



**4**  
**'IT'S A JUDICIAL MATTER':**  
**MP CM ON CONG'S DEMAND**  
**FOR MIN'S DISMISSAL**



**11**  
**'PAKISTAN'S ABILITY TO**  
**HANDLE NUCLEAR WEAPONS**  
**IS QUESTIONABLE'**



**16**  
**FC BARCELONA CONTINUE**  
**DOMINANCE TO LIFT 28TH LA**  
**LIGA TITLE WITH 2-0 WIN**

## PAKISTAN CALLS FOR 'COMPOSITE' DIALOGUE

Addressing Pakistan Senate, country's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar says ceasefire with India has been extended till May 18

AGENCIES  
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has called for a "composite dialogue" with India to address the contentious issues between the two sides.

Addressing the Senate on Thursday, Dar said the "ceasefire" with India has been extended till May 18, but a political dialogue will ultimately have to take place to resolve the problems between the two neighbours.

"We have told the world that we will hold a composite dialogue," Dar, who is also the Deputy Prime Minister, said.

He also said that the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of Paki-



stan and India would again get in contact on May 18.

The composite dialogue was launched in 2003 when General Pervez Musharraf was ruling Pakistan. It had eight baskets of components, containing all contentious issues between the two countries.

The dialogue was derailed after the 2008 Mumbai attacks and not restored in

proper form.

Dar also warned that any attempt to block Pakistan's water through the unlawful suspension of the Indus Water Treaty would be treated as "an act of war".

Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also extended an offer of talks to India, saying Pakistan is ready to engage "for peace".

■ P3

## Dar cites 'fake news' to laud Pak's air force, local media fact-checks

TDG NETWORK  
ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar has praised the country's air force by quoting a fake page of the UK-based The Daily Telegraph.

In his address to Pakistan's Senate on Thursday, Dar said, "Telegraph writes Pakistan Air Force is the undisputed king of the skies."

The newspaper page quoted by Dar was a fake



page viral on social media.

Pakistan newspaper The Dawn's iVerify Pakistan team investigated the content, found discrepancy.

■ P3

## Citing terror, Rajnath says IMF should reconsider funding Pak

TDG NETWORK  
BHUJ

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday appealed to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to reconsider funding to Pakistan and said Islamabad will use a large portion of these funds on terror infrastructure in its country.

The International Monetary Fund recently approved over USD one billion loan to Pakistan.

"I believe Pakistan will spend a large portion of the funds received from the International Monetary Fund on terror infrastructure in its country... India wants the IMF to reconsider funding to Pakistan," Singh said addressing Air Warriors at Bhuj Air Force Station.

He said fight against terrorism is not just a matter of security, but it is now also a part of the National Defence Doctrine.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh interacts with soldiers at Bhuj Air Force Station, in Bhuj on Friday. ANI

"The entire world has seen how you destroyed nine terrorist camps. In the action taken later, several of their air bases were destroyed."

"Now, the fight against terrorism is not just a matter of security, but it is now also a part of the National Defence Doctrine. Together we will uproot this proxy and hybrid warfare. As the Defence Minister, I would like to reiterate this resolve," he said.

Praising the Indian Air

Force for their action during Operation Sindoor, he said, "You have made the entire nation believe that 'Naya Bharat ab sahan nahi karta, balki wah palat kar jawab deta hai.' I can say all I want but my words would fail to assess your actions. On behalf of a grateful nation, I

■ P3

## Multi-party diplomatic mission to meet world leaders to expose Pak

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

India is likely to send diplomatic mission to different countries to present its viewpoint on India-Pak conflict to world leaders, particularly on Kashmir and cross-border terrorism.

A delegation of MPs from various parties, including NDA, BJD, Congress, and others, will visit prominent nations such as US, UK, Japan, South Africa, Qatar and UAE, commencing after May 22.

While there was no clar-

ity on the exact number of delegations or their members, some leaders said more than 30 MPs could be included in the outreach

*A delegation of MPs from various parties, including from NDA, BJD, Congress, and others will visit prominent nations.*

exercise.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju is leading the coordination ef-

forts for this international tour, marking a significant step in India's diplomatic outreach.

The key objectives of the tour is to enlighten global leaders about the recent tensions between India and Pakistan, while also showcasing India's strategic viewpoint and garner support from the international community, said sources on Friday.

MPs have been asked to assemble in Delhi with necessary documents, and Ministry of External Affairs

■ P3

## 'West trying to pit our friends India, China against each other'

AGENCIES  
MOSCOW

Russia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov said that the West was trying to create a "clash" between "our great friends and neighbours India and China," he said, RT India reported.

"What is happening right now in the Asia-Pacific region, the West has begun to call it the Indo-Pacific



Sergey Lavrov, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Russia

region in order to give its policy a clear anti-Chinese direction, hoping to thereby additionally gain the

opportunity to pit our great friends and neighbours India and China against each other. Recently, President Putin recalled that it's simply a divide-and-rule policy," he said.

Ever since the Russia-Ukraine conflict, Russia and China are fostering closer ties, as Chinese President Xi Jinping on May 8 told Russian leader Vladimir Putin that his country will stand

■ P3

## 6 terrorists killed in past 3 days as forces step up operations

AJAY JANDYAL  
AWANTIPORA

In a significant counter-terrorism success, security forces neutralised six terrorists in two operations over the past three days in south Kashmir's Shopian and Pulwama districts, officials said on Friday.

The operations were carried out in response to heightened security focus following the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack, which left 26 people dead. Addressing a joint press conference at Victor Force headquarters in Awantipora, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir V K Birdi, GOC Victor Force Major General Dhananjay Joshi, and CRPF IG Mitesh Jain detailed the operations and their strategic impact.

"These operations are significant achievements and reflect the synergy between security and intelligence

■ P3

## Water row: Haryana seeks 10,300 cusecs over worsening crisis

NEERAJ MOHAN  
CHANDIGARH

A severe drinking water crisis has hit the southern districts in Haryana as the water dispute with Punjab deepens following the Bhagwant Mann-led Aam Aadmi Party government in the neighbouring state refusing to increase flow of water from the Bhakra dam



from 4500 cusecs.

As per ground reports, for lack of canal water several water supply plants across

■ P3

## Celebi moves High Court as Indian airports end ties

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Even as the Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) and two more Mumbai and Ahmedabad airports have officially terminated its association with Celebi Airport Services India Pvt Ltd on Friday, the Turkish firm has moved the Delhi High Court against the decision of aviation watchdog



BCAS revoking its security clearance in the "interest of national security".

According to statement is-

sued by DIAL, "In compliance with the directive from the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) to revoke the security clearance of Celebi Airport Services India, Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) has formally ended its association with Celebi entities responsible for ground handling and cargo operations at Indira Gandhi International Air-

■ P3

## Global economy to drop to 2.4% in 2025: UN

India's GDP growth to slip to 6.3%, China's 4.6%

AGENCIES  
NEW YORK

The global economy is under growing pressure, with growth expected to slow to 2.4 per cent in 2025, down from 2.9 per cent in 2024, according to the UN's World Economic Situation and



Prospects report.

The report also highlights slowdowns in major economies, including China, where the economy is projected to grow at 4.6 per cent, hit by

weak consumer demand and continued property sector challenges. India's growth forecast for 2025 has been revised downward to 6.3 per cent, but it still remains one

of the fastest-growing large economies.

In a press release issued on Thursday, the United Nations stated, "The global economy is at a precarious juncture, marked by heightened trade tensions and elevated policy uncertainty, according to the World Economic Situation and Prospects as of mid-2025. The recent surge in tariffs--driving the effective US tariff rate up steeply--threatens to raise

■ P3



# FACTORY GUARD ARRESTED FOR SPYING FOR ISI IN PANIPAT

The accused, Nauman Ilahi, a resident of Kairana in Uttar Pradesh, is said to have been in touch with a Pakistan-based ISI handler and shared sensitive information.

NEERAJ MOHAN  
CHANDIGARH

A 24-year-old security guard arrested in Haryana's Panipat for allegedly spying was associated with Pakistan's top intelligence agency the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI), reveals the police investigation. The accused, Nauman Ilahi, a resident of Kairana in Uttar Pradesh, is said to have been in touch with a Pakistan-based ISI handler and shared sensitive information.

Ilahi, who worked as a factory guard in Panipat and was earlier posted as a guard in Srinagar, was arrested by the CIA-1 wing of Panipat Police on May 13. His arrest has come amid a high security alert following last month's terror attack in Pahalgam, and days after several other suspected spies were held in neighboring Punjab.

As per the police officers associated with the investigation on Friday morning, a police team took Ilahi to his native town Kairana for further investigation. His house in Begumpura Bazaar was searched extensively with help from local police. Police officers have reportedly seized a large number of passports and identity documents

## THE ESPIONAGE

- **Nauman Ilahi Arrested:** 24-year-old security guard arrested in Panipat for alleged spying for ISI.
- **Connection with ISI:** In touch with Pakistan-based ISI handler, shared sensitive info.
- **Extensive Search:** Ilahi's house in Kairana searched, passports and identity documents seized.
- **Spying Network:** Authorities suspect Ilahi was part of a larger network aiding Pakistani operatives.
- **Other Arrests:** Add to a growing list of suspected spies, including recent arrests in Amritsar and Bathinda.
- **Ceasefire Context:** Arrest occurred shortly after India-Pakistan ceasefire on May 10.



belonging to different people. Soon after getting the information the locals gathered outside in large numbers as police brought Ilahi, with his face covered and hands in handcuffs, to the house. After several hours of search, the police returned to Panipat with the accused and the recovered documents. Authorities suspect that Ilahi was part of a bigger network of individuals helping Pakistani operatives. Ilahi's arrest adds to a growing list of suspected spies. On May 3, Amritsar police arrested two men for clicking and sharing photos of Army and Air

Force installations. On May 11, Malerkotla Police held a woman, Guzala, and her associate for allegedly helping a Pakistani official posted at the Delhi High Commission. Just two days ago, on May 13, a tailor working at Bathinda military station was arrested on spying charges. He was the second civilian from that location to be caught within weeks — the first was a cobbler, Sunil Kumar, arrested on April 29.

Ilahi's arrest came days after India and Pakistan announced a ceasefire on May 10 following intense drone and missile exchanges across

borders. The countries agreed to stop all military actions by land, air, and sea with immediate effect. Ilahi's sister Zeenat and brother-in-law Irfan, with whom he stayed in Hali Colony, Panipat, said they were shocked over the revelations and refused to have any information about his spying. Zeenat, however, said the law must take its course. "If he has done such a thing, he should be punished strictly," she told reporters. The family revealed that Ilahi had studied only till Class 10 and usually stayed either at the factory or in Kairana.

Force installations. On May 11, Malerkotla Police held a woman, Guzala, and her associate for allegedly helping a Pakistani official posted at the Delhi High Commission. Just two days ago, on May 13, a tailor working at Bathinda military station was arrested on spying charges. He was the second civilian from that location to be caught within weeks — the first was a cobbler, Sunil Kumar, arrested on April 29.

Ilahi's arrest came days after India and Pakistan announced a ceasefire on May 10 following intense drone and missile exchanges across

## Another suspected spy held in Kaithal

TDG NETWORK  
CHANDIGARH

A 25-year-old man named Devender Singh has been arrested from Kaithal district of Haryana for allegedly spying for Pakistan.

Police say Devender had gone to Pakistan via the Kartarpur Corridor in November, where he met an officer from Pakistan's intelligence agency (ISI). Since then, he had reportedly been sharing sensitive information with them.

The Haryana police have seized Devender's mobile phone and are now checking his bank account records to track any possible money transfers or other links.

This is not the first such case in Haryana. Just a few days ago, on May 13, another suspected Pakistani spy named Noman Elahi was arrested from Panipat. On Friday, Panipat police, along with the CIA-1 team, took Noman to his ancestral house in Kairana, located in Shamli district of Uttar Pradesh, for further investigation. The back-to-back arrests have raised concerns about increasing attempts by Pakistan to gather intelligence in India through local agents.

## Rashtriya Suraksha Nagarik Samaj holds 'Tiranga Yatra'

TDG NETWORK  
BHUBANESWAR

Rashtriya Suraksha Nagarik Samaj organised a 'Tiranga Yatra' in Bhubaneswar to honour the Indian armed forces and commemorate Operation Sindoor.

The event saw enthusiastic participation from locals, expressing their solidarity and respect towards the nation's soldiers.

The yatra highlighted the community's commitment to supporting the armed forces and remembering their sacrifices.

In a major public outreach, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) launched a nationwide Tiranga Yatra on Tuesday. The yatra aims to honour the valour of Indian soldiers and inform citizens about Operation Sindoor's recent success.

BJP's 'Tiranga Yatra', which began on Tuesday, will continue till May 23. On Wednesday, the BJP organised the 'Tiranga Yatra' in states such as Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Odisha.

Today, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan led the Tiranga Yatra rally in Sambalpur, Odisha, in solidarity with the Indian armed forces.

# Suvendu Adhikari seeks apology from BJP defector Barla

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE  
KOLKATA



*After switching camps, Barla claimed that Adhikari had obstructed his hospital project and stated, "Why should I stay in the party if I am not allowed to work?"*

inquire about his wife's well-being. His wife was very ill at the time." He also claimed that the BJP had assisted Barla after he lost his MP post and had to vacate his Delhi bungalow.

The LoP accused the Trinamool Congress' election strategy firm, I-PAC, of scripting Barla's statements. He alleged, "... If someone from BJP joins Trinamool, they have to repeat the slogans taught by IPAC. The instructions there are to attack me more than the BJP. John Barla has also done the same thing." Adhikari on Friday elaborated on the legal notice on X: "Yesterday, the former BJP MP from Alipurduar and Union Minister of State, who changed parties and joined the thieves' party after the party did not re-nominate him, in return, the owner of his new

party — whom I defeated in Nandigram by 1,956 votes in the 2021 assembly elections — deliberately raised completely false and baseless allegations against me without any evidence, to please her. He has already memorized the script written by I-PAC and has come out in public."

The legal notice demands that Barla "make an unconditional apology to me in writing and publicly within 7 days. This apology must be published in major English and Bengali newspapers and on the media channels where this defamatory statement was broadcast." The notice further states: "You must refrain from making any other defamatory statements or suggestive comments against me in the future... If these demands are not met, I will be forced to take civil and criminal legal action."

# Minister Sarbananda Sonowal leads Tiranga Yatra in Dibrugarh

TDG NETWORK  
DIBRUGARH

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal led the Tiranga Yatra rally in Dibrugarh on Friday. The rally was organised in honour of the Indian Armed Forces.

Sarbananda Sonowal mentioned that the Tiranga Yatra is being taken out due to the tremendous victory against Pakistan under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"We are taking out the Tiranga Yatra in support of our tremendous victory against Pakistan under the leadership of Narendra



Modi. The whole world has witnessed Bharat Mata's strength", Sarbananda Sonowal said.

Meanwhile, Maharashtra Minister and state BJP president Chandrashekhar Bawankule led the "Tiranga

Yatra" organised in Nagpur, following the success of Operation Sindoor.

Chandrashekhar Bawankule, while briefing the media informed that over 1500 "Tiranga Rallies" will be organised in Maharash-

tra from May 16 to 20. He highlighted that apart from the 'Tiranga' rally, 'Sindoor' rallies will also be organised and members from all the NDA parties will participate in it.

"Over 1500 Tiranga rallies are being organised in Maharashtra between today and 20th May. Yesterday, CM Devendra Fadnavis conducted a Tiranga rally in Mumbai. People from all NDA parties are taking part in these rallies. There will also be 'Sindoor' rallies. The public is with our Armed Forces and the nation", Chandrashekhar Bawankule told reporters.

## Gangster case: 3 brothers get 7-year jail term in UP

TDG NETWORK  
BALLIA

A court here has sentenced three men, who are brothers, to seven years of imprisonment each in a 14-year-old case under the Gangsters Act, a senior police officer said on Friday.

Superintendent of Police Omvir Singh said the three convicts -- Vinay alias Jhabar, Bhoolan Rai and Arun Rai -- residents of Kothiya village under



Narhi police station limits, were accused of forming a criminal gang and spreading terror in the area.

Based on a complaint by the then in-charge of Narhi

police station, a case under the Uttar Pradesh Gangsters and Anti-Social Activities (Prevention) Act was registered against them on September 3, 2011, the SP said.

Additional District Judge (Fast Track Court) Ram Kripal on Thursday convicted the three and sentenced them to seven years in jail after hearing arguments from both sides.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs 5,000 on each of

them, the officer added.

The Gangsters Act in India, formally known as the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) and similar laws in other states, is a legislative measure aimed at combating organized crime, specifically targeting gangsters and their activities. The act provides law enforcement agencies with special powers to tackle organized crime, including terrorism.

# UP: Rise in temperature sees spike in hospital admissions

TDG NETWORK  
MORADABAD

Rising temperatures in Uttar Pradesh's Moradabad has led to an increase in people getting admitted in hospitals.

Senior Consultant Medical, V Singh said that children being admitted to hospitals have been suffering from typhoid, fever, loose motion, cold and cough.

"Summers have started, and at this time, children suffer from typhoid, fever, loose motion, and cold and

cough" Singh told ANI.

He further advised people to avoid the consumption of food from outside.

"Since the outside food is adulterated, our suggestion is to avoid it because some people mix such things that are not good for the health... Around 200 patients are coming in and 25-30 children are being admitted..." he further added.

Dr. Rajendra of the ACMS District Hospital, Moradabad stated that the count of patients with vomiting and diarrhoea had increased.

"Patients with vomiting and diarrhoea have increased a bit due to the heat, but it is not enough now that everyone is being seen in the OPD... Around 2200-2500 patients come in each day in the hospital OPD with different kinds of ailments... Around 90-100 patients are admitted as well. Summers have started, but have not caused a massive effect till now, it is manageable," he said.

Meanwhile, as per IMD, more heatwaves can be expected this month.



As per IMD DG, April 2025 saw sharp weather contrasts.

The month was the 50th driest April recorded nationwide since 1901. Yet southern and central India

recorded substantial rainfall. The southern peninsular region experienced its 13th highest April rainfall since 1901 and 5th highest since 2001, while central India recorded its 28th highest

April on record.

Maximum daily temperatures across India were the 8th highest ever recorded for April, while minimum temperatures ranked 9th highest. Most regions in northwest, central, and northeast India recorded normal to above-normal daytime temperatures, and some areas in the peninsula and east-central regions avoided the worst of the heat.

Notably, there was a sharp increase in heatwave activity during April. Western

India was hit hardest, with Rajasthan and Gujarat experiencing between 6 to 11 heatwave days, significantly higher than the average of 2 to 3. East Madhya Pradesh and Vidarbha recorded 4 to 6 heatwave days, while Maharashtra and nearby areas saw slightly fewer than usual.

The IMD reported a major heatwave from April 3 to 10 across Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh. Shorter but intense heatwaves followed later in the month, culmi-

nating in 72 days of heatwave or severe heatwave conditions across various meteorological subdivisions in the country.

During the hot summer months, the risk of summer-borne diseases increases due to the rise in temperature, humidity, and the prevalence of certain environmental factors. To protect yourself and your family from these diseases and avoid hospital admissions, it's essential to take proactive measures.



# MAMATA GOVT STUNNED AS SC DIRECTS STATE TO PAY 25% DA DUES TO STAFFERS

SUPROTIM MUKHERJEE  
KOLKATA

Even as the Mamata Banerjee Government maintained a stunned silence after being ordered to pay 25 per cent of pending Dearness Allowance (DA) dues amounting to more than Rs 10,000 crore to its employees within three months, the State unit of the Bharatiya Janata Party crowded at the Government's discomfiture.

In a setback for the Mamata Banerjee Government, a bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Sandeep

Mehta issued the order directing the Bengal Government to pay the DA within three months and posted the matter to be heard next in August.

The dispute began when a few State Government employees approached the Calcutta High Court, seeking DA parity with Central Government employees, including arrears. While the High Court in May 2022 ordered the Bengal Government to pay DA to State employees at the rate applicable for Centre's employees, the State Government challenged this decision in the

Supreme Court via an appeal in November 2022. In the meantime, the Bengal Government announced an incremental rise in DA intermittently, but could not match the Central rates - a gap of 37 per cent still remained. The Central Government pays 55 per cent DA to its employees while the State Government employees get 18 per cent, leading to widespread discontent among employees.

BJP leaders such as West Bengal co-minister Amit Malviya and state head Sukanta Majumdar welcomed the Supreme Court's order



and crowded at the discomfiture of the Mamata Banerjee Government.

"This is a major victory for West Bengal Government employees and the BJP Bengal. After a long legal battle and multiple attempts by the

Government employees in West Bengal receive what they are owed-and that Mamata Banerjee is held accountable," Malviya said in the post on X.

In a long post on X, State BJP chief and Central Minister Sukanta Majumdar wrote: "The Supreme Court has slapped the Mamata govt once again! "After 17 shameless adjournments by a corrupt regime drowning in mela, khela & appeasement politics, the apex court has ordered WB govt to pay 25% of DA arrears to its employees. This is a historic win for Bengal's deprived

govt employees and a tight slap to a govt that spent crores on carnivals but cried poverty when asked to pay its workers their dues. Failed CM Mamata Banerjee's lawyer Abhishek Manu Singhvi told the court the state couldn't pay 50% of DA because it would "break its financial backbone. But the truth is, Mamata & her inner circle looted the treasury dry—from SSC scams to cow & coal rackets, the list is endless. Had the Trinamool Congress not turned Bengal into a corruption laboratory, our employees wouldn't have to beg the

court for their rightful dues. The 2022 Calcutta HC order to pay DA at Central Govt rates was also ignored.

"Today, the Supreme Court delivered justice where Mamata delivered only excuses. This verdict isn't just legal—it's moral. It's a warning to every TMC leader who thinks public money is private property. BJP stands with every employee, every youth robbed of opportunity, and every citizen betrayed by this failed govt. We will build Sonar Bangla. And Mamata Banerjee will be held accountable."

## CJI raps SCBA for not holding Justice Bela farewell event

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Chief Justice of India B R Gavai on Friday deprecated the decision of the Supreme Court Bar Association of not holding the usual farewell ceremony for retiring judge Justice Bela M Trivedi.

"I must deprecate openly, because I believe in speaking plainly... The association (SCBA) ought not to have been such a stand," said the CJI while presiding over a ceremonial bench also comprising Justices Trivedi and Augustine George Masih.

The CJI, however, praised SCBA president and senior advocate Kapil Sibal and vice president Rachna Srivastava for their presence before it during the proceedings despite the bar body not holding the usual

function for Justice Trivedi in the evening.

"I am grateful to Kapil Sibal and Rachna Srivastava, both of them are here. But the stand taken by the Association, I must deprecate openly... On such an occasion, such a stand ought not to have been taken by the Association," he said.

"So therefore, I am openly appreciating Sibal and Srivastava for their presence. Despite the resolution of their bodies, they are here. But what has been lost by the association, the presence of the Full House here, vindicates that she is a very very good judge. There are different types of judges, but that should not be a factor to deny what ought to have been granted," the CJI said.

Similar sentiments were

echoed by Justice Masih.

"Strangely enough, as has already been expressed by the chief (CJI), I feel sorry, but I must say that traditions need to be followed, and they are to be respected. I am sure good traditions should always continue," Justice Masih said.

The CJI, in his address, hailed Justice Trivedi for her rise from the district judiciary to the apex court and delivering justice with hard work and dedication. "She should always be known for fairness, firmness, carefulness, hard work, devotion, dedication, industry, integrity..." he said.

CJI Gavai said that the Supreme Court endorsed Justice Trivedi's integrity and fairness.

"She has always been fair, known for her hard work,

integrity.... Justice Trivedi, you have been a valuable asset for our judiciary, as you embark on a new journey, I wish you all the best," CJI Gavai said.

As a matter of practice, the SCBA holds farewell functions for retiring apex court judges and an exceptional decision is taken in Justice Trivedi's case possibly because of some decisions that have gone against lawyers affiliated to the bar body.

Justice Trivedi, who was considered as a tough judge, had ordered a CBI probe against few lawyers in relation to alleged filing of a fake plea in the top court using a forged 'vakalnama' (power of attorney).

She had rejected the vehement plea of many bar leaders for mercy for the lawyers.

## Dar cites 'fake news' to laud...

CONTINUED FROM P1

cies in the viral photo, and determined that the information was false. It analysed through its tools and checked the British Publication 'The Daily Telegraph' to see if it had shared any such news story.

Posts from multiple users across social media have been sharing the photo since May 10, allegedly showing the front page of The Daily Telegraph newspaper declaring the Pakistan Air

Force the "King of the Skies" amid the recent escalation with India. However, no such article was published in the newspaper and the screenshot is fake, Dawn reported.

The Dawn, conducted a fact-check to determine the veracity of the claim made in the newspaper due to its virality and keen public interest in the international coverage of the recent tensions between Pakistan and India.

While analysing the viral image, the team found

multiple discrepancies, including spelling errors, mistyped and jumped sentences and language inconsistencies. Words like "Fyaw..." instead of "Force" and "preformance" instead of "performance" are incorrect, "Aur Force" appears instead of "Air Force" and "advancemend" instead of "advancement" is incorrect. These typographical and spelling mistakes are inconsistent with the editorial standards of a mainstream newspaper, Dawn reported.

## IMF should reconsider funding Pak

CONTINUED FROM P1

extend my gratitude to you once again."

"The entire world has seen how you destroyed nine terrorist camps. In the action taken later, several of their air bases were destroyed. During Operation Sindoor, Indian Air Force displayed not just their might but also proved to the world that now India's war policy and technology have changed," he added.

The Defence Minister also stressed that Indian Air Force assumed a very impactful role in Operation Sindoor and is being appreciated all over the world.

"Indian Air Force assumed a very impactful role in Operation Sindoor and it is being appreciated not only in this country but also in other countries of the world. In this Opera-

tion, you not only dominated the enemy but also successfully decimated them," Singh said. "This Operation against terrorism was led by our Indian Armed Force. Our Air Force is such a force which has touched the zenith of the sky through its valour and bravery. I would also like to thank Air Chief Marshal AP Singh for this, his efforts, his entire team and all his jawans. This is no small thing that our Air Force can reach every corner of Pakistan and this has been proven in every manner," he added.

India conducted precision strikes on terrorist infrastructure in Pakistan on May 7 in response to Pahalgam terror attack. Indian Armed Forces subsequently repelled Pakistani military aggression and pounded its air bases.

## Multi-party diplomatic mission...

CONTINUED FROM P1

(MEA) will provide detailed briefings on the tour's plan and agenda.

Sources reveal that the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) will soon provide detailed briefings to the MPs regarding the tour's plan and agenda.

This international outreach aims to bolster India's global stance and foster international cooperation. With diverse political representation, the delegation is poised to effectively convey India's perspective on the recent conflict and its

strategic priorities.

MPs have received invitations, and each delegation will comprise 5-6 members, their key task is to effectively communicate India's stance and garner support from the international community, the sources added.

As per sources, the delegations will comprise prominent leaders and Parliamentarians from across the political lines. The groups will likely to leave for different destinations across the world on May 22-23.

This will be the first time that the Centre will depute MPs from multiple parties

to present India's stance on Kashmir and cross-border terrorism originating from Pakistan. Each delegation will comprise 5-6 MPs from various political parties, including NDA, BJD, Congress, and others, along with an official from the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and a government representative.

MPs have been advised to keep their passports and other travel-related documents ready. The delegations are likely to depart India for various countries on May 22-23 and return in the first week of June.

CONTINUED FROM P1

Shehbaz made the comments during a visit to the Kamra air base in the country's Punjab province where he interacted with officers and soldiers involved in the recent military confrontation with India.

"We are ready to talk with it (India) for peace," he said.

The Pakistan's prime minister added that the "conditions for peace" include the Kashmir issue.

India has maintained that

the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the Union Territory of Ladakh "are and always will be integral and inalienable parts of it".

Shehbaz was accompanied to the airbase by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif, Army Chief General Asim Munir, Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu.

This was the Pakistan's prime minister's second

visit to a defence facility following the understanding reached between India and Pakistan India on May 10 to end the conflict after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes.

India carried out precision strikes under 'Operation Sindoor' on terror infrastructure early on May 7 in response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that killed 26 people. Following the Indian action, Pakistan attempted to attack Indian military bases on May 8, 9

## 6 terrorists killed in past 3 days

CONTINUED FROM P1

agencies," IGP Birdi said.

"We are duty-bound to end terror activities and will act wherever required."

Major Gen Joshi said that in the aftermath of the Pahalgam attack, security agencies designated specific areas as high-priority zones, focusing on upper

reaches and forest belts amid reports that militants had moved into those areas after snowmelt.

"In Keller, the domination party engaged the terrorists following a tip-off. In Tral, the operation required evacuating civilians, including children, from homes before engaging terrorists hiding inside," he explained.

## Omar, Mehbooba clash over Tulbul Barrage revival

CONTINUED FROM P1

something as essential and life-giving as water risk internationalising a bilateral matter," she said in a counter-post.

In a sharp rebuttal, Omar accused Mufti of "blind lust" to "score cheap publicity points" and appease people "across the border". He called the IWT a "historic betrayal" of J&K's interests and defended his opposition to the treaty as a correction of a long-standing injustice.

Mufti then escalated the exchange by bringing up the political legacy of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, claiming the NC founder had once advocated for J&K's accession to Pakistan but switched sides post-regaining power. She

contrasted this with PDP's "consistent convictions" and accused the NC of shifting loyalties "according to political expediency".

Omar Abdullah responded sharply, accusing Mufti of dragging the conversation to the "gutter" and invoking her past praise of his grandfather as Kashmir's tallest leader. "I'll rise above the gutter you want to take this conversation to... You can keep posting, I'll do some real work," he wrote. The Tulbul project, located at the mouth of Wullar Lake, has been a long-contested issue under the IWT, which governs water sharing between India and Pakistan. The barrage was stalled decades ago following Pakistani objections under the treaty.

## 'West trying to pit our friends...'

CONTINUED FROM P1

with Moscow against "unilateralism and hegemonic bullying" during a visit to the country to commemorate the defeat of Nazi Germany in World War II, Al Jazeera reported.

Xi hailed the "deeper" trust developing between the two countries, appearing to take

and 10.

India and Pakistan reached an understanding on May 10 to end the conflict after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes.

Ties between India and Pakistan nose-dived after a terror attack on the Pathankot Air Force base in 2016 by terror groups based in the neighbouring country. Subsequent attacks, including one on an Indian Army camp in Uri, further deteriorated the re-

a swipe at Western critics of Russia's continuing offensive in Ukraine, which Putin has characterised as a war against latter-day Nazis, as per Al Jazeera.

Meanwhile, ever since Trump took office, Russia-US ties have improved significantly.

On March 18, US President

relationship.

The relationship dipped further after India's war planes pounded a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist training camp deep inside Pakistan on February 26, 2019 in response to the Pulwama terror attack in which 40 CRPF jawans were killed.

The relations deteriorated after India announced withdrawing the special powers of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcation of the state into two union territories in August, 2019.

## Haryana seeks 10,300 cusecs of water

CONTINUED FROM P1

the southern districts have completely dried up, affecting water supply in many urban and rural areas - especially in south Haryana, including Sirsa, Rohtak, Mahendragarh, Charkhi Dadri, and Bhiwani.

The situation has weakened the water rationing system managed by the Public Health Department. Currently, water is being supplied in cities only once a day, while villages are getting water on alternate days. In some places, the government has resorted to using water tankers and tube wells to quench people's thirst.

Officials have now been directed to plan water distribution based on a new standard 150 litres of water

per person per day. But with canal water flow dropping and water plants drying up, the department is struggling to meet this target.

While pumps are being used to refill the plants, the supply is still far from adequate.

Public Health Minister Ranbir Gangwa held Punjab responsible for the crisis, accusing the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government there of playing "cheap politics." Gangwa in an interaction with the media persons alleged, "Every year in May, the Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) allocates water. Despite having enough water, Punjab has cut Haryana's share by half."

He further stated that Haryana, which earlier received over 9000 cusecs, is

now getting only 4500 cusecs, leading to the current shortage. "The High Court has also ruled in Haryana's favour, but Punjab refuses to follow the orders," Gangwa added, calling it harmful to India's democratic system.

To manage the crisis, Minister Gangwa directed the officials to prepare a detailed water supply and demand plan. In case the crisis deepens, the state is ready to impose stricter rationing in affected districts.

The ongoing water dispute between the two states took another turn with Haryana having now requested 10300 cusecs of water for the new allocation cycle starting May 21-an increase from its earlier demand of 9,500 cusecs. However, Punjab has rejected this request.



# 'IT'S A JUDICIAL MATTER': MP CM ON CONG'S DEMAND OF SHAH'S DISMISSAL

CM Yadav further accused that wherever there is an opportunity to insult the judiciary, the Congress does not refrain from doing so.

TDG NETWORK  
BHOPAL

Reacting to Madhya Pradesh Congress's continuous demand about the dismissal of state cabinet minister Kunwar Vijay Shah over remark on Colonel Sofiya Qureshi, Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Friday said that Congress can do as much drama as it wants but they know that it is all a judicial matter and they cannot be above the judiciary.

CM Yadav further accused that wherever there is an opportunity to insult the judiciary, the Congress does not refrain from doing so.

"Congress can do as much drama as it wants but they know that it is all a judicial matter. When the matter is sub-judice, they cannot be above the judiciary. There was a case against the LoP too, they should ask for a resignation from him as

## JUDICIAL MATTER

- Judicial Independence: CM Yadav emphasizes that Congress cannot be above the judiciary, citing the sub-judice nature of the case.
- Accusation Against Congress: CM alleges Congress insults the judiciary whenever possible, mentioning past incidents.
- Reference to Past: CM recalls Congress' actions against the Allahabad High Court ruling on Indira Gandhi and the change in law regarding triple talaq.
- Congress' Protest: Congress delegation meets Governor Mangubhai Patel, demands Shah's resignation, and stages a sit-in at Raj Bhavan.



well. Whenever there is an opportunity to insult the judiciary, Congress will not miss it," the CM said.

"Congress should remember the past incident of Allahabad High Court that when it gave verdict against the then PM Indira Gandhi, the Congress declared emergency across the nation. After that Con-

gress also changed the law on triple talaq given by the Supreme Court through Lok Sabha," the CM added. The MP CM further alleged that the Congress had a record of making mockery of the Court.

"We respect the court and follow the order of the court. But the Congress has a record of mockery of the

court's order. If the Congress looked at the past incident, they made fun of the court..."

Earlier today, a delegation of Madhya Pradesh Congress leaders met Governor Mangubhai Patel at Raj Bhavan in Bhopal demanding dismissal of the state cabinet minister Vijay Shah over his objectionable

statement on Colonel Sofiya Qureshi.

The Congress delegation also demonstrated and staged a sit-in outside the Raj Bhavan in the state capital and demanded that they want the resignation of the minister and a decision must be taken immediately.

Earlier, following the direction of the Madhya Pradesh High Court, an FIR was registered against Minister Vijay Shah over his objectionable remarks at Manpur police station in Indore district on Wednesday. The FIR was under sections 152, 196(1)(b), and 197(1)(c) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS). This comes after a division bench of the Madhya Pradesh High Court in Jabalpur took suo motu cognisance against him and directed the Director General of Police (DGP) of the state to lodge an immediate FIR.

## Police detains MP Congress MLAs

TDG NETWORK  
BHOPAL

Madhya Pradesh Police detained Congress leaders, including Leader of Opposition (LoP) and MLAs staging a protest with their demand for dismissal of state cabinet minister Kunwar Vijay Shah at Raj Bhavan in Bhopal on Friday.

Earlier today, a delegation of Congress leaders met with Governor Mangubhai Patel at his residence, Raj Bhavan in the state capital demanding dismissal of minister Vijay Shah over his objectionable statement on Colonel Sofiya Qureshi.

After meeting with the Governor, the Congress delegation demonstrated and staged a sit-in outside the Raj Bhavan and demanded that they want the resignation of the minister and a decision must be taken immediately.

During this, the police asked them to call off the protest as they do not have



Congress MLA Arif Masood with party workers stages a sit-in demonstration demanding the sacking of Madhya Pradesh minister Kunwar Vijay Shah over his statement on Colonel Sofiya Qureshi, in Bhopal on Friday. (ANI Photo)

permission to demonstrate outside the Raj Bhavan but the Congress leaders did not pay attention to it. Following which, the police detained them. Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition Umang Singhar said, "The police is no longer the state's police but it has become Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) police. This police is not with the Indian Army. We will keep fighting till the

end." Earlier, while holding the demonstration, Singhar spoke to the media and said that they want the resignation of the minister and a decision for the purpose must be taken immediately. "Vijay Shah made objectionable statements against a senior Army officer but the Government has not made any decision so far. We want his resignation.

## ED raids multiple premises in Tamil Nadu in TASMAC money laundering case

TDG NETWORK  
CHENNAI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) is conducting raids at multiple premises across Tamil Nadu in connection with alleged offences related to Tamil Nadu State Marketing Corporation Limited (TASMAC) and associated entities under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002.

According to officials, searches began early morning today covering 10 locations.

The investigation follows multiple FIRs filed under the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 concerning issues such as TASMAC shops charging more than the actual MRP, distillery companies allegedly giving kickbacks to TASMAC officials for supply orders, and senior TASMAC officials



accepting bribes from retail shops and for staff transfers.

Earlier on March 6, 2025, ED had conducted searches and recovered incriminating data related to transfer postings, transport tender manipulation, bar license tenders, indent orders favouring certain distilleries, and excess charges of Rs. 10-30 per bottle at TASMAC outlets involving officials.

The probe revealed manipulation in TASMAC's transport tender process, including mismatches between applicant KYC details and Demand Drafts, with tenders awarded even when there was only a single applicant.

TASMAC reportedly pays over Rs. 100 crore annually to transporters. Evidence also showed that bar license tenders were allegedly allotted to applicants without GST/PAN numbers or proper KYC documentation.

Investigations uncovered direct communication between distillery companies and senior TASMAC officials aimed at securing increased indent orders and undue favour. The financial fraud involves distilleries and bottling firms. They allegedly inflated expenses and created bogus purchases to siphon off over Rs. 1,000 crore in unaccounted cash.

## ISRO Chairman announces upcoming weather surveillance satellite EOS-09

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to launch its 101st satellite, EOS-09, aboard the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C61) on May 18, 2025.

According to ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan "The launch is scheduled for 5:59 am from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota".

The PSLV-C61 rocket was transported to the Mobile Service Tower at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota for final integration and checks before



ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan

its scheduled launch on May 18.

Former ISRO scientist Purohit also mentioned that EOS-09 would serve as a follow-on to the earlier RISAT-1 mission. This launch is strategically timed," said former ISRO scientist Manish Purohit.

*According to ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan "The launch is scheduled for 5:59 am from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota".*

"It strengthens monitoring at borders and coasts, particularly with respect to sensitive areas. The satellite can detect ingress or suspicious movement deemed vital in anti-terror operations, especially after the recent Pahalgam terror attack and Operation Sindoor," added Purohit.

Earlier ISRO Chairman V. Narayanan stressed the critical role of satellite tech-

nology in national security and governance, stating, "With the PSLV-C61/EOS-09 mission, ISRO continues to demonstrate its commitment to both technological excellence and the national interest."

IN-SPACe Chairman Pawan Kumar Goenka echoed this sentiment, emphasizing the need for constant enhancement of capabilities.

## Rahul Gandhi condemns detention of Gujarat Samachar co-founder

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Congress leader and Lok Sabha Leader of Opposition (LoP) Rahul Gandhi on Friday labelled the detention of Gujarat Samachar co-founder Bahubali Shah as a "conspiracy to suppress the voice of entire democracy", saying that the country would neither be governed by sticks nor fear, but by truth and constitution.

"The country will neither be run by sticks nor by fear - India will be run by truth and the Constitution," Gandhi posted on X.

He said that the shutting down of newspapers that hold those in power accountable was indicative of the democracy being in danger. Detention of Bahubali Shah reveals that "politics of fear" has become the identity marker of the Modi government, the Congress leader added.

"The attempt to silence Gujarat Samachar is an-



*"The country will neither be run by sticks nor by fear - India will be run by truth and the Constitution," Gandhi posted on X.*

other conspiracy to suppress the voice not just of one newspaper but of the entire democracy. When newspapers that hold power accountable are shut down,

understand that democracy is in danger," Gandhi said.

"The detention of Bahubali Shah is a part of the same politics of fear, which has now become the identity of the Modi government," he added.

Meanwhile, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convenor Arvind Kejriwal on Friday condemned the detention of Bahubali Shah following the raids by Income Tax (IT) and Enforcement Directorate (ED) on the leading daily, which he said was not a coincidence since the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) "wants to silence" every questioning voice.

Further, he said that Gujarat would soon give an answer to this "dictatorship."

He further said that Shah's "detention" came 48 hours after raids were carried out on Gujarat Samachar and GSTV. Kejriwal added that it was a sign of the BJP's frustration.

## Pak national aboard cargo vessel denied entry into India by K'taka port

TDG NETWORK  
UTTARA KANNADA

A Pakistani citizen who arrived at Karnataka's Karwar Port aboard the cargo vessel MT R Ocean was denied entry into India by port authorities, said the Indian Coast Guard.

The ship, which was carrying bitumen from Iraq, docked on May 12 with 14 Indian crew members, two Syrians, and one Pakistani national on board.

The captain of the ship was also an Indian. Police Inspector Nischal Kumar had instructed that Pakistani and Syrian nationals should not disembark from the ship due to the deteriorating relations between Pakistan and India, said authorities. As per the Police instructions, their mobile phones were seized by the captain. The Iraqi commercial ship, after unloading bitumen at the port, set off for Iraq, said Karwar port officials.

Following the Pahalgam terrorist attack, India has banned Pakistani nationals from entering the country and has also cancelled their visas. Twenty-six people were killed in the Pahalgam attack. India launched Operation Sindoor targeting terrorist sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir in response to the attack. Meanwhile, Defence Minister Singh, during his visit to Srinagar on Thursday, highlighted India's firm stance against terrorism, evident in its refusal to be intimidated by Pakistan's repeated nuclear threats, which have been issued irresponsibly on several occasions. In his first interaction with troops after Operation Sindoor at Badami Bagh Cantt, he said that Operation Sindoor has sent a loud and clear message to the terrorist organisations hiding in Pakistan and their masters that they are not safe anywhere.

## Tiranga Yatra to be held in Hyderabad today: Minister G Kishan Reddy

TDG NETWORK  
HYDERABAD

Union Minister and Telangana BJP president G Kishan Reddy on Friday said that Tiranga Yatra in honour and to congratulate the army will be held in Hyderabad on May 17 (Saturday).

"Operation Sindoor was successfully completed by the Indian Army... In this spirit, Tiranga Yatra will be held in Hyderabad on 17th at 5 PM in honour and to congratulate the army... Everyone, including DGP Jammu and Kashmir, retired IPS and DGP rank officers from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, army officers, defence personnel, artists, youth leaders and elected representatives," the Union Minister told reporters in Hyderabad.

The BJP leader said that Pakistan is "bowing its head" and "begging before the world."



Union Minister and Telangana BJP president G Kishan Reddy

"But India made it clear: Operation Sindoor is not over.

The operation will continue until all the terrorists harboured in Pakistan are eliminated or handed over to India. This is our first demand and our second demand is that Pakistan must vacate PoK.

Only then will talks with Pakistan be considered," he added.

The BJP's 'Tiranga Yatra', which began on May 13, will continue till May 23. The BJP organised the 'Tiranga

Yatra' in states such as Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Dibrugarh, Srinagar and Odisha.

The event was organised to thank India's Armed Forces and Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the success of Operation Sindoor.

Following the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 people, including a Nepali national, were killed, the Indian forces have intensified their operation against terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir.

In retaliation for the terror attack, India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7 in which precision strikes destroyed terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu Kashmir (PoJK) and eliminated nearly 100 terror operatives at key bases in Pakistan. Among the targets were Bhawalpur, the headquarters of Jaish, and Muridke, a key training base of Lashkar.

## Karnataka seeks electric buses under PM E-Drive scheme

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Karnataka government has sought allocation of electric buses from the central government under the centrally sponsored PM E-Drive initiative.

For this purpose, Karnataka Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy has put forward the state's request before the Centre, at a meet-

ing with Union Minister for Heavy Industries HD Kumaraswamy, citing need for enhanced urban public transport systems in key cities in the southern state.

According to a statement from his ministry, HD Kumaraswamy held deliberations with senior officials of the Ministry and assured the Karnataka government of complete support from the Centre.

The Union Minister confirmed that the process of allocation is already underway and that Karnataka will receive electric buses in a phased and prioritised manner.

"I will ensure that Karnataka receives all due support from the Government of India," said HD Kumaraswamy, as was quoted in the statement.

"Under the visionary



*According to a statement from his ministry, HD Kumaraswamy held deliberations with senior officials of the Ministry and assured the Karnataka government of complete support from the Centre.*

leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, we are transforming public mobil-

ity across India. Karnataka will definitely receive buses under PM E-Drive," the

minister added.

According to Ministry of Heavy Industries, 14,000 electric buses are to be allocated to nine major cities under the PM E-Drive initiative.

Discussions between the Union and State governments have also covered associated infrastructure, including charging stations, bus depots, and vehicle maintenance systems.



# FRUIT MANDI TRADERS TO STOP IMPORT OF APPLES FROM TURKEY

Mandi had imported 1.16 lakh tonnes of Turkish apples in 2024.

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Azadpur Mandi, Asia's largest wholesale market for fruits and vegetables, has decided to stop importing apples from Turkey, citing the current diplomatic situation. Azadpur Fruit Mandi chairman Meetha Ram Kriplani said, "We have decided to discontinue all new imports of apples from Turkey. While consignments ordered earlier will still arrive, no further trade in apples or other produce will take place going forward."

Kriplani said that the decision was taken after a careful review of the situation, adding that no fresh orders will be placed in the future.

According to Kriplani, Azadpur Mandi had long prioritised Turkish apples, with imports reaching 1.16 lakh tonnes in 2024.

However, he said recent developments in Turkey's approach towards India had led to disappointment.

"We have supported Turkish trade for years, but the cur-



rent circumstances have left us with no choice," he added.

The move marks a significant shift in the mandi's sourcing strategy, as it looks to explore alternative suppliers to import apples in the coming months, he said.

Traders across Delhi are protesting, demanding a ban on the import and marketing of Turkish goods. According to Delhi traders associations, "Turkey's recent political stance towards India is unacceptable and has hurt national sentiments."

Meanwhile, traders in Delhi on Friday pledged to halt all business ties with Turkiye and Azerbaijan, following the two countries' recent political stances regarding India's counter-terror operations under Operation

Sindoor in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). The Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI) organised a campaign at the Delhi Secretariat where several market associations, traders and factory owners participated.

CTI chairman Brijesh Goyal said that the traders collectively took an oath not to conduct any future trade with Turkiye and Azerbaijan.

He also mentioned that representatives from major markets such as Kashmere Gate, Chandni Chowk, Chawri Bazar, Naya Bazar, Khari Baoli, Gandhi Nagar, Sadar Bazar, Rohini, Karol Bagh, Lajpat Nagar, Sarojini Nagar, Kamla Nagar, Bawana, and Narela were present and joined the protest.

## 'Govt will bring modernisation plan for mandis'

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta on Friday said her government will bring a modernisation plan for the wholesale markets in the national capital.

A compactor and a green-waste processing plant will also be installed within the mandi premises, eliminating the need to transport waste elsewhere, according to an official statement.

Gupta visited the Azadpur Mandi, Asia's largest wholesale market, here on Friday morning and blamed the previous Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Delhi for its "poor condition".

She interacted with traders, workers and visitors at the mandi and took note of their concerns, the statement said. "Thousands of people work in the Azadpur Mandi, but it severely lacks basic infrastructure like

roads, sanitation and security. The heavy movement of trucks, rotting vegetables, broken roads and dilapidated toilets have turned this mandi into a garbage heap," the chief minister said.

Attacking the previous AAP dispensation, she accused its ministers of turning mandis into "centres of corruption".

"Neither the traders nor the workers were heard, and no effort was made to understand or address the core issues. Those who once promised to turn Delhi into London or Paris should stand here and face the stench. These markets need a complete renovation and we are committed to it," the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader said. She instructed officials to take immediate corrective steps to restore the dignity of both the traders and the public and ensure their safety.

## AAP claims dismissal of staffers in Mohalla clinics

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Friday attacked the Delhi BJP government, alleging the dismissal of thousands of doctors, nurses, pharmacists and multi-tasking workers (MTWs) from the Mohalla clinics.

Responding to the allegations, Delhi Health Minister Pankaj Singh said the government will not do injustice to anyone and everyone eligible will be included.

"There will be a proper process to hire doctors and all eligible candidates can apply. There will be transparency in the selection as we aim to provide the best healthcare to our people.

"All good doctors and healthcare workers will be with us. Everything will be done systematically," the minister said.

Earlier, addressing a press conference, Delhi AAP chief Saurabh Bharadwaj alleged that the minutes of a meeting issued on May 7 indicated plans to shut down most Mohalla clinics in Delhi. The stated reason, he said, was that Ayushman Aarogya Mandirs



*There will be transparency in the selection as we aim to provide the best healthcare to our people.*

would be established in their place and wherever an Aarogya Mandir is built, there would be no need for a nearby Mohalla Clinic.

According to him, the statement read that the clinics would remain operational only until the Aarogya Mandirs are constructed, after which both the clinics and their personnel would be removed.

"They've been trying to get a meeting with the

chief minister since then. But when they got no response, they were left with no choice but to come in thousands to the CM's Janta Darbar," he said.

Bharadwaj accused the BJP of going back on its promise.

"Before elections, the Prime Minister (Narendra Modi), (Union Health Minister) J P Nadda and every BJP MP and minister promised that no public welfare scheme run during the AAP government tenure -- be it free electricity, 20,000 litres of water or Mohalla clinics -- would be stopped. But the first order by the new health minister was to shut down 250 rented clinics," he said.

"With the sentiment of political hatred, all the facilities are being shut down. And on top of that, the people who used to come to the clinics every day, used to get free treatment, free medicines and free tests, those facilities are also being shut down by the BJP," he added.

Bharadwaj noted that many of the staffers have been working since 2017.

## City's power demand at new high of 6,867MW

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi recorded the highest peak power demand in the summer season so far this year, as the temperature soared on Friday afternoon. The real-time figures of the State Load Dispatch Centre (SLDC) showed the peak demand was 6,867 MW at 3.17 pm.

This year, the peak power demand of Delhi is expected to cross 9,000 MW. Previously, an all-time high peak demand in the national capital was recorded at 8,656 MV in 2024.

BSES discoms -- BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) and BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) -- successfully met the peak power demand of 3,004

*This year, the peak power demand of Delhi is expected to cross 9,000 MW. Previously, an all-time high peak demand in the national capital was recorded at 8,656 MV in 2024.*

MW and 1,479 MW respectively in their areas, according to a statement from the company.

Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (TPDDL) successfully met the peak power demand of 2,045 MW on Friday, as the city's peak reached 6,867 MW on the day, said a statement from the discom.

TPDDL is fully equipped to ensure uninterrupted power supply through a multi-pronged approach that includes bilateral agreements, reserve shutdown

and power exchange, it said. Last year, Delhi's peak power demand had crossed 8,000 MW for the very first time.

BSES discoms are geared up to ensure reliable power supply to meet the power demand of more than 50 lakh consumers and two crore residents in South, West, East and Central Delhi, the statement said.

These arrangements include long-term purchase agreements and banking arrangements with other states and deployment of

latest technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning for predicting power demand accurately, it added.

According to estimates, the power demand in BRPL's jurisdiction -- covering South and West Delhi -- is expected to reach around 4050 MW, up from 3809 MW in 2024.

In BYPL's area, which includes East and Central Delhi, the peak demand is likely to touch 1900 MW, slightly higher than last year's 1882 MW.

According to estimates, the power demand in BRPL's jurisdiction -- covering South and West Delhi -- is expected to reach around 4050 MW, up from 3809 MW in 2024.

## Delhi's AQI in 'poor' category on Friday

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi's Air Quality Index (AQI) stood in the 'poor' category at 297 at 9 am, according to the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) data. According to the IMD, the national capital recorded a minimum temperature of 26.2 degrees Celsius, 0.3 notch below the season's average. The IMD has forecast thunderstorm with rain on Friday and Saturday. The maximum temperature is expected to settle at 41 degrees Celsius. The relative humidity was 44 per cent at 8.30 am. An AQI between zero and 50 is considered 'good', 51 and 100 'satisfactory', 101 and 200 'moderate', 201 and 300 'poor', 301 and 400 'very poor', and 401 and 500 'severe'.

## Four-storey building tilts in Shahdara; asked to vacate

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI



Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) officials have vacated the occupants of a four-storey building in Bihari Colony, Shahdara, after finding out that the building has tilted. Officials have also issued notices for vacating the occupants in the adjacent buildings as well. The MCD has decided to take similar actions in the cases of other buildings that are tilted and in dilapidated condition, as they pose a threat to people's lives and property.

"MCD is taking action on all such buildings which are 5-6 storeyed and have tilted or are in dilapidated condi-

tion. Such buildings can pose a threat to the lives and property of people," Sandeep Kapoor, Chairman of the Standing Committee, Shahdara South Zone MCD, said.

He said that whether the building in Bihari Colony will be demolished or not will be decided by the officials, adding that public safety is the topmost priority for the MCD.

"Public safety is of utmost priority. In this connection, this 4-storey building in Bihari Colony is slightly tilted.

A survey was done, and the building was vacated at night. Whether the building has to be sealed or demolished will be decided by the officers," Kapoor said.

"Notices have been issued for buildings adjacent to the said building too, so that they can be vacated," he added. On receiving the information, the police, corporation and BSES team reached the spot on Thursday night. The house was vacated.

The corporation posted a notice on the house stating that it is a dangerous building. Due to the house tilting too much, the people around are afraid that it may suddenly collapse.

## 500 new electric buses to join Delhi's public transport fleet

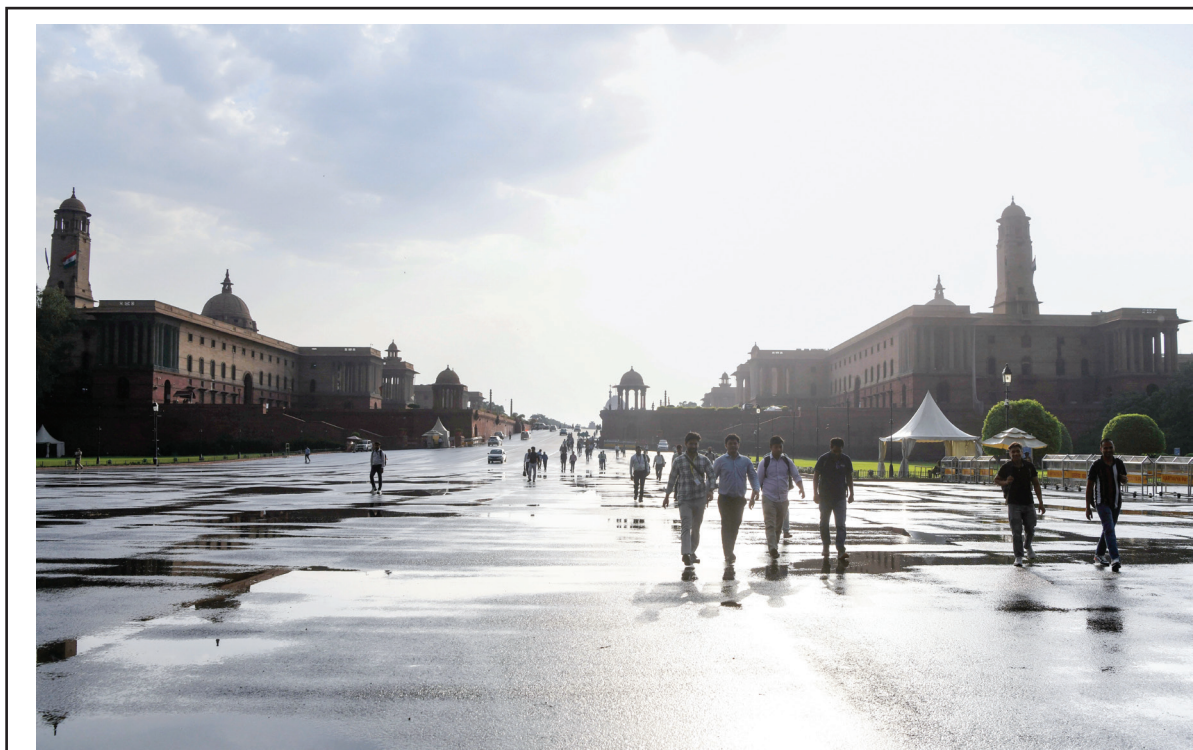
TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

In the next two months, 500 new electric buses will be rolled out on the city roads, Delhi Transport Minister Pankaj Singh said on Friday. After a review meeting on the induction of e-buses in the public transport fleet, Singh said that the government will induct 1000 such buses by the end of this year. "We are moving swiftly to transform public transport. In the next two months, 500 e-buses will be on Delhi's Roads, and by year-end, 1,000 more will follow -- ensuring cleaner, more efficient commuting options for all," Singh said in a statement.

*A structured route rationalisation plan is being implemented to effectively integrate electric DEVI buses into Delhi's existing public transport network.*

"The new electric buses should be introduced at the earliest so that the benefits of clean, efficient mobility reach citizens without delay. With the induction of these non-polluting electric buses, we are taking a decisive step toward making Delhi the EV capital of India," Singh said. A structured route rationalisation plan is being implemented to effectively integrate electric DEVI

buses into Delhi's existing public transport network. The DEVI e-buses are operating on shorter routes (around 12 km each), particularly in areas where longer (12-metre) buses face operational challenges. "With route rationalisation and greater awareness, DEVI buses will enhance last-mile connectivity and bring clean, efficient transport closer to every commuter in Delhi," he said.



People are seen walking at Raisina Hills after rain, in New Delhi on Friday. ANI

## Govt forms 10-member panel to draft new EV policy

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has formed a 10-member committee comprising officials and experts to draft a revised electric vehicle (EV) policy, officials said on Friday. A 12-point agenda has been set for the committee, which includes transitioning all CNG vehicles to electric, charging facilities under flyovers, managing battery waste, last-mile connectivity, subsidy disbursement and other aspects

of the revised policy. "For proper CNG to EV transition, the committee shall ensure that a scientific study is done to assess the number of CNG cars currently in use in Delhi and to outline a feasible plan for replacing them with EVs within a year, starting from April 1, 2026," a government document said. According to the document, the expert committee shall, after detailed examination, recommend measures on how to set up EV charging stations.

## Driver, accomplice held for choking, robbing passengers in moving auto

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

An autorickshaw driver and his accomplice were arrested for allegedly robbing passengers after choking them unconscious in a moving vehicle, police said Friday.

The accused, identified as Raja (27) and Sonu (34), operated from the Old Delhi Railway Station, where they would pick up lone passengers in autorick-



shaws, often with one or two accomplices posing as commuters.

"Once the auto reached a relatively isolated stretch, the assailants would suddenly overpower the pas-

senger by grabbing and choking him until he lost consciousness. The victim would then be looted of all belongings and dumped on the roadside," Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Raja Banthia said.

The case that led to their arrest was registered on May 10, when Ranjit Kumar, a resident of Lal Bagh in Azadpur, reported that he had been assaulted and robbed in a similar manner around 4:45 am while

travelling from Old Delhi Railway Station to Azadpur.

According to the FIR, the men sitting in the back of the auto attacked him, choked him unconscious and fled with his mobile phone, wallet, documents, and travel bag after throwing him out of the moving vehicle.

Based on Kumar's complaint, an e-FIR was registered and an investigation was launched.

## Cyber Police nabs man for duping a defence personnel

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Cyber Police Station on Friday nabbed an individual who duped a Defence personnel on various pretexts, as per officials.

The individual has been identified as Om Prakash Sanwaria and has been involved in 10 cases, as per the Delhi Police. Meanwhile, the Delhi Police IFSO unit of Special Cell busted a module responsible for providing, handling, and using mule/fake bank accounts in



connection with IVR scam (Digital Arrest scam). The accused were operating mule accounts to siphon off the proceeds of crime abroad. According to a release, Rs 2.2 crores, three mobile phones, SIM cards, and other digital documents were recovered and restored to the victim.



# UK COURT REJECTS NIRAV MODI'S FRESH BAIL APPLICATION: CBI

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

In a significant development, the High Court of Justice, King's Bench Division, London, on Thursday rejected a fresh bail petition filed by Nirav Deepak Modi. Modi, who has been lodged in a UK prison since March 19, 2019.

He is wanted in India for his involvement in the Rs 6,498.20 crore Punjab National Bank fraud case.

In a press release issued on Thursday, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) stated, "Fresh Bail Petition filed by Nirav Deepak Modi was rejected today by the High Court of Justice, King's Bench Division, London. The bail arguments were strongly opposed by the Crown Prosecution Service advo-



*In a press release issued on Thursday, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) stated, "Fresh Bail Petition filed by Nirav Deepak Modi was rejected today by the High Court of Justice, King's Bench Division, London.*

cate who was ably assisted by a strong CBI team consisting of investigating and law officers who travelled

to London for this purpose."

"Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) could

successfully defend the arguments which resulted in rejection of the bail. Nirav Deepak Modi is in UK prison since 19th March 2019. It may be recalled that Neerav Modi is a fugitive economic offender who is wanted for Trial in India in a Bank fraud case of CBI for defrauding Punjab National Bank for Rs. 6498.20 crore," the release added.

The CBI further said that his extradition has already been approved by the High Court of the UK in favour of the Government of India. "This is his 10th bail petition since his detention in UK which was successfully defended by CBI through Crown Prosecution Service, London," CBI said.

India has been working for the extradition of Nirav Modi, who was arrested in March 2019 by British authorities in London. Nirav

Modi and his uncle Mehul Choksi are the main accused in the PNB scam.

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) had in 2018 registered a Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) case against Nirav Modi, Mehul Choksi and others in the Punjab National Bank (PNB) fraud case. During the investigation, several searches were conducted which led to the seizure of diamonds, gold, pearls and precious and semi-precious stones.

In December 2022, Nirav Modi lost his plea to move the UK Supreme Court against his extradition to India on charges of fraud and money laundering.

The diamantaire had fled India in 2018 before details of his "involvement in large-scale fraud" at the Punjab National Bank became public.

## SC bars Centre from granting retrospective environmental clearances

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday said the right to live in a pollution free atmosphere was a part of the fundamental right as it struck down Centre's office memorandum allowing ex post facto or retrospective environmental clearances to projects in violation of norms.

A bench comprising Justices Abhay S Oka and Ujjal Bhuyan made scathing remarks in its judgement delivered on a plea filed by Vanashakti organisation and said, "The Union Government, as much as individual citizens, has a constitutional obligation to protect the environment."

The court said it "must come down very heavily" on the Centre's attempt to do "something which is completely prohibited un-



der the law".

It added, "Cleverly, the words ex post facto have not been used, but without using those words, there is a provision to effectively grant ex post facto EC. The 2021 OM has been issued in violation of the decisions of this court...."

The bench, therefore, declared the 2021 office memorandum (OM) and related circulars "arbitrary, illegal, and contrary to the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006".

The Centre, as a result, was restrained from issuing directions for grant of ex post facto clearances in any form or manner or for regularising the acts done in contravention of the EIA notification.

"Under Article 21 of the Constitution, the right to live in a pollution free environment is guaranteed. In fact, the 1986 Act has been enacted to give effect to this fundamental right... Therefore, even the Central Government has a duty to protect and improve the natural environment," it said.

## 2020 Delhi riots: Court acquits 11 of arson, theft charges

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

A Delhi court has acquitted 11 men accused of arson and theft charges in a February 2020 riots' case for want of evidence. Additional Sessions Judge Pulastya Pramachala observed the two police witnesses who identified the accused persons in the case appeared to be "artificial eyewitnesses".

The prosecution alleged the accused persons were involved in theft, vandalism and arson in some shops on the intervening night of February 24 and 25, 2020.

In an order dated May 14, the court said the core issue in the matter was the iden-

tification of the accused persons comprising the mob involved in the crime.

The two police witnesses, the court noted, posted in the same police station, identified the photographs of the accused persons after a 10-month gap.

"If prosecution witness (PW) 9, assistant sub-inspector (ASI) Jahangir and PW 10, ASI Vanvir, had actually seen and identified the accused persons among the rioters on February 24, 2020, then there was no good reason for them to keep silent for such a long period," the court said.

The investigating officer was said to have known that the two police officials

were on duty at the spot, but he did not examine them.

"Showing photographs of the accused to PW 9, when they were already arrested in this case, appears to be an unnatural action, giving the impression that PW9 was artificially made an eyewitness to identify the accused persons," the order said. The court, as a result, discarded the witness testimony.

The statement of another witness, namely, Aslam, who identified the accused in court for the first time though he had in fact known them from before was termed "suspicious" by the court.

## Jewellers' body urges suspension of business with Turkiye, Azerbaijan

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

The All India Gem and Jewellery Domestic Council (GJC) urged the industry on Friday to suspend all business transactions with Turkiye and Azerbaijan in a show of support for Operation Sindoor, while reputed educational institutions, such as the IIT-Roorkee, cancelled MoUs signed with the universities of the two countries. Several trade bodies have given a call to boycott Turkish products, whereas Indian universities, including the JNU and Jamia Millia Islamia, have suspended their agreements with the two countries.

The developments come against the backdrop of Turkiye backing Pakistan and its condemnation of India's strikes on terror camps in the neighbouring country and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) under Operation Sindoor. Pakistan also used Turkish drones

on a large scale during the military conflict with India. Azerbaijan had also actively supported Pakistan in the conflict.

The Cochin International Airport Limited (CIAL) announced that it has discontinued the ground-handling services of Turkish company Celebi Airport Services India Private Limited, in compliance with the recent directives of the Bu-

Aviation watchdog BCAS on Thursday revoked the security clearance for Celebi Airport Services India Private Limited in the "interest of national security".

Operating in the Indian aviation sector for more than 15 years and employing over 10,000 people, Celebi offers its services at nine airports in the country -- Mumbai, Delhi, Cochin, Kannur, Bengaluru, Hyder-



reau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) with regard to national security.

In a statement, the CIAL said the services of the Turkish company were formally discontinued from Thursday.

abad, Goa, Ahmedabad and Chennai.

Meanwhile, the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee said it has formally cancelled an MoU it had signed with Turkiye's Inonu University.



## Selfless gift: Family donates organs, saves three lives

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

On the morning of May 1, 2025, a 37-year-old man was rushed to Manipal Hospital after suffering a brain hemorrhage. Despite the medical team's best efforts, he was declared brain dead on May 12. His wife, amidst overwhelming grief, made the incredibly brave decision to donate his organs.

With support from her family and the counselling team, she chose to give the gift of life to others. The liver and kidneys were successfully transplanted into recipients at HCMCT Manipal Hospital and another private hospital in Delhi. A 61-year-old male received the liver, while a 52-year-

old man and a 59-year-old woman received the kidneys. Though the heart and lungs were deemed unfit for transplant, the donation still saved three lives. Dr. Shrikanth Srinivasan of Manipal Institute of Critical Care Medicine praised the family's strength and compassion. Dr. Avnish Seth from Manipal Organ Sharing & Transplant emphasized the importance of trust and transparency in organ donation. This poignant act underscores the critical need for organ donations in India, where the demand far exceeds supply. With thousands waiting for transplants, increasing awareness could save countless lives and bridge the gap between need and availability.



## Delhi govt invites private sector to financially support Yamuna cleaning

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

The Delhi government is planning to collect funds through the corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative to support its mission to rejuvenate the deteriorated ecological health of the Yamuna River, officials said on Friday. The Delhi Jal Board (DJB) has invited private companies to sponsor the modular sewage treatment plants (STPs) to be installed along the major open drains having an outfall into the river

According to the officials, instead of traditional STPs, which require large space and investment, modular and decentralised STPs will be installed on the drains, in which the companies can invest and get a chance at branding.

"The DJB seeks commitment from the corporate entities to partner in the installation of such STPs over the identified open drains as per need.

"The corporate entities would commit to contribut-



ing a particular amount for such installations. They will make the payments directly to the supplier after the installation of the plants," the rules drafted by the DJB said.

Currently, the DJB has 37 STPs, which are largely operated and maintained by private companies, whom the government pays as per the contract. Under the new scheme, the companies will choose a vendor to install a plant and directly pay them.

"Modular STPs are smaller in size and can be arranged in parts along a drain outfall or the length of the drain that is polluting the river. As part of the government's mission to restore Yamuna, a key priority is the effective and accelerated

treatment of sewage and wastewater flowing into the river through open drains," a DJB official said.

For the past few years, the DJB has been working on the Interceptor Sewer Project, which entails trapping all the drains and diverting the wastewater flowing into them to the nearby STP.

However, there are some drains where trapping is not possible, such as the Najafgarh drain; here, the government is carrying out desilting work, but treatment of waste in the drains will be done for a long-term solution.

Several sub-drains are carrying untreated wastewater, adding to the large drains, and work is ongoing to clean these, the officials said.

## 'India ranks 151st on World Press Freedom Index'

**TDG NETWORK**  
NEW DELHI

India's ranking on the World Press Freedom Index improved to 151 among the 180 countries surveyed by Reporters Without Borders this year from 159 the previous year.

Finland, Estonia and the Netherlands take up the top three positions in the index that sought responses from more than 5,000 persons from across the world to finalise the rankings.

"We have surveyed 5,000 respondents across the world. It comprises a diverse set including policymakers, journalists and other stakeholders," Thibaut Bruttin, assistant director general of Reporters Without Borders, said at a press conference in Delhi.

The organisation does

not reveal the respondents' identity, he said and insisted that it was a diverse set representing different ideologies.

India has nearly 900 privately-owned TV channels, half of which are dedicated to news.

Around 1,40,000 publications are published in more than 20 languages, including some 20,000 daily newspapers with a combined circulation of more than 390 million copies, Reporters Without Borders said.

The US ranks 57th on the index, slipping two positions from the previous year's ranking.

Even in highly-ranked countries such as Australia (29th), Canada (21st) and Czechia (10th), media concentration is a cause for concern, Reporters Without Borders said.



# QUALITY CONTROL ORDERS HELPED INDIA ACCESS GLOBAL MARKETS: COMMERCE MINISTER GOYAL

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Every Quality Control Orders (QCO) introduced so far has eventually earned the support of the sectors because they have not only improved product quality but also helped Indian manufacturers access larger markets, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal.

The government is committed to building a system that ensures consumer safety and industry competitiveness, stated Minister Piyush Goyal, while emphasising on the importance of implementation of QCO for electrical appliances at the Stakeholder Meet convened by DPIIT in New Delhi this week.

The meet discussed the issues being faced by the industry in the implementation of Horizontal QCO on “Safety of household, commercial and Similar



Electrical Appliances” notified by DPIIT on September 20, 2024.

The industry presented their concerns and highlighted issues faced by them.

According to a statement from the commerce ministry, industry overwhelmingly supported the intent behind QCOs to ensure only high-quality products to be manufactured and sold in India.

However, they requested for notifying QCOs on finished goods first followed by QCOs on components and raw materials, considering the complexity of

global supply chains. They also recommended mapping domestic manufacturing capacities and available technologies to align compliance timelines. A phased rollout was also proposed.

Major concerns raised by the Industry inter alia included the following- ambiguity as regards to coverage of DC Supplied Appliances and Battery-Operated appliances; non-availability of product manuals and test labs all 85 appliances included in the illustrative list; lack of certification by domestic manufacturers as well as foreign manu-

facturers; insufficient time available for getting the BIS certification for domestic as well as foreign manufacturers; addressing the issue of legacy stock and non-acceptance of non-BIS marked products on e-commerce platform.

During the meeting, the commerce minister acknowledged concerns raised by the industry and agreed to consider the request to extend the implementation timeline of the QCO, as well as the issue of legacy stock.

He requested industry to come up with the proposal for setting up more testing facilities with modern technology in public funded labs, labs in public sector enterprises and labs in State Government institution etc. so that that robust and accessible testing infrastructure will be made available for the industry pan India. Jitin Prasada, Minister of

State for Commerce and Industry mentioned that “the Ministry remains firmly committed to a consultative and collaborative approach in implementing QCOs. Together, let us ensure that ‘Made in India’ globally stands for safety, quality, and trust.” DPIIT is working towards ensuring sectoral readiness for the QCO and identifying gaps in testing infrastructure to ensure a smooth rollout. DPIIT is closely working with BIS to streamline the testing and certification ecosystem, making it more accessible, efficient, and affordable, particularly for MSMEs.

The meeting witnessed the proactive participation of representatives from leading Industry players and Industry Associations like CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, CEAMA, RAMA, ICEA, IFMA, SMTA as well as Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

## Goyal to consider industry plea for extension of QCO deadline

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal has agreed to consider the domestic industry’s request to extend the implementation timeline of the quality control order (QCO) for various electrical appliances, an official statement said on Friday.

Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) convened a stakeholder consultation meeting under the chairmanship of the minister on May 15 to discuss the issues being faced by the industry in the implementation of horizontal QCO on “Safety of household, commercial and Similar Electrical Appliances” notified on September 20, 2024.

The industry raised its concerns and highlighted issues faced by them in the implementation of the order on various electrical appliances. The DPIIT said that the industry supported the intent behind QCOs to ensure only high-quality



products, but they requested for notifying these orders on finished goods first followed by QCOs on components and raw materials, considering the complexity of global supply chains.

They also recommended mapping domestic manufacturing capacities and available technologies to align compliance timelines, it said adding a phased rollout was also proposed.

Major concerns raised by the industry included ambiguity as regard to coverage of DC Supplied Appliances and Battery-Operated appliances; non-availability of product manuals and test labs; lack of certification by domestic manufacturers as well as foreign makers; insufficient time available for getting the BIS certification. The minister “acknowledged concerns raised by the industry and agreed to consider the request to extend the implementation

timeline of the QCO, as well as the issue of legacy stock,” the department said.

Goyal requested the industry to come up with a proposal for setting up more testing facilities with modern technology in public funded labs, labs in public sector enterprises and labs in state government institutions so that robust and accessible testing infrastructure will be made available for the industry pan-India. The DPIIT is working towards ensuring sectoral readiness for the QCO and identifying gaps in testing infrastructure to ensure a smooth rollout.

It is closely working with BIS to streamline the testing and certification ecosystem, making it more accessible, efficient, and affordable, particularly for MSMEs. The meeting witnessed participation of representatives from leading industry players and associations like CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM, CEAMA, RAMA, ICEA, IFMA, SMTA as well as Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS).

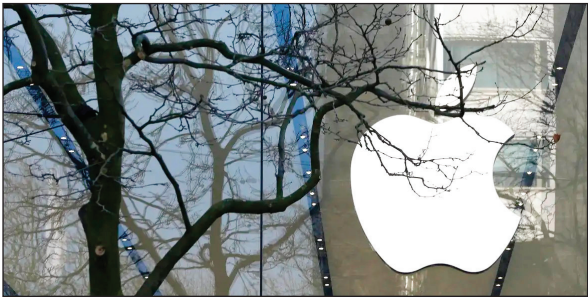
## ‘Even if Apple moves manufacturing to US, India will not lose much’

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

If Apple CEO Tim Cook decides to move manufacturing unit from India to US, it will be Apple which will lose more than India says a report by Global Trade Research Initiative founder Ajay Srivastava.

India may lose some low paying jobs, but if we see holistically currently, India earns USD 30 per iPhone, much of it is given back to Apple as subsidy under the Production Linked Subsidy (PLI) scheme. Also India is reducing tariffs on key smartphone components at the request of big firms like Apple, which is hurting domestic industry who are into building a local manufacturing ecosystem.

“For every iPhone sold at around USD 1,000 in the US, India’s share is less than USD 30. Yet, in trade data, the full USD 7 billion export value adds to the US trade deficit,” says Ajay Srivastava founder GTRI.



If Apple moves its manufacturing to US, India can increase its focus on new age technologies and move from shallow assembly lines of smart phones.

“If Apple’s assembly moves out, India will be forced to stop propping up shallow assembly lines and instead invest in deeper manufacturing—chips, displays, batteries, and beyond,” says Srivastava.

Every iPhone, made in India carries the imprint of a dozen countries, through its software, design and brand which carries a lion’s share of the value. A made in India iPhone of USD 1000, carries a value of about USD 450 for the device,

US component makers like Qualcomm and Broadcom gets another USD 80. Taiwan gets USD 150 for chip manufacturing, South Korea adds USD 90 for OLED screens and memory chips and Japan contributes USD 85 for camera. Other countries like Germany, Vietnam and Malaysia account for another USD 45 for smaller parts.

India and China as manufacturers get a mere USD 30 per device, which is less than 3 per cent of the device cost. But manufacturing units while returns low in value, is high in employment. About 3 lakh workers in China and 60,000 in India works in these units.

## Rupee ends 3 paise weaker at 85.57 against US dollar

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBA

Rupee pared its gains and settled 3 paise lower at 85.57 against the greenback on Friday as robust inflow of foreign capital failed to boost the local currency amid negative equity market sentiment and higher crude oil prices. The government data that showed the country’s trade deficit widening in April also dragged the rupee downward, according to forex traders.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the local unit opened strong at 85.28 and traded in the range of 85.28 to 85.70. It eventually settled at 85.57, lower by 3 paise from its previous close.

On Thursday, the rupee depreciated 22 paise to close at 85.54 against the greenback.

“Though the Asian currencies were all up, and so were the European currencies, the rupee could not make much headway towards 85.00 level and was

getting sold near 85.30 and staying in a range broadly between 85-86 and narrowly between 85.25 and 85.75, which is also the range expected on Monday,” Anil Kumar Bhansali, Head of Treasury and Executive Director, Finrex Treasury Advisors LLP, said.

In the domestic equity market, Sensex declined 200.15 points to settle at 82,330.59, while Nifty fell 42.30 points to 25,019.80.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback’s strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.12 per cent at 100.75.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, rose 0.14 per cent to 64.62 per barrel in futures trade.

The government data released on Thursday showed India’s trade deficit widened to a five-month high of USD 26.42 billion as imports rose 19.12 per cent year-on-year to USD 64.91 billion in April due to a rise in shipments of crude oil and fertiliser.

## Singtel offloads 1.2 pc stake in Bharti Airtel for \$1.5 billion

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Singtel on Friday said it has sold about 1.2 per cent of its direct stake in Bharti Airtel for SGD 2 billion (roughly USD 1.5 billion) in sync with its active capital management approach to optimise its asset portfolio and drive shareholder returns.

According to the bulk deal data available on the National Stock Exchange (NSE), Singtel’s arm Pastel Ltd offloaded 7.10 crore shares or 1.2 per cent stake in Bharti Airtel.

The shares were disposed of at an average price of Rs 1,814.08 apiece, taking the aggregate transaction value to Rs 12,879.96 crore.

Following the sale of 1.2 per cent equity, Singtel will hold a 28.3 per cent stake in India’s second-largest telecom operator Airtel.

The transaction was ex-

ecuted on a private placement basis to international and Indian institutional investors, including existing shareholders of Airtel, according to Singtel.

“Singtel has sold approximately 1.2 per cent of its direct stake in regional associate Airtel today for SGD 2.0 billion as part of its active capital management approach to optimise its asset portfolio and drive shareholder returns sustainably,” Singtel - Southeast Asia’s largest telecoms provider - said in a statement.

It said the private placement drew strong interest from existing shareholders and new investors and was well oversubscribed, resulting in an increase in transaction size and tighter final pricing than initial guidance. A large majority of the transactions were sold to domestic mutual funds

and international long-only funds.

A long-term strategic investor in Airtel for over two decades, Singtel said it has been working with Bharti Enterprises to equalise its effective stake in Airtel in the medium term.

Post the sale of 1.2 per cent holding, Singtel will have a 28.3 per cent stake in Airtel, valued at an estimated SGD 8 billion, and generate an estimated gain of SGD 1.4 billion.

In 2022 and 2024, Singtel raised a total of about SGD 3.5 billion from the progressive sale of Airtel shares – a 3.3 per cent stake to Bharti Telecom and 0.8 per cent direct stake to GQG Partners. This has helped to support the Group’s 5G deployment, digital infrastructure expansion and sustainable shareholder distributions, Singtel said.

## RBI imposes penalty on Deutsche Bank AG and Yes Bank

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Friday said it has imposed penalties on Deutsche Bank AG, India and Yes Bank for non-compliance with certain regulatory norms.

A penalty of Rs 50 lakh has been imposed on Deutsche Bank AG, India for non-compliance with certain directions on ‘Creation of a Central Repository of Large Common Exposures-Across Banks’, the RBI said.

In another statement, it said a penalty of Rs 29.60 lakh has been imposed on



Yes Bank for non-compliance with certain directions issued by RBI on ‘Financial Statements Presentation and Disclosures’.

In both cases, the RBI said the penalties are based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and not intended to pronounce upon the

validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the banks with their customers.

Further, imposition of monetary penalty is without prejudice to any other action that may be initiated by RBI against the banks, it added.

## Jio tops data internet, call setup success rate in TRAI tests

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

Telecom regulator TRAI recently conducted independent drive tests across highways to assess the quality of service provided by cellular mobile telephone service providers for voice and data services.

The drive tests were conducted in March 2025.

In the voice services, the drive tests intended to assess call setup success rate, drop call rate (DCR), speech quality using MOS (mean opinion score), downlink and uplink packet (voice) drop rate, call silence rate,



and coverage, according to data and report released by TRAI.

In the call setup success rate criteria, Jio and Vodafone were found to be efficient in most of those drive test routes.

Jio stood out in the call setup time criteria in all drive test routes, meaning that the telecom operator connects voice calls in the shortest

time. In the call drop category, Airtel performed the best in the five out of seven routes. Airtel had the least call drop rates.

TRAI also analysed the call silence among the operators. Airtel was again the most efficient telecom operator. Coming to data segment (download and upload), Jio was found to be the most high-speed data internet services provider. On the download side, Jio was the best service provider on all the routes. On the upload front, Jio was on top among these five routes, and Airtel in other two.

## TATA.ev launches 10 TATA.ev MegaChargers

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

TATA.ev, has launched its first 10 high-speed TATA.ev MegaChargers in collaboration with ChargeZone and Statiq, aligns with the company’s bold commitment to scale India’s EV charging infrastructure to 400,000 charge points by 2027.

The chargers are strategically located along key highways and in major urban centers, designed to

support both long-distance EV travelers and daily city commuters.

Through its Open Collaboration framework, TATA.ev has formed impactful partnerships with Charge Point Operators (CPOs) and Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs).

The TATA.ev MegaCharger network is a flagship initiative under this framework, focused on offering ultra-fast, dependable charging solutions that el-

evate the overall EV ownership experience.

Commenting on the launch, Balaje Rajan, Chief Strategy Officer at Tata Passenger Electric Mobility Ltd. and Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles Ltd., said, “At a time when EV adoption is on its growth path, ubiquitous and dependable charging infrastructure is the need of the hour. We are on a mission to provide fast, reliable, and effortless charging that enables seamless mobility

across the country - and we are just getting started.”

In addition to rapid charging, each site provides premium amenities such as dining, restrooms, parking bays, and in some cases, co-working spaces and retail outlets.

On the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Highway, TATA.ev has installed three MegaChargers in partnership with ChargeZone.

These include a flagship 400 kW charging station at

Shreenath Food Hub in Vadodra, capable of charging six vehicles simultaneously and delivering up to 150 km of range in just 15 minutes.

The other two locations - Shanti Complex in Vapi and Hotel Xpress Inn in Ghodbunder - feature 120 kW chargers. All three locations are spaced 150-200 km apart to support smooth long-distance travel between Maharashtra and Gujarat.

Along the Delhi-Jaipur

Highway, four MegaChargers have been installed in collaboration with Statiq at SS Plaza in Gurugram, Hotel Old Rao in Kapriwas, Asli Pappu Dhaba in Hamzapur, and Hotel Highway King in Shahpura. Positioned at roughly 60 km intervals across the 270 km stretch, these 120 kW chargers offer consistent coverage for EV travelers and are situated near popular eateries and rest stops, providing both convenience and hospitality.

Highway, four MegaChargers have been installed in collaboration with Statiq at SS Plaza in Gurugram, Hotel Old Rao in Kapriwas, Asli Pappu Dhaba in Hamzapur, and Hotel Highway King in Shahpura. Positioned at roughly 60 km intervals across the 270 km stretch, these 120 kW chargers offer consistent coverage for EV travelers and are situated near popular eateries and rest stops, providing both convenience and hospitality.

## India to close 2024-25 sugar season with comfortable stock of 52-53 lakh tonnes: ISMA

TDG NETWORK  
NEW DELHI

India will close the current sugar marketing season with a closing stock of around 52-53 lakh tonnes, believed to be a comfortable buffer, and it will ensure that the country has a sufficient supply to meet its demand, Indian Sugar and Bio-Energy Manufacturers Association (ISMA) said on Friday.

Sugar marketing season in India runs from October to September.

The 2024-25 season commenced with an opening stock of 80 lakh tonnes. Considering the projected domestic consumption of 280 lakh tonnes and export estimates of upto 9 lakh tonnes, the closing stock is likely to be around 52-53 lakh tonnes, according to the industry body ISMA.

The 2024-25 sugar season is projected to conclude with a net sugar production of approximately 261 to 262 lakh tonnes. This includes 257.44 lakh tonnes produced up to mid-May, along with an estimated 4 to 5 lakh tonnes anticipated from the special crushing season in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

As per the supplies upto April 30, 2025, approximately 27 lakh tonnes of sugar have been diverted for ethanol production during the current season. An additional 6 to 7 lakh tonnes are expected to be diverted over the remaining season, the industry body said.

The industry body has painted an optimistic outlook for the 2025-26 sugar season.

“The 2025-26 sugar season is shaping up to be promising, buoyed by several positive developments across key sugar-producing regions,” the industry body said today.

In the southern states, particularly Maharashtra and Karnataka, sugarcane planting has shown significant improvement, thanks to a favourable southwest monsoon in 2024.

“Supported by a strong cane availability, the stage is set for a timely start to the crushing season in October 2025,” it said. Adding to this positive momentum are climate forecasts from both the India Meteorological Department (IMD), which predict a normal southwest monsoon in 2025.



# SHIELDING JUDICIAL PROPRIETY AGAINST CASUAL REMARKS

## OPINION

SHIVANG TRIPATHI AND  
DR. SHAIWAL SATYARTHI

Recent proceedings in the Supreme Court and certain High Courts have brought to light a growing concern: judges, albeit acting in good faith, have made oral observations framed in language indicative of personal opinion, with only a tenuous connection to the facts and legal issues under consideration.

The Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court, in *In Re: Remarks by High Court Judge During Court Proceedings* (2024), observed that “The perception of justice to every segment of society is as important as the rendition of justice as an objective fact,” and that “casual observations often reflect individual bias of the judges,” thereby warranting caution on the part of judges. In the era of social media, where news is consumed in brief snippets, such observations can have unintended adverse repercussions for the subjects involved and may under-

mine the fairness of trial proceedings. This underscores the need for a deeper examination of the role and limits of judicial commentary in the courtroom.

### OFF-THE-CUFF REMARKS

When a judge of the Karnataka High Court referred to a specific territorial area in Bangalore as “Pakistan,” the Supreme Court promptly initiated suo motu proceedings and strictly advised caution and reasonable restraint. Also, in *Imran Pratapgadhi v. State of Gujarat* (2025), the Court emphasized that a judge’s personal distaste for particular words or expressions cannot impede the fulfilment of constitutional responsibilities or the delivery of impartial justice. Further, in *Ranveer Gautam Allahabadia v. Union of India* (2025), even though interim protection from arrest was duly granted, the judges orally lashed out at the petitioner, to the extent

of calling him “perverted” with a “dirty mind.” Similarly, *Rahul Gandhi v. State of UP and Anr* (2025) was a defamation matter involving comments made against freedom fighter V.D. Savarkar, wherein interim relief was duly granted, notwithstanding an oral remark stating that “if the petitioner knew anything about the history and geography” of the nation, he wouldn’t have made such comments in the first place.

However, transgressing judicial propriety outside the courtroom, a sitting judge of the Allahabad High Court, whilst delivering a lecture on the Uniform Civil Code at an event, vehemently asserted that the country would function in accordance with the “wishes of the majority.”

### CHALLENGES

There are multiple challenges posed by such misdemeanours on the part of judges. First, such remarks are susceptible to misinterpretation. For instance, in 2021, the Madras High Court casually remarked that the Election Commission of India should be booked for murder for allowing election rallies during the pandemic, thereby implicitly and unintention-



*The Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court, in In Re: Remarks by High Court Judge During Court Proceedings (2024), observed that “The perception of justice to every segment of society is as important as the rendition of justice as an objective fact,” and that “casual observations often reflect individual bias of the judges,” thereby warranting caution on the part of judges.*

ally attributing culpability to a constitutional body. Second, it is contrary to the principle of judicial propriety, which demands adherence to decorum, the embrace of impartiality, and the practice of reasonable restraint, irrespective

of the informal nature of courtroom interactions. Third, such oral observations often reflect personal biases and accumulated predispositions based on a judge’s life experiences and can bring disrepute to judicial integrity. Fourth,

when expressed at the pre-trial stage, such subjective views can potentially prejudice the trial outcome. Fifth, given the expansive reach of legal reporting and live streaming, where judicial observations are often consumed in a piecemeal manner, such comments can result in the premature media trial of the accused. Lastly, from a layman’s perspective, it is particularly challenging to grasp the context and essence of such remarks without specialized legal reasoning.

### SAFEGUARDING JUDICIAL PROPRIETY

One of the most effective solutions was articulated by the Supreme Court in

Election Commission of India v. M.R. Vijay Bhaskar (2021), where it observed: “Language, both on the Bench and in judgments, must comport with judicial propriety. Judicial language is a window to a conscience sensitive to constitutional ethos. Bereft of its understated balance, language risks losing its symbolism as a protector of human dignity.” Furthermore, the widespread live streaming of court proceedings post-COVID has added multiple layers of audience, extending the contours of courtroom spectatorship to individuals beyond the physical premises of the courtroom. This development imposes an added responsibility on all stakeholders in the judicial system.

Additionally, the Supreme Court, in *In Re: Remarks by High Court Judge During Court Proceedings* (2024), called upon judges to first become aware of their own predispositions shaped by personal life experiences, as such awareness is a sine qua non for preventing those predispositions from influencing their language, both on the Bench and in judgments. Also, it would be prudent to draw inspiration from the JCIO (Judicial Conduct Inves-

tigations Office) model and consider establishing a judicial conduct accountability body in India, with jurisdiction limited strictly to matters of personal misconduct. JCIO, an independent statutory body established under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 in England, assists the Lord Chancellor and the Lady Chief Justice in overseeing judicial discipline.

Empowered to address even minor misconduct, such as offensive language or rudeness, the JCIO follows a structured process that may involve reviewing hearing recordings, consulting third parties, and obtaining responses from the judge concerned to assess the validity of complaints. Lastly, it is also imperative to institutionalize sensitization and training as periodic exercises to ensure that judicial remarks remain firmly grounded in legal reasoning upholding the fairness of proceedings. Because being higher or supreme comes with no guarantee of being infallible.

*Shivang Tripathi is a Doctoral Researcher, Faculty of Law, Banaras Hindu University and Dr. Shaiwal Satyarthi is a Professor at the Faculty of Law, University of Delhi*

# Will Artificial Intelligence Replace Lawyers? The Evolving Legal Landscape

## OPINION

DR. S.KRISHNAN AND  
MS. ANUSHKA SINGH



A popular refrain echoes through legal technology conferences and webinars: “Lawyers won’t be replaced by AI, but lawyers *with* AI will replace lawyers *without* AI.” This statement offers a degree of comfort to legal professionals navigating rapid technological advancement, suggesting AI is primarily an augmentation tool rather than a replacement. While many practitioners hope this holds true, a fundamental question remains: Is it legally possible for AI, operating independently, to replace lawyers under the current regulatory frameworks governing the legal profession? As it stands, the rules surrounding the unauthorized practice of law (UPL) in most jurisdictions present a significant hurdle.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming more and more prominent in the business world and changing how organisations operate. The legal sector is no exception, with AI being implemented by firms for a number of

reasons. Change can often be challenging and can lead to misgivings. It’s natural to ask the question: Will robots replace lawyers? We explore how legal tech and AI are currently used and how the future of the sector is looking.

### THE CURRENT SITUATION OF AI IN LAW

AI is already present in the legal sector and is becoming increasingly prevalent. The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA) reported “Three quarters of the largest solicitors’ firms were using AI” at the end of 2022, which was almost twice the amount reported three years previous. It also found at least 60% of large firms and a third of medium sized firms were exploring the potential of AI.

Currently, AI is used in a variety of ways. Some firms may use an AI powered chatbot on their website or to automate call handling as a first point of contact for clients. However, much of AI’s current use is focused on

supporting the work of legal professionals by automating repetitive tasks, streamlining processes by generating contracts, managing firm finances and supporting legal research.

AI is already used to support legal research and there are already a number of successful tools used in the sector which use machine learning and natural language processing (NLP). Because these tools can scan thousands upon thousands of legal documents they can help significantly reduce research time and produce more accurate results. They can also generate trends in data, evaluate legal strategies and even predict the outcome of cases.

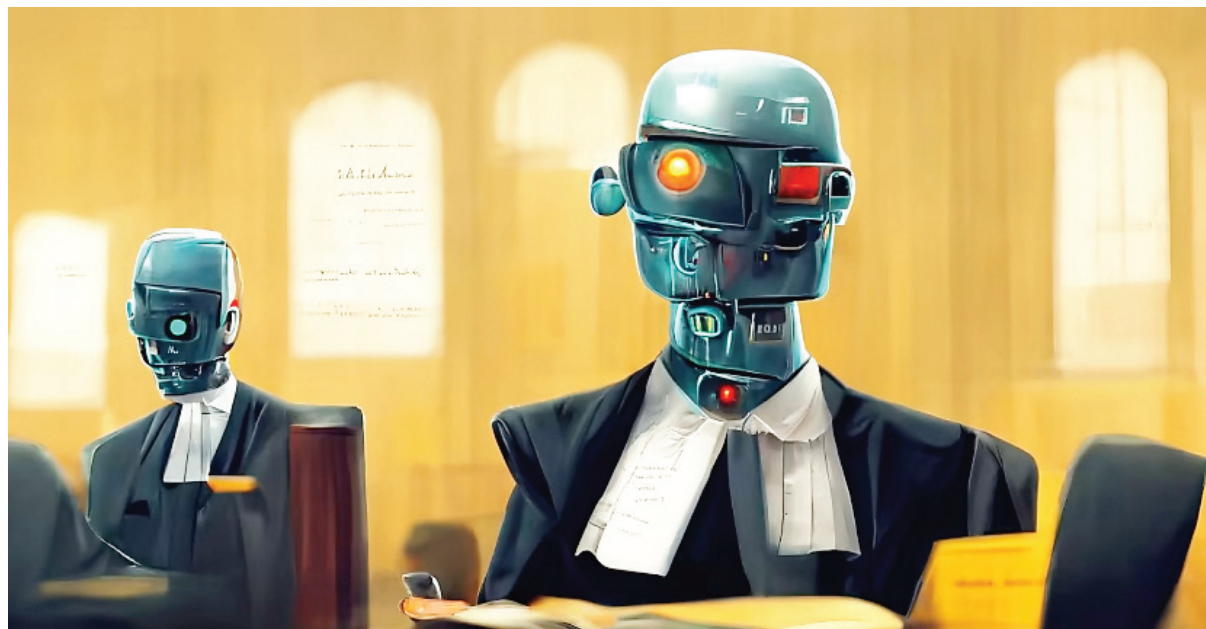
### ADVANTAGES OF USING AI POWERED LEGAL RESEARCH TOOLS

There’s no denying legal research can be time consuming. AI tools can perform these tasks in a fraction of the time, which allows legal professionals to focus on their clients and legal strategies. Because the tools are able to review so much information they may produce more results and discover material which could be missed. It can also identify potential inconsistencies in documents and ensure documentation is legally accurate and compliant.

AI can also help save money and improve accessibility to databases, which could be particularly beneficial for smaller firms.

### DISADVANTAGES OF AI POWERED LEGAL RESEARCH TOOLS

Despite the many advantages, AI powered legal research tools aren’t perfect. Legal work still requires the skills of a legal profes-



sional. Lawyers will need to contextualise the research, identify the nuances and adapt the provided results for their current cases. It’s also important to remember that AI can only work with the data it has been provided with. If a database is incomplete for example, then the results could lead to inaccuracies and biases.

There are ethical questions around confidentiality and how AI is used and regulated by the legal profession. There are also concerns lawyers could become over reliant on AI. For example, two lawyers in the USA were fined for submitting fake court citations generated by ChatGPT. This alone highlights that, whilst AI powered research can support legal practice, the skills and knowledge of a human lawyer are still a necessity.

Finally, consider the other side of the coin. If AI can support the legal world, how is it being used by criminals? We have already experienced ‘deepfakes’ and voice imitation. Legal professionals need to consider how criminals can

use AI to manipulate and deceive in the future.

### WILL ROBOTS REPLACE LAWYERS?

There are benefits to AI in legal practice – particularly when used to improve workflow and automate the painstaking, repetitive tasks lawyers might have to undertake. That said, it’s unlikely robots will replace lawyers. Practicing law requires human intelligence and emotion, after all, your clients are human too. AI can’t replace your critical thinking, legal advocacy skills, or the relationship you can build with your clients.

AI has demonstrated remarkable efficiency in handling repetitive and time-consuming legal tasks, such as: Document Review & E-Discovery, wherein AI tools can swiftly scan and analyze large volumes of legal documents, identifying key information and reducing manual workload. AI-driven platforms can provide precise case law and statutory references, significantly improving research efficiency. AI can also detect crucial clauses,

flag potential risks, and ensure compliance with legal regulations.

However, despite these advancements, AI cannot replace human lawyers in areas requiring: Negotiation and Mediation, wherein Effective dispute resolution often involves persuasion, empathy, and human intuition, all of which AI lacks. Litigation requires adaptability, argumentation skills, and the ability to assess and respond to human behavior, making AI unsuitable for courtroom representation. AI can analyze data but struggles with abstract thinking, moral considerations, and case-specific nuances.

The legal profession is bound by strict ethical and regulatory frameworks that govern issues like:

Attorney-Client Privilege & Confidentiality, Bias in AI Algorithms and Accountability & Professional Responsibility.

### IS AI THE FUTURE OF LAW?

Rather than replacing lawyers, AI is reshaping the legal profession, requiring

professionals to adapt and develop new skills. Instead of viewing AI as a threat, lawyers should leverage AI to enhance their capabilities. AI can handle tedious administrative tasks, allowing legal professionals to focus on high-value responsibilities such as: Client counseling, Negotiation and litigation and Legal strategy and innovation. By integrating AI into daily workflows, lawyers can increase efficiency, improve accuracy, and provide better client services.

Legal professionals must stay updated on AI advancements and understand how to integrate technology into their practice. This involves: Learning about AI-powered legal research tools, Understanding the ethical implications of AI in law, and Participating in legal tech workshops and training programs.

As AI takes over routine legal work, lawyers should focus on skills that AI cannot replicate, such as: Critical Thinking & Problem-Solving – Evaluating complex legal issues and making strategic decisions;

Emotional Intelligence – Communicating effectively with clients, understanding their concerns, and offering personalized legal guidance. And Ethical Judgment & Advocacy – Navigating legal dilemmas, ensuring justice, and advocating for clients in court.

While AI is undoubtedly transforming the legal profession by enhancing efficiency, streamlining research, and automating repetitive tasks, it is not poised to replace lawyers entirely. The legal field requires human judgment, ethical reasoning, emotional intelligence, and adaptability—qualities that AI currently lacks. Rather than viewing AI as a competitor, legal professionals should embrace it as a powerful tool to augment their expertise and improve service delivery.

The future of law lies in a balanced integration of AI and human expertise, where technology handles administrative burdens while lawyers focus on strategic thinking, advocacy, and client relationships. By staying informed about AI advancements, developing essential human-centric skills, and advocating for ethical AI use, legal professionals can thrive in an AI-enhanced legal landscape. Ultimately, AI will not replace lawyers, but lawyers who effectively utilize AI will have a significant advantage in the evolving legal industry.

*Dr. S.Krishnan is an Associate Professor in Seedling School of Law and Governance, Jaipur National University, Jaipur Ms. Anushka Singh is a First Year Student of BBA LLB (H) in Seedling School of Law and Governance, Jaipur National University, Jaipur.*



# FROM EMPIRES TO STATES: TRACING INDIA'S DYNAMIC JOURNEY OF STATE FORMATION

*As Sikkim is celebrating its formation day on May 16, we are diving deep to divulge information in detail on the formation of all the states and Union territories in the pre- and post-independence India. From the integration of princely states in 1947 to the recent creation of Telangana, the evolution of India's states reflects a continuous process of negotiation, adaptation, and regional aspirations.*

India's journey of state formation is a complex and evolving process that reflects the country's diverse geography, cultures, languages, and political dynamics. From its early days under British rule to the reorganization of states post-independence, the evolution of India's political structure has been shaped by historical events, regional aspirations, economic considerations, and efforts to promote unity amidst diversity. This process continues even today, with new demands for the creation of states and the reorganization of existing ones. Below is a detailed account of how states were formed in India, from the colonial period to the modern era.

## BRITISH COLONIAL RULE

Before India gained independence in 1947, the sub-continent was a collection of various provinces and princely states under British colonial rule. The British Empire did not form a unified political structure; instead, India was divided into administrative units based on geography, culture, and convenience. The British-controlled territories were governed directly by the Crown, while over 560 princely states were nominally ruled by local monarchs under British suzerainty. The most significant provinces included Bengal, Punjab, Madras, Bombay, and the United Provinces, but these were still fragmented in nature and not integrated into a cohesive state system.

The integration of these diverse regions into a unified India was one of the major challenges post-independence. British rule did not focus on creating a single unified national identity but rather managed these



regions separately for imperial interests. The concept of a unified Indian state became central to the freedom movement, which sought to bring together disparate peoples and territories under one national identity. Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, among others, envisioned a post-colonial India as a nation where regions could work in unison for collective progress, despite linguistic, cultural, and religious differences.

## INITIAL REORGANIZATION (1947-1950)

The independence of India in 1947 was accompanied by a partition into two separate nations: India and Pakistan. The partition, based largely on religious lines, created India as a Hindu-majority nation and Pakistan as a Muslim-majority one. This division led to widespread violence and one of the

largest migrations in history, as people moved across the borders based on their religious identities. It also led to the creation of a number of new administrative boundaries, and the newly independent Indian government was faced with the immense task of managing this transition.

The princely states, which had remained autonomous under British rule, were given the option to join either India or Pakistan. Most of the princely states joined India, with some exceptions such as Jammu and Kashmir, which remained disputed for several years. Sardar Patel played a pivotal role in integrating these princely states into the Indian Union. He utilized a mix of diplomacy, political persuasion, and, when necessary, military action (such as in Hyderabad) to bring the princely states into the fold of the new Indian Republic.

Simultaneously, the Indian Constitution was drafted, and in 1950, India was officially declared a republic. The Constitution laid the groundwork for the creation of states and Union Territories, although at this stage, the country's political structure was still in its nascent stage. India was initially divided into 29 states and 7 Union Territories. However, these divisions were not necessarily based on any cohesive reasoning but were a legacy of British administrative practices.

## STATE REORGANIZATION ACT OF 1956

One of the most significant milestones in the formation of states in India came with the State Reorganization Act of 1956. Prior to this, the country had been divided into states and provinces based on geographical, his-

torical, and administrative considerations. However, linguistic and cultural diversity was not adequately represented in the administrative divisions. The demand for reorganizing states along linguistic lines had gained traction, especially after the formation of Andhra Pradesh in 1953, the first state to be created on a linguistic basis.



In response to this demand, the Government of India established the States

Reorganization Commission (SRC) in 1953 to study the issue and recommend a new framework. The SRC recommended that states should be reorganized based on linguistic and cultural considerations, arguing that such a division would allow for better governance and greater harmony. The State Reor-

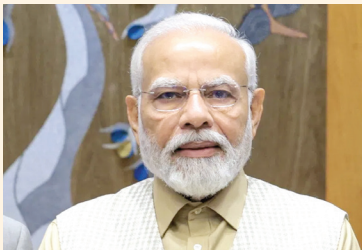
ganization Act of 1956 was enacted to implement these recommendations, leading to the creation of 14 states and 6 Union Territories.

The new configuration was based on the findings of the SRC, which recommended the creation of states like Andhra Pradesh (from the Madras Presidency), Kerala (from the Travancore-Cochin state),

formation of these states followed the principle of linguistic unity that had been established earlier in the 1956 reorganization. In the 1980s and 1990s, new states were formed in response to growing regional movements for autonomy. These included the creation of Nagaland in 1963, Mizoram in 1987, and Arunachal Pradesh in 1987,

## PM MODI OFFERS WISHES ON SIKKIM'S 50TH STATEHOOD ANNIVERSARY

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended his wishes on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Sikkim's statehood. PM Modi took his official 'X' handle and mentioned that Sikkim is associated with "serene" beauty and it has made "strides" in different sectors. "Warm greetings to the people of Sikkim on their Statehood Day! This year, the occasion is even more special as we mark the 50th anniversary of Sikkim's statehood! Sikkim is associated with serene beauty, rich cultural traditions and industrious people. It has made strides in diverse sectors. May the people of this beautiful state continue to prosper", PM Modi's 'X' post said.



and Karnataka (from the Mysore State), among others. The formation of Kerala, for example, united the Malayalam-speaking people in the region, while Andhra Pradesh was formed to bring together Telugu-speaking populations. This reorganization helped address long-standing grievances about the inadequacy of earlier state boundaries, which were based on administrative convenience rather than cultural unity.

## FORMATION OF NEW STATES (1960-1990)

The 1960s and 1970s saw further changes in India's political landscape, as regional movements continued to push for the creation of new states. The demand for a separate state for Gujarat, for instance, had been a longstanding issue, and in 1960, the state of Gujarat was created by bifurcating the Bombay state along linguistic lines. Similarly, Maharashtra was created in 1960 for Marathi-speaking people, while the state of Haryana was carved out from Punjab in 1966 due to demands from the Hindi-speaking population. The

all of which were driven by the desire to recognize and preserve the distinct cultural identities of the indigenous people in these regions. For example, Nagaland was created to meet the aspirations of the Naga people, while Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh were formed as a response to the ethnic and cultural demands of the Mizo and Arunachali communities. The demand for separate states was not limited to the northeast. The 1990s saw the creation of Goa, which was granted statehood in 1987 after being a Union Territory since its liberation from Portuguese rule. Other regions such as Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, and Uttarakhand also saw the formation of new states in the early 21st century, driven by the desire for regional autonomy and better governance.

## RECENT STATE REORGANIZATIONS (2014)

One of the most significant recent changes in the state structure of India came in 2014 with the formation of Telangana. This state was carved out of Andhra Pradesh following years of agitation, protests, and political negotiations that highlighted the unique cultural, economic, and social needs of the region. The Telangana movement, led by both political parties and civil society groups, pushed for a separate state due to perceived neglect and underdevelopment by the government of Andhra Pradesh. The creation of Telangana was seen as a major victory for the people of the region, marking the first new state to be formed in India in over a decade.

The formation of Telangana also highlighted the continuing role of regional movements in shaping India's political map. While the creation of Telangana was a direct result of local demand, it also prompted similar calls for statehood in other regions of India, such as Vidarbha, Gorkhaland, and Bodoland. These

movements continue to advocate for the creation of states based on cultural, linguistic, and economic factors, reflecting the ongoing complexities of India's federal structure.

## EVOLUTION OF UNION TERRITORIES

Alongside the formation of states, India has also seen the creation and reorganization of Union Territories (UTs). These regions are directly administered by the Central Government and typically consist of small, strategic, or underdeveloped areas that do not qualify for full statehood. Delhi, Puducherry, and Jammu and Kashmir are examples of Union Territories with special status. Delhi, for instance, was granted a Legislative Assembly and Chief Minister in 1993, providing it with powers akin to a state.

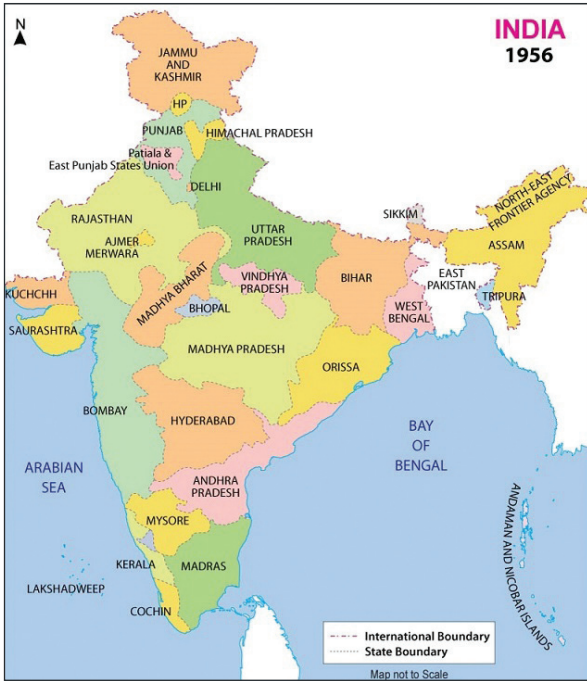
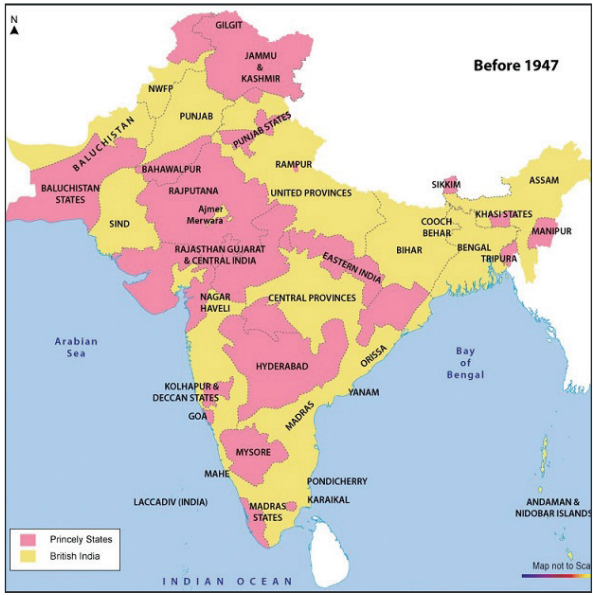
The abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 was another major event in India's political evolution. This Article had granted Jammu and Kashmir a special status, but its revocation led to the bifurcation of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories—Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh. This reorganization reflected the government's desire to streamline administration in these sensitive border regions, but it also sparked significant political and regional controversies.

## THE FUTURE

The future of state formation in India remains a dynamic issue. While the major reorganization of states took place in the 20th century, the 21st century has seen renewed demands for new states and further political restructuring. Factors such as cultural identity, regional autonomy, and economic disparities will continue to play a significant role in shaping India's political landscape. The challenge for the Indian government will be to balance the need for regional representation with the overarching goal of maintaining national unity.

Compiled by Kausbal Verma

ALMANAC OF INDIAN STATES		
INDIAN STATES	FORMATION DATES	
Andhra Pradesh	01-Nov-56	
Arunachal Pradesh	20-Feb-87	
Assam	26-Jan-50	
Bihar	26-Jan-50	
Chhattisgarh	01-Nov-00	
Goa	30-May-87	
Gujarat	01-May-60	
Haryana	01-Nov-66	
Himachal Pradesh	25-Jan-71	
Jharkhand	15-Nov-00	
Karnataka	01-Nov-56	
Kerala	01-Nov-56	
Madhya Pradesh	01-Nov-56	
Maharashtra	01-May-60	
Manipur	21-Jan-72	
Meghalaya	21-Jan-72	
Mizoram	20-Feb-87	
Nagaland	01-Dec-63	
Odisha	01-Apr-36	
Punjab	01-Nov-66	
Rajasthan	30-Mar-49	
Sikkim	16-May-75	
Tamil Nadu	01-Nov-56	
Telangana	02-Jun-14	
Tripura	21-Jan-72	
Uttar Pradesh	26-Jan-50	
Uttarakhand	09-Nov-00	





# IAS KANA RAM: TRANSFORMING ADMINISTRATION WITH CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION

TDG NETWORK  
JAIPUR

IAS Kana Ram is an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer in Rajasthan, currently serving as the District Collector and District Magistrate (DC&DM) of Hanumangarh district. He is known for his work in tackling drug addiction in Hanumangarh, which is a remote region. Kana Ram's efforts in Hanumangarh are seen as a promising model for other similar regions facing the same challenge. He was also previously the District Collector of Dungarpur.

Indian Administrative Service Officer Kana Ram's name is known for innovations. He does remarkable work by innovating in whatever department he works in. Currently, he is working as District Collector in Hanumangarh. Recently, he has innovated in the Prime Minister Crop Insurance Scheme. Due to those innovations, Hanumangarh district has received national level honor. Hanumangarh Agriculture Department made crop cutting experiments transparent and technology based under the Prime Minister Crop Insurance Scheme. These efforts are now being adopted in the entire state. Hanumangarh Collector Kana Ram was honored for this innovation in the 12th National Conference of PMFBY held recently

in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. Three districts of the entire country were included in this category of innovations. Two of which were districts of Karnataka and the third was Hanumangarh district.

In fact, in the past several years, whenever crop cutting experiments were conducted in the fields, the insurance company used to raise a large number of objections. Due to this, farmers were delayed in getting insurance claims or they were completely deprived. Even in Kharif 2023, claims of many Patwar Mandals remained pending at high level. More than one lakh insurance policies were rejected in 2022 and 2023. To overcome these problems, many changes were made in the district in Rabi 2023-24 and Kharif 2024. It was made mandatory to give information about crop harvesting in writing to the insurance company in advance. Every experiment was uploaded online. It was made mandatory to take photos and videos at the time of harvesting, threshing and weighing in the field. Technology was used in the selection of crops. District level committee meetings were held regularly to coordinate with banks and insurance companies. The effect of these innovations was that the insurance company did not register a single objection during Rabi 2023-24 and Kharif 2024. Farmers



got the claim on time in the Rabi season. The calculation of Kharif 2024 claims has also been completed. Distribution will start soon. According to the district administration, more than 1 lakh policies were rejected in 2022 and 2023, while in 2024 this number came down to just 7,000. This model of Hanumangarh district has been implemented by the Rajasthan Agriculture Department in the entire state



Indian Administrative Service Officer Kana Ram's name is known for innovations. He does remarkable work by innovating in whatever department he works in. Currently, he is working as District Collector in Hanumangarh.

from Kharif 2024.

STRICT STEPS ALSO TAKEN TO PREVENT DRUG ABUSE

District Collector Kana Ram has also taken strict and big steps in the prevention of drug abuse. He has played an important role in de-

addiction through Manas Sakhiyan. These Sakhiyan are going door-to-door and communicating with mothers and sisters and making

them aware to get rid of drug addiction. Women associated with Rajivika have been made Manas Sakhi in the drug-free 'Manas' campaign. Kana Ram says that women will play an important role in drug-free Hanumangarh. If the sister, mother, wife and daughter of the house decide, then the concept of a drug-free district can be realized and the family will become strong economically, socially and educationally. He said that drug addiction is a disease and its treatment is possible. Counsel the people suffering from drug addiction and take them to the hospital. Women should break their silence about drug addiction which has become a trap in the society and family. Kana Ram said that a small effort of Manas Sakhis can empower a family. Move forward with the district administration and eradicate drug addiction from its roots. He said that women should not hide the matter of drug addiction in the family. Come forward and talk about it, only then this disease will be eradicated from its roots. The District Collector said that instead of the person who is addicted to drugs, first explain to his family members. Try to bring them to the hospital. Give information to women at Mahatma Gandhi NREGA work sites in villages. Make them take an oath.

MANAS DRUG DE-ADDITION SPORTS COMPETITIONS ALSO ORGANIZED

With the aim of promoting drug de-addiction awareness, traditional folk sports competitions are being organized in the district under the Manas Abhiyan. As per the orders of District Collector Kana Ram, traditional sports competitions like tug of war, sitoliya and handkerchief snatch are being organized in the month of May. Block level competitions have been organized for two days recently. While the district level final competitions will be held on 24 May at Rajiv Gandhi Stadium Junction. Through these games, an inspirational message will be given to the youth and the general public to stay away from addiction and adopt a healthy lifestyle. The tug of war competition will be for men and women, in which participants above 35 years of age can participate.

Sitoliya and Rumal Jhapatta competitions will be organized for both the age group of 6 to 18 years and the senior category. Rumal Jhapatta will be organized only for the women category. The administration has appealed to the general public, students and youth to not only show their talent by participating in these sports events, but also become partners in spreading this social message of de-addiction to the people.

## OPERATION SINDOOR: A NEW CHAPTER IN INDIA'S MILITARY DOCTRINE



Operation Sindoor, launched in May 2025 in response to the deadly Pahal-gam terror attack, marks a turning point in India's strategic posture towards Pakistan. Unlike earlier retaliatory or preemptive strikes, this operation blending hybrid warfare, real-time intelligence, local civilian integration, advanced technology, expansive geographical scope, and a layered strategic doctrine. Since 1947, India has conducted several major operations against Pakistan — from full-scale wars to precision strikes. However, Operation Sindoor stands apart as India's first multidimensional hybrid warfare campaign with embedded geopolitical messaging, technological dominance, and indigenous civil-military collaboration.

1. SCALE AND SCOPE: FROM REGIONAL TO THEATRE-LEVEL DEPLOYMENT

Previous operations, such as the 1947-48 Kashmir War, 1965 and 1971 Indo-Pak Wars, and Kargil Conflict of 1999, were either conventional wars or localized conflicts focused on specific territorial aims. Even modern strikes like the 2016 Surgical Strikes and 2019 Balakot Airstrike were targeted and brief. In contrast, Operation Sindoor was theatre wide, covering The Line of Control

(LoC). International Border (Punjab-Rajasthan sectors) Kashmir's hinterland Potential threat vectors from Pakistani Punjab and Balochistan. The operation was short in duration but high in strategic value, avoiding a drawn-out conflict while still achieving deterrence.

This reflects a shift from conventional battlefield tactics to targeted strategic operations, in line with the doctrines of modern warfare.

2. TECHNOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY: AI-ENABLED WARFARE AND DRONE DOMINANCE

For the first time, India deployed autonomous AI-powered drones that conducted both surveillance and offensive strikes deep inside enemy territory. Real-time satellite communication, advanced cyber-monitoring units, and EW (electronic warfare) systems were seamlessly integrated into combat operations. While earlier operations relied heavily on human reconnaissance and convoys inside Pakistani Punjab since the 1971 war. Intelligence-led targeting of a terror logistics hub in the region sent a powerful message: India's response will no longer be limited to PoK or symbolic air raids. By striking a target within Pakistan's strategic heartland, India demonstrated its willingness to reshape traditional red lines in retaliation to proxy terrorism.

3. ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY: FROM DOCTRINE TO ACTION

Where past responses were often delayed or bound by diplomatic hesitation, Operation Sindoor showcased a resolute and unapologetic

policy on terrorism. It was a preemptive and punitive strike in direct response to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam that killed dozens of civilians, including pilgrims and security personnel.

This operation proves that India has moved from a posture of strategic patience to active counterforce, signaling that any attack on Indian soil will be met with firm and immediate retaliation—not through words, but through action.

4. HUMANANITARIAN RESPONSIBILITY: PRECISION WITHOUT COLLATERAL

A remarkable feature of Operation Sindoor was its emphasis on minimizing civilian casualties and avoiding infrastructure damage. All targets were confirmed multiple times via satellite imagery and human intelligence. The operation focused solely on training camps, launchpads, and logistics hubs aiding infiltration and terror planning.

This humanitarian caution demonstrates India's commitment to ethical warfare, countering the enemy with strength but without abandoning its moral compass. It also helped build trust among border communities, especially vulnerable groups like the Gujjar-Bakarwals, who have long suffered under the shadow of terrorism.

5. PRECISION STRIKES ON NUCLEAR-LINKED AIRBASES

Perhaps the boldest and unprecedented element was the limited, targeted strike on a Pakistani airbase associated with its nuclear strike platforms. Although India avoided critical nuclear infrastructure, the choice of target — a base facilitating



UAV and terror-related air assets — was deliberate. This action broke the long-standing assumption that Pakistan's nuclear shield renders certain zones untouchable. Sindoor challenged that notion without triggering escalation, thanks to India's precision and restraint.

6. CIVIL-MILITARY SYNERGY: ROLE OF INDIGENOUS TRIBAL NETWORKS

Operation Sindoor incorporated local Gujjar and Bakarwal tribes as intelligence assets — a strategy rarely formalized in prior military actions. These communities, often marginalized, were trained, equipped, and integrated into the operational command chain as ground informants and terrain guides. This marks a transition towards 'People-Centric Warfare', recognizing the strategic value of socio-cultural networks in modern combat zones.

6. STRATEGIC MESSAGING AND GLOBAL DIPLOMACY:

Unlike past operations, Sindoor was executed alongside a parallel global diplomatic campaign. India briefed key allies — including the US, France, Russia, and Gulf states — and provided satellite evidence of Pakistan's continued terror exportation. This pre-emptive diplomacy minimized global backlash and reframed India's actions as a responsible act of deterrence, not aggression.

7. DURATION AND PREPAREDNESS: FROM IMPULSE TO STRATEGIC DRILL

While earlier operations

were often swift, reactive, or post-crisis, Operation Sindoor was strategically orchestrated over several days, involving rehearsals, war drills, logistics convoys, and mock war exercises. The 7 May 2025 "War Drill Day" witnessed live coordination of air-land-sea triad units in real time, setting the tone for future integrated operations.

8. NARRATIVE CONTROL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY

A modern war is not only fought on borders but also in the information space. The government managed the media narrative with clarity, discipline, and strategic messaging. Selected visuals, intelligence briefings, and tributes to martyrs were timed and crafted to maintain public morale and prevent disinformation. This contrasts sharply with previous conflicts, where delayed communication and chaotic narratives diluted India's position. Through information dominance, India ensured psychological superiority—both at home and abroad.

9. INTERNATIONAL SILENCE: A DIPLOMATIC VICTORY

One of the most significant departures from previous conflicts is the international reaction—or lack thereof. Historically, India's military actions, especially in Kashmir, were met with global calls for restraint and dialogue. During the Kargil War (1999), India had to exert considerable diplomatic effort to gain global support. In contrast, Operation Sindoor has not attracted any major international criticism. This is perhaps the first instance

where India's strong response was not only silently accepted but also seen as a responsible and timely action. This shift underscores India's rising global stature, its strategic maturity, and the effectiveness of its diplomatic outreach.

10. PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE AND MEDIA:

Operation Sindoor was not just fought on the battlefield, but also in the information domain. The Indian government ensured timely, credible briefings while countering propaganda from across the border. Controlled disclosure of footage from the operation, emotional tributes to martyrs, and coordinated social media messaging helped maintain narrative dominance—a lesson learned from earlier incidents where disinformation often diluted India's strategic messaging.

11. BHARAT DEFENCE INDUSTRY.

Operation Sindoor has given a significant boost to India's weapon industry and its prospects in the global arms export market. Through this operation, India showcased its advanced indigenous technologies, missile systems, and strategic capabilities, reaffirming its growing self-reliance in defense production. It sent a strong message that India is no longer just an importer of defense equipment but is now emerging as a credible and competitive exporter. The successful deployment and performance of Indian-made systems have attracted the attention of regions like South Asia, Africa, and South America, where demand for cost-effective and

reliable defense solutions is rising. Operation Sindoor has thus laid a strong foundation for accelerating India's future defense exports under the "Make in India" initiative.

12. ENDGAME WITH CLARITY.

Unlike previous wars which ended ambiguously—like the ceasefire after the 1965 war or the unfulfilled Shimla Agreement post-1971—Operation Sindoor came with a clear strategic message: Any act of terror will be met with a cost. The operation wasn't just about tactical wins but about resetting the deterrence threshold. India did not seek territory or long-drawn confrontation, but rather demonstrated capability, intent, and consequence.

CONCLUSION: A DOCTRINAL SHIFT IN INDIAN MILITARY THINKING

Operation Sindoor is not just a military response — it is a strategic doctrine in action. It represents a shift from isolated, reactionary strikes to layered, sustained deterrence, combining kinetic action with psychological, diplomatic, and technological warfare. Where previous operations were designed to punish or defend, Sindoor was built to reshape the rules of engagement — deterring not just terrorist actors but their state sponsors with credible, repeatable consequence mechanisms.

As India aspires to be a global power with secure borders, Operation Sindoor may well be remembered as the blueprint for 21st-century Indian military doctrine.



# ‘PAKISTAN’S ABILITY TO HANDLE NUCLEAR WEAPONS IS QUESTIONABLE’: ANALYST

Analyst Tom Cooper added that India’s intelligence and strategic capabilities continue to monitor Pakistani military movements closely.

TDG NETWORK  
VIENNA

Military and strategic analyst Tom Cooper has raised serious concerns about the security of Pakistan’s nuclear infrastructure, suggesting that recent developments reinforce long-standing doubts about the country’s ability to manage its arsenal. His remarks come amid speculation following India’s Operation Sindoor and reports of strikes near suspected Pakistani nuclear facilities.

“India has a perfect picture of what is going on there. The fighting ended actually after India hit two entrances to one of Pakistan’s underground facilities, suspected or assumed to be a nuclear facility,” said Cooper, responding to questions about whether nuclear sites had been damaged, despite Indian officials denying such targets were struck.

He pointed to Defence Minister Rajnath Singh’s

SURVEILLANCE

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh questioned Pakistan’s nuclear safety protocols, echoing concerns previously raised by nuclear scientists.
- India’s intelligence continues to closely monitor Pakistani military activity, indicating strategic dominance and operational freedom inside Pakistan.
- Operation Sindoor was launched by India on May 7, targeting nine terror sites in Pakistan and PoJK in retaliation for the deadly Pahalgam terror attack.
- The conflict de-escalated on May 10, as India and Pakistan reached an understanding to cease hostilities after intense cross-border engagements.



recent comments questioning Pakistan’s nuclear command and safety protocols. “He (Defence Minister Rajnath Singh) now says that Pakistan’s ability to handle nuclear weapons is questionable. This is not new. We have heard such concerns issued even by nuclear scientists, and not just a few of them, but 20 or even more. It is just a confirmation that the situation has not improved in this regard, on one side,” Cooper

said. He added that India’s intelligence and strategic capabilities continue to monitor Pakistani military movements closely. “It is also a confirmation for the dominance or freedom of operation of Indian armed forces well inside Pakistan,” he stated.

Earlier in the day, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addressed the brave Indian Army soldiers at Badami Bagh Cantt, Srinagar and

stated that, “Prime Minister Narendra Modi has redefined India’s policy against terrorism, which now says that any attack on Indian soil will be considered as an act of war.”

The Defence Minister emphasised that India has always prioritised peace and never supported war; however, when its sovereignty is attacked, it is necessary to respond. If Pakistan continues to support terrorism, it will pay a heavier

## Taliban-ruled Afghanistan’s delegation attends business forum in Russia

AGENCIES  
MOSCOW

Russia sees prospects in trade and economic cooperation with Kabul, a Russian minister said Friday as Taliban-ruled Afghanistan’s flag shared space with other nations for the first time at a Russian-Afghan business forum.

An official Taliban delegation is attending an Islamic forum being held in Muslim-majority region Tatarstan’s capital Kazan, weeks after the Russian Supreme Court lifted a ban on the Islamist movement, which was proscribed in Russia as a terrorist organisation.

According to the Foreign Ministry officials, Moscow is expecting the appointment of a new Afghan Ambassador representing the Taliban government in Kabul.

The Taliban delegation was taking part in the Russian-Afghan business forum, with the framework of 16th International Economic Forum “Russia - Islamic World: Kazan Forum” being held from May 13 to 18.

Russia sees prospects in trade and economic cooperation with Afghanistan, the country has great resource and logistics potential, First Deputy Industry and Trade

*Russia had proscribed the Taliban movement as a terrorist outfit in 2003. Since the hasty withdrawal of the US troops in August 2021, the Taliban has gained control over Afghanistan.*

Minister Vasily Osmakov said in an interview to state-run news agency TASS.

“It is clear that the country (Afghanistan) is in a very difficult situation, but at the same time, firstly, it has absolutely amazing resource potential. It is a mountainous country with many deposits. Secondly, it has absolutely amazing logistics potential, because Afghanistan, both in ancient times and now, has always been a trade crossroad, the Silk Road passed through it,” the First Deputy Minister said. Russia traditionally had close ties with the Islamic world, Osmakov noted and added that the partnership with Central Asian countries such as Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan is highly developed now.

Russia’s Supreme Court had on April 17 suspended the over two decades old ban on Afghanistan’s ruling Taliban, paving the way for the establishment of full-fledged relations between Moscow

and Kabul.

Russia had proscribed the Taliban movement as a terrorist outfit in 2003. Since the hasty withdrawal of the US troops in August 2021, the Taliban has gained control over Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, the official also spoke about Russia’s increasing ties in the region of North Africa and West Asia and said Moscow has developed ties with Egypt, with the United Arab Emirates, and cooperation with Saudi Arabia is also gradually growing.

“Oman is a very attractive and interesting direction. These are the new Arab Emirates” as it is sometimes called. In North Africa, there is also Algeria, with which we have developed cooperation,” he said. “And, probably, by tradition, Iran, Turkey, which are large trading partners. Türkiye is one of the most significant logistics hubs and trade crossroads for our trade,” the First Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade said.

## Tibetan leader slams China’s repression in Tibet at UK parliament

AGENCIES  
LONDON

Secretary of the Office of Tibet in London, made a powerful plea for Tibet during a joint parliamentary event titled “United Voices: A Joint Discussion About Freedom in North Korea, China, Tibet, Xinjiang, Hong Kong, and Burma/Myanmar,” as reported by the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA).

The event took place on May 14 in the UK Parliament and was co-hosted by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on North Korea and Fortify Rights. It was chaired by David Smith MP, the UK’s Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief, alongside John Glen MP, according to the CTA report.

As a representative of the Tibetan cause, Kunga spoke



about the severe and ongoing suppression of religious and cultural liberties in Tibet under Chinese governance. He emphasised the systematic attempts by the Chinese government to undermine Tibetan Buddhism, which include monitoring of monasteries, enforced political re-education for monks and nuns, and colonial-style

boarding schools that exclude Tibetan language and religion.

In reflecting on the other speakers’ presentations, Tenzin Kunga drew connections and pointed out similarities to the situation in Tibet. He cautioned the audience about the broader threat posed by the Chinese Communist regime to the

## Tibetan representative warns EU of China’s dam projects in Tibet

AGENCIES  
BRUSSELS

Tibetan Representative Rigzin Genkhang spoke on the implications of damming rivers in Tibet in a conference held in the European Parliament, which addressed its humanitarian, environmental, and geopolitical repercussions, according to the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA).

The conference held on Wednesday gathered environmental specialists, policy advocates, and Eu-

*This statement underscored the necessity for global climate and environmental organisations to acknowledge the strategic importance of the Tibetan plateau and to incorporate it into protective frameworks, as emphasised in the CTA report.*

ropean representatives to assess the extensive impacts of China’s hydropower initiatives on the Tibetan Plateau, as reported by CTA. His participation at the conference came after an invitation from the International Campaign for Tibet Brussels.

Representative Rigzin Genkhang highlighted the

price, he said.

Notably, Operation Sindoor was launched by the Indian Armed Forces in the early hours of May 7, targeting nine terror sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoJK).

This operation was a retaliatory response to the terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir’s Pahalgam, which claimed the lives of 26 civilians, including one Nepali national, while several others were injured.

After the attack, Pakistan retaliated with cross-border shelling across the Line of Control and Jammu and Kashmir as well as attempted drone attacks along the border regions, following which India launched a coordinated attack and damaged radar infrastructure, communication centres and airfields across airbases in Pakistan.

On May 10, India and Pakistan reached an understanding on the cessation of hostilities.

strategic significance of Tibet and the ecological vulnerability of the region, cautioning about the dangers these projects pose to major river systems in Asia and the hundreds of millions who rely on them downstream. This statement underscored the necessity for global climate and environmental organisations to acknowledge the strategic importance of the Tibetan plateau and to incorporate it into protective frameworks, as emphasised in the CTA report.

Representative Rigzin

Genkhang engaged in multiple meetings with Members of the European Parliament. These discussions offered a platform to express appreciation for the recent European Parliament resolution addressing violations of religious freedom in Tibet and deliberate on future steps.

## Israeli strikes kill 92 as Gaza war deepens

AGENCIES  
JERUSALEM

Israeli strikes across Gaza killed at least 92 people, including women, children and two journalists, officials said Wednesday, as Israel prepares to ramp up its campaign in the strip, with the devastating war now entering its 20th month.

Two Israeli airstrikes on Wednesday targeted an area in central Gaza, killing at least 33 people and wounding 86, including several children, though the actual death toll is likely higher, according to health officials.

The new bloodshed comes days after Israel approved a plan to intensify its operations in the Palestinian enclave, which would include seizing Gaza, holding on to captured territories, forcibly displacing Palestinians to southern Gaza and taking control of aid distribution along with private security companies.

Israel is also calling up tens of thousands of reserve soldiers to carry out the plan. Israel says the plan will be gradual and will not be implemented until after US President Donald Trump wraps up his visit to the region later this month.



Troops to stay in Gaza for unspecified time as Israel approves takeover

Any escalation of fighting would likely drive up the death toll. And with Israel already controlling some 50% of Gaza, increasing its hold on the territory, for an indefinite amount of time, could open up the potential for a military occupation, which would raise questions about how Israel plans to have the territory governed, especially at a time when it is considering how to implement Trump’s vision to take over Gaza.

The Israeli offensive has so far killed more than 52,000 people in Gaza, many of them women and children, according to Palestinian health officials who do not distinguish between combatants and civilians.

Israel blames Hamas for the death toll, saying it oper-

ates from civilian infrastructure, including schools. Wednesday’s strikes included two attacks on a crowded market area in Gaza City, health officials said.

Footage posted online reportedly showed the aftermath with men found dead, including one still seated in a chair inside a Thai restaurant, used by locals as a gathering spot, and several children lying motionless on the ground, covered in blood.

Journalist Yahya Sobeih, who freelanced for several local outlets, was among those killed, according to Gaza’s media office. He had shared a photo on Instagram of his newborn baby girl. Victims of the blasts, some with severe injuries, were taken to nearby Al-Shifa Hospital, Gaza health ministry spokesperson Zaher al-Wahidi told.

## Urban renewal in Israel increases as share of housing construction

AGENCIES  
TEL AVIV

Urban renewal accounts for 28 per cent of the total 204,000 of all housing units approved by planning institutions in Israel, and 30% of all construction starts in the market. Every third apartment sold in 2024 - within the framework of a Pinui Binui (remove and then build) complex.

This is according to data compiled in the Government Urban Renewal Authority’s 2024 Report which the Authority declared marks the

*Urban renewal accounts for 28 per cent of the total 204,000 of all housing units approved by planning institutions in Israel, and 30% of all construction starts in the market.*

“Revolution in the Real Estate Market.”

“The data in the report clearly indicates the consistent and growing increase in the volume of activity in the urban renewal market, despite the events of the war and the upheavals experi-

enced by the Israeli economy in its aftermath,” said the Authority. “Within this framework, record figures stood out in the field of planning, in the field of issuing building permits, and in the volume of construction starts in this market segment.”

## Bangladeshi women’s rights activists rally against anti-feminist wave

AGENCIES  
DHAKA

Thousands of Bangladeshi women’s rights activists on Friday gathered on Manik Mia Avenue near the Parliament building in Dhaka to demand equal rights and dignity for women. The rally, held under the slogan “A march of solidarity at the call of women” (nariira dake maitri yatra) aimed to protest against attempts to deprive women of their rights in the name of religion.

The protest follows a wave of anti-feminist sentiment in Bangladesh, sparked by controversy over the interim government’s Women’s Reform Commission recommendation to recognize sex workers as labourers. Hardline Islamist groups opposed the move, making derogatory comments about women.

The activists condemned recent statements that demeaned women and demanded equal rights and dignity. They expressed solidarity with the protest, emphasizing the importance of protecting women’s rights.

Bangladesh Former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was ousted from power in a student-led uprising in August last year. Hasina fled to India and an interim government led by Nobel Laureate Muhammad Yunus was formed.

“The interim government had formed a Women’s Re-



form commission. When the commission recommended recognizing sex workers as labour, hardlines Islamist political parties and groups opposed it. The made derogatory comments about women,” a transgender activist told.

“I have come to express solidarity with this protest for everyone’s rights,” the activist added. Women danced and sang to protest discrimination against women. After the iron fist rule of Sheikh Hasina came to an end, women’s reforms took a back seat.

Talking to media Bangladesh writer and activist Taslima Nasreen strongly criticized the interim government, highlighting atrocities against women and the rise of Islamic terrorism. She called for quick elections and questioned the legitimacy of the current government.

“It’s not just violence against women in the country. Theft, robbery, terror,

rape, murder is all going on. That means law enforcement is not doing anything. So I think elections should be held quickly and the political party that comes into power is in power. It’s good that they run the country. Because this government is illegal, and this government has no right to run the country,” she said.

Voicing against religious extremism and emphasising values of secularism, women’s rights and freedom of speech, she has been at the receiving end of extremist elements in Bangladesh. Nasreen alleged that Islamic terrorism is targeting not just women but also those associated with the ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s party, Awami League. Nasreen said that apart from women, the “Islamic terrorism” is torturing everyone belonging to Bangladesh’s ousted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s party, Awami League.



# TRUMP’S MIDEAST TOUR ENDS WITH OPULENCE, BUSINESS DEALS, AND \$400M JET

AGENCIES  
ABU DHABI

President Donald Trump used the first major foreign trip of his second term to outline a vision for restoring global stability that is grounded in pragmatism and self-interest rather than values, holding out U.S. ties to wealthy Gulf countries as a model for America’s longtime foes.

His four-day swing through Saudi Arabia, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates, which ends Friday, put a spotlight on Trump’s transactional approach to foreign affairs as he was feted by autocratic rulers with a trio of lavish state visits where there was heavy emphasis on economic and security partnerships.

His trip played out against the backdrop of stubborn global conflicts, including Gaza and Ukraine, that showed the limits of his influence. But Trump insisted he was turning the page on American “interventionism” in the region as he moved to recognize the new government in Syria for the



first time and prodded Iran to engage on nuclear talks before it’s too late.

Some takeaways from Trump’s travels:

Presidential trips to the Middle East usually feature at least some public calls for authoritarian governments to improve their human rights efforts. Not this one, as Trump celebrated his business deals with Gulf royals and admired their wealth.

Trump toured the marble and gilded palaces of Gulf rulers and deemed them “perfecto” and “very hard to buy.” He praised the “gleaming marvels” of the skyline in Saudi Arabia. And he

groused about the “much less impressive” Air Force One.

In Trump’s remarks at a VIP business conference in Riyadh, he went out of his way to distance himself from the actions of past administrations, the days when he said American officials would fly in “in beautiful planes, giving you lectures on how to live and how to govern your own affairs.”

Rights advocates took that as a pledge of nonintervention, swearing off some of the pressure past U.S. presidents have brought to bear on partners to varying degrees to ease up on detentions, suppression of critics

and other issues.

“It’s absolute support for absolute monarchy,” said Saudi exile Abdullah Alaoudh. His father, a Saudi cleric with a wide following there, is imprisoned in the kingdom.

Some rights advocates said Trump officials gave them private assurances the administration was working on behalf of detained Americans and rights advocates. Tommy Pigott, a deputy spokesman at the State Department, declined to say whether Trump raised those or other rights issues in discussions with Gulf royals.

While Trump was in the Mideast, Vladimir Putin opted to skip direct peace talks with Ukraine’s Volodymyr Zelenskyy despite the U.S. president’s strong calls for them to meet face to face.

Trump has been pushing Putin and Zelenskyy to move with greater haste to end Russia’s grinding war in Ukraine.

But after it became clear Putin wouldn’t be attending talks in Turkey this week and would instead be sending underlings to Istanbul,

an annoyed Trump insisted he knew all along that it was highly likely Putin would be a no-show.

“I don’t believe anything’s going to happen whether you like it or not, until he and I get together,” Trump said. “But we’re going to have to get it solved because too many people are dying.”

As he wrapped up his visit on Friday, Trump said the face-to-face would happen “as soon as we can set it up.”

Trump was scheduled to fly back to Washington on Friday, but tried to keep people guessing until the end. He teased late Thursday that he would be heading to a “destination unknown” — “probably” Washington, he added. His opaque language stoked speculation that he might make a drop-by to Turkey.

But on Friday morning, he told reporters he needed to get back to Washington. His daughter Tiffany had her first child while the president has been away.

“I would actually leave here and go,” Trump said. “I do want to see my beautiful grandson.”



The leaders of European countries and organizations pose for a family photo during the European Political Community summit in Tirana, Albania. Agencies

## Russia-Ukraine talks end in under 2 hours with POW swap deal

AGENCIES  
ISTANBUL

The first direct Russia-Ukraine peace talks since the early weeks of Moscow’s 2022 invasion ended after less than two hours Friday, and while both sides agreed on a large prisoner swap, they clearly remained far apart on key conditions for ending the fighting.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he discussed the results of the talks with U.S. President Donald Trump and the lead-

ers of France, Germany, the U.K. and Poland. In a post on X from a European leadership meeting in Albania, he urged “tough sanctions” against Moscow if it rejects “a full and unconditional ceasefire and an end to killings.”

At the brief Istanbul talks, Kyiv and Moscow agreed to exchange 1,000 prisoners of war each, according to the heads of both delegations, in what would be their biggest such swap.

Russian presidential aide Vladimir Medinsky, who headed Moscow’s delega-

tion, said both sides agreed to provide each other with detailed ceasefire proposals and Ukraine requested the heads of state meeting, which Russia took under consideration.

During the talks, a senior Ukrainian official said Russia introduced new, “unacceptable demands” to withdraw Ukrainian forces from huge swaths of territory. The official, who was not authorized to make official statements, spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity.

## Man who stabbed author Salman Rushdie on stage sentenced to 25 years in prison

AGENCIES  
MAYVILLE [US]:

The man found guilty of attempted murder of Salman Rushdie has been sentenced to 25 years in prison.

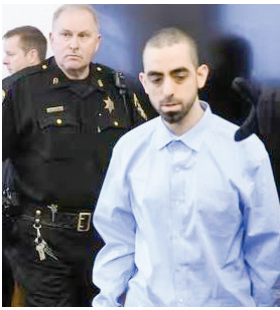
On Friday, the Chautauqua county court issued the sentence to Hadi Matar, 27, of New Jersey, nearly three months after he was first convicted of attempted murder in the second degree.

Matar’s conviction followed an intense trial during which Rushdie, 77, detailed the moment when he felt certain that he was going to die from Matar’s attack during a literary gathering in western New York state in 2022. The author was severely wounded and lost the use of his right eye.

In a statement delivered to court before his sentencing, Matar said: “Salman

Rushdie wants to disrespect other people ... He wants to be a bully, he wants to bully other people. I don’t agree with that.”

Matar was also sentenced to seven years for wounding Ralph Henry Reese, a moderator at Rushdie’s lecture who was on stage with him. According to the Chautauqua county district attorney, Jason Schmidt, Matar’s two sentences will run concur-



Hadi Matar at court on his second day of his trial on 11 February 2025, in Mayville, New York. Agencies

rently as both victims were injured at the same event.

“He designed this attack so that he could inflict the most amount of damage, not just upon Mr Rushdie, but upon this community, upon the 1,400 people who were there to watch it,” Schmidt said, adding that Matar in effect “chose this” maximum sentencing.

Meanwhile, the public defender Nathaniel Barone said Matar had an otherwise clean criminal record and disputed the prosecutors’ argument that the audience at the event should also be considered victims.

“Every day since then, for the last couple of years, this case has been an international publicity sponge,” Barone said, adding: “There was no presumption, ever, of innocence for Mr Matar from the very beginning.”

## King Charles climbs up UK rich list to match Sunak’s wealth, Hinduja family hold top spot

AGENCIES  
LONDON

Britain’s King Charles III saw his wealth grow by around GBP 30 million over the past year to hit GBP 640 million in the 2025 ‘Sunday Times Rich List’ released on Friday, with the 76-year-old monarch climbing 20 places to rank 238th alongside former prime minister Rishi Sunak and his wife Akshata Murty.

The annual tally of the country’s 350 wealthiest individuals and families was topped for the fourth consecutive year by the Indian-origin Hinduja family, with an estimated fortune of GBP 35.3 billion, despite taking a hit of GBP 2 billion since May 2024.

“Awarding licences to build wind farms has helped the Crown Estate double its profits, increasing the sovereign grant, which funds the royal family’s official activities,” the newspaper notes with reference to Charles’ boosted fortunes.

“We exclude the majority of royal assets from the King’s valuation be-



cause they are owned ‘in the right of the Crown’ and are not personal holdings. His Balmoral and Sandringham estates in Scotland and Norfolk, as well as an investment portfolio also inherited from his late mother [Queen Elizabeth II], account for the bulk of his wealth,” it notes.

Meanwhile, Sunak saw a dent in his family fortunes since last year with Murty’s stake in Infosys losing some of its value on the stock market, but the couple’s combined estimated fortunes of GBP 640 million

means they improved their rank from last year’s 245th.

“Since leaving Downing Street, Sunak has taken a part-time role at Stanford University and signed up to the lucrative Washington Speakers Bureau,” reads ‘The Sunday Times’ analysis.

“His wife’s stake in Infosys, her father’s Bangalore-based IT firm, paid out GBP 7.5 million of dividends last year but has lost some of its value. The couple have launched a charity to tackle numeracy problems,” it adds.

Besides the Hinduja family, the top 10 of the 2025 ‘Sunday Times Rich List’ sees another set of India-born brothers, David and Simon Reuben, build on their wealth to rise to second place from last year’s third, with a fortune estimated at around GBP 26.87 billion.

At No. 8 is NRI tycoon of Arcelor Mittal steelworks Lakshmi N. Mittal, who holds on to his rank with an estimated GBP 15.44 billion. Vedanta Resources’ industrialist Anil Agarwal with an estimated GBP 7.5 billion is at No. 25.

Other Indian-origin billionaires on the 2025 list include textiles entrepreneur Prakash Lohia at No. 31 with an estimated GBP 6.02 billion; retail majors Mohsin and Zuber Issa at No. 32 with GBP 6 billion; and pharma chiefs Navin and Varsha Engineer at 48 with GBP 3.45 billion. Among the top 100 richest Britons are brothers Simon, Bobby and Robin Arora at No. 69 with GBP 2.57 billion and leading NRI industrialist Lord Swraj Paul and family ranked 81st with an estimated wealth of GBP 2 billion.

# ‘OPERATION SINDOOR’ IS NEW NORMAL, SAYS INDIAN PM; INDIA LAUNCHES DIPLOMATIC FORAY AGAINST TÜRKIYE, TRUMP’S LATEST ANNOUNCEMENTS LEAVE THE WORLD IN SHOCK

Following the successful execution of Operation Sindoor, which resulted in the destruction of terrorist strongholds in Pakistan, India encountered several failed drone attack attempts from its neighbour. In response to a request from Pakistan, India announced a temporary halt to its operations. However, amidst a backdrop of various rumours and propaganda efforts initiated by Pakistan, the Prime Minister of India addressed the nation and the global community this week to provide clarity on the situation. He emphasized that the world must recognize India’s unwavering stance against terrorism, asserting that India equates terrorism with the nations that support it. Furthermore, he stated that Operation Sindoor represents a ‘new normal’ for India, with the Indian Armed Forces prepared for any potential escalation from Pakistan.

The Prime Minister also revealed that it was at the request of the Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) of Pakistan that the Indian DGMO agreed to cease further military actions, leading to the declaration of a pause. He reiterated that the Indus Water Treaty would remain suspended, asserting that ‘blood and water cannot flow together.’ Additionally, he firmly stated that India would not accept any form of ‘nuclear blackmail.’ The following day, he visited the Adampur airbase in Punjab to commend the courageous team of the Indian Air Force, and his presence, along with photographs taken during the visit, effectively dispelled the rumours propagated by Pakistan regarding the destruction of a significant Indian military base by their missile.

It was surprising to hear President Trump announcing a ‘ceasefire’ between

WORLD RECAP

ANSHU JOSHI

India and Pakistan, as he appeared to claim the role of a mediator in the conflict. However, during the address to the nation by the Indian Prime Minister, there was no mention of Trump’s involvement in the matter. This week, the chiefs of the Indian Armed Forces also addressed media, providing important updates regarding Operation Sindoor. Furthermore, India has resolved to take a firm stance against nations that support Pakistan in its efforts to propagate terrorism. India has not only condemned Türkiye for its backing of Pakistan but has also made significant decisions this week that are likely to have negative repercussions for Türkiye’s economy and political

influence in the future.

Türkiye’s assistance to Pakistan has undermined India’s confidence in the nation. In the wake of the devastating earthquake in Türkiye, India promptly extended its assistance; however, the Turkish government simultaneously facilitated Pakistan’s military aggression against India by not only supplying drones but also deploying military personnel. Also, President Erdogan has consistently highlighted the Kashmir issue on international platforms, especially at the UN General Assembly. This perceived betrayal has led to a significant backlash among Indians, resulting in the ‘Boycott Türkiye’ movement, which has garnered widespread sup-

port from the Indians. The repercussions of this sentiment are evident, as tourist bookings to Türkiye have been cancelled at a major level, Indian businesses have pledged to distance themselves from Türkiye, and educational institutions like Jawaharlal Nehru University and Jamia Milia Islamia have suspended their MoUs with a Turkish institutions.

India has also started countering Türkiye through a range of strategic and diplomatic initiatives. India has launched a comprehensive diplomatic and strategic counter-offensive, refining its foreign policy to strengthen ties with Türkiye’s regional adversaries and align with more influential powers in the area. This involves strengthening relationships with Türkiye’s geopolitical and historical adversaries, like Greece and Armenia. In recent years, India has notably enhanced its defence

and strategic partnerships with Greece. Also, the two countries have engaged in discussions regarding maritime security and are considering naval co-operation in the Eastern Mediterranean, an area where Türkiye’s maritime aspirations have led to tensions with Greece. In this manner, India has initiated both a strategic and tactical countermeasure against Türkiye, which is essential at this moment.

In addition to Türkiye’s actions regarding India, another unexpected development has emerged from the West Asian region. Following an initial claim of facilitating de-escalation between India and Pakistan, President Trump later clarified during his visit to Gulf nations that he was not acting as a mediator in the India-Pakistan conflict. While on this trip, he has further surprised the international community by lifting sanctions on Syria, with the hope

that it will recognize Israel and join the Abraham Accords, a significant series of bilateral agreements aimed to normalise Arab-Israeli relations in 2020, mediated by Trump. Syria, a longstanding ally of Iran, has been known to support proxy groups that attack Israel. The current president of Syria is designated as a terrorist by Al-Qaeda and has previously spent a significant amount of time in a US prison in Iraq. Trump appears eager to diminish Iran’s influence in the West Asian regional order, positioning the US as the dominant power. Additionally, with Türkiye’s backing, the only Islamist nation in NATO, he seems to be employing a different strategy in the realm of global politics. However, this development has caused concern for Israel. It remains to be seen how this situation will evolve in the future.

India has emerged victorious in the diplomatic and

strategic contest with Pakistan; however, it is crucial for India to question the global community’s neutrality throughout this conflict. It is important to remember that the International Monetary Fund ultimately provided a substantial loan to Pakistan, and Türkiye, a close ally of the US and a member of NATO, also extended its support to Pakistan.

Additionally, we should not forget that Trump has urged the CEO of Apple to cease manufacturing operations in India. While Afghanistan’s backing of India is significant in the current intricate geopolitical landscape, we must remain aware of the true nature of the Taliban. This period appears to be one of instability that will eventually subside, yet our identity and aspirations will be shaped by the decisions we make at this juncture.

The author is Professor, School of International Studies, JNU



## NITANSHI GOEL MARKS HER CANNES 2025 DEBUT

AGENCIES  
CANNES

Making an unforgettable first impression at the 2025 Cannes Film Festival, actress Nitanshi Goel made her red carpet debut with a powerful homage to the golden age of Indian cinema. The 17-year-old actress, known for her breakout role in the Oscar-shortlisted 'Laapataa Ladies', stepped into the global spotlight on Thursday with elegance and poise. Dressed in a custom ivory saree by Jade by Monica and Karishma, Nitanshi's ensemble served as a heartfelt tribute to the women who shaped the legacy of Hindi cinema.



Adorned with hairpins bearing the faces of screen legends like Madhubala, Nargis, Meena Kumari, Nutan, Waheeda Rehman, Asha Parekh, Vyjayanthimala, Hema Malini, Rekha, and Sridevi, the young actress carried with her a lin-

eage of cinematic brilliance onto one of the world's most prestigious stages. Shrey and Urja styled Nitanshi's first look, which was complemented by an intricately beaded blouse crafted with pearls and delicate embroidery, echoing

the aesthetic of heirloom Indian fashion. Accessories were kept minimal. Later that evening, Nitanshi made a second appearance on the red carpet in a striking black gown adorned with gold embroidery by Jade by Monica and Karishma. Nitanshi was present at Cannes for the screening of 'Dossier 137'. Her Cannes debut comes alongside a wave of Indian talent at this year's festival, including 'All We Imagine As Light' director Payal Kapadia, Chhaya Kadam. Actor Anupam Kher is in France for the 2025 Cannes Film Festival, where his film 'Tanvi The Great' is set to be screened on May 17.

## Actor Vijay Raaz acquitted in sexual harassment case

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

Actor Vijay Raaz known for his roles in 'Stree', 'Delhi Belly' and others, has been acquitted of sexual harassment and stalking charges filed by a colleague on the sets of the film 'Sherni' also starring Vidya Balan. The Additional Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court in Gondia acquitted actor Vijay Razz of all charges in a sexual harassment case filed against him in 2020 during the shooting of a film in Gondia and Balaghat. The Court found him innocent after completing the trial, and he was acquitted of all charges against him. The judgment, pronounced by Judge Mahendra Keshao Sorte, cleared



the 51-year-old actor of allegations under Indian Penal Code Sections 354-A (sexual harassment) and 354-D (stalking), citing lack of evidence and failure of the prosecution to establish guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. The case dated back to October 25-29, 2020, when

a female crew member accused Razz of inappropriate behaviour, including unwelcome physical contact and suggestive remarks, during a film shoot at Hotel Gateway in Gondia and later at Jatashankar College in Balaghat. His advocate and noted celebrity lawyer Saveena Bedi Sachar, stated that the actor who was shooting near Nagpur for 'Sherni' had to not only leave the film shoot midway but also lost work thereafter. However, he has now been declared innocent and she hopes that this case serves as an example for people who declare every accused as guilty as soon as allegations are levied against him. According to the FIR filed

on 3 November 2020, the actor allegedly tried to touch the complainant, adjusted her mask without consent, and made comments about her physical appearance. The woman later reported the incident to her seniors and filed a complaint at Ramnagar Police Station. The incident dates back to November 4, 2020, when Razz was arrested in Balaghat, Madhya Pradesh, over allegations of molesting a crew member at a hotel where the film crew was staying. He was released on bail the same day. During the investigation, police seized CCTV footage from the hotel and recorded statements of witnesses. However, the court noted that:

## Bhumi Pednekar faces trolls over her lips in 'The Royals'

TDG NETWORK  
MUMBAI

Actor Bhumi Pednekar is facing heavy trolling after her new web series The Royals released on Netflix. Viewers have criticised not just the show but also her appearance. In particular, many people online are commenting on her lips and suggesting she had a cosmetic procedure. As the backlash grew, an old interview clip from 2017 started trending on Reddit. In the video, Bhumi confidently responds to similar remarks made in the past. She was speaking with Rajkumar Rao and Ayushmann Khurrana in a chat with Anupama Chopra. In the clip, she says, "You know the most bizarre thing that somebody actually told me was that 'your lips are too big'." She added, "I said since when is that a problem? I mean people pay in lakhs of money to get that done... They can say the most bizarre things. You should just be aware of what you are and not care."



At that time, all three actors were sharing awkward experiences from the start of their careers. Rajkumar and Ayushmann recalled how their eyebrows had become an issue. Currently, Bhumi stars opposite Ishaan Khatter in The Royals. The series premiered on May 9 on Netflix. It was created by Rangita Prithish Nandy and Ishita Prithish Nandy. However, the audience gave mixed reactions. Many said the show lacks chemistry between the leads.

Others called the screenplay weak and superficial. Soon after the show's release, Bhumi's lips became a trending topic. For instance, one user commented, "Her lips are doing more acting than her in The Royals." Another said, "In recent times it looks like her lips have a personality and screen presence rather than her." Still, Bhumi's old response reflects her self-assurance. Despite repeated trolling, she remains unfazed and confident about her appearance.

### BRAIN PICKING



She's the storm they never saw coming, the calm that changed the scene.  
—SHARVARI  
(Indian Actress)

## Anupam Kher walks on Cannes 2025 red carpet

AGENCIES  
CANNES

Actor Anupam Kher shared his stills from his walk on the red carpet at the ongoing 78th Cannes Film Festival on Thursday. Taking to his Instagram handle, Anupam shared a bunch of pictures of his red carpet look as he entered the auditorium for the screening of the films. The actor's second directorial, 'Tanvi The Great', is set to screen at the 78th Cannes Film Festival on May 17. The 'Saaransh' actor adhered to the formal dress code of Cannes 2025, wear-



ing a black tuxedo and a bow tie. The star looked handsome as he walked the red carpet and greeted his fans. While sharing the photos, he wrote, "Red Carpet!", to signify his arrival at the prestigious Cannes Film

Festival 2025. Meanwhile, Kher, who has been sharing moments from his time at the festival with his fans, took to his Instagram account to introduce two writers of his upcoming film 'Tanvi The Great', -- Abhishek Dixit and Ankur Suman.

## Anupam Kher meets with actor, friend Robert De Niro

AGENCIES  
CANNES

Bollywood star Anupam Kher reunited with legendary actor and friend, Robert De Niro at the ongoing 78th Cannes Film Festival. The Hollywood actor Robert De Niro received the honorary Palme d'Or award for Lifetime Achievement at the Cannes 2025. Meanwhile, acclaimed Indian actor Anupam Kher is also in attendance at



the film festival for the world premiere of 'Tanvi the Great' on May 17. The two actors were last seen together on the big screens for the movie 'Silver

Linings Playbook' in 2012. It also starred Bradley Cooper and Jennifer Lawrence in the lead roles. As per the press note by the team of Anupam Kher, the two long-time friends took the opportunity to catch up during the festival, where Kher spoke about his film with him. He also introduced debutante Shubhangi to Robert De Niro, who graciously offered her his best wishes.

REVIEW: FINAL DESTINATION: BLOODLINES \*\*\*\*\*

## FINAL DESTINATION: BLOODLINES



**PRAVEEN NAGDA**  
Death is inevitable, and that is the final destination. The 6th installment in this franchise, Final Destination: Bloodline, intensely showcases the chills, horror, scares, and thrills of Death as the antagonist. Unlike typical horror films, where

the gruesome acts of murder are committed by criminal characters, this franchise has Death going on the hunt for those who try and escape from its clutches in a supernatural, unexpected, and unanticipated manner. One character saving the lives of people via a premonition, and then death avenging this by targeted killings of those who escaped, remains the basic concept of this franchise. Directed by Zach Lipovsky and Adam B. Stein, Final Destination: Bloodline opens up in 1968, where people are queuing up for celebrations at the Sky View Tower. A young

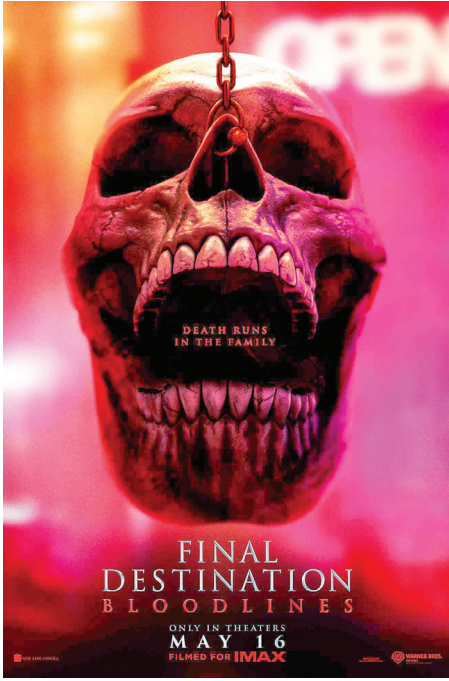
Iris Campbell (Brec Bassinger) and her fiancée are up for celebrations, but Iris has this eerie feeling the moment she enters the elevator, which is taking them all high up in the sky to the dance floor and the restaurant. A series of events, including a little child throwing a coin, which gets stuck in the mechanical system of the tower, leading to malfunctioning, the dance floor unable to bear the load, and the tower crashing down, killing all revellers. That's actually the nightmare Stefani Reyes (Kaitlyn Santa Juana) from the Campbell family repeatedly experiences tied to her grandmother, Iris (Gabrielle Rose). Stefani leaves college and delves into the historical facts

and is discouraged by all of her family members from probing anything about her grandmother, Iris. Stefani discovers Iris, who was living a secluded life alone in a scary house in the jungle, self-protected from the clutches of Death. Iris researches, tracks all those who were killed by Death in supernatural manners, keeps news clippings, maintains diaries of the events, and gives them to Stefani, who discovers that it was the premonition of Iris that had prevented the disaster that Stefani was seeing in her nightmares. No one had died then, and Sky View Tower was closed after Iris' premonition. Iris says, "When the universe speaks, you pay attention," but

Stefani still doesn't believe all of this, only to see Iris getting killed, spilling the blood on her face after the windchimes give signs of Death coming. Stefani develops this intuitive ability to see the possible supernatural events that could bring death to the next ones in the bloodlines of those who had survived in 1968, as they were never supposed to be born. Death doesn't spare the one who is trying to save the one in line. Message is clear, when you mess with the plans of death, it gets messy with you. The film has brilliantly planned sequences that will give you shocks and shudders, trembles and shivers, fear and fright, anxiety and nervousness, making you wait for the

next tragedy that will happen in an almost unexpected manner. Death comes when you believe you've escaped it, and it escapes when you think you're going to encounter it. With the fun and humour among the young family members, some intense moments clearing misunderstandings of years of mother-children relationships, family's close bonding, and zeal to survive and fear of being killed makes this fun watch for those who like such supernatural horror films. And yes, Tony Todd (William Bludworth) leaves a strong mark in this film.

Praveen Nagda is Festival Director of KidzCINEMA and CultureCinema Film Festivals





# PROTECTING HER HEALTH: UNDERSTANDING STROKE RISKS AND REHABILITATION INSIGHTS FOR WOMEN



DR GAURISH KENKRE

Stroke remains a leading cause of long-term disability worldwide, and women face unique biological and lifestyle-related risks. Hence, it is necessary to empower women with knowledge about prevention, recovery, and the critical role of rehabilitation in restoring function and independence. Let's explore how awareness and proactive physical health strategies can make a difference.

## RECOGNIZING STROKE SYMPTOMS: A CALL TO ACTION

The FAST acronym (Face drooping, Arm weakness, Speech difficulty, Time to

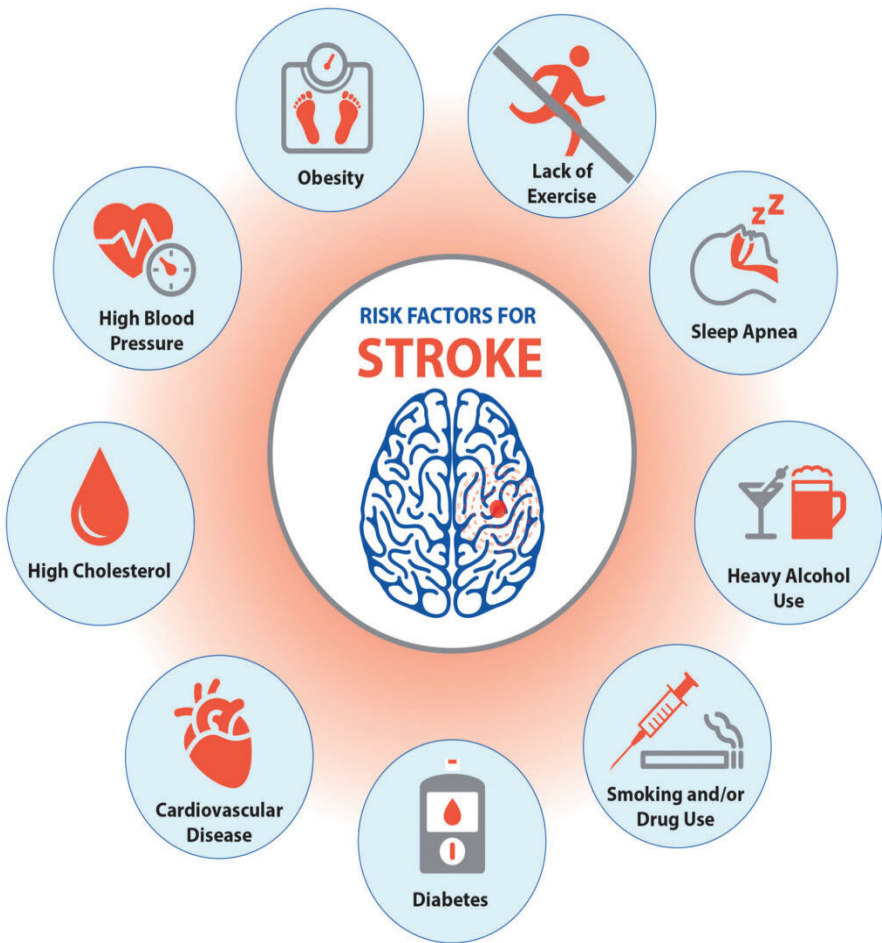
act) is vital, but women may present with subtler symptoms like sudden confusion, fatigue, nausea, or shortness of breath. Prompt recognition saves lives and reduces long-term disability. As neuro rehabilitation specialists, we stress the importance of immediate medical attention — early treatment preserves brain tissue, which directly impacts recovery potential.

## PREVENTION THROUGH MOVEMENT AND LIFESTYLE

Physical activity and lifestyle modifications is a necessity to reduce the risk of stroke:

**Stay Active:** Regular exercise (e.g., walking, swimming) improves cardiovascular health and reduces stroke risk. Even light activity post-menopause can counteract vascular changes.

**Strengthen Balance and Coordination:** Falls are a major concern post-stroke. Balance training and lower-body strengthening exercises help prevent injuries.



**Posture and Mobility:** Sedentary lifestyles contribute to poor circulation and stiffness.

Simple daily stretches and posture awareness can enhance vascular health.

**Mind-Body Connection:** Stress management (e.g., yoga, breathing exercises)

*Women recovering from stroke may also face unique psychosocial challenges, such as caregiving responsibilities or societal pressures to “bounce back.” A holistic rehab approach includes emotional support and pacing strategies to avoid burnout.*

lowers cortisol levels, supporting overall wellness.

The Role of Neuro Physiotherapy in Recovery

Post-stroke rehabilitation focuses on maximizing independence. This often involves addressing:

**Hemiparesis:** Customized strength training and task-specific exercises to improve affected limb function.

**Spasticity Management:** Gentle stretching, splinting, or modalities like heat therapy to reduce muscle tightness.

**Gait Retraining:** Using treadmills, assistive devices, or visual cues to rebuild

walking patterns.

**Cognitive-Motor Integration:** Activities that challenge coordination and dual-task abilities (e.g., walking while counting).

Women recovering from stroke may also face unique psychosocial challenges, such as caregiving responsibilities or societal pressures to “bounce back.” A holistic rehab approach includes emotional support and pacing strategies to avoid burnout.

**COLLABORATION IS KEY**  
Neuro physiotherapists

work closely with neurologists, occupational therapists, and speech-language experts to create cohesive rehabilitation plans. For example, if a woman has post-stroke aphasia, combining speech therapy with rhythmic movement exercises can enhance communication and motor recovery. Neuro rehabilitation centers that offer multiple therapies under one roof are preferred since stroke often limits the patient's mobility.

**FINAL THOUGHTS**  
Stroke prevention and recovery require a team effort. While medical professionals tackle acute care, neuro physiotherapists play a pivotal role in rebuilding strength, confidence, and function. By understanding gender-specific risks and advocating for proactive health habits, women can reduce their vulnerability and embrace a resilient path forward.

*The author is General Manager and Center Head, Atharv Ability.*

# Vaccinations during pregnancy: What's safe and necessary for maternal health



DR. POORNAM BEHAL

Vaccinations during pregnancy are most important as it protects both the mother and the to-be born child from serious infectious diseases. During pregnancy, a woman's immune system undergoes natural changes, making her more susceptible to infections that could lead to severe complications for herself and her baby. Immunizations not only help prevent these illnesses but also pass on protective antibodies to the baby, offering crucial protection during the first few months of life when the infant is most vulnerable and too young to receive certain vaccines.

Among the vaccines considered both safe and essential during pregnancy, two are strongly recommended: the influenza (flu) vaccine and the Tdap vaccine (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis).

nus, diphtheria, and pertussis). Pregnant women are at a higher risk for severe illness from the flu, including pneumonia and hospitalization. Vaccination significantly reduces these risks and also provides passive immunity to the newborn, who benefits from maternal antibodies during early infancy.

The Tdap vaccine is another critical immunization, recommended during each pregnancy, preferably between 27 and 36 weeks gestation. This vaccine is particularly important for protecting against whooping cough (pertussis), which can be life-threatening for newborns. Since infants do not receive their first dose of the DTaP vaccine until two months of age, maternal immunization helps bridge that vulnerable gap, reducing the risk of infection during the baby's earliest weeks.

Additionally vaccines may be considered during pregnancy based on individual risk factors. For example, the hepatitis B vaccine may

be recommended if a pregnant woman is at high risk for infection and has not been previously vaccinated. Likewise, vaccines for hepatitis A, meningococcal disease, and pneumococcal disease may be considered for women with specific medical conditions or exposure risks. Each case should be carefully evaluated by a healthcare provider to weigh the benefits against any potential risks.

However, not all vaccines are safe to administer during pregnancy. Live vaccines, which contain a weakened form of the virus, are typically avoided due to a theoretical risk of transmitting the infection to the fetus. Ideally, women should receive these vaccines before becoming pregnant. If a woman inadvertently receives a live vaccine shortly before discovering she is pregnant, she should consult her healthcare provider, though such exposures rarely lead to harm.

Vaccinations don't end with

pregnancy. Some vaccines, such as MMR and varicella, can be safely administered in the postpartum period, particularly for women who were not previously immunized. This helps protect both the mother and the baby, especially if the mother is breastfeeding. Breastfeeding does not interfere with vaccine efficacy and, in some cases, may even enhance the baby's protection through transferred antibodies.

Healthcare providers play a central role in guiding expectant mothers through the vaccination process. In an age where misinformation about vaccines can be widespread, it is essential that pregnant women receive accurate, evidence-based advice from trusted medical professionals. Providers should assess the mother's vaccination history, explain the risks and benefits, and ensure timely administration of recommended vaccines. Encouraging vaccination not only safeguards individual families but also contributes to broader community immunity.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Vaccinations during pregnancy are a safe and necessary component of prenatal care. The flu and Tdap vaccines, in particular, offer proven protection for both mother and baby. While certain vaccines are avoided during pregnancy, others may be considered based on risk.

With proper medical guidance, pregnant women can make informed decisions that promote healthier outcomes for themselves and their children. As maternal and infant health continues to be a global priority, ensuring access to and awareness of safe vaccinations during pregnancy is a vital step forward.

*The author is MS, MBBS Consultant- Obstetrics & Gynecology, Apollo Cradle & Children's Hospital, Moti Nagar, New Delhi*



# STITCHING THE FUTURE: HOW INDIAN WOMEN ARE WEAVING THEIR WAY INTO A TRADITIONALLY MALE-DOMINATED CRAFT

RIDHIMA BAHUGUNA

For centuries, the intricate art of embroidery and stitching in India has been a testament to the country's unparalleled craftsmanship. From the dazzling Zardozi of Lucknow to the exquisite Kantha of Bengal, these delicate stitches have told stories of culture, heritage, and artistry. However, while embroidery and tailoring are often perceived as domestic skills, professional stitching and embroidery—especially in luxury fashion, bespoke tailoring, and high-end textile craftsmanship—have traditionally been male-dominated industries.

When we started Project Unnati at Roots Foundation, we witnessed this reality firsthand. Women who had spent their lives stitching within the confines of their homes never saw themselves as skilled artisans. They didn't believe their craft could translate into financial independence. Trapped by both social and personal circumstances and self-doubt, they hesitated to see themselves as professionals. As our flagship skilling initiative, Project Unnati aims to change this age-old situation – we work towards enabling livelihood enhancement for women through industry-focused training and entrepreneurial support. By nurturing their skills and confidence, we are helping them realise that their hands, which once worked in silence, can now shape their own futures.

Ever since the inception of the initiative in 2017, we have skilled more than 5,000 women in sewing, pattern making, and hand embroidery. Over 4,500 Sewing Machine Operators (SMOs) have been placed in garment factories, while 500+ women have been trained in embroidery and placed under luxury designers. Through our efforts, we have positively impacted more than 15,000 lives.

## A CRAFT ROOTED IN HISTORY, YET RE-SERVED FOR MEN

India's embroidery and stitching traditions date back centuries, with royal patronage fuelling some of the most elaborate hand-craft techniques the world has seen. The Mughal era saw the flourishing of Zardozi—metallic thread-work fit for nobility. Gujarat's Kutch region became synonymous with mirror work and colourful thread embroidery, while Punjab's Phulkari became an intrinsic part of a woman's bridal trousseau. The Chikankari of Lucknow, initially introduced by Persian artisans, became a staple of elegance and refinement.

Yet, despite embroidery being a common household skill among women, the commercial side of these crafts has remained largely male-dominated. Historically, master artisans—known as karigars—who worked in royal ateliers, couture houses, and high-end textile industries were overwhelmingly men. The meticulous handwork seen in luxury labels and bridal couture, even today, is largely executed by male craftsmen working in workshops across cities like Delhi, Mumbai, and Kolkata.

So why, when millions of Indian women are adept at embroidery from a young age, has the professional field remained closed off to them?

One reason lies in the structural barriers of the industry. Traditional craft workshops have long been male-led spaces where skills are passed down from father to son, leaving little room for women to enter. Societal norms have also played a role—women were often expected to practise embroidery within the confines of their homes, while men pursued it as a profession.

However, we knew that if we were to truly make a difference, we had to break this cycle—not just by providing skills, but by shifting mindsets.

## WOMEN TAKING THE NEEDLE FORWARD

Across India, more and more women are stepping beyond household embroidery to become professional artisans, entrepreneurs, and designers in their own right. Social enterprises, NGOs, and skill development programmes are playing a crucial role in equipping them with the necessary tools to transition from informal work to professional craftsmanship.

We envisaged Project Unnati recognising the gap between skill availability and employment opportunities, and thus, the project focuses on equipping women and youth with vocational training in sewing machine operations, embroidery, pattern-making, and retail.

Initially, many of the women we worked with had little faith in their own abilities. They were hesitant, but as they started to master new techniques and saw their creations being valued and sold, something changed. The same women who once believed they were only meant to sew for their families were now designing garments, launching businesses, and taking control of their financial independence.

Aarti, a 22-year-old from Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh, grew up in a family where financial struggles dictated her choices. Despite completing her education up to the 12th grade, she knew that formal schooling alone wouldn't secure her a stable future. Marriage and household responsibilities soon followed, but Aarti always held an interest in sewing—one she hoped could lead to financial independence.

After relocating to Noida, she discovered Project Unnati and, with encouragement from her husband, enrolled in the Sewing Machine Operator training programme. In just 45 days, she gained expertise in garment-making techniques, boosting her confidence and unlocking opportunities she never imagined possible. Soon after, she secured a job, helping support

her family during difficult times. Her savings even allowed her to buy a plot of land—a milestone she once thought was unattainable. Today, Aarti sews not just for others but also for her young child, proving that one skill, when nurtured, can transform a life.

## THE SHIFT TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE INDUSTRY

As we continue our work, we are also seeing a shift in power—women are not just workers in the textile industry; they are becoming leaders, entrepreneurs, and innovators.

Luxury labels and major fashion houses in India are increasingly recognising the importance of empowering women artisans. Some high-end brands now actively partner with female-led embroidery clusters, acknowledging the unique creativity and skill that women bring to the craft. Fashion initiatives that promote hand embroidery as a sustainable and ethical alternative to mass-produced garments are further boosting women's involvement in the industry.

## STITCHING A FUTURE THAT BELONGS TO ALL

The transformation of India's embroidery and stitching industry is more than just an economic shift—it is a cultural one. The very craft that has been part of women's lives for generations is now becoming a tool for empowerment, professional recognition, and financial independence.

By equipping women with technical skills, professional training, and entrepreneurial opportunities, India is not just preserving its rich textile legacy—it is ensuring that its future is more inclusive, diverse, and dynamic. One stitch at a time, women are no longer just the silent keepers of this legacy. They are now its future.

*The author is Co-Founder, Roots Foundation and Nehal Rajvanshi.*



# CAN WE COME CLOSE TO GOD?



B.K. SURYA

The Bhagvad Gita describes yoga as the union of the soul with the Supreme through a mental link. Its practice is said to empower the mind, enabling it to overcome weaknesses such as lust, anger, and ego, and acquire divine virtues like truth and compassion. The Gita dwells on the practices essential for yoga: considering the self an immortal soul and remembering our eternal relationship with the Supreme Soul.

But a variety of prevalent beliefs about God negate the possibility of the soul communing with Him.

One such belief is that God is omnipresent. This means that He is present everywhere at the same time, permeating everything. If that were the case, there would be no need for yoga, as the soul would be constantly in the company of God. We do not sit down and remember someone who is already with us. Nor do we yearn for a

glimpse, or the company, of such a person. There would be no need for that if God were omnipresent.

One might argue that even if we do not sit down and remember someone who is already with us, we do communicate with them. But even that possibility is negated by the belief, held by some, that the soul and God are the same. Then who will have yoga with whom, and for what?

The soul remembers God in order to receive His powers and virtues. If God were omnipresent, or souls were similar to God, both would have the same qualities.

The soul and God do share some attributes. Both have the same form: they are tiny, sentient points of light. Souls and God also have the same abode, from where they come to this world to play their part in the drama of life.

Regarding God as omnipresent diffuses our thoughts about Him, as there is no clearly defined entity to remember, and as a result we have no clear idea about what God is like or how we can connect with Him and receive anything from Him.

In fact, such a belief trivialises God and renders Him irrelevant, as anything that is commonplace would hardly attract attention, let alone inspire reverence. Is God present in the ground I



We can come close to God and receive His love and blessings by recognising the fact that we are souls, His children.

am walking on, in the smoke belching out of a chimney, or in the water flowing down the drain? If this is what omnipresence means, how are we supposed to remember God?

When souls are under a negative influence, or face adversity, they remember God because He is free from any influence. He does not know fear, sorrow, anger, or hatred, and therefore is in

*Regarding God as omnipresent diffuses our thoughts about Him, as there is no clearly defined entity to remember, and as a result we have no clear idea about what God is like or how we can connect with Him and receive anything from Him.*

a position to extricate souls from their difficulties. But the idea of an omnipresent

God, or that souls and God are the same, does not allow this possibility. Can God face

problems or suffer pain? Can the Almighty be like ordinary humans? If that were

the case, why would millions of people worship Him?

Another belief that distances us from God is that everything happens by His will. In other words, it is futile for us to make any effort as only God's will prevails. This idea makes us passive and demotivated.

This is how a variety of ideas about God confuse us and alienate us from Him. Our communication with

God should be as easy as a conversation between a child and a father. Instead we have made it a complicated ritual in which we are not sure about who we are communicating with, and whether our message is getting across.

We can come close to God, talk to Him, and receive His love and blessings simply by recognising the fact that we are souls, His children. Like any good parent, God is there to help us. He does not frown on us or punish us when we go astray. We reap what we sow, and experience the consequences of our actions, as per the law of karma. God alerts us to this law and teaches us that the purity of our actions is the foundation of security and happiness in life. Our actions are the seeds: the more virtuous they are, the sweeter will be the fruit they yield. The power to remain virtuous comes from remembering God. Through this mental link, God's virtues and powers flow into the soul, healing, enriching, and empowering us. We become conduits for spreading the fragrance of Diving virtues to other souls, helping and inspiring them to connect with God and become whole again.

B.K. Surya is a Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Mount Abu, Rajasthan.

## Jealousy uncovered: Understanding and transforming the green-eyed emotion



JOHN MCCONNEL

Jealousy is based on the fear of losing what we already have; it is a very strong emotion and it is based on one's identity. If we base our sense of self on temporary things; position, role, wealth – then there is a constant sense of threat from others surpassing us and unseating us. Therefore, anyone who appears to us to be able to do that, we will be jealous and suspicious of.

Then there is envy. Envy is about wanting something that others have. Our culture actively encourages us to have envy of others – bombarding us

with pictures of desirable objects or attractive activities that seek to make us spend to 'keep up' and have the same as others. It is an impossible situation where there is a kind of constant envy and jealousy. Then we look for other solutions to not feeling 'the best', by shopping, drinking, or taking drugs to dull the feeling of inadequacy. All this destroys mental well-being, health, and relationships.

The fairy tale, Snow White, has all these elements. The queen who based all her sense of self-worth on her astonishing beauty, suddenly becomes aware that there is someone even more beautiful in the kingdom. She is overwhelmed with jealousy and seeks to destroy the new threat to her sense of self. When someone has power over others because they have something that others do not, there is built-in fear and insecurity because of the deep awareness that it could all go at any moment, or be taken away.

This is an untenable state of affairs. If we are always concerned with the physical, in any form, not just our own



We can eliminate jealousy when we empower ourselves spiritually and go beyond the distractions of the physical world.

appearance, then we will always be fixed on blaming others for our lack of inner well-being. To deal with jealousy we can begin with taking a good look at what is driving that emotion. We can examine closely what it is that is driving our jealousy and balance that with appreciation of our own qualities and talents, remember all the small successes and not the failures, turn down the loud and complaining voice of criticism and switch on the inner voice of compassion and self-encouragement – reinforce the goodness within.

When we understand that we are not physical beings, but pure consciousness, intrinsically full of peace and happiness, pure powerful energy, then we need nothing from anyone. We have lost power through the years and lifetimes; we have become trapped in karmic relationships and need to regain our spiritual power. This comes from the Divine. A connection with the Divine, the Supreme Being, moves us on to this higher level of awareness. In the company of the Divine, God, we can engage in the process of removing

the layers and layers of accumulated fear and insecurity, because now is the time to sort it all out.

We will be able to eliminate jealousy because we will no longer feel inadequate or depend on anything physical or intellectual. We will have no need to prove anything to anyone, we will just engage in empowering ourselves and going beyond the distractions of this physical world that is trying to make us believe we are of the physical. We cannot really change until we get into the depth of something, but it must be with an attitude of learning. There will always be an opportunity to learn for those who desire it and are prepared to learn the new and live it. When we change, the world changes.

John McConnel is a stress management trainer and a former prison governor and social worker. He is the author of 'Breaking Through the Darkness - how to defeat depression, anxiety and stress: a spiritual perspective'. He teaches Rajyoga Meditation with the Brahma Kumaris and is based in London.

## From seeking mercy, to becoming worthy of blessings



B.K. USHA

The word mercy refers to benevolence, forgiveness, and kindness in different contexts. Mercy has been extolled as a great virtue in many religions, and is praised as one of the attributes of God. Some faiths emphasise performing acts of mercy -- such as giving alms and caring for the sick -- as a part of religious beliefs.

Compassionate behaviour by those in positions of authority is also called mercy, such as the leniency shown by a judge to a convict.

In the Bible, God is said to be "merciful and gracious" and

is praised for it. In Islam, Most Merciful is one of the names of God, and Compassionate is the most common name occurring in the Quran. Both Buddhism and Jainism hold 'karu a' or compassion to be an important virtue.

Mercy shown by one person to another reduces suffering, heals relationships, and serves the cause of justice.

But what is God's mercy and how does He show it? When most people think of divine mercy, they believe it means God absolving people of their sins, thus saving them from punishment. However, human actions and the return thereof are governed by the law of karma, which says that we reap what we sow. No one can avoid the consequences of their actions, good or bad, and God does not intervene in this mechanism. If He were to intercede on behalf of some people, that would be injustice to the rest.

God bestows mercy on all His children by showing them the path to happiness and liberation

from sorrow. He first reminds His children that they are souls, not bodies, and points out that forgetting this simple fact has caused them all their suffering. God tells souls that He is their Father, and that they have the right to receive His powers and virtues as their inheritance. They can get these by maintaining the awareness that they are

souls, and remembering Him. Such remembrance of God is called Rajyoga. The powers that souls receive through this mental link enable them to overcome their weaknesses.

With regular practice of such remembrance, souls gradually become free of defects. They are able to give up damaging habits of thought, feeling, and reaction,

which leads to an improvement in the quality of their attitude, actions, and interactions. This practice also stills the mind and enables the intellect to gain an understanding of the spiritual laws and principles that govern life and sustain harmony in our relationships and in our interaction with nature.

Souls who regularly practise

such remembrance experience constant peace and happiness and become instrumental in enabling others to have a similar experience. They help fellow souls connect with the Father and receive their inheritance from Him.

From a state of want, in which they used to pray for God's mercy, love, and peace, the souls reach a state of fulfillment and completeness where they no longer need to ask for anything. Instead, by their sincere effort to be a better person, they become worthy of receiving God's love and blessings.

This is how God's mercy reaches His children. There is a lesson in this for all of us. When we can seek mercy from God in spite of our faults, we should be willing to show the same mercy to others. We only gain by doing this. Mercy is said to be "twice blessed": it blesses him that gives and him that takes.

B.K. Usba is a Rajyoga teacher at the Brahma Kumaris headquarters in Abu Road, Rajasthan.



God bestows mercy on all His children by showing them the path to happiness.

### A THOUGHT FOR TODAY

I lose my balance when I judge others. My own imperfections emerge when I look at the imperfections of those around me. Only when I respect myself will I be able to respect others. Respecting others helps me respect myself. Today let me maintain the elegant balance of self-respect and giving respect to others.



# FC BARCELONA CONTINUE DOMINANCE TO LIFT 28TH LA LIGA TITLE WITH 2-0 WIN

AGENCIES  
MADRID

Hansi Flick-led FC Barcelona side clinched their 28th La Liga title as they defeated the Espanyol team 2-0 on Thursday, with two games remaining in the competition.

This win marked the completion of the domestic treble for the Barcelona team. Earlier, they won the Copa del Rey (April) and the Spanish Super Cup (January) titles.

With this victory, FC Barcelona has 85 points in 36 games in the 2024-25 season. The defending champions, Real Madrid, are in second place with 78 points in 36 matches of the tournament.

https://x.com/FCBarcelona/sta-



tus/1923128652654383160

Speaking of the clash, Espanyol dominated the first half of the game as a lot of

chances were made by Urko Gonzalez and Javi Puado, but they were unable to convert them into a goal.

Espanyol put up a strong defence in front of visitors in the first half, however, ter Stegen and Co managed to

take a lead in the second half. Lamine Yamal scored a goal in the 53rd minute, whereas Fermin Lopez consolidated FC Barcelona's lead in the injury time.

After winning the game against Espanyol, FC Barcelona's manager, Hansi Flick, expressed his feelings after winning the 2024-25 La Liga season.

"I'm really proud...we have a fantastic team...When I see all the people on the street with a big smile, this is fantastic," Hansi Flick said in a video posted by FC Barcelona on X.

After winning the 28th La Liga title, midfielder Frenkie De Jong said, "I think we deserve it, so we're going to enjoy it and we are very happy...it's very satisfying to win the title."

## Indian pugilist Faizan Anwar to fight for WBA Asia Middle East title

AGENCIES  
BENGALURU

Indian professional boxer Faizan Anwar will take on Ghana's Kpakpo Allotey in the WBA Asia Middle East's super lightweight title fight in the Super Fighter Series at the Sunburn Union here on Sunday.

The fight night will feature 10 action-packed bouts, including four international match-ups and two WBA Asia Middle East title clashes.

Ukraine's Danylo Honcharuk will take on Ruslan Kamilov of Dagestan in the co-main event, while the Belarusian sensation Aleksandra Sitnikova will cross swords with India's Rani Devi in the women's bout.

The event will also feature prominent names like Ritesh Singh Bisht, Kavinder Singh Bisht, Vanlal-



wmpuia, F Zoramchhana, and rising talents who are training in Bengaluru such as Kamla Roka, Rohit Choudhary, and Harsha Saroha.

International stars Ramanthan Mpagi (Uganda) and Ruslan Kamilov (Russia) are also on the fight card.Organised by Grassroot Boxing and Crown

Boxing Promotions, this third edition follows successful rounds in Bengaluru (November 2024) and Bangkok (February 2025).

"This is not just an event — it's a movement to elevate Indian boxing from the grassroots to the global stage," founder of Grassroot Boxing and former Indian boxer Mujtaba Kamal said.

## Pro Kabaddi League Season 12 player auction set for May 31-June 1

AGENCIES  
MUMBAI

Mashal Sports has announced the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) Season 12 player auction is scheduled to take place on May 31 and June 1 in Mumbai.

The season 12 auction comes after the successful conclusion of PKL Season 11, which saw Haryana Steelers win the trophy for the first time after beating three-time champions Patna Pirates in the final on December 29, 2024.

The league's journey began in 2014, and over the past 11 Seasons, there have been 8 different champions. Season 11 of PKL - held from October 18, 2024, to December 29, 2024 - was a significant milestone, as the league entered its second decade, which further



solidifies PKL's position as one of India's premier sporting leagues, enabling sustained growth and interest in kabaddi.

The upcoming player auction for PKL season 12 gets the ball rolling for yet another glorious chapter of rivalries, a passionate title defence, and the unmatched energy of kabaddi fans from across India, and the globe.

Anupam Goswami, Business Head of Mashal and

League Chairman of Pro Kabaddi League, said in a statement, "We are happy to announce the dates for the PKL Season 12 Player Auction. The PKL Player Auction is the launch pad for our teams to demonstrate their strategy, determination, and ambition to become high-performers for the upcoming Season. It also serves as a platform to showcase the wealth of global talent for India's indigenous sport.

## Zara finishes creditable seventh at Queen Sirikit Cup Miyazaki

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Young golfer Zara Anand put up a solid and consistent show through the week to finish sole seventh, helping India seal a fifth-place finish at the Queen Sirikit Cup, here.

The young star, who shot 73-71-72 on the first three days, carded her best round of the week, a 2-under 70 in the final round at the acclaimed Tom Watson Golf Course at the Phoenix Seagaia Resort. It helped her finish at 2-under 286 in sole seventh place.

Zara was one of the only eight players who had a under par total over days.

Zara's efforts helped India finish in the top-5 of the event as Mannat Brar (77-70-78-72) at 9-over 297 was T-19 and Heena Kang

(76-78-70-74) at 10-over was T-21st.

Teenager Oh Soo-min of Korea scored a dominant win in the individual section. She shot 69



after 69-67-62 on the first three days. Her total of 21-under 267 was 11 shots better than Thailand's second-placed Thai Prim Prachnakorn (67).

Soo-min is just the fifth player to win leading individual honours at the Queen Sirikit Cup on two occasions and only the second to win back-to-back after fellow-Korean Park Hyung-kung (2015, 2016).

## 'Is Neeraj Chopra not of national importance?'

RUPINDER SINGH  
NEW DELHI

A couple of years ago the national TV channel won a case that events of national importance should be allowed to be telecast on the national channel even though rights bought by any private channel. In using this the national channel mainly concentrates on showing Indian cricket ODI and T20I matches and occasionally grand slam tennis semis and finals. Even as a new season of sports begins Neeraj Chopra, India's golden boy will be leading a group of 4 Indian athletes competing at the diamond league athletics in Doha on May 16th. However the national channel does not show any interest to show this event on television.

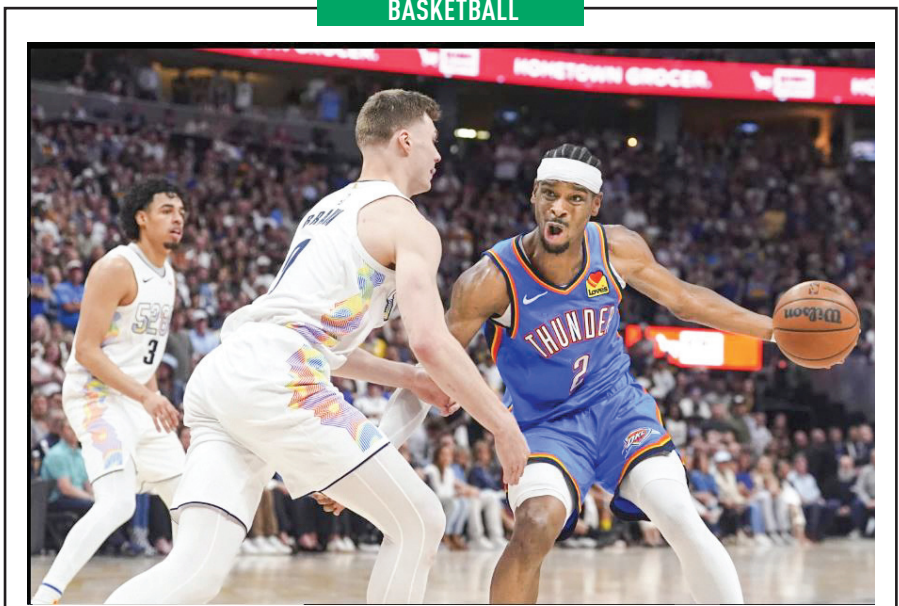
## Ultimate Table Tennis Season Six kicks off from May 31 with double header

AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Ultimate Table Tennis (UTT) Season 6 kicks off with a double-header on May 31 at the EKA Arena in Ahmedabad, with the opening night witnessing defending champions Dempo Goa Challengers taking on home side Ahmedabad SG Pipers in a primetime clash.

Earlier in the evening, Season 2 winners Dabang Delhi TTC will face Sreeja Akulaled Jaipur Patriots in the ceremonial opener, setting the tone for a high-voltage season, where eight franchises will compete across 23 ties, according to a UTT release.

U Mumba TT, led by World No. 14 Bernadette Szocs and rising Indian star Yashaswini Ghorpade,



Oklahoma City Thunder guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, right, drives to the basket as Denver Nuggets guard Christian Braun defends in the second half of Game 6 in the Western Conference semifinals of the NBA basketball playoffs Thursday, May 15, 2025, in Denver. (AGENCY)

## Starc, Ferreira skip IPL return



AGENCIES  
NEW DELHI

Delhi Capitals' Mitchell Starc and Donovan Ferreira have opted not to return for the remainder of the IPL, while England all-rounder Will Jacks will rejoin Mumbai Indians for their final two league fixtures.

Australian pacer Starc and South African batter Ferreira have communicated their decision to the Delhi Capitals management.

Starc has been a pivotal figure in DC's campaign, emerging as their leading wicket-taker with 14 scalps in 11 matches at an average of 26.14. His absence is a significant setback to Delhi's already slim playoff hopes.

Ferreira, meanwhile, has played only once this season.

Fellow South African Tristan Stubbs has joined the DC squad for the remaining three league matches. The World Test Championship Final-bound Stubbs will be unavailable for the playoffs should DC qualify.

However, there is still no clarity on the availability of DC vice-captain Faf du Plessis.

For Punjab Kings, Marcus Stonis and Josh Inglis have agreed to join the team but will be missing its first game post IPL resumption on May 18.

MI batter Jacks confirmed his return by posting a photo of his flight ticket to Mumbai on Instagram on Friday.

But like compatriot Jos Buttler, Jacks will leave for national duty after completing Mumbai Indians' last two league engagements as the IPL play-offs are clashing with England's white ball series against the West Indies starting May 29.

Mumbai Indians currently sit fourth on the points table and must win both their remaining matches to confirm a playoff berth.

The IPL was stopped for a week due to military tension between India and Pakistan. It resumes on Saturday to the final pushed back to June 3 from May 25, clashing with international commitments of players from South Africa, England, Australia and the West Indies.

## The plight of internet trolling on football players

ISHAN CHAUHAN  
NEW DELHI

On May 4th, at Stamford Bridge, Chelsea F.C.'s home ground, Cole Palmer put up a man-of-the-match performance against the champions of this season, Liverpool. By scoring a 96th-minute penalty and making the score 3-1 in favor of Chelsea, Palmer was finally able to end his 18-match goal drought. In the post-match interview, the player opened up about his struggles and frustra-

tions during this period. In doing so, he alluded to the constant trolling from social media and said, "Social media nowadays is just full of idiots." Palmer has created quite an identity as a goofball off the field, but this interview displayed pure emotion. Although he proclaims that being trolled on social media and other remarks do not affect him, but no one likes to be mocked globally when they are already struggling. The accessibility and anonym-



ity of the internet has its benefits, but a major nega-

tive—something that just might outweigh the posi-

tives—is the circulation of hate speech, and the world of football is no exception to this.

A lot of footballers have spoken out about how social media has impacted them, with the larger portion coming from minority communities. Again, the anonymity provided by the internet can allow the deepest, darkest thoughts of any person to materialise, and unfortunately a lot of these thoughts are filled with hatred. Whenever a Black

footballer has a bad game, they are at huge risk of facing racism, sometimes from the fans of the teams they play for. Marcus Rashford, Bukayo Saka and Jadon Sancho faced widespread hate from their country after not converting their penalties in the final of Euro 2020. In Spain, Real Madrid star Vinicius Jr. has been subjected to racist chants throughout the country.

In his case it has not been limited to the internet. In

women's football, instances of homophobic

and sexist remarks are nothing new. Data released by FIFA shows that, in the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023, one in five players personally received online abuse hurled at them. Such is the dire state of world football.

Memes are another major aspect of football social media.

For each match of any popular club, countless memes can be found on

platforms like X or Tik Tok. Any incident, both on and off the field, can be turned into a meme. May it be missing a clear goal-scoring chance, a celebration, or maybe even a tweet. So players have to remain extremely cautious of their behavior.

These memes can get out of the internet as well, as in the case of "Project Mbappe." This meme grew in popularity a few years ago when Kylian Mbappe was rising as a certified star.