

Kashmir Convener



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Operation 'Sindoor

India Will Not Tolerate Any Nuclear Blackmail: PM Modi

"This is not an era of war but it is also not an era of terrorism"

KC News Network

NEW DELHI: Asserting that India will not tolerate any "nuclear blackmail", Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said operations against Pakistan have only been kept in abeyance and the future will depend on their behaviour.

In his first address to the nation after Operation Sindoor, Modi said that while Pakistan pleaded with India to stop the military offensive, New Delhi considered it only after they promised to stop their misadventure.

The prime minister termed the Pahalgam attack as the most "barbaric face of terrorism", saying it was personal pain for him, but the enemy has now realised the consequences of removing "sindoor from the forehead of our women".

Addressing the nation, Modi said Operation Sindoor was not just a name



but, through it, the whole world saw India's resolve turn into action and more than 100 dreaded terrorists were slaughtered.

"India will not tolerate any nuclear blackmail. We have only kept in abeyance

our operations against Pakistan, the future will depend on their behaviour. Operation Sindoor is now India's new policy against terrorism, a new line has been drawn," he said.

PM Modi said India will not see terrorists and their state sponsors separately.

"This is not an era of war but it is also not an era of terrorism," he said.

Pakistan has to dismantle its terror infrastructure. There is no other way to peace, the prime minister said.

"Pahalgam attack was the most barbaric face of terrorism, it was a personal pain for me. We gave the armed forces full liberty to raze terrorists to dust. The enemy has now realised the consequences of removing 'sindoor' from the forehead of our women. Operation Sindoor was not just a name... on May 7, the whole world saw our resolve turn into action," he said. "When our missiles and drones destroyed terror sites in Pakistan, not only their buildings but their spirit was also demolished. When 'Nation First' is our resolve, steely decisions are taken," he said.

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India-Pak DGMOs Hold Talks, Discuss Issues

Agree upon troop reduction on borders, forward areas

KC News Network

NEW DELHI: Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan held talks on Monday evening.

Sources said that "the DGMOs discussed issues relating to continuing the commitment that both sides must not fire a single shot or initiate any aggressive or inimical action against each other."

"It was also agreed that both sides will consider immediate measures to ensure troop reduction from the borders and forward areas," sources added.

Earlier addressing a joint press conference in New Delhi, Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai (Army), Air Marshal AK Bharti (Indian Air Force), and Vice Admiral AN Pramod (Navy), according to KNO said,

"India's fight was and will always be aimed at terrorists and terrorists' infrastructure in Pakistan, and not against the country's army or civilians."

The top military commanders said India's air defense grid—featuring a layered, integrated command and control system operated by the Indian Air Force—successfully

repelled multiple aerial threats over the past week.

"Pakistani attempts to strike Indian forward positions on May 9 and 10 were entirely foiled," they added.



"Not a single enemy aircraft could breach our multi-tier defense system," Air Marshal Bharti asserted, adding that "our pilots, drones, helicopters, and air defense systems operated seamlessly both day and night to protect vital assets."

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Our neighbouring country chose to target innocent civilians: CM Omar

Visits Poonch, assures support to cross-border shelling victims

KC News Network

POONCH: Chief Minister Omar Abdullah today undertook an extensive tour of Poonch district to assess the ground situation in the aftermath of the recent



cross-border shelling. Poonch was among the worst-affected districts in the cross-border artillery shelling, which resulted in the loss of 13 lives and injuries to many others.

Upon his arrival, the Chief Minister visited the District Hospital Poonch, where he enquired about the condition and treatment of the injured. He expressed his admiration for their courage and resilience and

assured them of the best possible medical care and full support from the administration.

Later, the Chief Minister met with the bereaved families who lost their loved ones in the shelling. "Words fall short in the face of

with public representatives, which included Members of the Legislative Assembly: Ajaz Ahmad Jan (Poonch-Haveli), Choudhary Mohammad Akram (Surankote), and Minister Javed Ahmad Rana (Mendhar). The meeting was also attended by prominent citizens, former legislators, and community leaders from the Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, and other communities.

Advisor to the Chief Minister Nasir Aslam Wani, Chairperson of the District Development Council, Deputy Commissioner Poonch, SSP Poonch, and other senior officials were also present at the meeting.

Addressing the gathering, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah acknowledged the grief and suffering caused by the shelling. "Today, we gather in a time of great difficulty and pain. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude and admiration for the spirit of unity and communal harmony displayed by the people of Poonch. The brotherhood among Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and others during this crisis is truly commendable. May the Almighty continue to bless this unity," he said.

Following his visits, the Chief Minister convened a meeting

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India will never compromise on its sovereignty and territorial integrity: LG



KC News Network

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha today visited Shelter and lodgement centre at Sahib Bandgi Ashram, Mishriwala in Jammu, and met the families who have been affected due to the cross-border shelling from Pakistan.

The Lieutenant Governor enquired about the well-being of

families, and listened to the issues raised by them. He reaffirmed the commitment of the Government of India and the Union Territory Administration to ensuring their safety and security.

The entire nation stands in solidarity with the affected families, he said.

"India always advocated for peace. It never wants a war but

what happened in Pahalgam was an act of war by terror state Pakistan. With "Operation Sindoor", we have avenged Pahalgam. Our war was to teach Pakistan a lesson.

Our Armed Forces have repeatedly demonstrated their capability to respond decisively to threats posed by Terror state Pakistan. It harbors and exports terror and caused immense suffering through its terrorist activities in our territory," the Lieutenant Governor said.

He observed that India will never compromise on its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

We are resolved to dismantle the entire terror ecosystem from Jammu Kashmir. On the night of May 6th-7th, our Armed Forces executed a precise

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"Stopped a nuclear conflict" says Trump

KC News Network

WASHINGTON, DC [US]: US President Donald Trump has asserted that his administration played a crucial role in brokering an immediate cessation of hostilities between India and Pakistan, following escalating tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbours.

He said, "We stopped a nuclear conflict. I think it could have been a bad nuclear war. Millions of people could have been killed. I also want to thank VP JD Vance and Secretary of State, Marco Rubio, for their work..."

Speaking to the media in a press briefing at the White House, Trump emphasised the significant impact of US diplomatic efforts in facilitating the truce, stating, "On Saturday, my administration helped broker an immediate cessation of hostilities. I think a permanent one between India and Pakistan – the countries having a lot of nuclear weapons."

Trump further elaborated on the influence of trade in securing the cessation of hostilities, explaining his approach to the two countries. "I'm very proud to let you know that the leadership

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Satish Sharma meets displaced border residents

KC NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Demonstrating government's commitment towards welfare of citizens affected by recent conflict, Minister for FCS&CA, Transport, Youth Services and

Sports, Satish Sharma, today visited multiple makeshift relief camps set up for residents displaced due to cross border shelling by Pakistan.

The Minister visited several key locations currently housing displaced families including Basawa Dev Sthan, GHS Dhanna Chapri, GPS Amblian, Little Flower Public School, Dhanna, Panchayat Ghar, Dhanna, Bright Future Public School, Dhanna, GMS Dhanna Ambo Shani, GPS Dhanna Dhanu, Panchayat Ghar, Dori, Baba Mai Mal Dev Sthan, Dager and several adjoining temporary shelter sites.

During the visit, the Minister interacted with the affected families to assess their immediate needs and ensure adequate provision of relief services including food, clean drinking water, medical aid, sanitation and temporary education facilities for the children.

"The plight of our border residents is deeply concerning. We are taking all necessary steps to ensure their safety, dignity and timely rehabilitation," stated the Minister. "Every displaced family

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Pak Shelling Victims Begin Journey Home

KC News Network

SRINAGAR: Residents of villages close to the LoC who were forced to flee due to heavy shelling by the Pakistani military started returning home on Monday.

They started their journey back to their villages after bomb disposal squads cleared the residential areas of any leftover or unexploded shells, officials said.

"We are happy that a ceasefire has been reached between the two countries. We are also hopeful that Pakistan will not resort to such activities again," said Arshad Ahmad, a resident of the Kamalkote area in Uri.

Some residents praised the army and other security forces for taking care of them.

"The Indian Army has come out with flying colours. It had to respond and it did that well. They (army personnel) are our heroes, they always help us.

Even now, when we are going back to Uri, they checked the place thoroughly (for shells)," said Mehak Khursheed, a resident of Uri near the Line of Control (LoC).

Uri MLA Sajjad Shafi has asked the residents of villages along the

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Flight Operations Resume At Sgr Int'l Airport



Rehan Qayoom Mir

SRINAGAR: After remaining suspended for days, the flight operations at Srinagar International Airport are set to resume from Tuesday morning, bringing much-needed relief to stranded passengers, including Hajj pilgrims.

The closure of 32 airports, including Srinagar, was enforced following India's Operation Sindoor, a targeted military operation launched in response to the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack that claimed 26 lives. Details gathered by the news agency—

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Hajj flights from Srinagar to resume from May 14

Mubashir Alam Wani

SRINAGAR: After days of uncertainty caused by heightened tensions between India and Pakistan, which led to the cancellation of seven Hajj flights from May 7 to 12, the pilgrimage flights from Srinagar airport are set to resume from May 14, with

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J&K HC mulls addl flights as 2240 pilgrims left stranded

Mubashir Alam Wani

SRINAGAR: While the Haj-2025 flight operations are set to resume, the air travel disruptions amidst the closure of airports have left at least 2,240 Haj pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir stranded, prompting the J&K Haj Committee to consider operating additional flights to clear the backlog.

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CS takes on spot assessment of NH restoration at Ramban

KC News Network

RAMBAN: In a move to assess and expedite restoration work on the crucial Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, today visited the affected sites in district Ramban.

The Chief Secretary was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Baseer-Ul-Haq Chaudhary, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Ramban, Kulbir Singh and SSP Traffic National Highway, Raja Adil Hamid and PD NHAI Parshotam Singh.

Dulloo along with the team inspected various vulnerable and affected spots including Marog, Sita Ram Passi, Seri, Mehar, and Dalwas to review the extent of damage and ongoing restoration works.

During the visit, he emphasized urgency of the situation and directed the executing agency to accelerate the pace of work to ensure early clearance of stranded vehicles and resumption of traffic on this critical route.

Acknowledging the plight of those stranded, the Chief Secretary instructed the district administration to extend all necessary support to the stranded passengers. He also called upon the traffic police to provide full cooperation to the

executing agency, facilitating seamless restoration operations.

Dulloo asked for prioritizing the movement of passenger vehicles and trucks carrying perishable goods once the



road reopens. He highlighted the need for a coordinated approach to minimize inconvenience and mitigate the impact resulting from the disruption.

During the inspection, the Chief Secretary directed the concerned agencies, particularly the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), to expedite repair and restoration work ensuring uninterrupted vehicular movement. He emphasized the

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

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

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

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

The party regretted that "today's independent Bangladesh" had to witness the ban on Awami League activities by an

"undemocratic fascist" government that now runs the country "without people's mandate", while the country "earned independence and sovereignty under its (Awami League's) leadership".

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

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

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



Awami League also called upon all democratic states, institutions, and leaders against this incoherent and anti-people decision," it said.

around the world to denounce the decision taken by the Yunus government.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

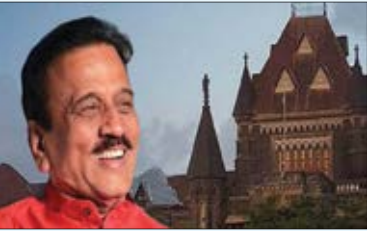
Three days after her ouster, Yunus took charge as the chief adviser of the interim government.

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

HC asks to videos defaming Maha minister Grish Mahajan

MUMBAI: In a relief for Maharashtra Water Resources Minister and senior BJP leader Grish Mahajan, the Bombay High Court has recently ordered to delete six videos allegedly defaming him, which were uploaded by two YouTubers, both of whom are journalists.

Single-judge Justice Anif Doctor in its order on May eight said that videos were "prima



facie defamatory and restrained journalists Anil Thatte and Shyam Giri, who own YouTube channels - Anil Gaganbhedhi Thatte and Mudda from uploading any more such videos or posts that would be defamatory against Mahajan.

The judge further said, "The statements made by defendants in the videos as discerned from the transcripts are in my prima facie view per se defamatory."

The order was passed while hearing a defamation suit filed by Mahajan against one Anil Thatte and one more person claiming that six videos were uploaded between April one and April 14, 2025, contain a series of false and damaging allegations.

Representing Mahajan, senior counsel Ravi Kadam told the bench that the offending videos were "gravely affecting Mahajan's reputation and goodwill."

Kadam highlighted the fact that these videos have been widely circulated and viewed by thousands of individuals, thereby

Fijian PM Sitiveni Rabuka Praises Significant Contribution Of Girmityas In Nation's Progress

SUVA/NEW DELHI: Fiji became an economic powerhouse in the Pacific due to the hard work of the Indian migrants who arrived during the indentured labour system, Fiji Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka emphasised.

While delivering his message on the 146th Girmit Day at Subrail Park in Labasa, Prime Minister Rabuka emphasised the contribution of the indentured labourers to Fiji's development.

Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita was present on the occasion.

He said Girmit Day is a profound moment in our history, as on 14th May 1879, the first ship carrying indentured labourers from India arrived on our shores.

He stated that between 1879 and 1916, about 60,000 men, women, and children were brought under an oppressive system of bonded labour to work under very uncertain and often inhumane conditions on Fiji's sugar plantations.



The Prime Minister said that many people would have heard the stories of those times during the three days of the event, and that there are many documentaries available to help us learn more about the Girmityas and their descendants.

Rabuka said the Girmityas were not passive victims, but proud individuals who resisted oppression, reclaimed their dignity, and were determined to define their own place in a foreign land.

They stood firm against injustice and helped shape a new identity for their people and their descendants, the PM said.

Rabuka emphasised that they defied the British overseers at every opportunity to claim their honour, fought for respect, and set a limit to toleration.

He said that today we can all come together to remember — and rejoice in — what they have left for us, and we get the opportunity to honour not only the Girmityas who have passed

on, but also the descendants who are with us today, who continue to enrich our nation with their talents, their values, and their deep sense of community.

Rabuka added that he is also looking forward to the compilation of a database of the descendants of Girmityas.

He said the Girmityas have added to the richness of Fiji's identity as a multicultural society — one where we are united by our diversity.

He said this is what makes Fiji special — where we do not simply tolerate difference, but celebrate it.

Meanwhile, Indian Minister of State for External Affairs Pabitra Margherita joined the 146th Girmit Day celebrations in Fiji as Guest of Honour.

"Honoured to join the 146th Girmit Day celebrations in Fiji as Guest of Honour, alongside Chief Guest H.E. @s/rabuka. Hon. @FijianPM. In my address, I paid tribute to the enduring legacy

Arunachal Dy CM inaugurates Lungchaseng Buddha Vihara in Namsai

ITANAGAR: Arunachal Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Chowna Mein while gracing the grand 2025 Poi-Lu-Chong cum Buddha Jayanti celebrations held at Nampong village in Namsai district on Monday inaugurated the newly constructed Lungchaseng Buddha Vihara. The Vihara is envisioned to serve as a centre for spiritual enrichment, reflection, and communal harmony.

The event witnessed a vibrant display of spiritual fervour and cultural traditions, bringing together devotees, dignitaries, and community members from across the region.

Highlighting the significance of the occasion, Mein emphasized the need to preserve cultural heritage while promoting inclusive and sustainable development. "Education is the foundation of empowerment. Without



it, society remains in darkness. Let us invest in our youth, value the voices of both women and men, and build a society where all can grow together," he appealed.

The day-long celebration featured traditional Tang Thi Kongma procession, devotional chanting, Dhamma discourses, and cultural presentations that highlighted the message of peace, harmony, and unity espoused by Lord Buddha.

The event was also attended by Arunachal East MP Tapir Gao, Ministers Wangki Lowang and Biyuram Wahge, MLA Chau Zingnu Namchoom, venerable Bhantes and

Indo-Pak ceasefire: Peace returns to LoC areas but inhabitants are unsure

Uri (LoC) "For around 1.5 lakh people of Uri and Boniyar Tehsils of Kashmir's Baramulla district, the period of around three weeks beginning the night of April 24 has been a nightmare. The Muslim inhabitants bore the maximum brunt of

the cross-frontier shelling and firing by the Pakistani military as these areas are located along the Line of Control (LoC).

At least one woman was killed in Uri in the Pakistani action.

The Pakistani bombardment had ended the peace that these tehils saw for more than 4 years after the February 2021 border ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan.

Peace has returned since yesterday, thanks to the ceasefire agreement reached between India and Pakistan two days back.

But this peace is uneasy as the inhabitants are not sure how long the cessation of fighting will last. Hence, there is a common and urgent demand for underground bunkers, which they had forgotten for years.

"This calm doesn't feel permanent. Hence, our first priority now is constructing individual bunkers for our safety," says Ikhlaiq Ahmed, a resident of Kamalakote village of Uri.

He was referring to the announcement of ceasefire by India and Pakistan two days back after intense and large-scale tit-for-tat military fighting, which included air raids and drone attacks.

"We were living happily and had forgotten about cross-border firing. There was no need for underground bunkers because peace had prevailed. But now it feels like this place is cursed. More skirmishes seem inevitable because there is no sincerity behind the ceasefire announced on Saturday," he said.

In Uri, underground bunkers were first built in the early 1990s in the wake of relentless cross-border firing and shelling by the Pakistani troops. However, many of these were destroyed in the devastating October 8, 2005 earthquake that struck both sides of the Line of Control, and today, only a few remain.

Putin calls for 'direct talks' with Ukraine

MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin has called for "direct talks" with Ukraine, saying that they should "start without delay, as early as May 15", media reports said.

"We seek serious talks... to remove the root causes of the conflict and start moving towards a lasting, strong peace", Putin said on Saturday, in a rare televised late-night address from the Kremlin, the BBC reported on Sunday.

It came hours after the European leaders — including UK Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer and French President Emmanuel Macron — visited Ukraine and urged Russia to agree to an unconditional 30-day ceasefire.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov had said in response that Moscow would "have to think this through" — but warned that "trying to pressure us is quite useless".

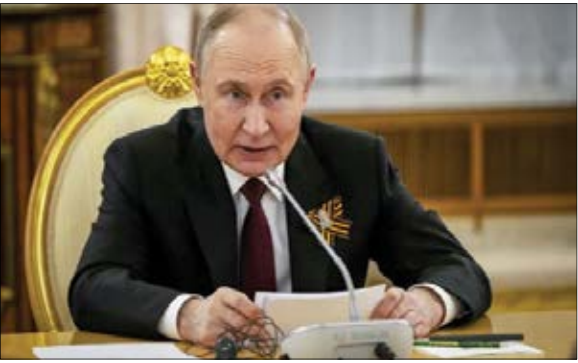
Putin said he would "not rule out" the possibility that the talks — which he proposed should take place in Turkey's largest city Istanbul — could result in Russia and Ukraine agreeing "new ceasefires, a new truce".

The Russian leader said he would speak to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Sunday to discuss the details, the report said.

European leaders visited Ukraine and called for a month-long ceasefire, but Kyiv has not responded to the invitation, which

came on the same day. Leaders of France, Germany, the UK and Poland — part of the

we will focus on how to build and guarantee real and lasting security," he said.



so-called "coalition of the willing" — were hosted by Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky and took part in a joint news conference during the trip.

They warned that "new and massive" sanctions would be imposed on Russia's energy and banking sectors should Putin not agree to the unconditional 30-day ceasefire "in the air, at sea and on land".

They also said they had discussed the proposal with Donald Trump, the report said.

Sir Keir later told the BBC the US president was "absolutely clear" that their suggestion of an immediate ceasefire was a "demand that must be met". After the meeting — a symbolic response to Victory Day celebrations, hosted by Putin in Moscow a day earlier — Zelensky thanked the assembled leaders for "standing with" Ukraine. "Today

Responding to the proposal, the Kremlin's Peskov said, "It is a new development. But trying to pressure us is quite useless."

According to media reports, Moscow has previously said that before considering a ceasefire, the West must first halt its military aid to Ukraine. Putin later made his own statement, with video showing journalists assembled in a hall inside the Kremlin.

"This would be the first step towards a long-term, lasting peace, rather than a prologue to more armed hostilities after the Ukrainian armed forces get new armaments and personnel, after feverish trench-digging and the establishment of new command posts," he said.

"Who needs peace like that?" Putin also accused Ukraine of having repeatedly failed to

respond to multiple ceasefire proposals from Moscow, including a 30-day halt in attacks on energy infrastructure and last month's Easter truce.

The day after Moscow agreed to stop targeting Ukrainian energy infrastructure, Zelensky told EU leaders that "nothing had changed" and attacks continued.

Another ceasefire Putin flagged was one he ordered in April to coincide with World War Two commemorations. It ended on Saturday at midnight local time (21:00 GMT).

Kyiv had rejected the unilateral, three-day ceasefire, calling it a "theatrical show". Instead, Zelensky reiterated calls for a longer truce of at least 30 days.

On Thursday — the same day the supposed ceasefire took effect — Ukraine accused Russia of more than 730 violations and said it was responding "appropriately".

Russia's defence ministry insisted the truce was being observed, before accusing Ukraine of 488 violations.

"In spite of everything, we are offering the Kyiv authorities to resume the negotiations... resume direct talks, and I stress, without any preconditions," Putin said on Saturday.

The last direct talks between Moscow and Kyiv took place shortly after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine began more than three years ago, the report said.

Dialogue is foundation of democracy: Yogi

GORAKHPUR: Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday said that democracy thrives on meaningful dialogue, while stressing that public participation and open communication are key to achieving ease of doing business and living.

Speaking after inaugurating the Urban Service Centre and Senior Citizen Day Care Centre in Civil Lines, the CM said, "In a democracy, the public is not just seen as ordinary citizens, but revered as 'Janata, Janardan'. It is with this spirit that we must move forward." Reflecting on India's global progress, he said the country is reaching new milestones in a rapidly changing world. "Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India, during the Amrit Kaal of Independence, overtook Britain, its former colonial ruler, to become the fifth largest economy. And now, we have surpassed Japan to become the fourth largest economy in the world," he said.

He said, "The nation's prosperity must be the collective goal of all citizens. Aligned with this vision, Uttar Pradesh has launched a sustained campaign to promote urban development over the past eight years."

Describing Gorakhpur as the lifeline for nearly five crore people of eastern UP, Yogi noted the city's remarkable transformation. "Not long

ago, Gorakhpur resembled a Nagar Panchayat. But today, it is a municipal corporation counted among the state's major urban centres. Progress in connectivity, tourism, sanitation and public services reflects

the Day Care Centre will provide health, recreational, and learning facilities for the elderly," he said.

The CM said, "Today, Gorakhpur is changing, and it is essential that the common



He said, "The nation's prosperity must be the collective goal of all citizens. Aligned with this vision, Uttar Pradesh has launched a sustained campaign to promote urban development over the past eight years."

our commitment to inclusive growth," he said.

He praised the Municipal Corporation for successfully developing the Urban Service Centre and the Senior Citizen Day Care Centre. "The Service Centre will offer residents of 16 wards one-stop access to key municipal services, while

citizen becomes part of this transformation," CM Yogi said. "Real change happens when people embrace it as a collective movement. The vision of a Smart City will only be realised when every citizen engages with the new systems being put in place."

He also urged citizens to take ownership of urban

development by forming mohalla sanitation committees, ensuring proper functioning of street lighting systems and creating designated vending zones to improve traffic flow. "Citizens, too, have a vital role in shaping the cities they live in," he said.

During the event, Yogi directed the Municipal Corporation to begin early monsoon preparations, stressing the need to prevent water logging by promptly clearing drains and removing silt. He also urged strict enforcement of the plastic ban. Highlighting recent progress, he said, "The city's drainage system has improved significantly. Today, Gorakhpur is recognised for efficient drainage, not for water logging. With the completion of the Gordhaiya Nala Project, this system will be further strengthened and the site itself will be developed into a tourism spot."

The Chief Minister also felicitated several Municipal Corporation personnel, including the Assistant Municipal Commissioner, for outstanding performance in tax collection, presenting them with certificates and mementos.

Following the inauguration, CM Yogi inspected the Urban Facilitation Centre and the Senior Citizen Day Care Centre to review the infrastructure and services offered.

Editorial



SpaDeX Mission

India's relentless pursuit of space exploration reached a historic milestone on 16th January 2025 with the successful completion of the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX). This achievement catapults India into an elite group of nations—joining the United States, Russia, and China—capable of executing space docking operations, a technological feat that opens new frontiers in space science.

The launch of SpaDeX on 30th December 2024 aboard the PSLV-C60 marked the beginning of this groundbreaking mission. Designed as a cost-effective demonstrator, SpaDeX showcases critical capabilities in rendezvous, docking, and undocking of spacecraft. The success of SpaDeX lies in its innovative use of two small satellites—SDX01 (Chaser) and SDX02 (Target)—each equipped with cutting-edge technologies, including androgynous docking mechanisms and autonomous inter-satellite communication links. The seamless manoeuvres leading to docking, undocking, and integrated control of the satellites demonstrate India's advanced technological prowess.

SpaDeX's success extends beyond technical triumphs; it holds transformative implications for practical applications. Post-mission, the satellites will support high-resolution imaging, natural resource monitoring, and radiation studies, contributing to sectors ranging from agriculture to disaster management. The potential for extending satellite lifespans and performing in-space repairs through docking is another promising avenue unlocked by this mission.

With its success, SpaDeX lays the groundwork for autonomous docking technologies, a critical requirement for the establishment of space stations and ambitious lunar exploration missions. It solidifies India's vision of becoming a global space leader, from sending astronauts to the Moon to building a sustainable space infrastructure. The SpaDeX mission is more than a technical accomplishment; it is a statement of India's aspirations in the global space race. It not only showcases India's readiness for complex interplanetary challenges but also highlights the nation's capability to lead collaborative efforts in space innovation. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi aptly remarked, this achievement is a "significant stepping stone for India's ambitious space missions in the years to come." SpaDeX is a beacon of India's progress and its unwavering commitment to pushing the boundaries of space science. The mission's success reinforces ISRO's position as a trailblazer, driving India's ascent as a formidable force in the global space community.

Nishat Horror: A Murder That Calls for Moral Awakening



RAYEES AHMAD KUMAR

The weather was cool and cloudy last Sunday, children were busy in playing outdoors games after a week's school break, parents were either busy in fields to prepare the land for upcoming agriculture season or in markets purchasing household items, birds were singing melodies on tree branches, rivers and streams pleasing every passer-by through their natural music and blossoms and flowers luring every soul by their fragrance and suddenly a horrifying and heart-wrenching news made several rounds on every platform of social media. Like forest fire it got viral, reached every smart phone user and those not possessing these devices, heard it from their loved ones.

A nomadic woman died after being allegedly assaulted by a group of drunk men near Water Works Road in the Nishat area of Srinagar. It was reported that the woman, originally from Reasi and presently putting up in Nishat, was attacked by four individuals who were reportedly under the influence of alcohol. She sustained injuries during the assault and was shifted to a hospital, where doctors declared her brought dead. Taking cognizance of the matter, local police swiftly swung into action and the accused were arrested. The incident has triggered public outrage and demands for justice.

This inhuman act has shocked us all and people in one voice demanded justice and strict punishment for the guilty. The Vallities in general and Nishat residents in particular condemned the incident and called for an exemplary action. This act of barbarity is not just a crime against an individual—it is a painful reflection of the deepening moral and spiritual crisis engulfing our society.

The unchecked spread of obscenity and vulgarity through digital media, the rampant abuse of alcohol and drugs, and the growing culture of corruption and greed have severely weakened the ethical foundations of our people. The moral compass that once guided society is eroding before our eyes. To condemn this brutal incident, the local shopkeepers kept their shops closed for the whole day and demanded strictest punishment for the culprits. Social, political and religious groups cutting sectarian and party lines, too expressed their anger and demanded stern punishment for the accused.

Each year nomadic people from Pirpanchal and Chenab Valley regions migrate in thousands, to rear and herd their livestock in the vast green meadows of upper areas of the valley. They erect temporary tents and canopies to shelter themselves and leave back

area of Sonamarg, local people kept open mosque hamams, their own homes, served them for days together, and youth came to their rescue and helped them in every respect. These goodwill gestures were acclaimed and at

Drug addiction among our youth besides smuggling of banned narcotic items are the main causes of rising crimes in the valley. It needs to be checked forthwith. These kinds of heinous crimes can't be checked unless strong legislations at state and union



in Autumn. Such brutal and inhuman episodes were never recorded in Kashmir, it has been a centuries old practice for them to migrate in early summer and leave in late Autumn.

Kashmiries have been hospitable to both our native and non-native guests since time immemorial, history and epics have been all praise to Kashmiries. Even S.W Lawrence, in The Valley Of Kashmir has exalted and glorified Kashmiri people for their utmost love, support and respect they display while welcoming guests from other parts of globe. Last winter, when tourists got stranded due to erratic weather in Gagangir

national level too our commitment to serve humanity was recognized. But most unfortunately, Sunday's incident has shaken the whole of humanity, we feel ashamed to invite our guests, the sacred land of holy saints never tolerated such tragedies and before the global community now, our recognition is fully at stake. The brutal assault and murder of a marginalized woman at the hands of local culprits, have evoked outrage, sadness and concern for safety and justice. To minimize such episodes and put a check on these incidents, police and other law enforcement agencies must work hand in glove.

levels are drafted and debated.

Stringent laws to curb crimes against women are much needed at the moment besides conducting training programs to equip them against culprits attempting to assault or murder them. Academicians, preachers, social activists and religious and political leaders must come forward and play a positive role in curbing the Nishat like incidents in future.

It isn't a crime against a particular community woman, but humanity at large must wake up at the earliest to demand for a fast track inquiry and stern punishment for the culprits.

From Margins to Mainstream: Reforming Waqf for a Just Society

SANTOSH KUMAR/ RITU KATARIA/ RISHITA AGGARWAL

New Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025 aims to end corruption, reclaim misused properties, and channel resources into healthcare, education, housing, and skill development for the poor.

Waqf has always been meant to help the community by providing education, healthcare, housing, and support for the poor. However, problems like mismanagement, corruption, and inefficiency have often prevented Waqf properties from benefiting those who need them most. The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, aims to fix this by making the system more transparent, efficient, and focused on reducing poverty.

One big problem in Waqf management has been a lack of transparency, leading to corruption and misuse of funds. The new bill introduces a digital portal to record all Waqf properties, making it easier to track and audit them. This ensures that funds are not misused and are spent on helping the poor. With mandatory financial audits and digital records, this change will reduce corruption and make Waqf management more accountable to the people.

The bill ensures that Waqf properties and funds are used to improve healthcare services for the poor. This includes:

- Setting up clinics and hospitals on Waqf lands to provide free or low-cost healthcare.
- Partnering with charities to fund medical aid programs.
- Making medicines and essential treatments more available in poor areas.

With better management, more people will get access to healthcare, reducing medical costs and improving public health.

Education is a key way to fight poverty. The bill ensures that Waqf funds are used for:

- Building and maintaining schools and madrassas.
- Providing scholarships and financial aid to poor students.
- Supporting vocational training centers to teach job skills.

By focusing on education, the bill helps people from poor backgrounds get better jobs and improve their lives.

Many poor people struggle with housing. The bill allows Waqf Boards to use properties

for affordable housing. Section 32(4) permits:

- Building low-cost housing for the poor.
- Providing shelters for homeless people.

carpentry, tailoring, and digital literacy.

- Providing small loans to help people start businesses.

for social welfare projects.

- Give district collectors more power to protect Waqf properties.

disputes over land belonging to non-Muslims, so that welfare efforts are not disrupted.

The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025, is not



- Creating subsidized rental programs for low-income families.
- This ensures that Waqf properties are used to help people instead of being left unused or taken over illegally.
- Helping people become financially independent is important for reducing poverty. The bill supports:
- Setting up training centers for skills like

- Connecting trained workers with jobs.
- This approach helps people earn a living rather than relying only on charity.
- A major issue with Waqf properties is illegal occupation. According to the WAMSI portal, nearly 58,898 Waqf properties have been taken over unlawfully. The bill introduces stronger legal measures to:
- Reclaim illegally occupied Waqf lands

- Prevent unauthorized claims that take away resources meant for the poor.
- These steps will ensure that Waqf properties are used properly to help those in need.
- The bill also ensures fairness and inclusivity, making sure aid reaches all communities in need. It prioritizes poor people and uses data to make better decisions about Waqf resources. Additionally, the bill includes measures to prevent

just about managing properties—it is about making Waqf a strong tool for helping the poor. By increasing transparency, stopping corruption, improving healthcare and education, providing affordable housing, and supporting employment, the bill ensures that Waqf serves its true purpose. These reforms will help Waqf fulfill its original mission—supporting the underprivileged and creating a fairer and more just society.

Amit Shah hails PM Modi’s address as a declaration of zero tolerance towards terrorism

NEWDELHI: Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s address to the nation following Operation Sindoor, calling it a decisive declaration of Bharat’s zero-tolerance policy towards terrorism and a redefining moment in the country’s strategic posture.

In a post on X, Amit Shah posted, “PM Modi today demarcated the boundary for Bharat’s enemies through the example of Operation Sindoor, in which our armed forces razed the very edifice of terrorism in Pakistan’s backyard.” Reinforcing the Prime Minister’s warning, Shah said that Bharat will strike back the moment our enemies dare to make a mistake.


“Our armed forces have made Pakistan shudder with their might and set a new normal of zero tolerance for terrorism. PM Modi reiterated our resolve that Bharat would strike back the very moment our enemies dare to make a mistake. Do listen to his powerful speech,” read his post. The Home Minister also praised the armed forces of the country for their courage and valour and said that the bravery of our forces will forever be etched in our glorious history.

“Nation salutes the unparalleled valour of our Armed Forces – the destroyers of our enemies and the shield of Bharat. We also salute our first line of defence, the courageous personnel of the BSF. The bravery of our forces will forever be etched in our glorious history,” he said.

Congratulating PM Modi for his leadership, Shah wrote, “I congratulate PM Modi for his exemplary leadership in

delivering justice to the departed souls of our innocent brothers. Time and again, Modi Ji has proven that no enemy of Bharat can go unpunished. Operation Sindoor.”

Asserting that the Indian Armed Forces have shown a lot of courage to achieve the objectives of Operation Sindoor, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday



said the forces had been given full freedom to wipe out terrorists.

In his address to the nation, PM Modi said, “Every terror organisation now knows ‘ki hamari behano, betiyon ke maathe se Sindoor hatane ka anjaam kya hota hai’.

Referring to the Pahalgam terror attack on April 22, PM Modi said, “The barbarism that terrorists have shown has shaken the country and the world.”

In a bold and unequivocal message to the nation following Operation Sindoor, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared that India will no longer tolerate nuclear

blackmail and will respond to any terrorist attack with strict and decisive action.

“Operation Sindoor is now India’s established policy in the fight against terrorism, marking a decisive shift in India’s strategic approach”, he declared, stating that the operation has set a new standard, a new normal in counter-terrorism measures.

PM Modi on Monday outlined three key pillars of India’s security doctrine.

Firstly, the ‘Decisive Retaliation,’ any terrorist attack on India will be met with a strong and resolute response. India will retaliate on its terms, targeting terror hubs at their roots.

The second is ‘No Tolerance for Nuclear Blackmail.’ PM Modi said India will not be intimidated by nuclear threats. Any terrorist safe haven operating under this pretext will face precise and decisive strikes.

The third pillar is ‘No distinction between terror sponsors and terrorists.’ PM Modi said India will no longer see terrorist leaders and the governments sheltering them as separate entities.

He pointed out that during Operation Sindoor, the world once again witnessed Pakistan’s disturbing reality–senior Pakistani military officials openly attending funerals of eliminated terrorists, proving Pakistan’s deep involvement in state-sponsored terrorism.

The Prime Minister reaffirmed that India will continue taking decisive steps to safeguard its citizens against any threat. (ANI)

War brings only destruction, not solutions: MLA Langate

Waris Fayaz

Uri: Amid the cautious return of residents to their homes in shelling-affected villages of Uri, Awami Ittehad Party (AIP) legislator from Langate, Sheikh Khursheed Monday reiterated a strong anti-war stance, saying that war has only brought destruction and suffering, and that lasting peace must now be pursued sincerely by both India and Pakistan.

Khursheed, as per the news agency–Kashmir News Observer (KNO) while visiting several frontline villages in Uri damaged by recent cross-border shelling, expressed solidarity with the affected population and criticized the political narrative that, according to him, irresponsibly encouraged escalation.

“We have been saying from day one – war is not a solution; it only brings destruction,” Khursheed said. “Instead of saber-rattling, the leadership should have listened to the people of LoC – whether it is Uri, Tangdhar, or Poonch. They know best what war brings to



their doorsteps.”

Referring to days of shelling that displaced thousands and claimed lives, the legislator alleged that many voices, relief efforts. “Despite being in jail, Er Rashid directed us to continue the evacuation and aid work. We are duty-bound to help our people,” Khursheed added.

He assured the public that AIP would assist in rebuilding efforts. “We will do everything possible – even allocate MP funds to help rebuild homes. Additionally, will personally write to Chief Minister Omar Abdullah, requesting him for further donations from MLAs portion of their funds for those affected.”

The legislator said that the pain endured by border residents must not be forgotten. “Only when the leadership of both countries genuinely understands the suffering faced by people here, will this cycle of violence stop. Let good sense prevail – even if it took the intervention of a third country to help bring about the ceasefire, let it be a beginning, not just a pause.”

“We hope the ceasefire holds. We hope those in power will finally show the sensitivity and courage to prioritize the lives of border residents over politics,” legislator added –(KNO)

Satish Sharma visits relief camps; meets displaced border residents

JAMMU: Demonstrating government’s commitment towards welfare of citizens



Panchayat Ghar, Dhanna, Bright Future Public School, Dhanna, GMS Dhanna Ambo Shani, GPS Dhanna Dhanu, Panchayat Ghar, Dori, Baba Mai Mal Dev Sthan, Dager and several adjoining temporary shelter sites.

During the visit, the Minister interacted with the affected families to assess their immediate needs and ensure adequate provision of relief services including food, clean drinking water, medical aid, sanitation and temporary education facilities for the children.

“The plight of our border residents is deeply concerning. We are taking all necessary steps to ensure their safety, dignity and timely rehabilitation,” stated

the Minister. “Every displaced family will receive the support they need until they can safely return home.”

The Minister directed the officials to strengthen supply chains for essential items, deploy additional health workers and improve the overall conditions within the shelters.

He also emphasized the need to safeguard children’s education during this crisis by utilizing local schools as temporary learning centers. Accompanied by the officials from administration, local leaders, emergency response teams, NGO Society for Scheduled & Backwards with its General Secretary Tariq Mirza, Minister Sharma reaffirmed Omar Abdullah government’s resolve to provide both immediate relief and long-term support to the displaced communities.

NC welcomes resumption of Hajj flights from Srinagar airport

Calls for increase in number of flights from Srinagar Airport to save valuable time of pilgrims

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Chief Spokesperson and MLA Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq Monday welcomed the resumption of Hajj flights from Srinagar Airport, set to begin on May 14. He emphasised the urgent need to increase the number of flights to ensure that pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir can complete all Hajj rituals in a timely manner.

In a statement issued to KNS, Sadiq expressed that the resumption of flights has brought immense joy to thousands of pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir who have long awaited the opportunity of a lifetime to perform Hajj.

“I extend our heartfelt gratitude to the relevant authorities for this timely action.

It is imperative that the airport authorities and the Hajj committee collaborate to devise a comprehensive plan to increase the number of flights from Srinagar Airport.

This initiative will not only save valuable time for the pilgrims but also ensure that they can fully participate in all Hajj rituals alongside their counterparts from around the globe,” he added. (KNS)


Dulloo visits GMC Jmu to assess health of cross-border shelling victims

JAMMU: In an outreach to the citizens affected by the recent shelling incidents in the border districts of the Jammu region, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo visited Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu to enquire about the well-being of the injured admitted there.

Expressing solidarity with the victims and their families, the Chief Secretary personally interacted with each of the injured patients, assessing their recovery by moving bed to bed and engaging in heartfelt conversations.

During the visit, Chief Secretary Dulloo also entered the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to check on the health status of two critically injured patients. He

conveyed his deep concern for their recovery and encouraged the medical staff to prioritize the best possible treatment for all those affected.



Highlighting the administration’s commitment to the welfare of its citizens, Dulloo directed the Principal of the College to ensure effective and timely medical care.

He reassured the victims and their family members that the

LG Sinha, Minister Pay Tributes To BSF Officer Martyred In Pak Firing Along IB In Jammu

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha and Minister Satish Sharma on Monday joined the wreath-laying ceremony of BSF Constable Deepak Chingakhm who died in cross-border firing by Pakistani troops.

BSF Inspector General (Jammu Frontier) Shashank Anand and other senior BSF officials, police and civil officers also attended the ceremony to pay floral tributes to the slain constable.

Constable Deepak Chingakhm suffered fatal injuries during cross-border firing along the international border in the R S Pura area of Jammu district on May 10 and attained martyrdom on May 11.

A solemn wreath-laying ceremony was held at BSF headquarters in Jammu, and later his mortal remains were dispatched to his family for the last rites.

The LG laid a wreath at the mortal remains and said “I salute the brave son of Mother India, BSF Constable Deepak Chingakhm, who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty.”

He further said, “We share the grief of the family and stand in solidarity.” After the wreath-laying ceremony, the tricolour-wrapped coffin carrying the body of the constable was dispatched to his hometown for the last rites.

Provide jobs to kin of cross-border shelling victims: Tarigami

Seeks compensation for losses, appeals Gol to assist J&K admin in delivering relief

Srinagar: Expressing deep concern over the suffering of people living along the Line of Control (LoC) and International Boundary (IB), CPI(M) leader and MLA Kulgam, M.Y. Tarigami on Monday urged both the Government of India and the J&K administration to urgently prioritize the rehabilitation of families affected by recent cross-border shelling.

While addressing the press conference at Srinagar Today, Tarigami as per a statement issued to the news agency–Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that border villages in Uri, Poonch, Rajouri, Kupwara, and others faced devastation due to skirmishes. “These people have lived through fear, destruction, and loss.

It is the government’s responsibility to ensure their safe return, provide adequate compensation, and rebuild their lives with dignity,” he said.

He said that the damage to homes, crops, and livestock must be assessed thoroughly, and the affected must be compensated fairly. “These villages have not only lost shelter but some also livelihood. In areas like Rajouri and Poonch, entire homes have been



Armed forces downed 'surveillance drone' in Punjab's Jalandhar, says official

Chandigarh: Armed forces neutralised a suspected “surveillance drone” in Punjab’s Jalandhar, a senior district official said in a late-night message on Monday.

Jalandhar Deputy Commissioner Himanshu Aggarwal said, “I have been informed that one surveillance drone was brought down by the armed forces around 9:20 pm near Mand village. An expert team is looking for the debris.”

In a message at 10:45 pm, he advised people against going near any debris and to immediately inform the nearest police station.

It has also been informed that there was no drone activity since 10 pm, Aggarwal said.

The Jalandhar deputy commissioner urged residents to remain calm and not burst firecrackers, as had been reported in some areas.

Strict police action will be taken against people who try to create panic, he warned.

“We have cut off electricity in some areas of Jalandhar as a precaution and will review the situation after some time. Nothing to worry,” Aggarwal said.

Earlier, he had said lights had been switched off in some areas around Suranassi as a precautionary measure after reports of drone sightings.

JKPCC President Tariq Hameed Karra Urges Govt to Ensure Rehabilitation, Compensation for Cross-Border Conflict Victims

Srinagar: Expressing deep anguish over the recent loss of lives and property due to cross-border shelling in both Jammu and Kashmir regions, Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) President Tariq Hameed Karra on Monday called on the Government of India and the J&K administration to take urgent steps for the rehabilitation and compensation of all displaced and affected residents.

In an official statement, Karra conveyed his sorrow and concern over the devastation caused in border areas, particularly highlighting the severe impact in North Kashmir’s Uri and Karnah sectors, where mass evacuations have taken place due to intense shelling. Similarly, the Rajouri and Poonch districts in the Jammu region have witnessed extensive damage to lives and property.

Karra emphasized the need for both governments to accord the status of martyr to those who lost their lives in the conflict and called for immediate assessment and compensation for public and private losses. He urged that relief efforts be carried out on a “war footing” to help affected residents return to normalcy.

“The Government must ensure swift action in terms of compensation, resettlement, and rehabilitation. People’s lives have been upended, and urgent intervention is needed,” Karra said, extending his heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured.

Ceasefire brings relief as traffic resumes on Mughal road

Poonch, Rajouri residents hope for lasting peace

Jahangeer Ganaie

Srinagar: After days of disruption caused by heightened border tensions, traffic has fully resumed on the historic Mughal Road following the recent ceasefire announcement along the Line of Control (LoC).

This development has brought relief to commuters and local businesses, which had been severely impacted by the prevailing situation. The Mughal Road, connecting the Kashmir Valley with the border districts of Poonch and Rajouri in Jammu, had seen minimal vehicular movement in recent days due to fears of cross-border shelling.

Lying close to the volatile LoC, the route’s safety concerns kept travellers cautious, especially in Poonch. “We’re relieved that the ceasefire has been announced,” Bilal Ahmad, a transporter who frequently operates along the route, told the news agency–Kashmir News Observer (KNO). “We’ve resumed our services, but people are still cautious. It will take a few more days for full confidence to return.”



The reopening of the road has facilitated the movement of goods and people between the regions, providing vital relief to residents of remote areas who depend on this route for essential travel and trade.

Shopkeepers and hoteliers along the Mughal Road, particularly in Shopian’s Hirpora and surrounding areas, expressed optimism.

“The last few days were very difficult,” said Tariq Mehmood, a shopkeeper in Hirpora. “No customers, no traffic. Everything came to a standstill. Now that the ceasefire has been announced, we hope it holds and our businesses can bounce back.”

Historically, the Mughal Road was a significant trade route used by emperors and merchants. It often serves as an alternative when the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway is closed, such as during recent landslides in Ramban.

However, locals remain apprehensive.

“We want the peace to last,” said Feroz Khan, a resident of Poonch. “Ceasefires have been broken before. We can only hope this one brings lasting calm.”

The Poonch and Rajouri sectors have suffered heavily due to cross-border shelling, with around 20 casualties, including an ADC Rajouri, in the past four days –(KNO)

Big announcement soon, say Kashmir hoteliers

Will meet PM, LG, CM shortly; don’t worry about foreign advisories, India enough for us; Kashmir belongs to country’s people: Chaya

Srinagar: The Kashmir hoteliers on Monday said a big announcement will be made in the tourism sector soon and that they will soon meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah.

Addressing a press conference here, prominent hotelier and president of Hoteliers Club Kashmir, Mushtaq Ahmad Chaya, as per the news agency–Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said there is a good news that 32 airports have started functioning again and the people of Kashmir, like other parts of India, are happy with the decision as it will mark a beginning of tourist arrival again.

“We are expecting a flow of tourists again. Many families are dependent on the tourism sector. We appeal to the people



across India to visit Kashmir again,” he said.

He added that the sector has witnessed huge losses, but none of the employees have been fired by the hoteliers

or others so far, as everyone is hopeful of resumption in tourism activities. “Time is the best healer. The situation has improved and they (tourists) will come to the Valley again to enjoy. Kashmir is theirs and they are ours,” he said while replying to a query.

When asked about the arrival of tourists again following the Pahalgam tragedy that left 26 people, mostly tourists, dead, Chaya said, “We are meeting the Lieutenant Governor soon and a big announcement will be made by him and Chief Minister Omar Abdullah. I can’t share the details at present, but you will be informed of it shortly. We will also meet the Prime Minister soon; his voice is strong for the whole nation.” He clarified that advisories have been issued by America and not India.

“India is enough for us,” he said, adding that the reply to the Pahalgam carnage has been given and there was no issue now that could deter the tourists from visiting Kashmir.

Pertinently, the tourist footfall declined in the valley following the Pahalgam killings on April 22, 2025.

The tour operators had reported cancellation of bookings, which affected the tourism sector –(KNO)

PART-I

The Concept of God in Attar's Mantiq-ut-Tayr



SHOWKAT AHMAD WANI

Seyyed Hossein Nasr emphasizes its portrayal of the soul's quest for divine unity, highlighting Attar's use of encrusted symbolism to convey stages of spiritual awakening.

Sanjar Murodov notes Attar's ontological framework, where Allah is the ultimate substance shaping existence. The poem explores human development, matter, and divine influence, integrating medieval Islamic thought with Greek philosophical

The divine is not a peripheral energy but an intrinsic blaze, a radiant ember ignited within the soul's sacred core. At the heart of Attar's theology roars the fierce inferno of divine love. The Valley of Love, the second stage, enshrines ishq as the supreme power that obliterates the ego's impurities, hurling the seeker into the divine's ardent embrace. Far surpassing mere passion, Attar's love is a cataclysmic tempest of spiritual alchemy.

"Love is the inferno that consumes the heart's core, In its pyre alone, God's mystery doth soar."

This cosmic ardor is the radiant compass steering the soul toward dissolution in the divine.

For Attar, the path to God is forged through relentless self-

heralding God's transcendence (tanzih) as the ultimate end, solitary and unassailable.

God's nearness (hudur) is the divine ambrosia that quenches the soul's profoundest yearnings, rendering all earthly pursuits obsolete. This assurance vows that divine proximity bestows absolute spiritual sustenance, serenity, and purpose. Embodying qurb (proximity to God), it reveals God's immanence (tashbih), an ever-present flame accessible to the purified nafs. It fore-shadows fana, where the soul, immersed in divine intimacy, craves nothing beyond.

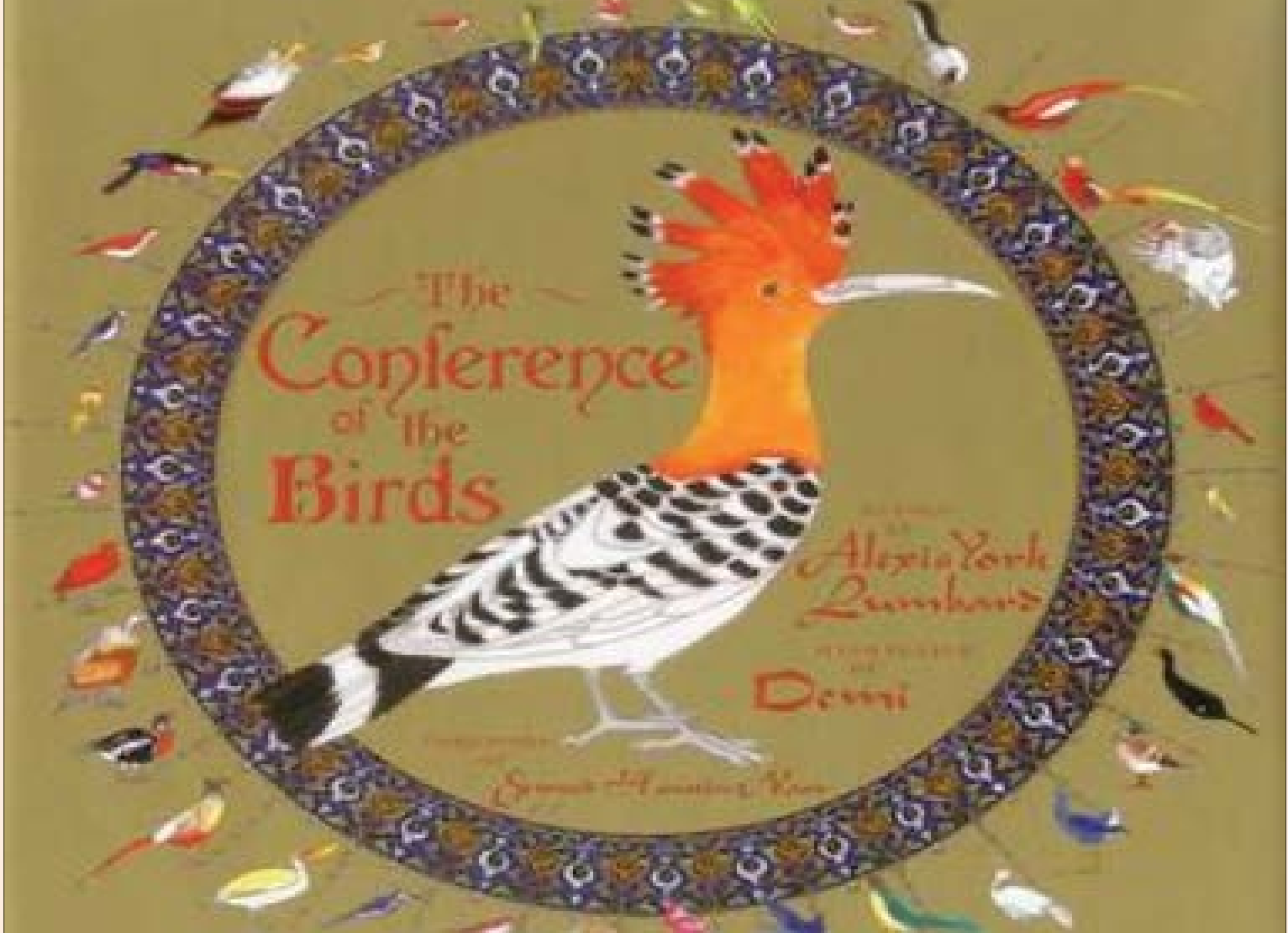
Resonating with the Qur'anic al-Ghani (the Self-Sufficient), God is the boundless wellspring of existence, fulfilling creation's every void. This reaffirms His sovereignty as Rabb (Lord) and Ilah (deity), bound intimately to the seeker ("for you"). In Sufi praxis,

transcendence eclipses all created domains, urging the pursuit of His essence over His gifts.

The "ocean" of God's infinite reality is promised as attainable, a testament to divine mercy (rahma). The rhetorical challenge "why should you stop?" rebukes the birds' hesitation, spurring relentless perseverance on the Sufi path (tariqa). This call fuels the valley of love ('ishq), where ardent longing propels the seeker through trials toward divine union. God's accessibility, rooted in grace, balances His transcendence, echoing Qur'anic assurances of divine nearness ("We are closer to him than his jugular vein" [Qur'an 50:16]).

The "evanescent dew" symbolizes the transient allure of worldly pleasures—fragile, illusory, and devoid of substance. "Beguiled" condemns the birds' distraction by these fleeting temptations, which pale against the eternal Divine. Attar underscores the Sufi view of dunya (the world) as a veil obscuring divine reality (Haqq), advocating zuhd (detachment) as essential for the valley of poverty (faqr). The dew's impermanence, a staple of Persian poetic imagery, aligns with Qur'anic warnings against worldly deception (e.g., "The life of this world is but amusement and play" [Qur'an 6:32]).

The "shoreless sea" and the diminishment of paradise exalt God's transcendent, infinite essence, surpassing all created realms and human conception. Yet, the promise of the "ocean" as attainable reflects God's immanence and mercy, rendering



influences, though adapted to a theistic worldview.

Annemarie Schimmel praises Attar's narrative for its intricate structure, blending anecdotes, parables, and poetry to guide readers through spiritual stages (e.g., love, detachment, unity). The Simorgh's revelation as both a collective and singular entity underscores themes of self-discovery and divine immanence.

Scholars like Leonard Lewisohn highlight the poem's universal resonance, transcending Islamic mysticism to address human existential questions. Its influence extends to later poets like Rumi, with its accessible yet profound storytelling appealing to diverse audiences.

Some scholars, such as Hellmut Ritter, compare Attar's work to other mystical traditions, noting parallels with Christian and Hindu allegories of the soul's journey, though rooted in a distinctly Islamic framework.

Rumi venerated Attar as a colossus of mystical insight, a sage whose Mantiq-ut-Tayr rent asunder the veils shrouding divine truth. Scholars like Franklin Lewis posit that Rumi perceived Attar's work as a celestial compass, its narrative of birds seeking the Simorgh an indomitable allegory for the soul's annihilation in the divine Beloved, a theme Rumi fiercely amplified in his Masnavi.

Fariduddin Attar Nishapuri a colossus of Persian mystical poetry, forged an immortal masterpiece in Mantiq-ut-Tayr(The Conference of the Birds), a radiant allegory charting the soul's grueling odyssey toward divine union. Through the epic quest of birds seeking their sovereign, the Simurgh, Attar spins a resplendent tapestry of spiritual revelation, interweaving divine unity (wahdat al-wujud), celestial love ('ishq-e ilahi), and self-realization. This analysis excavates Attar's vision of God in Mantiq-ut-Tayr, wielding incisive, evocative language to lay bare its transcendent truths.

In this towering work, Attar crafts a mythic saga where the world's birds converge to pursue their elusive king, the Simurgh, enthroned on the fabled Mount Qaf. Led by the Hoopoe, an emblem of sagacity and fortitude, they undertake a harrowing pilgrimage through seven valleys: Quest (Talab), Love ('Ishq), Gnosis (Ma'rifat), Detachment (Istighna), Unity (Tawhid), Bewilderment (Hayrat), and Annihilation (Faqr-o-Fana). Each valley is a forge, refining the soul through trials of resolve and spirit. In the end, only thirty birds (si murgh, a linguistic mirror of Simurgh) attain the summit, gazing upon their own essence in the Simurgh's incandescent presence. This epiphany, a cataclysmic awakening, unveils the inseparable oneness of self and Divine.

Rooted in Sufi mysticism and echoing Ibn al-Arabi's wahdat al-wujud, Attar's God is an infinite, ineffable reality, saturating every shard of existence. In Mantiq-ut-Tayr, the Divine is not a distant monarch but an intimate flame, kindled through the alchemy of self-discovery.

Attar envisions God as the singular, boundless truth, suffusing the cosmos with divine essence. The climactic revelation, where the thirty birds confront the Simurgh and behold their own reflection, shatters the illusion of duality, proclaiming wahdat al-wujud. Attar thunders:

"Thou art the radiant flame, thou art the vision divine, Thou art the Simurgh, no other reigns sublime."

discovery. The birds' epic in Mantiq-ut-Tayr is an unyielding plunge into the abyss of the self. At the journey's zenith, they perceive the Simurgh as their own essence, a revelation of cataclysmic grandeur. Attar states:

"Know thine own soul, and God shall thou behold, Within thy essence, His enigma doth unfold."

This doctrine, echoing Rumi's luminous teachings, shines in Attar's allegory with unmatched clarity and ferocity.

The final valley, Annihilation and Poverty, forms the pinnacle of Attar's mystical fortress. Fana fi Allah—the complete erasure of the self in God—heralds the supreme moment where the seeker's ego is incinerated, fusing into the boundless divine sea. Attar's verse thunders:

"While 'thou' persist, He remains beyond thy grasp, Efface thyself, and His eternal realm unclasp."

This transcendent annihilation, a cornerstone of Sufi metaphysics, is woven with a poetic ferocity that scorches the soul.

Mantiq-ut-Tayr is no mere tale but a metaphysical clarion, unraveling the profound interplay of God, humanity, and the cosmos. The Simurgh, a blazing emblem of divinity, and the birds' odyssey, a paradigm of the soul's yearning, fuse in a narrative of breathtaking profundity. The seven valleys, each a crucible of spiritual alchemy, map the Sufi ascent to divine gnosis, illuminating the inward spiral of the sacred quest.

Attar's divine vision, while resonant with the revelations of Rumi, Hafiz, and Rabia Basri, burns with a singular radiance. His structured allegory, carving the spiritual ascent into seven distinct valleys, stands in contrast to Rumi's rapturous, untamed hymns to divine pursuit. Attar's symbolic tapestry, both intricate and piercingly clear, distills wahdat al-wujud into a narrative that ensnares scholars and seekers alike.

Mantiq-ut-Tayr endures as an immortal testament to Attar's Sufi mastery and his vision of the divine. God, in Attar's universe, is the all-pervading truth, unveiled through the furnace of self-knowledge, the conflagration of divine love, and the obliteration of the ego. His poetry, a lodestar of spiritual and literary brilliance, has ignited souls across ages. Through Mantiq-ut-Tayr, Attar issues an everlasting proclamation: the quest for God is the quest for the self—a pilgrimage every soul is fated to embark upon.

"I am alone; make me your single goal – My presence is sufficient for your soul; I am your God, your one necessity – With every breath you breathe, remember Me."

God declares Himself the seeker's supreme Lord and the singular, indispensable reality. The phrase "your one necessity" annihilates all rival claims—wealth, status, or ego—demanding unwavering fealty to the Divine. In Sufi metaphysics, this commands detachment from the mirage of multiplicity, rooting the soul in the One Reality. It kindles irada (spiritual resolve),

acknowledging God as the sole necessity demands zuhd (renunciation) and tawakkul (complete reliance), priming the seeker for the valley of poverty (faqr), where God alone reigns as truth.

This divine edict summons ceaseless dhikr, the Sufi practice of perpetual God-consciousness. "Every breath" decrees that remembrance permeate existence, transfiguring life into an unbroken liturgy of devotion. Echoing the Qur'an ("Remember Me, and I will remember you" [2:152]), dhikr is both invocation and an inner state, aligning the soul with God's omnipresence. This discipline paves the way for the valley of unity (tawhid), where God's reality consumes all.

God's assertion of solitude ("I am alone") and the mandate to make Him the "single goal" thunder the doctrine of wahdat al-wujud, obliterating duality. Attar masterfully balances God's transcendence—His majesty as the ultimate aspiration—with His immanence, manifest in His sufficiency and presence in every breath. The call to dhikr offers a tangible path to divine intimacy, culminating in fana and union with the Simurgh. Through direct divine speech, Attar's commanding, rhythmic imperatives ("make Me," "remember Me") ignite urgency, echoing the soul's ravenous longing.

"The home we seek is in eternity; The Truth we seek is like a shoreless sea, Of which your paradise is but a drop. This ocean can be yours; why should you stop Beguiled by dreams of evanescent dew?"

The "home" signifies the soul's ultimate destiny—union with God in the timeless realm of eternity (baqa). This contrasts sharply with the ephemeral world, a transitory illusion bound by temporality. In Sufi thought, the soul is a wayfarer (salik) journeying back to its divine origin (ma'ad). Attar frames eternity as the soul's true abode, aligning with the valley of quest (talab), where the seeker pledges to pursue the Divine. God, as al-Baqi (the Eternal), transcends time, beckoning the soul to its primordial purpose.

God, as al-Haqq (the Truth), is depicted as an infinite, boundless ocean, uncontainable and unfathomable. The "shoreless sea" evokes divine transcendence (tanzih), where God's essence (dhat) defies all limits and comprehension. This metaphor resonates with wahdat al-wujud, portraying God as the all-encompassing reality subsuming existence. It primes the seeker for the valley of wonder (hayrat), where divine majesty overwhelms the soul, evoking Qur'anic imagery of God's vastness (e.g., "His Kursi extends over the heavens and the earth" [Qur'an 2:255]).

Even paradise, the conventional eschatological aspiration, is diminished to a mere "drop" against the infinite expanse of God's reality. Attar critiques limited spiritual ambitions, a hallmark of Sufi thought, noting that paradise, though a divine reward remains a created realm. The seeker must aim beyond it for direct union with the uncreated Divine. This aligns with the valley of detachment (istighna), where even the yearning for paradise is relinquished in favor of divine love ('ishq). God's

Mantiq-ut-Tayr is no mere tale but a metaphysical clarion, unraveling the profound interplay of God, humanity, and the cosmos. The Simurgh, a blazing emblem of divinity, and the birds' odyssey, a paradigm of the soul's yearning, fuse in a narrative of breathtaking profundity. The seven valleys, each a crucible of spiritual alchemy, map the Sufi ascent to divine gnosis, illuminating the inward spiral of the sacred quest.

the infinite accessible through spiritual striving. The "Truth" as the sole reality reinforces wahdat al-wujud, while the "evanescent dew" condemns worldly illusions, urging detachment. Attar elevates the seeker's aspiration to direct union with God, achieved through love, perseverance, and the relinquishment of lesser goals, culminating in fana and unity with the Simurgh.

"Make of your heart a looking-glass and see Reflected there the Friend's nobility; Your sovereign's glory will illuminate The palace where he reigns in proper state. Search for this king within your heart; His soul Reveals itself in atoms of the Whole."

The heart (qalb), the epicenter of spiritual perception, is urged to become a pristine mirror (mir'at), reflecting divine reality with unerring clarity. The "looking-glass" demands a heart purified of ego, desires, and distractions through dhikr (remembrance) and tazkiya (purification). The imperative "see" commands active spiritual insight (basira). In Sufism, the heart is the throne of divine manifestation, as per the prophetic saying, "The heart of the believer is the throne of the All-Merciful." This prepares the seeker for the valley of knowledge (ma'rifat), where divine recognition dawns. God's immanence shines within the polished heart, echoing Qur'anic intimacy ("We are closer to him than his jugular vein" [Qur'an 50:16]).

TO BE CONTINUED...

Continued From P1...

India Will

Saluting the security forces, PM Modi dedicated their bravery to mothers, sisters and daughters of this country.

Pakistan slumped into gloom after the Indian attack on terror camps, “but they dared to attack us rather than helping fight terrorism. More than 100 dreaded terrorists were slaughtered in the Indian attack”, Modi said.

“The entire world saw how Pakistani drones were downed by our military might. India has struck at the heart of Pakistan, our missiles attacked with precision to damage their air bases,” he said.

India-Pak

They confirmed the successful downing of several enemy drones and loitering munitions, including Turkish-origin UAVs that attempted incursions.

Vice Admiral AN Pramod emphasized the role of the Indian Navy in ensuring maritime security, confirming that Indian naval air defense systems and fleet patrols remained alert and active.

“If needed, we have the capability to strike at will across maritime or land-based targets. Pakistan could not threaten us during maritime operations either,” he said, as per KNO.

Officials confirmed that offensive operations were carried out across “the length and breadth of enemy territory,” including high-impact strikes near Nur Khan Air Base and Rambhayer. These precision attacks were aimed at disrupting terrorist command hubs and logistics networks.

They praised the perfect synergy between the Army, Air Force, Navy, Border Security Force, and intelligence units during recent operations. “From the DG to the last jawan, the BSF played a vital role in securing the borders,” said Lieutenant General Ghai.

He also acknowledged the unwavering support from the Indian government and the collective will of India’s 140 crore citizens. “This is not just a military effort. Every domain—air, land, sea, and cyber—is involved, and every Indian stands behind the forces,” the commanders said.

Responding to reports from across the border, the Indian military dismissed Pakistani claims that a terror leader reportedly killed in a targeted strike, was still alive. “They will say whatever it takes to manage their internal narrative. But facts speak louder. Our fight is not with Pakistan’s people—it is with the terrorists they shelter,” Air Marshal Bharti said.

In a symbolic gesture, he also quoted a Hindi poem to reaffirm India’s resilience and self-reliance, adding that indigenous systems were fully capable of countering modern threats, including drone swarms and cyber warfare.

The military commanders said that while India remains open to dialogue through DGMO-level talks, its forces are “ready for the next mission—anytime, anywhere.”

“Every war is different. What matters is staying ahead of your adversary. We were ready, and we remain ready,” they added

Our neighbouring

He lauded the efforts of the civil administration, including the Deputy Commissioner, SSP, and their teams for their unwavering service. “They stood their ground and worked tirelessly to support the people and minimize the suffering caused by this tragic situation,” he added.

Speaking about the conflict, the Chief Minister said, “This situation was not of our making. Our neighboring country chose to target innocent civilians on our side of the border. This is both deeply saddening and unacceptable.”

Expressing sorrow over the loss of 13 innocent lives, he said, “While no compensation can replace a lost life, it is our responsibility to provide immediate support and Rs 10 lakh relief announced by me to each family of the deceased is not a measure of the value of life, but a step to help them cope during this difficult time.”

The Chief Minister acknowledged the role of local MLAs for their support during this crisis.

Commenting on the expanding threat of cross-border shelling, Omar Abdullah said, “For the first time, even the old quarters of Jammu have been affected. We are now forced to contemplate building bunkers in the city—something previously unimaginable.”

He stressed the need for immediate reforms in preparedness. “We must learn from this experience and rectify our shortcomings. Strengthening hospital infrastructure is essential. Citizens have suggested that retired doctors be engaged during emergencies. I will raise this with the Health Minister and explore re-employment or stipend-based scheme for retired medical professionals,” he said.

Outlining future preparedness, the Chief Minister said, “May we never face such a situation again, but if we do, we must be better prepared. We plan to establish critical infrastructure including fixed and mobile bunkers, reinforce ambulance services, and improve evacuation mechanisms in border areas through mock drills and practical assessments.”

In conclusion, Chief Minister Omar Abdullah offered his deepest sympathies to the families of the deceased. “Their pain is our pain. I salute the people of Poonch for their resilience, unity, and sense of coexistence during this crisis. You have set an example for the rest of the state and the country. May peace return to our borders, and may our people continue to live in harmony and safety,” he said.

India will

Operation Sindoor, demonstrating both unwavering resolve and commendable restraint and successfully demolished terror factories in Pakistan, and avenged the killing of innocent civilians in Pahalgam.

Our Armed Forces have made it unequivocally clear: any threat by the adversary to the safety of our people will be met with such a decisive

response that the action of our armed forces will be remembered by seven generations of Pakistan,” the Lieutenant Governor said.

The Lieutenant Governor expressed gratitude to all those individuals and organisations who are extending their support to the families affected due to unprovoked shelling by Pakistan. He also assured that bunkers will be built as per the new assessment, for the safety of the people.

“Stopped a nuclear

of India and Pakistan was unwavering and powerful... And we helped a lot, and we also helped with trade. I said, ‘Come on, we’re going to do a lot of trade with you guys. Let’s stop it, let’s stop it. If you stop it, we’re doing trade. If you don’t stop it, we’re not going to do any trade.’” Trump stated, highlighting his administration’s use of trade leverage to encourage peace.

The cessation of hostilities between India and Pakistan was reportedly agreed upon following a call from Pakistan’s Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) to his Indian counterpart, Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai.

During the conversation, the Pakistani DGMO proposed an end to hostilities, which was accepted by the Indian side, leading to a cessation of cross-border firing and air intrusions starting from 5:00 pm on May 10. However, Lieutenant General Ghai later disclosed that the cessation of hostilities was short-lived, as Pakistan violated the agreement with cross-border firing and drone intrusions just hours after it took effect.

The conflict had initially intensified after the Indian Armed Forces launched Operation Sindoor on May 7, targeting nine terrorist infrastructure sites in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Jammu and Kashmir (PoK).

This operation was a direct response to the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, which resulted in the death of 26 civilians, including one Nepali national. The Indian military’s retaliatory strikes were followed by increased cross-border shelling from Pakistan and a series of counter-responses by the Indian Armed Forces.

Satish Sharma

will receive the support they need until they can safely return home.”

The Minister directed the officials to strengthen supply chains for essential items, deploy additional health workers and improve the overall conditions within the shelters. He also emphasized the need to safeguard children’s education during this crisis by utilizing local schools as temporary learning centers.

Accompanied by the officials from administration, local leaders, emergency response teams, NGO Society for Scheduled & Backwards with its General Secretary Tariq Mirza, Minister Sharma reaffirmed Omar Abdullah government’s resolve to provide both immediate relief and long-term support to the displaced communities.

CS takes

need for durable and time-bound solutions to address the recurring issue of landslides and road erosion in this vital corridor that connects Jammu with the Kashmir Valley.

Special focus was laid on the ongoing Four-Laning Project of NH-44 between Nashri and Banihal, which forms a key component of the J&K road infrastructure upgrade.

The Chief Secretary took stock of the physical progress on the project and directed the executing agencies to strictly adhere to timelines, while ensuring quality and safety standards.

Highlighting the importance of seamless transportation, he instructed the NHAI officers to ensure proper double carriageways in all critical stretches of NH-44 to facilitate smooth and safe vehicular flow, especially given the highway’s strategic and economic significance.

Earlier, Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Baseer-UI-Haq Chaudhary, briefed the Chief Secretary about the losses incurred due to recent cloudbursts and flash floods, detailing the immediate response, restoration measures, and relief provided to affected families. He also outlined the District Administration’s preparedness and coordination mechanisms to tackle such natural calamities in the future.

Flight Operations

Notably, the Airports Authority of India (AAI), in a press statement, announced that the 32 previously closed airports are now available for civil aircraft operations with immediate effect.

“Reference notice issued for temporary closure of 32 airports for civil aircraft operations till 05:29 hrs of 15 May 2025. It is informed that these airports are now available for civil aircraft operations with immediate effect,” the statement reads.

Similarly, the travelers have been advised to directly check flight status with their respective airlines and monitor official websites for updates.

Moreover, in response to the government’s directive, SpiceJet announced an additional commercial flight from Delhi to Srinagar, scheduled to arrive at 07:35 hrs and depart at 08:10 hrs on Tuesday morning.

Also, IndiGo Airlines issued a travel advisory acknowledging the reopening of airports and gradual restoration of services. “We will progressively commence operations on the previously closed routes. As services gradually return to normal, there may still be a few delays and last-minute adjustments,” the advisory said, urging passengers to regularly check flight status and stay updated through IndiGo’s official channels.

IndiGo further informed that change and cancellation fee waivers remain available until May 22, for bookings to and from affected airports. “Your comfort, confidence, and convenience while travelling with us remain our top priorities,” the statement added.

SpiceJet also encouraged passengers to track real-time updates at [enr.in/airindia](#) or [tstetstus](#) and said

its teams are actively working to resume normal flight operations as soon as possible. In addition to this, other airlines like Air India and others issued advisories and schedules.

In addition to flight operations, officials also confirmed that scheduled Hajj flights from Srinagar, initially impacted by the closure, will now operate as planned on May 14 and 15.

Officials told KNO that seven Hajj flights carrying 320 pilgrims each had to be cancelled and special arrangements for them are also made.

Notably, with the airport reopening, the revised operations are expected to proceed smoothly.

It is pertinent to mention, the suspension of flight operations came amid rising security concerns in the aftermath of Operation Sindoor, and rising tensions between India and Pakistan. Srinagar, being among the affected airports, witnessed significant disruption in travel plans, especially for pilgrims, students, and medical patients

Hajj flights from

two flights scheduled on Wednesday, officials announced.

The Executive Officer of the J&K Haj Committee, Dr Shujhat Qureshi, informed the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the flights were temporarily halted due to the prevailing situation. However, with improvements in security and operational conditions, Hajj flight operations are now being restored.

“Flights will operate from May 14, with two flights scheduled that day,” Dr Qureshi said. “Each flight will carry approximately 320 pilgrims.”

This development brings much-needed relief to hundreds of pilgrims from Jammu and Kashmir, who had been anxiously awaiting updates on their travel plans following the suspension of flight operations at Srinagar airport.

J&K HC mulls addl

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Executive Officer Haj Committee, Dr Shujhat Qureshi said that while pilgrims scheduled for May 14 and 15 will depart as planned, efforts are underway to accommodate those who were unable to fly earlier due to the situation.

“The ones scheduled will go first. Those who could not go earlier will be accommodated if an additional flight is arranged,” Dr Qureshi said.

The Hajj flight from Srinagar, originally slated for May 7 with 320 pilgrims onboard, was cancelled due to flight disruptions after tension between India and Pakistan escalated. Since then, cancellations continued daily, with the last flight cancellation date on May 12.

According to official data, a total of 2,240 pilgrims are now waiting to be rebooked after their scheduled flights were cancelled over the past week. The Committee is currently in talks with concerned agencies to arrange special flights aimed at clearing the backlog.

The disruptions had sparked anxiety among intending pilgrims and their families. Meanwhile, the J&K Haj Committee has assured that all affected pilgrims will be accommodated as soon as logistics are finalised

Pak Shelling

frontline to remain vigilant and not touch anything suspicious.

“They should immediately report any suspicious objects to the authorities for proper disposal,” he said.

Authorities in Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday asked the residents of border villages not to rush back as residential areas were yet to be sanitised and cleared of any unexploded shells.

More than 1.25 lakh residents of villages close to the LoC in Baramulla, Bandipora and Kupwara districts were evacuated to safety as their homes were at a very high risk of being targeted in Pakistani shelling.

“Do not return to frontline villages. Lives are at risk as unexploded munitions remain (scattered) after Pakistani shelling,” police said in an advisory on Sunday.

“As many as 41 lives were lost in explosions of leftover shells near the LoC in 2023 alone,” they had said, highlighting the dangers of civilians rushing back to villages.

Poonch district accounted for 18 of the 25 total fatalities since Wednesday. It also recorded injuries to 50 people.

The Pakistani shelling began shortly after India carried out Operation Sindoor, striking nine terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) to avenge the April 22 terror attack in Pahalgam.

India and Pakistan on Saturday reached an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes. However, hours later, New Delhi accused Islamabad of breaching the agreement.

Dulloo visits GMC Jmu to assess health of cross-border shelling victims

JAMMU: In an outreach to the citizens affected by the recent shelling incidents in the border districts of the Jammu region, Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo today visited Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu to enquire about the well-being of the injured admitted there.

Expressing solidarity with the victims and their families, the Chief Secretary personally interacted with each of the injured patients, assessing their recovery by moving bed to bed and engaging in heartfelt conversations.

During the visit, Chief Secretary Dulloo also entered the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) to check on the health status of two critically injured patients. He conveyed his deep concern for their recovery and encouraged the medical staff to prioritize the best possible treatment for all those affected.

Highlighting the administration’s commitment to the welfare of its citizens, Dulloo directed the

Principal of the College to ensure effective and timely medical care. He reassured the victims and their family members that the government stands firmly with them during these testing times, pledging full support towards their recovery and well-being.

He also appreciated the whole-hearted efforts of the medical staff and urged them to maintain the highest standards of care, emphasizing that every effort should be made to accelerate the recovery process.

The Chief Secretary further emphasized that the administration remains vigilant and proactive in addressing the needs of those affected by such unfortunate incidents, reiterating that collective efforts are being made to minimize suffering besides expeditious recovery of all of these victims.


Kharge Reiterates Demand For Special Parliament Session To Discuss Operation Sindoor, Ceasefire

KALABURAGI: Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Monday reiterated his demand for the central government to convene a special session of Parliament to discuss the Pahalgam terror attack, Operation Sindoor, and the latest developments in cross-border firing, including the recently announced “ceasefire”.

The Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha said that while everyone wishes for peace, the country must be defended when necessary, and the Indian armed forces have fought with full strength to do so.

“Both Rahul Gandhi and I have written to the Prime Minister, seeking a special Parliament session. We want the session to be convened to discuss what is happening in our country, in Pakistan, and other developments, along with what measures we can take to safeguard our people,” Kharge said.

We want the discussion to take place. Let’s see what steps the government takes, he added while speaking to PTI Videos.



Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, and Kharge have written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterating their demand for a special session of both Houses of Parliament.

In his letter on Sunday, Kharge conveyed the unanimous request of all opposition parties for a special session to discuss the Pahalgam attack, Operation Sindoor, and the ceasefire announcements—first from Washington DC, and later by the governments of India and Pakistan.

India and Pakistan on Saturday reached an understanding to immediately halt all firing and military actions on land, air, and sea, following four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes.

Noting the ceasefire, the AICC chief said, “India keeps its promises, but Pakistan repeatedly breaks them and troubles people. They don’t fight directly—they use terrorists to wage war. If they fight, we will be forced to fight. If they remain quiet, we too will maintain peace.”

He added that on the occasion of Buddha Purnima—a day commemorating the birth of Gautama Buddha—everyone naturally yearns for peace, in line with the teachings of the Buddha.

“India has followed his teachings for over two thousand years. We wish for peace everywhere and hope everyone lives peacefully. But to protect the country, we must be prepared to fight—because if the country is safe, we are all safe. Our army is fighting bravely, and we salute their courage and commitment. Everyone should unite for the country and stand strong for it,” Kharge said.

Without Fear There’s No Love: Air Marshal Quotes Ramcharitmanas On Op Sindoor

NEW DELHI: At a serious military briefing, one doesn’t expect high literature and text from epics to be quoted by a battle-hardened air warrior to drive home a point.

Director General of Air Operations, IAF, Air Marshal A K Bharti, though stunned and captivated a large gathering of generally cynical journalists by quoting a couplet from Ramcharitmanas to expound on Lord Ram’s patience and anger at the Sea God.

Without reading from any paper, the Air Marshal fluently recited the couplet — “Vinay Na Manat Jaldhi Jad, Bhaye Teen Din Beet, Bole Ram Sakop Tab, Bhai Bin Hoi Na Preet’.

Translated in English, the couplet reads, “The ocean remained unmoved by humble requests, three days passed.

Then Lord Rama, with rising anger, declared without fear, there can be no love.” This couplet refers to the time when Lord Rama waiting for the Sea God to grant him the passage to Lanka loses patience after three days and becomes angry. He declares that love does not exist without fear and lifts his bow. Only then does the Sea God appears and helps Lord Ram.

“What message is being given... So, a hint is enough for an intelligent person,” Bharti said, as the room broke into applause.

The display of literary prowess was triggered by a reporter’s question whether there was any symbolism or messaging in using the Sanskrit hymn dedicated to Lord Shiva in the briefing on Sunday and a famed

poetry of ‘Rashttrakavi’ Ramdhari Singh Dinkar on epic Mahabharata on Monday.

Before the briefing started, the military played on a big screen, a key verse from ‘Krishna ki Chetavani’, part of Dinkar’s timeless classic ‘Rashmirathi’ in a rock music style rendition, juxtaposed with the images of the Indian military assets — missiles, naval platforms, weapon system, air defence system — with subtitles.

“Jab nash manuj pe chhata hai, pehle vivek mar jata hai....Hit-vachan tune nahin maana, maitri ka mulya nahin pehchana,... Antim sankalp sunaata hun. Yachana nahin ab ramn hoga, jeevan jai ya ki maran hoga,” the lyrics played out with subtitles carrying words — ‘Prepared’, ‘Each move detected’, ‘Every step watched’, ‘Tracked’, ‘Monitored’.

In English, it roughly translates as — “When doom hovers over a man, the first thing that vanishes is wisdom...you did not heed wise words, did not recognise value of friendship...announcing last resolve. There will be war and not pleading, glory to life or death it will be”.

Before the briefing by the military on Sunday, Shiva Tandava Stotram was played on the big screen, setting the tone for the press conference.

A montage of images showing damage inflicted by the Indian military under Operation Sindoor played with subtitles such as — ‘heed our advice’, ‘terrorism will have a cost for Pakistan’, ‘heavy’, ‘inevitable’, ‘unaffordable’.

During Monday’s briefing, sounds of a powerful rendition of ‘Krishna ki Chetavani’ poem echoed through the hall — a metaphor-laden message delivered to Pakistan by the Indian military with a poetic precision.

A collage of images of wreckage of Pakistani drones destroyed by the Indian armed forces under Operation Sindoor and a montage of videos showcasing India’s military’s prowess in all three domains — land, air and sea — played on a large screen along with music.

The message was loud and clear — India’s zero-tolerance for terrorism and its resolute stand to protect the nation’s sovereignty and integrity and ensure safety of its citizens.

Director General Military Operations (DGMO), Lt Gen Rajiv Ghai, and Director General of Naval Operations, Vice Admiral A N Pramod, also briefed the media on Operation Sindoor that was launched early May 7 to destroy nine terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-Occupied-Kashmir in retaliation to the Pahalgam terror attack.

The top IAF officer pointed to footage of wreckage of Turkish drones and other aerial assets destroyed by the Indian armed forces and the robust air defence posture maintained by the forces.

“Our counter-UAS, our trained air defence operators are fully capable and our indigenous capabilities have demonstrated that whichever technology may come, we are prepared to counter. And I don’t need to say much, you have seen with your very eyes, what eventuality they have met with,” he said.

Congress Seeks Centre’s Clarification On Third-Party Mediation In Kashmir Issue

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: The Congress on Monday urged the Centre to clarify whether it is open to third-party mediation on the Kashmir issue, warning that such as stance could potentially violate the Simla Agreement, Jammu and Kashmir tourism

The grand old party pointed to US President Donald Trump’s daily statements, claiming that he was intervening in the matter, and said a clarification from the union government on the matter was inevitable.

While addressing a party programme here, AICC general secretary K C Venugopal said the party wants to know whether there has been a shift in the country’s foreign policy, and therefore the matter has to be taken up in the Parliament at the earliest.

Questions are now being raised if the Simla Agreement has been violated.

“Was the Simla Agreement, which rejects any third-party involvement in the Kashmir issue between India and Pakistan, violated? Trump has been making statements daily, claiming that he has intervened in the matter. We need the government’s clarification,” Venugopal said.

“The Congress party has asked the Prime Minister of India to urgently convene Parliament to discuss these issues. This is not to blame anyone or put them on trial.” The Congress party also called for a special session of

Parliament to evaluate the situation in detail, to identify any mistakes that were made, and to ensure that they are not repeated in the future.

“We must get answers to these questions in order to rectify lapses and mistakes, and to continue our fight against Pakistan without fail,” he added.

His comments came after India and Pakistan on Saturday agreed to halt military actions on land, air and sea after four days of intense cross-border drone and missile strikes.

There were violations of the agreement as Pakistan resorted to cross-border firing within hours of its announcement.

According to Venugopal, the country is going through a very serious situation, and the Congress, the INDIA alliance, and the entire opposition firmly stand behind the union government and the Indian Army in their strong fight against terrorism, Jammu and Kashmir tourism

The leader also mentioned that in recent days, both the country and the world have recalled former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, who had firmly opposed third-party intervention in the Kashmir issue.

India and Pakistan reached an understanding on May 10 to cease all military actions, following the most severe confrontation between the two countries in decades.

The escalation was triggered by a terror attack on tourists in Pahalgam, Jammu and Kashmir, on April 22, which left 26 dead.

Retires From Test Cricket

Virat Kohli has announced his retirement from Test cricket, bringing the curtain down on a career that spanned 14 years and included 123 Tests - 68 of them as captain - in which he scored 9230 runs at an average of 46.85.

"It's been 14 years since I first wore the baggy blue in Test cricket. Honestly, I never imagined the journey this format would take me on. It's tested me, shaped me, and taught me lessons I'll carry for life," Kohli said in a social media statement on Monday morning. "There's something deeply personal about playing in whites. The quiet grind, the long days, the small moments that no one sees but that stay with you forever."

"As I step away from this format, it's not easy - but it feels right. I've given it everything I had, and it's given me back so much more than I could've hoped for. I'm walking away with a heart full of gratitude - for the game, for the people I shared the field with, and for every single person who made me feel seen along the way. I'll always look back at my Test career with a smile."

As reported on ESPNcricinfo on Saturday, Kohli had communicated his desire to retire from Test cricket to the BCCI ahead of the big five-match series in England starting June 20, for which he was expected to be part of the squad. It was learnt at the time that Kohli had been having conversations on the matter with officials of the BCCI for the past month or so.

For Kohli, it hadn't been a particularly fruitful time in the format of late. When he scored 100 not out in the Perth Test in November 2024, it was his first century in Tests since July 2023 (against West Indies in Port of Spain), and his average, 55.10 at its peak after he scored his career best of 254 not out vs South Africa in Pune in 2019, had been 32.56 over the last 24 months.

Despite that, it's understood that the team management and selectors wanted his experience on the England tour, where India will be playing under a new captain - Shubman Gill is the frontrunner to take over from Rohit Sharma following his retirement from Test cricket earlier this week.

Apart from Rohit, R Ashwin had also retired from international cricket late last year. With Cheteshwar Pujara and Ajinkya Rahane not in the mix at the moment, and Mohammed Shami's form under scrutiny after his return from a long injury layoff, KL Rahul, Ravindra Jadeja and Jasprit Bumrah remain the only links to that phase of Indian Test cricket, where they reached two successive World Test Championship (WTC) finals, the first under Kohli's leadership.



Rajput Urges Kohli To Stay, Backs Bumrah To Lead

Former India coach and manager Lalchand Rajput has urged Virat Kohli to play the upcoming Test series against England as he believes the national team cannot "afford to lose" his wealth of experience on such a demanding tour.

Uncertainty looms over 36-year-old Kohli's Test future following Rohit Sharma's red-ball retirement. Speculation is growing that the former skipper may follow Rohit out of the Test arena ahead of India's five-match Test series in England.

He stressed that Kohli's experience, and unmatched batting pedigree are irreplaceable.

"He is one of the greatest players India has produced. If you look at his record, I don't think anybody can come very near," Rajput told 'PTI Videos' in an interview.

The former India captain has 9,230 runs in 123 Tests at an average of 46.85, including 30 centuries. He is also India's most successful Test captain ever, having led the country to 40 wins out of 68 Tests.

"...I feel he should be playing in the England tour. His presence brings calm, authority, and a wealth of knowledge in these demanding conditions," he added.

While Shubman Gill has emerged as a frontrunner for Test captaincy, Rajput believes Jasprit Bumrah should be the preferred for now.

"Whenever Rohit wasn't there, Bumrah captained. Even in the World Test Championship final in England, he led the team. With that experience, I would look at him as the captain for this tour," Rajput said.

"Shubman Gill is being prepared for future leadership. This is the ideal time to let him grow under Bumrah's leadership. Leading in England is not easy; it affects your batting and requires split-second decision-making," he exclaimed.

Adding to the complexity of the tour is the likely absence of seasoned pacer Mohammed Shami, and possibly even limitations on Bumrah's availability due to his well-documented fitness management.



Ayush, **Unnati** Aim To Continue Strong Show At Thailand Open



Young Indian shuttlers Ayush Shetty and Unnati Hooda will look to build on their recent impressive run, while Lakshya Sen will be eager to regain his rhythm during the Thailand Open Super 500 badminton tournament which gets underway here on Tuesday.

Ayush, 20, and 17-year-old Unnati had reached the semifinals of the Taipei Open Super300 last week, but they will have to navigate the qualifying rounds to make it to the main draw here.

While Ayush will take on Finland's Joakim Oldorff in his opening qualifying match, Unnati faces Thailand's Thamonwan Nithiittikrai in the women's singles qualifiers.

Sen, on the other hand, will open his campaign against Ireland's Nhat Nguyen in the main draw. The former Commonwealth Games champion will be keen to test his fitness, having missed out on playing any matches at the Sudirman Cup due to an injury.

Priyanshu Rajawat, another rising talent, has struggled for consistency and will hope for a strong showing when he begins his campaign against Indonesia's Alwi Farhan.

In women's singles, Malvika Bansod - a finalist at the 2022 Syed Modi International and the 2023 Hylo Open, both Super 300 events - will face Turkey's Neslihan Yigit in her opening match in the main draw.

Former national champion Anupama Upadhyaya, who beat England's Miu Lin Ngan in the Sudirman Cup, will have a tough task against Thailand's former world champion Ratchanok Intanon in her opening round.

Rakshita Ramraj will open against Singapore's Yeo Jia Min, while Aakarshi Kashyap will face Japan's Kaoru Sugiyama.

In men's singles, former world number one Kidambi Srikanth, currently ranked 82nd, will continue his comeback trail. He faces fellow Indian S Sankar Muthusamy Subramanian – a player he defeated last week in Taipei – in the qualifiers. Sathish Karunakaran and Tharun Mannepalli are also in the fray in the men's singles qualifiers. In the women's qualifiers, Ira Sharma is the only other Indian in the fray, alongside Unnati.

Meanwhile, world No. 10 women's doubles pair Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand are set to return after missing the Sudirman Cup due to injuries. The duo, who broke into the top-10 last year, were forced to take a break due to a back injury to Gayatri and a shoulder issue to Treesa.

They will face the Malaysian pair of Ong Xin Yee and Carmen Ting in the opening round of the main draw.

In doubles, India will also have representation in the men's pair of Pruthvi Krishnamurthy Roy and Sai Pratheek K, and the women's duo of Kavipriya Selvam and Simran Singhi.

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