

Trump to help solve tricky Kashmir issue

NEW DELHI, May 11: US President Donald Trump on Sunday morning lauded ceasefire understanding between India and Pakistan and said that he would increase trade with the two nations, and work with them to find a solution to the Kashmir issue.

He hailed the leaders of the both the nations and said, "Your legacy is greatly enhanced by your brave actions".

"While not even discussed, I am going to increase trade substantially with both of these great Nations. Additionally, I will work with you both to see if, after a "thousand years," a solution can be arrived at concerning Kashmir. God Bless the leadership of India and Pakistan on a job well done," Trump wrote on his Truth Social network.

While resident of border district let out a sigh of relief following the ceasefire



India hit 9 terror sites in Pakistan and PoK under Operation Sindoor on May 7

understanding between India and Pakistan, they also noted that caution needs to be maintained continuously even now.

A vendor outside Attari International Customs Post, Dharam Singh, said, "Today, there is a kind of festivity in our house."

Gurnam Singh, sarpanch

of Tendiwala, a border village of Hussainwala sector in Punjab's Ferozepur, said that good news arrived at last. "We hope to resume work in fields. We know we have to be cautious."

The US-brokered ceasefire between India and Pakistan has for now ended hostilities between

the two nuclear-armed neighbours who were on the brink of a full-blown shooting war after military confrontations involving fighter jets, missiles, precision weapons, kamikaze drones and artillery guns escalated sharply during the last four days. India struck several ter-

ror sites, air bases and military installations in Pakistan which made desperate attempts to hit military infrastructure and civilian areas in several Indian states.

The operation began with India achieving its intended target; it hit nine terror training camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK), the precision strikes killing around 100 terrorists in just 26 minutes.

"We smashed the terror infrastructure there, hit their air defences and targeted several of their airbases. The Indian forces had a good run during the last four days. Pakistan's counter-offensive was mostly thwarted," said one of the officials, asking not to be named.

A halt to the fighting — at least on paper; there were reports of Pakistan violating the ceasefire across the LoC late Saturday evening. (PTI)

Manau Shadung of Singphos set up at RCML to boost cultural heritage



ROING, May 11: A newly constructed Manau Shadung, the sacred altar of the Singpho community, was formally inaugurated at RIWATCH Museum here in a significant stride toward preserving indigenous heritage.

The consecration ceremony was attended by community elders and guests, including Mumbai CDSL chairperson Balkrishna V. Chaubal and chief risk manager Vinay Madan besides large number of Singpho community members who witnessed traditional rituals and a vibrant dance performance by elders, women and youth.

Singpho Development Society (SDS) secretary general Ongyun Maio, in his address, underscored significance of the altar in preserving the identity and spiritual essence of the

Singphos, calling it a vital symbol of their ancestral heritage.

The ceremony also marked unveiling of two educational books in Singpho language - Ruhkum (Numerals) and Shingra Ma?ka hteq Grupyin Ma?sha? (Nature and Environment). These books, part of Jinghpaw Ga Sha?rin La Gaq (Let Us Learn Singpho) initiative to support language revitalization among younger generations.

RIWATCH Centre for Mother Language (RCML) head Dr. Mechek Sampar Awan highlighted collaborative efforts between RCML and SDS in producing these books, which would serve as cultural bridge for the youth and a step toward preserving linguistic heritage.

CDSL representative

lauded cultural richness of Northeast India and encouraged the community to continue celebrating and safeguarding their unique traditions for future generations, according to a RML release.

Buddha Purnima greetings

ITANAGAR, May 11: Governor Lt. General (Retd) K T Parnaik has greeted Arunachal Pradesh people, Buddhist community in particular, on sacred Buddha Purnima and hoped the day would inspire all with Lord Buddha's timeless message of love, peace, and harmony.

"May this Buddha Purnima deepen the bonds of unity, mutual respect and emotional harmony among all communities and bring peace and well-being to every corner of our society", the governor wished in his message. (PRO)

Borgeet & Krishna Nritya reverberate Kristi Kendra



Assamese kids performing at Kristi Kenda

By Nipjyoti Kalita

NAHARLAGUN, May 11: In a touching display of tradition and talent, Assamese children performed Borgeet and Krishna Nritya at Kristi Kendra during a cultural programme here on Sunday bringing smiles and pride to

all present.

While most kids now are maniacs of mobile phones and online games, these young boys and girls, aged between 5 and 10 years, chose to learn something meaningful. They devoted 15 days to learn classical dance and devotional mu-

sic under the guidance of two experienced trainers from Assam, Mahesh Baruah and Jonali Borah. The result was a vibrant and soulful performance that connected the audience to their cultural roots.

Kristi Kendra, founded here in 1974, has been a

stronghold of Assamese culture in since decades. More than just a Naamghar, it served as a place where tradition is preserved and shared. Its annual Rongali Bihu Sammelan has long been a celebration of unity, joy and Assamese identity, bringing people of

Arunachal Pradesh and Assam together through music and dance reflecting community spirit.

Kristi Kendra president Bipul Kalita conveyed his heartfelt joy for the vibrant performance and wished the children bright and successful future. In his address, he said, "Watching these young children perform our traditional songs and dances fills me with hope. In today's fast-paced digital world, it's rare to see such dedication to culture at such a young age. I believe these children are a reflection of what we can still achieve as a community. They are the future, and they carry our heritage with them. May they grow strong, stay grounded in their values, and continue to spread the beauty of our culture wherever they go."

SC aware of Col Sofiya Qureshi's feats



NEW DELHI, May 11: While ruling in favour of granting permanent commission (PC) to women officers in Indian Army, the Supreme Court in 2020 had acknowledged the achievements of Colonel Sofia Qureshi, one of the two women officers who briefed the media on Operation Sindoor on Wednesday.

The top court, in its 17.02.2020 verdict, had said that absolute exclusion of women from all positions, except staff assignments, in the Army was indefensible and their blanket non-consideration for command appointments without any justification cannot be sustained in law, reports NDTV.

The SC, which had allowed PC to women officers in the Army, said an absolute prohibition of women short service commission (SSC) officers to obtain anything but staff

appointments evidently did not fulfil the purpose of granting PC as a means of career advancement in the Army. The SC had also referred to distinctions achieved by women officers and cited example of Col Sofia's achievements.



"Lieutenant Colonel Sophia Qureshi (Army Signal Corps) is the first woman to lead an Indian Army contingent at a multi-national military exercise named 'Exercise Force 18', which is the largest ever foreign military exercise hosted by India. "She has served in the

United Nations Peacekeeping Operation in Congo in 2006, where she, along with others, was in charge of monitoring ceasefires in those countries and aiding in humanitarian activities. Her job included ensuring peace in conflict affected areas," the SC had said.

Taking note of the GoI's affidavit in the matter, the SC had said that the counter affidavit contained a detailed elaboration of the service rendered by women SSC officers to the cause of the nation, working shoulder to shoulder with their male counterparts.

"Yet, that role is sought to be diluted by the repeated pleas made before this court that women, by the nature of their biological composition and social milieu, have a less important role to play than their male counterparts.

"Such a line of submission is disturbing as it ignores the solemn constitutional values which every institution in the nation is bound to uphold and facilitate. Women officers of the Indian Army have brought laurels to the force," the top court had said.

Born in Gujarat's Vadodara in 1974, Col Qureshi graduated with a master's in biochemistry from Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in

1997 and commissioned in 1999 as an officer in Corps of Signals. She was picked for the role of a military observer in Congo in 2006, besides being part of flood relief operations in the NE region.

The officer broke the glass ceiling when she became first woman officer in 2016 to lead its contingent at the multi-national field training exercise, Exercise Force 18, hosted by India for interoperability in sustaining peace among the ASEAN nations.

As Operation Sindoor captures national attention,



leadership of Col Sofia, has emerged as a proud symbol of courage, competence and changing gender roles in the armed forces after serving for over three decades.

During the media briefing on behalf of the GoI on Wednesday, Col Qureshi and wing commander Vyomika Singh of Indian Air Force (IAF) were

flanked foreign secretary Vikram Misri, who gave the opening remark.

The briefing came hours after Indian armed forces, under Operation Sindoor, carried out missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) in retaliation to April 22 Pahalgam terror attack.

Col Sophia, the face of the Indian Army's counter-attack on terror camps across the border, has won hearts across the country, especially in her family village in Karnataka, who celebrated her role in the op-

eration. Qureshi, along with Wing Commander Vyomika Singh, briefed the nation on Operation Sindoor, launched in response to the deadly Pahalgam terror attack that claimed 26 Indian lives. The precise and powerful retaliation underscored both military might and the rising leadership of women in uniform.

"We were (Contd on P.3)

APU conducts its 8th convocation ceremony and 13th foundation day

Maksam Tayeng

PASIGHAT, May 11: Apex Professional University (APU), Pasighat, celebrated its 8th Annual Convocation with grandeur and academic spirit on Saturday at its main campus in Pasighat. The ceremony marked a significant milestone in the academic journey of the graduating students and highlighted the university's commitment to excellence in education.

The event was graced by Tapi Darang, MLA, 38 Pasighat East as Chief Guest, and Prof. Jiten

Hazarika, Vice-Chancellor of Dibrugarh University, as the Guest of Honour, who delivered the convocation address. While Pankaj Lamba, Supt. of Police, East Siang, delivered the keynote speech. The function was presided over by Acharya Dhanwant Singh, Chancellor and Founder of APU.

The programme commenced with a tree plantation drive by the dignitaries, followed by the ceremonial convocation procession, university anthem, and lighting of the lamp. Prof. Naseer Ahmed Khan,

Vice-Chancellor, APU welcomed the guests and presented the university report while emphasizing on APU's academic advancements and its efforts to blend Indian knowledge systems with contemporary education. He also announced the relocation plans of the faculty of education and law to the 5th Mile Campus soon.

In his address, Tapi Darang urged the graduates to prepare for life's real challenges post-graduation while emphasizing on the growing role of Technology in Education (Contd on P.3)

APQS joins HIV/AIDS sensitization prog



NAHARLAGUN, May 11: AP QueerStation (APQS) actively participated in a sensitization programme on HIV/AIDS prevention, organized by Arunachal Pradesh State AIDS Control Society (APSACS) in collaboration with Arunachal Network of Positive People (ArNP+) that focused on critical role of community-led efforts in prevention and awareness of the killer

virus across the state. APQS founder Sawang Wangchha, speaking as a resource, highlighted the stigma faced by gender and sexual minorities and stressed on collective responsibility of society to challenge and dismantle the harmful stereotypes unfairly associated with the LGBTQIA+ community.

HIV-related stigma originated in 1980s for lack of

awareness and government support in the U.S. leading to marginalization of gay men, he said, adding "The queer community, which was blamed, eventually led the charge in raising awareness". He also advocated open conversation not only about HIV/AIDS but also about gender and sexual identity to end the stigma for social inclusion.

Arunachal (Contd on P.3)

Week-long anti-drug awareness begins

PASIGHAT, May 11: NGO WASE in collaboration with East Siang district administration and police began a week long anti-drug awareness campaign under Mission Parivartan at Sille-Oyan on Saturday to strengthen the anti-drug squad to dismantle drug networks and enhance legal action by involving youth through voice

against drug abuse (VADA) and rural women.

When person is addicted, it affects the family emotionally, psychologically, financially and the society as a whole, DHS joint director T. Tali said and exhorted students to refrain from drugs while urged parents to monitor their children and create healthy environment in

family.

Addressing HGBs, GBs, officers, students and public present, a recovered addict Mingat Mibang said that quitting addiction is a process and needs determination, support of parents, proper counseling and rehabilitation. Thus, all out efforts are needed to eradicate drug menace. (DIPRO)

The Arun Khabar

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Digital lynching torches India’s soul

Among the tormented victims was a young widow, her life shattered by the Pahalgam terror attack that claimed her husband, a soldier, days after their wedding.

India’s digital landscape, a roiling cauldron of millions of social media users, has become a charnel house of the human spirit. Faceless trolls, shrouded in anonymity’s toxic veil, have turned keyboards into guillotines. They are spewing venom that corrodes the nation’s soul. Their targets? A grieving widow, a cricketing legend, a tennis pioneer, a Bollywood icon, a sports presenter, and countless others. These are not mere words but digital pyres, incinerating privacy and igniting virtual lynching. Algorithms, the infernal architects of this chaos, have transmuted personal pain into viral carnage, while India’s heart bleed, drowning in this digital pestilence.

Among the tormented victims was a young widow, her life shattered by the Pahalgam terror attack that claimed her husband, a soldier, days after their wedding. Her plea for unity—“We don’t want hate against any community; we seek peace and justice”—had been met with a torrent of cruelty. “Crocodile tears for martyr money!” one X post sneered, racking up thousands of likes.

Another jeered, “Your husband was a coward—good riddance!” It was shared across platforms, each retweet a lash on her grief. Her televised sorrow, meant to honour her husband’s sacrifice, has been twisted into a public pillory, her dignity shredded by a mob algorithm. While Operation Sindoor delivered instant justice, her retort was equally sharp when she said: “Those who spread hatred have no right to live or to be on this earth.”

Earlier, a cricketing titan, once India’s pride, had endured a similar crucible. The 2023 World Cup failure had unleashed a storm: “Selfie-obsessed has-been!” a viral post had spat, amplified by thousands. In 2022, a leaked video of his hotel room—personal belongings exposed—had sparked sneers: “Too fancy for India!” shared relentlessly.

His Instagram plea—“This invasion of my privacy is NOT okay”—had been mocked. Worse, in 2021, his infant daughter had faced rape threats, with posts like “Your kid will pay for your failures!” spreading like wildfire. These were not critiques but assaults, his family’s sanctity turned into a blood sport by algorithms that thrive on outrage.

Others had fared no better. A tennis trailblazer, vilified for her cross-border marriage, had faced relentless hate. “Traitor who sold out to Pakistan”, a 2020 post had roared, gaining thousands of impressions. Even her solidarity with the Pahalgam victims drew venom: “Go back to your husband’s country!”

A sports presenter, attacked for sharing her newborn’s photos, had faced cruelty: “Using your kid for fame”, one post sneered. amplified across feeds. Her retort—“Our son is NOT your spectacle”—had been drowned in scorn. Their privacy had been reduced to ash, their dignity a fuel for algorithmic inferno.

This torment was no fluke. It was engineered. India’s vast digital populace has formed a crucible where hate festers. Algorithms, built to maximise engagement, are acting as bellows, fanning outrage over truth. Algorithmic amplification has yielded much higher dividends than stocks have ever done.

A 2023 study showed platforms like X and TikTok amplified divisiveness, with hate posts reaching millions via bots and hashtag hijacking. This was digital lynching, a public crucifixion where algorithms drove the nails. A widow’s grief, broadcast on news, has been hijacked into a troll carnival, with posts like “She’s fishing for sympathy” amplified to millions.

As a consequence, the cultural rot had spread, sowing division and fracturing communities. A widow’s call for peace had been twisted into “appeasement”, fuelling communal venom. The National Commission for Women had decried her trolling, yet the mob raged on. Celebrities have fled from platforms—Aamir Khan in 2021, citing “toxic scrutiny”; Sonakshi Sinha in 2020, “sick of hate”. This echoed historical purges—Salem’s witch hunts, India’s communal riots—where unchecked mobs devoured the innocent. India’s digital square is no agora; it’s a pyre for the blameless.

Studies show trolling triggered anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress, with most Indian users reporting mental strain. A credible digital content creators, trolled for a self-love video, had shared: “The hate ate my soul—I couldn’t sleep for weeks.” Comedian Agrima Joshua, targeted in 2020 for a joke, had faced death threats: “We’ll burn you alive”, one troll had written; the post was shared thousands of times.

Digital lynching torches India’s soul
Pakistan's violation of the ceasefire just hours after agreeing to it and what it underlines

India’s legal framework is a frayed shield, offering scant protection. The IT Act of 2000 penalised cyber harassment, but enforcement lagged. A ban on some foreign YouTube channels post-Pahalgam targeted external threats, but domestic trolls are roaming free. The ‘Kulhad pizza’ couple, Sehaj Arora and Gurpreet Kaur, fled to the UK this year after relentless trolling, hacking and death threats like, “We’ll gut your family”. They didn’t get any justice. Platforms faced little accountability, their moderation remaining a mockery. A 2023 report had flagged “addictive algorithms” as hate enablers, yet reforms stalled. This legal void emboldened trolls, mocking victims without fear.

Social media giants aren’t bystanders. They are profiteers. Algorithms rewards ‘rage farming’, ensuring posts like “She’s a con” or “He’s a fraud” flood feeds. X’s global team has resisted foreign censorship this year, citing free speech, but has sidestepped domestic hate. Meta, facing a US antitrust trial, has deflected blame. Yet, all platforms share the sin: prioritising profit over ethics. A Canadian study found a quarter of users encountered ‘polarising’ fake content, a tactic Indian trolls have mastered. Platforms needed to dismantle these algorithms and ban trolls en masse, or stand complicit in this digital carnage.

HELP US TO HELP YOU

The members of Arunachal Pradesh Union of Working Journalists (APUWJ) and the Arunachal Press Club (APC) have unanimously taken the following decisions applicable for newspapers published from Arunachal Pradesh:

In view of too many appointment orders, formation of unions and forums beginning from colony, village level to state level, congratulatory and thank you notes clogging up various newspapers offices published from the state, the APC and APUWJ unanimously deem it fit to set a standard for accepting such releases for printing.

Henceforth, releases pertaining to appointments and resignation of various office bearers of any organisation, formation of organisations, **congratulatory and thank you notes** and intimation of programme would not be entertained.

Press releases containing demands not addressed to the state government/ authorities concerned; bandh announcements not addressed to the Deputy Commissioner/ District Magistrate; demands made to the state government but not addressed to the Chief Minister, the Chief Secretary or the Minister concerned; and payment demands addressed to the editor instead of the HoDs concerned will not be entertained under any circumstances from any quarter.

In light of the constant menace of bandh calls given by various organisations/ unions etc and its subsequent withdrawals which has become a public nuisance, it will be mandatory for such bodies to convene a press conference in Itanagar to address media persons before declaring any bandh at Capital Complex. Failure to do so will result in non-publication of their ‘news’.

Condolences will not be entertained anymore unless the person in question was a prominent personality **at the state level**. Anything else can go as obituary/paid news.

NOTE: Unsolicited telephonic or personal enquiries shall not be entertained. Any attempt to influence the above rules shall tantamount to interference and may invite legal actions. Therefore, the newspapers request all sections of society to co-operate for independent functioning of the media in the state in their own interest.

India has avenged Daniel Pearl's killing in Bahawalpur

India’s deepest strike inside Pakistan was at a terror factory in Bahawalpur. Daniel Pearl exposed it as such 23 years ago. The killing of Abdul Rauf Azhar there brings some justice in the story that led to the reporter’s grisly murder.

Asra Q Nomani

I still remember the chill I felt when I first heard of Bahawalpur. It was late January 2002. My dear friend and colleague, Wall Street Journal reporter Daniel Pearl, had just left a home I had rented on Zamzama Street in Karachi for an interview from which he never returned. We soon learned terrorists in Pakistan had kidnapped Danny. As we tried to trace Danny’s steps, one name kept surfacing: the dusty city of Bahawalpur.

In the days that followed, we learned terrorists had murdered Danny, brutally beheading him and cutting him into pieces. Twenty-three years have passed, but the chain of events that led to Danny’s murder continues to haunt us—and it runs straight through Bahawalpur.

This week, India’s Operation Sindoor launched an airstrike on Bahawalpur and other terrorist targets, killing terrorist chief Abdul Rauf Azhar. To be clear, Abdul Rauf did not kidnap or murder Danny. But in 1999, he masterminded the hijacking of Indian Airlines flight 814, which forced India to release three terrorists - including his brother, Masood Azhar, and a British Pakistani, Omar Sheikh, who would go on to lure Danny into captivity. Another brother, Ibrahim Azhar, was a hijacker on Flight 814.

Abdul Rauf opened the prison door that allowed a kidnapper to walk free. His



killing is a reminder that those who enable terror must answer for their actions.

Bahawalpur, where Abdul Rauf enjoyed a safe haven, is more than just a city. Since the 1990s, it has been a hub for a state-sponsored terrorism industry that has enabled global violence—killing innocents in India, Pakistan and around the world. It’s where the story of Danny’s murder began.

In late December 2001, Danny travelled to Bahawalpur to investigate the militant groups that Pakistan’s leaders claimed to be cracking down on. What he found was the opposite: active recruitment, open bank accounts soliciting jihadist donations, and posters glorifying holy war still plastered on office walls. On recruitment day, he walked into the offices of Jaish-e-Mohammed, the very group founded by Abdul Rauf’s brother, Masood Azhar, after being released. On January 2, 2002, Danny published a prescient article from Bahawalpur. His headline could just as easily be written today: ‘Militant groups

in Pakistan thrive despite crackdown’.

Danny discovered the truth: the crackdown was a lie. “A nearby Jaish-e-Mohammed regional centre was still operating Thursday, its traditional recruiting day,” Danny wrote. “The group’s name had been painted over, but the posters praising holy war were still hung inside.” A Jaish official, he reported, was “waiting for people to show up to register for jihad”.

Danny was no cowboy. His trip was calculated and low-risk—at the time, no foreign journalist had ever been kidnapped in Pakistan. In an email, Danny told me: “I’m anxious to go to Afghanistan, but I’m not anxious to die.” He shared the article with his mother, worried about her son’s safety like any parent would be, and added this warning: “Don’t freak out too much about my story in today’s paper.”

What he wrote from Bahawalpur was prophetic—the militant infrastructure was alive, well-funded and protected by the state. He warned the world of Pakistan’s terrorism industry. And then it

destroyed him.

Two of the men involved in Danny’s kidnapping were also from Bahawalpur. Arif, or Hashim Qadeer, who arranged the meeting with Omar Sheikh that set Danny up for abduction, and Salman Saqib, who picked up photos of Danny in captivity in chains with a gun to his head. These were not abstract extremists. They were foot soldiers raised in the very soil where India struck this week.

I’ve lived this story as a friend and a colleague, studying every step of Danny—and the militants. And it’s clear: Bahawalpur was not a backdrop. It was a base.

The killing of Abdul Rauf does not bring Danny back. It does deliver some justice. And it brings the world a step closer to recognising the deadly consequences of appeasing extremism. Pakistan’s military and intelligence establishment have long used men like Abdul Rauf, Masood Azhar and Omar Sheikh as strategic assets against India—only to see them bring ruin to Pakistan itself: to schoolchildren, civil society leaders and journalists.

What India did this week was not only a military action. It was a strike on impunity. It was a historical reckoning. Bahawalpur is a symbol of the terror infrastructure that the Pakistani state has harboured, protected and exported.

Daniel Pearl in a photograph taken by his captors. All-party meet: Centre

says 100 terrorists killed in ‘Operation Sindoor’ as Opposition backs response

Danny’s father, Judea Pearl, continues to call for accountability for the men who kidnapped and murdered Danny. In 2021, despite protests from Danny’s parents, the Pakistani Supreme Court freed from jail the only four men convicted in Danny’s kidnapping—Omar Sheikh, Fahad Nasim Ahmed, Syed Salman Saqib and Shaikh Muhammad Adil—and the Pakistani state today protects Omar Sheikh. Another Pakistani, Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, confessed to beheading Danny after orchestrating the 9/11 attacks out of safe houses in Pakistan, and he sits in Guantanamo Bay without trial for Danny’s murder.

There’s a deeper pattern of impunity here. The same moral inversion used by Pakistani terrorists—where they kill across a border and then claim to be victims—is now used by others: Hamas, Iran and their defenders in the West. They hijack not just planes, lives and nations—but the truth.

Danny saw through the deception. He gave us the reporting to understand the truth. And now, 23 years later, we must pay attention to his reporting—and we must finish the story he couldn’t. Danny’s life represented truth, courage and humanity. His reporting and his murder was a warning to us about the home-grown terrorism industry in Pakistan. We must continue to listen.

Two Years on, Manipur Looks to be an Incurable Wound

The strife in Manipur continues to be treated as a simple ‘law and order’ problem, with little attention to any constructive initiatives.

Ajai Sahni

Without even a ripple, May 3, the date marking the completion of two years of ethnic strife in Manipur, has passed. For almost two years now, an Indian state has had an arbitrary border drawn through it, separating two warring communities, with an intervening ‘buffer zone’ or ‘no man’s land’ patrolled and monitored by the Army and the CRPF. Since Independence, nowhere in India has such a situation prevailed. More dangerously this is being allowed in a border state that abuts the violence-wracked and failing state of Myanmar, and is not far distant from another country on the edge of chaos—Bangladesh. And yet, the Centre’s silence on Manipur speaks volumes on its orientation towards this troubled Northeastern province. The strife in Manipur continues to be treated as a simple ‘law and order’ problem, with little attention to any constructive initiatives.

The reliance on blunt force is evident even in attempts at ‘normalisation’, such as the forcible restoration of ‘free movement’ between the divided Hill and Valley areas on March



8, under directives of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. Despite continuing unrest, it had been decided that bus services covering four routes connecting Imphal, Senapati, Kangpokpi, Bishnupur and Churachandpur, would be restored. A single bus left Imphal, under armed escort, but was met with protests, road blocks, barricades and stone pelting, as it entered ‘Kuki areas’. Eventually, the bus was overturned and a security vehicle was set on fire a few kilometres beyond Gangphai in Kangpokpi District. One person was killed and over 20 injured in clashes, as security forces sought to restore order. The entire enterprise was then abandoned, and the move only cemented the orchestrated hatred between Kukis and Meiteis.

It is significant that, despite continuous troubles, a complete absence of any process of normalisation,

the comprehensive failure to recover thousands of weapons and large quantities of ammunition looted from state armouries, and mounting evidence of bias and, indeed, political mischief by the powers that be, prominently including the state’s chief minister, Biren Singh, the government was allowed to continue for more than 21 months after the start of the troubles, and was pressured to resign only on February 9. Crucially, the troubles were created and persisted under a ‘double-engine government’, with a BJP regime both at the Centre and in the state.

It is useful to recall, moreover, that the enduring insurgencies in the state were all but over, when intentional mischief plunged it into renewed ethnic strife. The year 2022 saw just seven insurgency-linked fatalities. There was an abrupt escalation to 157

such fatalities in 2023, with just four of these occurring between January and May. Total fatalities in both insurgent and ethnic violence exceeded 200 in 2023, and there was a significant overlap between the two categories, making a clear separation difficult. Insurgency-linked fatalities fell to 87 in 2023, but the largest drop was in the ‘insurgent’ category, from 73 killed in 2023, to 30 in 2024. Several dormant Kuki and Meitei insurgent groups have revived their violent activities, and there has been a significant escalation in turf wars. Indeed, of the 28 killed in 2025 (South Asia Terrorism Portal data till May 3), 27 were insurgents, of who 24 were killed in a running battle between Manipur-based insurgent formations, including the People’s Liberation Army/ Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup/ United National Liberation Front-Koireng and the Peoples Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak, on the one hand, and the Myanmar-based Kuki National Army-Burma on the other, in the Kamjong district of Manipur, near the Indo-Myanmar border, between January 27 and 30. Abductions, extortion and other crimes have also become frequent. Of over 6,000

weapons looted from various state armouries, just half have yet been recovered, most of them after President’s rule was imposed in February, further testimony to the prejudicial actions of the Biren Singh regime. There are, of course, voices of reason, both in the political leadership and in civil society, but these remain on the periphery of the dominant and polarised discourse in the state. Crucially, any significant step towards reconciliation would require powerful political initiatives from the Centre to act against the extremist elements in the present political spectrum, but there is little evidence of any such measures. Moreover, there is little trust among the larger population in the good faith of the Centre’s intentions and interlocutors.

Violence and political malfeasance have created an abyss of hatred and suspicion between the Kukis and Meities in Manipur, and this is unlikely to be filled in the foreseeable future. If political and administrative actions continue to compound the injuries on both sides, however, this will become an incurable wound that can only produce wider harm in India’s fragile Northeast.

'New India' will track and eliminate terrorists : no matter where they hide: Assam CM



GUWAHATI, May 11 (PTI) Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma on Sunday said 'Operation Sindoor' has shown that 'New India' will track terrorists and kill them. He lauded the armed forces for eliminating terrorists and damaging critical military and terror infrastructure in Pakistan during the operation. He also praised Prime Minister Narendra Modi for leading the world's oldest

civilisation with maturity and urged BJP workers to inform the public about India's growing role as a global leader. "As I watched the excellent briefing by our DGMOs a short while ago, we remain profoundly grateful to the exemplary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri @narendramodi Ji and our valiant Armed Forces," Sarma said in a post on X. He maintained that it has been "demonstrated with

irrefutable evidence that #OperationSindoor has eliminated over 100 Pakistani terrorists and damaged critical military and terror infra of our enemy". "But above all it sent a strong deterrence that New India will track terrorists to the ends of the earth and eliminate them, no matter where they hide - at land, air or sea," Sarma added. Later, addressing party members at the state BJP headquarters here, Sarma

lauded Modi's leadership. "Modi is not coming on TV. But he is holding a series of meetings. There is no immaturity displayed. He has shown how to lead a matured nation," he said. On Pakistan prime minister making statements over the current situation, Sarma said, "Pakistan is a fragile state, a failed state. And India is the oldest civilisation and Modi is leading it." Dismissing Pakistan's claim of hitting Indian targets, the chief minister said, "We are all here and if something were to happen in Punjab or Jammu and Kashmir as claimed by them, we would have known. The fact is that nothing has happened." Asserting that India has emerged as a global power, he urged BJP members to make the people aware of this powerful position the country holds. "The BJP members have to tell the people that we are in a position now which other nations want to emulate," he claimed, without elaborating.

Assam govt to adopt austerity measures in solidarity with armed forces: Himanta

GUWAHATI, May 10 (PTI) The Assam Government has decided to adopt austerity measures in solidarity with the armed forces and extend all support to family members of soldiers from the state, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma said on Saturday. "Given the prevailing situation, the state cabinet has decided on several austerity measures, which include not holding any seminars, conferences, workshops, and commemorative events," Sarma said at a press conference to mark the completion of his four years in office. He also presided over a cabinet meeting before the press conference. During the next seven days, officials of all districts would be asked to identify families of the armed forces, form support groups and help them in all possible manner, he said. "We want to take care of the family members of the soldiers till they come back from the battlefield so that the person at the war front is not

worried about their families," the chief minister said. Army and air force camps are there in Assam and other northeastern states where movement of troops is taking place, Sarma said. "I have directed the district commissioners to be in close contact with the officials of the armed forces to facilitate troop movements," the CM said. Though the decisions were taken in view of the India-Pakistan conflict, the directors general of military operations (DGMO) of the two countries later in the day agreed to stop all firings and military action on land, air and sea with effect from 5 pm on Saturday. The cabinet has decided that coordination mechanisms at the district and state levels shall be activated for smooth movement and logistical facilitation of official contingents or convoys of defence forces, he said. The district commissioners and superintendents of police will intensify coordination among civil, police

and emergency service wings to ensure uninterrupted civic services. He also appealed to the people to maintain communal harmony as people of all religions are in the armed forces, and "we should not write or say anything that will affect their morale". "There is unity among the members of the armed forces, and the same should extend to the society at large. Pakistan is trying to divide us. We should not allow them to be successful," he said. This is a critical period for us and not the time to "invoke religious, ethnic and regional identities. We should remain as India and support Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the armed forces," the Assam CM said. The cabinet has also decided that hospitals and health institutions shall maintain an updated registry of voluntary blood donors, particularly those with rare blood groups. Fuel and medical inventories in the hospitals are to be reviewed to ensure ad-

equate availability for emergencies, he said. Ministers and officials of the state government will refrain from foreign travel or non-essential outstation tours, the CM said. It has also been decided that officers must refrain from unofficial travel and remain within their place of posting unless otherwise permitted. If required, government employees currently on leave, excluding maternity/medical, may be recalled as and when decided by the competent authority and must report within 24 hours. All departments and institutions should display exemplary discipline, efficiency and austerity, reflecting the state's collective sense of duty and solidarity, he said. The cabinet also decided that there shall be no procurement of vehicles, except in the case of police requirements, furniture or office infrastructure, while working lunches, official dinners, cultural functions, and entertainment expenses shall be avoided.

BJP leads in counting of votes for Assam panchayat polls



GUWAHATI, May 11 (PTI) The BJP is leading in the Assam panchayat polls' counting, which is underway across the state since Sunday morning amid tight security, officials said. Panchayat elections took place in two phases on May 2 and May 7 in 27 districts for the first time after the delimitation of constituencies. The counting of votes for both phases is being held simultaneously since 8 am. According to Assam State Election Commission (ASEC) data, the BJP has won six members of Anchalik Panchayat constituencies in Majuli district. "We have not got any

other trends or results yet from the districts. Counting of panchayat votes is a very complex job with three ballot papers for each panchayat. It will continue till tomorrow night," ASEC Commissioner Alok Kumar told PTI. The total seats include 21,920 Gram Panchayat (GP) members with 10,883 seats reserved for women. Voting also happened for 2,192 Anchalik Panchayat (AP) members with 1,124 reserved for women and 397 Zilla Parishad (ZP) members with 199 seats reserved for women. Sources said the BJP is leading in 355 AP seats and its ally AGP in 42 seats, while the Congress is ahead

in 21 AP constituencies. In the case of ZP, the safron party is marching ahead in 35 and AGP in two. Congress is not leading in any ZP seat yet. The GP members were not allowed to contest on party tickets and they were all independents. As many as 2,912 candidates have won uncontested – 34 ZP members, 311 AP members and 2,567 GP ward members. "The counting of ballot papers began in all the 39 centres across the state. The counting agents of candidates reached early in the morning for the exercise," a senior official said. In view of stray violence and disruptions during vot-

ing, the administration has arranged adequate security measures in all the counting centres to avoid any such situations, he said. "There are thousands of seats in the election. We will try to complete the counting as soon as possible. However, we believe that it is likely to stretch till tomorrow," the official said. A total electorate of 1,80,36,682, comprising 90,71,264 men, 89,65,010 women and 408 others, were eligible to exercise their franchise in 25,007 polling stations. According to official data, 74.71 per cent of the eligible voters exercised their franchise during the panchayat polls.

Women who are left behind: Another side of Assam floods

DHEMAJI (ASSAM), May 11 (PTI) "Will our house still be standing when we return some day? What about the land?" Lakhisekhi Bara's ears ring with these questions from her husband every day. Questions to which she has no answer. Bara (52) moved to Assam's Dhemaji from a neighbouring district with her daughter-in-law when the 2023 floods rendered them homeless while the men of the family migrated to Chennai to work as construction labourers. The two women are among several to have been left behind in the district by the men in their families who moved to other states due to climate-induced income loss. "We used to work the farmland but agriculture has become unpredictable while daily wage work is not regularly available. It was not possible to run the household with this income. As a result, my husband and our son moved to Chennai two years ago. We moved to Dhemaji because other women from our extended family live here and we can be there for each other in times of need," she tells PTI. "Whenever my husband calls, he wonders if our land will be safe to resume agriculture some day. What if it is completely washed away? That is our only asset," she says. Among the country's 250 most backward districts, Dhemaji is severely flood-prone. Official estimates suggest more than 23 lakh people in 28 districts of Assam in India's northeast have been affected by floods. The unpredictable Brahmaputra river -- originating in the Tibetan Plateau and flowing through Arunachal Pradesh and Assam before emptying into the Bay of Bengal -- shapes the state's flood landscape. During a visit to Bara's village, this PTI correspondent could barely spot a working-age man. Most of the men still left in the village were either senior citizens or children. Roopa Baruah (32) lives in a 'chang ghar' -- a temporary

home built on bamboo stilts -- with her two children, aged four and six, while their pucca house built under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna lies abandoned. Her husband works in a Bengaluru rubber factory and hasn't been back for two years. "The pucca house is located in a far-flung spot in the village. If it gets submerged, I cannot rush out on my own with the children. So I live in a 'chang ghar' here with other women nearby. Sometimes, if my children are ill, it is easier to get help here," she tells PTI. "My husband sends money. He asks if we will be able to live together in our house some day. The children miss their father but what can we do when there are no income sources here? If we also migrate, it will be expensive and our house here may be gone forever," she says. The majority of Dhemaji's residents live in 'chang ghars', with their livestock kept below. During floods, however, the animals have to be accommodated inside to save them from being washed away. When living at home becomes perilous, they move away from the embankment and return after the waters recede. A working-age man, Bokul moved back to Dhemaji four months ago after losing an arm in a factory accident in Kerala. He now lives with the women of the family. "Most of the men have left the village to make a living in other states. It is mostly the elderly or those with disabilities, like me, who live here since we cannot go out to earn. I help my wife and my brother's wife, who lives here with her three-year-old son. Nobody wants to migrate but there is no choice," the 26-year-old says. Rebuilding homes, collecting firewood, fishing, stitching and weaving for pit-tances, besides helping children and livestock adjust to a new place as floods render them homeless every year are among the changing roles women in the district perform due to the migration of men that has increased

their vulnerability and workload. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati, researchers studying the climate-induced migration from the district believe Dhemaji serves as a compelling case due to its extreme vulnerability to environmental changes, particularly flooding. The study is being funded by the Indian Institute for Human Settlements and Population Council. According to IIT, Guwahati, professor Anamika Baruah, who is leading the study, recurrent floods lead to displacement, erosion, prolonged water-logging and the destruction of livelihood -- especially agriculture, the district's economic backbone. "Climate change further intensifies these challenges, increasing the frequency and the severity of floods, resulting in both seasonal and permanent displacement. Beyond the environmental impact, the socio-economic consequences in Dhemaji are substantial," she says. Debarchana Biswas, a postdoctoral scholar at IIT, Guwahati, says most workers from Assam, particularly districts such as Dhemaji, are not happy migrating to other parts of the country despite recognising its economic benefits. "For many, migration is seen as a positive step toward improving their financial situation but, deep down, leaving behind their families, homes and familiar surroundings is emotionally challenging. Migration, while providing better wages, comes with the emotional and logistical burden of maintaining two households," she says, citing the study. "This dual responsibility is financially and emotionally draining. Moreover, during emergencies, their inability to quickly return home exacerbates their sense of helplessness," she says. The 2021 Climate Vulnerability Index ranked Assam as India's most climate-vulnerable state. The expansive Brahmaputra and Barak river basins, Assam's fast-dwindling green cover and north-east India's overall

geoeological fragility are a few reasons behind the vulnerability. Improved plans and programmes are being implemented for disaster risk reduction in hazard-prone areas compared to previous years, says environmental scientist Partha Jyoti Das. He says, "High-vulnerability groups like women, the elderly and marginalised communities should get more attention in disaster risk reduction policies. Although we have many policies and programmes on paper to address such concerns, the vulnerable people somehow do not get the desired benefit of such interventions to the expected extent -- indicating execution deficit and lack of monitoring of government projects and welfare schemes." Das, who heads the Water, Climate and Hazard division at Aranyak -- a research organisation -- notes outward migration of youngsters from rural areas is usually considered a useful strategy to cope with the negative impact of climate-induced hazards. The remittances they send back is also crucial for survival and sustenance of their families in a hazard-prone environment. "However, labour out-migration also has some negative impacts. We have seen wives and girls bearing more burden of family responsibilities such as looking after parents, in-laws and children. The women must also take care of family vocations such as farming, livestock rearing and other such means of income generation," he adds. Luit Goswami, executive director at Rural Volunteers Centre -- a non-profit working in the region -- says Dhemaji is extremely vulnerable to climate change due to its proximity to the confluence of the Brahmaputra and many of its tributaries. "However, like most developing regions, climate change issues have received less importance here and efforts are more focused on recovery than creation of adaptive capacity," he says.

Contd. from front page...

SC aware of Col Sofiya Qureshi's...

thrilled to see her on TV explaining the operation with such confidence and clarity," said her father-in-law Gous Sab Bagewadi of Konnur village in Belagavi district. "I did not even know she was on TV until my friends came and told me," he added. The family proudly displayed a photo of the couple in uniform, calling Sophia "Gujarat's pride and the nation's hero." Hailing from Baroda, she married Col Tajuddin Bagewadi from Konnur in 2015. She is currently posted in Jammu and he in Jhansi, but are described by their family as a rare and inspiring partnership in service. (Agency)

APU conducts its 8th convocation...

and its importance to which the students need to learn. "It was truly inspiring to witness the hard work, determination, and achievements of the graduating students. Wishing all the graduates the very best as they step into new chapters of their lives. May you continue to pursue excellence, contribute meaningfully to society, and lead with integrity", added Darang. He also lauded the APU's contributions to higher education in Arunachal Pradesh. Prof. Jiten Hazarika, the Guest of Honour, spoke on the importance of decision-making in life and stated that while opportunities abound, discipline and hard work remain the key to success. While delivering the keynote address, Pankaj Lamba, SP Pasighat motivated the graduating students and inspired them to excel in life ahead. While delivering the presidential address, Acharya Dhanwant Singh, founding Chancellor of APU inspired the students with the philosophical message from the Kathopanishad, popularized by Swami Vivekananda: "Arise, awake, and stop not till the goal is reached." He announced that in the coming two years, APU plans to establish Ayurveda and Allopathic Medical Colleges. He expressed gratitude to the parents and guardians for their faith in the university and extended best wishes to the graduates. The ceremony saw the conferral of degrees by the Vice-Chancellor, followed by the presentation of gold medals and academic awards to meritorious students. The event concluded with an exhortation, vote of thanks by Registrar Vijay Kumar Tilak, the National Anthem, and the exit of the Convocation Procession. The 8th Convocation of APU reaffirmed the university's vision of fostering knowledge, discipline, and innovation among its students, preparing them for meaningful contributions to society. **APQS joins HIV/AIDS sensitization...** transgender icon and State Core Resource Group (SCRG) member Marie Game, addressed issues faced by trans women in society, especially the lack of access to safe sex practices. She raised concerns about how many men still ignore or trivialize the use of condoms and other preventive measures. Key modes of HIV transmission are unprotected sex, multiple sexual partners, shared needles, mother-to-child transmission and unsafe blood transfusions, social worker Tomo said, adding that despite increasing awareness, stigma, taboos around sexuality, and societal discomfort in discussing sexual health continue to hinder effective prevention. He stressed the importance of knowing one's HIV status and outlined the role of antiretroviral therapy (ART), viral load management, and CD4 count in maintaining the health of people living with HIV. APACS deputy director (MS) Karjo Basar spoke about HIV and AIDS (Prevention and Control) Act, 2017 while focusing on patients' rights to privacy, informed consent, legal protection and penalties for discrimination and breaches of confidentiality. Community workers of ICR, Papum Pare, Namsai, East Siang, Lower Dibang Valley and Lohit districts took part reflecting collective effort to build awareness and reduce stigma around HIV/AIDS.

Wahan se goli chalegi, toh yahan se gola chalega': PM told armed forces on Pakistani actions

NEW DELHI, May 11: India has called Pakistan's nuclear bluff with Operation Sindoor and sent a psychological message to state-sponsored terrorists: nobody is untouchable and no place in Pakistan is safe for you, government sources said on Sunday.

India has also set a "new normal" in response to Pakistan-backed cross-border terrorism through the operation and Prime Minister Narendra Modi directed the armed forces that Indian retaliation to any action by the Pakistani military should be "bigger and stronger", they said.

"Wahan se goli chalegi, toh yahan se gola chalega (If they fire bullets, we will respond with cannons)," one of the sources quoted PM Modi as saying following the Pakistani actions.

Operation Sindoor is not concluded yet and the cost of cross-border terrorism will be raised as Pakistan can't continue with terrorism while expecting cooperation in areas of its choosing, the sources said.

When asked whether Operation Sindoor managed to fulfil the prime minister's instructions, a senior government source said, "Markaz ko mitti mei mila diya hai; age ka bhi dekhenge".

He was referring to precision strikes on nine terrorist training sites and head-



quarters on the early morning of May 7.

Asked how many more terror centres remain in Pakistan, another source posed a counter question: How big is Pakistan, implying the country is a hotbed of terrorism.

The sources also emphasised that the confrontation never reached the stage of a nuclear conflict which has been the greatest fear and threat used by Pakistan, whose military is vastly smaller than India's.

However, the nuclear deterrence has given it some amount of parity, they said.

"We have called their nuclear deterrence bluff. We take the nuclear threat seriously, but it cannot serve as cover for Pakistan to come and do terrorism in our country," said a senior source.

"The new normal is that the Line of Control will not protect you; the international border will not protect you; the nuclear threat will not protect you," the source said.

"The message that has

been sent is that no matter where you are in Pakistan, we will hit you. On this occasion, we have gone after the head of the snake and not foot soldiers," it said.

The sources said Indian action demonstrated its new approach to kill terrorists within Pakistan.

"It showed our approach of 'ghar me ghus ke mareng' (kill them within their home)," said a source.

India carried out precision strikes on terror infrastructure early on May 7, following which Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases on May 8, 9 and 10.

The Pakistani actions were strongly responded to by the Indian side by inflicting heavy damage to a number of key Pakistani military installations, including air bases, air defence systems, command and control centres and radar sites.

Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri on Saturday evening announced that India and Pakistan reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with

immediate effect.

"The actions taken by India are aimed at creating and setting a new normal in the relationship with Pakistan."

"Pakistan and the world will have to get used to this new normal because India has had enough," said a source.

The sources said that India will never accept mediation in the Kashmir issue and the only matter to discuss is Pakistan returning the territory which is under its illegal occupation.

They made it clear that the Indus Waters Treaty will be in abeyance as long as terrorism sponsored by Pakistan against India continues.

"The cost of terrorism has increased. The Indus Waters Treaty is linked to cross-border terrorism and it will be held in abeyance as long as terrorism from Pakistan continues," the source cited above said.

The sources said when Pakistan tried to attack Udhampur, the response was what the prime minister had promised and eight Pakistani air bases were demolished.

Pakistan changed its tune immediately after India hit their air bases, the sources said, adding the next morning, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio called External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar to say Pakistan

has understood.

India's position after the May 7 strikes on terror infrastructure was that if Pakistan fires, India will respond more forcefully, they said.

After the Pahalgam attack, India had told countries that reached out to New Delhi it would hit terror infrastructure in Pakistan territories.

At the height of the conflict, PM Modi told US Vice President J D Vance that "if Pakistan does anything, our response will be very very strong", the source said.

In a related development, Army Chief Gen Upendra Dwivedi has given full authority to the Army commanders for counteraction in the kinetic domain to any violation of the understanding reached between the Indian and Pakistani militaries.

"Consequent to the ceasefire and airspace violations on the night of May 10-11, the Chief of Army Staff reviewed the security situation with the Army Commanders of the Western Borders," the Army said.

The Army Chief "has granted full authority to the Army Commanders for counteraction in the kinetic domain to any violation of the understanding reached vide the DGMO talks of May 10," it said. (PTI)

Indian armed forces carried out careful scrutiny of terror camps before precision strikes: DGMO

NEW DELHI, May 11:The Indian armed forces carried out "careful scrutiny" of the nine cross-border terror camps down to their layouts and configurations and terrains around them before conducting the precision strikes on them on May 7 under Operation Sindoor, Director General Military Operations (DGMO) Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai said on Sunday.

"I have no doubt in my mind that we achieved total surprise and those strikes across those nine terror hubs left more than 100 terrorists killed, including high-value targets," the top Army officer said during a media briefing here.

Aerial images of some of the camps, taken before and after the strike, were also shown on a large screen during the briefing that came a day after India and Pakistan reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea with immediate effect after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes that brought the two countries teetering on the edge of full scale war.

Directors general of military operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan agreed on the understanding during a call on May 10 afternoon.

Operation Sindoor was launched early May 7 to destroy nine terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir in retaliation to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack. All subsequent retaliations to Pakistani offensives were carried out under this operation.

"You are now familiar with the brutality and the dastardly manner in which 26 lives were prematurely terminated at Pahalgam on April 22. When you combine those horrific scenes and the pain of the families the nation witnessed, with numerous other terrorist strikes on our armed force-

es, and defenceless civilians, we knew that the time had arrived to make yet another compelling statement of our resolve as a nation," the DGMO said.

Operation Sindoor was conceptualised with a clear military aim to "punish the perpetrators and planners" of terror and to destroy their terror infrastructure, he said.

"What I do not state here, of course, is the often stated determination of India and its intolerance to terror. It sent into motion, a very diligent and microscopic scarring of the terror landscape across the borders and the identification of terror camps and training sites," Lt Gen Ghai said.

The Army officer said the locations that emerged were "numerous", but as "we deliberated more, we realised that some of these terror hubs were now bereft of any presence and preemptively been vacated fearing retribution from us".

There was also a "term of reference and our own binding self-imposed restrictions" to target only terrorists, and thus "prevent collateral damage", he added.

"There were nine camps that you are now all familiar with, which were confirmed by our various intelligence agencies, to be inhabited. Some of these were in PoJK (Pakistan-occupied-Jammu & Kashmir), while there were others which were located in Punjab province in Pakistan," Lt Gen Ghai said.

Nefarious places such as Muridke, the hub centre of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, has over the years spread infamous characters such as Ajmal Kasab and the likes of David Headley, he underlined.

"What followed was a careful scrutiny of each of these sinister locations, their layout, configuration, even the type of construction in each structure and the terrain obtained around

these. This was with an obvious intent to deduce and identify exact vector that was required for their neutralisation, as also the eyes in the sky that we would send up to ensure that we brought back evidence that we had indeed targeted what we set out to," the DGMO asserted.

The precise images of these engagements on that "fateful and historical night" have already been showcased during the first statement on May 7 that was helmed by the foreign secretary, he said.

"I have no doubt in my mind that we achieved total surprise and those strikes across those nine terror hubs left more than 100 terrorists killed, including high-value targets such as Yusuf Azhar, Abdul Malik Rauf and Mudasir Ahmed, who were involved in the hijack of IC814 and the Pulwama blast," the DGMO told reporters.

The Indian Air Force (IAF) played a "major role" in these strikes by engaging some of these camps and the Indian Navy "provided wherewithal in terms of precision munition".

Director General of Air Operations, IAF, Air Marshal AK Bharti, also addressed the media on the role of the IAF in Operation Sindoor.

"We carefully selected the targets and out of the nine selected targets, the target systems that were given to the IAF, were the notorious training camps at Bahawalpur and Muridke," he said.

Under Operation Sindoor, the Indian military targeted Markaz Taiba of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Muridke, Markaz Subhan Allah of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) in Bahawalpur, Hizbul Mujahideen's Mehmoona Joya Facility in Sialkot and the LeT's base in Markaz Ahle Hadith in Barnala and its camp in Muzaffarabad's Shawai Nalla, military officials said. (PTI)

India inflicted heavy losses on Pakistan military: Armed Forces

NEW DELHI, May 11: India on Sunday said it inflicted tremendous losses to the Pakistan military, including downing its fighter jets featuring latest technologies and damaging key military installations close to even capital Islamabad, during the three-day confrontation between the two sides.

Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai said 35-40 Pakistani military personnel were killed in the combat and New Delhi achieved its desired objectives and that Pakistan will have to pay a very heavy price if it resorts to any misadventure.

At a media briefing, senior military officials of the Army, Indian Air Force and the Indian Navy provided details of Operation Sindoor, including how India repelled Pakistani attempts to target Indian military installations and civilian areas.

To a question, Air Mar-



shal AK Bharti said India definitely downed a few Pakistani planes but refused to hazard a guess on the numbers.

"Their planes were prevented from coming inside our border. So we do not have the wreckage with us but definitely we have downed a few planes," he said.

Asked about reports in the foreign media of losses of Indian fighter jets, Air Marshal Bharati said, "We are in a combat situation and losses are part of combat."

"All I can say is that we have achieved our objectives that we selected and

all our pilots are back home," he said.

DGMO Lt Gen Ghai also paid tribute to five Indian fallen heroes and civilians who "tragically lost their lives" during Operation Sindoor.

"We have thus far exercised immense restraint and our actions have been focused, measured and non-escalatory. However, any threat to the sovereignty, territorial integrity and safety of our citizens will be met with decisive force," he said.

On losses to the Pakistani military, the DGMO said there are reports of 35-40 fatalities.

The DGMO said it was his Pakistani counterpart who made a call to him last afternoon, requesting a way out to stop the hostilities.

The two DGMOs on Saturday afternoon agreed to stop all firing and military action on land and in the air and sea with effect from 1700 hours Indian Standard Time.

The Indian military suggested that the Pakistani DGMO's call came after Indian Armed Forces launched a fierce counter-attack on several Pakistani military installations including Rafiqui, Murid, Chaklala, Rahim Yar Khan, Sukkur

and Chunion on Saturday morning.

The strikes were launched after the Pakistan military attempted to target major Indian military installations on the night of May 9-10.

Lt Gen Ghai said over 100 terrorists, including high-value targets such as Yusuf Azhar, Abdul Malik Rauf and Mudasir Ahmed, who were involved in the hijacking of IC 814 and the Pulwama blast, were eliminated during Operation Sindoor on May 7.

Nine terror targets were identified after careful deliberations and they were hit using precision weapons, he said.

Operation Sindoor was launched on early May 7 to destroy nine terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir in retaliation to the Pahalgam terror attack. All subsequent retaliations to Pakistani offensives were carried out under Operation Sindoor. (PTI)

Pak's condition worsened as Modi govt gave free hand to armed forces: MP CM

INDORE, May 11: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said on Sunday that the Narendra Modi government has made things worse for Pakistan by giving the Indian armed forces a free hand to destroy hubs of terrorists through Operation Sindoor.

Addressing a job fair in Indore, Yadav said the Modi government had prepared well ahead to deal with the nefarious intentions of the country's

enemies.

"When the government led by PM Modi was formed, many asked why a huge amount was being spent on the Rafale deal. We saw that when India's enemy was standing at the border, our armed forces equipped with Rafale aircraft and modern military technology destroyed the terrorist bases and settled old dues," he said.

The chief minister said that the Modi government

made things worse for Pakistan by giving the armed forces a free hand to destroy terrorist bases.

"This is India of changing times. The world is looking at India with surprise. There was a time when enemies beheaded our soldiers, and the then government could do nothing. Under the present government's rule, the enemy can't even imagine such audacity," he said.

Yadav said the Modi gov-

ernment has kept the country safe by making quick decisions.

"The respect for India increased in the world after PM Modi showed India's military capability. He has already said that 'we do not provoke anyone, but if someone provokes us, we do not spare him either'," the chief minister said.

Stressing that the nation is united in this hour of crisis, Yadav said the MP government has made tight security

arrangements.

He further said that the government is promoting self-employment and providing jobs through various programmes.

"We have said that we will give one lakh new government jobs, but the state's population is nine crore, and the total number of government posts is less than 10 lakh. In such a situation, we are giving special incentives to employment-based industries," he said.(PTI)

Navy deployed carrier battle group, submarines with full combat readiness following Pahalgam attack

NEW DELHI, May 11: Indian Navy's carrier battle group, submarines and aviation assets were immediately deployed at sea with full combat readiness in the aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack, a top Navy official said on Sunday.

The naval forces remained forward deployed in the northern Arabian sea in a "dissuasive and deterrent" posture, with full readiness to strike select targets at sea, and on land, including Karachi, at a time of our choosing, Director General of Naval Operations, Vice Admiral A N Pramod, said.

The Vice Admiral was addressing a press conference along with his counterparts from the Army and the Indian Air Force on India's 'Operation Sindoor'.

The Director General of Naval Operations (DGNO) said the Navy tested and refined tactics and procedures at sea during multiple weapon firings in the Arabian Sea, within 96 hours of the terrorist attack.

"The aim was to revalidate our crew, armament,

equipment and platform readiness to deliver various ordnance on selected targets precisely," he added.

The DGNO said the carrier battle group was deployed in the Arabian Sea following the terror attack that killed 26 civilians on April 22.

A carrier battle group is a naval fleet consisting of an aircraft carrier and its accompanying ships.

Vice Admiral Pramod said the forward deployment of the Indian Navy compelled Pakistani naval and air units to be in a defensive posture, mostly inside harbours or very close to their coast.

"The Indian Navy maintained seamless maritime domain awareness throughout the duration and was entirely aware of the location and movement of Pakistani units," he said.

"In effect, we had, and continue to have, good battlespace transparency, using our maritime domain awareness grid," he said.

"Under India's calibrated approach, we considered all options, including the

ability of the Indian Navy for offensive action from and at sea," the DGNO said.

"As part of the escalation control mechanism, the application of force by the Navy was planned in a synchronised manner in concert with the Army and the Air Force, the highlight being teams from the three services working closely in an integrated manner," he added.

"Along with kinetic actions by the Indian Army and Indian Air Force, the overwhelming operational edge of the Indian Navy at sea contributed towards Pakistan's urgent request for a ceasefire yesterday," Vice Admiral Pramod said.

The India Navy remains deployed at sea in a credible deterrent posture to respond decisively to any inimical action by Pakistan, or Pakistan-based terrorists, he added.

India carried out precision strikes on terror infrastructure early on May 7 following which Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases on May 8, 9 and 10.(PTI)

President Trump praises 'strong, unwaveringly powerful' leadership of India, Pakistan

NEW YORK/WASHINGTON, May 11: US President Donald Trump on Sunday praised the "strong and unwaveringly powerful" leadership of India and Pakistan for reaching a "cease-fire" and offered to work with them for a "solution" on the Kashmir issue.

India has always maintained that the Kashmir issue is a bilateral matter and there is no space for any third party. India asserts that the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and the Union Territory of Ladakh are and always will be integral and inalienable parts of it.

"I will work with you both to see if, after a "thousand years," a solution can be arrived at concerning Kashmir. God Bless the leadership of India and Pakistan on a job well done!!!" Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

His comments came hours after India and Pakistan on Saturday reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate effect.

"I am very proud of the strong and unwaveringly powerful leadership of India and Pakistan for having the strength, wisdom, and fortitude to fully know and understand that it was time to stop the current aggression that could have lead (led) to the death and de-



struction of so many, and so much," Trump said.

"Millions of good and innocent people could have died! Your legacy is greatly enhanced by your brave actions. I am proud that the USA was able to help you arrive at this historic and heroic decision," Trump said.

He went on to say that even though this has not been discussed, he is going to "increase trade substantially with both of these great Nations."

In Islamabad, Pakistan's Foreign Office Sunday said it appreciates President Trump's "willingness to support efforts aimed at the resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute".

Trump on Saturday announced that India and Pakistan have agreed to a "full and immediate ceasefire" after a "long night" of talks.

Soon after Trump's an-

nouncement, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said that the directors general of military operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan have agreed to stop all firings and military action on land, air and sea with effect from 5 pm (IST) on Saturday.

Tensions between India and Pakistan soared after the Indian Armed Forces hit terror launchpads in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) last week in response to the Pahalgam terror attack.

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio on Saturday said that over the past 48 hours, Vice President J D Vance and he engaged with senior Indian and Pakistani officials, "including Prime Ministers Narendra Modi and Shehbaz Sharif, External Affairs Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar, Chief of Army Staff Asim Munir, and

National Security Advisors Ajit Doval and Asim Malik."

"I am pleased to announce the Governments of India and Pakistan have agreed to an immediate ceasefire and to start talks on a broad set of issues at a neutral site," Rubio said.

Vance had also expressed gratitude to the leaders of India and Pakistan for their "hard work and willingness to engage in this ceasefire."

"Great work from the President's team, especially Secretary Rubio. And my gratitude to the leaders of India and Pakistan for their hard work and willingness to engage in this ceasefire," Vance said in a post on X.

Last month, Trump had said that there have always been tensions between India and Pakistan, and the two countries will figure it out between themselves

"one way or the other."

Several members of the Trump administration and lawmakers lauded Trump's efforts for de-escalation.

"I am incredibly proud to serve alongside Vice President Vance and Secretary Rubio. This historic administration is working every day to achieve peace. The golden age is coming and it starts with peace throughout the world," Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick said on X.

Former national security advisor Mike Waltz, whom Trump plans to nominate as US ambassador to the United Nations, said, "progress towards stability in a historically volatile region. It won't be easy, there will be violations and much work to be done, but another step in President Trump's commitment to peace."

The House Committee on Foreign Affairs in the US has said President Trump is the "President of Peace."

Far-right political activist Laura Loomer said Trump "deserves the Nobel Peace Prize" for his efforts on India and Pakistan.

"He is truly such a transformative historical figure and the most consequential President of our lifetime. Once again, he has proven his commitment to Peace. Thank you, President Trump," Loomer said in a post on X. (PTI)

Pak PM Sharif bats for 'path of peaceful negotiations' to address India-Pak issues



ISLAMABAD, May 11: Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif thanked the country's political leadership, including his coalition partners and opposition, for demonstrating "exemplary" unity and integrity during the four-day confrontation between Pakistani and Indian militaries.

In an address to the nation late Saturday night, Sharif said the "path of peaceful negotiations" should be adopted to solve the long-standing issues between India and Pakistan, including the sharing of water resources and the Kashmir issue.

India and Pakistan on Saturday reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate effect.

Sharif said Pakistan has given a positive response to the understanding

reached with India in the interest of regional peace.

Sharif also said Pakistan responded positively to international diplomatic efforts and expressed his gratitude to all friendly countries, including the leadership of the US, the UK, Türkiye, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the UAE, and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres in de-escalating tensions between India and Pakistan.

Sharif especially mentioned the efforts and support of Pakistan's "time-tested" and trustworthy" friend China, which he said stood with Pakistan in "this hour of turbulence".

The Pakistani prime minister described the understanding with India as a success of the entire nation and the armed forces of Pakistan.

According to Radio Pakistan, he said the Pakistan

military's "Operation Bunnan-un-Marsoos", was successful and that India's actions were responded to in a professional manner.

"The nation and our armed forces proved that Pakistanis are a brave, self-possessing and prudent nation," he said.

Sharif said Pakistan offered to join a credible and transparent investigation into the Pahalgam attack, but New Delhi did not respond positively.

The Prime Minister congratulated the entire nation and armed forces for what he called a "victory".

Sharif announced that Pakistan will observe Sunday (May 11) as Youm-e-Tashakkur (Day of Thanks) for giving what he called "a befitting response" to India's actions.

According to the statement, Sharif said, "We are grateful to Allah for this success, which has made us victorious. This day is a day to pay tribute to the bravery of the Pakistani Army."

The Prime Minister claimed that under "Operation Banyan Marsus" Pakistani armed forces gave a "full response" to the Indian military's actions. (PTI)

Awami League rejects its ban by Bangladesh interim govt, vows to continue operations



DHAKA/NEW DELHI, May 11: Bangladesh's deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina-led Awami League on Sunday rejected "with disgust" the interim government's decision to ban the party and vowed to continue its operations despite the restriction.

The Muhammad Yunus-led interim government's Council of Advisers or the Cabinet on Saturday night slapped a ban on "all activities of Awami League", including in cyberspace, under an anti-terrorism law.

Reacting to the move, in a strongly worded statement posted on X, the Awami League said, "We are rejecting and protesting the fascist autocrat Yunus government's decision with disgust...Awami League will carry on its activities in an appropriate course, defying the decision of the fascist Yunus government."

The party regretted that "today's independent Bangladesh" had to witness the ban on Awami League activities by an "undemocratic fascist" government that now runs the country "without people's mandate", while the country "earned independence and sovereignty under its (Awami League's) leadership".

Formed in 1949, the Awami League led the movement for the autonomy of Bengalis in the then East Pakistan for decades and eventually led the Liberation War in 1971.

The statement said the ban is meant to "exile the spirit, ideals, and core values of the Liberation War and to empower the vulgar resurgence of anti-independence elements" and "only an anti-state and anti-independence evil force alone".

"We strongly believe that the people of Bangladesh will deliver a resounding response to this reckless decision by the fascist Yunus regime. We call upon all leaders and activists of Awami League to stand shoulder to shoulder with the people and build a total resistance against this incoherent and anti-people decision," it said.

Awami League also called upon all democratic states, institutions, and leaders around the world to denounce the decision taken by the Yunus government.

Earlier in the day, Yunus's press secretary Shafiqul Alam in a media briefing said the democratic world was unlikely to oppose the interim government's decision to ban "this shameless, killer, anti-democracy, and corrupt party".

He said there are instances of the Western world banning political parties for their activities against the national interest and for committing crimes against humanity, like the Nazi and Fascist parties of Germany and Italy.

"So we don't expect any negative international reaction over the ban on Awami League activities," Alam said.

The Election Commission (EC) has said it is awaiting a formal government notification to decide on scrapping the registration of the Awami League.

According to Bangladesh law, if the Awami League's registration with the EC is cancelled, it will be disqualified from contesting the general election, which could be held between December 2025 and June 2026.

"We will have to decide going with the spirit of the present Bangladesh," Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) AMM Nasir Uddin told reporters here.

Hasina's 16-year-long Awami League regime was toppled on August 5 last year in a student-led violent mass uprising, prompting the 77-year-old former prime minister to flee to India.

Three days after her ouster, Yunus took charge as the chief adviser of the interim government.

Hasina and many of her party leaders have been facing hundreds of cases, including those of mass murder and corruption, since then. Most of her party leaders and ministers in her government have either been arrested or fled abroad.

The announcement to ban Hasina's Awami League came after the student-led newly-floated National Citizen Party (NCP) activists rallied since Thursday and carried out blockades across Dhaka demanding the ban. (PTI)

Top UN leaders welcome understanding between India, Pak to stop firings and military actions

UNITED NATIONS, May 11: Top UN leaders have welcomed the understanding between India and Pakistan to stop all firings and military actions, calling it a "meaningful" and "positive step" toward ending current hostilities and easing tensions.

President of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly Philomen Yang wrote in a post on X that he welcomes the development, saying, "it is a meaningful step towards de-escalation reflecting the commitment of both nations to regional peace and stability."

Yang urged continued diplomatic efforts and dialogue to resolve differences

and achieve lasting peace and stability in line with the UN Charter and international law.

Immediately after India announced "understanding on stoppage of firing and military action" on Saturday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the move, describing it as a "positive step" toward ending current hostilities and easing tensions.

Tensions between India and Pakistan soared after the Indian Armed Forces hit terror launchpads in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) last week in response to the Pahalgam terror attack. (PTI)

Pak Defence Minister says major issues with India can be discussed in any future dialogue

ISLAMABAD, May 11: Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has said Kashmir, the Indus Waters Treaty and terrorism remain major issues with India and could be discussed in any future dialogue with the neighbouring country.

Asif's comments came when he was asked about tackling the pending issues with India following the understanding reached with India on Saturday to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with immediate effect.

The understanding was reached after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes that brought

the two countries teetering on the edge of full-scale war.

Asif said major issues with India related to the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT), terrorism and Kashmir could be discussed in potential talks with India.

"These are the three major issues that can be discussed," the channel quoted Asif as saying.

"If the ceasefire helps pave the way towards peace, it would be a welcome development," he said, adding it is too early to say anything with certainty.

Though Pakistan maintained that it agreed on a ceasefire with India, New

Delhi called it an understanding.

Tensions between India and Pakistan soared after the Indian Armed Forces hit terror launchpads in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) last week in response to the Pahalgam terror attack.

"As time passes, opportunities for peace may emerge," Asif said.

"We hope India, and particularly its leadership, will one day prioritise the region's future over party interests," the minister said, adding that peaceful coexistence based on equality is key to South Asia's progress. (PTI)

UK hails India-Pak ceasefire, calls for sustained de-escalation

LONDON, May 10: The UK on Saturday welcomed the ceasefire agreed between India and Pakistan, calling on both nations to sustain their steps towards de-escalation.

Prime Minister Keir Starmer said the UK had been "engaged" with both countries for some days in pursuit of a ceasefire.

"I'm pleased to see today that there's a ceasefire. The task now is to make sure that that is enduring and is lasting," he told the BBC from Kyiv, where he is meeting European leaders for peace talks over the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

"Today's ceasefire between India and Pakistan is hugely welcome. I urge both parties to sustain this. De-escalation is in everybody's interest," said Foreign Secretary David Lammy.

He took to social media soon after Indian Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri told reporters in New Delhi that the Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) of Pakistan

had called his Indian counterpart on Saturday afternoon to agree to "stop all firing and military action on land, in the air and sea, with effect from 1700 hours IST".

The announcement followed a night of intense military activity in the region, with Lammy expressing "serious concern" and calling on India and Pakistan to move toward a "dialogue that leads to a swift and sustainable ceasefire".

Earlier, in a joint statement with fellow G7 Foreign Ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United States and the High Representative of the European Union, the UK had strongly condemned the "egregious terrorist attack" in Pahalgam on April 22 and urged maximum restraint from both India and Pakistan.

"Further military escalation poses a serious threat to regional stability. We are deeply concerned for the safety of civilians on both sides. We call for immediate

de-escalation and encourage both countries to engage in direct dialogue towards a peaceful outcome.

"We continue to monitor events closely and express our support for a swift and lasting diplomatic resolution," read the statement, issued hours before the ceasefire announcement.

Diaspora groups in Britain reacted with guarded relief, with Friends of India Society International (FISI) UK highlighting India's "firm and uncompromising" stand against terrorism and INSIGHT UK stressing on a "humanity against terrorism" message.

"There are no winners in war. A lot of innocent people suffer unnecessarily and therefore, I welcome this step and hope that good sense will prevail where both sides agree never again," said Rami Ranger, House of Lords peer and Chairman of the British Sikh Association.

"History has a habit of repeating itself if we don't

learn from it. So, I hope this time, the Pakistani leaders will learn from the history. This could be the time when we draw a line and end this hostility forever," Lord Ranger said.

Chietigj Bajpae, Senior Research Fellow at the London-based think tank Chatham House, struck a note of caution because the ceasefire does not resolve the "underlying grievances" in the India-Pakistan bilateral relationship.

"India has stated that it considers any future terror attack an act of war, so the situation remains precarious. Short of a genuine peace process, it is not a question of if, but when tensions escalate once again," said the regional analyst.

"Most of the international community had come forward calling for restraint and de-escalation, including the United Kingdom... It comes at a time of a string of Free Trade Agreements that countries are trying to conclude with India, the UK

Meet Miss World contestants from subcontinent, no representative from Pakistan

HYDERABAD, May 11: Beauties representing 110 countries, including India, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh, are currently battling it out for the 72nd Miss World title in Hyderabad. But, with the military conflict between India-Pakistan in the last four days, Miss Pakistan is conspicuous by her absence.

A representative of the Miss World competition said this has nothing to do with the conflict.

"Pakistan has never participated in Miss World. In any case, you don't see -- except in rare cases -- Pakistan in international pageants in general," said Ashwani Shukla of Altair Media, the official publicist for Miss World.

He pointed out how in 2023, when Erica Robin represented Pakistan at the Miss Universe pageant for the first time in its 72-year history, it sparked outrage in the Islamic country, with many calling it "shameful".

This year, India is being represented by Nandini Gupta, who hails from Kota in Rajasthan.

Gupta is pitching for an inclusive world, and vows to make a difference in the lives of differently-abled

through her 'Project Ekta'. Gupta said in a video posted on her official Instagram account that she was inspired to work for the rights of the differently-abled after having watched her uncle struggle with polio and "developmental delays".

"We have created a world that does not include the differently-abled and I think righting this historical wrong is long overdue," said Gupta in the video.

Srichchha Pradhan, who is representing Nepal, is pushing for a world that pays attention to the wisdom of our ancestors.

According to the official website of Miss World, Pradhan's initiative Pancha Pranali is looking to reconnect people with the nature and traditional wisdom of the indigenous communities of Nepal to solve today's problems.

Her project emphasises climate action grounded in ancestral values.

"In listening to the rivers, the trees, and the animals, we are healing ourselves," Pradhan said on her official Instagram account. "This is not about fixing problems, but re-directing the narrative toward harmony and re-



spect," she added.

Bangladesh candidate, Atika Konika, is, incidentally, the last one to join the gang in Telangana.

Although she was the First Runner-Up at Miss World Bangladesh 2024, she was chosen to represent her nation, due to some last-minute developments, according to the Miss World representative.

A certified mental health

support worker, Konika said in a video posted on the Miss World YouTube channel, that her own battle with ADHD, anxiety and low self-worth was the instigator for her project, Young Mind Matters.

"Mental health is never optional. For instance, between 2023 and 2024, 984 students died by suicide in my country. With my project, I wanted to go beyond support and build a solution,"

said Konika in the video.

Anudi Gunasekara, Miss World Sri Lanka, for her part, is breaking taboos and transforming lives through her 'Beauty With A Purpose' project, Saheli.

She focuses on menstrual health and hygiene, by providing essential products and education in schools, children's homes, prisons, workplaces, postpartum centres, and monasteries

throughout Sri Lanka.

"This project is not just a part of the competition; it's a part of who I am. It was born from the stories of countless women, shaped by the struggles they face, and fuelled by a dream to create meaningful, lasting change," Gunasekara has posted on her Instagram page, tracing her journey over the years.

This year, Miss Finland and Miss Malaysia are also

represented by women with Indian roots.

Miss Finland, Sofia Singh, in fact, credits her diverse upbringing for resilience. According to the Miss World official site, her personal journey is also deeply influenced by her mother's migration from India to Finland.

"It is a story of perseverance that fuels my own drive to push limits, give back, and grow continuously," said Singh.

Twenty-six-year-old Saroop Roshi, who represents Malaysia, is a psychologist, model, and travel enthusiast, said the Miss World website.

Roshi had posted a picture of her mother and her grandmother -- rooted in their unmistakable Indian values -- on this Mother's Day, to celebrate the strength of women.

This is the third time India is hosting the Miss World contest. Last year, it was held in Mumbai and Delhi. But the first one was held in Bengaluru in 1996, two years after Aishwaraya Rai won the Miss World crown.

The grand finale, held at the Chinnaswamy Stadium, was supposedly watched by over 1 billion people in

115 countries.

According to Miss World's official website, the stage at the cricket stadium was designed by celebrated film art director Sabu Cyril at a cost of nearly USD 200,000. The set was inspired by the 14th-century ruins of Hampi, the capital of the former Kingdom of Vijayanagara, founded in the middle of the 14th Century.

Miss World Greece (Miss Hellas), Irene Skliva was crowned Miss World that year.

Incidentally, in a war-ridden world, peace is the underlying theme for this year's contest, said Julia Morley, Chairman and CEO of Miss World Limited. "This year's pageant reflects the spirit of world unity, peace, and cultural appreciation, and I am excited to witness the remarkable journeys of each contestant as they inspire the world," said Morley at the opening ceremony of the beauty pageant.

71st Miss World Krystyna Pyszkova, who too won the crown in India and who will be crowning this year's winner on May 31, said, "It is an honour to pass my crown in this incredible country once again." (PTI)

Preity Zinta thanks spectators for not panicking after PBKS-DC match was called off in Dharamshala

NEWDELHI, May 11: Days after the clash between Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals was cancelled in Dharamshala amid blackout in the hill town due to India's ongoing military conflict with Pakistan, actor and co-owner of the Punjab IPL team Preity Zinta on Sunday expressed gratitude to spectators at the stadium for not panicking.

At the Thursday's game, the Punjab side was 122 for 1 in 10.1 overs when lights went out which at first was attributed to floodlight failure. The teams and the assembled fans were eventually evacuated from the stadium for their security.

Videos of Zinta asking spectators to vacate the stadium in an orderly manner also started doing rounds of the social media.

The actor, who said she was finally back home after "a crazy last few days", on Sunday thanked fans for being "absolute rock stars".

"To all the people that were in the Dharamshala stadium - Thankyou Thankyou Thankyou for not panicking & for any stampedes... I'm

sorry I was a bit curt & said no to pictures with everyone but the need of the hour was the safety of everyone and it was my duty & responsibility to make sure everyone stayed safe. Thank you for making it possible," she wrote in a post on X.

The Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association Stadium, which can house approximately 23,000 spectators, was packed to about 80 per cent of its capacity at the time of evacuation on Thursday night.

The Indian Premier League (IPL) was on Friday suspended indefinitely due to the escalating military confrontation between India and Pakistan with a BCCI official saying that continuing the event in the current situation would not look appropriate.

The players and support staff of both PBKS and DC teams were evacuated from Dharamshala and escorted to the Jalandhar railway station in batches through Hoshiarpur amid tight security. The squads arrived in New Delhi aboard



a special 'Vande Bharat Express' on Friday night.

Dharamshala's lone airport and the ones in neighbouring Kangra and Chandigarh were closed for operation as part of the precautionary measures to thwart Pakistani attacks.

In her post, Zinta also thanked Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, ICC chairman Jay Shah, IPL chairman Arun Dhumal, and Punjab Kings CEO Satish Menon for their constant support.

"A heartfelt thank you to Indian Railways & our Rail-

way minister Mr. Ashwini Vaishnaw for helping both IPL teams and all officials & families leave Dharamshala in a safe, swift & comfortable way. A big thank you to @JayShah, Mr Arun Dhumal, BCCI & our CEO Mr Satish Menon & the Operations team of @PunjabKingsIPL for helping co-ordinate the evacuation of our stadium in Dharamshala safely & in an orderly manner. Everything was handled so well (sic)" she added.

BCCI Vice President Rajeev Shukla on Saturday

said the Board officials and IPL Governing Council will discuss on Sunday the best possible schedule to resume the suspended T20 League following the announcement of an immediate ceasefire between India and Pakistan. (PTI)

Kangana Ranaut to make Hollywood debut with 'Blessed Be the Evil'

MUMBAI, May 11: Actor-politician Kangana Ranaut is gearing up for her Hollywood debut in Blessed Be the Evil. The film will be directed by Anurag Rudra, with the script co-written by Gatha Tiwary, the founder and producer of Lions Movies. Cinematographer Wade Muller will lend his skills to the film.

Kangana is known for the films Emergency, Queen, Manikarnika, and Tanu Weds Manu. In her maiden Hollywood project, she will take on the lead role alongside Tyler Posey (known for Teen Wolf) and Sylvester Stallone's daughter, Scarlet Rose Stallone.

Blessed Be the Evil is centred on a Christian



couple grieving a miscarriage, who buy an abandoned farm, only to discover dark secrets. As per Anurag Rudra, folklore stories hold a special place in his heart, and he hopes to bring them to a global audience through cinema. It will also be presented to buyers at the Cannes Film Market 2025, which could open doors to even greater recognition.

The film's shoot is expected to take place in New York, and the decision to pick US locations was based on the influence of Trump's tariffs on imported films.

Kangana's statement about entering Hollywood sparked significant debates across social media, as she had earlier said that moving to the West would be foolish due to the decline of the theatre business there. She also said she wasn't planning to join Hollywood anytime soon -- yet now she is. Since not much information about her role has come to light, she is expected to bring the same power and performance she has shown in her previous films.

Amitabh Bachchan returns to X to praise 'Operation Sindoor', says Pahalgam attack won't be forgotten

NEWDELHI, May 11: Megastar Amitabh Bachchan on early Sunday morning made his social media comeback with a lengthy post on 'Operation Sindoor' by the Indian armed forces in retaliation of the Pahalgam terror attack, after sharing a series of blank posts on his X page and personal blog for weeks.

The veteran actor had not made any post on X since April 22, hours before terrorists attacked Pahalgam in Jammu and Kashmir killing 26 people.

Bachchan, 82, expressed sadness over the massacre of innocent civilians in Pahalgam.

In his post, he also lauded the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government for launching 'Operation Sindoor' which targeted nine terror targets in Pa-

kistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, including Bawalpur which is a major base of Jaish-e-Mohammad terror outfit.

"The Pahalgam attack where they killed 26 innocent tourists .. all with their families enjoying a holiday, mercilessly, at one spot - even on a couple just married three days ago, who had come for their Honeymoon .. will never be forgotten .. SO .. the Government, who have been telling the neighbouring authorities to stop terrorist camps and activities in our Country, has never been heeded ..

"Hence Modi and the Government decided to respond to the terrorist base camps in the neighbours and launched a military procedure .. the results of which are well known .. 9 of their terrorist camps and outfits were de-

stroyed .. militarily .. (sic)" the actor wrote on X.

Bachchan concluded his post with the lines from his father, Hindi poet Harivansh Rai Bachchan's popular poem "Agneepath", exhorting the armed forces.

The actor said he chose to select words from the poem "as an inspiration and a demand to the Army and all Indians .. to continue the fight !! Against the injustice done to us and in particular the innocent .. !!!

"Tu na thamega kabhi, tu na mudega kabhi, tu na jhukega kabhi, kar shapath, kar shapath, kar shapath, agneepath, agneepath, agneepath," he wrote.

Hours after India and Pakistan on Saturday reached an understanding on stopping military actions, the arrangement came

under severe pressure with New Delhi blaming Islamabad for breaching it.

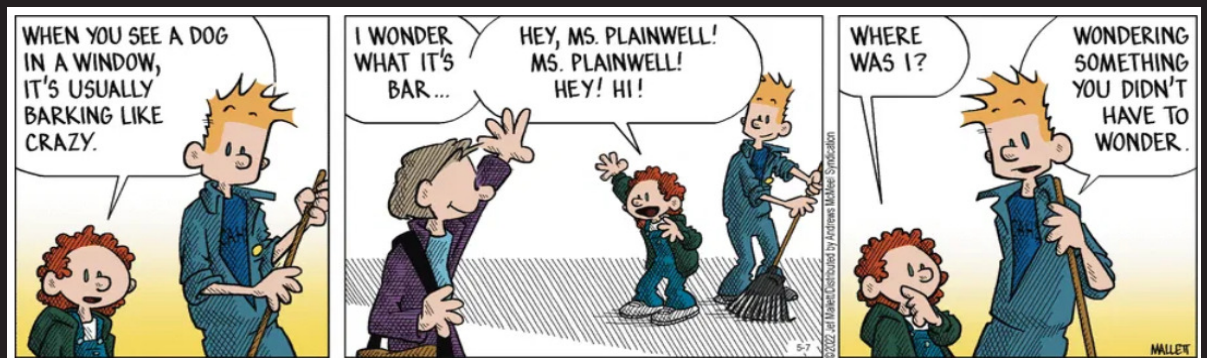
In a media briefing close to midnight, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri called upon Pakistan to take "appropriate steps" to address these violations and deal with the situation with "seriousness and responsibility".

This came around five hours after the foreign secretary announced that India and Pakistan had reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea with immediate effect.

However, there was no ceasefire violation reported in Kashmir valley overnight, with no overnight cross-border shelling or drone activity reported from anywhere across the Jammu region, officials said on Sunday. (PTI)

FRAZZ

By Jef Mallett



BIG NATE

By Lincoln Peirce



DON BRUTUS

By Chip Sansom



Clinical India crush Sri Lanka by 97 runs to win Women's Tri-Nation tournament

COLOMBO, May 11: India displayed absolute dominance to crush Sri Lanka by 97 runs and earn a well-deserved title triumph in the Women's Tri-Nation ODI series after vice-captain Smriti Mandhana's sublime century and the bowlers' collective effort in the title clash here on Sunday.

After Mandhana rose to the occasion to power India to a commanding 342 for seven, the bowlers completed the task by bundling out Sri Lanka for 245, with Sneha Rana (4/38) and Amanjot Kaur (3/54) doing the bulk of the damage.

Skipper Chamari Athapaththu (51 off 66 balls) and Nilakshika Silva (48 off 58) were the chief contributors for the hosts.

Earlier, battling cramps in humid conditions, elegant left-hander Mandhana, who had returned to form with a fifty in India's last match against South Africa, struck a majestic 116 off 101 balls to lay the foundation for India's imposing total after skipper Harmanpreet Kaur opted to bat.

Her knock was laced with 15 fours and two sixes, including four successive boundaries off Athapaththu to bring up her 11th ODI hundred in style.



After the early dismissal of Pratika Rawal for 30, Mandhana shifted gears smoothly.

The stylish Mandhana made Sri Lanka pay for dropping her on 21 as was involved in two big partnerships - 70 for the first wicket with Pratika and 120 for the second with Harleen Deol.

She brought up her 32nd ODI fifty with a stylish sweep behind square.

The left-hander added 120 runs in 106 balls with Harleen (47 off 56; 4x4) for the second wicket to steady the innings before falling while attempting a lofted

cover drive.

But her dismissal set the stage for a strong finish as Jenimah Rodrigues, coming off a career-best 123 against South Africa, smashed a quick-fire 44 off 29 balls (4x4), while Harmanpreet contributed a brisk 41 off 30 (4x4, 1x6) as India piled on 90 runs in the last 10 overs.

There was a brief phase where India looked to have lost steam in the final overs, but cameos from Deepti Sharma (20 not out off 14) and Amanjot Kaur (18 off 12) helped them surge past 340.

For Sri Lanka, Sugandika Kumari was the pick of their

bowlers with 2/59, while Dewmi Vihanga (2/69) and Malki Madara (2/74) also picked two wickets each.

Set a formidable target, the home team needed a strong start, but instead, they lost Hasini Perera to Amanjot in only the third ball of the Sri Lankan innings.

Attempting to play through mid-off, Perera ended up playing down the wrong line as the ball crashed onto the off-stump.

Sri Lanka were one down without a run on the board and an onerous task awaited the duo of captain Athapaththu and Vishmi

Gunaratne (36 off 41 balls).

They seemed to be succeeding, as Athapaththu and Vishmi put Sri Lanka's chase back on track after the early blow. The pair negated the difficult phase well before opening up to hit boundaries.

However, Deepti's introduction put the brakes on Lankan scoring as the senior off-spinner bowled three economical overs on the trot before Amanjot gave India their second breakthrough by bowling Vishmi around her legs after the batter had shuffled a long way across.

India could have had another wicket but wicket-keeper Richa Ghosh, standing up to debutant pacer Kranti Goud, could not hold to an edge from Athapaththu when she was on 25.

Kranti then missed a catch off her own bowling after Nilakshi's leading edge off a slower delivery.

However, soon after getting to her fifty, Athapaththu was bowled by Rana, who dropped the batter off her own bowling in her previous over.

With the required run rate mounting, the match was as good as over after Nilakshika's dismissal to Rana. (PTI)

Deepika, Salunkhe win bronze as India finish with 7 medals at Archery World Cup Stage 2



SHANGHAI, May 11: India's most decorated archer, Deepika Kumari, salvaged her pride with a hard-earned bronze medal after a semifinal heartbreak, while Parth Salunkhe also finished on the podium for the first time as India wrapped up their campaign at the Archery World Cup Stage 2 with seven medals, here Sunday.

A day after compound archers put up a dominating show with five medals, Deepika and Salunkhe added two more from the recurve section to end India's campaign on a high.

Exactly a year after the 21-year-old reigning Olympic champion Lim Sihyeon had knocked Deepika out at the same stage of the Yechon World Cup, the Indian was undone again by the Korean in the semifinal, losing 1-7 in a largely one-sided women's recurve individual contest.

The 30-year-old four-time Olympian, though, bounced back strongly to defeat another Korean, Kang Chae Young, 7-3 in the bronze medal playoff and return with a consolation podium finish.

Deepika's win took India's overall medal tally to six at the event, with five coming from the compound section on Saturday that included

a remarkable triple-medal haul by comeback archer Madhura Dhamangankar.

In the bronze medal playoff, Deepika showed greater composure and tactical clarity than her defeat to Lim in the semis.

The opening set ended in a 27-all tie, but Deepika edged ahead with a solid 28 in the second to take a 3-1 lead.

Kang, a former world champion who had beaten Deepika in the Berlin World Cup quarterfinals back in 2017, fought back in the third, scoring a flawless 30 to Deepika's 27 to make it three-all.

The Indian responded with her best shooting under pressure, firing three perfect arrows for 30 in the fourth set to again take a 5-3 lead.

Needing just a draw in the final set to secure victory, Deepika delivered once more, shooting 29 to Kang's 28, to bag the bronze.

Earlier, Deepika began nervously in the semifinal, losing the first set 26-27 despite hitting two 9s.

The second set saw both archers shoot 28, but Lim held steady to force a split and deny Deepika any rhythm.

The world No. 1 then shifted into top gear, drilling in a perfect 30 in the third set while Deepika

managed 28. With momentum fully on her side, Lim wrapped up the match in the fourth with a 29, as Deepika managed a 28.

It was a repeat of their 2023 clash, though Deepika had managed to take two set points back then.

In the men's section, 21-year-old Salunkhe, who qualified lowly at 60th place, impressed with his resilience after a 1-7 loss to top seed and Korean legend Kim Woojin in the semifinals.

After taking just one point off multiple Olympic medallist and reigning champion Woojin in his semifinal loss, Salunkhe bounced back impressively to beat higher-seeded French archer Baptiste Addis 6-4 in a tense five-setter to earn his maiden World Cup medal.

Salunkhe began in style with a flawless 30, including an X, to take the opening set. He slipped in the second, hitting an 8 that led to a 28-all tie. The third set was a scrappy affair, both archers managing just 25.

Addis then raised his level with a perfect 30 to level the match 4-4.

But the young Indian held his nerves in the decider, shooting two 10s, one of them an X, and a 9 to edge out Addis by a point. (PTI)

Sinner wins in return from doping ban before home crowd at Italian Open

ROME, May 11: After a wait of more than 100 days, Janik Sinner still knows how to win a tennis match.

The top-ranked player made a solid return from his three-month doping ban by beating 99th-ranked Mariano Navone 6-3, 6-4 before an adoring home crowd at the Italian Open on Saturday.

It was Sinner's first match since he won his third Grand Slam title at the Australian Open in January. He said it took him all of three games to get his competitive focus back.

"Amazing feeling. I have waited quite long for this moment," Sinner said. "I am very happy to be back."

There weren't too many signs of rust and it didn't take long for Sinner to start crushing his groundstrokes on or near the lines. When the Italian broke for 3-1 in the first set, the crowd inside Campo Centrale sang "Ole, ole, ole, Sin-ner, Sin-ner."

But Sinner acknowledged that he had doubts over whether he would regain the form that he had before his ban.

"It's normal to have doubts. Would be strange to don't have any doubts. Would sound very arrogant, no?" Sinner said. "I had doubts before going on court today. I have doubts now

what's going to happen in the next match. But we have to live with doubts because it means that you really care, that you want to improve, that you want to show yourself, that you want to do something special."

Many fans in the sold-out crowd of 10,500 were dressed in orange, Sinner's theme color. And there were plenty of signs that said "Bentornato Jannik" ("Welcome back Jannik").

The victory extended Sinner's winning streak to 22 matches, dating to October.

"It went very well at times," he said. "Could be better, yes, but in any case it doesn't matter about the result today. It has been a remarkable day for me."

In February, Sinner agreed to the three-month ban in a settlement with the World Anti-Doping Agency that raised some questions, since it conveniently allowed him not to miss any Grand Slams and come back at his home tournament.

The settlement was made after WADA appealed a decision last year by the International Tennis Integrity Agency to fully exonerate Sinner for what it deemed to be an accidental contamination by a banned anabolic steroid in March 2024.

Many fellow pros feel Sin-

ner was treated too lightly.

But the crowd at the Foro Italico night session was fully behind Sinner, who has remained Italy's most popular athlete despite his suspension.

When Sinner unleashed a backhand approach winner up the line early in the first set — the game in which he eventually broke Navone's serve — one Sinner fan yelled, "Destroy him."

Another sign in the crowd translated to "Make our hearts beat." One more referred to this week's election of a new pope just down the road at the Vatican, joking that "After three months of conclave, Habemus Papam!" — using the Latin words that are announced from the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica when a pope is elected.

"The crowd was incredible," Sinner said. "They always give me strength to continue even in tough times. So it was a very, very special moment."

His only real lapse came late in the second set when he failed to consolidate a break and dropped his serve. But he broke again in the next game and then served the match out.

Sinner hit twice as many winners as Navone, 21-10; but had more unforced errors, 24-19. (AP)

India's men's 4x400m, mixed 4x400m teams miss out on World C'ships qualification



GUANGZHOU, May 11: India's campaign at the World Athletics Relays ended in disappointment as the men's 4x400m and mixed 4x400m teams missed out on qualifying for the World Championships, to be held in Tokyo later this year.

The mixed 4x400m team of Santhosh Kumar Tamilarasan, Rupal Chaudhary, Thennarasu Kayalvizhi Vishal and Subha Venkatesan clocked 3 minutes 14.81 seconds to finish fourth in heat number 2.

The top three teams in each of the two heats qualified for the Worlds -- scheduled for September 13-21 in the Japanese capital.

On Saturday, the Indians had clocked 3:16.85 seconds to finish fifth in heat number 3. They got another chance on Sunday to book the World Championships berth but failed to do so.

Eight teams booked their World Championships berths on Saturday.

The men's 4x400m quartet of Jay Kumar, Dharmveer Choudhary, Thekkinalil Saji Manu and Rince Joseph did worse than their female counterparts, finishing seventh with a time of 3:04.49.

On Saturday, the Indian men's 4x400m team had clocked 3:03.92 to finish fifth in their heat. They got another chance on Sunday to book the World Championships berth but failed to do so.

The top 14 teams in each of the men's and women's 4x100m and 4x400m, plus the mixed 4x400m, will secure their place at the Tokyo World Championships.

The remaining two places in each event will be awarded based on top lists during the qualification period (February 25, 2024 to August 24, 2025).

Home-bound Ponting deboards plane after ceasefire announcement, gives pep talk to foreign players

NEWDELHI, May 11: Punjab Kings head coach Ricky Ponting was about to take off for home when the ceasefire between India and Pakistan came into force.

Despite that, the Australian legend had the option to fly back to Australia but he chose not to, making a last-minute disembarkation from the Qantas plane packed with anxious passengers.

Ponting stayed back in Delhi but he also ensured that the PBKS' foreign players, who were edgy considering the possibility of a full scale war between two nuclear-armed countries, were convinced about returning to India with the event like-

ly to resume later in the week.

"It shows Ponting's character. Only he could have pulled that off. Not only he voluntarily decided to stay back, he gave a motivational talk to the foreign players who had left for their respective destinations but now will be joining the team at the earliest," Punjab Kings CEO Satish Menon told PTI.

Considering the heightened security at the Delhi Airport, the franchise officials had to make plenty of phone calls to ensure Ponting's luggage was off-loaded from the plane.

The anxious batch of players, who had to make a

nervous road/train journey from Dharamsala to Delhi following the abandonment of the IPL game on May 8, included Marcus Stoinis, Aaron Hardie, Josh Inglis and Xavier Bartlett (all from Australia).

South Africa's Marco Jansen and Afghanistan's Azmatullah Omarzai have camped themselves in Dubai which is a short flight from India.

"The foreign players are not used to something like this (war like situation). So, it was natural for them to feel anxious. Led by Stoinis, they all wanted to leave at the earliest and understandably so. But Ponting has convinced them to come

back post ceasefire which I think is remarkable," said a source in the team.

With the announcement of IPL resumption imminent, Punjab find themselves well-placed with majority of their star Indian and foreign players already in the country and on standby.

With Ponting galvanising the team from a nervous situation, it could motivate the squad to do something special in this IPL.

In the first season of Shreyas Iyer and Ricky Ponting era, Punjab stand on the cusp of its first playoff berth since 2014.

The other stranded team in Dharamsala was Delhi Capitals after the



game was abandoned after Punjab Kings raced to 122 for 1 in 10.1 overs. The match will resume from that position at a yet to be decided venue and date. (PTI)