



DEADLINE FOR PAKISTANIS EXPIRES TODAY

RAJESH KUMAR ■ New Delhi

Any Pakistani, who fails to leave India as per the deadlines set by the Government, will be arrested, prosecuted and may face a jail term of up to three years or a fine of a maximum ₹3 lakh or both, according to the Immigration and Foreigners Act 2025.

As many as 509 Pakistani nationals, including nine diplomats and officials, left India in three days beginning Friday through the Attari-Wagah border point as the exit deadline for the 12 categories of short-term visa holders of the neighbouring nation ended Sunday, officials said. A total of 745 Indians, including 14 diplomats and officials, have

returned from Pakistan through the international border crossing located in Punjab.

The 'Leave India' notice to the Pakistani nationals was issued by the Government after 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed by Pakistan-linked terrorists at Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir on April 22. The deadline for exiting India for those holding SAARC visas was April 26. For those carrying medical visas, the deadline is April 29. The 12 categories of visas whose holders have to leave India by Sunday are — visa on arrival, business, film, journalist, transit, conference, mountaineering, student, visitor, group tourist, pilgrim and group pilgrim.

Meanwhile, Delhi Police is carrying out verification of nearly 6,000-7,000 Pakistani nationals staying here following a Centre

directive issued after a recent terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Pahalgam district. According to sources, the Foreign Regional Registration Office (FRRO)

Most Pakistani nationals told the media that they had come to India to meet their relatives. Some had arrived to attend weddings but were now forced to return without attending

passed the list to the police's special branch, which has forwarded it to district units for verification. Most listed individuals have had their visas revoked, except those holding Long-Term Visas (LTVs),

especially Hindu Pakistani nationals, who are exempt.

Sources said authorities are verifying overlaps in two separate lists of 3,000 and 2,000 names. The Ministry of Home Affairs has confirmed visa revocations effective April 27, excluding medical, diplomatic, and LTV categories.

Most Pakistani nationals told the media that they had come to India to meet their relatives. Some had arrived to attend weddings but were now forced to return without attending. The visas of Pakistan nationals have been revoked in the wake of the recent directive of the centre, prompted by a recent terrorist attack on tourists in the Pahalgam district of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Immigration and Foreigners Act

2025, which came into effect on April 4, overstaying, violating visa conditions, or trespassing in restricted areas could lead to three years in jail and a fine of up to ₹3 lakh. "Whoever, (a) being a foreigner, remains in any area in India for a period exceeding the period for which the visa was issued to him or stays in India without a valid passport or other valid travel document in contravention of provisions of Section 3 or does any act in violation of the conditions of the valid visa issued to him for his entry and stay in India or any part thereunder;

"(b) contravenes any other provisions of this Act, other than sections 17 and 19, or of any rule or order made thereunder or any direction or instruction given in pursuance of this Act or such order or direc-

tion or instruction for which, no specific punishment is provided under this Act, shall be punishable with an imprisonment for a term which may extend to three years or with a fine which may extend to ₹3 lakh or with both," the Act says.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday called up the chief ministers of all states and asked them to ensure that no Pakistani stays in India beyond the deadline set for leaving the country. After Shah's telephonic conversations with the chief ministers, Union Home Secretary Govind Mohan held a video conference with the chief secretaries and asked them to ensure that all Pakistani nationals whose visas were revoked must leave India by the fixed deadline.

Navy tests battle readiness for strikes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

In the backdrop of tension between India and Pakistan after the Pahalgam terror attack, the Indian Navy carried out multiple anti-ship firings revalidating their readiness for long range precision "offensive" strikes. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, meanwhile, was briefed about the current security situation by military top brass.

"Indian Navy ships undertook successful multiple anti-ship firings to revalidate and demonstrate readiness of platforms, systems and crew for long range precision offensive strike," the Indian Navy said in a statement here on Sunday.

"Indian Navy stands combat ready, credible and future ready in safeguarding the nation's maritime interests anytime, anywhere, anyhow," it said. The Navy also released videos of the live firings at sea.

The visuals showed BrahMos anti-ship and anti-surface cruise missiles being launched from a fleet of warships, including Kolkata-class destroyers and



Indian Navy Ships undertook successful multiple anti-ship firings to revalidate and demonstrate readiness of platforms, systems and crew for long range precision offensive strike. PTI

Nilgiri and Krivak-class frigates.

The demonstration of the Navy's combat prowess came amid heightened tensions between India and Pakistan over the dastardly Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 civilians.

Amid escalating tensions, INS Surat, last week also completed a successful precision test of the Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MR-SAM) system against a sea-skimming target in the Arabian Sea.

NIA takes over Pahalgam terror probe

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ Jammu

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) formally launched investigations in the Pahalgam terror attack case following orders from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on Sunday.

Meanwhile, a 45-year-old social activist succumbed to his fatal injuries after he was targeted by suspected terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district on Sunday.

The Pakistan Army violated the ceasefire agreement for the third consecutive day along the Line of Control in the Kashmir valley on Sunday. According to Defence PRO, on the night of April 26-27, Pakistan army posts initiated unprovoked small arms firing across the line of control in the areas opposite Tutmari Gali and Rampur sector. Own troops responded effectively with appropriate small arms fire.

In Kashmir valley, the security forces demolished houses of three more terrorists, taking the total number of razed houses to 10 so far in the last six days.

According to a NIA spokesman, the NIA teams, already camping in Pahalgam since Wednesday, in the aftermath of the

merciless killing of 26 tourists in the Baisaran meadow of Pahalgam, have intensified efforts to gather credible evidence in the case. The NIA teams will be gathering vital inputs based on the questioning of eyewitnesses present at the spot on April 22, when a group of terrorists emerged from inside the forested area

Separate teams of NIA officials have been visiting across the country to seek details from survivors of the terrorist attack, said to be orchestrated by Pakistan-based LeT

to target tourists on a holiday. According to a statement issued by the NIA, "a team of NIA officials led by its Inspector General (IG) was rushed to the site to assist the local police. The NIA teams have been camping at the terror attack site since Wednesday, looking for clues."

"The teams, aided by forensic and other experts, are checking the entire area thoroughly for evidence to expose the terror

conspiracy that led to the horrendous attack that has shocked the nation," an NIA statement said.

The eyewitnesses are also being questioned in minute detail to piece together the sequence of events that led to one of the worst terror attacks in Kashmir, it said.

Separate teams of NIA officials have been visiting across the country to seek details from survivors of the terrorist attack, said to be orchestrated by Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the officials said.

NIA teams have recorded accounts from victims' family members in Maharashtra, Odisha and West Bengal among other states, they said.

Initial investigations into the dastardly terror attack indicate that the number of terrorists involved could range from five to seven, they said.

The attackers were also aided by at least two local terrorists who received training in Pakistan, the officials said.

Security agencies have released sketches of three terrorists suspected of being involved in the attack. The trio, from Pakistan, are said to be Asif Fauji, Suleman Shah and Abu Talha, they said.

The Bystander



Students forced to recite namaz in Chhattisgarh

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BILASPUR

Eight persons, including seven faculty members, were booked for allegedly forcing some students of Guru Ghasidas Central University to offer namaz during a National Service Scheme (NSS) camp in Chhattisgarh's Bilaspur district. Nobody has been arrested so far.

Police said the booked persons had forced 159 students to offer namaz during the NSS camp held between March 26 and April 1 in Shivtarai village under Kota police station limits, though only four among them were Muslims.

A probe was instituted after students came back and protested, following which Right Wing outfits too agitated seeking action against those responsible, the official said. "The incident took place on March 31. Bilaspur Senior Superintendent of Police Rajnesh Singh had constituted a four member committee under City Superintendent of Police (Kotwali) Akshay Sabadra to investigate the matter. The case was lodged on Saturday after the investigation report was submitted to the SSP," said the official. Seven faculty members of Guru Ghasidas Central University and a team core leader-cum-student have been booked under Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita

and Chhattisgarh Religious Freedom Act for promoting enmity among groups on the basis of religion etc, outraging religious feelings and other offences, the official said.

Local police station said that the case diary has been received and a probe begun. "The persons named in the FIR will be served notices to be present for recording of statements. Action will be taken on the basis of further probe," he said. Bilaspur SSP Rajnesh Singh ordered an inquiry and formed a four-member committee led by Kotwali (City) SP Akshay Sabadra. Based on the committee's investigation report, a case was registered on Saturday against teachers Dilip Jha, Madhulika Singh, Jyoti Verma, Neeraj Kumari, Prashant Vaishnav, Suryabhan Singh, Basant Kumar, and student leader Ayushman Chaudhary.

"They have been charged under relevant sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and the Chhattisgarh Religious Freedom Act. We will arrest them soon," IG of Police, Bilaspur range, Sanjeev Shukla said.

The case was initially filed at the Koni police station, with the case being subsequently transferred to the Kota police station for further investigation, the officer added.

Blood of every Indian is boiling: PM Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday blood of every Indian is boiling looking at pictures of the Pahalgam attack killing 26 people and cautioned that Kashmir saw progress but terrorists want to destroy it. He assured the nation that perpetrators of this act will definitely be brought to justice.

Making this assertion in his monthly 'Mann Ki Baat' radio broadcast, he also said terrorists and conspirators behind the killings of 26 civilians will be served the harshest punishment.

Blood of every Indian is boiling by looking at the pictures of the attack, he said.

It is the second time in the last few days Prime Minister Modi spoke about the dastardly act. On Thursday last, he sent out a fierce message that perpetrators will be pursued "to the end of the earth" and promised to "identify, track and punish every terrorist and their backers".

Addressing a public rally in Madhubani, Bihar, Modi also vowed the terrorists and conspirators behind the attack will get a punishment beyond their imagination.

In his addressing in the public rally, Modi suddenly switched from Hindi to English to reiterate his message. It was an apparent move to address the global community about India's intentions and resolve to bring the killers of Pahalgam to justice. Modi said in English, "Friends, today from the soil of Bihar, I say to the



whole world India will identify, track, and punish every terrorist and their backers. We will pursue them to the ends of the earth. India's spirit will never be broken by terrorism. Terrorism will not go unpunished."

In the stern message, he said, "Every effort will be made to ensure that justice is done. The entire nation is firm in this resolve. Everyone who believes in humanity is with us. I thank the people of various countries and their leaders who have stood with us in these times."

On Sunday, Modi also said the country's unity and solidarity of its 140 crore citizens is its biggest strength in this war against terrorism. "This unity is the basis of our decisive fight against terrorism," he said. The prime minister said the attack in the famous tourist town in Kashmir reflected the desperation and cowardice of the patrons of terrorism, a reference to Pakistan, at a time when peace was returning to the Valley and there was vibrancy in its schools and colleges.

He said construction work had gained unprecedented pace, democracy was getting stronger, the number of tourists was increasing at a record rate, people's income was increasing, and new opportunities were being created for the youth.

Modi said, "Enemies of the country, the enemies of Jammu and Kashmir did not like that. Terrorists and the masterminds of terror want Kashmir to be destroyed again and hence they executed such a big conspiracy."

The prime minister said his heart is in deep anguish over the biggest terror attack on civilians in Kashmir in a long spell of time, and said the incident has hurt every citizen of the country.

Every Indian is feeling deep sympathies for the affected families, no matter which state one belongs to or which language one speaks, he said.

Modi said, "I can feel that the blood of every Indian is on the boil after seeing the pictures of the terrorist attack. I once again assure the affected families that they will get justice, and justice will be definitely done. The perpetrators and conspirators of this attack will be served the harshest punishment." He added,

"We have to strengthen our resolve to face this challenge before the country. We have to demonstrate a strong willpower as a nation.

Today the world is watching that after this terrorist attack the whole country is speaking in one voice."

Out with Mughals, in with Maha Kumbh: NCERT overhauls school textbooks

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ New Delhi

Massive overhauling of the NCERT text books for the current session of class seven has incorporated chapters on Government's socio-economic initiatives like 'Make in India', Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, Atal Tunnel.

While it has done away with the references to Mughals and Delhi Sultanate, new chapters on Indian dynasties, geographical aspects and Maha Kumbh are among the new additions to the new textbooks released as per the guidelines of new National Education Policy (NEP) and the National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCFSE).

The Social Science textbook "Exploring Society: India and Beyond" has new chapters on ancient Indian dynasties like the Magadha, Mauryas, Shungas, and Satavahanas with a focus on "Indian ethos." Another new edition in the book is a chapter called "How the Land Becomes Sacred" that focuses on places considered sacred and pilgrimages across India and outside for religions like Islam, Christianity,

Judaism, and Zoroastrianism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism.

The chapter introduces concepts like "sacred geography" detailing networks of such places as 12 jyotirlingas, the char dham yatra, and the "Shakti pithas." The chapter also details such places as river confluences, mountains, and forests, which are revered.

NCERT officials said the latest book released is only the first part of the text book which has newer items as designed by NEP while the second part of the book shall be in coming months

The text includes a quote from Jawaharlal Nehru, who described India as a land of pilgrimages - from the icy peaks of Badrinath and Amarnath to the southern tip at Kanyakumari. The book also talks about the varna-jati system which resulted to inequalities during the colonial era. The just concluded Maha Kumbh in

Prayagraj mentions that about 65 crore people from the across the world took a holy dip.

NCERT officials said the latest book released is only the first part of the text book which has newer items as designed by NEP while the second part of the book for class seven shall be released during the next couple of months.

Officials however could not specify whether the chapters on medieval India would be retained in the second part of yet to be released book.

It's not the first time but NCERT had previously trimmed sections on the Mughals and Delhi Sultanate — including detailed account of dynasties like Tughlaqs, Khaljis, Mamluks, and Lodis and a two-page table on Mughal emperors' achievements as part of its syllabus rationalisation during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022-23. But this time new textbook has removed all references to them.

Further a chapter on the movement of allowing individuals to fly the national flag at their homes has also been introduced.

PIONEER IN SHORT

MP: 11 killed after van falls into well following collision

In Madhya Pradesh's Mandsaur district, a van carrying 13 people collided with a bike and fell into a water-filled well, killing 11, including the biker and a rescuer. The incident occurred in the Narayangarh area. Four passengers survived. Rescue operations by NDRF are ongoing. Deputy CM Jagdish Devda visited the site and stated the van driver likely lost control.

Two dead in Delhi slum fire, over 800 shanties gutted

A massive fire broke out in a jhuggi cluster in Sector 17, Rohini, on Sunday morning, killing two children and injuring five people. Over 800 shanties were destroyed. Firefighters battled the blaze for over three hours, deploying 26 fire tenders despite access challenges. Union Health Minister JP Nadda urged immediate relief. Cooling operations continue as the cause is investigated—suspected to involve LPG cylinders.

Dalit MP attacked by caste group on national highway

Samajwadi Party Dalit MP Ramjilal Suman's convoy was attacked with tires by Karmi Sena activists at Gabhana Toll Booth on the Alligarh-Delhi GT Road on Sunday, causing a minor pile-up. Though no one was injured, police deployed forces and later suspended the toll booth in-charge for negligence. Suman was en route to Sohana village, where Dalits were attacked on April 21, but was stopped and sent back. SP chief Akhilesh Yadav condemned the incident.



First woman dog handler of the Assam Rifles, Rifle-woman Sreelakshmi PV, during her training. PTI

MISHRA TAKES CHARGE AS PRINCIPAL OF D.A.V. SECTOR-4, BOKARO STEEL CITY

R SHARMA : BOKARO

D.A.V. Public School, Sector-4, Bokaro Steel City, marked a proud and significant moment as S.K. Mishra officially assumed the position of Principal on Friday.

During the installation ceremony, Mishra outlined his vision for the future, emphasizing a commitment to academic excellence, a culture of discipline, and the holistic development of students. He expressed his determination to create an environment that not only enhances learning outcomes but also nurtures the all-round growth of every child.

"Our primary goal is to provide quality education and cultivate an atmosphere where students are motivated to realize their fullest potential," Mishra said in his address.

Known for his dynamic leadership and deep-rooted commitment to educational excellence, Mishra previously served with distinction at D.A.V. Public School, Pundag, and D.A.V. Public School, Sector-6, Bokaro. His track record of inspiring students and strengthening academic frameworks is expected to usher a new era of progress at the Sector-4 campus.



Naman Parivar connects Jharkhand to PM Modi's Mann Ki Baat

PNS : JAMSHEDPUR

A wave of pride and emotion swept through Kalimati Road today as "Naman", the renowned Jamshedpur-based organization, achieved the unique distinction of being the only institution from Jharkhand to be directly connected with the 121st edition of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Mann Ki Baat programme.

Organized under the aegis of "Naman Parivar", the event brought together families of martyrs, ex-servicemen, and distinguished guests, all united in spirit to celebrate the bravery and sacrifice of India's soldiers. The venue reverberated with chants of "Bharat Mata Ki Jai", symbolizing the deep sense of patriotism that enveloped the gathering.

Welcoming the attendees, Amarpreet Singh Kale, Founder of Naman, expressed



heartfelt gratitude to the Prime Minister for honouring the organization. "It is a matter of immense pride for Jamshedpur and Jharkhand that from the entire eastern region — Jharkhand, Bihar, and West Bengal — only 'Naman' was chosen to be directly connected to this historic broadcast," he said.

During the event, Kale paid a solemn tribute to the brave soldiers martyred in the

recent Pahalgam terror attack, stating that their sacrifice has rekindled the spirit of duty and patriotism across the nation.

Following the Mann Ki Baat broadcast, a special felicitation ceremony was held to honour the families of martyrs and ex-servicemen for their invaluable contributions.

Notable honourees included Veer Nari Durgavati Devi, Sunita Sharma,

Padmaja, Seema Devi, Havildar Dalveer Singh, Subedar Rambhavan Ram, Havildar Manik Wardha, Havildar Jasbir Singh, among others. Many shared their emotional journeys, drawing inspiration from the Prime Minister's words.

Reaffirming their commitment, "Naman" vowed to continue organizing such events to nurture patriotism, national unity, and a spirit of serv-

ice.

The event witnessed the presence of several eminent personalities, including former Jamshedpur East MLA Purnima Das Sahu, Founder of the All India Ex-Servicemen Council Varun Kumar, General Secretary Jitendra Singh, and many others from the ex-servicemen community.

Also present were Naman's Patron Brijbhushan Singh, senior journalist Jaiprakash Rai, BJP Metropolitan District President Sudhanshu Ojha, along with prominent social leaders like Sanjeev Singh, Jitendra Chawla, Raghavendra Sharma, and representatives from various organizations.

The event concluded on a note of profound pride, with participants pledging to keep alive the spirit of sacrifice and service that forms the backbone of a strong and united India.

Youth can play key role in country's development: RU VC

PNS : Lohardaga



National seminar on the topic of Developed India was inaugurated on Friday at BS College Lohardaga. The program was inaugurated by Ranchi University Vice Chancellor Dr Ajit Kumar Sinha as the

chief guest and Open University Jharkhand Vice Chancellor Dr TN Sahu and Padma Shri Mukund Nayak ji as special guests by lighting the lamp from the United Russia.

On this occasion, Vice Chancellor Dr Ajit Kumar Sinha said that the youth of Jharkhand can play an important role in realizing the dreams of developed India.

Youths should not become job seekers but job givers. On this occasion, Nagpur NEERI scientist Tanveer Afreen talked about the pathway necessary for sustainable development for developed India in the context of Jharkhand.

On this occasion, Dr DN Verma of Rampurhat (West Bengal) presented his research paper on the history of tribal communities in the context of Santhal Pargana. Dr Prabhat Kumar talked about the Butterfly Garden. Dr Parwez Hasan, Dr Sunil Kerketta, Dr Prasanjit Mukherjee presented their research papers. On this occasion, Dr. Sumit Pathak, Dr. Sangeeta, Yogada Satsang College Ranchi, Dr. Abha Mukherjee, Daltonganj, Dr. Chitra Sharma, Dr. Tetaru Oraon, Dr. Tetaru Tirkey, Dr. Soheb Ansari, Dr. Jafar Ali, etc. participated.

Praveen prepared UPSC while working got success

DEVASHEESH BADAL : GIRIDIH

There is an atmosphere of happiness in the area as Praveen Kumar, a resident of Sariya in Giridih, has passed the UPSC examination. The Mandal community organized a welcome ceremony where hundreds of people from the Mandal community attended and welcomed him with bouquets and shawls.

Hazaribagh MLA Pradeep Prasad attended the program as the chief guest. Addressing the people, the MLA said that dedication and commitment towards education makes the path to success smooth. Today, the youth of this region, Praveen

Kumar, has passed the country's biggest examination for the first time, which deserves congratulations and is also an inspiration for the youth of this region.

UPSC pass out Praveen Kumar said that it is not necessary that UPSC studies can be completed from Delhi only. If the student has a sense of dedication towards studies, then he can prepare for UPSC from anywhere and achieve the goal.

He said that since I was working in a company in Kolkata where I had to spend eight hours there, I used to study with full concentration in the remaining time, used to listen to UPSC toppers on YouTube and pre-

pare, the result is that today I have cracked the UPSC exam in the first attempt itself.

He told the students currently preparing for the competition that they should not prepare for the exam under pressure but should do it with complete freedom and whatever they study, they should study with full concentration, success will definitely be achieved.

On the occasion, hundreds of people including Sariya chief Preeti Kumari, Rajni Kaur, Kumkum Kumari, Hari Mandal, Mathur Prasad, Mukesh Mandal, Raju Mandal, Nandlal Mandal, Murali Mandal were present.

Program on "Operational Parameters and Bottom Management in BOF" concludes

PNS : BOKARO

The two-day "LEO" program on Operational Parameters and Bottom Management in BOF concluded today at Bokaro Steel Plant. The event, which commenced on April 25, was inaugurated by Chief Guest, Director In-Charge Birendra Kumar Tiwari, through the traditional lighting of the lamp ceremony.

The inaugural session was graced by Executive Director (Works) C.R. Mahapatra, Executive Director (Finance & Accounts) Suresh Rangani, Chief General Manager In-

Charge (Steel) Arvind Kumar, Chief General Manager (SMS-New & MRD) R.K. Dhawan, along with other Chief General Managers, Department Heads, and senior executives from various departments.

The program witnessed active participation from SAIL units, including Durgapur Steel Plant, Bhilai Steel Plant, IISCO Burnpur, and Rourkela Steel Plant, as well as from leading steel manufacturers across the country like Tata Steel, Jindal Steel, NMDC Limited, and RINL.

Participants shared their experiences and insights on



BOF operations, plant performance, lance operation and maintenance, and hood and skirt maintenance, through detailed presentations.

The event was efficiently

conducted by General Manager (Knowledge Acquisition & Development) D.R. Toppo, and concluded with a formal Vote of Thanks delivered by Chief General Manager (ECS) D.K.

Love, Licks & Little Paws: Life with My Famous Five



BY RAJEEV KUMAR

In the quiet corners of my home, I am surrounded by five little companions—my beloved Shih Tzus—each one a bundle of love, warmth, and unwavering loyalty. After decades of service in the police force—marked by unrelenting stress, high-stakes responsibility, and the burden of command—their presence is more than comforting. It is deeply therapeutic. These furry souls have become my sanctuary, my joy, and my quiet strength—a healing balm after years spent on the frontlines of duty.

Brandy, the calm yet commanding father, has taken up the self-appointed role of chief security officer of the house. Stationed at the main

gate, he is always on patrol—barking with authority at passers-by, dashing along the grills of the gate with his front paws striking against the boundary wall, even wearing a hole into it with his persistent strikes, and creating enough commotion to remind all who pass that this territory is watched over. Yet for all his noise, he wouldn't harm a soul—he's a guardian, not a warrior. What makes Brandy even more endearing is his unique way of demanding chicken and biscuits—sitting upright like a teddy bear, front paws folded close to his chest, eyes fixed intently on mine. That teddy-like posture, filled with expectation and innocence, is utterly charming and melts my heart every single time. And like his daughter Sherry, Brandy, too, often has a tiny pink tongue peeking out—his own sweet signature of innocence and contentment.

By his side, always, is Whiskey—his spirited yet deeply affectionate mate. She supports him to the hilt, often echoing his alarm calls, yet remains the gentlest soul, one whose loving eyes and calm temperament bring peace wherever she sits.

Their three puppies—Toddy, Sherry, and Martini—are growing fast, each developing a unique personality. When Whiskey gave birth to them, my daughter Chitrakshi was adamant that none of the puppies should be given away. Her deep affection for them and her strong desire to keep the family intact made it clear: our home would be blessed by all five.

Sherry, the undeniable charmer, is the apple of everyone's eye. Her dainty face and the ever-visible tip of her pink tongue, even when she sleeps, lend her a look of constant wonder. Martini, on the other hand, is headstrong, playful, and a natural spark—full of zest and mischief. The sibling bond between Sherry and Martini is intense—full of love, play, and passionate rivalry. Every so often, they erupt into physical squabbles that startle me—fur flying, paws slapping—but I've come to realize that these are not fights of fury, but wild little games born out of a deep, unshakable bond. Moments later, I find them curled up together, hugging and licking each other with the same intensity they fought with—proving that love, in its purest form, often has many faces.

All five sleep in my room—my nighttime companions and protectors of silence.

Sometimes, they climb onto my bed, curling up beside me like warm, breathing pillows. But come dawn, especially around 5:30 AM, a new ritual begins. Sherry and Martini, without fail, climb up to my face and begin licking me vigorously, their little tongues showering me with their overwhelming affection. It jolts me out of sleep—but with a smile. This daily wake-up call, though disruptive, is one of the most cherished parts of my morning—a love letter written in licks.

And then begins our most amusing ritual: My morning trip to the toilet. Like clockwork, all five spring to life, eagerly scrambling to follow me—each one rushing in to claim a spot around me. It becomes a crowded little gathering in the smallest room of the house, with furry bodies pressed close, tails wagging, and eyes watching my every move. It's their own innocent and endearing way of showing their closeness and affection towards me. At 68, having once commanded a force of 80,000 as the Director General of Police, I often chuckle at the sheer contrast—once overseeing vast operations, now hemmed in by five tiny Shih Tzus while simply trying to relieve myself

in peace! To be honest, their pure-hearted devotion moves me deeply, and this delightful madness is something I treasure more than anything.

Caring for them gives rhythm to my days. From morning routines to quiet evening moments, their lives intertwine with mine. Their needs keep me active, their antics keep me laughing, and their loyalty keeps me anchored. In them, I see purpose, playfulness, and peace—all wrapped in fur.

Their love is as boundless as it is comforting. In their presence, I have discovered something truly rare—a sense of home that isn't tied to a place, but to the warmth, connection, and trust we share. Perhaps, in His infinite kindness, God placed them in my life to remind me of the quiet, simple joys that sustain and uplift us.

This pack of five—Brandy, Whiskey, Toddy, Sherry, and Martini—are not just pets. They are my companions, my comforters, and my constant cheerleaders. Their little paws may leave prints across the floor, but their love leaves lasting imprints on my heart.

THE WRITER IS FORMER DGP OF JHARKHAND. VIEWS ARE PERSONAL.

You bunch of spineless cowards



MAJOR (DR.) MOHAMMED ALI SHAH

It is well past midnight—infact the early hours of morning—and I just can't sleep. Not after hearing of your gruesome, senseless killing of innocent people in my motherland. You sick people.

I write to you as a furious, broken-hearted Indian Muslim. A man whose soul is torn between unimaginable grief and blazing rage.

Because when you attacked civilians in Pahalgam, you didn't just target a place—you pierced through the heart of every Indian who still believes in unity, in peace, in justice.

And I speak not just as an individual, but as the son of a family that has lived and breathed service to this nation. Patriotism runs through my veins. My father, Lt. Gen. Zameer Uddin Shah, retired as the Deputy Chief of Army Staff and later became a voice for the Muslim intelligentsia as the Vice Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University.

His younger brother, the celebrated actor Naseeruddin Shah—a recipient of the Padma Shri and Padma Bhushan—and my father's elder brother, a respected IITian, have all been honoured by the President of India for their distinguished contributions to this great nation.

My family has always been treated with dignity, and I have always been a proud Indian before being anything else. It is from this legacy of honour, service, and nation-first values that I draw my strength—and it is exactly this legacy that makes your actions even more revolting to me. So many of the films I've acted in—stories that celebrated love, sacrifice, and unity—were shot in the breathtaking valleys of Pahalgam and across Kashmir. National award-

winning films like Haider, Bajrangi Bhaijaan, Mojhi, and even the web series Avrodh, where I portrayed a Para Commando, were born in these very lands you've tried to desecrate. I've walked those serene paths, felt the purity of the mountain air, and seen firsthand the harmony that lives in every fold of those hills. In my TEDx talks across the world, I've spoken of India's soul—its strength in diversity, its unmatched spiritual and cultural richness. And today, you have tried to rip that soul apart.

But let me tell you something: your bullets cannot silence beauty. Your hatred cannot erase harmony. Pahalgam is not just a location—it is a living memory of what India truly stands for. And by spilling blood on its soil, you've not weakened us. You've reminded us of what we must protect—with more resolve than ever before.

You claim to fight for something. For what? For Islam? For Kashmir?

Don't insult our intelligence.

You are not freedom fighters. You are not warriors. You are cowards hiding behind guns, masks, and false slogans. You are butchers.

You didn't dare come close to an army base. You targeted simple civilians, tourists, children, mothers, pilgrims, newlyweds—unarmed, defenseless human beings. And you dare to call this Jihad?

No, this is not Jihad. Jihad means "struggle." What you did was gunah—sin, bloodshed, and a betrayal of both humanity and God. You've dragged the name of Allah through the blood-soaked soil of Pahalgam. You've taken a religion of peace, twisted and misinterpreted it, and turned it into a weapon of terror. You shameful creatures—you will rot in hell.

I am ashamed that you and I were born into the same faith—because we are nothing alike. My religion is humanity. The Islam I know teaches me to protect the innocent. Yours glorifies slaughter. My Islam teaches me to serve my country. Yours tells you to tear it apart.

No matter how much I curse you in my heart, it will still be too little. And because of you, I now carry a burden I never asked for. Every time

someone hears a Muslim name or sees a skullcap, there's suspicion in their eyes. All because of you. Right-thinking, patriotic Muslims who love their motherland are forced to explain, defend, and apologize—for crimes they never committed and beliefs they never endorsed.

You've taken lives. But worse—you've tried to take away trust. You've tried to make it impossible for an Indian Muslim to love his country openly, freely, without being questioned.

That is your real crime. And guess what? You've failed.

You will always fail. Because we—the real Muslims, the real Indians—are still standing. And we are furious. Not afraid—furious. We will not be pushed into corners. We will not be silenced by your bullets. We will not let you rewrite what it means to be one of us.

To the people of India—please do not confuse these monsters with your Muslim brothers and sisters. We are bleeding with you. We are angry with you. And we are not your enemy. We are just as victimised by these cowards as every other Indian.

To the terrorists—you are nothing but a stain, a blot, a rotting scar on the face of humanity. But this country, this unity, this idea of India—is eternal.

You tried to terrorize us. But you've only awakened us.

To the families in Pahalgam, I offer not just prayers, but a promise: We will not forget. We will not forgive. We will not rest until your loss echoes in the conscience of this country—and justice is served. Not just in the courts, but in the soul of this nation. How dare you ask names and religions before killing? You are not Muslims. The Muslim community around the world disowns you. Bloody terrorists.

You didn't just attack Kashmir.

You attacked all of us. And we will rise—as a nation, as Indians.

Jai Hind. Major (Dr.) Mohammed Ali Shah (Veteran a veteran Army officer Major (Dr.) Mohammed Ali Shah who has served India for decades, has penned a letter where he lambasted terrorists for their coward attack)

Meeting held by Atal Vichar Manch on Pahalgam Attack

AVINASH ANJAN : HAZARIBAG

A very important meeting of Atal Vichar Manch was held at Rishabh Vatika, Demo Tand, Hazaribag. The meeting was chaired by Prakash Mishra, senior worker of Atal Vichar Manch. The meeting was conducted by Deepak Nath Sahay. In this important meeting, former Hazaribag Lok Sabha MP and former Finance and External Affairs Minister of the Government of India Yashwant Sinha was present as the chief guest. First of all, expressing grief over the killing of innocent people in Pahalgam, two minutes of silence was observed for the peace of the departed souls and God was prayed to grant peace to the souls of the deceased and give strength to their families to bear the grief in this moment of immense grief. A meeting was held regarding the expansion of



the organization. In this, there was a discussion about the National President of Atal Vichar Manch. Senior leader of Atal Vichar Manch Priyambada proposed the name of Atal Vichar Manch founder and former Hazaribag MP and former Union Finance and External Affairs Minister Yashwant Sinha for the post of National President in the meeting, which was passed by the

workers present by voice vote. As the national president, Yashwant Sinha was given full authority to expand the organization and take further action to register Atal Vichar Manch as a political party.

On this occasion, Prakash Mishra addressed the meeting and said that Atal Vichar Manch will establish itself at the national level and achieve a new position under the

leadership of Yashwant Sinha. Today we have got a leader who never compromised with the situation. He always stood against injustice and protested openly, which is well known. We are proud that we are getting the opportunity to work in the presence of such a pioneer of development. On this occasion, all the important workers of Atal Vichar Manch addressed the meeting, among them Vipin Kumar Sinha, Shailendra Sinha, Divakar Prasad Sahu, Ravindra Prasad Sharma, Rajesh Sahay, Jagtar Singh, and other prominent workers were present.

On this occasion, National President of Atal Vichar Manch Yashwant Sinha addressed the meeting and said that you all have put a huge responsibility on me by trusting me. The organization will be expanded as soon as possible and further action will be taken so that the party

can be formed soon. He further said that in today's current situation, we need such a political party which can play an important role in building a clean and hygienic society by providing the right direction to the society. He said that it is futile to expect anything from the current government. This government is dividing the society into Hindus and Muslims by spreading animosity in the society. It is a matter of great concern that where will this country go. It has been almost a week since the killing of innocent people in the terrorist incident in Pahalgam, but the terrorists could not be brought to justice. While discussing foreign policy, he informed the workers about the time spent with Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji and said that Atal Bihari Vajpayee's government never bowed down to America and faced whatever circumstances came up.

Govt committed to skill devp and advancement of youth: Pandey

PNS : RANCHI

Rural Development Minister, Deepika Pandey said, "The youth of Jharkhand have proved that if given opportunity and proper guidance, they can make a mark for themselves in the country and the world. We are all proud of you. It is the responsibility of the government to not only support your skill development but also to provide all possible help in ensuring your safe and respectable livelihood. On this occasion, she congratulated all the candidates for their achievements. A special book "Kaushal Vikas se Atmanirbharta ki Aur" based on DDU-GKY was released at the event.

Pandey said that the Jharkhand Government is committed to skill development and advancement of the

youth of the state. She also assured that the government is with them at every step, whether they are in Jharkhand or in any other part of the country.

Smt. Deepika Pandey on Sunday addressed an alumni meet for the candidates placed under DDU-GKY organized by Jharkhand State Livelihood Promotion Society, Rural Development Department, in Bengaluru. She was addressing the Samaroh-2025.

Minister Pandey praised the effective implementation of DDU-GKY scheme by JSLPS and said that this flagship program has brought positive change in the lives of thousands of youth of Jharkhand. The Minister especially mentioned the Migration Support Center established by JSLPS in Bengaluru, which is playing an important role in providing



support to the youth working outside Jharkhand.

The objective of this program was to provide a common platform to the youth of Jharkhand working in different parts of the country, where they can share their experiences, communicate with each other and celebrate their journey of development. Under the able and sensitive leadership of Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Hemant Soren, the Jharkhand government is committed to make every youth, especially women, self-reliant through skill development, in this episode, more than 85 thousand youth have been provided free skill training by JSLPS so far.

Addressing the program, CEO, JSLPS, Mrs. Kanchan Singh welcomed the Hon'ble Minister of Rural Development, representatives of PIA (Project Implementing

Agencies), representatives of Government of India, and all the candidates present and explained the objective of the program. She said that the purpose of such alumni meets is not only to celebrate but also to ensure that the placed youth get continuous support and guidance.

Referring to the Migration Support Centre established by JSLPS in Bengaluru and Haryana, she said that this center not only helps in solving the problems of the youth of Jharkhand working, but also provides them social and mental support.

Around 850 placed candidates, who are employed in various reputed companies, participated in this program. There was an atmosphere of enthusiasm and excitement in the program, in which the young talents also showcased their talent through cultural

presentations. Activities like dance, song and drama presentation mesmerized all the participants and guests.

During the ceremony, "Skill Icon" felicitation ceremony was also organized, in which outstanding performing candidates and Project Implementing Agencies (PIAs) who contributed to the effective implementation of the scheme were felicitated. These felicitated youth have not only brought laurels to their families but also brought pride to the state of Jharkhand.

During the program, many candidates shared their experiences and told how the DDU-GKY project brought a new turn in their lives. They shared stories of their training, struggle to get a job and their self-reliant life today, which was extremely inspiring for the listeners.

NHES brings Mahabharata to life with 'Myths and Morality'



PNS : JAMSHEDPUR,

Narberham Hansraj English School (NHES) staged a mesmerizing play titled "Myths and Morality" at the Kusum Kamani Auditorium, bringing alive the timeless tales of the Indian epic Mahabharata. The event, conceptualized by the Principal, Paramita Roy Choudhury, was a sincere endeavour to reconnect with India's rich cultural heritage and highlight the transformative values embedded in these age-old narratives.

The play unfolded through a series of significant episodes from the epic. The poignant tale of Dronacharya and

Eklavya showcased the profound themes of sacrifice, devotion, and social injustice, leaving the audience deeply moved. The thrilling Swayamvara of Draupadi, featuring Arjuna's unparalleled skill in archery, demonstrated the virtues of focus, discipline, and determination.

The turning point of the Mahabharata — the infamous dice game between Shakuni and Yudhishtira — was depicted with gripping intensity, reflecting the dangers of temptation and deceit. The valorous story of Abhimanyu and his sacrifice within the Chakravayha battle formation drew loud applause, while the

soulful enactment of the Krishna-Arjuna Samvad from the Bhagavad Gita conveyed profound philosophical insights about duty, righteousness, and inner resolve.

The portrayal of Bhisma's fall on the battlefield and his final plea for Shanti was especially poignant, capturing the essence of selfless sacrifice and the eternal quest for peace.

Under the expert guidance of Jarita Roy, who choreographed the sequences, and the musical direction of Ravikant and Surabhi Banerjee, the students brought energy and depth to their performances. The props and stage decoration, managed by Mahesh and Bhaskar, added authenticity and grandeur to the production.

The Chief Guest for the evening, Ananya Mittal, Deputy Commissioner of East Singhbhum, along with Nakul Kamani, President of NHES, and members of the Managing Committee, lauded the efforts of the students and teachers. They praised the programme as an enriching cultural experience that beautifully revived the ethos of India's eternal epic.

Discussion on paddy production and storage in State



PNS : RANCHI

Telangana's Agriculture and Cooperatives cum Handloom Textiles Minister T Nageshwar Rao warmly welcomed Jharkhand's Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Cooperatives Minister Shilpi Neha Tirkey in Hyderabad. During the initial meeting with Agriculture Minister Shilpi Neha Tirkey in Hyderabad, Telangana Agriculture Department Secretary M Raghunandan Rao along with Horticulture Director Sheikh Yasmin Basha were also present. In the initial meeting, there was a discussion on the production and storage of paddy crop in Telangana.

The Telangana government has reinstated a large number of agriculture officers for better performance in the field of agriculture. Who are proving to be most helpful for the farmers in their farming. The meeting also discussed the advanced technology being adopted by the Telangana government in the field of agriculture. From April 28, Minister Shilpi Neha Tirkey will visit the institutions of Telangana along with the officials of Jharkhand and hold meetings with their officials.

Lecture on viral plant diseases at BAU

Use certified seeds and planting materials only for better productivity, stresses expert

PNS : RANCHI

Dr VK Baranwal, National Professor, Division of Plant Pathology, Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi has stressed on procuring certified seeds and planting materials only to check seed borne harmful viruses and ensure higher production and productivity. Underlining the importance of using advanced tools and techniques for virus screening, he said prevention is always better than cure.

He was delivering an invited lecture on "Diagnosis and management of viral diseases using modern diagnostics" at Birsa Agricultural University (BAU) on Saturday evening. Dr Baranwal said seed treatment and mulching are effective techniques for checking viruses and air borne insects in vegetable crops because even high temperatures are unable to check viruses.

He said over 10 thousand viruses have been recognised by research institutes across the globe out of which nearly 4000 are plant viruses. These viruses are transmitted horizontally and vertically through vectors and move with hosts like seed and propagation material. Many viruses like tobacco mosaic virus move through contact and cause devastation for farmers.

He also outlined the innovations in plant virus diagnostics, challenges in plant virus detection, methods used for diagnosis, etiology of emerging rice diseases and management of viral diseases.

Enzyme linked immunosorbent assay (ELISA) and polymerase chain reaction (PCR) are two major breakthrough methods developed during last 5 decades in diagnosis and



detection and routine analysis of single or a few species of viruses. Plants can have multiple viral infections, can damage the plants and insects but don't transmit to human being. Sequencing is an ultimate tool for detection and characterization of known/ unknown viruses.

US has stringent laws for management and control of plant viruses and even if one sample in lot size of 3000 is found infected, they discard the whole lot. Any diagnostic programme without proper infrastructure supported by technically qualified manpower will not succeed, he asserted. The Government of India has made a budgetary allocation of Rs 1800 crores during current fiscal for clean plant programme and Advanced Centre for Plant Virology, New Delhi is coordinating and guiding the management programme, Baranwal added.

BAU Vice Chancellor Dr SC Dubey chaired the event.

India will divide Pakistan into four parts, claims Dubey

PNS : RANCHI

After the terrorist attack in Pahalgam on 22 April, BJP MP Nishikant Dubey has given a big statement on Pakistan. Protests are being seen all over the country regarding the attack in India. Be it the ruling party or the opposition, all are demanding action against Pakistan. BJP MP Nishikant Dubey has again given a big statement regarding the attack in Pahalgam. MP Nishikant Dubey, who reached the foundation stone laying program of Maheshmara Halt in Deoghar, said that by the last month of 2025, the name and trace of Pakistan will be erased from the whole world.

BJP MP Nishikant Dubey said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will not spare the terrorists at any cost. He said that the Government of India will divide Pakistan into four parts. The first will be Balochistan, the second will be Pashtunistan, the third part will be Punjab and the fourth part is what is being seen as Pakistan occupied Kashmir. He said that Pakistan occupied Kashmir was our part, which Pakistan has taken over with dishonest intentions.

The BJP MP further said that the Modi government will not step back anywhere on the issue of terrorism. The Indian government has intensified action against terror-



ism. The result of which will be seen soon in the coming days. It is known that after the Pahalgam terrorist attack, BJP MP Nishikant Dubey is continuously giving statements against terrorists.

After listening to the speech of MP Nishikant Dubey, the local people raised slogans in his support and also raised slogans of Pakistan Murdabad. He said that terrorism will never be encouraged in the PM Modi government. Wherever terrorists are seen, our army will kill them and secure the country.

Dubey is surrounded by controversies these days. A contempt case is going on against him for his recent statement against the CJI of the Supreme Court. Few days back, MP Nishikant Dubey tweeted - "Ashhadu Allah illallah illallahu wa dahu la sharik lahu wa ashduhu anna Muhammadan abduhu wa rasuluhu." He further wrote - "These days I am learning Kalma, don't know when I will need it."

On Dubey's post, people are giving different types of reactions. A user has written that your 'Kalma' is not correct whereas it is very easy. Lailaha illallahu Muhammadur Rasulullah! Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam! A user has written that Nazakat Ali of Pahalgam saved the lives of 11 tourists with his bravery and wisdom, including Arvind Agarwal, a special invitee of Chhattisgarh BJP Yuva Morcha. Arvind thanked Nazakat Ali on Facebook and wrote that "we will never be able to repay the favor of Nazakat Bhai".



During his visit to the IFEMA Rebuild Exhibition in Madrid the Chief Minister Hemant Soren actively explored pioneering innovations in the construction and urban development sectors.

Elevator and Escalator Consulting- The Key to Safer and Smarter Buildings



BY ALOK SINGH : RANCHI

In today's rapidly urbanizing world, elevators and escalators are not just conveniences but essential lifelines in our buildings. With sky-

scrapers reshaping our skylines and healthcare facilities relying on swift vertical movement, the importance of quality and safety in elevator systems cannot be overstated. Yet, installing an

elevator alone does not guarantee either. This is where specialized elevator consulting becomes critical.

An elevator consultant acts as a trusted partner for developers, architects, and facility owners, providing unbiased expertise throughout the project life cycle from concept to commissioning. They ensure that vertical transportation systems are designed, selected, and maintained with the highest standards of safety, efficiency, and future readiness.

Given the technical complexity involved, even minor errors in planning or installation can lead to frequent malfunctions, higher operational costs, or, worse, compromise user safety. Professional consultants bring deep technical insights, evaluating each project's unique requirements and recommending customized solutions that ensure smooth, reliable, and safe operations.

Quality assurance is another pillar of elevator

consulting. By guiding the preparation of technical specifications, evaluating vendor proposals, and monitoring critical project stages, consultants safeguard the interests of building owners. They ensure that every system installed is robust, energy-efficient, and built for long-term performance, reducing lifecycle costs and enhancing user satisfaction.

Above all, safety remains paramount. Consultants ensure that every elevator installed complies with national and international safety standards, and that crucial safety features are incorporated right from the start. Regular audits and safety inspections recommended by consultants further help in maintaining operational excellence over the years.

Transparency and neutrality in vendor selection also form a key part of a consultant's value. Instead of being bound by particular brands or commercial influences, consultants prioritize

performance, service quality, and long-term reliability, ensuring that the client's investment delivers maximum returns.

In sectors like healthcare, where every second can be critical, the reliability of elevators is directly tied to life-saving outcomes. Specialized consulting ensures that hospital lifts, patient elevators, and service lifts meet the highest standards of performance, hygiene, and emergency readiness.

In conclusion, elevator consulting is not an added luxury, it is an essential investment in quality, safety, and peace of mind. As our buildings grow taller and technology advances, professional elevator consulting will continue to play a vital role in shaping safer, smarter, and more sustainable spaces for generations to come.

ALOK SINGH AN ENGINEER AND FOUNDER OF ENGINEERING SOLUTION AND ASSOCIATES

Tribal group protest against construction of Siramtoli flyover ramp

PNS : RANCHI

In protest against the construction of a flyover ramp in Sirmatoli, members of the tribal organization burnt the effigy of CM Hemant Soren at Albert Ekka Chowk. During this, the tribal organizations raised many slogans besides Abua Sarkar Looteri Hai.

Before burning the effigy, the people of the residential organization got into a scuffle with the police and pushed them. Regarding the incident, it is being told that the people of the tribal organization were coming in large numbers from Jaipal Singh Stadium to Albert Ekka Chowk and were going to burn the effigy of the CM there. However, the police stopped them before that. After which people got angry and clashed with the police.

In the first week of April tension gripped Ranchi's Sirmatoli during Sarhul, the biggest festival of the tribal community, due to a clash between two tribal groups.



The confrontation occurred when a group of protesters showed black flags and wore black bands on their foreheads to express opposition to Chief Minister Hemant Soren and his wife, Kalpana Soren, as they arrived to worship at the main Sarna Sthal (place of worship). The tribal organisations in Ranchi had even called a bandh in Jharkhand's capital, Ranchi, against the construction of a flyover near the Sarna Sthal, a sacred trib-

al site. The tribal outfits have been demanding that the ramp built as part of the Siram Toli-Mecon Flyover project from the Sarna Sthal at Siram Toli, be removed. The Sarna Sthal at Siram Toli is considered to be sacred for the tribals in Jharkhand and they want the ramp to be removed as vehicles would be using the ramp for movement, impacting the sanctity of the place and also leading to congestion there.

India emerges as global space leader: PM Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Noting that India has become a global space power, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the country is leading the most cost-effective but successful space programme in the entire world and is going to scale new heights in the future. Many youth are attaining new milestones in the field of space startups, Modi said, adding 10 years ago, there was only one company, but today there are more than 325 space startups working in the country. In his monthly radio broadcast 'Mann Ki Baat', he also paid tributes to former Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chief K Kasturirangan, who passed away last week. "Two days ago we lost the country's great scientist Dr K Kasturirangan ji. Whenever I met Kasturirangan ji, we discussed topics like the talent of Indian youth, modern education, Space-Science. His contribution in lending newer heights to science, education and India's space programme shall always be remembered. ISRO attained a new identity under his leadership," he said. The space programmes that moved forward under his guidance gave global recognition to India's efforts, Modi said. Many of the satellites that India uses today were launched under the supervision of Dr Kasturirangan, he said. "There was one more special facet to his personality, which the younger generation can learn from. He always accorded

importance to innovation. The vision of learning, knowing and doing something new is very inspiring," Modi said.

The prime minister said Kasturirangan also played a major role in formulating the new National Education Policy of the country.

Kasturirangan came up with the idea of "forward looking" education according to the modern needs of the 21st century, Modi said. "His selfless service to the country and contribution to nation building will always be remembered. Very humbly, I pay my tribute to Dr K Kasturirangan," he said. Noting that April marks 50 years of the launch of the Aryabhata Satellite, Modi said, "Today, when we look back and remember this journey of 50 years, we realise how far we have come. This flight of India's dreams in space once commenced with just conviction.

Some young scientists with the passion to do something for the nation - they neither had the modern resources like today, nor the access to world technology as such. If at all they had anything, it was talent, dedication, hard work and the passion to do something for the country." "You must have seen pictures of our scientists carrying critical equipment themselves on bullock carts and bicycles. It is the result of that very dedication and spirit of service to the nation that so much has changed today," he said.

Modi pointed out that India has become a global space power, pointing "We have created a record by launching 104 satellites simultaneously. We have become the first country to reach the South Pole of the



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

FILE PHOTO

Moon. India has launched the Mars Orbiter Mission and we have reached pretty close to the Sun through the Aditya - L1 Mission," he said.

Today, India is leading the most cost-effective but successful space programme in the entire world, he pointed out.

Many countries of the world take help from ISRO for their satellites and space missions, Modi said. "When we see a satellite launch by ISRO, we are filled with

pride. I had a similar feeling when I witnessed the launch of PSLV-C-23 in 2014. I was also present at the ISRO Centre in Bengaluru during the landing of Chandrayaan-2 in 2019. At that time Chandrayaan failed to achieve the expected success, it was a very difficult time for the scientists.

But I could see with my own eyes the patience of the scientists and their zeal to achieve something," he said. And a few

years later, the whole world too noticed how the same scientists made Chandrayaan-3 a success, the Prime Minister added. Noting that India has opened her space sector for the private sector as well, Modi said today many youth are attaining new milestones in the field of space startups.

"The times to come are ushering in a lot of new possibilities in Space. India is going to scale new heights. The country is busy preparing for many important missions like Gaganyaan, SpaDeX and Chandrayaan-4. We are also working on the Venus Orbiter Mission and Mars Lander Mission," he said. Indian space scientists are going to fill the people of the country with new pride through their innovations, Modi said.

Recalling the 'Champran Satyagrah', Modi said it was the first big experiment by Babu in India. "The entire British rule was shaken by Babu's Satyagrah. The British had to suspend the law that forced farmers to cultivate indigo.

This was a victory that infused new confidence in the freedom struggle. All of you must be aware that another son of Bihar also contributed a lot to this Satyagrah, who became the first President of the country after Independence. The great personality was Dr Rajendra Prasad. He also wrote a book on the 'Champran Satyagrah'," Modi said.

Many more indelible chapters of the freedom struggle are associated with April itself, he said. "Gandhiji's 'Dandi March' culminated on the 6th of April itself. This march which commenced on the 12th of

March and continued for 24 days had shaken the British. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre took place in April itself. The marks of this blood stained history are still present on the soil of Punjab," Modi said.

He said that in a few days, on May 10, the anniversary of the first freedom struggle would also be there. The spark that arose in that first battle for freedom, later became a torch for millions of freedom fighters, Modi said.

"On April 26, we observed the death anniversary of the great hero of the 1857 revolution, Babu Veer Kunwar Singh. The entire country derives inspiration from this great freedom fighter of Bihar. We have to keep alive the immortal inspirations of lakhs of such freedom fighters," he said.

The energy received from them provides renewed strength to our resolve of 'Amrit Kaal', Modi added. He said the biggest strength of the country is our 140 crore citizens, their capability, their will power, and when crores of people join a campaign together, its impact is huge.

He cited the example of the 'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam' campaign and pointed out that on the 5th of June, on 'World Environment Day', this campaign is completing one year.

"During this one year, under this campaign, more than 140 crore trees have been planted in the name of the mother across the country. Observing this initiative of India, people outside the country have also planted trees in the name of their mother," he said. In his broadcast, Modi also lauded how in Wayanad, saffron is not being grown in any field or soil but with the help of aeroponics technique.



Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan paying tribute to former ISRO chief K Kasturirangan at Raman Research Institute in Bengaluru

509 Pakistanis leave India after notice

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

As many as 509 Pakistani nationals, including nine diplomats and officials, left India in three days beginning Friday through the Attari-Wagah border point as the exit deadline for the 12 categories of short-term visa holders of the neighbouring nation ended Sunday, officials said.

A total of 745 Indians, including 14 diplomats and officials, have returned from Pakistan through the international border crossing located in Punjab.

The 'Leave India' notice to the Pakistani nationals was issued by the government after 26 people, mostly tourists, were killed by Pakistan-linked terrorists at Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir on April 22. Officials said that altogether 237 Pakistani nationals, including nine diplomats and officials, left India through the Attari-Wagah border post on Sunday, 81 Pakistani nationals left on April 26 and 191 on April 25.

Similarly, 116 Indians, including one diplomat, returned from Pakistan on Sunday through the international land border crossing, 342 Indians, including 13 diplomats and officials, came back from Pakistan on April 26 and 287 Indians crossed over on April 25, officials said.

Some of the Pakistanis might have left India through airports too, they said, pointing out that since India does not have direct air connectivity with Pakistan, they might have left for other countries. The deadline for exiting India for those holding SAARC visas was April 26. For those carrying medical visas, the deadline is April 29.

The 12 categories of visas whose holders have to leave India by Sunday are — visa on arrival, business, film, journalist, transit, conference, mountaineering, student, visitor, group tourist, pilgrim and group pilgrim.

Three Defence or Military, Naval and Air Advisors in the Pakistani High Commission in New Delhi have been declared Persona Non Grata and they

were given one week to leave India. Five support staff of these defence attaches were also asked to leave India. India has also withdrawn its defence attaché from the Indian High Commission in Islamabad.

However, those having long-term and diplomatic or official visas were exempted from the 'Leave-India' order. At the Attari border in Amritsar district, vehicles queued up as Pakistani nationals hurried to cross over to their country. Many Indians came to bid farewell to their relatives, the pain of separation evident on their faces.

Sarita and her family had come to India for a kin's wedding set for April 29. "We came to India after nine years."

Besides, 438 Pakistani nationals are in the foreign countries on long-term visas and they include Hindus who have applied for Indian citizenship

She, her brother and her father are Pakistanis while her mother is an Indian national. "They (the authorities at Attari) are telling us they will not allow my mother to go along. My parents got married in 1991. They are saying Indian passport holders will not be allowed," she said, crying bitterly.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said all Pakistanis have been accounted for and arrangements are being made to deport the people whose visas have been revoked as per the Centre's directives.

State minister Yogesh Kadam on Saturday said the 1,000 Pakistani nationals with short-term visas have been asked to leave India.

Around 5,050 Pakistani citizens have been living in Maharashtra and most of them are on long-term visas, officials said. The Bihar government said that all Pakistani nationals, who had been to the state in the recent past, have left well

ahead of the April 27 deadline.

In the southern state of Telangana, police chief Jitender cited official records to say that as many as 208 Pakistani nationals were staying in the state, mostly in Hyderabad. Among them, 156 hold long-term visas, 13 short-term visas and 39 were with the travel document for medical and business purposes.

There were 104 Pakistani nationals in the southern coastal state of Kerala, of whom 99 were on long-term visas. The remaining five, who were on either tourist or medical visas, have left the country. Central India's Madhya Pradesh had around 228 visiting Pakistani nationals, many of whom have left the country already, officials said.

On the other hand, around 12 Pakistanis have been identified in Odisha and all of them have been asked to follow the deadline set for them to leave the country. Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has said three Pakistani nationals, who were in the state on short-term visas, have been asked to leave.

Seven Pakistanis were in Gujarat on short-term visas — five in Ahmedabad and one each in Bharuch and Vadodara. They have either left India or are leaving by Sunday, officials said.

Besides, 438 Pakistani nationals are in the western state on long-term visas and they include Hindus who have applied for Indian citizenship.

In the north, Uttar Pradesh Director General of Police Prashant Kumar said on Saturday that the process of sending back all categories of Pakistani citizens visiting the state who have been ordered to leave India has been completed.

One Pakistani national is still in the state and he will depart for Pakistan on April 30, the DGP said.

As many as 19 Pakistani nationals staying in Bihar with short-term visas have left the country.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday called up the chief ministers of all states and asked them to ensure that all Pakistani stays in India beyond the deadline set for leaving the country.

PM Modi to inaugurate first WAVES summit in Mumbai

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the first World Audio Visual and Entertainment Summit (WAVES) in Mumbai on Thursday, a four-day event that will bring together the entire spectrum of the media and entertainment industry.

The prime minister is also expected to interact with top leaders of the media and entertainment industry during the summit, which is also aimed at giving a boost to the creator's economy taking shape across the world.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis and Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw will also address the inaugural session of the summit, which is expected to witness participation from top actors such as Amitabh Bachchan, Rajinikanth, Mohanlal, Hema Malini, and Chiranjeevi, among others.

The summit will feature theme-based plenaries and discussions aimed at shaping the future of the audio-visual industry in India and beyond.

The first two days will focus on cinema, filmmaking, and marketing, while the next two days will witness business meetings and participation from the general public.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is expected to chair the Global Media Dialogue which will see participation from ministers, leaders of the media industry and policymakers from across the world.

Mumbai is expected to be the permanent venue of the WAVES summit, billed as the biggest gathering of the media and entertainment industry, similar to what World Economic Forum meeting at Davos is for the business and economy sectors, officials said.

Dharmendra Pradhan pays tribute to K Kasturirangan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ New Delhi

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Sunday paid homage to former ISRO chief K Kasturirangan, who died on April 25, in Bengaluru, saying he was one of the brightest stars of the scientific and academic community.

"Paid homage to the mortal remains of Dr K Kasturirangan ji at Raman Research Institute, Bengaluru. One of the brightest stars of the scientific and academic community, Kasturirangan ji leaves behind an unparalleled legacy.

"May his soul attain sadgati. Pray to Almighty to grant solace to the bereaved family," Pradhan wrote on social media and shared pictures.

Kasturirangan, who led the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) for nearly a decade and was the man behind the reforms proposed in the new National

Education Policy (NEP), passed away at the age of 84 in Bengaluru. His mortal remains, wrapped in the national flag, were kept at the Raman Research Institute (RRI) for the public and well-wishers to pay their last respects.

His last rites will be conducted with full state honours. Pradhan shared a heartfelt post for Kasturirangan on social media on Friday, saying the space scientist was "more than a mentor" for him.

"I am deeply heartbroken by the passing of Padma Vibhushan Dr K Kasturirangan ji. His loss is not only a profound one for the global scientific and academic community, but an intensely personal one for me.

"To me, he was far more than a mentor — he was a guiding light, a wellspring of wisdom, compassion, and quiet strength. I consider myself truly fortunate to have received his affection, blessings and guidance over the years," the minister wrote.



Chief Justice of India Sanjiv Khanna being greeted by Supreme Court Bar Association President Kapil Sibal before the start of a friendly cricket match between CJI XI and SCBA-XI at Modern School Cricket Ground in New Delhi on Sunday

IIT-Madras non-destructive evaluation centre grows

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ New Delhi

From sensors detecting leaks in pipelines, tanks, bridges and dams without tearing those down to robots for ending manual scavenging — IIT-Madras has established itself as a global centre of excellence for developing disruptive material testing technology.

"Non Destructive Evaluation" (NDE) is the broad name given to the field of testing and analysis used by industry to characterise components or structures for indicators of performance degradation, without causing damage to the original part.

The "NDE 5.0 — Industrial Assets and Process Management CoE (CNDE)" at IIT-Madras is developing advanced inspection solutions using X-rays, infrared thermography, lasers, ultrasonics, microwave, terahertz and eddy currents, leveraging industry tools in robotics, drones, AI, Machine Learning, virtual reality, distributed ledgers, hyperspectral imaging and quantum computing.

Krishnan Balasubramanian, Chair Professor, IIT-Madras, said that the centre of excellence has a team of internationally acclaimed professors and researchers who have executed projects with a cumulative value over ₹200 crore, attracted industry funding in excess of ₹50 crore and CSR funding of ₹10 crore for

socially-relevant projects. "The research undertaken by this team has already led to 15 IIT Madras-incubated startups with a combined valuation in excess of ₹2,000 crore.

"The vision is to carry out cutting-edge research on asset integrity platforms for society and industry validated and accepted as benchmarks that can be commercialised worldwide," he said.

Balasubramanian also underlined that technologies from this CoE impact the efficiency of industry operations and increase the availability and safety of industrial and infrastructural assets.

"The key objectives of this CoE include impacting industries by helping them reduce operating costs by 40 per cent, decrease failure risk, improve availability and uptime by 20 per cent and extend as well as maximise asset life safety," he added.

"The country has the second-longest road network in the world (6 million km) and the Indian Railways is one of the largest rail networks in the world under one management. The ports handle 95 per cent of its international trade in and out of India.

"The country is currently the fourth largest consumer of energy globally after the US, China and Russia and, hence, has over 40,000 km of cross-country pipelines and underground oil reserve storage facilities," he said.

CM Yogi Adityanath directs timely completion of Ganga Expressway

SAJID KHAN ■ Shahjahanpur

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has issued firm instructions to officials to complete the construction of the ambitious Ganga Expressway project by November this year, emphasising that there should be no compromise on quality or deadlines.

The directive came during his visit to the expressway site on Sunday, where he personally reviewed preparations for a significant upcoming event - the first-ever night landing of fighter aircraft on an expressway airstrip in India. Chief Minister Yogi's helicopter landed at 11:56 AM on a heliport constructed over the expressway near Jalalabad. Upon arrival, he boarded a vehicle and inspected approximately 500 meters of the newly developed 3.5-kilometer-long airstrip. The inspection was carried out meticulously, with a focus on assessing the surface readiness, lighting systems, and overall infrastructure essential for safe aircraft operations.

After the inspection, the Chief Minister moved to a secure facility (safe room) where he held a detailed meeting with administrative officers, representatives from the Uttar Pradesh Expressways Industrial Development Authority (UPEI-



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath address during inspection of the Ganga Expressway construction in Jalalabad

DA), and officials from the construction companies involved in the project. During the review, he was briefed on the pace of work and the current status of different segments of the expressway.

Highlighting the importance of the Ganga Expressway for Uttar Pradesh's eco-

nommic growth and strategic connectivity, Yogi Adityanath stressed that the project must be completed within the stipulated time frame. He further reviewed the elaborate preparations underway for the landing exercises by the Indian Air Force, particularly focusing on night operations

- a first for India's expressways.

He directed that all tasks related to the airstrip and supporting infrastructure should be completed on priority and that utmost attention should be given to safety and security measures. The Chief Minister also sought details about emergency response mechanisms, lighting installations, and animal control measures to prevent any untoward incidents during the landings.

Officials informed the Chief Minister that the preparations had been completed. The night landing exercise is scheduled for May 2, while daytime landings will take place on May 3. Senior Indian Air Force officers have been supervising the arrangements to ensure flawless execution of the event.

To create a safe operational environment, a five-kilometer radius around the airstrip has been declared a 'No-Flying Zone' for civilian aircraft and drones. Additionally, iron fencing has been erected around the airstrip to prevent animals from straying onto the runway, further strengthening safety protocols.

The 594-kilometer-long Ganga Expressway is one of the flagship infrastructure projects of the Uttar Pradesh government, aimed at enhancing connectivity between the western and eastern parts of the state.

China unlikely to affect India-Pakistan tensions

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Guwahati

China is unlikely to get directly involved in the "instability" between India and Pakistan in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack, due to the current geopolitical scenario and tariff-related "complexities", a former Indian Army commander has said.

He, however, also underscored that China's friendship with Pakistan is a known fact.

"Post the Galwan 2020 incident, after a lot of consultations and deliberations between the two countries, the stand-off at the last of the friction points has been resolved," former Eastern Command chief Lt Gen (ret'd) Rana Pratap Kalita said.

A "process of normalisation" has taken place after resolution of the last areas of conflict and bilateral mechanism has picked up, including talks to start direct flights and resumption of the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, he said.

Kalita also pointed out that both countries face hiked trade tariffs imposed by the US, which also impacts the global economy. With India and China being manufacturing countries as well as major consumption markets, the impact of change in tariffs is bound to be felt more, he said.

"Seeing these complexities and geopolitical developments as well, whether there will be any direct manifestation of the Chinese towards the instability caused by the Pahalgam incident is difficult to pre-

dict at the moment. But as of now, I don't see them getting directly involved," the former army commander said.

"The vulnerability of the sea link with Pakistan is known. The importance of access to the Arabian Sea through Pakistan for China is also a known fact," Kalita added.

On vulnerability along the Bangladesh border, he said it remains and "more so after the change of government in Bangladesh". "After the Sheikh Hasina government was deposed, we have seen that there is a rising anti-India feeling in Bangladesh, which is being fueled by religious fundamentalists," he said.

The release of leaders of terror groups like Ansarul Bangla from jail after the caretaker government came into power in Bangladesh has also "collectively added to the rise of the anti-India feeling," he said.

The visit by senior Pakistan military officers, "including the DG of the ISI who met various people there adds to the vulnerability", the former army commander said.

Migration from Bangladesh and infiltration to "spread Islamic fundamentalism within the northeast" because of the existing vulnerability borne by the demographic pattern, particularly in Assam and Tripura where it is sensitive and balanced, are areas of concern, he said.

Kalita said the narrow Siliguri corridor is also an area of vulnerability for India, as it provides strategic connectivity to the northeast.

Himanta asks 'Congress MP, Gogoi' over stay in Pakistan, wife's job

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Guwahati

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and Congress MP Gaurav Gogoi on Sunday traded barbs on social media over the opposition leader's alleged links with Pakistan, and both politicians brought each other's families into the spat. Sarma was the first to launch the tirade by posting three questions to Gogoi on X, which was retorted with a similar number of queries by the MP on the same platform.

Without naming anyone in his first post, Sarma asked a Congress MP whether he had stayed in Pakistan for a continuous period of 15 days and if his wife gets salary from an NGO of the neighbouring country. "Questions for the Hon'ble Member of Parliament from the Congress Party: 1. Did you visit Pakistan for a continuous period of 15 days? If so, could you kindly clarify the purpose of your visit?" he asked.

The CM also questioned whether it is true that the MP's wife "continues to receive a salary from a Pakistan-based

NGO while residing and working in India." "If so, may we ask why a Pakistan-based organisation is paying a salary for activities conducted in India?" Sarma questioned. He also asked about the citizenship status of the parliamentarian's wife and two children.

"Are they Indian citizens, or do they hold the citizenship of any other country? Many more questions will follow," he added. Sharing Sarma's post, Gogoi countered the allegations with three questions from his end. "Questions for the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Assam: 1) Will you resign if you fail to prove your allegations against me and my wife being agents of an enemy country? 2) Will you take questions on your own children and wife?" the Congress MP asked. He also questioned whether the state police would arrest those "linked to coal mafia who are ravaging the hills of Assam and making crores of undeclared money". It was an apparent reference to Enforcement Directorate's findings that illegal rat hole quarrying was being 'rampantly' done in Meghalaya and a 'syndicate' with people

from both states ensured that trucks containing illegal coal cleared the borders of Meghalaya and entered into Assam. Gogoi had posted on X about this matter on Saturday. "Waiting for the SIT report to be submitted," Gogoi added to his post with the three questions, though he didn't clarify which investigation he was referring to. The state government had in February formed a Special Investigation Team to probe into the alleged interference of Pakistani national Ali Tauqeer Sheikh, who is claimed to have links with Gogoi's British wife Elizabeth Colburn, in India's internal affairs. Responding to Gogoi's post, Sarma said that he or his family had no connection with Pakistan and that 'sufficient materials' will be put in public domain in coming days to 'expose' the Congress MP's links with the neighbouring nation.

"I would like to clarify that neither I nor my son and daughter have ever visited Pakistan. Furthermore, my wife and our entire family would never even think of accepting any salary or financial support from Pakistan," he said.

Gurugram issues advisory amid rising heat in the city

PARVESH SHARMA ■ Gurugram

As temperature continues to rise, the district administration has issued advisory to residents to take necessary precautions to avoid heat waves and other heat-related illnesses.

Chairman of District Disaster and Management Authority and Deputy Commissioner Gurugram Ajay Kumar on Sunday stressed the danger of heat waves, while emphasising that they could cause severe physical stress and, in extreme cases, could even be life-threatening.

In the advisory he said, "Residents are advised to stay updated on the local weather-related news by checking newspapers, radio, or TV.

This will help them prepare for the intensity of the heat in their area.

One of the most important precautions is staying hydrated. Drinking plenty of water is essential," the Deputy Commissioner Gurugram Ajay Kumar said. "Wearing light-colored loose cotton clothes in summer, keep your head covered, use a hat or umbrella, and drink a suf-

ficient amount of water—even if you are not thirsty, stay refreshed by consuming ORS (oral rehydration solution) and homemade drinks like lassi, lemon water and buttermilk, etc.

Do not leave children in vehicles, as they may be at risk of heat stroke; do not go out barefoot; keep a hand fan with you for relief from heat; take short breaks in between work; and if you are working in the field, then take shelter under a tree or in the shade from time to time.

Avoid junk food in the summer season. Eat fresh fruits, salads, and homemade food. Especially do not go out in the sun between 12 noon and 3 pm.

If the child feels dizzy, vomits, panics, or has a severe headache, chest pain, or difficulty in breathing, consult a doctor, Deputy Commissioner Gurugram Ajay Kumar said.

"Heat stroke symptoms like dizziness, headaches, and fainting should not be ignored. If anyone feels unwell, one should seek medical attention immediately. Using fans and taking cold water baths can also help lower body temperature," the DC said.

Yadav directs officials to ensure safety of J and K students studying in MP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ Bhopal

Amid tensions following the Pahalgam terror attack, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav has directed officials to ensure the safety of students from Jammu and Kashmir studying in the state. Yadav also directed the administration to ensure the return of Pakistani nationals as per the directives of the Union Home Ministry.

The chief minister issued the directives on Saturday during a high-level meeting on the law-and-order situation in the state. After the meeting, Yadav said necessary guidelines have been issued in connection with the strict implementation of the Home Ministry's directives on Pakistani nationals.

"I have directed officials to identify Pakistani visa holders in the state within the stipulated time limit. All Pakistani citizens, except those holding long-term, diplomatic and official visas, should be expelled from the state. Identify students from Jammu and Kashmir studying in Madhya Pradesh and ensure their safety," he said in a social media post.

The chief minister said he gave clear instructions to senior police officers to keep an eye on sensitive places in the state and ensure peace, law and order under any circumstances.

Tensions between India and Pakistan have escalated after the terror attack in Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir, in which 26 persons, most of them tourists, lost their lives earlier this week. The Ministry of External Affairs has said all Pakistani nationals currently in India must leave the country before their visas expire. An official on Saturday said that 228 Pakistani nationals living in Madhya Pradesh will have to leave India before the April 27 deadline set by the Centre. The MEA has said that all existing valid visas issued by India to Pakistani nationals stand revoked with effect from April 27 while medical visas issued to Pakistani nationals will be valid only till April 29.

Essential to make state drug-free: Haryana CM Saini

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Chandigarh

Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini on Sunday emphasised that the cooperation of every section of society is essential in the fight against drugs, saying only through a united effort can a drug-free Haryana be achieved.

He called for collective efforts from the saints, khap panchayats, sarpanches, and the people of Haryana to actively participate in the campaign for a drug-free state.

Saini was addressing a gathering in Sirsa as part of Cyclothon 2.0, during which he urged all sections of society to unite and contribute toward making the state drug-free. Addressing the gathering at the event, he said that to realize the dream of a developed India and a developed Haryana, it is essential to make the state drug-free.

Therefore, in the campaign for a 'drug-free Haryana,' everyone must also rise above party politics and unite to empower and strengthen the youth of Haryana, he said.

The Cyclothon began at Shaheed Bhagat Singh Stadium in Sirsa and will pass through various parts of the city, before concluding at Odhan in Sirsa district. On the occasion, Saini rode a bicycle to the event venue and reinforced the strong message of promoting a drug-free Haryana.

He said that today in Sirsa, through the Cyclothon, an extraordinary confluence of energy, celebration, and unity has been witnessed, which symbolises the collective fight against drugs.

He added that it is a matter of pride that the Khap Panchayats have extended their support to this Cyclothon.

According to an official statement, the cyclothon, which started from Hisar on April 5, has travelled across the entire state and has now reached its final destination in Sirsa after a 23-day journey.

A similar cyclothon rally was conducted in 2023, lasting 25 days.

Congratulating all the youth who participated in this cyclothon, he said that these young individuals have tirelessly spread the message of drug de-addiction to every corner of society.

environment, road safety, and youth empowerment, he said.

He said that the organizers, participants, and citizens have proven that when the goal is noble, the intention is honest, and there is public participation in the efforts, any ill in society can be eradicated from its roots.

Saini said that Haryana is the land of 'Jawans, Pehlwanas and Kisans' (soldiers, wrestlers, and farmers), and there is no place for drugs here.

He said that all of us must come together to advance the spirit of a strong and resilient Haryana.

Saini said that while today marks the final stop of the Cyclothon 2.0, it should not be considered the end but rather the beginning of the fight against drugs.

He urged everyone to take a pledge to make each home and every village in Haryana drug-free. Surely, this campaign will yield meaningful results, he added.

Saini said that de-addiction centres are being run to help the youth trapped in drug addiction.

Separate de-addiction facilities have also been opened in government hospitals and medical colleges.

Saini said that sarpanches have been urged to make their villages drug-free, pollution-free, and perform exceptionally well on parameters like cleanliness and health.

Villages securing the first, second, and third positions across the state will be honored with awards of Rs 51 lakh, Rs 31 lakh, and Rs 21 lakh respectively, the CM reiterated.

The Chief Minister said that Station House Officers (SHOs) have been directed to take prompt action on any drug-related complaints received from villages within their jurisdiction.

SHOs whose entire jurisdiction becomes drug-free will also be honored and rewarded, he said.

Appealing to the citizens, the Chief Minister said that if any person has fallen into the trap of drug addiction, they should not be isolated; instead, efforts should be made to help and reintegrate them into the mainstream.

He said that the government has created the 'Manas' portal, where any citizen can report information about drug trafficking, and immediate action will be taken on such reports.

UP RO, ARO exam to be held on July 27

BISWAJEET BANERJEE ■ Lucknow

The Uttar Pradesh government is gearing up to conduct the Review Officer (RO) and Assistant Review Officer (ARO) examination on July 27, with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directing officials to ensure the process is conducted with utmost fairness, transparency, and security.

Following the Chief Minister's clear instructions, preparations have been intensified across the state to guarantee a smooth and flawless examination. The exam will be held simultaneously across all 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh, with approximately 10,76,004 candidates expected to participate. To accommodate the large number of candidates, more than 2,000 examination centers are being established. In line with CM Yogi's vision for a transparent recruitment process, detailed guidelines have been issued for the selection and finalisation of exam centers. A

high-level committee, chaired by the District Magistrate and including senior officials such as the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Additional District Magistrate (ADM), District Inspector of Schools, and Technical Education Officer, has been constituted in each district to oversee the arrangements.

The exam centers have been categorised into two groups: The Category A includes government or government-aided higher secondary schools, government colleges, universities, polytechnic institutes, and government medical colleges. The category B includes reputed private institutions that have demonstrated excellence in conducting previous examinations. So far, according to reports from 63 districts, arrangements have been made for 7,63,532 candidates across 1,750 centers. In total, 2,242 centers with a seating capacity of 480 candidates each, and 2,803 centers with a seating capacity of 384 candidates each, have been identified.

Finalisation of centers for the remaining 3,12,472 candidates is underway.

As per the prescribed standards, exam centers must be located within 10 kilometers of a bus stand, railway station, or treasury and must be situated in urban areas to ensure easy access to transportation and basic amenities. To streamline management, the number of candidates per shift will be capped at five lakh. In districts where the number of candidates is particularly high, the exam will be conducted in two shifts.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath will personally monitor the preparations to uphold the principles of merit and transparency. Enhanced security measures have been mandated, including the deployment of police personnel, installation of CCTV cameras, activation of flying squads, and confidential inspection teams to maintain vigilance. Prohibitory orders will be enforced around all exam centers to prevent any disruptions.

Time to move from food security to farmer prosperity: Dhankhar

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Coimbatore (Tamil Nadu)

The time has come for national agriculture agenda to move from food security to farmer prosperity and the latter has to rise above just being a producer. Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar said here on Sunday.

Dhankhar was addressing the students and others at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) on the topic "Fostering Agri-Education, Innovation and Entrepreneurship for Viksit Bharat."

While 46 per cent of population supports agriculture, the sector contributes only 16 per cent to GDP. Institutions like TNAU should carry ahead legacy of veteran agri scientist, the late Dr M S Swaminathan in ensuring "there is quantum jump in the contribution of this sector to our GDP," he said.

Swaminathan was an alumnus of TNAU. Dhankhar said India is now a net exporter of agriculture produce with agri food products forming over 11 per cent of our total exports.

"You have to script a new chapter. It is time that our national agriculture agenda must move from food security, which was of prime importance, a national priority



Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar with wife Sudesh Dhankhar visit an exhibition on the premises of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu

at one point of time. Because we had food scarcity, our concern was food security."

"But now the time has changed. We must move from food security to farmer

prosperity. Farmer has to be prosperous and this has to evolve from institutions like yours," he said.

The gap between land and lab should be bridged and there should be a seamless connect. "Lab and land should be together and for this our 730 Krishi vighanendra must be vibrant centres of action with farmers to educate them," he said.

There should be change in curriculum which must align to make farmer an entrepreneur. "You must persuade the farmer to rise above being just a producer," the V-P said. Further, he said innovation and research initiatives must be evaluated on what impact they have on the farmer. Research has to be applied, must be based on need. It must serve a cause.

"Research must be supported, apart from the government at the Centre and the state, also by industry, trade, business and commerce," he said.

He also stressed that agri entrepreneurship needs to be given a great fillip. There are 6,000 such startups but for a country of 1.4 bn this is not enough.

"The government has started innovative schemes. The PM Kisan Nidhi Samman scheme—it is not a freebie, it is distinct from freebie. It is doing justice to a sector that is our lifeline. This is a direct transfer to the farmer," he said.

The US helps its farmers massively but it has only one motto—it will directly help the farmer.

Editor's TAKE

Honouring the bravehearts

Metro murals for Param Vir Chakra winners must be replicated for the next generation

The Delhi Metro has put up murals to honour Param Vir Chakra winners, transforming urban spaces into canvases of culture and history. Among the most poignant of these are murals dedicated to the Param Vir Chakra (PVC) winners, the highest military decoration awarded to Indian soldiers for their acts of exceptional valour during wartime. These murals not only serve as artistic tributes but also as a powerful reminder of the bravery and sacrifice of these unsung heroes.

The Param Vir Chakra is awarded to those soldiers who display extraordinary courage in the face of adversity, often paying the ultimate price for the safety and sovereignty of the nation. From the Indo-Pakistani Wars to the Kargil conflict, the valour of these soldiers has always been at the forefront of India's military history.

But while their bravery is celebrated in military circles, it is essential that these heroes are also remembered in the heart of the public's consciousness. The decision to honour Param Vir Chakra winners through murals is a step in the right direction — ensuring that their legacies are etched not just in the history books, but in the very spaces we live in.

These murals are not just decorative but hold deep significance. They act as visual landmarks in metro stations — places that see thousands of commuters pass by daily. In their fleeting moments of travel, these individuals are exposed to the murals, reminded of the heroes who defended the nation with unparalleled courage. By embedding these murals in the daily lives of citizens, the brave hearts who earned the Param Vir Chakra are given the attention and respect they deserve.

It is always crucial to honour bravehearts, as their sacrifices are the foundation of national pride and security. They fought not for fame or recognition, but out of a deep sense of duty. By commemorating them, we also emphasise the values of patriotism, sacrifice, and honour — values that are essential for the growth of a nation.

Moreover, such tributes provide an educational aspect to public art. Younger generations, who may not be familiar with the history of these gallant warriors, are exposed to their stories in a non-traditional format. A mural, rich with symbolism and imagery, can tell the story of a Param Vir Chakra recipient far more vividly than words can, offering a visual narrative that resonates deeply with those who may have never encountered these stories in textbooks. Honouring such brave soldiers in public spaces also sets an example. It helps instill a sense of respect for service members and the dedication required to protect one's country. It teaches the value of courage and sacrifice, ensuring that these principles continue to inspire future generations. The concept of using metro stations as platforms for public art has gained significant traction in India over the last decade. As urbanisation grew and metro systems expanded in major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore, authorities recognised the power of art to transform sterile, utilitarian spaces into cultural hubs.

Metro murals are not a new phenomenon, but their focus on historical figures and national heroes is a relatively recent development. Prior to this, murals mostly depicted abstract art or symbolic representations. As the push for greater recognition of national heroes grew, so did the idea to place these figures at the forefront of public consciousness through art.

Today, metro murals dedicated to Param Vir Chakra winners are part of a larger movement to preserve the history and valour of India's armed forces in a visually accessible way. For instance, the Delhi Metro, one of the busiest metro systems in the world, has a long history of commemorating India's heroes through art. Murals celebrating figures from the Indian independence struggle, as well as the brave soldiers of post-independence wars, have become a common sight. These murals are a testament to India's commitment to never forget its warriors, regardless of how much time has passed. Murals have the power to communicate in a way that transcends words. Unlike statues or plaques, which can sometimes feel distant or formal, murals exist in the everyday life of a city. They engage people on their way to work, school, or while simply waiting for a train. These works of art are a bridge between history and the present, making it easy for anyone to reflect on the bravery of soldiers and the sacrifices they made.

Moreover, metro murals are also an important form of urban storytelling. They speak to the identity of the city and, in many ways, reflect the values of its people. By painting the faces of Param Vir Chakra winners on the walls of bustling metro stations, the cities are not only recognising their importance but also making sure their legacies live on.

No Indus water for Pakistan

In a decisive shift, the Government of India has suspended the Indus Waters Treaty, marking a bold recalibration of its strategic doctrine

The recent terrorist ambush in Pahalgam of innocent tourists once again has exposed the rot of cross-border terrorism and has brought into sharp focus the question of proportionality and response. Each time blood is spilt on Indian soil by forces emanating from across the border, the nation mourns, reacts with diplomatic outrage, tightens security, and moves on. But this cycle must be broken. At some point, restraint becomes complicity.

In the aftermath of the Pahalgam attack, the Government of India has taken a bold and long-overdue step — it has moved to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), one of the most generous and lopsided water-sharing agreements in the world. This is not just a policy shift; it is a recalibration of India's strategic doctrine. Signed in 1960, in an era far removed from today's realities, the Indus Waters Treaty was an act of remarkable generosity by an upper riparian India. It granted Pakistan near-exclusive rights over the waters of the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab — rivers that originate in Indian territory.

For decades, India honoured the treaty even during full-scale wars and covert proxy conflicts. But the age of automatic magnanimity is over. The suspension of the IWT marks a decisive turn — where cooperation is no longer unconditional, and dialogue is no longer disconnected from deeds. The Jhelum River, whose headwaters lie in India, flows directly through the region where Pakistan — backed militants gunned down Indian soldiers in Pahalgam. That water, nourished by Indian glaciers and mountains, eventually sustains Pakistan's economy and agriculture.

In return, what India receives is infiltration, radicalisation, and relentless bloodshed. The symbolism is stark — and so is the imperative. The Government's decision to suspend the IWT is not an act of retaliation; it is an assertion of sovereign logic.

This move comes after years of diplomatic exhaustion. India has been patient. It has absorbed attacks in Uri, Pulwama, and now Pahalgam, while choosing to respond through global forums, dossiers, and restraint. But when a treaty becomes a strategic liability — when it empowers a belligerent neighbour with economic lifelines while they export terror — it ceases to be a diplomatic instrument and becomes a moral failure. It is important to understand that this suspension is not an arbitrary breach of international norms.

Under the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, a fundamental change in circumstances — such as the continued use of terrorism as state policy — provides legal ground



for renegotiation or withdrawal. India has exhausted the dispute resolution mechanisms under the IWT. Pakistan's habitual misuse of arbitration panels and neutral experts to stall Indian projects has made the treaty unworkable. The Government's move is legally defensible, diplomatically deliberate, and strategically astute.

What does this suspension mean in operational terms? It means that India will now assert its full entitlement over the eastern rivers, accelerating long-delayed projects like the Shahpur Kandi Dam and Ujh multipurpose project.

It means that hydropower infrastructure on western rivers will be scaled up rapidly. It means that water flowing unutilised into Pakistan will now be directed to support irrigation, industry, and drinking water needs in Jammu, Kashmir, Ladakh, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh. This is not water as a weapon.

This is water as a national right. Critics may raise concerns about international backlash or ecological consequences. But the reality is that global sentiment has shifted. The global community, increasingly aware of Pakistan's double game, is unlikely to be swayed by cries of victimhood. Moreover, India's position can be bolstered by highlighting how the IWT, signed in a pre-climate-

change, pre-terrorism era, is now outdated. The treaty does not account for glacial melt, increased water variability, transboundary hydro-politics or asymmetric warfare. A revised framework — rooted in sustainability, reciprocity, accountability and hard realism — is both logical and necessary. If anything, revising the treaty offers an opportunity to integrate climate resilience, data transparency, and regional sustainability into a 21st-century water framework. Domestically, the benefits are immense. Jammu and Kashmir, long denied full utilisation of its riverine potential due to international sensitivities, can now develop large-scale hydropower that generates jobs, stabilises grids, and improves infrastructure. Ladakh, with its unique water needs and altitude challenges, can benefit from controlled storage and adaptive distribution. Even Punjab and Haryana, battling agrarian distress, can gain from better irrigation planning. This is a national interest in action not at the cost of others, but in fulfilment of what was always rightfully ours.

By suspending the Indus Waters Treaty, India is also rewriting the rules of engagement. The message to Islamabad is clear: treaties require trust. When that trust is systematically eroded by proxy war and cross-border terrorism, the framework of cooperation cannot hold.

If Pakistan wants the privileges of diplomacy, it must first uphold the principles of peace. The days of one-sided patience are over. This is a new water doctrine: princi-

pled, powerful, and unapologetically Indian. This decision also sets a precedent for the broader region. It signals that India will no longer allow historical inertia to dictate present vulnerability. Whether it is trade, visas, culture, or water, reciprocity is the new baseline. It also reminds the world that sovereignty is not merely about borders — it is about resources, resilience, and refusal to be taken for granted.

The terrorists who struck in Pahalgam sought to destabilise the Valley. What they have done instead is awakened a deeper resolve. India has responded not just with weapons and diplomacy, but with the reassertion of control over its natural capital. Rivers, like nations, must flow with dignity. Dignity cannot coexist with duplicity. As the Indus flows through the mountains of Kashmir and into the plains of Pakistan, let it now carry a message — not of hostility, but of hard realism. India will share what is fair, but it will no longer suffer what is unjust. The Indus Waters Treaty was forged in hope. Today, it flows through hypocrisy.

If Pakistan wishes to continue enjoying the privileges of a water-sharing agreement, it must renounce the politics of bloodshed. Until then, India has every moral, legal, and strategic right to turn the tide. The suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty is not the end of diplomacy; it is the beginning of a new equilibrium, forged in the waters of resolve.

(The author is an IAS officer. Views are personal)



BHUPESH CHAUDHARY

Future belongs to XR, AR and 3D innovation

SECOND Opinion

BY SANJEEV DE

The Indian industrial landscape is undergoing a seismic shift. As products grow more complex, markets demand faster turnarounds, and sustainability becomes non-negotiable, businesses face a pressing challenge: how to communicate value effectively while keeping costs low and engagement high. Traditional tools like static brochures, PowerPoint decks, and physical demonstrations are increasingly falling short. Immersive technologies such as 3D product animation, Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and Extended Reality (XR) are stepping in to redefine how Indian industries market, sell, and train.

The rapid evolution of India's industrial sectors has exposed the limitations of conventional approaches. Companies now need ways to simplify product demonstrations, accelerate sales cycles, cut operational costs, and boost digital engagement. Immersive technologies address these needs by offering dynamic, interactive ways to showcase offerings — whether it is a heavy-duty machine, a cutting-edge vehicle, or a consumer lifestyle product. A standout example of this transformation is XploR, a new immersive tech vertical launched by BizConnect, designed to bring these cutting-edge solutions to Indian businesses. The disruptive solution was born from this very demand, aiming to make industrial marketing

smarter, faster, and more sustainable by leveraging 3D and XR tools to deliver powerful product stories. Across various industries, immersive tech adapts to unique demands and transforms operations. In manufacturing and heavy engineering, complex machinery often requires detailed explanations of internal mechanisms and workflows. 3D animations illustrate these intricacies with precision, while XR tools allow companies to replace bulky physical demos with portable, interactive kits. The goal is to empower manufacturers to showcase entire product portfolios at trade fairs using compact XR-based solutions, eliminating the need for costly shipping and setup. In the automotive and new mobility sector, from passenger cars to electric vehicles (EVs), immersive tech brings products to life. 3D modelling reveals engine functionality or vehicle interiors without dismantling anything, and virtual showrooms enable global presentations and dealer training. These immersive technologies customise presentations for diverse vehicle categories, slashing logistical challenges. For energy, power, and infrastructure companies, visualising equipment like transformers or wind turbines changes the game. XR simulations demonstrate installation, maintenance, and performance remotely.

XploR supports this by enabling energy firms to simulate smart grids or solar plant systems dynamically, streamlining sales, training, and even Government tender processes. In the lifestyle and retail space, AR-powered virtual try-ons for clothing, accessories, or furniture help shoppers see products in their own homes or on themselves, boosting confidence, cutting return rates, and bridging the gap between physical and dig-

ital shopping. Beyond innovation, immersive tech delivers measurable gains. Reducing the need for physical demos and event logistics can slash expenses by up to 70 per cent, eliminating freight, installation, and handling costs. Less reliance on printed materials and product shipping lowers carbon footprints and promotes greener practices.

Globally, immersive tech is already standard practice. In Germany, Japan, and the US, B2B Expos feature 3D displays, OEMs use VR for training, and retailers leverage AR to enhance online shopping. India, with its burgeoning industrial and retail sectors, is ripe for this shift. Indian businesses are now well-positioned to compete on this global stage, offering customised immersive solutions that modernise marketing and training responsibly. The proof lies in real-world results.

Companies worldwide have slashed costs by replacing machinery shipments with XR demos, engaging buyers faster with interactive displays, and streamlining training with virtual simulations. One industry leader points out, "We used to haul entire units to expos; now, a headset does the job better." Immersive technology is not just a glimpse into the future, it is a tool for the present.

For Indian industries, it is a chance to sell with confidence, train with clarity, and communicate with creativity. With the adoption of immersive technologies, India has the tools to lead, not follow. By harnessing 3D and XR, the industry can now meet its unique challenges and ambitions.

(The writer researcher and expert on immersive technologies and founder of BizConnect. Views are personal)

Leaderspeak



In 2013 Waqf Bill was passed unanimously by both houses of Parliament. As per the theory of separation of powers, the judiciary, the legislature, and the executive are all independent. If the Government misuses its powers or any article of the Constitution, the judiciary will intervene. Where else will we go?

ASADUDDIN OWAIISI, MEMBER OF THE LOK SABHA

Letters to the Editor

Adieu Dr Kasturirangan

Madam — Any discussion on the odyssey of India's space and research history is incomplete without making the mention of Dr Krishnaswamy Kasturirangan. He bade adieu to all of us at the age of 84, due to illness.

From holding the peculiar chairmanship of ISRO from 1994 to 2003, he held the basket of accolades and honours to his name. From the satellite missions like Bhaskara I and II, his excellent leadership has given India its first remote sensing satellite, powerhouse launch vehicle technologies like PSLV and GSLV, INSAT-2, and also chaired Earth Observation Satellite committees.

India will never forget his contribution in making Indian space and research capable of attaining self-reliance. He extended his versatile contribution to his nation's service during his entire life. From the space apex of ISRO to Rajya Sabha to Planning Commission to chairing many other committees on environment, higher education and technology, his list of national contribution is really long. India can never forget her son, who has used his academic power to revolutionise the nation in the path of progress and development. He will remain the beacon of inspiration for the upcoming generations to initiate stellar contribution in national service. As India reaches for the stars, his spirit will always shine amongst them.

KIRTI WADHAWAN | KANPUR

The war against Naxals

Madam — The anti-Naxal operations in Chhattisgarh are at their peak. Naxal hotbeds Bijapur and Sukma have never witnessed such an unprecedented "war" against the Maoists. Combing operations by more than 10,000 security personnel, drawn from various forces — including the dedicated Commando Battalion for Resolute Action (CoBRA) — have gone hammer and tongs at Naxal dwellings and explosives by working day in and day out at unfamiliar terrains.

Amidst the ongoing operations against the Naxals, Chhattisgarh Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma has proposed a dialogue with the Maoists. Quickly acting on the proposal, the Communist Party of India (Maoist) has, instead, asked for a month-long ceasefire in anti-Naxal operations to come to the negotiating table. It has to be noted that plenty of Naxals have laid down arms and surrendered before the Government. Therefore, the ceasefire request of the Naxals has to be taken with a pinch of salt by the Chhattisgarh Government.

In a serious war against any kind of terror, aimed at the State, the Government cannot let its guard down by agreeing to a truce. The dangerous Naxals may seize the ceasefire period to recoup. The Government must tread very carefully in responding to the Maoist offer. While the prospect of dialogue is welcome, it must be backed by clear surrender and accountability.

CK SUBRAMANIAM | MUMBAI

Trade tariffs are counter-productive

Madam — Trade tariffs are intended to protect domestic industries and promote local production. Taxes on imported goods make local products cheaper and more attractive, which boosts the economy and employment.

However, high import prices of raw materials increase the cost of production, burden consumers and increase inflation. Exports can become expensive and lose competitiveness in the global market.

Trade disputes around the world have affected economies, as seen in the Trump era, where some countries have benefited and others have been affected. India should maintain its export potential despite rising costs, explore new markets, support local industries and train its youth so that the economy becomes self-sufficient and can withstand trade pressures.

While trade tariffs aim to protect domestic industries, they can also increase production costs, burden consumers, and impact global competitiveness. India must focus on maintaining export potential, exploring new markets, and strengthening local industries.

By investing in workforce training and fostering self-sufficiency, the country can better withstand global trade pressures and position itself for sustainable economic growth in an evolving global landscape.

MOHAMMAD ASAD | MUMBAI

RAHUL GANDHI GETS WARNING FROM SC FOR SAVARKAR REMARKS

Belonging from a freedom fighter family, I agree with the Supreme Court (SC) that it is not good for anyone to make disparaging remarks about freedom fighters. SC's stern warning to the Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi stated that Vinayak Damodar Savarkar is revered in Maharashtra. Not only this, the SC, pointing out that Gandhi's grandmother, former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, had written a letter praising Savarkar. Pardon me, for SC to have credibility in their views, but they must first identify freedom fighters, and their actions. It is not about whether Rahul Gandhi has any obligation to accept the actions of his grandmother (or great-grandfather, or great-great-grandfather), but whether any defamation of someone who espoused the ideology of Hindu Mahasabha led to Mahatma Gandhi's assassination. Moreover, was it not part of history that Savarkar did write at least six petitions of mercy between 1911 and 1920 for his release from the notorious Cellular Jail? Or did he not

receive a pension of ₹60 per month (which was higher than the salary of a District Collector) from the British Government, after his release from imprisonment in 1924, when Savarkar was placed under surveillance and had restrictions on his movements? Not only these, was Savarkar not supposed to have supported Mahatma Gandhi's call for the Quit India Movement?

But instead of support, he was recruiting Indians for the British Army. Parivar (many among them worship the first terrorist in India, Nathuram Godse, who killed the Father of the Nation) and the people of Maharashtra, majority other Indians have not recognised Savarkar as a freedom fighter, because he was the original propounder of the two-nation theory — the theory ("there are two antagonistic nations living side by side in India") which led to the partition of India. My humble request to the Honourable Justice of the SC, the above points also need to be examined.

BIDYUT KUMAR CHATTERJEE | FARIDABAD

Regaining Pahalgam's lost paradise

A brutal terrorist attack in Pahalgam's Baisaran Valley has shattered dreams, reignited fear, and exposed the fragile calm, threatening Kashmir's hard-earned progress and hopes for lasting peace

FIRST
Column

Holidaying in happiness turned into a nightmare at the idyllic landscape of Pahalgam, often described as a 'heaven on earth,' as a scene of unimaginable horror broke open on April 22, 2025.

A brazen terrorist attack on a group of tourists in the Baisaran Valley — mainly men being killed based on their religious identity — resulted in the tragic and unfortunate loss of at least 28 lives and left over 20 others critically injured.

This barbaric act, claimed by 'The Resistance Front' (TRF), a shadow outfit of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), has not only devastated families and shattered dreams but has also ripped apart the fragile veneer of normalcy that authorities had been attempting to bring back in the Kashmir Valley.

The gruesome incident unfolded in the afternoon of 22 April when a group of four to six heavily armed militants, disguised in military — style uniforms, emerged from the dense forests surrounding Baisaran Valley (a meadow accessible only by foot or pony and an open area with no hideouts for safety). According to eyewitness accounts, the assailants systematically targeted non-Muslim tourists after checking their identities and religious affiliations.

This selective targeting underscores the malicious intent to sow communal discord and further destabilise the region. The victims included 24 tourists from various parts of India, two local residents, and two foreign nationals from Nepal and the UAE. The serene meadow erupted into chaos and grief in the attack's immediate wake.

Social media feeds flooded with harrowing videos — terrified cries for help mingled with the grim sight of lifeless bodies scattered across the once-picturesque landscape.

The emotional wounds inflicted on the bereaved families are immeasurable. While the Government's offer of ₹20 lakhs for information on the terrorists' location is one step to involve citizens' participation in nabbing the culprit, it cannot erase the haunting memories of this devastation.

The image of the young woman beside her fallen Navy officer husband, a honeymoon tragically cut short; the local pony owner's family, now without their sole provider after his courageous son tried to shield tourists; the woman forced to witness the brutal murder of her husband and son; the recently married IAF officer from Arunachal Pradesh on vacation — these stories of unimaginable loss and despair paint a stark and enduring picture of terrorism's human cost, shattering the illusion (read deception) of calm in this vulnerable region.

Following the Pahalgam attack, the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) recommended a set of five decisive actions against Pakistan — that included holding the 'Indus Waters Treaty of 1960' in abeyance until verifiable cessation of cross-border terrorism; immediate closure of the 'Integrated Check Post Attari' with a grace period until 1 May for those with valid endorsements to return; the cancellation of all 'SAARC Visa Exemption Scheme'



(SVES) visas for Pakistani nationals with a 48-hour deadline for those currently in India to depart; the declaration of Pakistan's Defence/Military, Naval, and Air Advisors in New Delhi as 'Persona Non Grata' with a week to leave (and a reciprocal withdrawal of Indian counterparts from Islamabad along with five support staff from each mission); and a significant reduction in the overall strength of High Commissions from 55 to 30 personnel by May 1, 2025.



RAJDEEP PATHAK

The Pahalgam attack has triggered widespread condemnation across India, with many viewing it as a direct assault on the nation's unity and secular fabric. Many countries, including the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, and several European

and Middle Eastern nations, especially the UAE, issued strong statements condemning the attack. They emphasised the need for international cooperation to eradicate terrorism and called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice. This incident has added a new dimension to Kashmir's intricate geopolitical scenario.

For decades, this region has been a fiercely contested territory between India and Pakistan, leading to repeated conflicts and border tensions and solidifying its status as a highly sensitive area. The situation has become even more complex with China's bordering presence. Adding to this volatile mix, Bangladesh has recently emerged as a neighbour in dispute with India, further intensifying regional dynamics.

The timing of this unrest could be a calculated move to draw international attention to the Kashmir issue and undermine India's attempts to showcase normalcy, particularly as it coincided with US Vice President JD Vance's visit and the ongoing WAQF debate. Moreover, striking at the height of the tourist season — a critical period for the local economy —

THIS REVERSES THE REMARKABLE GROWTH FROM 1.62 CRORE TOURISTS IN 2019 TO 2.36 CRORE IN 2024, WHICH HAD SIGNIFICANTLY BOOSTED LOCAL ECONOMIES AND LIVELIHOODS DEPENDENT ON THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY, INCLUDING HOTELS, HOUSEBOATS, GUIDES, AND ARTISANS, THEREBY REIGNITING FEAR AND UNCERTAINTY.

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is a calculated attempt to inflict maximum economic harm and cultivate an atmosphere of fear, thereby disrupting peace and stability.

Since the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, the Indian Government has been actively pursuing peace-building and confidence — regaining measures in Jammu and Kashmir, while also promoting local entrepreneurship and development, recognising the practicalities of the situation on ground, which had begun to yield positive results, thereby projecting a return to normalcy in the region.

The recent attack has severely impacted its sector, specifically, the recovering tourism sector in Jammu and Kashmir. Travel agencies in Delhi experienced nearly 90 per cent booking cancellations, as per media reports.

This reverses the remarkable growth from 1.62 crore tourists in 2019 to 2.36 crore in 2024, which had significantly boosted local economies and livelihoods dependent on the hospitality industry, including hotels, houseboats, guides, and artisans, thereby reigniting fear and uncertainty.

Amidst the tears of this tragedy, the response of the Kashmiri people showcased a powerful display of humanity. Immediately following the attack, residents rushed to the scene to assist the injured tourists.

They helped with evacuations, offered first aid, and provided emotional support to those traumatised by the event. A day later, on April 23, religious organisations condemned the attack and large numbers of Kashmiri citizens took to the streets in protest of this massacre, holding peaceful demonstrations with the Tricolour, besides candlelight vigils, further underscoring the rejection of violence by the local population and their desire for peace and stability.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the insidious nature of terrorism often finds fertile ground in the tilled soil of human emotions — fear, anger, and envy — emotions that are tragically amplified by the harsh realities of systemic inequalities and sometimes, forced acts of blind belief.

It is a matter of grave national concern to observe the seeds of violence taking root even in our villages, and growing children's aggressive behaviour. This early violence is often a bitter harvest of neglect, stemming from a lack of fundamental education that instils mutual respect, and the gnawing anxiety of unemployment, that darkens the horizons of their future. These interconnected issues demand serious and sustained attention to prevent the escalation of individual frustrations into larger societal threats.

While the Government is taking strong counter-terrorism measures in light of this barbaric attack, the participation of citizens in rebuilding the shaken confidence is crucial. Despite this barbaric act that threatens to undermine the hard-won progress in the Valley, rebuilding trust is now paramount. The time is now to act — in all directions, for peace is the only way.

(The writer is a programme executive Gandhi Smriti Sansthan. Views are personal)

Congress in crisis: Reform or perish

Despite the energy generated by Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo campaigns, the session offered little more than ritualistic rhetoric, exposing deep structural inertia and a status quo mindset at odds with the urgency of the political moment

Why is the Congress reluctant to change its formation in terms of organisational network, and reform the decades — old processes related to the functioning of its highest bodies — Congress Working Committee, AICC and its customary session?

Are the Congress leaders fearful of the change or intense pressure from some invisible forces that have forced them to play safe and be status quo?

These questions confronting the current Congress dispensation (read Sonia Gandhi-Mallikarjun Kharge-Rahul Gandhi powerful troika) are not new. But a refresh button pressed by the recently held non-happening Ahmedabad AICC session has once again made these questions relevant and begging for answers.

The session left all those participating or not (the party leaders rank and file, and the public) unenthused to the level of the lowest ebb, as it failed to throw an alternative vision to fight the might of Mr Narendra Modi — led well-oiled ruling network — and also to ignite the minds of the Congresspersons to make them ready for future political battles — elections or otherwise.

The abysmal affair that the AICC session turned out to be, with no clear-cut direction emerging out of it as to how the Grand Old Party (GOP) proposes to fight the politico-ideological battle on its way to strengthening its place as the premier opposition party and the unchallenged leader of the fledgling opposition combine — I.N.D.I.A. The session has ended up adding to the confusion and demoralisation rather than emanating any ray of hope.

The Ahmedabad AICC session was not different from the preceding ones held in the last few decades. At a time when the Congress is facing the toughest battle of its survival, with an all-round onslaught launched by the ruling dispensation — both at the political and Government levels — the session was expected to be a path-breaking one, if not revolutionising the party's thinking or strategy. But nothing of the sort happened.

Where does the Congress — particularly Mr Rahul Gandhi, whose remarkable Bharat Jodo Yatra and Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra had rekindled a fresh hope — go from here?

The Ahmedabad AICC session was a valuable opportunity to unveil the blueprint of what the party intends to do in the coming times. Most of the contentious but significant issues — such as strengthening and overhauling the organisational set-up, changing the style of working, purging the party of non-performers and the deadwood, and those conniving with the arch-political rivals — went missing from the discourse.

Those who had their eyes and ears fixed on the session and waited with bated breath for a new look



ANIL ANAND

agenda to unfold were despaired to be content with passing references (on these issues) made by Mr Kharge and Mr Gandhi in their speeches.

The scores of leaders and the delegates who travelled long distances to be in attendance, left without carrying a message to enthuse the workers back home, as there was none. Under the circumstances, getting back to the grassroots and convincing the people to be back in the Congress — fold remains a tall order.

Although Mr Kharge, as the Congress president, has done commendable work despite age-related and physical constraints and has left no opportunity to go inside and outside the Parliament — without

ACCORDINGLY, THE ENTIRE GAMUT OF ORGANISING AICC SESSIONS MUST ALSO DRASTICALLY CHANGE. IT SHOULD NOT BE MERELY A CUSTOMARY FULFILMENT OF ELECTION COMMISSION REQUIREMENTS BUT AN EXERCISE THAT SHOULD BE DEEPLY INTERACTIVE AND ALL, ENCOMPASSING.

fighting back on crucial issues — the challenge is more daunting for Mr Gandhi.

It remains a fact that Mr Kharge is acting only as a guardian figure, but every policy decision in the party has Mr Gandhi's stamp affixed to it. The party president has no one in doubt about his position and candidly admitted from time to time that Mr Gandhi was the real force. A very tricky situation seems to have arisen in Congress, particularly after the lacklustre AICC session and with the next set of assembly elections approaching fast.

Normally, the onset of any election has been used as a standard excuse by the Congress strategist to ward off or postpone decisions on vital issues — to the great disadvantage of the party — which is there for everyone to see at the AICC and the state/UT levels where confusion prevails supreme. The play would not work anymore.

The clock is ticking fast and the indecisiveness is getting entrenched deeper, a situation that demands

a fast remedy.

Since Mr Gandhi has led the battle from the front, notwithstanding the personalised campaign against him to tarnish his image, with two pan-India sojourns having a dramatic effect both for the party and at the personal levels, unfortunately, the spirit has not been carried forward. A weak organisation, dotted by leaders with vested interests and at times working at cross-purposes to BJP's advantage, has been the Congress's bane and spoke in Mr Gandhi's wheels.

With this backdrop, it has become imperative that Mr Gandhi must press the alarm bell. The image of indecisiveness has to be shed and the mask of the status quo has to be blown to smithereens as fast as possible.

The charity must begin at the AICC with a thorough change in its work culture. In most of the cases, it has become a parking place for those elevated as its office-bearers in charge of key tasks. A big casualty is that they tend to lose touch with the middle-lower rung leaders and workers.

Accordingly, the entire gamut of organising AICC sessions must also drastically change. It should not be merely a customary fulfilment of Election Commission requirements but an exercise that should be deeply interactive and all — encompassing. The Ahmedabad AICC session starkly revealed the Congress party's deep-rooted reluctance to confront its structural inertia and outdated processes.

Despite the hopes ignited by Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo initiatives, the session failed to offer any meaningful vision or reforms, leaving leaders and workers disillusioned.

The Congress's continued avoidance of internal overhaul — especially in revamping the AICC, energising the grassroots, and purging non-performers — has eroded morale at a time when clarity and decisiveness are critical.

With Mr Kharge serving more as a caretaker and Rahul Gandhi being the de facto decision-maker, the party can no longer afford to hide behind election timelines to defer reforms. The Congress must shed its image of indecisiveness and break free from status quoist tendencies.

Only a bold reimagining of its organisational network and work culture — starting at the top — can revitalise the Grand Old Party and position it as a credible challenger in the evolving political landscape. The clock is ticking.

Every missed opportunity deepens the disconnect with the electorate and empowers the opposition narrative. Time for half-measures is over — action must replace introspection.

(The writer is a political and national affairs analyst. Views are personal)

Massive explosion at Iranian port kills 25, injures atleast 800

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Muscat

A massive explosion and fire rocked a port on Saturday in southern Iran reportedly linked to a shipment of a chemical ingredient used to make missile propellant, killing 25 people and injuring around 800 others.

Helicopters and aircraft dumped water from the air on the raging fire through the night into Sunday morning at the Shahid Rajaei port.

The explosion occurred just as Iran and the United States met Saturday in Oman for the third round of negotiations over Tehran's rapidly advancing nuclear program.

No one in Iran outright suggested that the explosion came from an attack.

However, even Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, who led the talks, on Wednesday acknowledged that "our security services are on high alert given past instances of attempted sabotage and assassination operations designed to provoke a legitimate response."



Firefighters work to extinguish the fire on Sunday, after a massive explosion and fire rocked a port near the southern port city of Bandar Abbas, Iran on Saturday

State media offered the casualty figures, saying authorities identified only 10 of the dead, including two women.

Meanwhile, state TV reported the fire was under control and will be fully extinguished later Sunday. It also said activities have resumed at the port, showing footage of containers of a commercial ship being unloaded.

There were few details on what sparked the blaze just outside of Bandar Abbas, causing other containers to reportedly explode. Private security firm Ambrey says the port received missile fuel chemical in March. It is part of a shipment of ammonium perchlorate from China by two vessels to Iran, first reported in January by the Financial Times.

The chemical used to make solid propellant for rockets was going to be used to replenish Iran's missile stocks, which had been depleted by its direct attacks on Israel during the war with Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

"The fire was reportedly the result of improper handling of a shipment of solid fuel intended for use in Iranian ballistic missiles," Ambrey said.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas appoints new deputy

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Ramallah (West Bank)

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Saturday named a veteran aide and confidant as his new vice president. It's a major step by the aging leader to designate a successor. The appointment of Hussein al-Sheikh as vice president of the Palestine Liberation Organisation does not guarantee he will be the next Palestinian president. But it makes him the front-runner among longtime politicians in the dominant Fatah party who hope to succeed the 89-year-old Abbas.

The move is unlikely to boost the image among many Palestinians of Fatah as a closed and corrupt movement out of touch with the general public. Abbas hopes to play a major role in postwar Gaza. He has been under pressure from Western and Arab allies to rehabilitate the Palestinian Authority, which has limited autonomy in parts of the Israeli-occupied West Bank. He has announced a series of reforms in recent months, and last week his Fatah movement approved the new position of PLO vice president.

The PLO is the internationally recognized representative of the Palestinian people and oversees the Western-backed Palestinian Authority. Abbas has led both entities for two decades. Under last week's decision, the new vice president, coming from the PLO's 16-member executive committee, would succeed Abbas in a caretaker capacity if the president dies or becomes incapacitated. That would make him the front-runner to replace Abbas on a permanent basis, though not guarantee it. The PLO's executive committee would need to approve that appointment, and the body is filled with veteran politicians who see themselves as worthy contenders.

The Palestinian Authority, meanwhile, would have a separate caretaker leader, Rawhi Fattouh, the speaker of the Palestinians' non-functioning parliament. But within 90 days, it would have to hold elections. If that is not possible, the new PLO president would likely take over the position.

Al-Sheikh, 64, is a veteran politician who has held a series of top positions over decades, most recently as the secretary-general of the PLO's executive committee for the past three years. He spent 11 years in Israeli prisons in his youth and is a veteran of the Palestinian security forces — experiences that could give him credibility with Palestinian security figures and the broader public.

Now he finds himself in a strong position to shore up his power.

He is Abbas' closest aide and, most critically, maintains good working relations with Israel and the Palestinians' Arab allies, including wealthy Gulf countries. As Abbas' point man with Israel, al-Sheikh is responsible for arranging coveted travel permits for Palestinians, including VIP leaders, giving him an important lever of power over his rivals.

However, polls show al-Sheikh, like most of Fatah's leadership, to be deeply unpopular with the general public. This week's decision behind closed doors by the PLO's aging leadership is likely to reinforce its image as being stodgy and out of touch.

The move is unlikely to boost the image among many Palestinians of Fatah as a closed and corrupt movement out of touch with the general public

In a 2022 interview with The Associated Press, al-Sheikh defended his unpopular coordination with Israel, saying there was no choice under the difficult circumstances of the occupation. "I am not a representative for Israel in the Palestinian territories," he said at the time. "We undertake the coordination because this is the prelude to a political solution for ending the occupation."

The most popular Palestinian, Marwan Barghouti, is serving multiple life sentences in an Israeli prison, and Israel has ruled out releasing him as part of any swap for Israeli hostages held in Gaza by the Hamas militant group.

As Israel's war with Hamas drags on, with talk by US President Donald Trump and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of uprooting Palestinians in Gaza to relocate them elsewhere, al-Sheikh will be under mounting pressure to unite the Palestinian leadership.

The PLO is a rival for Hamas, which won the last national elections in 2006 and is not in the PLO. Hamas seized control of Gaza from Abbas' forces in 2007, and reconciliation attempts have repeatedly failed.

Abbas is still seen internationally as the leader of the Palestinians and a partner in any effort to revive the peace process, which ground to a halt when Netanyahu returned to office in 2009. The chain-smoking political veteran has clung to power since his mandate expired in 2009.

UAE president strongly condemns J and K attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Abu Dhabi/New Delhi

President of the United Arab Emirates, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, spoke with Prime Minister Narendra Modi over phone and "strongly condemned" the Pahalgam terror attack, expressing full solidarity and support with India, the Ministry of External Affairs said on Saturday.

MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal in a post on X said the two leaders agreed that terrorism must be rejected in all its forms and manifestations.

President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, further stated that Narendra Modi appreciated our sentiments and words of sympathy

The terror attack in Pahalgam on April 22, which claimed 26 lives, has drawn widespread condemnation from countries and world leaders around the globe. "President HH @MohamedBinZayed of UAE called PM @narendramodi and conveyed condolences on the loss of lives in the barbaric terror attack on the Indian soil of Jammu & Kashmir. He strongly condemned the attack and expressed full solidarity and support with India," Jaiswal posted.

He further stated that Prime Minister Modi appreciated the President's sentiments and words of sympathy.

"Both leaders agreed that terrorism should be rejected in all its forms and manifestations. PM conveyed India's strong resolve to bring the perpetrators of the heinous crime and their supporters to justice," Jaiswal said.

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

The Resistance Front (TRF), a proxy of the banned Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), claimed responsibility for the attack.

Iranian President condemns Pahalgam terror attack, calls for regional unity against terrorism

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Tehran/New Delhi

Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian on Saturday condemned the Pahalgam terrorist attack during a phone call with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and emphasised the need for regional cooperation to combat terrorism.

President Pezeshkian said that Iran unequivocally denounces such "inhuman acts", Iran's embassy in New Delhi said in a post on X.

These tragic events amplify the shared responsibility of all countries in the region and compel the regional states to eradicate the roots of terrorism through empathy, solidarity, and close cooperation, ensuring lasting peace and tranquility for the nations in the region, Pezeshkian stressed.

Referencing the valuable legacy of renowned Indian leaders, the president noted that Iran holds the Indian nation and its prominent figures, such as Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlar Nehru — "who were messengers of peace, friendship and co-existence" — in high regard. He also expressed hope that this spirit will remain in India's relations with all countries.

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Regarding mutual economic ties between Iran and India, he expressed hope for the expansion of cooperation in trade and infrastructure more than ever before.

The development of Chabahar Port can serve as a hub for strategic interactions in the region and as a vital connection point between Iran, India, and Russia, the president said.

Pezeshkian also invited Prime Minister Modi to visit Tehran, noting that Iran is keen to discuss ways to strengthen comprehensive collaboration with India in a friendly and constructive atmosphere.

In turn, Modi appreciated Iran's sympathy regarding the tragic terrorist attack in Pahalgam, noting that New Delhi fully agrees with Tehran's perspective that the fight against terrorism requires the unity and comprehensive cooperation of all countries in the region, the embassy said.

Modi also praised Iran's constructive role in fostering peace and security, adding that India supports the Islamic Republic's efforts to enhance regional and international stability.

The prime minister further emphasised the need for a diplomatic solution to differences, including those between Iran and the United States.

He expressed deep sorrow over the massive explosion at Shahid Rajaei Port and conveyed India's readiness to assist Iran in addressing the aftermath of this incident.

Modi also extended his heartfelt wishes to the Iranian president, expressed his hopes for the health of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, and conveyed his aspirations for the ongoing progress of the great nation of Iran, the embassy said.

South Africans show solidarity with India after terrorist attack

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Johannesburg

Scores of South Africans, along with members of the Indian expatriate community, have gathered to express their solidarity with India and pay tribute to the victims of the Pahalgam terrorist attack at a memorial service organised by the Consulate General of India here.

Speakers representing the Jewish and Hindu communities on Friday shared their outrage over the attack and extended condolences to the families of those killed and injured. Rabbi Aharon Zulberg condemned terrorism in all its forms.

"We know all too well the effects of terrorism... Today, we stand together with you. Let us work as one to mend this broken world, replacing hatred with understanding, love, and hope," Zulberg said in his opening prayer.

Consul General Mahesh Kumar said the attack was "a cowardly act of terror" that should be unequivocally condemned.

"This attack marks the largest number of civilian casualties in India since the 26/11 Mumbai attack (in 2008), which was also targeted against Indian civilians and some foreigners from friendly countries and others who were visiting us then," Kumar said. "The attack forms part of a recurring pattern of targeting civilians, minority communities and visitors to Jammu and Kashmir, especially following the successful and peaceful democratic elections held in the Union Territory last year," the envoy added.

Kumar also pointed to a disturbing historical parallel, noting that the Pahalgam attack coincided with the visit of US Vice President JD Vance to India — similar to an attack in March 2000 in Chittisinghpura in Jammu and Kashmir, during then-US president Bill Clinton's state visit, when 35 Sikh civilians were massacred.

"The motive behind the attack appears

very clear: to disrupt the narrative of returning peace and normalcy in Jammu and Kashmir. The region has recently witnessed record tourism and a democratic government assuming office.

The Indian nation stands united in the face of this tragedy. We will not be cowed. The memory of the victims will strengthen our resolve to eradicate terrorism and bring those responsible to justice," Kumar said. Yashika Singh, representing the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) of South Africa, also denounced the attack.

"Wherever it may be and in whichever country, we do not wish for these organisations to hijack these communities, to hijack religion, and to speak on behalf of people that they don't know themselves," Singh said.

Rajesh Gupta, CEO of Mahindra South Africa, said the attack had shamed humanity. "This barbaric act has been extremely shameful. From any part of the world, belonging to any caste or religion, what matters to us is being human, and not getting butchered like the way it happened there. I think the time has come when we, all, from all aspects of the world, should stand up against this kind of sentiments which are prevailing in such a way that they get subdued over a period of time," Gupta said.



An Indian Army personnel at the site of the Pahalgam terror attack, in Anantnag district

Russia launches 150 drones against Ukraine

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA ■ Kyiv

Russia launched a sweeping drone assault and airstrikes across Ukraine overnight into Sunday, killing at least four people, officials said, after US President Donald Trump cast doubt over Russian President Vladimir Putin's willingness to end the war.

Three people died and four were wounded Sunday morning in airstrikes on Kostyantynivka in the Donetsk region, the regional prosecutor's office said. Another person died and a 14-year-old girl was wounded in a drone attack on the city of Pavlohrad in the Dnipropetrovsk region, which was hit for the third consecutive night, local Governor Serhii Lysak said.

The attacks came hours after Russia claimed to have regained control over the remaining parts of the Kursk region, which Ukrainian forces seized in a surprise incursion last August. Ukrainian officials said the fighting in Kursk was still ongoing. Trump said Saturday that he doubts Putin wants to end the more than three-year war in Ukraine, expressing new skepticism that a peace deal can be reached soon. Only a day earlier, Trump had said Ukraine and Russia were "very close to a deal."

"There was no reason for Putin to be shooting missiles into civilian areas, cities and towns, over the last few days," Trump wrote in a social media post as he flew back to the United States after attending Pope Francis' funeral at the Vatican, where he met briefly with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. Trump also hinted at further sanctions against Russia. The Trump-Zelenskyy conversation on the sidelines of the pope's funeral was the first face-to-face encounter between the two leaders since they argued during a heated Oval Office meeting at the White House in late February. Russia fired 149 exploding drones and decoys in the latest wave of attacks, the Ukrainian air force said, adding that 57 were intercepted and another 67 jammed.

One person was wounded in drone attacks on the Odesa region and one other in the city of Zhytomyr. Four people were also wounded in a Russian airstrike on the city of Kherson on Sunday morning, according to local officials. Russia's Defense Ministry said Sunday that air defences shot down five Ukrainian drones in the border region of Bryansk, as well as three drones over the Crimean peninsula, which was illegally annexed by Russia in 2014.

Five people were wounded when Ukrainian forces shelled the city of Horlivka in the partially occupied Donetsk region, the city's Russian-installed Mayor Ivan Prikhodko said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

DECLARATION

1. I, Smt Bulbul Tilanga, wife of No. 2850246 Ex Naik (Late) Nanda Lal Tilanga and an Indian citizen by birth residing at Flat No. - 304, Forest View Apartment, New Delhi for many years do hereby declare the following:-

2. That my real and actual name is Bulbul Tilanga and date of birth is October 13, 1952 whereas my name has been erroneously endorsed as Bulbul and date of birth as June 25, 1954 by my husband in his service document as well as by PAD (AR) in the Pension Payment Order. I declare and undertake that Bulbul Tilanga and Bulbul is the same and one person having single identity, i.e. myself in all respect and liable for all names.

3. That I was married to Nanda Lal Tilanga on June 25, 1977 and Master Jai Prakash (eldest son) was born out of our wedlock on May 15, 1978. However, my date of marriage and date of birth of Master Jai Prakash has been erroneously endorsed as June 25, 1964 and May 15, 1973 respectively by my husband in his service documents.

4. That the statements and declarations made herein above by me are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Dated: April 28, 2025

Sd/- xx xx xx BULBUL TILANGA

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Arti Devi, legally wedded spouse of- No.15415710P NK/Artisan WW Sachidanand Upadhyay, Unit- Army Hospital R & R, Delhi Cantt- 110010, have changed my name from Arti Devi to Arti Upadhyay, vide affidavit dated 26/04/2025 before Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1936)/C I, No.14668083H Rank Nk Brajesh Kumar Kurmi, R/o-VIII/PO- Chhulla, Teh-Garhakota, Dist- Sagar, M.P.-470232, Now at Unit - 6121 (I) FWC (608 EME BN) C/O 56 APO, declare that I have changed my daughter's name from Diya to Diya Kurmi, vide affidavit No.IN-DL74880762436612X, Dated 26/04/2025 by Notary Public Delhi.

PD(1937)/C

BSES Yamuna Power Limited, Delhi
... A joint venture with Govt. of NCT of Delhi

NOTICE INVITING TENDER Date: 28.04.2025

E-tenders under two Bid System (Unpriced & Priced) are invited as per the following details:-

NIT No.	Brief Description	Estimated	Cost of	Due Date & Time of Submission	Date & Time of Opening
		Cost (₹)	EMD (₹)		
CMC/BY/25-26/RS/SK/M/1 (RFx no: 220000011)	SURVEY, DESIGN, ENGINEERING, SUPPLY, ERECTION, TESTING, & COMMISSIONING OF NEW 11kV SWITCHGEAR PANELS AND DISMANTLING OF EXISTING EQUIPMENTS ON TURNKEY BASIS AT DWARKAPURI GRID	3.20 Crore	6.40 Lakh	20.05.2025 15:00 Hrs	20.05.2025 16:00 Hrs

Cost of each Tender Document: ₹1,180/-

For details in respect of Equipment/BOM/Services, Qualifying requirements, Terms & conditions, purchase/submitment of tender documents, corrigendum etc. please visit our [website www.bsesdelhi.com](http://www.bsesdelhi.com) → Tenders → BSES YAMUNA POWER LTD → Open Tenders.

Head (Contracts & Materials)
Regd. Off: BSES Yamuna Power Ltd, Shakti Kiran Building, KarKadoom, Delhi-110032 | CIN: U40109DL2001PLC111525
Website: www.bsesdelhi.com



Self-Care Now a Lifestyle, Not a Luxury

In an age of overstimulation, walking into a wellness clinic is a kind thing you can do for yourself, says ABHI SINGHAL

In a typical working week, how much time do you really take out for yourself, to slow down, to recharge, or to nourish your skin and scalp? For many, the answer still leans towards "too little." But the narrative around self-care is shifting. Wellness is no longer considered a luxury; it has steadily become a lifestyle choice. As individuals strive to balance demanding careers with personal well-being, they're beginning to invest not just in rest, but in routines that nourish both body and mind.

At the heart of this evolution lies a deeper appreciation for skincare and hair care - once seen as cosmetic indulgences, they are now recognised for their therapeutic and preventive benefits.

Facials, in particular, have transformed from occa-

sional treats to essential self-care rituals. More than just a glow-up, they are a reflection of inner health and mindfulness.

Daily skincare routines, while foundational, often fall short when it comes to tackling environmental stressors, premature ageing, and hormonal fluctuations. This is where professional facial treatments come in - offering targeted solutions that cleanse, nourish and repair the skin at a cellular level. Treatments like Hydrafacials, Fire & Ice facials, nano-needling, and chemical peels are now powered by dermatologist-led protocols and medical-grade devices. These don't just make the skin look good, they help it function

SKIN ANALYSIS IS IMPORTANT

Every facial is preceded by an in-depth skin analysis, ensuring that the treatment is suited to your skin and current condition - particularly important in seasons like summer, where a simple de-tan facial without proper diagnosis can do more harm than good.

better.

But the modern wellness journey doesn't stop at skincare. A healthy scalp is just as vital as a glowing face - and this realisation has brought hair care treatments into the wellness spotlight.

Much like skin, the scalp suffers from pollution, stress, and lifestyle choices, and requires targeted care to stay healthy. Advanced therapies such as Scalp Analysis, the K Revive Scalp Spa, and Low-Level Laser Therapy (LLLT) now provide holistic solutions for common issues like hair thinning, dryness, and dandruff, while also encouraging new growth and scalp balance.

However, just like with skincare, a one-size-fits-all approach does more harm than good. It's crucial to consult a qualified dermatologist or cosmetologist before beginning any facial or scalp treatment. These professionals can assess your skin and scalp type, identify underlying concerns, and

APPROACH TO BETTER HAIR

Equally impressive is Merakki Wellness and Co., approach to hair wellness. Recognising that good hair starts with a healthy scalp, the clinic offers FDA-approved treatments like LLLT and the K Revive Scalp Spa, a luxurious therapy that

detoxifies the scalp, boosts circulation, and nourishes hair follicles from the root. With rising cases of stress-related hair fall and scalp sensitivity, such treatments are no longer a niche - they're a necessity.

curate a plan that works best for your individual needs. Choosing the wrong products or treatments without expert advice can lead to allergies, acne breakouts, or further damage.

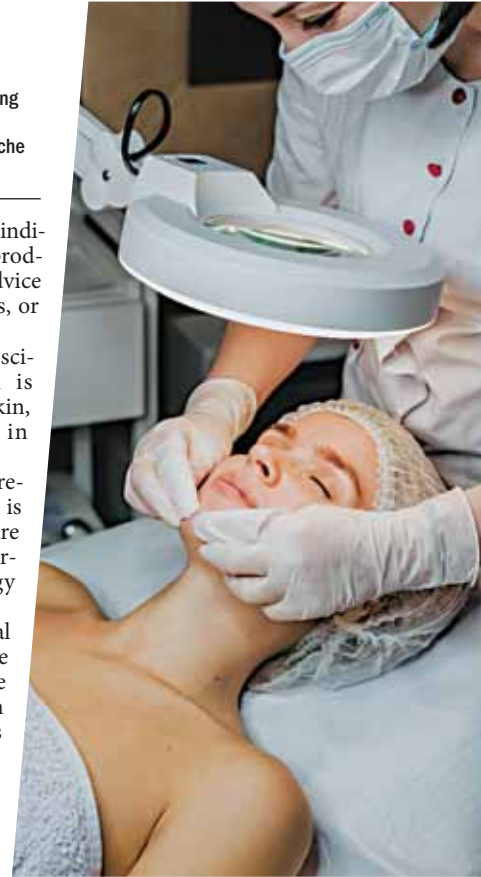
One wellness centre leading this science-meets-self-care revolution is Merakki Wellness Co., a premium skin, hair, and beauty clinic based in Faridabad.

Founded in 2023 by wellness entrepreneur Rima Narula, the centre is redefining what it means to take care of oneself - offering personalised services that blend advanced technology with natural healing principles.

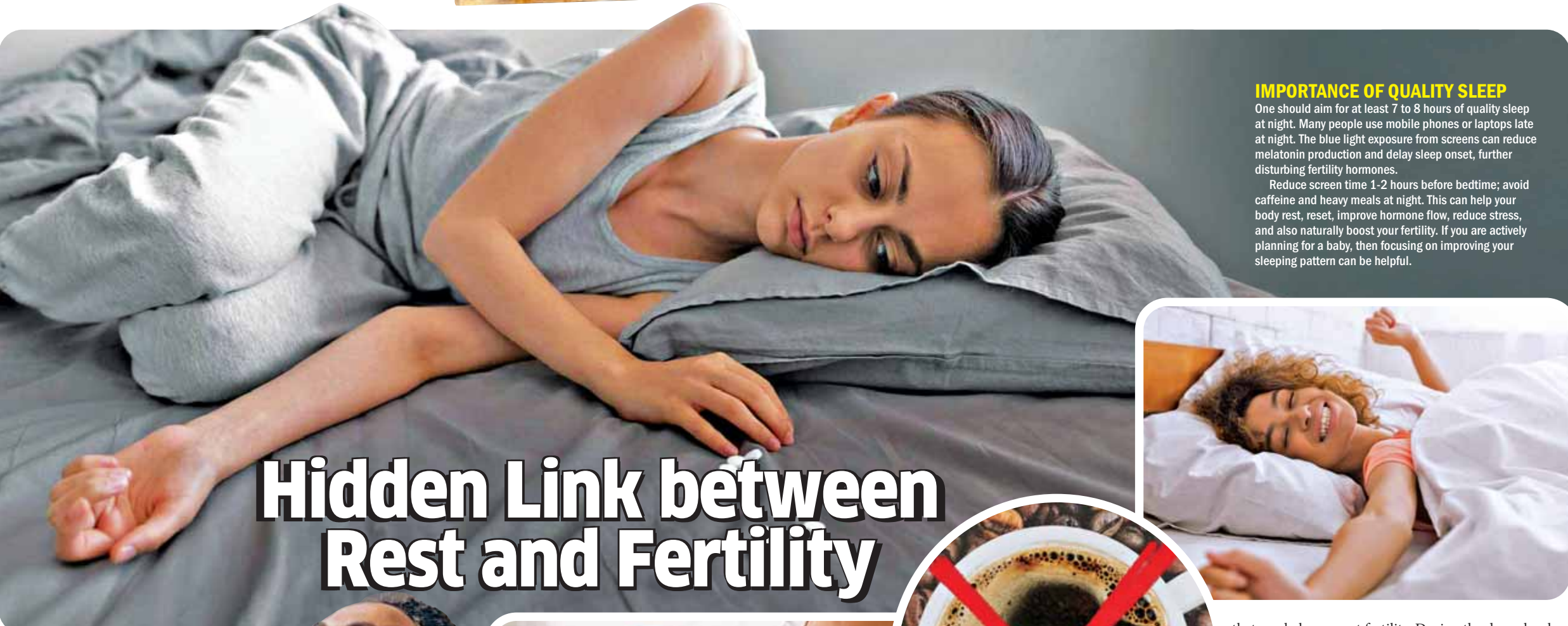
At this wellness centre, the facial menu reads like a tailored skincare blueprint: from the calming Signature Facial to the luxurious Platinum Hydra Facial, each treatment is designed to address specific concerns, whether it's pigmentation, dullness, or fine lines.

The use of LED therapy, oxygen infusion, and deep exfoliation ensures both immediate results and long-term skin health. But what truly sets Merakki apart is its commitment to expert-led care.

Every facial is preceded by an in-depth skin analysis, ensuring that the treatment is suited to your skin type and current condition - particularly important in seasons like summer, where a simple de-tan facial without proper diagnosis can do more harm than good.



What makes centres like Merakki Wellness Co. in Faridabad a growing part of people's routine is not just the range of services, but the shift in how people perceive self-care. Today, facials and scalp therapies are seen much like a balanced meal or a weekly workout - they are maintenance tools, designed to keep your body functioning at its best. It's not about vanity; it's about vitality. Because when you take time for your skin and scalp, you're not just pampering yourself - you're protecting your peace and embracing a lifestyle that puts you first.



Hidden Link between Rest and Fertility

IMPORTANCE OF QUALITY SLEEP

One should aim for at least 7 to 8 hours of quality sleep at night. Many people use mobile phones or laptops late at night. The blue light exposure from screens can reduce melatonin production and delay sleep onset, further disturbing fertility hormones.

Reduce screen time 1-2 hours before bedtime; avoid caffeine and heavy meals at night. This can help your body rest, reset, improve hormone flow, reduce stress, and also naturally boost your fertility. If you are actively planning for a baby, then focusing on improving your sleeping pattern can be helpful.



that can help support fertility. During the deep slumber, your body works effortlessly to regulate important hormones like oestrogen, progesterone, testosterone, and luteinising hormones that are essential for the production of sperm and regular ovulation. Not getting enough sleep for an extended period can easily confuse your internal clock, causing imbalances. It can increase the production of a stress hormone called cortisol. This can further lower fertility by negatively interfering with these reproductive hormones. Lack of sleep is more likely to reduce melatonin, a hormone that protects the eggs and sperm from getting damaged. Disturbed sleep patterns in women can lead to irregular menstrual cycles or problems with egg release. Poor sleep is also linked with insulin resistance, which can affect fertility; in this way, metabolic hormones and sleep are also interconnected. Chronic sleep deprivation can impact thyroid hormones which can be linked with poor sleep, and can lead to irregular periods or ovulatory issues. In men, it can lower their testosterone levels, reduce sperm quality, and also affect libido. This is why it becomes crucial to prioritise your sleep. Many people use mobile phones or laptops late at night. The blue light exposure from screens can reduce melatonin production and delay sleep onset, further disturbing fertility hormones.

count, difficulty in conceiving despite continuous efforts, or frequently feeling tired, then your sleeping pattern may be the culprit. Both women as well as men need enough sleep to ensure that their reproductive hormones are working smoothly. One must understand that good quality sleep not only helps boost fertility but also supports your overall health.

The Role of Sleep in Hormonal Balance and Fertility

Your sleep plays a vital role in efficiently balancing the hormones

al balance, particularly the hormonal system. Your hormones are responsible for controlling various key functions such as mood, energy levels, metabolism, and most importantly, reproduction. If you are someone who is dealing with problems like irregular periods, low sperm

BY DR JYOTI GUPTA

Trying to balance your hormones or start a family? Your sleep schedule might be more important than you may think. Discover how a good night's sleep can support your hormones and boost your fertility naturally.

Sleep is more than just resting your body. It is also about giving yourself enough time to do crucial internal work, especially when it comes to hormones. In today's busy lifestyle, many people often struggle to get quality sleep for even a few hours. This can lead to sleep deprivation. This can be mainly due to taking too much stress, long and busy working schedules, or excessive screen time. But what one may not realise is how a lack of sleep can silently disrupt your body's natur-



