformative shift. In a world increasingly governed by digital influence and algorithmic reach, a unified declaration will help navigate the ethical dilemmas of deepfakes, information disorder, and cultural homogenisation. It's not just about content anymore; it's about cultural continuity, technological responsibility, and global unity through creative collaboration.

> THE SUMMIT ALSO AIMS TO INCREASE INDIA'S GLOBAL MARKET SHARE IN MEDIA, ATTRACT MAJOR INVESTMENTS, AND ENCOURAGE CO-PRODUCTION BETWEEN INDIAN AND INTERNATIONAL PLAYERS. BY BRINGING TOGETHER CREATORS, INVESTORS, AND POLICYMAKERS, WAVES OFFERS A SHARED SPACE TO BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND GROW IDEAS

WAVES isn't just about short-term buzz, it's about building something lasting. It understands that media and entertainment (M&E) isn't a quick fix but a long-term strategic play. At its heart is a clear goal: to make India the global content hub and a net exporter of stories. With its rich cultural diversity and languages, India has all the ingredients to build a strong intellectual property base that resonates worldwide.

The summit also aims to increase India's global market share in media, attract major investments, and encourage co-production between Indian and international players. By bringing together creators, investors, and policymakers, WAVES offers a shared space to build partnerships and grow ideas. Platforms like WaveXcelerator and WAVES Bazaar will help startups and innovators scale up and plug into global markets.

WAVES 2025 is designed to be a complete experience. The Global Media Dialogue brings together ministers and top policymakers from around the world to exchange ideas. The Thought Leaders Track will host key sessions exploring future trends and challenges in media.

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

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

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

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

The timing couldn't be better. According to the EY-FICCI 2025 M&E Report, India's media sector grew to INR 2.5 trillion in 2024 and is expected to touch INR 2.7 trillion in 2025.

Digital media now makes up 32% of total revenue, with digital ads growing fast. OTT platforms grew by 18%, driven by regional stories finding global fans. The report projects that the sector will hit INR 3.1 trillion by 2027, powered by gaming, animation, and immersive tech. WAVES gives these numbers real meaning, by turning data into action, partnerships into policy, and content into soft power. It's where the industry meets diplomacy and the future is co-created.

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

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

(The writer is former Civil Servant, writes on Cinema and Strategic Communication. Views are personal. Inputs provided by Zoya Ahmad and Vaishnavi Srinivasan)

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

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

Septuagenarian Dr Iain McGilchrist, a world-renowned philosopher, psychiatrist and neuroscientist, recently addressed a symposium titled The Future of Humanity, where he delved into some of the most pressing questions at the heart of our existence-the existence of what is good, beautiful, and true. Reflecting on his lifetime, he observed that these fundamental transcendental values have been increasingly sidelined, decried, debased, and even destroyed. "It is not just that we are distracted from the truth," he noted, "but we demand protection from it, lest it hurt us-in case life itself hurts us."

DEBASISH BHATTACHARYYA

This observation resonates deeply in a world increasingly perceived as unkind, unfeeling, and unconcerned, where the very essence of humanity-compassion, love, and concern-seems to be vanishing at an alarming rate.

In our hyper-competitive socio-political environment, every sphere of life-familial, social, professional, and spiritual-is under strain. Systems meant to support them are collapsing. Yet amid this bleakness, glimmers of hope remain. One such beacon is a traveller's journey-marked by twists, encounters, and insights, offering a powerful affirmation of the human spirit.

Take the journey of Thor Pedersen, a Danish explorer. Thor is the only person in history to travel to every country in the world without flying. Between 2013 and 2023, he visited over 200 nations-India being his 168th-using only ships, trains, buses, and other ground or sea-based transport. His journey was more than a feat of endurance; it became a profound exploration of humanity, transcending borders, cultures, and beliefs.

At the heart of his experience lay a simple truth: "People are just people." Wherever he went, he met ordinary people living ordinary lives-finding joy in food, music, and sports, and valuing safety and stability over political and religious divides. Across every border he crossed, he was met with kindness and generosity. Strangers offered him meals, shelter, contacts, translations, or simply a smile when he needed it most-true to the spirit of our shared humanity.

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

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

Thor's journey, devoid of privilege and elitism-underscores vital truths:

a) Even if gentleness and kindness seem to be in decline, they continue to thrive quietly at the grassroots.

b)Though humanity struggles to find its rightful place in a world consumed by the relentless pursuit of power, pleasure, and profit, it is not lost - only marginalised.

c) As we glamorise wealth, we risk losing the very qualities that define us as human-compassion, care, and cooperation.

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

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

Grim Realities

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

Poverty, an affront to human dignity, heightens vulnerability to abuse. Tied to climate change, it's set to intensify-new research led by Dr Timothy Neal (University of New South Wales) warns the average person could be 40% poorer if global temperatures rise by 4°C.

Shockingly, those who hold power-whether in struggling countries, developing economies, or even the most developed nations-have often abandoned humanity as the foundation of governance. Opportunistic toxic politics and hybrid forms of authoritarianism continue to destroy the sacred ground of human dignity, pushing aside the cardinal principle that must guide all leadership: People Over Everything.

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

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

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

While it may be simplistic to expect everything to align perfectly with the humanistic way, it is crucial to recognise the deeper causes of suffering, distress, and anguish within the fabric of human society-locally, nationally, and globally. In an age of deep disillusionment, we must remember: the world is not merely a map of borders, but a shared home.

As Professor Harvey Whitehouse of Oxford reminds us: "Remembering that we are all related and experience many of the same challenges could be the key to solving global problems-from intergroup conflicts to poverty and the climate crisis."

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

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

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

US lawmakers condemn J-K attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New York

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

"I send my condolences to the people of India in the aftermath of the horrific attack in Kashmir and hope those responsible will be brought to justice soon. Terrorism is never tolerated," US Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Senator Jim Risch said in a post on X.

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

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

Deputy Secretary at the Department of State Christopher Landau said the US "strongly condemns" the terrorist attack in Kashmir and "stands resolutely alongside India. Sending very heartfelt condolences to all Indians, and especially those who have lost their loved ones in this heinous attack on tourists and civilians."

Senator Bill Hagerty said the US stands with India. "I condemn the shocking attack today by Islamic terrorists who murdered dozens of people in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir."

The "terrorist attack in Kashmir is a deeply disturbing reminder that the threat posed to civilized nations by terrorism remains acute," Senator Ted Cruz said.

He added that the US will stand with India and Prime Minister Modi "as they bring these terrorists to justice."

Congressman Raja Krishnamoorthi said he is heartbroken by the horrific attack on innocent tourists in Kashmir. "We must stand united against terrorism in all its forms and bring the perpetrators to justice," he said.

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

Senator Rick Scott said he and his wife Ann are devastated to hear of the "evil terrorist attack" in Pahalgam, India. "The US stands with India as we pray for those who lost loved ones or were injured in this unimaginable attack."

Vivek Ramaswamy, who was a 2024 presidential primary candidate and had briefly co-headed the Department of Government Efficiency along with billionaire Elon Musk, termed the attack "horrific" and extended condolences to the families of those who died.

Khanderao Kand, Chief of Policy and Strategy at the Foundation for India and Indian Diaspora Studies, strongly condemned the terrorist attack, saying both the US and India have been burned by state-sponsored terror.

While India will continue to remain resilient in the face of such adversity, this unfortunate incident is a sobering reminder, of just why the US-India defence and security partnership remains vital to stand up to such adversaries
— US-INDIA STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP FORUM

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

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

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

Former advisor to President Joe Biden and Co-Chair for the Economic Subcommittee for Asian American and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Commission Ajay Bhutoria too condemned the terrorist attack in Kashmir. "My prayers go out to the victims and their families. Let's unite against terror!"

Hindus Advancing Human Rights Initiative (HAHRI), an arm of HinduPACT, unequivocally condemned the attack, with its executive director Rahul Sur saying that the "world has been warned repeatedly about this Islamic fundamentalism. It must be crushed. It is time to sanction Pakistan."

The Kashmiri Overseas Association (KOA) condemned the terror attack in Pahalgam and said the 26 tourists were executed by Islamist terrorists by targetting solely for their Hindu faith.

The Global Organisation of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) unequivocally condemned the terrorist action, with GOPIO International President Prakash Shah saying the "world cannot idly stand by each time terrorists take actions and nations must unite and take joint actions against terrorists and those that harbor them." "That is the only way to end Terrorism," Shah added.

GOPIO Chairman Thomas Abraham reaffirmed solidarity and resolve in the fight against terrorism in all its forms and wherever it occurs. "The Indian Diaspora will remain united with the Government of India's efforts to combat terrorism," he said.

British PM condemns Kashmir terror attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ London

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer has condemned the terrorist attack in Kashmir, joined by Foreign Secretary David Lammy who described it as a "cowardly" act.

They took to social media to express their shock as the death toll rose to 26 in the Pahalgam attack on Tuesday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi cutting short his Saudi Arabia visit to return to New Delhi on Wednesday.

"The horrific terrorist attack in Kashmir today is utterly devastating. My thoughts are with those affected, their loved ones, and the people of India," said Starmer in a post on his X handle.

Lammy also took to the platform a little earlier with his reaction: "I am appalled by the horrific and cowardly terrorist attack on Kashmir earlier today. My thoughts are with all of those affected, especially those who have lost loved ones."

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

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

"We reiterate our absolute condemnation of all acts of terrorism in whatever form or wherever they occur or by whomsoever perpetrated, with the consequent tragic loss of life and human suffering," she said.

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

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

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

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

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

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

US forest fire forces thousands to evacuate

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Barnegat Township

A fast-moving wildfire still burning in New Jersey on Wednesday forced thousands of people to evacuate and temporarily closed a stretch of a major highway. The Garden State Parkway, one of New Jersey's busiest highways, was closed between Barnegat and Lacey townships on Tuesday night. It has since reopened, the Ocean County Sheriff's Office posted online Wednesday morning.

More than 1,300 structures were threatened and about 3,000 residents were evacuated, the New Jersey Forest Fire Service said. Shelters were open at two high schools, according to the Barnegat Police Department.

The fire service planned to give an update at a news conference late Wednesday morning.

The Jersey Central Power and Light Company cut power to about 25,000 customers at the request of the Forest Fire Service and the wildfire's command post Tuesday evening, including thousands in Barnegat Township. The company said on X that it doesn't expect to restore the power before Wednesday.

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

"This is for the safety of crews battling the fire," the company said.

The fire in the Greenwood Forest Wildlife Management Area burned more than 34 sq km of land, fire officials said.

The blaze, burning in Ocean and Lacey Townships in Ocean County, was only about 10% contained Tuesday night, the fire service said. The cause of the fire was under investigation.

There were no immediate reports of injuries.

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

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

Around her Waretown house it was "like a war zone," she said, describing smoke, sirens and the buzz of helicopters.

The site of the fire is near an alpaca farm. The farm said in a Facebook post that the property wasn't threatened and all of the animals were safe.

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

Harvey Weinstein's rape retrial set for opening statements

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New York

Five years after Harvey Weinstein's original #MeToo trial delivered a searing reckoning for one of Hollywood's most powerful figures, the ex-studio boss is on trial again after an appeals court threw out the landmark rape conviction. Opening statements are set for Wednesday in a trial that could take six weeks. It's happening at the same Manhattan courthouse as his first trial, and two accusers who testified then are expected to return.

But Weinstein's retrial is playing out at a different cultural moment than the first, which happened during the height of the #MeToo movement. And along with the charges being retried, he faces an additional allegation from a woman who wasn't involved in the first case.

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

The #MeToo movement, which exploded in 2017 with allegations against Weinstein, has also evolved and ebbed.

At the start of Weinstein's first trial, chants of "rapist" could be heard from protesters outside. TV trucks lined the street, and reporters queued for hours to get a seat in the packed courtroom. His lawyers decried the "carnival-like atmosphere" and fought unsuccessfully to get the trial moved from Manhattan.

This time though, over five days of jury selection, there was none of that.

Those realities, coupled with the New York Court of Appeals' ruling last year vacating his 2020 conviction and 23-year prison sentence — because the judge allowed testimony about allegations Weinstein was not charged with — are shaping everything from retrial legal strategy to the atmosphere in court.

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

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

Weinstein has pleaded not guilty and denies raping or sexually assaulting anyone. His acquittals on the two most serious charges at his 2020 trial — predatory sexual assault and first-degree rape — still stand. Lindsay Goldbrum, a lawyer for the unnamed accuser, said Weinstein's retrial marks a "pivotal moment in the fight for accountability in sex abuse cases" and a "signal to other survivors that the system is catching up — and that it's worth speaking out even when the odds seem insurmountable".

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

Gunmen kill two personnel guarding polio vaccination team in Pakistan

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Karachi

Two security personnel guarding a polio vaccination team were shot dead by unidentified gunmen on Wednesday in Pakistan's restive Balochistan province, police said.

The incident took place in the Teeri area of ??Mastung district, where Levies personnel protecting the polio vaccination team were attacked by masked gunmen, Assistant Commissioner Akram Harifal told the media.

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the attack. However, militants frequently target polio vaccinators in Pakistan, terming them un-Islamic and against Sharia.

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

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

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the attack on the polio vaccination team, the state-run Radio Pakistan reported.

"Terrorists who harm the lives and properties of innocent people are enemies of humanity and will be brought to justice," he said.

Such incidents cannot deter the government's commitment to eradicating polio from the country, he said, adding that the anti-polio campaign will continue with determination.

Balochistan government spokesperson Shahid Rind condemned the attack, saying "a thorough investigation into the incident was underway".

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

International students are piling up wins in US courts

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Atlanta

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

At first, he avoided going out in public, skipping classes and mostly keeping his phone turned off. A court ruling in his favour led to his status being restored this week, and he has returned to his apartment, but is still asking his roommates to screen visitors. More than a thousand international students have faced similar disruptions in recent weeks, with their academic careers — and their lives in the US — thrown into doubt in a widespread crackdown by the Trump administration.

Some have found a measure of success in court, with federal judges around the country issuing orders to restore students' legal status at least temporarily.

In addition to the case filed in Atlanta, where Roy is among 133 plaintiffs, judges have issued temporary restraining orders in states including New Hampshire, Wisconsin, Montana, Oregon and Washington. Judges have denied similar requests in some other cases, saying it was not clear the loss of status would cause irreparable harm.

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

But many affected students said they have been involved only in minor infractions, or it's unclear altogether why they were targeted. The attorney for Roy and his fellow plaintiffs, Charles Kuck, argued the government did not have legal grounds to terminate the students' status.

He speculated in court last week the government is trying to encourage these students to self-deport, saying "the pressure on these students is overwhelming." He said some asked him if it was safe to leave their homes to get food, and others worried they wouldn't receive a degree after years of work or feared their chances of a career in the US were shot. "I think the hope is they'll just leave," Kuck said. "The reality is these kids are invested."

An attorney for the government, R David Powell, argued the students did not suffer significant harm because they could transfer their academic credits or find jobs in another country.

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

London talks on ending Ukraine war pared down

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Kyiv

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

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

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

A Russian drone struck a bus carrying workers in Marganets, in eastern Ukraine's Dnipropetrovsk region on Wednesday morning, killing seven women and two men, regional head Serhii Lysak wrote on his Telegram channel. More than 40 people were injured, he said.

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

Lysak published photos of a bus with its windows blown out and shards of glass mixed with blood spattered on the bus floor.

President Donald Trump has pushed for an end to the war and said last week that negotiations were "coming to a head". That comment came after Rubio suggested that the US might soon back away from negotiations if they don't progress.

Rubio had indicated that Wednesday's meeting could be decisive in determining whether the Trump administration remains engaged.

Those still attending the meeting included retired Lt Gen Keith Kellogg, Trump's envoy for Ukraine and Russia.

Andrii Yermak, the head of Ukraine's presidential office, said on X that a delegation including him, Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha and Defence Minister Rustem Umerov had arrived in London for the talks despite the alterations.

"The path to peace is not easy, but Ukraine has been and remains committed to peaceful efforts," Yermak said. Officials would "discuss ways to achieve a full and unconditional ceasefire as the first step toward a comprehensive settlement and the achievement of a just and lasting peace".

US special envoy Steve Witkoff was expected to visit Moscow again later this week, according to Russian officials.

The abrupt change of plans in London came amid growing speculation that the US will press Ukraine to cede territory to Russia as part of a potential peace agreement - a possibility that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Tuesday again ruled out.

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

Zelenskyy pushed back against that during an appearance in Kyiv, saying: "There is nothing to talk about - it is our land, the land of the Ukrainian people."

Russia, meanwhile, has effectively rejected a US proposal for an immediate and full 30-day halt in the fighting by imposing far-reaching conditions.

Trump said repeatedly during his election campaign last year that he would be able to end the war "in 24 hours" upon taking office. But he has expressed frustration with Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Some European allies are wary of the American proposal for Ukraine to exchange land for peace. But an official said there's also acknowledgment by some allies that Russia is firmly entrenched wholly or partially in five regions of Ukraine - Crimea, Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson.

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

Still, Ukraine's territorial integrity and aspirations to strengthen ties with the rest of the continent are a top priority for the Europeans, the European official said.

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

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

Zelenskyy said Tuesday that Ukraine's delegation heading to the UK had a mandate to discuss only an unconditional or partial ceasefire with Russia. He said that "after a ceasefire, we're prepared to sit down for talks in any format".

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov cautioned that reaching a settlement could be a drawn-out process.

Putin declared a 30-hour unilateral ceasefire on Saturday, but Ukraine and British officials said Russian attacks continued during the alleged pause. The Associated Press was unable to verify whether a ceasefire was in place along the roughly 1,000-km front line.

6.2 earthquake hits Istanbul

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Istanbul

An earthquake with a preliminary magnitude of 6.2 shook Istanbul and other areas on Wednesday, Turkiye's disaster and emergency management agency said. There were no immediate reports of serious damage or injuries in the metropolis of 16 million.

The earthquake had a shallow depth of 10 km, according to the United States Geological Survey, with its epicentre about 40 km southwest of Istanbul, in the Sea of Marmara.

It was felt in the neighbouring provinces of Tekirdag, Yalova, Bursa and Balikesir and in the city of Izmir, some 550 km south of Istanbul. There were several aftershocks, including one measuring 5.3.

The incident, which started at 12:49 pm during a public holiday when many children were out of school and celebrating in the streets, caused widespread panic in Istanbul, which is on tenterhooks due to the looming threat of a major earthquake. Panicked residents rushed from their homes and buildings into the streets. The disaster and emergency management agency urged people to stay away from buildings. Leyla Ucar, a personal trainer, said she was exercising with her student on the 20th floor of a building when they felt intense shaking.

"We shook incredibly. It threw us around, we couldn't understand what was happening, we didn't think of an earthquake at first because of the shock of the event," she said. "It was very scary." Senol Sari, a 51-year-old resident who fled to a park nearby his house, told The Associated Press he was with his children in the living room of his flat on the third floor of an apartment building when he heard a loud noise and the building started shaking.

"We immediately protected ourselves from the earthquake and waited for it to pass, then calmly walked away from the house," Sari said. "Of course, we were scared during the earthquake. We were worried that it would continue. Since the (great) Istanbul earthquake is (still) an expected earthquake, our concerns continue."

'My children were little scared'

Cihan Boztepe, 40, was one of those who hurriedly fled to the streets with his family in order to avoid a potential collapse. Boztepe, standing next to his sobbing child, told AP that he was living in Batman province, an area close to the southern part of Turkiye where the 2023 quakes hit, and that Wednesday's tremor felt weaker and that he wasn't as scared.

"At first we were shaken, then it stopped, then we were shaken again. My children were a little scared, but I wasn't. We quickly gathered our things and went down to a safe place. If it were up to me, we would have already returned home." Turkiye's interior minister, Ali Yerlikaya, said the authorities had not received reports of collapsed buildings. He told HaberTurk television that there had been reports of damage to buildings.

The NTV broadcaster reported that a derelict and abandoned former residential building in this historic Fatih district, which houses the Blue Mosque and the Hagia Sophia Grand Mosque, had collapsed.

Kemal Cebi, the mayor of Kucukcekmece district in western Istanbul, told NTV there were "no negative developments yet," but reported traffic jams, and said many buildings were already at risk due to the area's density.

Urban reconstruction projects

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

Istanbul was not impacted by that earthquake, but the devastation heightened fears of a similar quake, with experts citing the city's proximity to fault lines.

Israeli strike on school-turned-shelter kills 23

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Deir al-Balah (Gaza Strip)

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 on Wednesday. There was no immediate Israeli comment on the strike, which set several tents ablaze, burning people alive. The military says it only targets militants and blames civilian deaths on Hamas because its fighters are embedded in densely populated areas.

France, Germany and Britain meanwhile said Israel's seven-week-old blockade on all imports to Gaza, including food, was "intolerable," in unusually strong criticism from three of the country's closest allies.

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

Abbas, who heads the Western-backed Palestinian Authority, has no influence over Hamas but is seeking a role in postwar Gaza.

A yearlong truce and a gradual withdrawal

Egypt and Qatar are still developing the proposal, which would include the gradual withdrawal of Israeli forces from the entire strip and the release of Palestinian prisoners, according to an Egyptian official and a Hamas official who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorised to brief media.

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

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

Hamas must be destroyed or removed; Israel-US

There was no immediate comment from Israeli officials. But Israel has ruled out any arrangement that would allow Hamas to preserve its influence in Gaza and rearm. The Trump administration, which has also been involved in the ceasefire talks, has said it fully supports Israel's position.

Israel and the US have pressed Hamas to accept a temporary truce in which it would immediately release several hostages in return for vague promises of talks on a more permanent ceasefire. Hamas has rejected those proposals and says it won't disarm as long as Israel occupies Palestinian territory. The Hamas official said the group does not trust either Netanyahu or the US after they shattered the existing ceasefire agreement, which had facilitated the release of over 30 hostages.

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

France, Germany condemn Israeli food blockade

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

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

Afghan Taliban Government condemns J and K attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Islamabad

Afghanistan's Taliban government on Wednesday condemned the terror attack on tourists in Jammu and Kashmir, saying such incidents undermine efforts to ensure regional security and stability.

In a statement, the Taliban-ruled Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Abdul Qahar Balkhi also expressed condolences to the bereaved families. "The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan categorically condemns the recent attack on tourists in the Pahalgam region of Jammu and Kashmir, and expresses condolences to the bereaved families," he said.

Balkhi said "such incidents undermine efforts to ensure regional security and stability."

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

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

Jordan bans Muslim Brotherhood

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Amman (Jordan)

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

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

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

The Interior Ministry said the Muslim Brotherhood is now considered an illegal organisation and announced a ban on any political activities related to the group and the closure of its offices. It said efforts to confiscate the group's assets would be accelerated. "It has been proven that members of the group operate in the dark and engage in activities that could destabilize the country," the ministry said. "Members of the dissolved Muslim Brotherhood have tampered with security and national unity, and disrupted security and public order."

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, **Ram Avtar**, Son of **Late Shri Ramesh Chandar**, was the owner of a property situated at **Trilokiya Apartment, Address 29, Trilokiya Adarsh Apartment, I.P. Extension, New Delhi 110092.** I have sold the said property to **Mrs. Shweta Jain.** The property was free from all encumbrances and not under lien any bank or financial institution. The **Original Share Certificate** related to the said property has been lost/misplaced. If found by anyone, kindly return it to the undersigned.

Sd/-
Ram Avtar

PUBLIC NOTICE

Known to all that my client **Smt. Kavita owner of the PLOT NO. 79, AREA 50 SQ. YDS., KHASRA NO. 12/12 & 12/13, RAZA PUR KHURD,SAINIK ENCLAVE PART-III, MOHAN GARDEN, NEW DELHI and. Smt. Kavita purchase property from Smt. Inder Wati vide Notarized GPA, ATS and will dated 18.08. 2009 Now Smt. Kavita wants to sell aforesaid property.** And It is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property, shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim, right in said property then he may contact and handover the same and apprise his claim to undersigned within 15 days of this publication.

AD REM LEGAL SOLUTION
Ch. No. 760 - Dwarka Court Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75
Mobile :- 9899013918

PUBLIC NOTICE

Known to all that my client **Sh. Dharmender Singh owner of the PROPERTY BEARING NO. E -15, AREA 47 SQ. YDS. KHASRA NO. 104/22/2 VILLAGE PALAM, RAJA PURI, BLOCK-E, UTTAM NAGAR,NEW DELHI-110059 Sh.Dharmender Singh purchase property from Sh. Mukesh vide Notarized GPA, ATS and will dated 18.08. 2009 Now Sh. Dharmender Singh wants to sell aforesaid property.** And It is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my sai client and said institution regarding said property, shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim, right in said property then he may contact and handover the same and apprise his claim to undersigned within 15 days of this publication.

AD REM LEGAL SOLUTION
Ch. No. 760 - Dwarka Court Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75
Mobile :- 9899013918

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences
Faridkot Ph. 01639-256232, 256236

Advt. No BFU-25/11

VACANCIES

Online applications are invited w.e.f. **05/04/2025 to 15.05.2025** from eligible candidates through University website i.e. www.bfuhs.ac.in for the recreuitment to the posts of Medical Officer (General)-1000 under Department of Health and Family Welfare, Govt. of Punjab.
For Application form, fee, speciality wise detail of posts, Category wise distribution and other terms & conditions, visit University website: **www.bfuhs.ac.in.**

Sd/-
REGISTRAR

nil/12/289/2023/43771 Dated CHD :- 4/23/2025

PUBLIC NOTICE

Known to all that my client **Smt. Anita Negi owner of the UPPER GROUND FLOOR, WITHOUT ROOF, PLOT NO. 103-A, BLOCK-L, AREA 250 SQ. YDS. RECT.58, KILLA NO. 17, VILLAGE KHUREJI KHAS, ILLAQA SHAHDARA, DELHI and aforesaid plot purchased by mother of our client i.e. Smt.Shanti Devi Nima vide GPA, ATS and Will dated 12.06. 1974 and Smt. Anita Negi have not original Secession Certificate issued by Competent Court in favour of Smt. Anita Negi W/o Lt. Chander Singh Nima in respect of subject property.** And It is informed that any deal with said documents by any person except my said client and said institution regarding said property, shall be deemed as null and void. If any person having any claim,right in said property then he may contact and handover the same and apprise his claim to undersigned within 15 days of this publication.

AD REM LEGAL SOLUTION
Ch. No. 760 - Dwarka Court Sector-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75
Mobile :- 9899013918

LOST & FOUND

This Public at large is hereby notify that my client Mrs. Gulnaz Begum W/o Mr. Rais Ahmad is the absolute and lawful owner of Flat No.E-101, CITY CGHS Ltd, Plot No.21, Vasundhara Enclave, Delhi. That the Original Share Certificate and Allotment Letter of the above said flat is misplaced by me and is not traceable by our best efforts and for the same I have filed NCR vide L.R. No.2778500/2025 Dated: 23.04.2025
If anyone has any objection/Claim for any type such as any Loan. Mortgage, Surety, Security etc. over the said property regarding the above said original documents, then contact to the undersigned within 15 days of this Notice. Thereafter no body have any right on the said property.

SAHIL ARORA (ADVOCATE)
Office No.107, First Floor, M.S. Chambers, Aruna Park, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-110092
Mob.: +91-9811912277

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Shobha Adlakha (Aadhar No. 708165813942), W/o Late Shri. Rajiv Kumar Adlakha, aged adult, R/o 97, Orange Drive, On Sohna, Road, Malibu Towne, Gurgaon, Haryana - 122018, declare that my Father in Law Late Shri. Ghanshaym Ghanshyam Dass Adlakha S/o Late Shri. Chetan Dass Adlakha, R/o 97, Orange Drive, Sohna Road, Malibu Towne, Gurgaon, South City II, Gurgaon - 122018, Haryana, had expired on 22nd November, 2024. The only child of Late Shri Ghanshyam Dass Adlakha, i.e., Late Shri Rajiv Kumar Adlakha have predeceased him on 20th April, 2023. Late Shri. Ghanshyam Dass Adlakha left behind the following legal heirs/ entire surviving members of the family:

Sr. No	Name of legal heirs	Relation	Age
1.	Shobha Adlakha	Daughter in Law	58
2.	Priya Adlakha	Grand Daughter	32
3.	Tamanna Adlakha	Grand Daughter	28

There are no other legal heirs or surviving members of the family except the above mentioned legal heirs. If anyone has any objection regarding this, he/she can raise objection with legal evidence within 7 days of the publication in the office of Sub Registrar, Badshahpur, Gurugram, Haryana.

Dated: 23rd April, 2025
Place: Gurugram, Haryana

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

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

PD(1916)C

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

PD(1917)C

I, JC-858076M Nb/Sub(DS) Ashok Khot, R/o- Vill- Kurniwadi, PO- Kurni, Teh- Hukkeri, Dist- Belagavi, Karnataka- 591221, have changed my daughter's name from Vaishnavi to Vaishnavi Khot, vide affidavit dated 23/04/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1918)C

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

PD(1919)C

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

PD(1920)C

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

PD(1921)C

MECHANIZED CLEANING OF COACHES

Tender Notice No.: GEM/2025/B/6154972; Dated: 21-04-2025; E-Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work; **Name of work :** Mechanized Cleaning of Coaches of through passing trains at Katihar Platform during halt under Clean Train Station (CTS) scheme for a period of 4 (four) years. **Tender Value:** ₹17,87,48,526.80/-; **Earnest Money**: ₹10,43,750/-; Date & Time of **closing** of tender at **18:00** hrs. and **opening** at **18:30** hrs. on **12-05-2025**. For complete information and tender document of e-Tender will be available in website **http://www.gem.gov.in**

Sr. DME, Katihar
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

Baba Farid University of Health Sciences
Sadiq Road, Faridkot -151203
Ph. 01639-256232, 256236

E-TENDER NOTICE

E-tenders are invited for the procurement of following items upto 15.05.25
1) Computerized speech laboratory with speech machine in GGSMCH Fdk. 2) Radiopharmaceuticals in Nuclear Medicine at GGSMCH FDK. 3) Supply and installation of Digital Sroboscope and fees in GGSMCH FDK. 4) Supply and Installation of Diagnostic Middle Ear analyser machine at GGSMCH Fdk. 5) Supply and Installation olf Nasometer machine in GGSMCH Fdk. 6) Hysteroscope machine. 7) Supply and installation of FETCT and SPECT scans all in one system with trunkey basis.
E-tender are invited for the procurements of following itemes upto B/05/25
1) Construction of Pharmacy Block in Hospital Complex in GGSMH. FDK
Note:- Tender document can be downloaded from https://eproc.punjab.gov.in and www. bfuhs.ac.in

nil/12/290/2023/43773 Dated CHD :- 4/23/2025 **Registrar**

NORTHERN RAILWAY
Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

N.I.T. No.	294741
Name of Work and its location	"CAMC of VTL machine at RCNK Sonipat"
Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 37,03,576.65/- including GST (Rs.Thirty-Seven Lac Three Thousand Five Hundred Seventy-Six and paise Sixty-Five only)
Earnest Money	Rs. 74100/-
Completion period of Work	36 months of date of issue of Letter of Acceptance
Cost of Tender document on cash/by post	NIL
Date and Time for submission/ Closing of tender	Upto 15:00 hrs on 14.05.2025
Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

No. 294741 Dated: 23.04.2025 1206/2025
Serving Customers With A Smile

CLIX HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED
Registered Office: W2/14, 1st Floor, West Patel Nagar, Delhi, 110008
POSSESSION NOTICE (Appendix IV) Rule 8(3)

Whereas the Authorized officer of **CLIX HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED** (Clix), a Housing Finance Bank Company under the National Housing Bank Act., having its registered office W2/14, 1st Floor, West Patel Nagar, Delhi, 110008, under the provisions of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (54 OF 2002) (hereinafter referred to as "Act") and in exercise of the powers conferred under Section 13(2) of the Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rule, 2002 issued a Demand Notice to the following borrowers and co-borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower/Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on as per under mentioned Date. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of "CLIX" and interest other charges thereon. The attention of the Borrower is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured asset.

Name & Address of Borrower/Co-Borrower : 1. MANISHA BERA S/O PRASENJIT, 2. PRASHANT KUMAR W/O DALIP BERA, 3. SANDHYA W/O DILIP KUMAR BERA, 4. DILIP BERA, ALL AT - A-14/1 2ND FLOOR NEAR MOONGA HOSPITAL STREE NO.04 KRISHNA NAGAR EAST DELHI-110051, **SR. NO. 1 ALSO AT:-** PMS ENTERPRISES, 9/4668 1ST FLOOR GALI NO-02, AJIT NAGAR, KALI MATA MANDIR GANDHI NAGAR, EAST DELHI-110031, **SR NO. 2 ALSO AT:-** 5/739, VAISHALI SECTOR -5, SAHIBABAD GHAZIABA, UTTARPRADESH-201010

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

Details of Property : "All Piece And Parcel Of Built-Up Property No.14-A-1, Measuring Area 166 Sg. Yds, Measurement 30ft. X 50ft. I.E. 138.79 Mtrs., Plinth/Covered Area 111.03 Sq. Mtrs.. Consisting Of One Drawing Cum Dinning Room, Three Bed Rooms, One Kitchen. Two Toilets/Baths On Second Floor, Upto Celling Level. Fitted With Electricity, Tap Water, With Seprate Meters. Alongwith Rights, To Use Common Stairs, Maingate, One Car And One Two Wheeler Parking, Passage, With Undivided, Indivisible, Impartiable, Proportionate Ownership Right In The Said Plot Of Land With All Its Fittings And Fixtures Fitted Thereon, Water Motor, Water Tanky On Roof Of The Said Building, Out Of Khasra No.1047/824/1, Situated At Abadi East Krishan Nagar Extn., In The Area Of Village Chandrawali Alias Shahdara, Illaga Shahdara, Delhi-110051."

Date: 21.04.2025, Place: Delhi **Authorised Officer, CLIX HOUSING FINANCE LIMITED**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Reg: Built-up Property Bearing No. J-66-A, land area measuring 50 sq.yds. (said portion), out of total land area measuring 111 sq.yds., out of Khasra N. 92/21 (during consolidation Khasra number has been changed as 92/2), Situated in the Revenue Estate of Village Hastsal, Delhi State Delhi, area abadi known as colony Arya Samaj Road, J-Block, Uttam Nagar, Delhi-110059 *(Hereinafter referred to as the "Said Property").*

Be it known to all that our clients, Mr. Rajendra Singh Rawat (hereinafter called the "Purchaser") intends to purchase the said portion of the said property from Mrs. Sanjana Aggarwal & Ms. Priyanka Aggarwal attorney of Mr. Devendra Kochhar (hereinafter called the "Attorney-holders"). In this connection, the Attorney-holders have informed the purchaser that they are the sole and absolute attorney holder in respect of the said portion vide POA documents viz.,GPA, ATS and Will dated 15.07.2024 executed by Mr. Devendra Kochhar and Mr. Devendra Kochhar owned the said portion vide Sale Deed dated 25.06.2007 executed by Mr. Patvinder Singh. The Attorney holders have further informed that the said portion owned by Mr. Patvinder Singh vide POA documents viz. GPA, ATS and Will dated 21.11.1994 executed by Mr. Narain Dass and Mr. Narain Dass owned the said portion vide GPA, ATS and Will dated 25.07.1990 executed by Mr. Sudershan Kumar. Further, Mr. Sudershan Kumar owned the said portion vide GPA, ATS and Will dated 02.02.1990 executed by Mrs. Neeru Dawar. Mrs. Neeru Dawar purchased the said portion from Mr. Kamlesh Jain and Mr. Kamlesh Jain purchased the said portion from Mrs. Chander Wati through GPA/ATS/Will dated 03.11.1989 and 17.05.1989 respectively. Mrs. Chander Wati purchased the said property vide GPA/ATS/Will dated 15.03.1979 from Mrs. Parvati, Mr. Mool Chand, Mr. Satya Pal & Mr. Rameshwar who owned the said property by way of transmission after the death of Mr. Giarsi Ram alias Panchoo Ram who owned the said property vide Sale Deed dated 22.10.1953. The Attorney holder has also informed the purchaser that the said portion is not mortgaged anywhere and there is no charge or dispute or any litigation pending regarding the said portion.

Any person including Bank/s, Financial Institution/s. relative/s having any claim, right, title or any interest of any nature whatsoever into or upon the said portion is hereby called upon to make the same known, in writing, with documentary evidence, by Registered AD Post, to the undersigned at the address mentioned herein below within 07 days of publication of this notice and in the event of no response having been received to the notice, the title of the attorney-holders in respect of the said portion shall be deemed to be clear of any charge or encumbrance of any nature whatsoever and any subsequent claim shall not bind our clients/Purchaser, in any manner whatsoever.

Shivkant Arora, Advocate
M/s Intellective Law Offices
A-74, LGF, Defence Colony,
New Delhi -110024

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE

The Dy. Chief Electrical Engineer (Const), Northern Railway, Shivaji Bridge, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender for the following work:-

1	Name of work and location	Comprehensive Annual Maintenance Contract of 1 no. 500kVA DG set installed in the office complex of CAO/C/K.Gate, 2 no. 63kVA DG sets (1 in CEE/C/TKJ office & 1 in Dy. CE/C-1/SERD office) and 1 no. 30kVA D.G sets installed in office of Dy. CEE/C/CSB, Delhi for Three years.
2	Completion period of the work	36 Months
3	Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 7,38,724.00
4	Bid Security to be deposited	Rs. 14,800.00
5	Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender	Tenders may be uploaded upto 11:30 hrs. on 15.05.2025 date on IREPS web site i.e. **www.ireps.gov.in**. The bidders can participate in the e-tender, the tender will be opened at 11:30 hrs on 15.05.2025.
6	Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document	The detailed e-tender notice is available on Northern Railway web site i.e. **www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in** and tender document is available on **www.ireps.gov.in**. Above tenders document will be available for submission of offer on IREPS web site i.e. **www.ireps.gov.in** from 01.05.2025 to 15.05.2025. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.

Tender No.: 17-Elect./DYCEE/C/T/155, Dated: 23.04.2025 1207/2025
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, M/s Vatika Ltd. is developing a Commercial Site over an area measuring 3.34 acres at Sector 83, falling in the Residential Plotted Colony, Sector 81 to 85, Gurugram, in accordance with the provision of License No. 113 of 2008 dated 01.06.2008 granted by Director, Town & Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh.

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

And whereas, the earlier approved building plans vide Memo no. ZP-664 A/AD(RA)/2018/6054 dated 16.02.2018 are now proposed to be revised, for which DTCP, Haryana has granted in-principle approval for the revision in building plans vide Memo no ZP-664-II/PA(DK)/2024/14777 dated 23.04.2025.

Accordingly, vide this Public Notice, objections/suggestion, if any are hereby invited from any of the allottees on the revised building plans. The earlier approved building plans & revised building plans (approved in principle) are available for perusal on our website www.vatikacollections.com and at our site office and in the office of Senior Town Planner, Sector-14, Gurugram, Haryana.

In case of any objection on the revised building plans, the allottee may file his/her objections/suggestion in the office of Senior Town Planner, Sector 14, Gurugram, Haryana and in the office of the undersigned at Unit no.-A-002, Ground Floor, Block A, INXT City Centre, Sector 83, Gurugram, Haryana within 30 days of the publication of this notice, failing which it shall be assumed that there are no objections to the proposed revision in the building plans.

Place: Gurugram
Date: 24.04.2025
For M/s Vatika Limited

छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल
पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.)

// सर्व संबंधित को सूचना //

भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय द्वारा जारी ई.आई.ए. नोटिफिकेशन, 2006 (यथा - संशोधित) के तहत् सर्व संबंधित को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेसर्स सुजीत सिंह, ग्राम- राटाकाट, तहसील- आरंग, जिला - रायपुर (छ.ग.) स्थित खसरा क्रमांक 887 (पार्ट), कुल क्षेत्रफल - 10 हेक्टेयर में प्रस्तावित रेत खदान (गौण खनिज) उत्खनन क्षमता - 1,80,000 घनमीटर प्रतिवर्ष के पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति बाबत् **लोक सुनवाई दिनांक- 24.05.2025 को प्रातः 11:00 बजे से स्थान ग्राम- राटाकाट, तहसील- आरंग, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.) स्थित शासकीय रिक्त भूमि खसरा नंबर 757 में नियत की गई है।** यह भी सूचित हो कि लोक सुनवाई के दौरान भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, नई दिल्ली के ऑफिस मेमोरेण्डम F.No.22-25/2020-IA.III दिनांक 14.09.2020 तथा कोरोना वाईरस के नियंत्रण एवं रोकथाम हेतु शासन द्वारा जारी समस्त दिशा-निर्देशों का अक्षरश पालन कराया जाना अनिवार्य होगा।

ई.आई.ए. नोटिफिकेशन, 14 सितम्बर, 2006 (यथा- संशोधित) के अनुसार संबंधित व्यक्तियों के अवलोकन/ पठन हेतु ड्राफ्ट ई.आई.ए. रिपोर्ट, कार्यपालक सार हिन्दी एवं अंग्रेजी भाषा तथा सी.डी. (साफ्ट कॉपी) डायरेक्टर, भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, जोर बाग रोड, नई दिल्ली, एकीकृत क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, अरण्य भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, छत्तीसगढ़, कार्यालय कलेक्टर, रायपुर, जिला - रायपुर, मुख्य कार्यपालन अधिकारी, जिला पंचायत- रायपुर, जिला - रायपुर, मुख्य महाप्रबंधक, जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र, जिला - रायपुर, मुख्य कार्यपालन अधिकारी, जनपद पंचायत- आरंग, जिला - रायपुर, कार्यालय सरपंच / सचिव, ग्राम पंचायत राटाकाट, तहसील - आरंग, जिला - रायपुर, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छत्तीसगढ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, न्यू ऑफिस बिल्डिंग, रिंग रोड़ नं.- 2, टाटीबंध, रायपुर, जिला - रायपुर (छ.ग.) एवं मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर में रखी गई है।

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

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE
Invitation of Tenders through E- Procurement system

Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-

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

NOTE- 1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. **www.ireps.gov.in** for details **2.** No manual offer will be entertained.
Tender Notice No.08/2024-2025 Date: 23.04.2025
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 1209/25

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION, BHOPAL
Water Work Department
Municipal Corporation Rest House, Shyamla Hills, Bhopal
Ph. No. 0755-2701669
NOTICE INVITING e-TENDER

Online tenders are being invited for the following works. The bidder can obtained detailed information and tender documents on website **http://mptenders.gov.in**.
Corrigendum for this NIT shall not be issued separately in newspapers. Corrigendum regarding correction can be seen on the website **http://mptenders.gov.in**

S. No.	NIT No.	Tender ID.	Details of Work	Estimated Cost (INR)	Earnest Money (EMD)	Bid Submission End Date
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
2	02/EE/NWSP/WWD/ 20 25-26 First call	2025_UAD _417370_1	Manning for Operation and Maintenance of 185 MLD Narmada Water supply project comprising intake well at Hiram, Water Treatment Plant at Khatpura, BPT, Ahmadpur pump house. MBSR and Pipe Line from Hirani to MBSR.	1,78,67,760.00	89,338.00	16.05.2025

T.N. 1685/025/026
Executive Engineer (WWD)
Municipal Corporation, Bhopal

Will not to raise stake in Vodafone Idea: Scindia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

The government has no plans to increase its shareholding in Vodafone Idea (VIL) as it does not want the telecom operator to turn into a public sector undertaking (PSU), Communications Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has said.

Sending out a strong message to Vodafone Idea, Scindia said in an interview that it is now the telco's job to ensure it performs. After the recent conversion of Rs 36,950 crore of outstanding spectrum auction dues into equity, the government now holds 48.99 per cent shares in Vodafone Idea Ltd. Prior to this, the government's stake was about 22.6 per cent.

It is pertinent to mention that any additional stake could potentially turn the company into a PSU - bringing it under the administrative control of the government which would then get to appoint the board. Also the company would come under the purview of CAG and other oversight bodies, under such circumstances.

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

Analysts have been saying that government relief to Vodafone Idea into through dues-to-equity conversion may ease near-term liquidity constraints for the the telco, but that structural challenges remain for the operator with factors like stabilisation of subscriber base, tariff hikes, long-pending debt raise, and further relief on dues being vital for the telco's long-term survival. On the issue of MTNL's default on bank loans, the minister noted that it has substantial land bank and informed that same will be monetised for clearing dues of banks and debt.

Analysts claim that government relief to Vodafone Idea into through dues-to-equity conversion may ease near-term liquidity constraints, but that structural challenges remain for the operator

"MTNL now has a large amount of asset base in terms of its land bank. We are today progressing on that. And through NLMC - National Land Monetisation Committee - that land will be divested and through the proceeds of that land, all dues to banks and debt will be taken care of," Scindia assured. He did not specify timelines that may be involved for such monetisation, and said he is persuing the matter.

"NLMC is under DIPAM and the Finance Ministry. I am pursuing with them. As soon as that's done that will be taken care of," the minister said.

It is pertinent to mention here that state-run telecom firm MTNL has defaulted on bank loans worth ₹8,346.24 crore from seven public sector banks, according to a statutory filing by the company over the weekend. The loss-making public sector telecom firm's total debt obligations reached ₹33,568 crore as on March 31, 2025, according to the filing dated April 19.

The total loan default includes ₹3,633.42 crore of debt raised from Union Bank of India, ₹2,374.49 crore of Indian Overseas Bank, ₹1,077.34 crore of Bank of India, ₹464.26 crore Punjab National Bank, ₹350.05 crore from State Bank of India, ₹266.30 crore from UCO Bank and ₹180.3 crore along with principal and interest payment.

The defaults in loan payment occurred between August 2024 to February 2025. The total debt on the company comprises ₹8,346 crore bank loan, Rs 24,071 crore sovereign guarantee (SG) bond, and loan of ₹1,151 crore from Department of Telecom (DoT) for paying SG bond interest. The minister said Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) has scripted an "amazing turnaround" and lauded it for delivering a "stellar performance". "It's been an arduous task and it has been an amazing turnaround. I must, on this occasion, also thank Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his belief in BSNL and providing those relief packages for BSNL without which we would have not seen this day," Scindia said.

BSNL during in the October to December quarter of FY25 has delivered net profit (₹262 crore) for the first time in 18 years. "After 72 quarters, we posted net profit....It is my firm belief that as we roll out 4G on an 'Atmanirbhar' solution...Only the fifth in the world to do so (there are only four other countries that have produced 4G technology)...India has produced 4G technology. We are rolling out 100,000 towers. As of date, 90,000 towers have been installed," he said. About 74,000 towers have been commissioned. "It is my fervent hope that by July or so, we will roll out the balance towers. We then have to stabilise the network...Then as a next step, ensure quality of service..The number of call drops, the amount of latency, the number of interruptions...And once that is stabilised, then I intend to move the 4G network, convert that into a 5G network," he said.

Doing so would require an additional equipment, include BTS, to graduate BSNL from 4G on to 5G.

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

Jitendra Srivastava appointed CMD of REC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Gurgaon

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

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

Srivastava is a seasoned civil servant with over two decades of distinguished service. Over the yea3rs, he has held several key administrative and leadership roles across the Government of India and the Government of Bihar.

Srivastava has served as Joint Secretary in the Department of Drinking Water and

Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti from January 2023 onwards. Earlier, he served as Secretary to Govt. of Bihar in Home Department and Public Health Engineering Department (PHED).

He holds a B.A. (Hons) in Economics from Delhi University's Hansraj College and MBA (Finance) from Cochin University of Science and Technology.

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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

Anticipating largescale travel booking cancellations for Jammu and Kashmir in the aftermath of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam, aggregators on Wednesday said they are working with airlines and hotels to offer free date change and cancellation waivers to travellers.

Hospitality industry players expect the terror attack to sow fear in the minds of tourists who were keen to visit Jammu and Kashmir, adversely affecting the livelihoods of people in the state who are dependent on tourism. At least 26 people — mostly tourists — were killed by terrorists on Tuesday at the Baisaran meadows in Pahalgam.

"As per the early observations, flight cancellations jumped 7x, and a drop in future bookings by nearly 40 per cent," said Manjari Singhal, Chief Growth and Business Officer, Cleartrip. "As travellers navigate this difficult situation, our teams are working round the clock with airline and hotel partners to provide flexibility and assistance on bookings/ cancellations. Our on-ground team is doing everything in their capacity to offer support to travellers. We remain committed to providing continued assistance to both our customers and partners during this difficult time," a MakeMyTrip spokesperson said.

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

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

FAITH (Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality) General Secretary Rajiv Mehra said for the people of Jammu and Kashmir, tourism is not just a livelihood, it is their pride, their legacy and their hope.

"This attack has not only harmed innocent lives but has also dealt a cruel blow to the thousands of families who depend on tourism to survive. From houseboat owners and hoteliers to local guides and artisans, every individual in this chain of warmth and welcome is affected," he observed.

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

We are shocked and appalled at these attacks in our country. Since 2020, the J&K region has seen a steady upswing in tourism numbers going from 3 million in 2020 to close to 24 million in 2024. This 8x huge surge in tourists impacts and improves the lives of the long-tail of the tourism industry and leads to the prosperity of the locals.

Rupee falls 25 paise to settle at 85.44 against US dollar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Mumbai

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

Forex traders said the American currency recovered, supported by Donald Trump's softened stance — particularly towards the Federal Reserve and China.

However, positive domestic markets and weak US dollar index and foreign fund inflows supported the domestic unit at lower levels.

Forex traders said the market found support after Trump on Tuesday backed off from threats to fire FED Chair Jerome Powell after days of intensifying criticism against him for not cutting rates. Trump also signalled the possibility of lower tariffs against China.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 85.24, and touched an intra-day low of 85.52 against the greenback. The unit ended the session at 85.44 (provisional), registering a loss of 25 paise over its previous closing level.

On Tuesday, the rupee settled lower by 4 paise at 85.19 against the US dollar.

"We expect the rupee to trade with a positive bias amid risk on sentiments in the global markets and FII inflows. Overall weakness in the US dollar may also support the rupee.

Alcohol industry seeks uniform taxation for sector

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Alcoholic beverage maker's body CIABC on Wednesday urged the government to introduce uniform taxation for the sector and allow promotion of heritage spirits like 'Mahua' and 'Feni' globally, saying such reforms are vital to boost exports and help Indian brands compete internationally.

Deepak Roy, Chairman at Confederation of Indian Alcoholic Beverage Industry (CIABC), also said that the government should allow the industry to communicate freely with its consumers.

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

Roy was speaking at the AlcoBev India 2025, the industry conclave organised by CIABC here.

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

He added that different taxation levels in states are a big challenge for the industry.

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

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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ London

European Union watchdogs fined Apple and Meta hundreds of millions of euros Wednesday as they stepped up enforcement of the 27-nation bloc's digital competition rules.

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

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

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

Apple and Meta have to comply with the decisions within 60 days or risk unspecified "periodic penalty payments," the commission said.

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

The penalties were issued under the EU's Digital Markets Act, also known as the DMA. It's a sweeping rulebook that amounts to a set of do's and don'ts designed to give consumers and businesses more choice and prevent Big Tech "gatekeepers" from cornering digital markets.

The DMA seeks to ensure "that citizens have full control over when and how their data is used online, and businesses can freely communicate with their own customers," Henna Virkkunen, the commission's executive vice-president for tech sovereignty, said in a statement.

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

"The decisions adopted today find that both Apple and Meta have taken away this free choice from their users and are required to change their behaviour," Virkkunen said. Both companies indicated they would appeal. Apple accused the commission of "unfairly targeting" the iPhone maker, and said it "continues to move the goal posts" despite the company's efforts to comply with the rules.

Meta Chief Global Affairs Officer Joel Kaplan said in a statement that the "Commission is attempting to handicap successful American businesses while allowing Chinese and European companies to operate under different standards."

In a press briefing in Brussels, commission spokespeople sought to tamp down concerns that the penalties would inflame trade tensions.

"We don't care who owns a company. We don't care where the company is located," commission spokesperson Thomas Regnier told reporters. "We are totally agnostic on that front from a European Union." "And be it a Chinese company, be an American company, or be it a European company, you will have to play by the rules in the European Union."

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

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

Apple said it has "spent hundreds of thousands of engineering hours and made dozens of changes to comply with this law, none of which our users have asked for." "Despite countless meetings, the Commission continues to move the goal posts every step of the way," the company said. The EU's Meta investigation centred on the company's strategy to comply with strict European data privacy rules by giving users the option of paying for ad-free versions of Facebook and Instagram.

Users could pay at least 10 euros a month to avoid being targeted by ads based on their personal data. The US tech giant rolled out the option after the European Union's top court ruled Meta must first get consent before showing ads to users.

Regulators took issue with Meta's model, saying it doesn't allow users to exercise their right to "freely consent" to allowing their personal data from its various services, which also include Facebook Marketplace, WhatsApp, and Messenger, to be combined for personalised ads.

Meta rolled out a third option in November giving Facebook and Instagram users in Europe the option to see fewer personalised ads if they don't want to pay for an ad-free subscription.

'90 per cent IT and security experts report cyberattacks'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

New research from Rubrik Zero Labs has traced that Indian organisations are facing a wave of cyberattacks. In the past one year, 80 percent of Indian organisations that experienced a ransomware attack paid a ransom to recover their data or to stop the ransomware attack. Significantly, 52 per cent of Indian organisations paid a ransom due to data extortion threats while 44 per cent of Indian organisations reported that cyber attackers successfully affected their backup and recovery options.

Accepting that cyberattacks are a constant threat, the RZL research, "The State of Data Security in 2025: A Distributed Crisis," also notes that 65per cent of organisations in India store their sensitive data across 2-3 multiple environments (on-premises, Cloud, or SaaS) while 38per cent respondents say that one of the biggest challenges they face in securing their data is securing sensitive data across multiple environments. As many as 44 per cent of Indian organisations reported that cyber attackers successfully affected their backup and recovery options. The consequences of these attacks were that 29 per cent of respondents reported financial losses, 31 per cent noted reputational damage and loss of customer confidence, and 36 per cent experienced a forced leadership change following a cyber incident.

"The State of Data Security in 2025: A Distributed Crisis" is based on insights from over 1,600 IT and security leaders across 10 countries (half of whom were CIOs or CISOs) from the US, UK, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Japan, Australia, Singapore and India. From India 125 IT respondents participated in the survey conducted by Wakefield Research.

RZL research — "The State of Data Security in 2025: A Distributed Crisis," – states that globally, 90per cent of the IT and security leaders reported cyberattacks in the past year. It also reveals the hazards that hybrid environments are creating, leading to a cloud security crisis that organisations are unprepared to address. "Many organisations that move to the cloud assume their providers will handle security," said Joe Hladik, Head of Rubrik Zero Labs.

Markets rise for 7th day

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Mumbai

Stock markets extended the winning run to seventh day on Wednesday with benchmark BSE Sensex jumping 520 points to close above 80,000 level for the first time in four months driven by strong gains in IT and auto shares.

The 30-share Sensex rose by 520.90 points or 0.65 per cent to settle at 80,116.49, the highest closing level since December 18. During the day, it surged 658.96 points or 0.82 per cent to 80,254.55.

The NSE Nifty rallied 161.70 points or 0.67 per cent to 24,328.95.

Foreign fund inflows and positive global trends also boosted the market sentiment, analysts said.

Among the Sensex firms, HCL Tech surged the most by 7.72 per cent after the firm posted an 8.1 per cent increase in consolidated net profit at ₹4,307 crore for March quarter 2024-25, mainly on account of large deals with a total contract value of about ₹25,500 crore.

Tech Mahindra, Tata Motors, Infosys, Mahindra & Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services, Tata Steel, Bharti Airtel and Maruti were also among major gainers.

Banking shares witnessed a sell-off after recent sharp gains with leading private lender HDFC Bank dropping by 1.98 per cent to emerge as the biggest loser among Sensex shares.

Kotak Mahindra Bank, State Bank of India, Axis Bank, ITC and UltraTech Cement were also among the laggards.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi index, Tokyo's Nikkei 225 and Hong Kong's Hang Seng settled in the positive territory. Shanghai SSE Composite ended marginally lower. Markets in Europe were trading significantly higher.

US markets bounced back sharply on Tuesday. Nasdaq Composite surged 2.71 per cent, Dow Jones Industrial Average jumped 2.66 per cent and S&P 500 rallied 2.51 per cent.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth ₹1,290.43 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

"The Indian equity market sustained its positive momentum, driven by better outcome from the latest set of IT results and optimistic forward-looking comments. However, profit-booking was visible in financials after the recent sharp rally.

"While US-China trade tensions appear to be easing, a rally in US tech stocks has further bolstered overall global market sentiment," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

INBRIEF

GNDU, NSE ACADEMY LAUNCH MBA IN FINANCIAL ANALYTICS

Amritsar: Guru Nanak Dev University has signed a three-year MoU with NSE Academy to launch an MBA in Financial Analytics, blending academic rigor with industry insights. The program will offer live projects, certifications, and practical training starting this academic session.

GNDU NATIONAL SEMINAR ON INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM

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

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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Manchester

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

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

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

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

A top-five finish would go some way to ending the season on a high — and Guardiola's celebration was evidence of just how important the win could prove to be.

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

"If we win the next four games, it will have been so important," he added.

Victory moved City up to 61 points and above Nottingham Forest in fourth and Newcastle in fifth. Chelsea is sixth and Villa, with 57 points, is seventh.

England's top flight will be given a bonus fifth Champions League place because of the performances of English teams in Europe this season. Both City and Villa have played a game more than their top-five rivals. But City knows a perfect record from its remaining four league games would guarantee a place in next season's Champions League.

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

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

Defeat was a blow to Villa's hopes of making it back-to-back seasons in the Champions League after returning to the competition for the first time in 41 years this term and advancing to the quarterfinals. "Of course, today we lost, but there are still matches to play, still points to play (for). We will have chances to get the Champions League," Villa manager Unai Emery said.

"I am happy how we are reacting, how every player is facing the moment we are (in)." Both City and Villa are also in the semifinals of the FA Cup.

Villa plays Crystal Palace on Saturday, and City plays Nottingham Forest on Sunday.

Andre Agassi to play at US Open Pickleball Championships

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Naples (US)

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

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

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

He won the tennis US Open in 1994 and 1999, completed a career Grand Slam by winning at least one championship at each of that sport's majors and was inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 2011.

It was announced earlier this month that Agassi will be a studio analyst for TNT Sports during the semifinals and finals at the French Open this year.

Pickleball is a mix of tennis and ping pong that uses paddles and a wiffleball.

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

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Bengaluru

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

"It's a very important game for us, in fact, every game from here on in, as the position we find ourselves in, we can't afford to make many mistakes. This stage is a tournament… just over half way, we find ourselves at the bottom half of the table," Dravid said in the pre-match press conference.

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

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

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

"You just have to go for it irrespective (of the nature of the pitch). But I think every surface will be different. The wicket I'm seeing here, from at least what I can make of it, looks like a really good wicket. "So, I can't really say how those wickets looked in earlier games, but the track that's been produced for this one looks actually to be a very good cricket wicket and I think it should be a pretty high scoring game," he added.

Sanju is getting assessed

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

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

"So, we took the decision and the medical advice to not risk him to travel — make two more flights and be here. We kept the physio back so that we can treat him and try and get him back as quickly as we possibly can. We're looking at it on a day-to-day basis." The former India coach did not give any specific time-line for Samson's return.

> We've got to start climbing that table quickly and we've got to start winning games quickly. There are no options, no chances of slipping up anymore
>
> — RAHUL DRAVID, RR HEAD COACH

"I have no time-line to give as to when exactly he will be fit, but we're trying our best, you know, obviously we've got to play here, after this we've got a game on (April) 27th and we've got a few games quickly and then we've got a gap.

"So, we'll just have to see how it goes. Honestly, he was not fit for this game and he didn't travel here," he added.

Dravid said Riyan Parag has stepped in effectively as the captain of the side in the absence of Samson despite a few matches not going the team's way.

"Sanju is still the captain of the team and Riyan is the vice-captain and he stepped in really well. I think Riyan had captained four of the games, even in the first three games, in fact, Sanju wasn't able to field because of the finger injury.

"Some of those games haven't been easy, especially the high-scoring ones, like the game against Sunrisers Hyderabad. But I think he's done a good job."

The 52-year-old said Parag has remained collected in the face of a tough job like the IPL captaincy.

"I think he's been really good, calm and, you know, we were just having a chat with him about some of his bowling changes and field placements.

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

World Cup Olympics of cricket, says Steve Waugh

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Madrid

At a time when the relevance of ODIs has become a topic of debate, former Australian captain Steve Waugh has batted for the format, saying that it would never lose significance as the quadrennial World Cup is akin to the "Olympics of cricket".

In an interaction with select media on the sidelines of the Laureus World Sports awards here, Waugh said despite the pressure of shorter formats, ODIs are holding ground as was evident from the record viewership garnered by the 2023 World Cup. "Everyone seems to think one-day cricket's not going to survive, but then you have the World Cup and it's huge and the ratings are massive and people love it and fall back in love with the game. Then it dies down for a couple years and we go through the same scenario," Waugh said.

"So right now, somehow we're managing to fit three formats of the game in and there's pressure of T10 maybe coming in, so could be four, four formats of cricket. I don't know how that's all going to get managed, but right now it seems to be going okay. "World Cup is significant for one-day cricket. It's pretty much the Olympics, to play (the World Cup) every four years," he added. Cricket will have its share of spotlight in the actual Olympics as well when it makes a comeback to the Games after more than 100 years in the 2028 Los Angles edition.

Waugh also offered his views on other issues concerning international cricket right now, including the obvious Indian dominance in the administration of the sport and the revenue sharing arrangement that favours big Test-playing nations.

A recent study by the World Cricketers Association (WCA) claimed that the BCCI currently receives 38.5 per cent of the global cricket revenue, and recommended the figure be brought down to 10 per cent to ensure fairer distribution.

Calling for equal pay for all Test players regardless of nationality, Waugh said: "If you play a Test match, every player who plays a Test match should have equal pay.

"No one listened to me, but I said that in 1999 in an article, that every Test match player should get paid the same. You play a Test match, the fee should be exactly the same," added the 59-year-old.

The report also highlighted the congested international schedule, with overlapping bilateral and domestic leagues making it difficult to manage player workload and team commitments. When pointed out that only the IPL has a designated window, Waugh was candid: "BCCI runs world cricket, that's why they have their own window. Simple."

Bumrah among best but unfair to compare others with him

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

"Bumrah obviously is one of the best bowlers of this modern era, if not of all time. It's very hard when you're judging the other players on him because he's at the elite level. But India have got plenty of backup and plenty of quick bowlers," he felt. Bumrah has led India's pace attack almost single-handedly for quite a while and remains one of the most feared bowlers across formats. However, frequent injury concerns have plagued his career in recent times. The 31-year-old was India's standout performer during the four-match Test series in Australia, which the visitors lost 1-3. "There's plenty of Indian bowlers out there. Obviously, Bumrah had a great series (in Australia). (Mohammed) Siraj did pretty well and some of the young guys coming through," he said.

With Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli in the twilight of their international careers, both are eyeing the 2027 ODI World Cup as their swansong. The duo has already announced their retirement from T20Is.

Waugh said their participation will depend on "form, fitness and motivation".

"I'm not sure. I mean I don't follow their careers that closely but they've both been incredible cricketers for India," the former skipper said when asked if he sees them playing a role in the 2027 edition.

Every career has got to end at some stage. They've both been outstanding and they're still world-class players now but lots of things coming up.

Barcelona beat Mallorca 1-0 to increase Spanish League Lead

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Madrid

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

The home win on Tuesday gave the Catalan club a seven-point lead over Real Madrid, which visits Getafe on Wednesday. Barcelona, seeking its first league title since 2023, has five league games left.

Olmo's winner came a minute into the second half at Montjuic stadium, with the playmaker finding the net from inside the area. It was the third consecutive victory for Barcelona in the league. The Catalan side had 40 attempts on goal, while Mallorca had only four — none on target

"We created many scoring opportunities and we should have taken advantage of them, but that's soccer," Barcelona midfielder Gavi said.

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

Mallorca, which has only two wins from its last nine matches, stayed in seventh place. Barcelona and Madrid will meet in the Copa del Rey final on Saturday in Seville. Barcelona coach Hansi Flick made several changes to his starting lineup, with forward Ansu Fati making his first league start in nearly six months. Striker Robert Lewandowski was absent because of a muscle injury. "We played a great match," Gavi said. "I'm happy for the players who rotated and got to play."

Espanyol draws at Valencia

Earlier on Tuesday, Espanyol's three-game winning streak ended with a 1-1 draw at Valencia, which has drawn two in a row after three straight victories.

The result left both teams tied on 39 points, though Espanyol has a game in hand. Valencia was in 14th place, just behind Espanyol. Also Wednesday, Celta Vigo hosts fifth-place Villarreal, and Las Palmas visits fourth—place Athletic Bilbao. Relegation-threatened Alaves welcomes ninth-place Real Sociedad.

On Thursday, third-place Atletico Madrid hosts midtable Rayo Vallecano, while sixth-place Real Betis visits last-place Valladolid, which has lost 12 of its last 13 matches.

15 selected for NCOEs from ASMITA sub-junior hockey league

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

Five under-16 girls from Mizoram are among the 15 hockey players selected by the Sports Authority of India to be inducted into the various National Centres of Excellence (NCOEs).

Seen as the building block for women's hockey in India, the girls have been chosen after the conclusion of the 2024-25 season of the ASMITA leagues matches.

The 15 selected for training at the NCOEs include three players from Haryana and two each from Jharkhand and Odisha, besides girls from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh.

Piyush Dubey, hockey's High Performance Director for SAI and Khelo India, said these girls have been chosen keeping future Olympics in mind.

"We have to think of a pathway and these girls have the potential to make it to the senior national team. In the last three-four years, ASMITA has provided the opportunity to see so many players in action and this is a welcome change in our hockey ecosystem. This did not exist before," said Dubey.

He added that many players like Sunelita Toppo, Sujata Kujur and Sakshi Rana have emerged from this hockey league and are now representing India.

Six teams featuring 120 under-16 players took part in the ASMITA sub-junior hockey league's final phase.

A total of 17 matches were played in the Rs 15.5 lakh prize money event. SAI Shakti won the team championship for the third consecutive time beating Madhya Pradesh Hockey Academy 2-1 in the final match at the Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium here.

Mizoram's ascendency in women's hockey has been quite startling. For the first time in its history, the tiny North-eastern state, known for its footballers and boxers, won a bronze medal in the senior national women's hockey championship in Panchkula.

> The 15 selected for training at the NCOEs include three players from Haryana and two each from Jharkhand and Odisha, besides girls from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh

Dubey said the Mizoram girls have shown immense improvement in the last five-six years and credit goes to the coaches who are working at the SAI centre in Thenzawl. Lalrothuami, a 2009 junior India player, said young girls are taking interest in hockey and some 40 are training at the SAI centre.

Mizoram have found a unique way to attract youngsters to play hockey. The image and profile of current Indian women's team player and Tokyo Olympian Lalremsiami have been used in advertisements and social media to attract girls to participate in trials.

"The response has been fairly good from the villages. Two of our girls – Lalthantluangi and Lalrinpuii – are ASMITA products and are junior Indian team members. They are a great advertisement for us and we are very happy that five Mizoram girls have been selected for training at NCOEs," said Lalrothuami.

"Our players need more competitive exposure and better training ecosystem. In terms of skills, all players are more or less equal but Mizo girls are stronger and have the stamina. We hope they will utilise the facilities at NCOEs well." However, selection at NCOEs does not guarantee long-term membership. There are two assessments every year and players are judged on the three basic parametres —physical strength, sports science tests and skills.

The following players have been selected:

For NCOE Lucknow: Shweta Upadhyay (Haryana), Rashi (Haryana).

For NCOE Mumbai: Laldinpuii (Mizoram), Binita Karketta (Jharkhand), Suneli Burh (Odisha), Salmi Jadia (Odisha).

For NCOE Delhi: Tulashi (Andhra Pradesh), Pearlin (Karnataka), Vanlarinluii (Mizoram), Lalnulfelli (Mizoram).

For NCOE Sonipat: Diya (Haryana).

For NCOE Bhopal: Aradhana Rajbhar (Uttar Pradesh), Shivani Khalko (Jharkhand).

For NCOE Kolkata: Loicy Lalthanpuii (Mizoram), Lalfakwami (Mizoram).

Give BCCI Hundred stake to unlock Indian players: Lancashire CEO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ London

The England and Wales Cricket Board should bring on board the BCCI as a "minority ownership partner" of The Hundred in order to attract Indian players to the tournament, Lancashire CEO Daniel Gidney has said, according to a report.

Even though Indian men's players are not issued 'No Objection Certificates' to play outside the IPL, the T20 league owners have expanded their footprint across the globe, and have stakes in SA20 (South Africa), ILT20 (UAE) and Major League Cricket (USA).

According to ESPNCricinfo, Gidney believes "aligning interests" would be the way to bring Indian players to compete in The Hundred.

"I think it's possible. If I was the ECB, I'd be talking about perhaps bringing the BCCI in as a minority ownership partner in the tournament as a whole. If you do that, then you are aligning interests," he said. While Indian men's players feature only in the IPL, the country's women cricketers, including captain Harmanpreet Kaur and Smriti Mandhana, have featured in England's The Hundred and Australia's Women's Big Bash League.

"That is probably your best chance of getting (Indian) players in The Hundred. It comes down to the will, and the individuals on both sides," Gidney said.

"The BCCI have been really successful with protecting their brand and by making sure they don't plan any T20 tournaments anywhere in the world…

"If I was the BCCI, then I would have to say I would need a significant incentive to relax the current policy because that has been extraordinarily successful and has grown the IPL into the massive commercial entity that it is," he said.

The report added that the Lancashire CEO was in India recently to finalise a deal with RPSG Group, which will see them acquire a 70 per cent stake in the Manchester Originals and run the franchise as a joint venture.

Indian athletes condemn Pahalgam terror attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

India's sporting fraternity oscillated between grief and rage as it joined the nation in condemning the deadly terrorist attack in Pahalgam with some demanding that the country should cut all sports ties with Pakistan.

On Tuesday, terrorists opened fire at a prime tourist location in south Kashmir's Pahalgam, killing at least 26 civilians and injuring several others. The Resistance Front (TRF), a shadow group of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terror group, has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Sachin Tendulkar and Virat Kohli expressed shock as they mourned the loss of lives.

"The affected families must be going through an unimaginable ordeal — India and the world stand united with them at this dark hour, as we mourn the loss of lives and pray for justice," Tendulkar wrote.

"Heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims. Praying for peace and strength to families all those who lost their lives and justice to be served for their cruel act," Kohli posted on his Instagram.

Similar sentiments were expressed by other top players such as Jasprit Bumrah and Suryakumar Yadav. Pacer Mohammed Siraj posted an emotional message in which he called for justice.

"To target and kill innocent civilians in the name of religion is pure evil... No cause, no belief, no ideology can ever justify such a monstrous act.*Yeh kaisi ladai hai...Jahaan insaan ki jaan ki koi keemat hi nah*i (what sort of a fight is this in which there is no value for human life)," he asked.

The affected families must be going through an unimaginable ordeal — India and the world stand united with them at this dark hour
— SACHIN TENDULKAR, CRICKETER

Praying for the families of the deceased. Those responsible for this will pay. India will strike
— GAUTAM GAMBHIR, INDIAN CRICKET TEAM HEAD COACH

"I hope this madness ends soon and these terrorists are found and punished, without mercy," he added. Former India cricketer Shreevats Goswami wrote a strongly-worded post, demanding an end to all sporting ties with Pakistan.

"And this is exactly why I say — you don't play cricket with Pakistan. Not now. Not ever. When BCCI or the government refused to send India to the Champions Trophy in Pakistan, some had the audacity to say, 'Oh, but sport should rise above politics,'" Goswami wrote.

"...Murdering innocent Indians seems to be Pakistan's national sport and India should respond with zero tolerance and not with bats and balls," he added.

While India has not played bilateral cricket with Pakistan since 2012–13, and the BCCI declined to send its team for the Champions Trophy earlier this year, other Indian teams have continued to travel to Pakistan for international events.

Goswami, who had recently visited Pahalgam, said he had sensed hope and peace returning to the valley.

"And now... This bloodshed again. It breaks something inside you. It makes you question how many more times we're expected to stay silent, stay "sporting," while our people die. No more. Not this time," he added. An "outraged" Olympic bronze medal-winning boxer and ruling BJP member Vijender Singh also called for firm "action".

"Our brave soldiers will definitely give a befitting reply to this cowardly attack in the coming times. In the presence of the brave sons of Mother India, the plans of those who want to disturb the peace in Jammu and Kashmir will never succeed," he asserted. Indian cricket team head coach and BJP MP Gautam Gambhir wrote, "Praying for the families of the deceased. Those responsible for this will pay. India will strike." Two-time Olympic medal-winning badminton player PV Sindhu too penned down an emotional post.

"My heart aches for the victims of the Pahalgam terror attack. So much pain. So much loss. No reason, no cause can ever justify such brutality.

"To the families left behind — your grief is beyond words, but you are not alone.We are with you. In these dark moments, may we find strength in each other, and never let go of the hope that peace will return!" Sindhu wrote. Olympic gold medallist duo of javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra and Abhinav Bindra prayed for the victims.

"Heartbroken by the tragic attack in Jammu & Kashmir. Prayers for the victims and their families," Chopra wrote.

"Heartbroken by the horrific terrorist attack in Pahalgam. My thoughts are with the victims and their families. Terror has no place in our world , we must stand united against hatred and violence," Bindra added. The attack is the deadliest terrorist act in the valley since the 2019 Pulwama strike. "Strongly condemn this cowardly act by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists. India stands united with our brave Army, J&K Police, and Paramilitary forces in the fight against terrorism. Justice will prevail," said former India all-rounder Suresh Raina.

"My heart goes out to family members of all those who lost their lives in dastardly attack. This can't be forgiven," former India spinner Harbhajan Singh wrote.

Olympic medal-winning former hockey goalkeeper PR Sreejesh, shuttler Saina Nehwal and two-time world champion boxer Nikhat Zareen also called for justice.

"Condemnation is not enough, justice must follow. Our hearts bleed for Pahalgam. Terror must never win. Prayers for all affected in the Pahalgam attack," Sreejesh wrote.

Zareen added, "Those who attack innocents attack humanity itself. Strongly condemn the cowardly terror attack in Pahalgam. Justice must be swift."

No fireworks in MI vs SRH match; players to sport black armbands

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Hyderabad

The players of Sunrisers Hyderabad and Mumbai Indians will wear black armbands during their IPL match which will not feature cheerleaders and fireworks here on Wednesday to mourn the victims of the terrorist attack in Pahalgam that caused 26 deaths.

The teams will also observe a minute's silence to pay their respects to those affected by the incident that has drawn international condemnation. "The players of two teams will wear black armbands and observe a minute's silence in memory of all those who lost their lives in the terrorist attack in Kashmir's Pahalgam," a BCCI source told to media.

"As a mark of respect there would be no cheerleaders on the sidelines of MI vs SRH game. No crackers will be burst," he added. Terrorists opened fire on civilians at the popular tourist location in south Kashmir on Tuesday, killing at least 26 persons and injuring several others.

The Resistance Front (TRF), which is a part of the banned Pakistan-based LeT terror group, claimed responsibility for the attack. The attack has drawn strong condemnation from across the world. The BCCI also issued a statement to condemn the "ghastly and cowardly" attack. "The cricketing community is deeply shocked and anguished by the tragic loss of innocent lives in the gruesome terror attack at Pahalgam yesterday," BCCI secretary Devajit Saikia said.

"On behalf of the BCCI, while condemning this ghastly and cowardly act with strongest possible words, I extend our heartfelt condolences to the berieved families and prayers for the departed souls. In sharing their pain and grief, we stand hand in hand at this hour of tragedy," he added. The Indian cricket team snapped bilateral cricket with Pakistan after the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks and recently refused to tour the country for the Champions Trophy, prompting the ICC to make provisions for a neutral venue in Dubai.

We never press panic button: CSK CEO

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

Chennai Super Kings as a franchise never presses the panic button and there is not much to worry about despite the five-time champions' ordinary run in the current season IPL, its CEO Kasi Viswanathan told to media on Wednesday. CSK have lost a record five games in a row this season and more than halfway into the tournament, find themselves at the bottom of the points table with six losses in eight games.

They have lacked firepower in the batting department and captain Ruturaj Gaikwad's absence due to an injury has only made it worse for the storied outfit. CSK CEO has also spoken about his team's run in IPL 2025.

"We have not been performing up to the mark. We are trying to improve and we we will try do well in the next few games. We have never pressed the panic button in our franchise is not like that, it is just a game," Viswanathan told to media. MS Dhoni is back leading the side in Gaikwad's absence but as head coach Stephen Fleming put it 'he doesn't have a magic wand' and can't change the team's fortunes overnight.

Following the defeat to Mumbai Indians, CSK find themselves in a must-win situation in their remaining six games with Dhoni already speaking about the planning for 2026.

Can Dhoni script a turnaround after taking over from Gaikwad midway into the tournament? "See, it's not the question of anybody. It's a question that the team should do well and not just one individual. We don't talk to the team management. Dhoni will do what is right for the team.

"What we are expecting as administrators is good performance by the team and we don't criticise our team at all," he added.

Current focus to win IPL with DC: Abishek Porel

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Lucknow

Like any other cricketer from the country, young Delhi Capitals opener Abishek Porel aspires to represent India in the future but said his current focus is to help his side win its maiden Indian Premier League trophy this year.

Chasing 160, the 22-year-old made 51 off 36 balls to help DC win by eight wickets against Lucknow Super Giants here on Tuesday. "Obviously, I am enjoying every innings, trying to develop in every innings. The future plan is to play for India, play for the country for a long period," Porel said at the post-match press conference. "But current focus is the IPL trophy, how can I help the team in winning the trophy, how can I contribute for DC. This matters a lot right now.

"I know my game and the support staff also knows that. The support staff always tells me to play freely and not to take any tension." Asked to bat, LSG made a quick start with Aiden Markram (52) and Mitchell Marsh (45) sharing 87 runs for the opening stand in 10 overs.

But DC bowlers made a brilliant comeback with Mukesh Kumar (4/33) leading from the front to restrict LSG to 159 for 6, a target which Porel feels was gettable. "The wicket was very good, so 160 score was a bit less, so we had that in mind that we need to chase these runs. Good toss to win. There was not much difference but the skipper took a good decision," Porel said.

"They (LSG) got runs initially but we knew we can restrict them in middle overs. We had good spinners so we backed ourselves and made a comeback with some good bowling in the second half." LSG assistant coach Vijay Dahiya said the hosts lost the momentum in the second half of their innings after a bright start.

"Let's give credit where its due. I think Delhi Capitals' bowlers assessed the conditions better. They made a very good comeback."

RCB eye home improvement against struggling Rajasthan Royals

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Bengaluru

Struggling to find form in their own den, Royal Challengers Bengaluru will look to regain control of their IPL campaign at home when they meet a floundering Rajasthan Royals here on Thursday. RCB's three defeats at the Chinnaswamy Stadium in as many matches offer one of the biggest paradoxes of this edition. An outfit that has steam-rolled opposition in all parts of the country has been left chasing shadows in their own backyard.

The RCB batters have appeared strangely subdued and their bowlers seem to have forgotten the lengths to adopt here.

Central to that woeful run is the changed character of the 22-yard strip here which has offered some grip to the bowlers. The Bengaluru batters are yet to find the right tempo to tide over the slowness in the pitch, as they seem to have been caught in the dilemma of whether to step on the gas or not.

It's evident in the team's totals here so far — 169/8, 163/7 and 95/9 (14 overs). They have scored over 9-10 runs an over in other venues, but here the rate has dropped down to 7-8 runs an over.

Their mainstay Virat Kohli has been in decent form this season, averaging 64, but more would be expected of Phil Salt, Devdutt Padikkal and skipper Rajat Patidar. The inconsistent bounce is holding back the RCB batters, particularly after the Power Play segment and, hopefully, they will find the rhythm against RR.

Avoid mid-table tussle

RCB currently have 10 points to be placed at third on the table but Punjab Kings and Lucknow Super Giants also have 10 points. Mumbai Indians are quietly sneaking up the ladder with eight points. If they win against Sunrisers Hyderabad then MI too will have 10 points and can displace RCB (4.7) from the third slot on account of better net run rate (4.8).

Therefore, a favourable result will help RCB to stay above the possible mid-table logjam of four teams with 10 points.

RR's turmoils

Rajasthan have a messy house to deal with. Sanju Samson will miss this match with an abdominal injury that earlier forced him to skip the game against Delhi Capitals as well.

Riyan Parag will continue to lead the Royals, who are currently tottering at eighth on the table with four points, in the absence of their regular captain.

Their front-line batsmen — Yashasvi Jaiswal, Parag, Shimron Hetmyer and Nitish Rana — are in reasonable form despite six defeats in eight matches and the start made by young Vaibhav Suryavanshi is also encouraging. However, the bowlers' lack of penetration has hurt them badly.

Wanindu Hasaranga (6 matches: 9 wickets) is their leading wicket-taker but the Sri Lankan spinner has taken four wickets in one match and struggled in the rest. Jofra Archer (8 matches, 8 wickets), Maheesh Theekshana (8 matches, 7 wickets) and Sandeep Sharma (8 matches, 6 wins) too offer a similar tale.

They have not either been able to take wickets or stem the run flow, and Archer (9.33) has the best economy rate among the bowlers tells a story.

The Royals management will hope that they will regain some mojo on the Chinnaswamy track which, by the occurrences of the recent past, will have something in it for them to explore.

Teams

Royal Challengers Bengaluru: Rajat Patidar (capt), Phil Salt, Virat Kohli, Liam Livingstone, Jitesh Sharma (w), Tim David, Krunal Pandya, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Josh Hazlewood, Suyash Sharma, Yash Dayal, Devdutt Padikkal, Rasikh Dar Salam, Manoj Bhandage, Jacob Bethell, Swapnil Singh, Lungi Ngidi, Romario Shepherd, Nuwan Thushara, Mohit Rathee, Swastik Chikara, Abhinandan Singh.

Rajasthan Royals: Yashasvi Jaiswal, Riyan Parag (capt), Nitish Rana, Dhruv Jurel, Shimron Hetmyer, Wanindu Hasaranga, Jofra Archer, Maheesh Theekshana, Sandeep Sharma, Tushar Deshpande, Shubham Dubey, Kumar Kartikeya, Yudhvir Singh Charak, Kunal Singh Rathore, Akash Madhwal, Fazalhaq Farooqi, Kwena Maphaka, Ashok Sharma, Vaibhav Suryavanshi, Sanju Samson (injured).

Rahul left last season's baggage, will do well for DC: Pujara

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

India Test specialist Cheteshwar Pujara feels KL Rahul has moved on from a disappointing last season at Lucknow Super Giants and the change in mindset is not only helping him flourish at his new IPL franchise but also making him a strong asset for the national team.

Rahul hit his third fifty of the season to take his mew team Delhi Capitals to a commanding eight-wicket win against his former franchise LSG in Lucknow on Tuesday. "Just move on, don't carry any baggage from the past. And that's a good thing. KL is a mature player. Last couple of years, he's been batting well across formats," Pujara said on ESPNcricinfo's TimeOut.

"He doesn't want to think about the past and wants to enjoy his batting and be in his zone, rather than think about what went wrong when he was playing for the LSG team. "It's good to move on, which will also help him play well for DC and even for the Indian team. Because, lately, he is someone the India team also relies on, the way he's batting."

Under Rahul's captaincy LSG had reached the play-offs in 2022 and 2023 seasons. However, the Lucknow outfit finished seventh last season.

Rahul's relationship with LSG owner Sanjiv Goenka also deteriorated last year. In a video that went viral on social media, Goenka was seen publicly reprimanding the former Lucknow captain after a defeat.

A few months later, the 33-year-old was released by the franchise ahead of the mega auctions. At DC, the wicketkeeper batter, one of the most consistent players in the IPL, has emerged as the leading run scorer this season, scoring 323 runs in seven innings. "Even as a person, he looks a lot more mature now, he understands his game very well. We have seen a different KL Rahul this season. When he started (against LSG), he didn't look that (fluid), but still he picked it up," Pujara said.

Former England opener Nick Knight added that the absence of captaincy responsibilities may also be contributing to Rahul's freedom with the bat.

"Captaincy can do funny things to you — sometimes you thrive on it, sometimes it's a burden. Whether that's had any impact, of not being captain now, just being free and being able to play the match situation," Knight said.

"We've got this obsession in cricket that the best player has to be captain. That's not always the case, is it? I'm not saying that's the case with KL Rahul, or even Rishabh Pant, but he's batting with so much freedom and looks relaxed in the crease."

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We, the PNB Housing Finance Limited (hereinafter referred to as 'PNBHFL') had issued Demand notice U/s 13(2) of Chapter III of the Securitization & Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. The said Demand Notice was issued through our Authorized Officer to all below mentioned Borrowers/Co-Borrower/Guarantors since your account has been classified as Non-Performing(NPA) Assets as per the Reserve Bank of India/ National Housing Bank guidelines due to non-payment of instalments/ interest. The contents of the same are the defaults committed by you in the payment of instalments of principals, interest, etc. Further, with reasons, we believe that you are evading the service of Demand Notice hence we are doing this Publication of Demand Notice which is also required U/s 13(2) of the said Act. You are hereby called upon to pay PNBHFL within a period of 60 Days of the date of publication of this demand notice the aforesaid amount along with up-to-date interest and charges, failing which PNBHFL will take necessary action/measures under all or any of the provisions of Section 13(4) of the said Act, against all or any one or more of the secured assets including taking possession of the secured assets of the borrowers and guarantors. Your kind attention is invited to provisions of sub-Section (8) of Section 13 of the of the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 where under you can tender/pay the entire amount of outstanding dues together with all costs, charges and expenses incurred by the PNBHFL only till the date of publication of the notice for sale of the secured assets by public auction, by inviting quotations, tender from public or by private treaty. FURTHER, you are prohibited U/s 13(13) of the said Act from transferring either by way of sale, lease or in any other way the aforesaid secured assets.

Loan Account No.	Name/ Address of Borrower and Co- Borrower(s)	Name & Address of Guarantor(s)	Property (ies) Mortgaged	Date of Demand Notice	Amount O/s as on dateDemand Notice
HOU/RAI/0420/792101, B.O. Raipur	**Mr./Ms. Girdhar Kumar Nishad (Applicant) & Mr./Ms. Purnima Purnima (Co-Applicant)** Dmrc,Sector 53,Delhi-110010, New Delhi,india.Village And Post Borsi,Police Station, Magarlode,Dist Dhamtari, Chhattisgarh-493662, India. & Central Industrial Security Force, DMRC,Sector 53,Delhi-110010,New Delhi,india.	NA	Plot No LIG 194,kh No 209/272 And, 171/101, Mouja Urla, ph No 131/10, RNM Abhanpur, Tahsil Abhanpur, Chhattisgarh-494335, Raipur,india.	15.04.2025	**Rs. 11,09,250.27/-** (Rupees Eleven Lakhs Nine Thousand Two Hundred Fifty and Twenty Seven Paisa Only)
HOU/RAI/1118/609592, , NHL/RAI/1220/843832 & NHL/RAI/1220/841918, B.O. Raipur	**Mr./Ms. Tridib Kumar Paul (Applicant) & Mr./Ms. Pallavi Paul (Co-Applicant)** S/o Trishit Kumar Paul,a 607 Avinash Pride,veer Sawarkar Nagar,Raipur,Heerapur Tatibandh Raipur,Chhattisgarh-492099 &Thought Applied Creation,shop No 313 First Floor,city Plaza,opp Maruti Business Park G E Road, Raipur,Chhattisgarh-492010	NA	**1.)**Apartment No 607,Sixth Floor,Block A,Avinash Pride,villege Jarvay Heerapur,ward No 01 Veer Sawarkar Ward,RNM Raipur,PC No 34, Raipur, Chhattisgarh 492099, Raipur, india. **2.)**Office No 313,first Floor,City Plaza,part Of Kh No 239/7 To 12 And 424/4 To 9,gram Chirhuldih, ward No 15 Swami Atmanand Ward, RNM Raipur,PH No 106 B,Raipur, Chhattisgarh-492001, Raipur,India.**3.)**Harshit Landmark Block E,Tenth,E-10008,Harshit Landmark,s. No.563/1,565,567, 570, 571,572,581/21, 592,593,596/3,594,595,596/4, P.H.No.103/34,Village Hirapur,RIC, Raipur,Tehsil And District Raipur (C.G.),Near Bharat Petrol Pump, Raipur, Chhattisgarh-492001, india.	15.04.2025	**Rs. 65,38,076.01/-** (Rupees Sixty Five Lakhs Thirty Eight Thousand Seventy Six and One Paisa Only)

Place: Raipur, Dated: 24.04.2025 **Authorized Officer, (M/s PNB Housing Finance Ltd.)**