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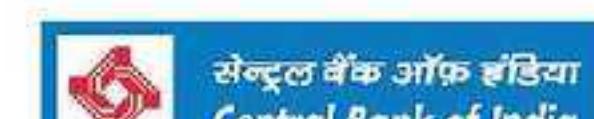
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Hindustan

Dust drapes Delhi



India Gate on Thursday. Delhi was cloaked in clouds of dust on Wednesday night and Thursday morning. Dust blew in from the northwest, severely shrouding visibility and kicking up pollution levels several times beyond the city's normal. VIPIN KUMAR/HT PHOTO

A 12-HOUR HAZE
The haze of dust persisted for nearly 12 hours, from 10pm on Wednesday till Thursday morning, said the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The air began to improve gradually after noon as the dust started to blow eastwards, said the agency.

VISIBILITY PLUNGES
Visibility dipped from 4,500 metres at 10 pm to 1,200 metres by 11:30 pm, with a subsequent drop in wind speed maintaining these elevated dust levels. Residents were caught off guard as IMD had forecast a thunder development

POLLUTION SOARS
Increased dust levels led to a spike in PM10 concentration. Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) data from its 24 stations showed hourly PM10 levels went up to 2,969 µg/m³ at Noida. The 24-hour safe standard for PM10 is 100 µg/m³.

PRESSURE GRADIENT
A high north-south pressure gradient over northwest India caused strong dust raising surface winds of 30-40 kmph over Punjab, Haryana, Delhi & north Rajasthan from the night of 14th May to the morning of 15th May, the Met department said. →P4

CBI sends fresh proof before Choksi hearing

Neeraj Chauhan

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Ahead of an Antwerp court's scheduled hearing of jailed fugitive diamantaire Mehul Choksi's bail plea on Friday, India has sent fresh evidence in four more bank fraud cases – other than the Punjab National Bank (PNB) case – along with warrants to the Belgian authorities in a bid to strengthen its extradition request, people familiar with the matter said on Thursday.

Indian authorities are also likely to hire a legal team in Europe to assist the local team of Belgian prosecutors during the extradition proceedings, they added.

Choksi, 65, was arrested on April 11 by the Antwerp police based on an extradition request sent by the Central Bureau of

UK court rejects Nirav Modi's bail in PNB case for 10th time

NEW DELHI: A UK court on Thursday rejected fugitive diamantaire Nirav Modi's bail for the 10th time in the Punjab National Bank (PNB) fraud case, accepting India's apprehensions that if released, he might flee, people familiar with the development said.

A CBI team was present in the high court during the hearing to assist the prosecutors. →HIC

Investigation (CBI) last year and has been lodged in a prison there for over a month now. While rejecting his plea for bail on April 22, a court of appeal in Antwerp said fears about him

fleeing are legitimate. CBI filed six bank fraud cases against Choksi and his companies between 2018 and 2022 involving amounts totaling

continued on →15

DON'T MODIFY LAYOUT PLAN OF RAJ OPEN JAIL: SC

Abraham Thomas

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Rajasthan government not to alter any further the layout plan of an open-air prison in Jaipur and outlined its purpose to bring inmates to society's mainstream. The bench ensured the facilities available to the inmates were not impacted by the proposed construction of a 300-bed hospital. →PTI

11 DHFL ACCUSED TURN APPROVERS, HANDED PARDONS

Neeraj Chauhan

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Eleven of the accused, out of 40 individuals named along with the promoters — Kapil and Dheeraj Wadhawan — of Dewan Housing Finance Ltd (DHFL) in a ₹34,000 crore bank fraud case, have turned approver for the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and have been granted pardon under the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC), people familiar with the matter said. →PTB

5.1% JOBLESS RATE IN APRIL, NSO SAYS IN 1ST MONTHLY LABOUR DATA SET

Abhishek Jha

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NEW DELHI: India's unemployment rate stood at 5.1% in April, the National Statistics Office (NSO) said on Thursday in its first ever monthly data on labour market indicators.

These monthly numbers, according to the ministry of statistics and programme implementation's advance release calendar, will come with a lag of about two weeks from the month of reporting, which is almost the same as India's inflation numbers.

This makes them a useful input in economic policy making, especially monetary policy, filling an important statistical vacuum. →PTB

{ SUPREME COURT ORDERS }

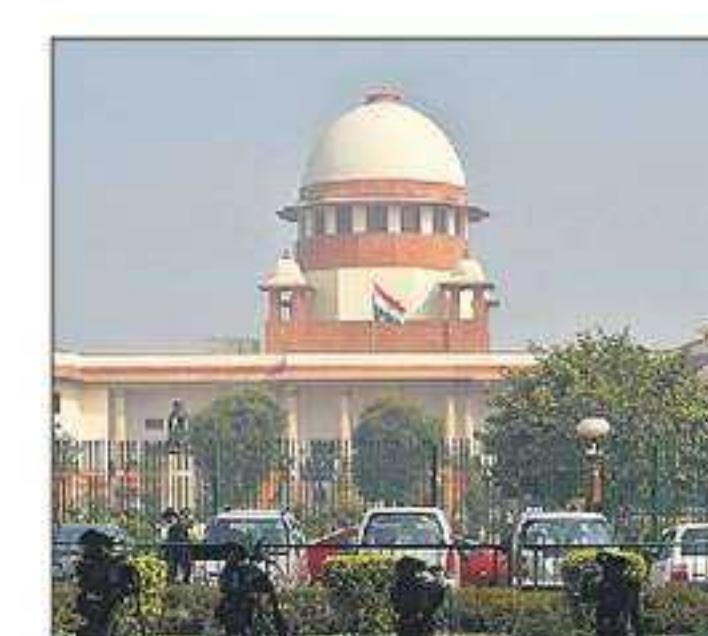
Take back forest land illegally in pvt hands'

Abraham Thomas

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NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday directed all the states and Union territories to constitute special investigation teams (SITs) to restore forest lands that have been illegally allotted to private entities and recover costs in cases where taking back possession was not in larger public interest.

The direction came in a judgment delivered in a matter related to "illegal" allotment of 11.89-hectare reserved forest land in Pune, Maharashtra to a housing society — Richie Rich Cooperative Housing Society Limited (RRCHS) — in October 1999. The court in its order



DELHI-BOUND BUS CATCHES FIRE IN LUCKNOW, 5 DEAD

HT Correspondent

letters@hindustantimes.com

LUCKNOW: Five people, including two children, died after a Delhi-bound private sleeper bus with 80 passengers on board went up in flames on Thursday near Kisan Path, a major roadway on the outskirts of Lucknow, police officers said.

They added that a preliminary probe suggests a short circuit led to the fire in the bus that was on its way to Delhi from Begusarai district of Bihar. →PTB

{ PRESIDENTIAL REFERENCE }

AG, SG, law officials huddled after SC's guv order, worked out 14 questions for prez letter

Rare reference under Article 143

Since Independence, the President has invoked Article 143 at least 14 times

ARTICLE 143: It empowers the President to seek the Supreme Court's opinion on questions of law or fact of public importance

PAST INSTANCES
Delhi Laws Act (1951): Laid down foundational principles on legislative delegation

Berubari Union (1960): Territorial cession to another country required a constitutional amendment under Article 368, not just a parliamentary law

Ramjanmabhoomi case (1993): The only reference declined by the Court. It refused to answer whether a temple existed beneath the Babri Masjid, citing judicial propriety and ongoing litigation — a rare assertion of the Court's discretionary boundary under Article 143.



for governors and the President to clear state bills.

The efforts – which included several rounds of meeting involving the offices of attorney general R Venkataramani, solicitor general Tushar Mehta, and the legislative wing of the Union law ministry – began shortly after the government received a certified copy of the judgment on April 12 and ended just a week before it was filed in the top court's registry on May 14, said the people cited above.

"The question of filing a review was not under consideration at any point of time," said one of the persons cited above. →PTB

NUMBER THEORY

How did the collegium system change apex court appointments?

By Nishant Ranjan

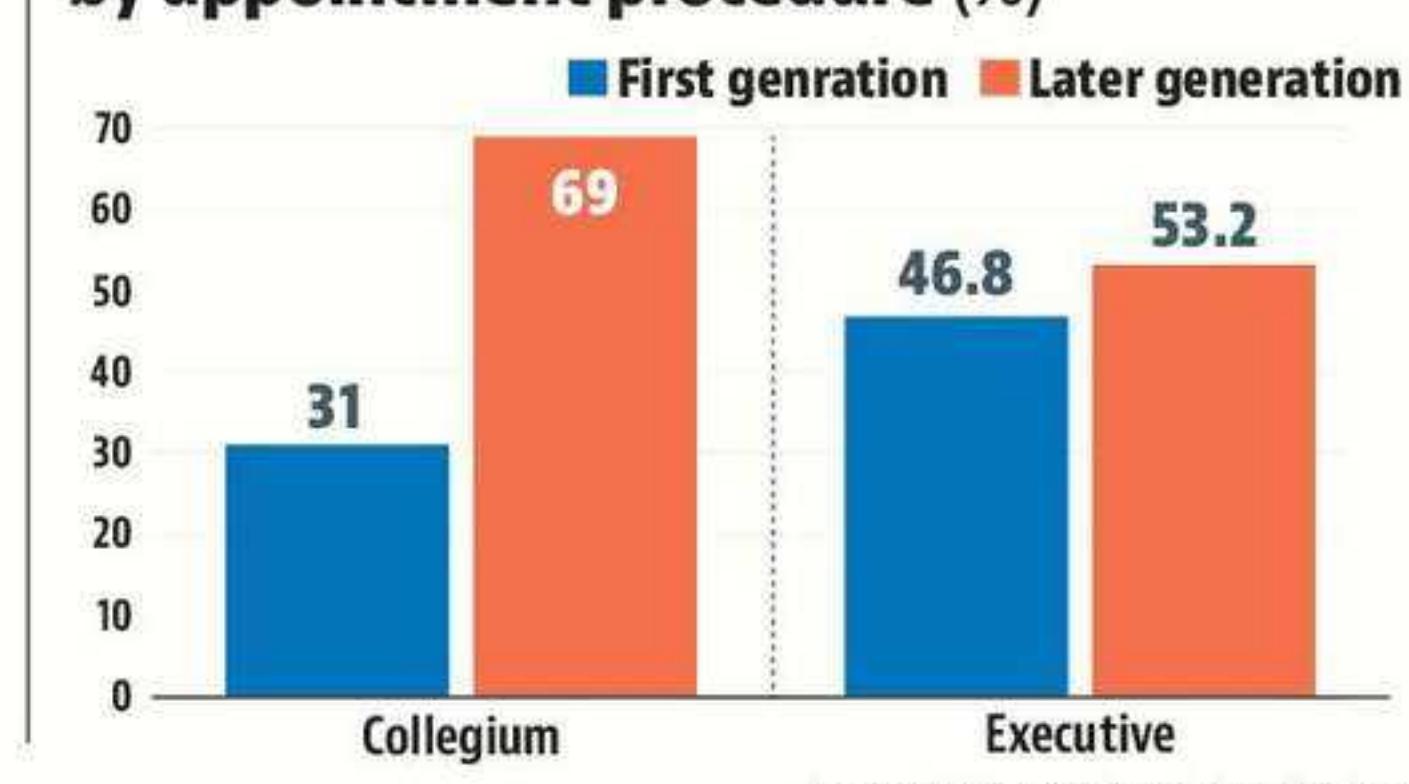
The second part of HT's three-part series on Supreme Court judges discussed inequality, by social group and high courts of origin. The last part looks at the impact of the collegium system on the appointment of Supreme Court judges. Appointment of Supreme Court judges was done by the executive until November 1993. This changed after the Supreme Court's ruling in the Supreme Court Advocates-on-Record Association versus Union of India case decided that a group of senior-most Supreme Court judges would recommend the appointment of Supreme Court and high court judges to the government. The

collegium consists of five and three members currently, including the CJI, for recommending judges to the Supreme Court and high courts respectively. To be sure, the government has refused some of these recommendations, and the collegium has accepted its view. However, there continues to be friction between the executive and judiciary on the issue of judicial appointments. The first Narendra Modi government brought a law to annul the collegium system, and the Supreme Court rejected it. These tensions make it worthwhile to see whether there is a discernible difference between the kind of appointments made before and after the collegium system came into place.

1 Almost half the judges appointed via the executive were first-generation lawyers as against less than a third for the collegium

Out of the 279 Supreme Court judges so far, 111 were appointed before the collegium system came into place. Almost half of the judges appointed before the collegium system – 52 out of 111 – were first-generation legal practitioners, according to HT's database. This number is significantly lower at less than one-third (52 out of the 168) for the judges appointed under the collegium system. Even a decade-wise disaggregation of the appointments under the executive and the collegium shows that the former did appoint a larger share of first-generation lawyer judges. Majority of all closely related Supreme Court judge pairs, as described in the first part of this series – have the elder judge preceding the collegium system and the younger judge after the collegium system came into place.

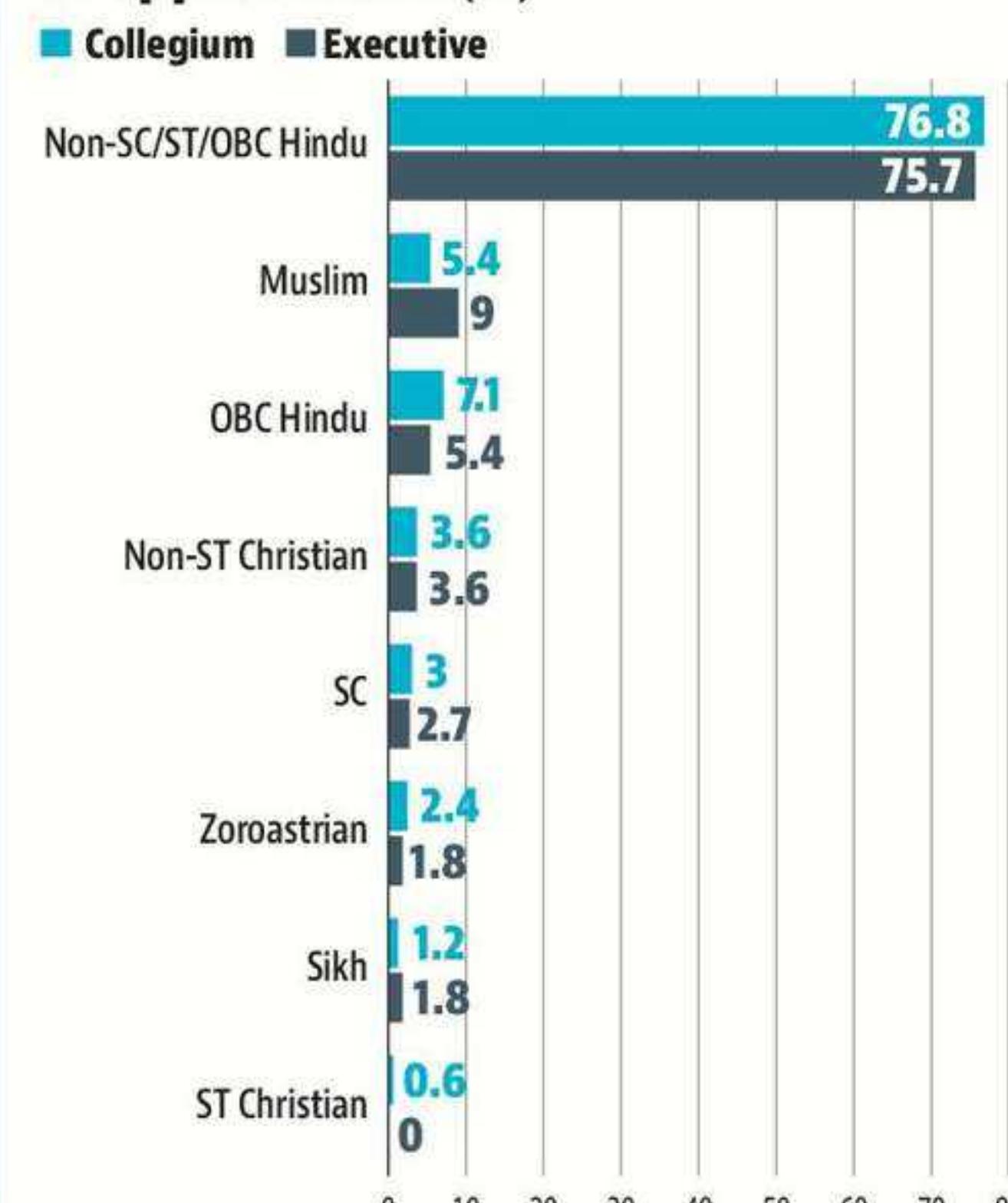
Distribution of Supreme Court judges as first or later generation legal practitioner by appointment procedure (%)



2 The collegium system has only led to an incremental change in the judges' social composition

While there is reason to believe that the collegium system has increased the probability of judicially connected persons being appointed Supreme Court judges, the social background of Supreme Court judges has not changed much in the pre- and post-collegium system era. To be sure, the collegium system has a slightly better record in appointing judges from SC-ST-OBC groups and also women. Of a total of eight judges from the SC groups, five were appointed by the collegium. The only judge from the ST community was appointed via collegium. Of the 51 Supreme Court judges who went on to become CJIs, the collegium appointed 21, and the remaining 30 were executive appointments. All the three of 51 CJIs (up to Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who retired on May 13) from SC and OBC groups were also appointed by the collegium. This number increases to four of 52 with Justice Gavai's appointment as CJI.

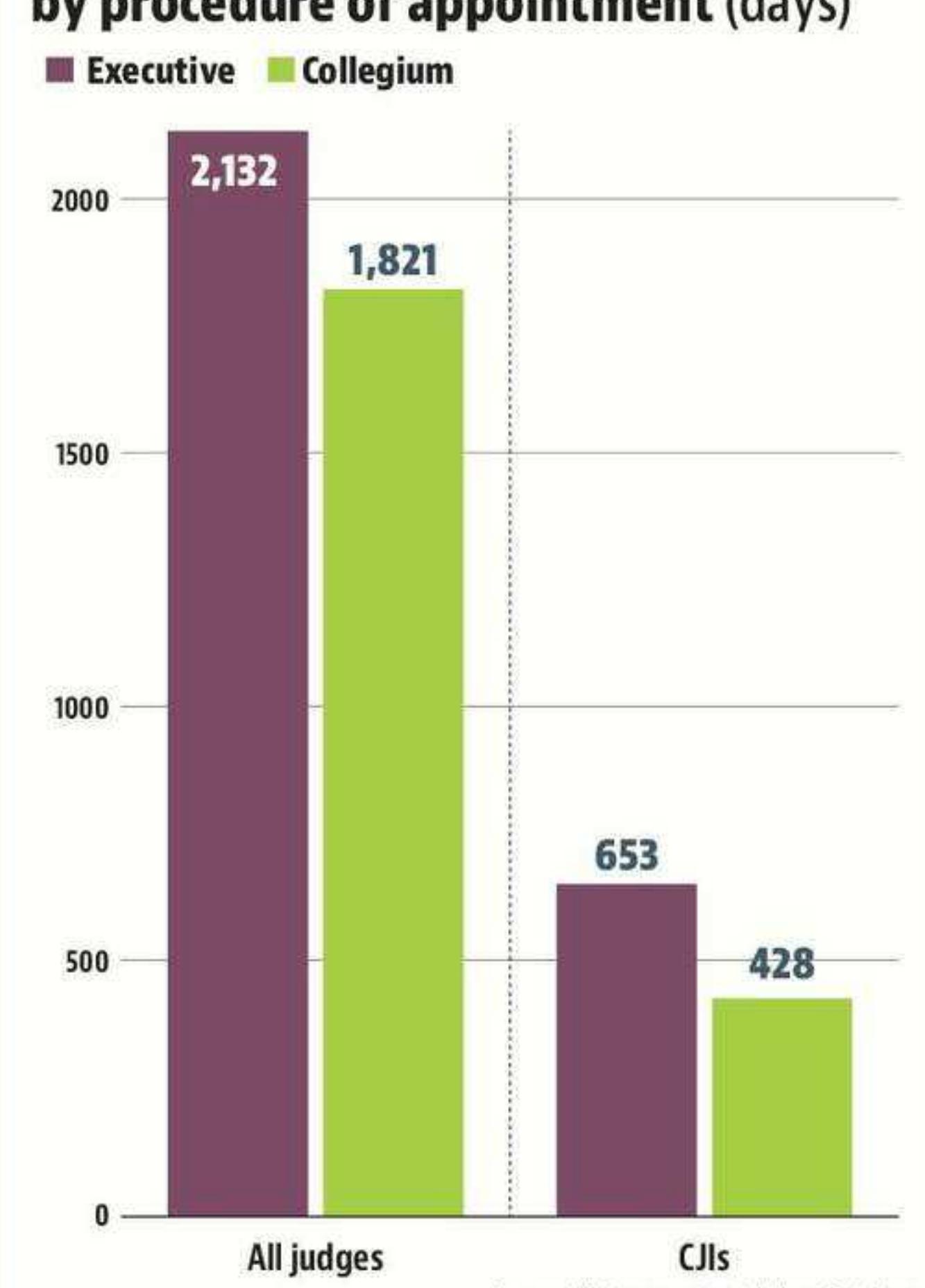
Social-religious composition of Supreme Court judges by procedure of appointment (%)



3 The average tenure of judges and CJIs appointed in 2010-2025 has been the lowest ever

Data shows that the average tenure of judges and CJIs appointed during the period 2010-2025 has been lowest ever since 1950-64. The average tenure of judges and CJIs appointed during the period 2010-2025 has been 1793 and 390 days respectively; a judge spends significant time in the Supreme Court before becoming the CJI. The mean tenure of CJIs decreased from 841 days during 1950-64 to 390 days during the latest period ending in 2025. The average tenure of judges appointed via executive was 2132 days. This decreased to 1821 days for the collegium appointments, a 14.6% decrease. The average tenure of CJIs appointed during the executive was 653 days which decreased to 428 days for the collegium appointments, a decrease of more than a third.

Mean tenure of Supreme Court judges by procedure of appointment (days)



This is the last of a three-part data journalism series on India's Supreme Court judges. The first part looked at family links or lack of it among India's Supreme Court judges. The second looked at the social and high-court backgrounds of Supreme Court judges.



SCAN THE QR CODES
TO READ PARTS 1 AND 2

Part 1: Only
1/3rd of all SC
judges have
been 1st-gen
lawyers



Part 2: The
skewed
social and
legal pool
of SC judges

Hindustan Times



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IAEA must monitor 'rogue' Pak's nuclear weapons arsenal: Rajnath

Rahul Singh
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Defence minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday questioned if nuclear weapons were safe in Pakistan's control and custody, and demanded Islamabad's arsenal be placed under the supervision of global nuclear watchdog International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), calling the country "irresponsible and rogue".

"I raise this question before the world: Are nuclear weapons safe in the hands of such an irresponsible and rogue nation? Pakistan's nuclear weapons should be brought under the supervision of the IAEA," Singh said while addressing soldiers at Srinagar's Badami Bagh Cantonment in Srinagar on Thursday.

His comments came even as IAEA said there was no radiation leak or release from any nuclear facility in Pakistan. "Based on information available to the IAEA, there has been no radiation leak or release from any nuclear facility in Pakistan," the watchdog said in a statement. India has already refuted reports that it targeted Pakistan's Kirana Hills area, which reportedly houses a nuclear facility, during a wave of airstrikes against terror hubs and military installations in the country.

Singh said India's unwavering resolve against Pakistani-backed terror -- demonstrated by Operation Sindoar -- was unaffected by its nuclear blackmail, adding that the world knows how Islamabad has issued nuclear threats to New Delhi on multiple occasions.

Operation Sindoar was continued on →15



Defence minister Rajnath Singh during his visit to Badami Bagh Cantonment in Srinagar on Thursday.

ARMY TAKING STEPS TO REDUCE LEVEL OF 'ALERTNESS' ON BORDERS WITH PAK

Rahul Singh
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Indian Army on Thursday said it will push "confidence building measures" along the border with Pakistan "to reduce the alertness level" there, hours after Pakistan's foreign minister Ishaq Dar said that the May 10 ceasefire between the Indian and Pakistani armies was extended till May 18.

The army did not comment on Dar's statement made in the Pakistani parliament or confirm if the two DGMOs spoke again on Thursday as he suggested. →P2

NO PLAN FOR TALKS, INDIA TO DECIDE ON WATERS ON ITS OWN

Rezaul H Laskar and Zia Haq
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: India has no plans to hold talks with Pakistani authorities on the Indus Waters Treaty, which will remain suspended, two people familiar with the matter said on Thursday in the wake of a letter from the Pakistani side seeking a review of the matter.

And India will continue to take independent actions on the Indus rivers on its side based on professional assessments of the country's needs by its engineers and is unlikely to respond to Pakistan's offer for talks. →P8

Missiles for military, drones for intel sites

Rezaul H Laskar
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: India resorted to a mix of precision strikes with drones targeting key Pakistani security and intelligence facilities and attacks with heavier long-range weapons such as the BrahMos cruise missile on terrorist and military infrastructure during Operation Sindoar, people familiar with the matter said on Thursday.

The drone strikes carried out in the initial stage, particularly on May 8, that targeted important military installations were meant

to signal the reach of the weaponry of the armed forces. The use of heavier weaponry, particularly the BrahMos missile, which has a range of about 450km for the air-launched version and about 800km for the land version, was meant to inflict greater damage on terrorist infrastructure and military facilities, the people said on condition of anonymity.

Among the locations targeted on May 8 were the Pakistan Army's General Headquarters, the Strategic Plans Division (SPD) and a wing of the ISI dealing with Kashmir in Rawalpindi. →P9

morestories

3 terrorists killed in encounter in J&K's Tral →P8

Flight ops restored at Jammu, Srinagar airports →P8

Jaishankar speaks to Taliban's acting foreign minister →P15



Other locations hit: Residence of the army's corps commander in Lahore, and a few locations within Malir cantonment in Karachi

morestories

3 terrorists killed in encounter in J&K's Tral →P8

Flight ops restored at Jammu, Srinagar airports →P8

Jaishankar speaks to Taliban's acting foreign minister →P15

Airport ops firm's clearance junked amid Turkey rift

Neha LM Tripathi
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Citing national security concerns, the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security has revoked the security clearance of Turkish-founded Celebi Airport Services Pvt Ltd, which handles ground-based services at 9 airports, including Delhi and Mumbai.

The development comes amid mounting tensions between India and Turkey over the latter's diplomatic and military ties to Pakistan. The Shiv Sena, a coalition partner in the Maharashtra government, had demanded that Mumbai airport cut ties with Celebi.

"Nothing is above the security of our nation and our fellow citizens. National interest and public safety are paramount and non-negotiable," said Civil Aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu in a press release, adding in a subsequent statement that the order would apply to the Turkish firm's associated companies in India.

Celebi and associated companies have around over 10,000 employees in India providing services such as passenger handling, baggage processing, aircraft loading, cargo management, and ramp services, according to a company statement. It also said that reports on its ownership structure and ties to Ankara were "misleading" and

morestories

Airports scramble to avoid disruption of services →P8

Rashtrapati Bhavan event with Turkish envoy deferred →P8

Trump drops Apple, zero tariff claims on India

HTC and Agencies
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI/DOHA: US President Donald Trump said on Thursday that India had offered a trade deal proposing "no tariffs" for American goods, a claim that comes as the two countries race to finalise an agreement before a July deadline.

The US president, speaking during a meeting in the Qatari capital Doha, also expressed his dissatisfaction with Apple's plan to invest in India.

"It is very hard to sell in India, and they are offering us a deal where basically they are willing to literally charge us no tariffs," Trump said, according to Reuters.

He also expressed dissatisfaction with Apple's plans to shift production to India, recalling a conversation with Apple CEO Tim Cook, who was not present at the event.

"Tim, we treated you very good, we put up with all the plants you built in China for years... we are not interested in you building in India. India can take care of themselves, they are doing very well. We want you to build here,"

US prez reiterates claim on Ind-Pak mediation talks

DOHA: US President Donald Trump repeated his claim yet again he "helped settle" tensions between India and Pakistan. "...And by the way, I don't want to say I did, but I sure as hell helped settle the problem between Pakistan and India last week, which was getting more and more hostile," he said. →P8

Trump said, recounting his message to Cook.

India's external affairs minister S Jaishankar responded with caution, emphasising that negotiations are still ongoing and any agreement must benefit both nations.

"On the trade remarks... between India and US, trade talks have been going on, negotiations have been going on," Jaishankar told reporters in New Delhi. "These are very complicated continued on →15

SC pulls up MP min for Col Qureshi comments

Abraham Thomas, Shruti Tomar and Monika Pandey
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI/BHOPAL/JABALPUR: The Supreme Court on Thursday pulled up Madhya Pradesh minister Kunwar Vijay Shah for his controversial comments on Colonel Sofiya Qureshi and said that by virtue of being in a "constitutional position" he should "exercise a degree of restraint".

The bench, led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Bhushan R Gavai, was hearing a plea filed by Shah seeking a stay on an FIR registered by the MP police on Wednesday on directions of the Madhya Pradesh high court.

The top court rapped Shah a day after the MP high court on Wednesday took suo motu cognizance of Shah's comments against Qureshi — one of the two women officers who briefed the nation on Operation Sindoar — and termed them disparaging and dangerous not just to the officer but to the armed forces itself. →P9

→RAM GOPAL STIRS CONTROVERSY, P9

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PAGE ONE PLUS

Steps planned to boost confidence at Indo-Pak border

Rahul Singh

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Indian Army on Thursday said it will push "confidence building measures" along the border with Pakistan "to reduce the alertness level" there, hours after Pakistan's foreign minister Ishaq Dar said that the May 10 ceasefire between the Indian and Pakistani armies was extended till May 18.

"Further to the understanding between the two DGMOs (directors general of military operations) on May 10, 2025, it has been decided to continue the confidence building measures (CBMs) to reduce the alertness level," the Indian Army said in a brief statement.

It did not comment on Dar's statement made in the Pakistani parliament or confirm if the two DGMOs spoke again on Thursday as he suggested.

The understanding between India and Pakistan to cease military hostilities was announced on May 10 in the evening, after Indian DGMO Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai and his Pakistani counterpart Major General Kashif Abdullah talked over the hotline.

The decision, announced by US President Donald Trump, ended four days of fierce fighting that began with the launch of Operation Sindo in the early hours of May 7. India has consistently said that the understanding was reached bilaterally.

The two DGMOs spoke again on May 12 to uphold the uneasy truce. The CBMs discussed then included continuing the May 10 commitment that both sides "must not fire a single shot" or initiate any aggressive action against each other, and consider troop reduction in forward areas.

The pause in hostilities addressed fears of a full-blown shooting war.

Earlier in the day, agencies reported that Dar told Pakistan's parliament that the truce stood extended till May 18 after both

sides had "military-to-military" communications on Wednesday and Thursday.

In his address, Dar said the two DGMOs would again get in touch on May 18. No details of the talks were shared, except that they agreed to respect the ceasefire.

India has not responded to the statement. To be sure, neither India nor Pakistan have earlier referred to the ceasefire as one that has to be extended periodically. Contours of the understanding remain unclear though New Delhi has said that it received a call from Pakistan on May 10, hours after India struck a number of military and air bases in the neighbouring country. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that India chose to consider Pakistan's "plea" after Islamabad said that it will not indulge in any sort of terror activities or military audacity any further.

Modi has also said that the eventual cessation of hostilities, announced on Saturday evening, came about after Pakistan was decimated militarily and came pleading for a ceasefire. But he categorically stated that Operation Sindo was not yet over.

We have only paused our retaliatory action against terror and military bases in Pakistan. In the coming days, every step taken by Pakistan will be monitored... any terror attack will get a befitting response, on our terms, in our way," Modi said in an address to the nation earlier this week.

Neither side has fired a single shot since May 10, a key condition for the ceasefire, though Pakistan has attempted to violate the truce with some drones sighted over Indian cities on Saturday night and Monday night.

Operation Sindo was India's direct military response to the April 22 terror strike at Pahalgam in Kashmir that killed 26 civilians — all men, and 24 Hindus — in what was the worst attack on civilians since the 26/11 Mumbai strikes.

{ BUSINESS } PETRO IMPORTS RISE

India's April trade deficit was highest since Nov '24



India's merchandise trade deficit was at its widest in five months in April, according to government data released on Thursday, as imports of petroleum products jumped, limiting the impact of an increase in exports to the United States. India's April trade deficit at \$26.42 billion was higher than the \$20 billion expected by economists in a Reuters poll, and rose from \$21.54 billion in the previous month. The trade deficit was the highest since November 2024.

{ WORLD } PARLEYS IN TURKEY

Peace deal unlikely as Putin declines to meet Zelensky



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Thursday he is sending a team headed by his defence minister to Istanbul for the first direct peace talks with a Russian delegation since the early weeks of Moscow's full-scale invasion in 2022. Zelensky made the move after Russian President Vladimir Putin stayed away from a face-to-face meeting with him that the Ukrainian leader had proposed.

{ MY INDIA } PROPOSAL IN COURT

Rape accused agrees to marry accuser, SC suspends jail term



The Supreme Court on Thursday suspended the 10-year jail term of a man accused of raping a woman after he exchanged flowers with the survivor and the two "unequivocally expressed their desire to marry" each other. The accused also proposed to the survivor amid applause from those present in the court. "The details of their marriage shall be worked out by their respective parents and we hope that the marriage takes place as expeditiously as possible," said the bench.

{ EYE ON THE FUTURE }

Trump plans for new warplanes, upgrades

President Donald Trump revealed plans for multiple new military aircraft developments during a business meeting in Doha, unveiling new F-series names.

The new warplanes

F-55: A proposed twin-engine warplane described as both an upgrade to the F-35 and a separate new development

F-22 Super: A modernized version of the Lockheed Martin F-22 Raptor stealth fighter

F-47: Recently awarded to Boeing, a "sixth-generation" fighter featuring a crewed aircraft with accompanying drones

What Trump said

"We're going to do an F-55... that'll be two engines and a super upgrade on the F-35, and then we're going to do the F-22 super," Trump stated, adding, "We're going to be going with it pretty quickly."

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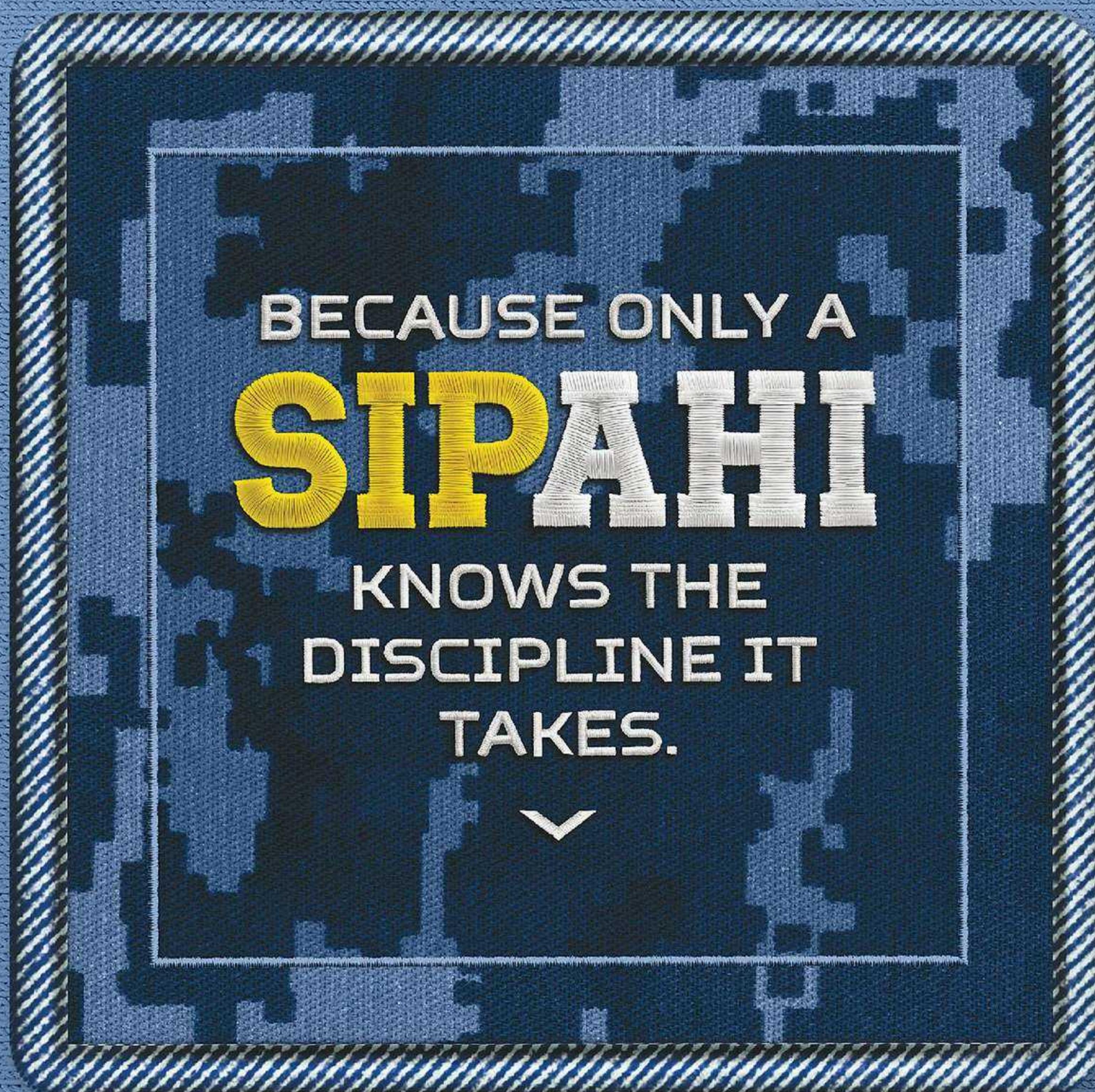
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MY DELHI

'Pre-monsoon' dust storm shrouds city

Jasjeet Gandhiok

jasjeet.gandhiok@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: A sudden burst of strong winds late Wednesday night carried dust from the Thar desert into Delhi, plunging the Capital and its surrounding areas into a 12-hour apocalyptic haze that blanketed the city until early Thursday afternoon. The dense cloud of dust sharply reduced visibility, left millions gasping for breath, and triggered a massive spike in pollution levels, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

The storm, which again caught forecasters and residents off guard, pushed PM10 levels—particulate matter 10 microns or less in diameter—to dangerously high concentrations. Between 1pm and noon the next day, Delhi's only two functioning air quality monitors recorded PM10 levels consistently hovering around 1,000 micrograms per cubic metre ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$), more than 10 times the safe limit. At one point, levels at Najafgarh shot up to $2,969\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

Visibility dropped precipitously—from 4,500 metres at 10pm to just 1,200 metres by 11:30pm—and remained poor into Thursday morning, with wind speeds falling to a near-calm 3–7 km/hr, allowing the dust to linger over Delhi-NCR.

Senior IMD scientist RK Jenamani said winds of 30–40 km/hr raised dust from the arid Thar region, which was then carried across Rajasthan, Punjab, and Haryana into Delhi. "The wind then slowed significantly, trapping the dust in the air. Visibility at Safdarjung and Palam remained between 1,200 and 1,500 metres," he said.

An IMD statement said a strong north-south pressure gradient over northwest India had caused dust-raising surface winds from May 14 night to the May 15 morning. "This led to dust advection from west Rajasthan to Delhi NCR via north Rajasthan, south Punjab, and south Haryana," it noted.

This blanket of dust was the result of dust storms that developed over parts of Rajasthan, combined with strong south-

westerly winds sweeping across the region. These winds, originated from the arid Thar desert and brought large volumes of dust into as far as Delhi," said Mahesh Palwai, vice president of private weather forecaster, Skymet. The Indira Gandhi International Airport reported its lowest visibility—1,200 metres—during this period.

By 1pm on Thursday, visibility had improved to around 4,000m as the dust drifted eastward.

Krishna Mishra, another IMD scientist, confirmed conditions had begun easing by afternoon.

Delhi Pollution Control Committee data showed a dramatic spike in PM10 levels across its 24 ambient air quality monitoring stations. The highest hourly reading was at Najafgarh, with $2,969\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ at 8am, followed by $2,396\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ at Ashok Vihar at 9am. The 24-hour safe standard for PM10 is just $100\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.

This spike pushed Delhi's average Air Quality Index (AQI) to 292 ("poor") by 4pm Thursday—more than double the AQI of 135 ("moderate") recorded the previous day. The last time pollution reached this level was on May 4, when AQI was 232.

Abbishhek Kar, senior programme lead at Council on Energy, Environment and Water said such storms are common in pre-monsoon months. "The focus now should be on protecting people. Authorities must use forecasting tools like the Air Quality Early Warning System and IMD bulletins," he said.

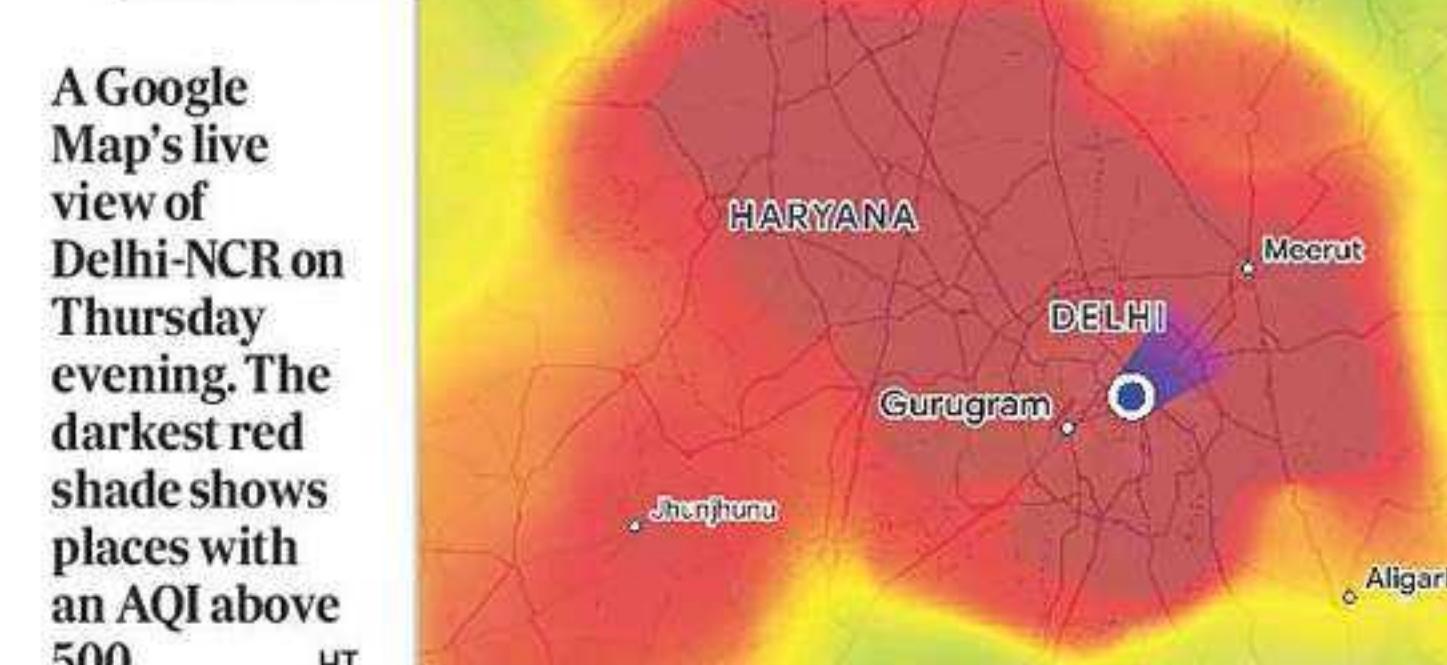
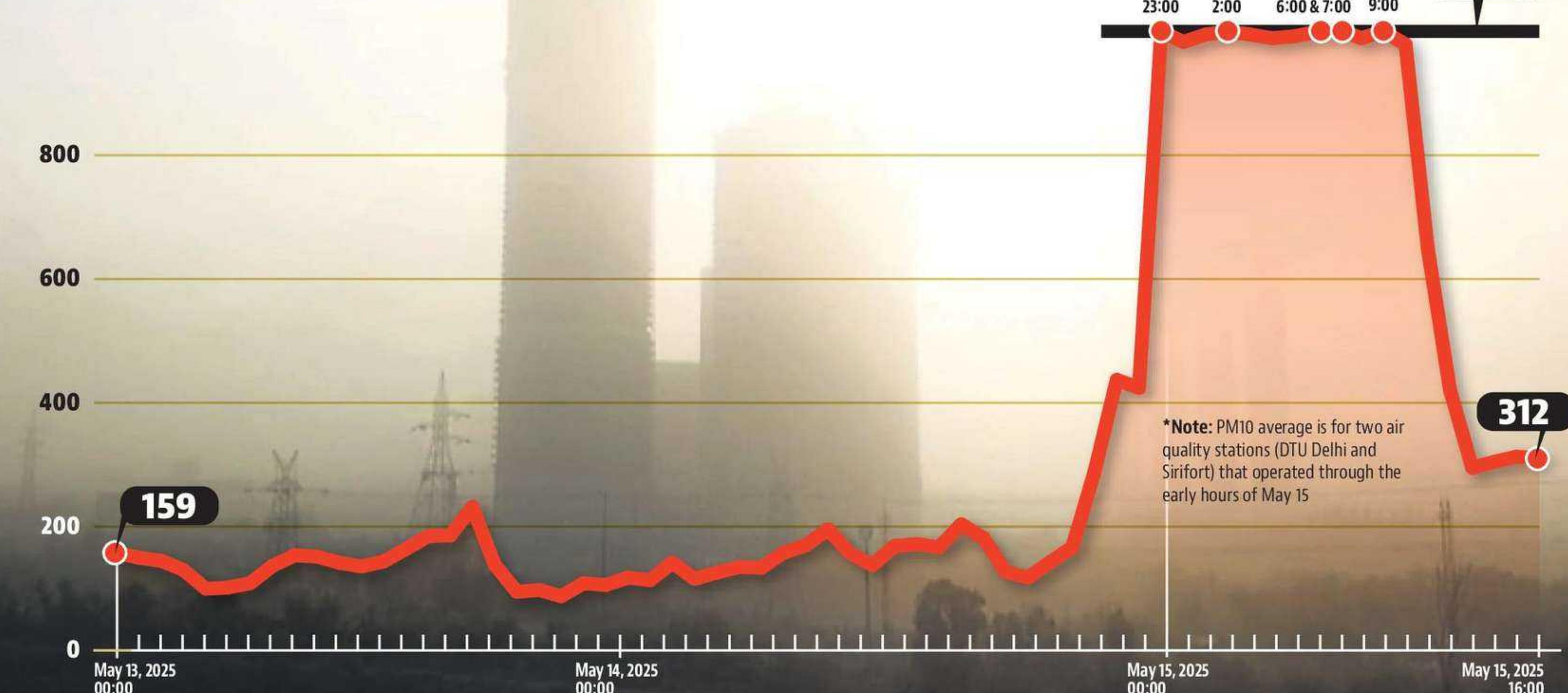
Temperatures also remained high, with a maximum of 40.6°C , a degree above normal and slightly higher than Wednesday's 40.4°C . For Friday, IMD has forecast very light rain, thunderstorms, and gusty winds of up to 50 km/hr during the night.

The toxic haze quickly became political fodder. The AAP blamed the BJP-led government for worsening air quality. Former CM Arvind Kejriwal posted on X: "Air pollution was never this bad during AAP regime at this time of the year."

Environment minister Maninder Singh Sirsa hit back, blaming the AAP for the Capital's environmental crisis.

How dust choked city, hour by hour

Average PM10 concentration*
(microgram per cubic metre)



NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr.DEE/EMU/GZB for and on behalf of President of India, Invites open e-tender for the under noted work:
1 Tender Notice No. 1 232Elect-EMU-WC-10-24-25
2 Name Complete dismantling of bogie, bolster overhauling of air spring fitted of the bogies etc. for 3-phase or conventional EMU/MEMU coach & 08 wheelers
3 Work Towing, hiring of Hydrat/CJB machine and Removal, dismantling and cleaning of Brake cylinder at EMU Car Shed, Ghaziabad for the period of 03 years
4 Tender cost NIL
5 Approximate cost Rs. 3,09,50,814.96 inclusive of GST
6 Earnest Money Rs. 3,04,800.00 (online payment mode available on IREPS website)
7 Completion period 36 Months
8 Validity of offer 60 days
9 Date & Time from tender advertised on IREPS website 14.05.2025 18:57 Hrs.
10 Date & Time from tender submission start and end 23.05.2025 to 06.06.2025 12:00 Hrs.
11 Date & Time of tender opening (immediately when tender submission ends) 06.06.2025 12:00 Hrs.
Note 1: All participants/Tenders will submit their requisite documents along with their tender offer. "No post tender correspondence for submission of additional document shall be entertained after opening of the tender. Even suo-moto post tender letters of the tenders shall be treated as null & void". Note 2 : Duplicate documents should not be enclosed/Up loaded. Tender Notice is available on website of www.ireps.gov.in No. 232-Elect-EMU-WC-10-24-25 Date : 14.05.2025 1431/2025

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SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General public is hereby informed that this Female (depicted in the photo) namely Sonam D/o Virender R/o H. No. 71, Vidhyanchal Apartment, Inner Enclave, Paschim Vihar, Delhi with her two child namely Vyom and Manyा has been missing from her home since 18.04.2025 at approx.

10.00 am. In this regard a DD No. 99A Dated 02.05.2025 has been registered at PS Paschim Vihar West, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out this female but no clue has come to light so far.

Physical description is as under:-

Sonam:- Sex: Female, Age: 35 years, Height: 4' 8" ft., Complexion: Wheatish, Wearing: Red Dark Colour Saree.

Vyom:- Sex: Male, Age: 15 years, Height: 4' 4" ft., Complexion: Shallow, Face: Round, Built: Normal.

Manyा:- Sex: Female, Age: 12 years, Height: 3' 9" ft.

Any person having information or clue about this missing female may kindly inform to the following address:-

SHO
Website: <http://cbi.nic.in> PS: Paschim Vihar West, Delhi
E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in Ph.: 011-25268394
Tel. No.: 011-24368638/24368641 Mob.: 7065036130
Fax No.: 011-24368639 DP/5749/OD/2025

SEARCH FOR MISSING



General public is hereby informed that a Girl namely Kamini D/o Mahesh R/o H. No. 145, Gal No. 08, Prem Vihar, Karawal Nagar, Delhi-94 has been missing since 05.05.2025 from the area of PS Karawal Nagar, Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 149/25 Dated 06.05.25 U/s 137(2) BNS has been Lodged at P.S Karawal Nagar, Delhi. Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace the Missing Girl, but no clue has come to light, so far. The description of the Missing Girl is as under:

Name: Kamini, **Gender:** Girl, **Age:** 17 years, **Height:** 4'10" ft, **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Built:** Thin, **Face:** Round, **Wearing:** Yellow Color Suit-Salwar and White Sport Shoes in Feet. If anyone has any information regarding this Missing Girl, kindly inform to the following address:

E-mail : cic@cbi.gov.in
Ph: 011-24368638, 24368641
Fax : 011-24368639
DP/5988/NE/2025

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male **Name:** Unknown, **S/o Unknown**, **R/o Unknown**, **Age:** About 70 years, **Height:** 5.4 feet, **Built:** Thin, **Complexion:** Shallow, wearing blue colour shirt and red colour checkdar gamchha, was found dead from Train No. 12555, Boggy No. S3, Sakurbasti Rly. Station. In this regard D.D. No. 5A, 6A & 8A dated 12.05.2025 has been lodged at P.S. Sarai Rohilla Rly. Station, New Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone numbers.

SHO - P.S. Sarai Rohilla Rly. Station, New Delhi,
Tel. No. 011-28711697,
DP/6066/Rly/2025

SEARCH FOR MISSING

General public is hereby informed that one female (depicted in the photo) Namely: Rasenethen Khatoon, W/o: Late Nai Natham, R/o: P.S. Dumra, Distt., Darbanga, Bihar has been Missing from Madina Masjid, Goyla Dairy, Delhi since 27.04.2025. In this regard a missing report case vide DD No.109A dated 27.04.2025 has been lodged at P.S Chhawla, New Delhi.

Her Physical description is as under:-

Sex: Female, **Age:** 60-70 Years, **Height:** 5' 2", **Complexion:** Wheatish, **Built:** Thin, **Face:** Oval, **Wearing:** White Kurta, Pink Saree and Slipper. Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing female but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone having any information about this female please inform to the following:-

Phone No.: 011-24368638, 011-24368641 | Fax no.: 011-24368639 | Email id: cic@cbi.gov.in | Website : <http://cbi.nic.in>

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION



General public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of male **Name:** Unknown, **S/o Unknown**, **R/o Unknown**, **Age:** About 50 years, **Height:** 5.6 feet, **Complexion:** Shallow, wearing red colour T-shirt & grey colour pant was found dead near Avanti Bal Chowk, Pul Mithai, Delhi. In this regard FIR No. 363/2025 u/s 281/106 (1) BNS dated 01.05.2025 has been registered at P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi.

Any person having any information or clue about the deceased may kindly inform to the undersigned on the following address or telephone numbers.

SHO - P.S. Lahori Gate, Delhi,
Tel. No. 8750870122,
9968099756
DP/6082/N/2025

For IMD, 3rd time is not a charm with forecast miss

Jasjeet Gandhiok

jasjeet.gandhiok@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Late Wednesday night, a dense haze of dust blanketed Delhi without warning, choking it through the night and into Thursday morning. The sudden intrusion of grit-laden air, which lingered until almost noon, brought visibility down and residents gasping for breath—yet again catching both citizens and authorities off guard.

At the centre of the storm, once more, is the India Meteorological Department (IMD), whose forecast had predicted only "thundery development" and winds of 15–25 km/hr, gusting up to 35 km/hr. Nowhere did it mention the scale or severity of the dust that would roll in from Rajasthan's Thar desert.

This marked the third time this month that Delhi's weather turned volatile with no meaningful alert from the country's official weather agency.

Madhavan Rajeevan, former secretary at the Union ministry of earth sciences, said dust

storms are typically easier to anticipate than localised thunderstorms. "Thunderstorms can emerge quickly over small regions, making them harder to model. But dust storms that span large distances can and should be predicted with better tools and interpretation," he said.

The haze on Wednesday was not a standalone event. On May 22, an intense thunderstorm lashed Delhi, flooding roads and neighbourhoods with 77mm of rain in just 24 hours—the second-highest such spell in May in recorded history. That day, IMD's forecast only mentioned "very light rain or drizzle."

Just over a week earlier, on May 13, a sudden storm had swept through Delhi with rain and visibility between 200–500m; a "severe" storm drops visibility below 200m with wind speeds above 62km/hr. IMD spokesperson Soma Sen Roy said that visibility in Delhi stayed around 1,200m, and thus, no coloured alert was warranted.

But critics weren't convinced. Ashwary Tiwari, an amateur meteorologist who tracks storms

via his IndiaMetSky account, said the storm originated on the outskirts of Pakistan and moved steadily eastward, covering vast areas of Rajasthan before reaching Delhi. "There was enough time to anticipate and issue a specific advisory," he said.

Such lapses are not new. Last year, IMD came under fire on June 28 when a massive and unpredicted storm dumped 91mm of rain on Delhi in just an hour, crippling infrastructure. With over 228mm in a 24-hour span, the event was later described by officials as "almost a cloudburst." IMD's forecast? "Light to moderate" rain.

As the haze lifted and life resumed on Thursday afternoon, experts said it was yet another reminder that Delhi, already one of the most polluted capitals in the world, needs more accurate and timely weather alerts—especially as climate volatility grows.

"Forecasting has improved, but interpretation has not kept pace," said Rajeevan. "We're still often responding to yesterday's weather while today chokes us."

{ DPCC TO INSTALL 32 STATIONS } 'LIKELY BY YEAR-END'

Like air, govt to assess water quality in real time at Yamuna, major drains

Jasjeet Gandhiok

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Delhi government will for the first time install 32 water quality monitoring stations at the Yamuna and city's drains for obtaining real-time pollution data for quick intervention, officials aware of the matter said on Thursday.

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), which will oversee the process, will award a tender worth ₹22 crore for installing 18 stations at major drains, and the remaining at various points of the Yamuna.

The project is likely to be completed towards the end of the year, environment minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa said.

"The tender for this was floated earlier and is now in the final stages. Bids have been received and it will soon be awarded," he said.

Experts appreciated the move but said that once these stations are operational only then will their use be identified.

A DPCC official said as per the initial plan, 18 stations will be installed at major polluting drains that flow into Yamuna, including Najafgarh drain, Shahdara

drain, Barapullah drain, Khyber pass drain and Metcalf House drain, among others.

On the river itself, six key locations have been selected—Palla, ISBT bridge, ITO bridge, Nizamuddin Bridge, Okhla barrage and Asgarpur.

DPCC the stations will provide real-time data, eliminating the need for manual collection of samples. At present, water samples are collected once a month from eight locations in the Yamuna, with a similar exercise carried out in drains. These samples are then tested in a lab. A DPCC official said the stations will help identify the parts of the

river that see pollution spikes.

The stations will monitor parameters such Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD), Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD), Dissolved Oxygen (DO), ammonia, total nitrogen, phosphates, and total suspended solids (TSS), among others.

In 2018, the National Green Tribunal (NGT)-appointed Yamuna Monitoring Committee (YMC) said only 2% stretch of the river in Delhi, or 22km

Fee hike: Parents in HC, seek govt takeover of DPS Dwarka

Shruti Kakkar

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Parents of over 100 students at Delhi Public School (DPS), Dwarka, have approached the Delhi high court seeking urgent intervention by the Directorate of Education (DoE) and lieutenant governor VK Saxena to take over the administration of the school, citing continued harassment of students over non-payment of fee hikes that lack regulatory approval.

The petition follows months of escalating conflict between the school and families, including allegations of student mistreatment, defiance of DoE directives, and fee increases without requisite sanction.

The petition follows months of escalating conflict between the school and families, including allegations of student mistreatment, defiance of DoE directives, and fee increases without requisite sanction.

In their plea, the parents submitted that the DoE, through a series of orders, had directed the school to refund excess and unapproved fees charged during the 2022–23 academic session and to refrain from harassing students over fee dues. Parents alleged that the school had not only failed to comply but had

also increased the fees for the 2025–26 session without securing the DoE's approval. The DoE was represented by standing counsel Sameer Vashisth.

During a brief hearing on Thursday, justice Vikas Mahajan suggested that parents deposit 50% of the hiked fee. However, this proposal was turned down by petitioners, citing their inability to pay. Their counsel, Sandeep Gupta, informed the court that a related matter concerning the reinstatement of 32 students—whose names were struck off the rolls over non-payment of hiked fee—was listed before another bench, headed by justice Sachin Datta, on Friday.

Counsel for the petitioner submits that the matter regarding the same school is coming up tomorrow. Accordingly, list the matter tomorrow," the court said.

The petition was filed just days after the school removed the names of the 32 students on May 9 and reportedly deployed bouncers to prevent them from entering the premises. The incident triggered protests by doz-

Take back 32 students struck off rolls over fee row: DoE tells DPS

Varun Bhandari

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Directorate of Education (DoE) on Thursday directed Delhi Public School, Dwarka, to immediately reinstate 32 students struck off the rolls over unpaid fee, calling the move a violation of court orders.

Citing a recent inspection, the DoE said the school sent students home without parental consent and withheld admit cards over fee

disputes. "No child should suffer because of a difference over fee," the DoE said, noting the matter is pending in the Delhi high court.

The action follows the HC's April 16 directive barring the school from isolating or discriminating against students unable to pay revised fees. "Take back the names of these 32 students and any others removed for non-payment of the alleged increased fee," said Sushita Biju, Deputy Director of Education.

high court on April 16, when justice Datta condemned its treatment of students—who had been confined to the library for failing to pay the increased fees—as "shabby and inhuman". Citing an inspection report by the dis-

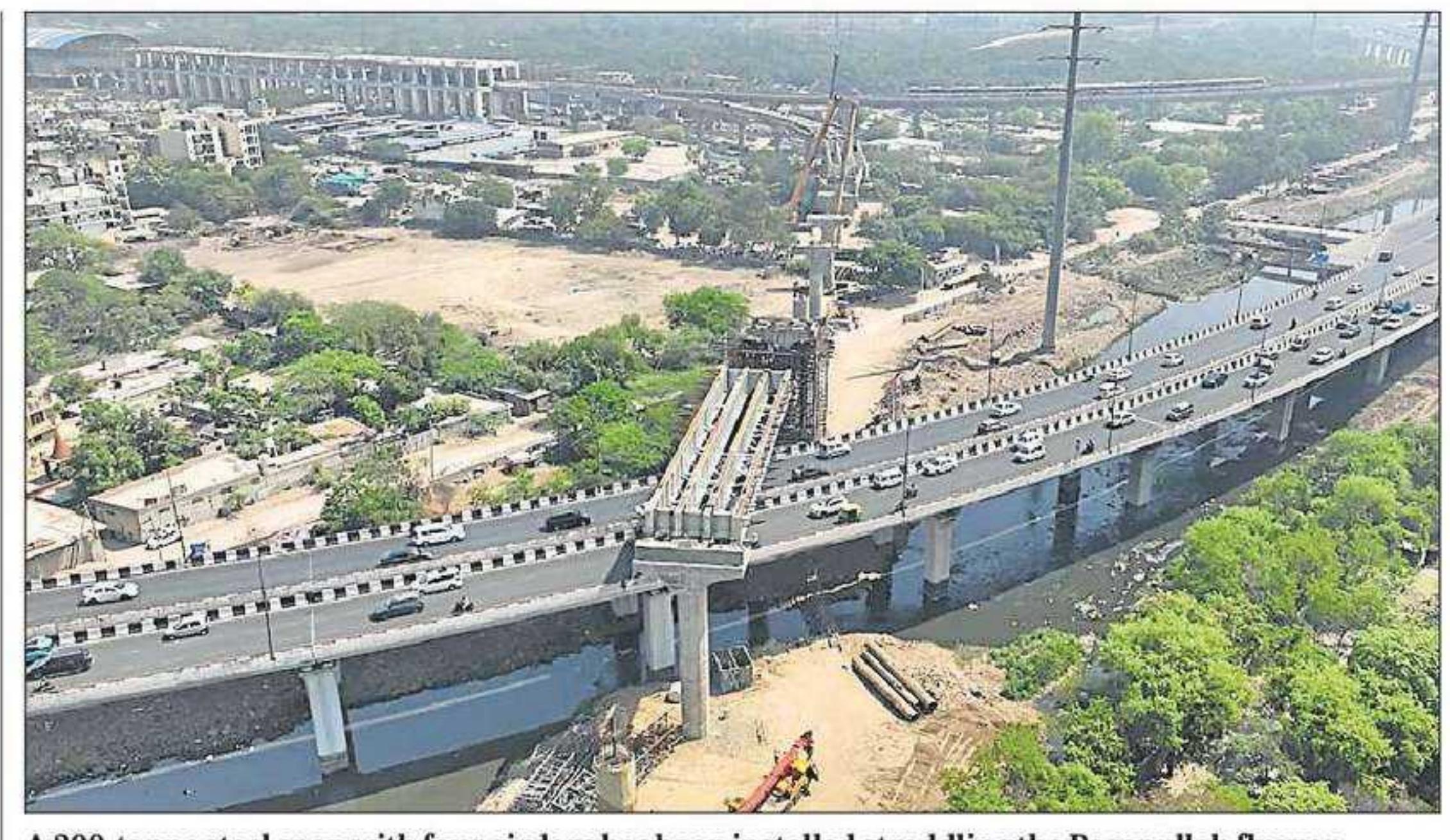
trict magistrate, the court observed that "the school deserves to be shut down" and held that an inability to pay fees does not entitle a school to subject students to "such indignity".

The court directed the school to immediately stop confining students to the library or denying them access to classes and facilities. It also instructed the DoE to conduct regular inspections to ensure compliance.

The latest petition also seeks directions to the DoE to ensure that DPS Dwarka charges only the fees approved for the 2025–26 academic session. The parents argued that the school's defiance of regulatory orders created an untenable situation.

"On a bare perusal of these rejection orders by DoE, Delhi, it is apparent that the school is involved in profiteering and commercialisation, diversion of funds, non-compliance of the accounting standards and even following prudent accounting practices," the petition said.

The matter will be heard further on Friday.



A 200-tonne steel span with four girders has been installed straddling the Barapullah flyover, connecting Sarai Kale Khan station with the upcoming Jangpura stabling yard. HTPHOTO

Span for RRTS laid over Barapullah

Snehil Sinha

snehil.sinha@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) has completed the installation of a 200-tonne steel span with four girders over the Barapullah flyover, connecting Sarai Kale Khan station with the upcoming Jangpura stabling yard on the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS Corridor, officials said on Thursday.

The installation was carried out in coordination with the

public works department (PWD) and Delhi traffic police and executed over 10 nights to minimise disruption to traffic, said officials. Additionally, officials said the Jangpura stabling yard, near Sarai Kale Khan station, is being developed to house RRTS trains.

"For the construction of a viaduct in the elevated section of the RRTS corridor, NCRTC usually erects pillars at an average distance of 34 metres," said NCRTC spokesperson Punitet Vats. He said in some areas, where the corridor crosses riv-

Two shoot dead man on busy road

Jignasa Sinha

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NEW DELHI: Two men on a motorcycle intercepted a car on a busy Mehrauli road on Thursday afternoon and shot dead its 24-year-old driver before fleeing, in what police described as a premeditated murder linked to a property dispute.

The victim was identified as Arun Lohiya, a businessman dealing in scrap and based in southwest Delhi's Aya Nagar. On the passenger seat of the black Mahindra Scorpio was his 50-year-old father, Rambir Lohiya, who police said was not targeted.

The father and son were returning from the Saket court after attending a hearing in an attempted murder case.



The spot where the shooting took place on Mehrauli Road on Thursday afternoon. (Inset) Victim Arun Lohiya. HT PHOTOS

The shooting unfolded in full public view near Chhattarpur Metro station around 1pm, bringing traffic to a standstill. According to locals and police, the assailants fired over 10–12 rounds—some aimed at Lohiya

and his car, others into the air. Eyewitnesses said they tried to stop the attackers, even hurling helmets at them, but the duo managed to escape. Police have identified the suspects and are probing the murder, which they

said was due to personal enmity—the victim and the accused hail from the same village.

DCP (South) Ankit Chauhan said, "Arun was rushed to the hospital but was declared brought dead. His father was unharmed. Preliminary investigation shows they were returning from a court hearing in an attempted murder case registered in Fatehpur Beri, in which Arun was the accused."

"There's a history of cross-complaints between the families. Arun had assaulted one of the accused last year, who was hospitalised for months. The accused plotted this attack as revenge," said an officer. Chauhan said teams are searching the suspects. Police are also probing the suspects' links to the Rohit Chaudhary gang.

Ex-CJI Chandrachud joins NLU as professor



where Chandrachud will guide cutting-edge research.

"His legacy in constitutional morality, transformative constitutionalism, and dynamic interpretation of fundamental rights offers unparalleled empirical and doctrinal material for academic inquiry," Bajpai said.

The university will launch a new initiative titled, "In the Spirit of Justice: The DYC Distinguished Lecture Series", starting July, which will aim to tackle contemporary legal challenges through the lens of Chandrachud's jurisprudence.

Chandrachud, who demitted office in November 2024 after a two-year tenure as the 50th CJI, is widely regarded as a progressive voice in judiciary.

As part of the collaboration, NLU Delhi will establish a Centre for Constitutional Studies,

Global investors' meet likely to be held next Jan-Feb, says CM Gupta

Alok KN Mishra

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Chief minister Rekha Gupta on Thursday announced plans for a grand global investor summit to be held in January–February 2026, focusing on sectors like artificial intelligence (AI), information technology (IT), IT-enabled services (ITES), and banking, financial services, and insurance (BFSI). The summit aims to attract major international investment and position Delhi as a global business hub.

After a meeting with industries minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa and senior officials, Gupta also said a new trader welfare board will be formed to resolve trade-related issues swiftly and represent the business community's concerns to policymakers. "The board will support small, medium, and large-scale traders and implement welfare schemes

while pushing for reforms to ease business operations," her office said in a statement.

She added that a new Industrial Policy and Warehouse Policy will be launched soon to promote industrial activity, boost logistics, and create a more investment-friendly climate in Delhi. These policies will especially benefit small and medium enterprises and encourage the use of modern technologies.

The government also plans to develop a high-tech industrial hub in Ranikhera and roll out a dedicated policy for start-ups.

Gupta announced the establishment of Delhi's first E-waste Eco Park on a 21-acre site in Holambi Kalan. The facility will promote safe disposal and recycling of electronic waste and include infrastructure for testing, training, and waste management. Officials said the park will serve as a model for sustainable industrial development.

₹1,400cr CM Fund set up to bridge infra shortfalls

Chief Minister Development Fund

CORPUS
₹1,400 crore
(FY 2025–26)
MAX PROJECT COST
₹10 crore
(relaxable by CM)

KEY FOCUS AREAS

- Public parks, footpaths, approach roads
- Hostels for working women
- Slum cluster improvement
- Community halls, school renovations
- Sports facilities
- Sustainability projects



CM Rekha Gupta with LG VK Saxena and other leaders at the inauguration of piped natural gas (PNG) supply to 111 villages on Thursday. HT

HOW FUNDS WILL BE RELEASED

Funds to be tied to work	10% After CM approval (mobilisation)	30% Post estimate & admin sanction	30% After 50% work completion	30% On full completion
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Unified data hub on cards to aid citizens

Alok KN Mishra

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Delhi government has initiated work on the Delhi Unified Citizen Data Platform (D-UCDP), a centralised data repository to create a "golden record" for every citizen enrolled under government schemes.

The planning department, after due scrutiny, will submit the proposals to the CM for approval. Once approved, the department concerned can engage agencies to prepare estimates and execute the project," the official said.

As per the CMDF guidelines, each project proposal must include a need assessment and a comprehensive execution plan which is to be submitted to the planning department, which is the nodal implementing agency.

The planning department, after due scrutiny, will submit the proposals to the CM for approval. Once approved, the department concerned can engage agencies to prepare estimates and execute the project," the official said.

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No garbage mounds in Delhi in 3 yrs, says Sirsa

Paras Singh

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NEW DELHI: Environment minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa on Thursday expressed confidence that "garbage mountains will disappear from the face of Delhi by 2028". Sirsa made the remarks while inspecting ongoing biomining work at the Okhla landfill, one of Delhi's most visible environmental challenges.

Spread over 62 acres, the Okhla Sanitary Landfill (SLF) has long been a legacy dumpsite. As reported by HT on Thursday, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) plans to divert around 90,000 tonnes of fresh waste annually from the Ghazipur landfill to Okhla ahead of the monsoon due to slow processing at the former, as part of its ongoing biomining efforts.

"More than 30 acres of (Okhla) landfill have been successfully reclaimed, with the landfill's height brought down drastically from 60 metres to 20 metres... The newly formed Delhi government's efforts will lead to the complete removal of garbage mountains of Delhi by 2028," Sirsa said. The target is to



Manjinder Singh Sirsa (centre) during his inspection at the Okhla landfill on Thursday.

HT PHOTO

remove 30 lakh metric tonnes of waste from the site by December 2025. "I assure the people of Delhi that just as the dinosaurs were wiped out from the earth, similarly... these mountains of garbage will also disappear from Delhi," he later posted on X.

Mayor Raja Iqbal Singh said biomining at Okhla is on track to be completed by October.

"While the deadline is set for December 2025, work is currently progressing ahead of schedule, with a revised internal target of October 2025," Sirsa's office added.

MP Ramvir Singh Bidhuri, who also visited the site, said, "The garbage mountains at the Okhla landfill site are the biggest issue in my constituency... This will be eradicated before 2026, and a green area will be developed."

MCD began biomining at legacy sites—Okhla, Balswa and Ghazipur—in 2019, targeting 240 lakh tonnes of waste. Of the initial 6 million metric tonnes at Okhla, 5.5 million have been cleared, with 2.9 million remaining. The site is slated to be cleared by March 2027.

ONLY 45% OF CAPITAL'S BWGs COMPOST WET WASTE, SAYS MCD

Paras Singh

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: Less than 50% of identified Bulk Waste Generators (BWGs) in Delhi are composting wet waste, even as landfills overflow, MCD data shows.

Of 3,073 BWGs, only 1,372 have begun on-site composting, despite repeated MCD warnings and Supreme Court directives. BWGs—commercial units, hotels, hospitals, and housing societies generating over 100kg of waste daily—are mandated to process wet waste in-situ, according to MCD data.

Only 2,416 BWGs are registered on MCD's 311 app, officials said. "Efforts are being made to ensure the remaining BWGs pursue on-site waste processing," says an MCD report dated May 9. These BWGs generate 261.87 tonnes of waste daily.

Environmentalists called the numbers inadequate. "A composting policy is needed, with capital and operational support," said Bharati Chaturvedi of Chintan.

HT's queries to the MCD spokesperson went unanswered.

MAN KILLED BY PARTNER'S KIN; HIS BROTHERS HURT IN PASCHIM VIHAR

NEW DELHI: A 27-year-old man was stabbed to death and his three brothers injured in Jwala-puri, allegedly by relatives of a woman he was in a relationship with, police said.

The woman's family opposed the relationship, which is believed to be the motive. The incident was reported to Paschim Vihar police station early Thursday. The deceased was Mohammed Sohail; his brothers Ali, Praveen, and Asad suffered minor injuries.

Initial probe revealed the family's denial of the relationship. However, those who attacked the victim were relatives of the woman. Her father was also involved in the murder but wasn't present at the spot," an officer said. **HEMAMI BHANDARI**

Blaze guts GGS college library



A massive fire broke out at the library of Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce in Pitampura around 9.30am on Thursday. No injuries were reported, fire officials said. After receiving the call, 11 fire tenders were rushed to the spot. The blaze spread rapidly, engulfing the first, second, and third floors of the library, they added.

SANCHIT KHANNA/HT PHOTO

EOW BUSTS ₹6CR SCRAP RACKET AFTER ACCUSED SURRENDERS

Sanjeev K Jha

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NEW DELHI: The Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Delhi Police on Tuesday arrested a 41-year-old man for allegedly orchestrating a ₹6.35 crore fraud through a bogus scrap trading business that duped at least 38 people. The accused, identified as Zamil Akhtar, was arrested after he surrendered at Karkardooma Court following months on the run, police said.

According to DCP (EOW) Vikram K Porwal, Akhtar operated the scheme from New Muzaffabad in northeast Delhi, luring dozens of investors with fake promises of high returns from a non-existent scrap trading venture.

Delhiwale

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Clicking Delhi, pre-Instagram

One of the ways of studying the capital's recent past

PUBLIC INTEREST 150 years ago, in 1875, Old Delhi's Jama Masjid was snapped by German photographer John Edward Sache. On the photos, the 17th century monument looks completely empty. So do its surroundings. Today, the same spaces are always packed with people, so much so that the landscape captured in the photos looks utterly unrecognisable.

Like any living place, Delhi has recast its character many times over. The old photos of the city show what has changed and what hasn't. The best of these images came out of a Walled City establishment that no longer exists. In the early decades of the twentieth century, the photo studio of H.A. Mirza & Sons in Chandni Chowk's Faiz Bazar produced a series of postcards showing the capital's monuments. The cards were photographed in Delhi and printed in Germany (the H.A. Mirza & Sons postcard in the photo above shows a solitary man in Safdarjung's Tomb). The postcards show evocative depictions of Delhi's monuments and streets, but hardly any Delhi walla can be spotted on them. That said, each photo has the symmetrical harmony of a Persian garden, everything looking so assuredly in place that the viewer feels this

world would last forever.

Yet, these images belong to a severely unstable world. Delhi was still recovering from the 1857 uprising against the British that had led to the fall of the Mughals and the massacre of thousands of Delhibalas. The imminent partition of India would again transform the city. These postcard photos might accurately render the Dilli of a certain moment, but they inadvertently suggest deception, in light of what we know.

Moreover, it is frustrating that Instagram didn't exist in that decisive era. There's little visual record of the ordinary Delhiwale—their homes, dresses, and the other details of their daily realities, including the mohalla shops and bazaar lanes. Some time ago, this reporter discovered an early twentieth century portrait belonging to the family album of an Old Delhi resident. The fragile print is partly torn and has yellowed over time, but the people in it are clearly visible. The bearded man in the centre is in a striped shawl and a turki topi. Seeming assured about the longevity of his world, his hands are placed on his lap. In his great novel, French author Marcel Proust wrote, "The past is hidden somewhere outside the realm, beyond the reach of intellect, in some material object..." By that logic, this photo's regal figure, frozen in time, does conceal the spirit of Delhi's lapsed past.



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With profound sorrow we announce the sad demise of **Smt. Bimla Devi Poddar**, lovingly known as Barima, a presence that shaped our lives through the wisdom of silence, affection, and quiet dignity.

As the Founder of Jnana Pravaha in Varanasi, she nurtured Indian art, culture, and heritage.

For her lifelong contributions, she was conferred the Padma Shri by the President of India, and received a D.Litt. from Kashi Vidyapeeth University.

Today, her absence echoes in the spaces she once made warm.

Yet her values continue to guide us in every step.

Her grace and kindness will live on in our memories and actions.

In reverence and remembrance of the matriarch of Poddar Neotia family.

Gayatri Neotia Krishna Neotia

Harshavardhan and Madhu Neotia

Smriti and Gautam Morarka

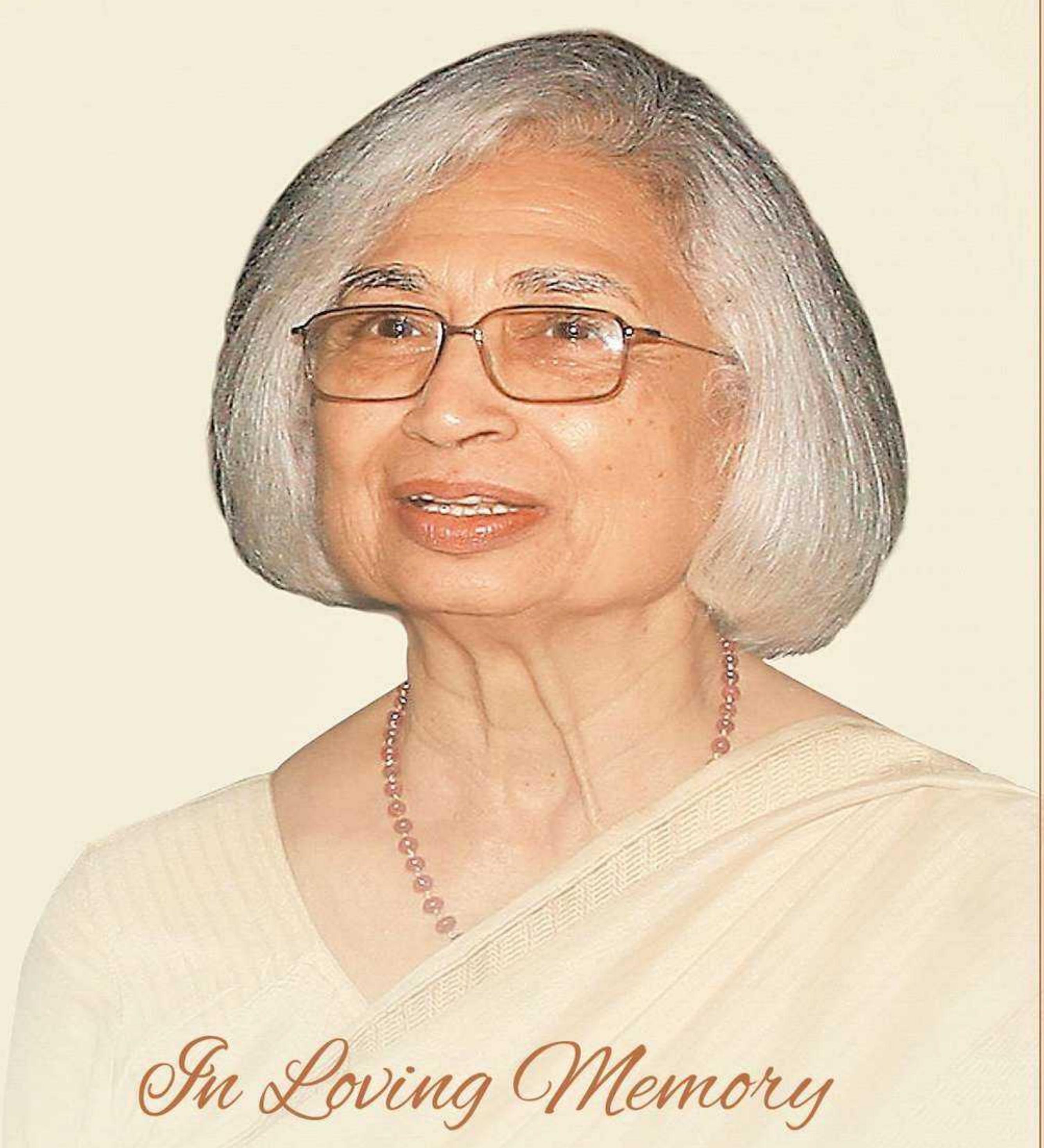
Shraddha Neotia

Parthiv and Mallika

Priyanka, Pranay, Paroma, Ishani and Kaartikeya and

the extended Ambuja Neotia Parivaar.

A prayer meeting to remember her legacy and celebrate her life will be held on Sunday, 18th May from 4.30-6 pm at Raajkutir, Swabhumi, Kolkata



In Loving Memory

SMT. BIMLA DEVI PODDAR

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AmbujaNeotia

No plans for talks with Pak on suspended Indus treaty: India

Rezaul H Laskar and Zia Haq

NEW DELHI: India has no plans to hold talks with Pakistani authorities on the Indus Waters Treaty, which will remain suspended, two people familiar with the matter said on Thursday in the wake of a letter from the Pakistani side seeking a review of the matter.

And India will continue to take independent actions on the Indus rivers on its side based on professional assessments of the country's needs by its engineers and is unlikely to respond to Pakistan's offer for talks on the now-suspended water-sharing treaty, a third person said.

Holding the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 in abeyance was among a raft of punitive measures announced by the Cabinet Committee on Security a day after the Pulwama terror attack on April 22 that killed 26 civilians. Even after India and Pakistan reached an understanding on stopping military actions on May 10 following four days of strikes and counter-strikes, Indian officials made it clear the punitive measures would remain in force.

After Debachree Mukherjee, secretary in the Jal Shakti ministry, conveyed the decision on the Indus Waters Treaty to Pakistan's secretary for water resources, Syed Ali Murtaza, in an official letter despatched on April 24, the Pakistani side sent a response that laid out its position. Murtaza is understood to have said in the response that Pakistan considers India's decision to hold the treaty in abeyance as unilateral and a violation of the provisions of the pact, which doesn't allow for the exit of a party. The response is believed to have come in before the launch of Operation Sindoor on May 7.

The Indian side has no plans to engage with Pakistan on the Indus Waters Treaty despite the receipt of the response from the Pakistani side and this status will continue till Pakistan stops backing cross-border terrorism, the two people cited above said on condition of anonymity.

India's position was clearly outlined by the foreign secretary at the media briefing on April 23 when he said the Indus Waters Treaty will be held in abeyance 'until Pakistan credibly and irrevocably abjures its support for cross-border terrorism,' one of the two people cited above said on condition of anonymity.

Since suspending the Indus Waters Treaty on April 23, India has held back all gauge and discharge data of the rivers from Pakistan's Indus commissionerate, which it historically shared under the pact, according to the third person.

"These inputs are used by the neighbouring country to verify if India has adhered to the treaty but the treaty is now under suspension, which we have already intimated to Pakistan," the third person said, confirming India is in receipt of a communication sent by Pakistan more than a week ago, in which it offered to start negotiations to revive the treaty.

In its letter, Pakistan urged



What the EAM said

On Kashmir issue: "The only thing which remains to be discussed on Kashmir is the vacating of illegally occupied Indian territory in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir"



On third-party mediation: "Where Pakistan is concerned, our relations, our dealings with them will be bilateral, and strictly bilateral"



On discussions involving terrorism: "PM made it very clear that talks with Pakistan will be only on terror. Pakistan has a list of terrorists that needs to be handed over, and they have to shut down terror infrastructure"



EAM S Jaishankar at the Honduran embassy on Thursday

Talks with Pakistan only on terrorism: Jaishankar

Rezaul H Laskar

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: India is willing to hold talks with Pakistan only on the issue of terror and the Indus Waters Treaty will remain in abeyance until cross-border terrorism by Pakistan is "irrevocably stopped", external affairs minister S Jaishankar said on Thursday.

The only issue related to Jammu and Kashmir that New Delhi is willing to discuss with Islamabad is the vacating of the parts of the region illegally occupied by Pakistan, Jaishankar said on the margins of an event to inaugurate the new embassy of Honduras.

"I think the Prime Minister made it very clear that the only talks with Pakistan will be on terror, that Pakistan has a list of terrorists who need to be handed over, they have to shut down the terrorist infrastructure," he said. "They know what to do. We are prepared to discuss with them what is to be done on terrorism. Those are the talks which are feasible."

Jaishankar pointed out that the Cabinet Committee on Security and the government

were very clear that the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 "will continue to be held in abeyance until cross-border terrorism by Pakistan is credibly and irreversibly stopped".

He also made it clear that the "only thing which remains to be discussed on Kashmir is the vacating of illegally occupied Indian territory in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir". He added, "We are open to discussing that with Pakistan...The government's position is very, very clear."

Jaishankar's remarks came a day after Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif offered to hold talks with India on a range of issues, including Kashmir and the Indus Waters Treaty.

In an apparent reference to offers of mediation on the Kashmir issue by US President Donald Trump, Jaishankar said that India's relations and dealings with Pakistan "will be bilateral and strictly bilateral". This has been the national consensus for many years and "there is absolutely no change in that consensus that deals with Pakistan will be bilateral", he said.

The people also said the role of the World Bank, which had brokered the treaty in 1960, is limited to appointing either a neutral expert or a court of arbitration for deciding on disputes related to cross-border rivers, and it cannot decide on larger issues such as keeping the pact in abeyance or proposed negotiations to amend the pact.

The Indus Waters Treaty has not been amended since it was signed in Karachi on September 19, 1960, by then Pakistan president Mohammad Ayub Khan, then Indian prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru and WAB Iliff of the World Bank.

At the time of independence in

Under the treaty's rules, India is allowed to carry out flushing operations only in the month of August but the two dams were flushed early this month based on safety requirements, according to this person.

India will not share surplus/deficit flow data on the Indus rivers from July 1 to October 10 — mandatory under the pact — as there are no plans to resume communications between the Indus commissioners, the fourth official said.

Since the treaty was kept in abeyance, India has not been transferring district and tehsil (sub-district) level irrigated-crop area stations for the western rivers for the ensuing kharif (monsoon crop) season, which India was required to do under the treaty.

If India releases water during what are expected to be heavy monsoon months this summer, Pakistan could witness large-scale flooding, experts say.

"The flushing of Baglihar and Salal dam gates didn't have a very big impact downstream in Pakistan just yet, but there could be serious consequences in the coming months. India is well within its rights to suspend the treaty because of the disadvantages it was creating for India," said Shashi Shekhar, former Union water resources secretary.

On April 23, Union Jal Shakti minister CR Paatil had said India won't give a drop of water to Pakistan, while PM Narendra Modi said "water and blood can't flow together".

Baglihar is a 900 MW hydropower project with a reservoir capacity of 475 million cubic metres. Electricity produced from its turbines feeds the grid in Haryana, which purchases the power through two distributors — Dakshin Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam and Uttar Haryana Bijli Vitran Nigam.

Nearly 80% of irrigated land in Pakistan's breadbasket, including Punjab, depends on water from the Indus river system, which is also important for drinking and power.

India is set to expedite work on six dams in the Kashmir region. These include Kishenganga, Ratle, Miyar Nallah, Lower Kalnai and Pakal Dul power projects aside from the Tulbul navigation project.

Ties between India and Turkey have come under significant strain after the latter condemned Operation Sindoar — India's military response to the Pulwama terror attack — and extended diplomatic and military support to Pakistan. The defence ministry also indicated that Pakistan used Turkish-made drones to attack targets in India during the four-day clash.

From travel platforms and accommodation service providers to traders, several sectors have called for suspending ties with Turkey for its support to Pakistan.

On Wednesday, online travel portal EaseMyTrip offered free change and cancellation waivers to travellers. "After the Pulwama attack, while many stayed silent, EaseMyTrip was the first to offer free change and cancellation waivers to travellers," the firm said in its advertisement published in a leading daily.

Travel company Cox & Kings announced the temporary suspension of its travel offerings to Turkey. Other travel firms such as IXIGO suspended flight and hotel bookings to Turkey, while the travel accommodation firm Go Homestays ended its partnership with Turkish Airlines.

OPERATORS OF DELHI, MUMBAI, BENGALURU, AHMEDABAD AND GOA AIRPORTS HAVE SAID THEY WERE ENDING TIES WITH CELEBI

passes to Celebi staff to enable them to work for other ground handling agencies," said an official familiar with the matter, who requested anonymity.

Industry analysts suggest that while airport operators appear to have contingency plans in place, the immediate challenge will be maintaining services at the affected airports while new service providers fully assume responsibilities.

Civil aviation minister Ram Mohan Naidu said efforts were being made to accommodate Celebi employees with other ground-handling firms to ensure continuity. Celebi has over 10,000 employees in India, according to a company statement.

The company provides services at Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Cochin, Kannur, Chennai, and the MOPA airport in Goa. It also runs one of Delhi airport's two cargo terminals as a joint venture with the airport operator.

The operators of Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Ahmedabad and Goa said they were ending ground handling agreements with Celebi and making alternative arrangements for avoiding disruptions.

Officials close to the development said that BCAS is working directly with airport operators to ensure smooth transitions.

The Celebi staff in all nine airports will be moved to other ground handling agencies.

BCAS has taken up the task of helping in smooth transitioning of staff and will issue special

Adani ends ties with China's DragonPass

MUMBAI: Adani Airport Holdings on Thursday said it has terminated its association with airport lounge services membership programme DragonPass with immediate effect.

Adani Digital Labs, the digital arm of Adani Group, only last week announced its partnership with DragonPass to offer a wide network of lounges at Adani-managed airports and beyond, offering passengers convenience and a seamless and comfortable lounge experience.

"Our association with DragonPass... has been terminated with immediate effect..." Spokesperson for Adani Airport Holdings said.

Europe.

Mark D Martin, CEO of Martin Consulting, warned of potential disruptions: "The government withdrawing the security clearance of Celebi will have a rippling effect on domestic and international import and export cargo movement. Costs for cargo handling are expected to skyrocket. The public can expect delays in import and export cargo clearance, transhipment, and customs processing dwindle time."

Martin added that "aviation should be kept away from geopolitical dynamics" and noted that "Celebi has had an impeccable safety and security track record in India working with CISF and the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security, raising the bar with airport security and bomb detection."

PAK PM OFFERS DIALOGUE WITH INDIA 'FOR PEACE'

Press Trust of India

letters@hindustantimes.com

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday extended an offer of talks to India, saying Pakistan is ready to engage "for peace".

Shehbaz made the comments during a visit to the Kamra air base in the country's Punjab province where he interacted with officers and soldiers involved in the recent military confrontation with India. "We are ready to talk with it (India) for peace," he said.

The Prime Minister added that "the conditions for peace" include the Kashmir issue.

This was Shehbaz's second visit to a defence facility following the ceasefire agreement between India and Pakistan on May 10 after four days of cross-border strikes.

EVENT INVOLVING TURKISH ENVOY AT PREZ HOUSE PUT OFF

Shashank Mattoo

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: A ceremony due to be held at Rashtrapati Bhavan for foreign envoys, including Turkey's new ambassador Ali Mursat Ersoy, to formally present their credentials to President Droupadi Murmu was deferred on Thursday, officials said.

The credential ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan which was to be held today has been deferred due to scheduling issues," said the external publicity division of the ministry of external affairs on Thursday. A spokesperson for Rashtrapati Bhavan also confirmed the same.

The development comes amid mounting tensions between India and Turkey over the latter's diplomatic and military ties to Pakistan.

Ersoy was among the envoys expected to present his credentials to President Murmu, people aware of the matter said. Turkey's newly appointed envoy previously served as the country's ambassador to China between 2013 and 2017. He has also served in Washington DC, Athens and London in the course of a 34-year career.

Aside from Turkey, the envoys of four other nations were also expected to present their credentials.

'Helped settle India-Pak tensions'

DOHA: US President Donald Trump on Thursday repeated his claim yet again that he "helped settle" the tensions between India and Pakistan.

"...And by the way, I don't want to say I did, but I sure as hell helped settle the problem between Pakistan and India last week, which was getting more and more hostile," he said while addressing US military personnel at al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar.

"And all of a sudden, you'll start seeing missiles of a different type. And we got it set-

tled. I hope, I hope I don't walk out of here and two days later find out that it's not settled, but I think it is settled." Trump said.

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

Trump was the first to announce that the two sides had reached an understanding to halt military actions, and the state department subsequently described the development as a "US-brokered ceasefire".

Trump has also offered to mediate on the Kashmir issue and claimed he used trade to stop what could have been a "bad nuclear war" between the two countries.

India has consistently maintained that the understanding was reached between the two countries and ruled out any talks. In an apparent reference to offers of mediation on the Kashmir issue by Trump, external affairs minister S Jaishankar, on Thursday, said that India's relations and dealings with Pakistan "will be bilateral and strictly bilateral".

Travel company Cox & Kings announced the temporary suspension of its travel offerings to Turkey. Other travel firms such as IXIGO suspended flight and hotel bookings to Turkey, while the travel accommodation firm Go Homestays ended its partnership with Turkish Airlines.

Universities like JNU and Jamia Millia Islamia have suspended academic ties with Turkish varsities

According to the India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), a trust established by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, bilateral trade between India and Turkey stood at \$10.4 billion during the financial year 2023-24.

In the entertainment sector, both All-India Cine Workers Association and the Federation of Western India Cine Employees issued statements urging film producers to reconsider Turkey as a shooting destination.

Academic institutions also joined the wave. On Wednesday, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) announced it would end an academic agreement with Turkey's Inonu University citing national security concerns.

A day later, Maulana Azad National Urdu University and Jamia Millia Islamia announced the cancellation of their Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Turkish institutions.

Meanwhile, traders called for an immediate ban on the import of Turkish apples and other goods. Talking to the news agency ANI, apple farmer Akshay Thakur said: "This is the right time for us to ban the import of apples. Or the import duty should be increased..."

The credential ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan which was to be held today has been deferred due to scheduling issues," said the external publicity division of the ministry of external affairs on Thursday. A spokesperson for Rashtrapati Bhavan also confirmed the same.

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Aside from Turkey, the envoys of four other nations were also expected to present their credentials.



Security personnel stand guard at the site of the encounter in Tral area of Pulwama district in J&K on Thursday.

3 terrorists killed in J&K's Tral encounter

HT Correspondent

letters@hindustantimes.com

SRINAGAR: Three Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) terrorists were killed in an encounter with security forces in Tral area of Pulwama district in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, officers aware of the matter said.

This was the second encounter in south Kashmir since Tuesday,

when forces killed three local Lashkar-e-Taiba and TRF terrorists, including an operations commander of LeT.

"The eliminated terrorists have been identified as Asif Ahmed Sheikh, Amir Nazir Wani and Yawar Ahmed Bhat, from whom three AK-series rifles, twelve magazines, three grenades and various other war-like stores have been recovered," he added.



Army's Chinari Corps said in a post on X.

After security forces got specific information on the movement of terrorists in the Nader Tral area of Awantipora, the army, police and CRPF launched the joint operation against the militants, the officers said.

Speaking to reporters near the encounter site

India's precision strikes and drones achieved twofold goal

Rezaul H Laskar

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: India resorted to a mix of precision strikes with drones targeting key Pakistani security and intelligence facilities and attacks with heavier long-range weapons such as the BrahMos cruise missile on terrorist and military infrastructure during Operation Sindo, people familiar with the matter said on Thursday, adding that the purpose was twofold.

The drone strikes carried out in the initial stage, particularly on May 8, that targeted important military installations were meant to signal the reach of the weaponry of the armed forces. The use of heavier weaponry, particularly the BrahMos missile, which has a range of about 450km for the air-launched version and about 800km for the land version, was meant to inflict greater damage on terrorist infrastructure and military facilities, the people said on condition of anonymity.

Among the locations that



Indian drones hit a wing of the ISI that deals with Kashmir located near Rawalpindi cricket stadium.

were targeted with drones in the strikes on May 8 were the Pakistan Army's General Headquarters, the Strategic Plans Division (SPD) and a wing of the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) dealing with Kashmir in Rawalpindi, the residence of the army's corps commander in Lahore in Punjab province, and a few locations within Malir cantonment in Karachi in Sindh province, the people said.

To be sure, the drone strikes didn't cause widespread damage and were carried out more to demonstrate the reach of the weaponry of the armed forces, the people said.

Several of these strikes – such as the ones in Rawalpindi on the army's General Headquarters, the Strategic Plans Division and the Joint Intelligence-North

wing of the ISI, which deals with Kashmir, and on the National Defence Complex (NDC) in Attock district, which builds transporter-erector-launcher vehicles for missiles, saw the drones hitting the periphery of the complexes, the people said.

According to reports in the Pakistani media, at least one person was killed in a drone strike near the cricket stadium in Rawalpindi, which is adjacent to the ISI facility, while another person was killed in a drone strike in Attock in the area where the NDC complex is located.

The BrahMos missile was used in the strike on the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) complex at Bahawalpur in Punjab province on May 7, when India targeted terrorist infrastructure at nine locations in Pakistan and PoK, the people said.

The JeM base was among the first few targets struck on May 7 and it was targeted with the "most potent weapons available" with India's armed forces, one of the people cited above said.

The BrahMos missiles were

also used to target eight Pakistani airbases including the Nur Khan airbase in Rawalpindi and the Bholari airbase at Jamshoro district of Sindh province, the people said.

The people declined to go into the details of these strikes but most of the information available in the open domain appeared to suggest that the air-launched version of the missile was used in these strikes.

Experts who analysed a video that was posted on social media of the May 7 strikes on Bahawalpur also said that the impact appeared to have been caused by a powerful missile.

India launched Operation Sindo on May 7 by targeting terrorist infrastructure at nine locations linked to groups such as the JeM, Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Hizbul Mujahideen. This triggered four days of strikes and counter-strikes with drones, missiles and long-range weapons before the two sides reached an understanding on stopping firing and military actions on May 10.

Central forces to stay in riot-hit Murshidabad: HC

Tanmay Chatterjee

letters@hindustantimes.com

KOLKATA: The Calcutta high court on Thursday extended the deployment of central paramilitary forces in Murshidabad district of West Bengal, which was rocked by riots last month, until further orders.

The bench of justices Soumen Sen and Raja Basu Chowdhury, was hearing a petition filed by BJP leader Suvenu Adhikari, who is also the leader of opposition in the state assembly, seeking deployment and transfer of violence-related cases to the National Investigation Agency.

The high court had on April 12 ordered deployment of CAPF in Murshidabad district in view of communal violence.

Murshidabad's Jangipur sub-

Tushar Mehta to lead govt lawyers' team for trial of 26/11 accused Rana

Neeraj Chauhan

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Thursday appointed a team of lawyers headed by Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to conduct the trial against Tahawwur Rana, Pakistani-born Canadian citizen extradited from the US to India last month in the 26/11 Mumbai attacks probe.

"...the central government hereby appoints a team of special public prosecutors headed by Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General of India, with SV Raju, additional Solicitor General, along with Dayan Krishnan, senior advocate, and Narendra Mann, advocate, for conducting trial and other matters related to NIA case RC-04/2009/NIA/DLI (26/11 case) on behalf of the National



Tahawwur Rana

Investigation Agency before the NIA special courts at Delhi, high court of Delhi and Supreme Court for a period of 3 years from the date of publication of this notification or till the completion of trial of the said case, whichever is earlier..." the ministry of home affairs said in a notification.

Krishnan and Mann were already appointed as special prosecutors in the case last

month. The US government extradited Rana to India on April 10 after which NIA arrested him and interrogated him for 30 days before he was sent to Tihar prison last week.

NIA has claimed in its court documents that Rana was part of 26/11 Mumbai attacks conspiracy since 2006 and had even visited India between November 13 and 21, 2008. Just before the attacks, he was in Dubai and had met his handler and former Pakistani army officer, Abdul Rehman Pasha, and later went to China. From China, he travelled back to the US on the first day of attacks, November 26, 2008. Rana is accused of facilitating a cover for Headley, a US citizen, to travel to Mumbai for the reconnaissance of potential attack sites for LeT.

SC slams minister for comments on Col Sofiya Qureshi

Abraham Thomas, Shruti Tomar and Monika Pandey

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI/BHOPAL/JABALPUR:

The Supreme Court on Thursday pulled up Madhya Pradesh minister Kunwar Vijay Shah for his controversial comments on Colonel Sofiya Qureshi and said that by virtue of being in a "constitutional position" he should "exercise a degree of restraint".

The people declined to go into the details of these strikes but most of the information available in the open domain appeared to suggest that the air-launched version of the missile was used in these strikes.

Experts who analysed a video

that was posted on social media

of the May 7 strikes on Bahawalpur also said that the impact

appeared to have been caused by

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India launched Operation Sindo

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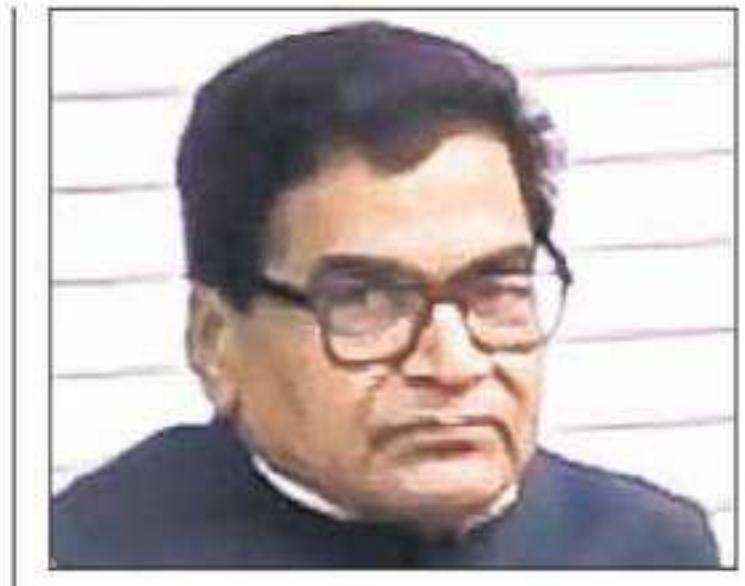
reached an understanding on

stopping firing and military

actions on May 10.



Kunwar Vijay Shah



Ramgopal Yadav

NOW, SP LEADER'S REMARK ON WING COMMANDER'S CASTE SPARK ROW

HT Correspondent

letters@hindustantimes.com

LUCKNOW: Samajwadi Party leader Ramgopal Yadav on Thursday sparked a controversy when he said Colonel Sofiya Qureshi was targeted by a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) minister as she is a Muslim, but Wing Commander Yomika Singh was spared thinking she was a Rajput.

Condemning the remarks of Yadav, Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath said that the uniform of armed forces is not seen through "casteist glasses" as every soldier performs "Rashtradharma" and is not a representative of any caste or religion.

Wing Commander Singh was a regular face in the press briefings on Operation Sindo along with foreign secretary Vikram Misri and Colonel Sofiya Qureshi.

While taking a dig at the Tiranga Yatra being organised by BJP across the country, Yadav at a programme in Moradabad, said, "They do everything only for elections."

Referring to the comment made by Madhya Pradesh minister Vijay Shah on Colonel Qureshi, he said, "One of their ministers, Shah, was targeted by a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) minister as she is a Muslim, but Wing Commander Yomika Singh was and neither did he know about Air Marshal AK Bharti, otherwise they would have abused them too."

Adityanath said Yadav's remarks not only show his narrow thinking but are also against the honour of the Indian army.

In a post on X, he said, "The uniform of the army is not seen through 'casteist glasses'. Every soldier of the Indian Army performs 'Rashtradharma' and is not a representative of any caste or religion."

eighty. On Thursday, the HC pulled up the state government for filing the FIR in a manner "to assist" Shah to get it quashed at a later date.

"There is not a single mention of the actions of the suspect, which would satisfy the ingredients of the offences which have been registered against him," the high court bench of justices Atul Sreedharan and Anuradha Shukla said.

"The FIR has been drawn in a manner so as to assist the suspect Vijay Shah to be able to have the FIR quashed on a later date. At this juncture this Court desists from embarking on a journey to find out as to who was responsible in the chain of command of the state police for this clumsy attempt..." it said.

The FIR against Shah was filed under sections 152 (an act endangering sovereignty, unity and integrity of India), 196(1) (an act which is prejudicial to maintenance of harmony between different religious, racial, language or regional groups or castes or communities and which disturbs or is likely to disturb public tranquillity) and 197 (l) (c) (causing disharmony or feelings of enmity) at the Manipur police station in Indore rural on Wednesday night.

The BJ leader's comments came at an event in Indore on Monday. "Those who widowed our daughters, we sent a sister of their own to teach them a lesson," he said in apparent reference to Qureshi. On Tuesday, he apologised for the remarks after condemnation from the opposition and censure from his own party.

Meanwhile, the Karnataka government on Thursday directed the state police to file a separate FIR against Shah.

GOVERNMENT OF PUNJAB DEPARTMENT OF EXCISE AND TAXATION

PUBLIC NOTICE

Invitation of applications for filling up the post of Chairman, VAT Tribunal, Punjab.

1.0 Applications are invited for the above post from the interested candidates.

2.0 Qualification

Sub-Section 4 of Punjab VAT Act 2005 which contains the qualification of this post reads as under:-

"The applicant shall either be a retired judge of the High Court or a retired or serving officer of the rank of Chief Secretary to the State Government or Secretary to Government of India".

3.0 The Chairman of the Tribunal shall hold office for a term of two years from the date he assumes charge of his office and he shall not be eligible for re-appointment.

4.0 No person shall be appointed or continue as Chairman of the Tribunal, if he has attained the age of sixty seven years.

5.0 The applications (5 sets) duly completed in all respects should reach in the office of Under Secretary, Government of Punjab, Department of Excise and Taxation, 2nd Floor, Punjab Civil Secretariat, Sector-1, Chandigarh on or before 13.06.2025 (Till 5.00 PM).

The terms and conditions will be applicable as per the Punjab Value Added Tax Act, 2005 and amendments if any.

Note: Those who had responded to the earlier advertisements inviting application shall need to apply afresh.

Ajit Balaji Joshi
Administrative Secretary Taxation
Department of Excise and Taxation

44470

UTTARAKHAND POWER CORPORATION LIMITED

(A Govt. of Uttarakhand Undertaking) CIN : U40109UR2001SGC025867/2358

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Website : www.uktenders.gov.in

E-TENDER NOTICE (NIT)

Uttarakhand Power Corporation Ltd., Dehradun invites e-tender for following as detailed below:

Sl. No.	Name of Item	Tender Specification No.	Tender Qty.	Estimated Cost (in ₹)	Average Yearly Turn Over of Preceding Three Financial Years i.e. 2021-2022, 2022-2023 & 2023-2024 (in ₹)	Earnest Money (in ₹)	Cost of tender document including GST (in ₹)	Date & time of pre-bid Conference in online mode	Last Date & time of online request for Tender and Submission of tender in online & Offline mode	Date of opening of bid Part-I in online & offline mode
1.	8.5 Meter Long Steel Tubular Pole SP-23 (Bottom Portion Hot Dip Galvanized)	CCP-II/5/2025-2026	24000 Nos	31,62,90,480.00	47,44,36,000.00	63,26,000.00	29,500.00		04.6.2025 upto 17:00 Hrs	5.6.2025 at 15:30 Hrs.
2.	9 Meter Long Steel Tubular Pole SP-33 (Bottom Portion Hot Dip Galvanized)	CCP-II/6/2025-2026	12000 Nos	17,29,19,760.00	25,93,80,000.00	34,59,000.00	29,500.00		04.6.2025 upto 17:00 Hrs	5.6.2025 at 15:45 Hrs.
3.	11KV XLPE Al. Cable 3x70Sq.mm	CCP-II/7/2025-2026	100 Km	6,42,75,311.00	9,64,13,000.00	12,86,000.00	23,600.00		04.6.2025 upto 17:00 Hrs	5.6.2025 at 16:00 Hrs.
4.	Cable, Al. 1x25S. mm XLPE	CCP-II/8/2025-2026	100 Km	30,50,300.00	91,51,000.00	61,000.00	2,360.00		04.6.2025 upto 17:00 Hrs	5.6.2025 at 16:15 Hrs.

Experts weigh in on Prez's move

Ayesha Arvind
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BENGALURU: The Supreme Court's April 8 judgment directing the President and Governors to act within a time-bound framework on bills passed by state legislatures has sparked an extraordinary constitutional moment. In a rare invocation of Article 143(l) of the Constitution, President Droupadi Murmu has sought the Court's advisory opinion on whether it is constitutionally permissible for the judiciary to prescribe such timelines?

The reference, made following advice of the council of ministers, questions whether the President's discretion under Article 201 is justiciable in the absence of explicit constitutional timelines.

The development has led to a flurry of reactions from constitutional experts, many of whom view the move as legally fraught and politically charged.

Justice PN Prakash, former judge of the Madras high court, said, "judgments exist which make it clear that a presidential reference cannot be used to challenge the correctness of a judgment already delivered." He added that many of the questions raised in the reference, including the maintainability of timelines and the propriety of a two-judge bench deciding such a significant matter, had already been argued before the Supreme Court (SC). "This is not the President acting suo motu. She acts on the advice of the Council of Ministers," he noted, underlining the political significance of the move.

Senior advocate Gopal Sankaranarayanan observed that while presidential references are not uncommon, the context of this one is unprecedented. "Most earlier references, like on judicial appointments or the Hindu Code Bill, arose in a constitutional vacuum, not in reaction to an active judgment. Here, you are asking the very institution that passed the order to opine on its correctness, albeit indirectly," he said. He also flagged concerns about the reference's timing, noting that it was sent on the same day that the new Chief Justice of India, Justice BR Gavai was sworn in. "The timing was terrible."

While the SC is not bound to answer every reference, as Article 143(l) uses the word "may," the implications of this advisory opinion could be profound.

Alok Prasanna Kumar, lawyer



President Murmu with Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, PM Narendra Modi, former CJI Sanjiv Khanna, and Union minister Arjun Ram Meghwal at CJI BR Gavai's swearing-in ceremony. PTI

and co-founder, Vidhi Centre for Legal Policy, said, "We've been here before," referring to the 2011 Presidential Reference on the 2G spectrum case, when the government sought a clarification without contesting the judgment itself. However, Kumar stressed that this time, the stakes are higher.

"The court didn't just issue guidelines for the Governor (in its April 8 order). It went a step further and said a mandamus could be issued. That's a new constitutional frontier. It also extended the same to the President."

The April 8 ruling, in State of Tamil Nadu vs Governor of Tamil Nadu, came after an unprecedented standoff between the state government and Governor RN Ravi, who delayed assent to 12 bills, triggering a constitutional crisis. The Court, invoking Article 142, declared that the bills had become law and directed the Governor to act within a specific timeframe. It also set timelines for Governors and the President to deal with state bills.

While many welcomed the Court's effort to check gubernatorial overreach, the directive to the President raised eyebrows.

"Can the Court issue a writ of mandamus to the President, who is bound by the aid and advice of the Council of Ministers?" Kumar asked. While the Court may only be directing the President to act, not prescribing how to act, this creates a novel constitutional arrangement.

Senior Advocate Arvind Datar said the reference was wholly unwarranted. "Instead, they could have taken it in their stride and said okay, the Governor will give an assent in say three months or six months. Instead, they are treating it like an attack on the authority of the Governor of the Presidency."

SC TO HEAR WAQF PLEAS ON MAY 20 FOR ORDERS ON INTERIM RELIEF

Abraham Thomas
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NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the petitions challenging the validity of the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025 to be heard on May 20 to decide on the issue whether any interim stay is required on operation of certain provisions of the law dealing with status of Waqf properties and inclusion of non-Muslims in Waqf Council and Boards.

A bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) Bhushan R Gavai directed the petitions to be listed on Tuesday. The CJI took up the matter for the first time after former CJI Sanjiv Khanna on May 5 expressed his disinclination to continue hearing the case due to his impending retirement.

The bench, also comprising Justice Augustine George Masih, said that on the next date of hearing, it will hear the petitioners who have challenged the 2025 Act for two hours and the Union government led by solicitor general Tushar Mehta for another two hours to decide on the limited issue of whether any interim order with regard to a stay is required.

President Droupadi Murmu gave her assent to the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025 on April 5, days after it was passed by Parliament after heated debates in both Houses. It scraps the waqf by user provision - where a property is acknowledged as waqf because it has been used for religious activities for some time, despite there being no official declaration or registration as waqf - for future cases, permits women, Shia sects and government officials to be members of waqf bodies, and gives overriding power to senior officials to determine if a government property belongs to a waqf.

On April 17, the top court recorded an assurance by the Centre that it will not de-notify Waqf properties, including Waqf-by-user and will not make any appointments to the central Waqf council and Waqf boards.

Meanwhile, another set of petitioners who have challenged the earlier Waqf Act of 1995 (now replaced by the 2025 Act) also sought an urgent hearing. "We will not consider any request to hear a challenge against provisions of 1995 Act. How can we allow a challenge to 1995 Act when we are considering the 2025 Act," SC said.



Rahul Gandhi leaves a cinema hall after watching the film 'Phule' at City Centre Mall in Patna. SANTOSH KUMAR/HT PHOTO

Bishnu K Jha
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DARBHANGA: Prime Minister Narendra Modi agreed to hold a caste census out of fear of the underprivileged population of the country, leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said on Thursday, and accused the NDA-led Bihar government of suppressing the voices of the marginalized.

The Congress leader was addressing students at the Ambedkar Welfare Hostel (AWH) in Darbhanga district, where he defied attempts by local administration to stop him from reaching the venue at the Lalit Narayan Mithila

Top law officials joined forces to frame Murmu's questions

Abraham Thomas
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The 14 questions put forth by President Droupadi Murmu in her presidential reference to the Supreme Court (SC) were the result of a month-long effort involving brainstorming, research, and coordination between multiple government departments and the offices of the top two law officers of the Centre, people aware of developments said on Thursday.

The questions deal with the constitutionality and reach of an April 8 judgment by the SC, setting deadlines for governors and the President to clear state bills.

The efforts - which included several rounds of meeting involving the offices of attorney general R Venkataramani, solicitor general Tushar Mehta, and the legislative wing of the Union law ministry - began shortly after the government received a certified copy of the judgment on April 12 and ended just a week before it was filed in the top court's registry on May 14, said the people cited above.

"There was contemplation of filing a reference," said one of the persons cited above. "The question of filing a review was not under consideration at any point of time," the person referred above added.

Under top court rules, the presidential reference is considered by a five-judge Constitution bench set up by the Chief Justice of India. A review petition would ordinarily be considered - either in chambers or open court - by the same bench that passed the original verdict.

On May 14, Murmu posed 14 questions to the SC over the landmark April 8 verdict that fixed timelines for governors and the President to act on bills passed by state assemblies.

Exercising her power under the rarely used Article 143 (l), Murmu said in the present circumstances, it appeared that important questions of law had arisen requiring the opinion of the SC. Article 143 (l) of the Constitution deals with the power of

THE QUESTIONS DEAL WITH THE CONSTITUTIONAL VALIDITY AND REACH OF THE APRIL 8 SC ORDER

the President to consult the SC.

Shortly after the judgment's copy was received on April 12, a legal team in Mehta's office tasked with preparing the draft of the reference was asked to cull out the "questions of law" arising from the judgment, said people aware of developments. This exercise took some time as several legal questions were framed initially. Venkataramani's office was kept in the loop and the draft issues were shared by the offices of the two senior law officers with the government, said the people cited above.

"There were a few meetings held with the government in which the draft versions prepared under the guidance of AG R Venkataramani and SG Tushar Mehta were discussed," people aware of the development said.

By the first week of May, the questions in the reference were refined, and by May 7, the final draft was shared with the government, they said. It was then sent to the President's secretariat, from where the reference was filed in the top court on May 14, they added.

On April 8, the SC pulled up Tamil Nadu governor RN Ravi for attempting to thwart the will of an elected legislature, declared his decision to reserve 10 re-passed bills for presidential assent as "illegal", and laid down timelines to curb inaction by governors across the country, in a landmark judgment that sought to reassess constitutional discipline, curtail gubernatorial overreach, and reiterate India's federalism.

It commented on Ravi's obstructionism in first withholding the bills, then sending them for re-consideration, and finally claiming they needed presidential assent.

If acting on the advice of the state cabinet, the governor must assent, withhold assent, or reserve the bill for the President within one month, held the two-judge bench of justice JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan. It added that if withholding assent is contrary to cabinet advice, the governor must return the bill with a message within three months. The judgment further said that if the governor is reserving the bill for the President contrary to cabinet advice, such reservation must also happen within three months. Similarly, if the bill is re-passed by the legislature, the governor must grant assent within one month. Any violation of these timelines, the court warned, would attract judicial review and scrutiny by constitutional courts.

Then, in the detailed verdict uploaded on April 11, the court extended this timeline discipline to the President and held that Rashtrapati Bhavan must decide within three months of receiving a bill from a governor. If there is any delay beyond this period, the President's office will be required to convey reasons to the concerned state. Experts have pointed out that a reference cannot be directly used to challenge the correctness of a judgment already delivered.

The present reference is by far among the more exhaustive ones sought, dealing with multiple constitutional provisions - Article 201 (power of governor to assent to bills), Article 201 (bills reserved for consideration of President), Article 142 (power of SC to pass orders to do complete justice), Article 361 (protection of President and governors against judicial scrutiny for any act done in official capacity), Article 145(3) (substantial questions of law to be determined by a bench of minimum five judges), and Article 131 (original jurisdiction of SC to decide suits arising from a dispute between Government of India and one or more states or between two or more states).

"Presidential references are generally pointed. This is the most exhaustive by far," said constitutional expert and senior lawyer Rajiv Dhavan.

In the high court, the petitioners



Maratha activists protested for reservation in jobs and education in Mumbai on July 25, 2018. HT ARCHIVE

Expedite hearing of Maratha quota pleas: SC to Maha

Abraham Thomas
letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has asked the chief justice of the Bombay high court to expedite decide on a batch of petitions challenging the 10% reservation granted to the Maratha community. The top court's direction on May 13 came in a writ petition filed by students appearing for the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) postgraduate and undergraduate exams of 2025.

The plea raised an important legal issue challenging the 2024 law as unconstitutional on the ground that the five-judge constitution bench of the Supreme Court in May 2021 struck down the quota provided to Marathas — a dominant community in Maharashtra — by the state government in the Jaishri Laxmanrao Patil case.

Shiv Sena (UBT) MP Arvind Sawant said: "Supreme court's direction to high court will help to clear the pending issue and uncertainty in the minds of students."

Shiv Sena leader and transport minister Pratap Sarnaik said that Marathas must get speedy justice.

State BJP general secretary Madhav Bhandari said, "We are sure that the Maratha reservation will pass legal scrutiny. The Maratha quota first given by Fadnavis government in 2018 was upheld by the HC, but was quashed by SC when the MVA government was in power. MVA government didn't want it to continue."

State Congress spokesperson Atul Londhe said, "Apart from the Supreme court, Congress expects time bound caste census and removal of 50 per cent cap on reservation. This will provide justice for Marathas."

NCP spokesperson Suraj Chavan said, "This decision is a part of judicial process. Justice must be delivered fast and needy must get reservation."

PM agreed to caste census out of fear: Rahul



Rahul Gandhi leaves a cinema hall after watching the film 'Phule' at City Centre Mall in Patna. SANTOSH KUMAR/HT PHOTO

Bishnu K Jha
letters@hindustantimes.com

DARBHANGA: Prime Minister Narendra Modi agreed to hold a caste census out of fear of the underprivileged population of the country, leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi said on Thursday, and accused the NDA-led Bihar government of suppressing the voices of the marginalized.

The Congress leader was addressing students at the Ambedkar Welfare Hostel (AWH) in Darbhanga district, where he defied attempts by local administration to stop him from reaching the venue at the Lalit Narayan Mithila

University campus. Gandhi was in the north Bihar town to launch the 'Shiksha Nyay Samvad', an outreach programme of the party in the state, where assembly polls are due later this year.

"The Bihar Police tried to stop me. But they could not stop me because your power is watching over me," Gandhi said, accusing the Nitish Kumar-led government of trying to prevent him from meeting Dalit and backward class students at the Ambedkar hostel.

"This government is against Dalits, extremely backward classes, minorities, and Adivasis," he alleged. The Darbhanga district administration had denied the former Congress president per-

mission for holding the event at the Ambedkar hostel and instead suggested an alternative venue. Gandhi dubbed the PM Modi-led government at the Centre of being against "the democracy, Constitution, and minorities."

Reacting to Gandhi's allegations, JD(U) national working president Sanjay Jha said: "He (Rahul Gandhi) did not care about any poor student or the backwards. He only went there to do politics because there are elections in Bihar this year."

Later in the day, police registered two FIRs against Gandhi and 100 more party workers for holding the event without any permission.



Police suspect a short circuit led to the fire on the bus that was on its way to Delhi from Begusarai district of Bihar. DEEPAK GUPTA/HT PHOTO

5 killed as bus catches fire near Lucknow

HT Correspondent
letters@htlive.com

LUCKNOW: Five people, including two children, died after a Delhi-bound private sleeper bus with 80 passengers on board went up in flames on Thursday near Kisan Path, a major road-way on the outskirts of Lucknow, police officers said.

They added that a preliminary probe suggests a short circuit led to the fire in the bus that was on its way to Delhi from Begusarai district of Bihar when the incident happened around 5am.

Chief fire officer Mangesh Kumar said, "Within 10 minutes, fire engulfed the bus. Firefighters controlled the blaze in 30 minutes, but the vehicle had already been reduced to ashes by then." All the passengers were from Bihar. When the fire broke out, the driver and conductor fled, leaving passengers trapped inside. Locals, along with fire and police teams, rescued the others by breaking the bus win-

dows," said deputy commissioner of police (South) Nipun Agarwal, who reached the site with senior officers.

Policemen identified the deceased as Lakshmi Devi (55), Soni Mahto (26), Devraj (3), Sakshi (2) and Madhusudan (21).

According to eyewitnesses, most passengers were asleep when the fire started and panic erupted as smoke filled the bus. The driver and conductor allegedly escaped by breaking a window, leaving passengers behind. An extra seat installed near the driver's cabin blocked the main exit, making it difficult for people to escape, they said.

"Many passengers tried to flee but fell over each other. Those who couldn't get out died in the fire," said a survivor.

Preliminary findings suggest the fire was caused by a short-circuit. The bus's emergency exit failed to open, adding to the casualty count," said DCP Agarwal. A case has been registered, police said.

TN approached the Supreme Court regarding 12 bills, pending with the governor, which were passed by the legislature between 2020 and 2023. After the court notice, in 2023, the governor returned 10 to the assembly.



Belgian Shepherd Malinois Rolo was trained in infantry patrolling and explosive detection. HT PHOTO

Praveen Lama
letters@hindustantimes.com

Stung by bees, CRPF sniffer dog dies during C'garh anti-Maoist op

NEW DELHI: Two-year-old Belgian Shepherd Malinois, Rolo, became the only fatality of the 21-day anti-Maoist operation in the Kerragattu hills, straddled between Telangana and Chhattisgarh, after he came under attack from a swarm of bees on April 27.

The female sniffer dog will be posthumously awarded a director general (DG) commendation disc, officials aware of the matter said. Police and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) officers in Chhattisgarh accorded a ceremonial funeral to the dog from the force's K9 squad.

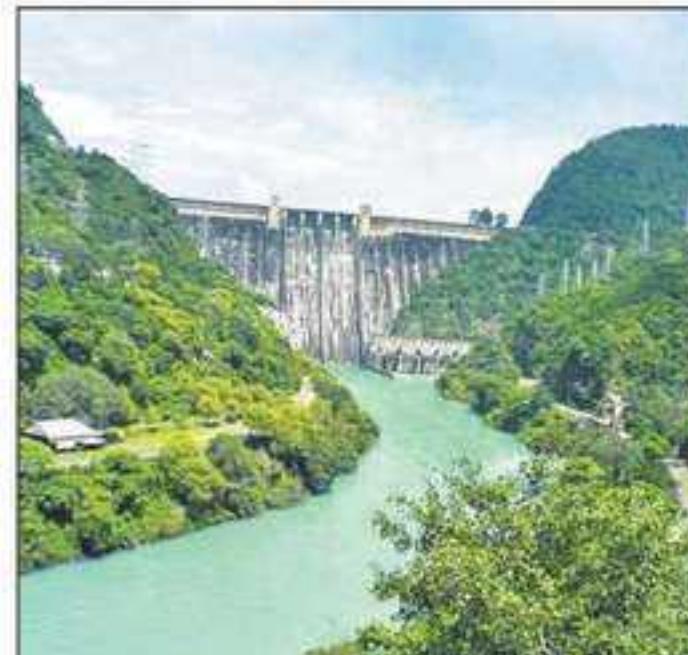
"Our K9 squad members are part of the road sanitisation operations and help in detecting ambush. In the three-week operation, Maoists planted over 450 IEDs at different places to ensure security forces did not reach the hill tops where they were hiding... What happened to Rolo is unfortunate. Our handlers tried their best to save him," DIG M Dhinakaran said.

Security forces led by the CRPF and Chhattisgarh Police units neutralized 31 Maoists, dealing a "deadly blow" to the armed cadres, in Operation Black Forest.

Pb calls Hry's demand for more water 'unfeasible'

Gurpreet Singh Nibbar

letters@hindustantimes.com



Punjab and Haryana are at loggerheads over the distribution of water. HT PHOTO

CHANDIGARH: Punjab said on Thursday that Haryana has made a fresh demand for the release of 10,300 cusecs of water from the Bhakra dam, and called it unfeasible.

The controversy came ahead of the new water-sharing cycle that starts on May 21 and a day after the Punjab and Haryana high court sought response from the Centre, Haryana and Bhakra Beas Management Board (BBMB) on a plea from Punjab, seeking recall of a May 6 order that directed the state to allow the release of additional 4,500 cusecs of water to neighbouring state.

Punjab water resources minister Barinder Goyal accused Haryana of being unwilling to reach a reasonable solution by escalating the demand for water. "We will not allow the robbing of our rights."

"Haryana's escalating demand clearly shows its unwillingness to reach a reasonable resolution to our

know of the matter. The meeting was attended by Punjab water resources secretary Krishan Kumar and chief engineer Sher Singh, with chief engineers from Haryana and Rajasthan, and central government representatives.

Punjab and Haryana are at loggerheads over the distribution of water with the former refusing to share water from the Bhakra Dam, saying the latter has already utilised its share of water. On April 23, Haryana demanded surplus water of 4,500 cusecs (a total 8,500 cusecs) from the Bhakra Dam, but Punjab said Haryana had exhausted its share of allocated water.

On May 6, the high court directed Punjab not to interfere with the functioning of BBMB and abide by the Centre's May 2 decision which asked the board to release additional 4,500 cusecs of water to Haryana. The Punjab government refused, and contended that the Union power secretary was the competent authority to deal with disputes around water sharing

under the BBMB Act, and not the Union home secretary.

On May 9, BBMB chairman Manoj Tripathi, in an affidavit, told the HC that board officials were prevented by Punjab Police from releasing the water. This led to the HC asking the Punjab director general of police and chief secretary to submit names of these officials and reiterating that additional water be released to Haryana. In response to the affidavit filed by the BBMB chairman, the Punjab government filed another application alleging that Tripathi "knowingly/intentionally submitted a false affidavit before the court on May 9" and demanded contempt proceedings against him for submitting a false affidavit. The application is yet to be taken up by court.

"Haryana had initially demanded 8,500 cusecs, which our technical team explained as impossible, however on humanitarian grounds, Punjab has already been supplying 4,000 cusecs since April 4 specifically for drinking water purposes," Goyal said.

SC COLLEGIUM RECOMMENDS K'TAKA HC JUDGE AS MANIPUR HC CJ

Abraham Thomas

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: In the first meeting on judicial appointments convened by Chief Justice of India (CJI) BR Gavai, the three-member Supreme Court collegium on Thursday recommended the Centre to appoint Justice Kempa Somashankar as the chief justice of Manipur high court.

The collegium headed by CJI and comprising justices Surya Kant and Abhay S Oka, had to meet urgently as the present CJ of Manipur high court justice D Krishnakumar is due to retire on May 21.

Justice Somashankar is currently a judge of the Karnataka high court and is the third senior most judge in the high court after chief justice NV Anjaria.

The resolution passed by the Collegium said, "The Supreme Court Collegium in its meeting held on May 15, 2025 has recommended appointment of Justice Kempa Somashankar, judge, high court of Karnataka, as the chief justice of high court of Manipur, consequent upon the retirement of Justice D. Krishnakumar on May 21, 2025."

SC tells T'gana to restore forests near Hyd varsity or face action

Ayesha Arvind

letters@hindustantimes.com

BENGALURU: The Supreme Court on Thursday said that the felling of trees near University of Hyderabad in Kancha Gachibowli Forest appeared to be "pre-planned" with the administration taking advantage of a long weekend, and asked the Telangana government to restore the forests or its officials could land in prison.

The bench, led by Chief Justice of India (CJI) BR Gavai, questioned the "rush" for felling trees over the weekend as it reviewed the state government's affidavit on bulldozing of roughly 100 acres of forest land near the University campus.

"If it was a bona fide exercise, why not wait until Monday... Prima facie, it appears that it was all pre-planned. Bulldozers were deployed. Three days holidays coming and you took advantage as court would not be available," the CJI said.

Justice Somashankar is currently a judge of the Karnataka high court and is the third senior most judge in the high court after chief justice NV Anjaria.

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The bench, led by Chief Justice of India BR Gavai, questioned the 'rush' for felling the trees.

State has to decide whether to restore the forest or be prepared for its officers to be sent to jail," CJI Gavai said.

On April 3, the Supreme Court took suo motu notice of the issue and passed an interim order staying further tree-felling. It also asked the State to answer whether there was any compelling urgency to undertake the proposed development activity, including the removal of trees from the forest area. The State was also asked to clarify whether requisite permission was obtained for felling the trees.

Moreover, the bench directed the Central Empowered Committee to hear next on July 23.

tee (CEC) constituted to assist the top court in complex environmental matters to personally visit the site and submit a report.

On Thursday, senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Telangana government, said there was no activity being carried out at the site and assured compliance with the top court's directives in "letter and spirit".

He also informed the bench that while the counter affidavit was filed, more time was needed to examine the CEC report, which he received only on Wednesday evening. "Everything has stopped, nothing is happening there," Singhvi said.

Senior advocate K Parameshwar, assisting the SC as an amicus curiae, informed the bench that according to CEC's ground report, 60% of 104 acre area falls within the moderately dense and heavily dense forest categories. The bench, comprising justice AG Masih, then referred to the photographs of the deforestation activities, and observed that the authorities managed to arrange dozens of bulldozers to fell the trees. The matter will be heard next on July 23.

SC asks Rajasthan govt not to alter Jaipur's open prison plan

Abraham Thomas

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Rajasthan government not to alter any further the layout plan of an open-air prison in Jaipur and outlined its purpose to bring inmates to society's mainstream.

A bench comprising Chief Justice of India Bhushan R Gavai and justice Augustine George Masih ensured that the facilities available to the inmates of Sangani Open Correctional home was not impacted by the proposed construction of a 300-bed hospital.

The court directed the state to abide by recommendations of an inspection report by a court commissioner which proposed

THE COURT DIRECTED THE STATE TO ABIDE BY THE SUGGESTIONS OF A REPORT BY A COURT COMMISSIONER

enhancing the area available to the inmates with better housing and recreational facilities.

"The main purpose is to bring them (inmates) into the mainstream of society. We direct the state government to file an undertaking that the layout plan as prepared and approved by...will not be altered any further," the bench ordered.

Opened in 1963, the Sangani

open jail or the Sampuranand Khula Bandi Shivir is the oldest and largest open camp in India and often considered the country's best showcase of reformative justice. Unlike traditional prisons, the open jail emphasises rehabilitation by allowing inmates to live with their families in self-constructed homes.

Inmates are responsible for their own expenses, including utilities, and are encouraged to work outside the prison in various occupations such as mechanics, tailors, and shopkeepers. The facility operates with minimal security, relying on a self-governance system called the Bandi Panchayat, where inmates manage daily roll calls and internal affairs. It houses around 400 prisoners.

The main purpose is to bring them (inmates) into the mainstream of society. We direct the state government to file an undertaking that the layout plan as prepared and approved by...will not be altered any further," the bench ordered.

SC clears Banke Bihari temple corridor plan

Ayesha Arvind

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday permitted the Uttar Pradesh government to use funds from the Shri Banke Bihari Temple in Vrindavan to acquire five acres of land for a proposed corridor project, on the condition that the land be registered in the name of the deity or the trust managing the temple.

A bench of justices Bela M Trivedi and SC Sharma modified a 2023 Allahabad high court order that had prohibited the state from using temple funds for the purchase. The bench gave its nod after examining the state government's ₹500-crore development plan aimed at easing congestion around the iconic temple.

"The State of Uttar Pradesh has undertaken to incur costs of more than ₹500 crore to develop the corridor. However, they propose to utilise the Temple funds for purchasing the land in question; which was denied by the High Court vide order dated 08.11.2023. We permit the State of Uttar Pradesh to implement the Scheme in its entirety," the court said in its order.

"The Banke Bihari Ji Trust is having fixed deposits in the name of the Deity/Temple. In the considered opinion of this Court, the State Government is permitted to utilise the amount lying in the fixed deposit to acquire the land proposed. However, the land acquired for the purposes of development of the temple and corridor shall be in the name of the Deity/Trust," it added.

servations Act, objections raised by bureaucrats on the land meant for agricultural purpose, and a 1996 top court verdict in the landmark TN Godavarman case that gave an expansive meaning to the definition of forests under the FC Act.

A bench headed by chief justice of India (CJI) BR Gavai said: "We direct chief secretaries of all the states and administrators of all the Union territories to constitute SIT for the purpose of examining as to whether any of the reserved forest land in the possession of the revenue department has been allotted to any private individuals/institutions for any purpose other than the forestry work."

The bench, also comprising justices AG Masih and KVinoch Chandran, further directed states and UTs to "take steps to take back the possession of the land from the persons or institutions in posses-

sion of such lands and handover the same to the forest department."

"In case, it is found that taking back the possession of the land would not be in the larger public interest, the state governments/UTs should recover the cost of the said land from the persons/institutions to whom they were allotted and use the said amount for the purpose of development of forests," the verdict, authored by the CJI, added.

Such transfer of land should be completed within a period of one year, the bench ordered.

In the PUNE case, the bench held that the allotment of 11.89 hectare of the reserved forest land in Kondhava Budruk village for agriculture purposes on August 28, 1998 and subsequent permission given for its sale in favour of RRCHS on October 30, 1999 was "totally illegal".

SAHA INSTITUTE OF NUCLEAR PHYSICS, KOLKATA
Autonomous institute under the Department of Atomic Energy,
Govt. of India and A Constituent Institution of Homi Bhabha
National Institute- a deemed to be University

ADMISSIONS 2025

Date: 16.05.2025

Applications are invited from eligible candidates to join the Ph.D. Programmes in Physics, Life Sciences and Chemical Sciences starting August 2025. For eligibility and other details please visit our website www.saha.ac.in.

Online submission of application is to be made through our website (www.saha.ac.in). The website is open for online submission of application.

CBC 48135/12/0003/2526

Registrar

NORTHERN RAILWAY OPEN-E-TENDER NOTICE

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-III, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-Tender for the following work:

1 Name Extension of platform no. 9 & 2 at ANVT, construction of shunting neck towards NDLS end to accommodate additional trains at ANVT by providing connectivity between 3rd and 4th line on DLII and GZB end of ANVT station in the S/o SSE/W/ANVT and SSE/P/WayNDLS under Sr/ADEN/NDLs.

2 Approx cost ₹ 1,63,45,046.94 (Rupees One Crore Sixty Three Lacs Forty Five Thousand Forty Six and Ninety Four Paise Only)

3 Earnest Money to be deposited ₹ 2,31,700/- (Rupees Two Lakh Thirty One Thousand Seven Hundred Only)

4 Cost of tender document ₹ 0.00/-

5 Date & Time of submission of tender bid and opening of tender 04.06.2025 at 15:00 Hrs.

6 Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen www.ireps.gov.in

7 Allocation 20164103

* The tenderer/s must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement system (IREPS) site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for participating in the e-tender system. • For all terms and conditions please refer tender document. • No manual offers are acceptable. • Cost of tender document and Earnest money will be acceptable through net banking or payment gateway only. No. 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT/06/2025-26/W-3 Dated -13.05.2025

1421/2025

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

SUPPLY WORKS
E-Tenders are invited by the undersigned for the following works:
SN.1. Tender No. NB255393 Dated: 13-05-2025. Name of work: Draft gear with conforming to RDSO spec. WD - 71 - BD - 15, Rev. 1. to RDSO DRG No: WD-81010-S-03, Item - 19. Alt: 12 or Latest. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]. **Earnest Money:** ₹2,43,640/-
SN.2. Tender No. NB255398 Dated: 13-05-2025. Name of work: 500kVA, 750Volt, 3Phase brushless Alternator along with fitted flexible pulley suitable for Greaves CPCB-II Engine of high capacity LHB power car. Make: Greaves/KEL/BHEL/Kirloskar only. Note: Materials to be supplied by OEM only. [Warranty Period: 30 Months after the date of delivery]. **Earnest Money:** ₹5,10,660/- **Date & Time of Closing of Tender:** 14.30 hrs. of 06-06-2025. The complete information with the tender documents of above e-tender will be available in website www.ireps.gov.in. **DY.CMM/D/New Bongaigaon**
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY
Serving Customers With A Smile

Chief Engineer, Uttarakhand Rural Roads Development Agency, First Floor, Directorate of Panchayatiraj, Opp-IT Park, Sahastadrha Road, Dehradun

Dated: 14.05.2025

Ref. No. I/173179/2025

PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY) e-Procurement Notice- 03/(Relaying Works)-2025-26

The Chief Engineer, URRDA on behalf of Governor of Uttarakhand invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of works under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the Districts of **Chamoli** for 01 number of Packages with estimated cost totaling to **₹. 1.30 Crore** including their maintenance for five years from the eligible contractors (Class-A and above) registered with PWD/CPWD or equivalent*.

Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement : **16-05-2025**.

Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission: The bid documents are available online and should be submitted online in www.pmgstyendersuk.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities.

The bidders are required to submit original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4 B (ii) of ITB with **CONCERNED CIRCLE OFFICES**, mentioned in SBD, on a date not later than three working days after the opening of technical qualification part of the bid, either by registered post or by hand, failing which the bids shall be declared non-responsive. No Physical documents will be accepted after the closing date and time of submission of bids.

Last Date/ Time for receipt of bids through e-procurement **22-05-2025 01:00 PM**.

For further details please log on to www.pmgstyendersuk.gov.in

Chief Engineer, URRDA, Dehradun

*Non Registered bidders may submit bids, however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.

Note: For-e-Procurement for any sort of queries 0135-2608125 number may be contacted 10:00 AM to 05:00 PM.

E-Tender response invited from experienced agencies to provide Security Ancillary services during multiple examinations being conducted by BPSC throughout the state. For further details bid documents with all timelines are available on the website: <https://eproc2.bihar.gov.in> Last date of submission of bid is **18.06.2025 till 3:00 PM**

A.

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

Tender Notice No: 1820252026 Dated: 14.05.2025

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Divisional Railway Manager (Engineering)/North Central Railway/Prayagraj, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites the following E-tendering process by Two-Packet System, on prescribed form, for the following work up to 13:30 hrs. on 09.06.2025. The details of the tender is as under:

Tender No. 61, Name of work : Supply, Stacking and Mechanized Loading of 1,00,000 Cum Machine Crushed Track Ballast of 65mm Gauge as per Rail Specification IS/RDOS-GE/0001:2023-February-2023, at Malwan (MWH) Depot under Assistant Divisional Engineer/North Central Railway/Fatehpur.

Approx Cost of work (₹): ₹ 14,49,99,000.00 **Earnest Money (₹): ₹ 8,75,000.00**

Completion Period: 12 (Twelve) Months **Date of Opening of tender:** 09.06.2025

Minimum Eligibility Criteria for "Similar work": Supply of machine crushed stone ballast/machine crushed coarse stone aggregate.

Note: -(1): Tenderers have to submit following test report along with their tender document from any reputed Govt. organization/institutions as per list given in the tender document, otherwise their tender will not be considered. (i) Size Gradation Test (ii) Abrasion Value Test (iii) Impact Value Test (iv) Water absorption Test. (2) (1) E-Tender Forms shall be issued free of cost to all tenderers. (2) The complete information along with tender document of above E-Tenders are available on website www.reps.gov.in. up to 13:30 hrs. on the due date of tender opening i.e. 09.06.2025. (3) Tender offer shall be made on line through Two Packet System i.e. (i) Technical Bid (ii) Financial Bid. (4) Bids other than in the form of E-Bids shall not be accepted against above tenders. For this purpose, vendors are required to get themselves registered with IREPS website along with Digital Signature Certificate issued by CCA under IT Act-2000. (5) Rates entered into Financial Rate page and duly signed digitally shall be considered. Rates and any other financial entity in any other form/letter head if attached by vendors shall be straightway ignored and shall not be considered. (6) The tenderers shall submit a certificate as given in tender document as "Annexure" in standard format without which their tender may not be considered and shall be summarily rejected. (7) The supplier / contractor of goods and / or services would be subject to GST Act and Rules as applicable from time to time. (8) Document being attached should be signed by the tenderer on its body. (9) This tender notice has also been uploaded on www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in. (10) Payment of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) in respect of e-tendering shall be accepted through net banking or payment gateway only. (11) In case of any difficulty helpdesk available on the website of IREPS may be approached. (12) Tender on line can be submitted up to 13:30 hrs. of tender opening date i.e. 09.06.2025. (13) The tenderer has to submit necessary documents in compliance of clause 10 to 18 (Part-I) of GCC-2022 mandatorily, otherwise offer will be considered as Incomplete Offer and accordingly shall not be considered.

84525 (MG)

North central railways @ CRONCR www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

PANCHAYAT SAMITI MANDRAYAL, DISTT. KARauli

Dispatch No.: PSM/Acc./2025-26/64

E-Notice Inviting Bid No. 01/2025-26

Bids for Annual Rate contract for Material Supply of Construction Work, Equipment Arrangement and Drilling of Handpump/Tubewell bore & installation in panchayat samiti mandrayal, district karauli are invited interested bidders from 02.05.2025 time 10.00 Am upto 16.05.2025 Time 12.00 PM Other particulars of the bid may be visited on the procurement portal (<http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> <http://sppp.raj.nic.in>) of the state website. The approximate value of the procurement is Rs. 200.00 Lacs

UBN No.: ZKR2526GLRC00037

NIB CODE: ZKR2526A0023

DIPR/C/6124/2025

Block Development Officer
Panchayat Samiti Mandrayal

Date: 02.05.2025

GOVERNMENT OF HARYANA TENDER NOTICE

SR. NO.	NAME OF BOARD/CORP./AUTH	NAME OF WORK NOTICE TENDER	OPENING DATE	AMOUNT/END (APPROX.) IN RUPEES	WEBSITE OF THE BOARD/CORP./AUTH	EMAIL ID OF OFFICER/CONTACT	MOBILE NUMBER
1.	HARYANA AGRO INDUSTRIES CORPORATION LIMITED	SHORT TERM E-TENDER FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF ESSENTIAL COMMODITY ITEMS FOR INSTITUTIONAL SUPPLY FOR HAR-HITH RETAIL PROJECT OF HARYANA AGRO INDUSTRIES CORPORATION LIMITED TO HACIL SPECIFIED DELIVERY POINTS/DCS/WAREHOUSES WITHIN THE STATE OF HARYANA.	16.05.2025	26.05.2025	-	0172-2561305 http://www.halc.co.in halc@mailto:halc@gmail.com	

FOR OFFICIAL INFORMATION KINDLY VISIT : www.haryanaeprocurement.gov.in or www.elenders.hrv.nic.in

RO No. 13/2024/03/4813/19/7



Govt. of Bihar

TRANSMISSION ZONE, MUZAFFARPUR (B.S.P.T.C.L)Reg. Office: 4th Floor, Vidyut Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna.

Office of the General Manager-cum-Chief Engineer

TRANSMISSION ZONE, MUZAFFARPUR- 842001

EmailId:-tz.muzaffarpur@bsptcl.bihar.gov.in, Contact No. 7763817789

(Unit of BSPTCL)INIT No. 05/PR/TRZ/MUZ/BSPTCL/2025

(Through e-tendering mode only www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)

Online e-tenders are invited by GM-cum-CE, TZ, Muzaffarpur for the following works under Transmission Zone, Muzaffarpur:-

Description of work	Estimated Cost (including GST)	EMD	Cost of B.O.Q. (including GST)	Bid Processing Fee (including GST)	Completion Period
Supply & Installation of Anti Climbing Device (ACD) with barbed wire in different transmission line under LMTD Muzaffarpur, Motihari and Gopalganj of TC Muzaffarpur, Motihari and Saran.	₹28,57,407/-	₹57148/-	₹5900/-	₹590.00	01 calendar month.
Bid submission start date and time				From 10:00 AM of 22/05/2025	
Date of Pre-bid meeting				On 11:00 AM of 03/06/2025	
Bid submission end date and time				Upto 05:00 PM of 15/06/2025	
Date of opening of Techno-commercial Part				After 11:00 AM of 16/06/2025	
Date of opening of price part				To be notified after Technical Bid evaluation (www.eproc2.bihar.gov.in)	

For further details please visit website state.bihar.gov.in/prdbihar (Premjeet Kumar)
General Manager cum Chief Engineer

PR- 03407 (B & C) 2024-25

नरों की मार, बर्वद करे सुखी परियारा।

**SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED**

General Public is hereby informed that one Female (depicted in the photo) namely **SARUPI W/o Vijay Negi R/o: H.No. A-864, Jahangirpuri, Delhi, Age: About 50 Years**, has been reported missing since 09.05.2025 from her Residence, vide DD No. 90A, Dated 14.05.2025, registered at **Police Station Mahendra Park, North-West Distt., Delhi**. Her physical description is as under:

Sex: Female, **Height:** 4'0", **Face:** Round, **Complexion:** Shallow, **Built:** Normal, **Wearing:** Green Saree.

Sincere efforts have been made by local police to trace out the missing female but no clue has come to light so far. If anyone have any information about this missing female please inform to the following.

SHO, Police Station Mahendra Park, North-West Distt., Delhi Ph.: 87500 50404

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AUTOMOBILES**CAR FOR SALE****PROPERTY****DLF - SUSHANT LOK****FOR SALE****DLF The Grove Independent Floor**

DLF 5,
500 sq.yd.

9 Golf Course Rd Sector 54, Gurugram

SHAHTOOT MARG DLF-I 1022 sq.yds. PLOT

(A Statement of Power, Privilege & Purpose)

- North-East facing
- Two Side Open
- Gated, 24 Hours Security
- Lush Green Park & Jogging Track
- An Investment that's already Doubled, Tripled-and is set to touch 100 Crore by 2028

THE PEARL REALTY (Unit of Pearl Estate)

Rajeev Chaudhary 98101-68801, 98110-12951

PRIME PROPERTIES**FOR RENT NEEMRANA (RAJASTHAN)**

RIICO INDUSTRIAL AREA PHASE-1

9667039892

IMMEDIATE READY TO MOVE IN INDUSTRIAL MODERN SHED PRIME LOCATION BUILT OVER

10,000 SQ.MTR. CORNER PLOT

RED-CATEGORY OPERATIONS PERMITTED AVAILABLE FOR REPUTED MINCs

- Ground Floor: 48,000 sq.ft. Height: 16.5 feet, Newly Elegant Epoxied.
- Additional Unit: 20,000 sq.ft. Height: 26.5 feet.
- Mezzanine Floor: 50,000 sq.ft. Height: 7.5 feet.
- First Floor: 80,000 sq.ft. Height: 24 feet.
- Strategically located jaipur-delhi highway-over 45 Mtr. one side and 24 Mtr. corner plot, with 2 sides loading deck, offering superior visibility & logistics access.

CHANGE OF NAME**CHANGE OF NAME**

- I, MOHD Ikhlas S/o Karimuddin R/o 111 Hauz Bani Malviya Nagar South Delhi 110017 have changed my Daughter name Shifa to Shifa Sultana both are the same person for all future purposes.

- I, UMEESH Kumar S/o Girdhari Lal R/o EA-20, Maya Enclave, Hari Nagar, P.O-Maya Puri, West Delhi, Delhi-110064 have changed my name from Umeesh Kumar to Umeesh Kumar for all future purposes.

- I, MATIN Kumar S/o Ram Dev Jha, presently residing at Flat No.R/2, 45, Palam Colony, Rajnagar Part-1, Rajnagar P.O.-Palam, Distt. West Delhi, Delhi-110077 have changed my son's name from Matin to Arif Khan for all future purposes.

- I, KALPANA Sinha R/o 9/11817-R SGT Niraj Kumar presently residing at SMQ-16/7, Pinto Park, Air Force Station, Palam, Delhi Cantt, Delhi-110010, have changed my name from Kalpana Sinha to Kalpana Devi for all future purposes.

- I, POOJA Mayer, W/o Kapil Bhattacharya, R/o BE-111, Street No. 2, Hari Nagar, West Delhi, Delhi-110064, have changed my minor daughter's name from Arunika to Arun Kumar Sinha for all future purposes.

- I, SABIR Areeb Rahman, son of Sabir Amin Ul Rahman, resident of KD-17, Kavi Nagar, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, have changed my name to Sabir Areeb Ul Rahman. Henceforth, I shall be known as Sabir Areeb Ul Rahman for all purposes.

- I, DAHLIA VASUMI D/o Late Mr Mayarbing Vashu Residing at Flat No. 109, Sec. 8, R. P. Puram, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, have changed my name from Dahlia Vashu Sudhi to Dahlia Vasumi for all future purposes.

- I, POOJA Mayer, W/o Kapil Bhattacharya, R/o BE-111, Street No. 2, Hari Nagar, West Delhi, Delhi-110064, have changed my minor son's name from Kriday to Kriday Bhattacharya for all future purposes.

- I, SANJAY S/o Shri Shanti Swaroop Gupta R/o A-5, A-Block, Main market, Arun Park, Shakti Nagar, Delhi-110092 have changed my name to Sanjay Gupta for all future purposes.

- I, RADHA W/o Dharmendra Seth, A-48/37, DLF Phase-1, Gurugram, Haryana-122001, have changed my name to Radha Seth for all future purposes.

- I, SURESH Kapoor S/o Late Shri Raja Kapoor R/o F-6/104, Second Floor, DLF Phase-1, Gurugram, Haryana-122001, have changed my name to Suresh Kumar Kapoor for all future purposes.

- I, AJMER Singh S/o Chohal Singh, R/o W.H. No. 201A, Sector 18, Noida, have changed my name to Ajmer Singh Chohal Singh for all future purposes.

- I, BHUPESH Kumar S/o Shri Chander Singh, R/o 101, Sector 18, Noida, have changed my name to Bhupesh Kumar Singh for all future purposes.

- I, RAHUL Kumar S/o Shri Rakesh Kumar, R/o 101, Sector 18, Noida, have changed my name to Rahul Kumar Singh for all future purposes.

- I, RAVI Kumar S/o Shri Rakesh Kumar, R/o 101, Sector 18, Noida, have changed my name to Ravi Kumar Singh for all future purposes.

- I, RAVI Kumar S/o Shri Rakesh Kumar, R/o 101, Sector 18, Noida, have changed my name to Ravi Kumar Singh for all future purposes.

- I, RAVI Kumar S/o Shri Rakesh Kumar, R/o 101, Sector 18, Noida, have changed my name to Ravi Kumar Singh for all future purposes.

- I, RAVI Kumar S/o Shri Rakesh Kumar, R/o 101, Sector 18, Noida, have changed my name to Ravi Kumar Singh for all

Manesar land case: HC clears decks to resume trial against Hooda

HT Correspondent

lettersch@hindustantimes.com



Bhupendra Singh Hooda

CHANDIGARH: The Punjab and Haryana high court on Thursday dismissed a bunch of petitions challenging a 2020 trial court's order allowing framing of charges and summoning additional accused in the controversial Manesar land deal case, involving former Haryana chief minister and senior Congress leader Bhupinder Singh Hooda.

Justice Manjari Nehru Kaul passed the order while hearing pleas from some bureaucrats and builders, thereby paving the way for the resumption of trial in the case. Hooda was not among the petitioners challenging the trial court's order. The HC's order was yet to be uploaded.

In December 2020, the special CBI court, Panchkula, ordered framing of charges against 32 people, including former CM Hooda, his former principal secretary ML Tayal, former princi-

pal secretary SS Dhillon, and promoter of Gurugram-based real estate company ABW Builders, Atul Bansal.

The case pertained to the notification issued to acquire 912 acres and 7 marla land in Manesar, Lakhnau and Naurangpur villages in Gurugram in August 2004. CBI has claimed that the then Hooda government's action resulted in huge loss of money to the exchequer while resulting in wrongful gains to private players at the expense of landowners, who were forced to sell their land in panic.

MANY INJURED AS TEACHERS, POLICE CLASH IN KOLKATA

Abraham Thomas

lettersch@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Thursday ordered a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probe into a custodial death case in Madhya Pradesh as the court found that eight months of investigation by the local police yielded not a single arrest of a police officer.

Finding it to be a case fit for an independent probe, a bench of justices Vikram Nath and Sandeep Mehta said, "It is not in dispute that for the incident involving the death of Dava Pardhi in police custody, an FIR No. 341 of 2024 has been registered, but till date, not one of the police official responsible for the death of a young man in custody has been arrested."

The court directed the CBI to arrest the officials found responsible for the custodial death within one month and to conclude the probe within a period of 90 days from the date of arrest of the accused policeman.

Quality Council of India

The Quality Council of India (QCI) is a premier autonomous body set up by Government of India. QCI is responsible for creating a Quality Mindset and envisions to ensure quality across products and services that touch every citizen.

QCI hereby invites proposals for "Engagement of Survey agencies for Baseline Study and Impact Assessment".

The Request for Proposal (RFP) with tender reference no. QCI/PPD/0525/439 along with detailed set of requirements may be found on QCI's website: www.qcindia.org under the tenders' section (<https://qcindia.org/work-with-us/tenders>).

Interested parties may submit the Technical and Financial proposals to "The Deputy Director (F&A), Quality Council of India 2nd floor, 2, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi-110002", in separate sealed envelopes enclosed into an outer envelope super-scripting "Engagement of Survey Agencies for Baseline Study and Impact Assessment" as per the date and time mentioned in the RFP document.

QCINDIA.ORG

Quality Council of India, Institution of Engineers Building, 2nd Floor, 2 - Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi - 110002, India.

QualityCouncilofIndia QualityCouncilIndia quality-council-of-india info@qcindia.org

SEARCH FOR MISSING



Mukul Srivastav

General public is hereby informed that a male namely **Mukul Srivastav, S/o Inderjit Srivastav, R/o Gali No. 11/4, Kaushal Puri Enclave, B-Block, Burari, Delhi** has been missing since 12.04.2025 from in front of Kabristan Kewal Park, Azadpur, Delhi. In this regard DD No. 0109 A, Dated 09.05.2025 has been lodged at Police Station Adarsh Nagar, New Delhi. The description of missing male is as under:

Name: Mukul Srivastav, Age: 36 Years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Wheatish, Built: Medium, Face: Oval, Eye: Black, Wearing: Brown Colour Shirt, Yellow Colour Pant and Yellow Colour Chappal in Feet.

If anyone has any information about this missing male please inform P.S. Adarsh Nagar, Delhi.

Web: <http://cbi.nic.in>, E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in

Ph.: 001-24368638/24368641, Fax: 011-24368639 SHO Police Station Adarsh Nagar, Delhi DP/6061/NW/2025

SEARCH FOR MISSING/KIDNAPPED



General public is hereby informed that one male namely **Mohd. Tanjim S/o Abdul Razique R/o: 122/6, G-Block, Ram Colony, Chattarpur, New Delhi, Age: 23 years, Height: 5'7", Complexion: Wheatish, Face: Long, Built: Medium, wearing White Check Line Shirt, Jeans and Sports Shoes in feet, has been missing/ kidnapped from his house since 13.05.2025. In this regard a DD No. 138A, dated 14.05.2025, has been lodged at P.S. Mehrauli, Delhi.**

Sincere efforts have been made by the local police to trace out the male but no clue has come to light so far. If any one having any information about him please inform undersigned.

**Website: <http://cbi.nic.in>
E-mail: cic@cbi.gov.in
Fax: 011-24368639, 24368641
Ph. No.: 011-24368638, 24368641
DP/6104/SD/2025**

APPEAL FOR IDENTIFICATION

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male Namely Unknown R/o Unknown, Age: about 35 years, Height: 5'1", Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Grey coloured Kurta, Black coloured jeans and Blue coloured Slipper in feet, was found dead on 09.05.2025 at 03:30 PM from Not working NDPL office, Janta Flats Pocket-9, Sector B-4, Narela, Delhi. In this regard a DD No.90-A, dated 09.05.2025 has been lodged at P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased female may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

SHO P.S. Narela Industrial Area, Delhi Ph.: 011-27787593 Mob.: 7065036324, 9910930811 DP/5969/ON/2025

General Public is hereby informed that an unidentified dead body of a male Namely Unknown S/o Unknown, R/o Unknown Age: 60 years, Height: 5'6", Complexion: Shallow, Wearing: Blue Coloured Check Lungi was found dead on 24.04.2025 at 2:40 PM from Near Mohalla Clinic, Yamuna Bazar, Hanuman Mandir, Kashmere Gate, Delhi. In this regard a DD No.70A Dated 24.04.2025 has been lodged at P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi.

If any one having any clue about deceased male may kindly inform the undersigned and contact on following numbers.

SHO P.S. Kashmere Gate, Delhi Ph.: 011-23967889, 23968730 Mob.: 8750870123 DP/5537/N/2025

PDPM Indian Institute of Information Technology, Design & Manufacturing, Jabalpur
(An Institute of National Importance established by an Act of Parliament)
Dumna Airport Road, P.O. Khamaria, Jabalpur-482005

Admission Notice for Ph.D. Programme

(Academic Year 2025-26)

Institute invites online applications for admission in Ph.D. for the academic year 2025-26. Detailed information is available on the Institute website www.iiitdmj.ac.in. Last date for submission of online application is 29/05/2025.

Assistant Registrar (Academic)

ERCP Eastern Rajasthan Canal Project Corporation Limited

No. 814 Date : 14/05/2025

Corrigendum issued for the following NIBs is as follows:-

Sr. NIB No. Estimated Cost of Work (INR in Crore) UBN No. Corrigendum issued

1 ERCPCL/12/2024-25 317.99 ERP2425WL0B00018 Corrigendum-06

2 ERCPCL/13/2024-25 1914.95 ERP2425WL0B00019 Corrigendum-06

3 ERCPCL/14/2024-25 3446.00 ERP2425WL0B00020 Corrigendum-07

4 ERCPCL/15/2024-25 3865.11 ERP2425WL0B00021 Corrigendum-06

5 ERCPCL/16/2024-25 2520.00 ERP2425WL0B00022 Corrigendum-06

6 ERCPCL/17/2024-25 680.00 ERP2425WL0B00023 Corrigendum-04

Other particulars of these NIBs/bids may be visited on the Procurement Portal <http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in> or e-procurement portal <http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in> & www.water.rajasthan.gov.in/wrd.

Tender No.: Samveda/C/25/2343

Managing Director

CHITTARAJAN LOCOMOTIVE WORKS

OPEN E-TENDER

The following e-Tenders can be accessed under the link www.ireps.gov.in. Offers for such e-Tender can be submitted only electronically by accessing the link www.ireps.gov.in → login → E-Tender Stores/Supply. Vendors may also contact the following officials to obtain clarification regarding particular tender or IREPS related information if any. Dm: COS/CRJ/PUB/e-Tender/19/0162 Date: 06/05/2025, (1); 92502412; Set Of Main And Rotor Stamping For Traction Motor Type 6FRA-6068, Each Set Consisting of 5 Items. 1) Stator Main Stampings Drg. No. ITWD.096.015 ALT-1, Spec. No. 4TMS.096.053 REV-2, ALT-11. 2) Solid Stator End Plate, Drg. No. SKL4889 ALT-0. 3) Rot Or Main Stampings Drg. No. ITWD.096.010 ALT-10, REV-1, Spec. No. 4TMS.096.053 REV-2, ALT-8, 4) Solid Rotor End Plate, Drg. No. ITWD.096.010 ALT-10, REV-2, ALT-11. 5) Solid Rotor End Plate, Drg. No. SKL4889 ALT-0. 6) ST. PLATE NO. 10/CLW/2011/0421/STATOR & ROTOR STAMPING/REV-1.

[Warranty Period]: 30 Months after the date of delivery]; 29538.00 Numbers: ₹ 200000.00; ₹ 00/06/2025 at 11:00 AM. [B] NO. COS/CRJ/PUB/e-Tender/19/0162 Date: 06/05/2025, (1); 92502412; Set Of Main And Rotor Stamping For Traction Motor Type 6FRA-6068, Each Set Consisting of 5 Items. 1) Stator Main Stampings Drg. No. ITWD.096.010 ALT-10, REV-1, Spec. No. 4TMS.096.053 REV-2, ALT-8, 4) Solid Rotor End Plate, Drg. No. ITWD.096.010 ALT-10, REV-2, ALT-11. 5) Solid Rotor End Plate, Drg. No. SKL4889 ALT-0. 6) ST. PLATE NO. 10/CLW/2011/0421/STATOR & ROTOR STAMPING/REV-1.

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PAK'S NUKE ARSENAL

India's direct military response to the April 22 terror strike at Pahalgam in Kashmir that killed 26 civilians -- all men, 24 of them Hindu tourists -- in what was the worst attack on civilians since the 26/11 Mumbai strikes.

Wherever Pakistan stands, the line of beggars starts from that point."

He reiterated the government's stand that terror and talks can't go together, and "if talks are held, it will only be on terrorism and PoK."

On May 12, the Indian Army director general of military operations Lieutenant General Rajiv Ghai and his Pakistani counterpart spoke over the hotline to uphold the uneasy truce. Neither side has since fired a single shot, a key condition for the ceasefire, though Pakistan has attempted to violate the truce with some drones sighted over Indian cities on Saturday night and Monday night.

"We have only paused our retaliatory action against terror and military bases in Pakistan. In the coming days, every step taken by Pakistan will be monitored...any terror attack will get a befitting response, on our terms, in our way," Modi said in his address to the nation on May 12.

Pakistan's foreign ministry condemned the defence minister's remarks in a post on X. Singh's remarks show India's "insecurity and frustration" about Pakistan's "effective defence and deterrence against Indian aggression through conventional means," Islamabad said.

"Pakistan will pay a heavier price if it continues to support terrorism. It must stop sheltering anti-India and terrorist organisations...They killed innocent people based on their religion; this was Pakistan's karma. We killed them for their karma; this was our Indian dharma," Singh said.

Since the attack Prime Minister Narendra Modi has declared a new doctrine on dealing with Pakistan.

Any attack on Indian soil will be viewed as an act of war, Singh said, reiterating the government's clear stand on terror. Modi has already made it clear that the strikes on "universities of terror" sponsored by Islamabad marked a new normal.

"India has always prioritised peace and never supported war. But when its sovereignty is attacked, it is necessary to respond," the defence minister said.

His visit to Srinagar came a day after the Cabinet Committee on Security, headed by the PM, met to review the security dynamics on the western border following the May 10 understanding that ended four days of fierce fighting with the neighbouring country.

Operation Sindoos was a message to the world that India can go to any extent in its fight against terrorism, Singh said, calling it the country's most muscular action against terror and a testament to its firm resolve to end the scourge.

Pakistan has reached a point

where it is begging for loans from the International Monetary Fund, and India is among the countries that provide funds to IMF so that it can help poor nations, he said.

Last week, IMF approved a \$1 billion bailout to Pakistan.

Indian forces launched the operation in the early hours of May 7, bombing nine terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK). The pre-dawn strikes on May 7 -- in which at least 100 terrorists were killed according to political leaders briefed about the attack by the defence minister -- spared a series of attacks and counterattacks across the western border, involving fighter jets, missiles, armed drones, and fierce artillery and rocket duels. In one such counterattack on the night of May 9-10, the Indian Air Force struck targets at 13 Pakistani air bases and military installations. After four days of fighting, military hostilities were stopped on Saturday evening as the two nations reached an understanding.

"Pakistan will pay a heavier price if it continues to support terrorism. It must stop sheltering anti-India and terrorist organisations...They killed innocent people based on their religion; this was Pakistan's karma. We killed them for their karma; this was our Indian dharma," Singh said.

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Pakistan has reached a point

{ FROM PAGE 1 }

critical juncture in India-US trade negotiations as New Delhi seeks to finalise a deal within the 90-day pause on additional tariffs announced by Trump on April 9. Under the current agreement, India faces a 10% baseline tariff on its exports to the US, but an additional 26% "reciprocal" tariff has been suspended until July 8.

Indian equity benchmarks jumped to a seven-month high following Trump's comments, reflecting investor optimism about a potential breakthrough in trade relations between the two countries.

The Indian trade ministry did not reply to a request for comment on the proposed deal.

These negotiations are part of broader efforts to forge a Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Trump during their February 13 meeting in Washington, where they set an ambitious "Mission 500" goal to increase bilateral trade from approximately \$200 billion to \$500 billion by 2030.

Both countries have indicated openness to an "early harvest deal" covering immediately achievable concessions before finalising the more comprehensive first tranche of the BTA by the fall 2025 deadline set by Prime Minister Modi and President Trump.

The negotiations are taking a sectoral approach, with in-person sectoral engagements scheduled to begin in late May, focusing on both tariff and non-tariff barriers.

Commerce minister Piyush Goyal will lead a trade delegation to the United States starting May 16 to advance negotiations, officials told HT. This visit follows intensive discussions between negotiating teams from both countries.

India reduced duties on items like bourbon whisky and motorcycles, while seeking improved business mobility for its professionals and companies, officials told HT in the past.

Amid the options on the table, according to people aware of the matter last month, India may eliminate tariffs on at least 80% of American imports, with the US potentially reciprocating with duty-free access for at least 90% of Indian goods.

The terms of reference, finalised during Assistant US Trade Representative Brendan Lynch's visit to New Delhi in late March, include about 20

chapters covering goods, services, rules of origin, technical barriers, processes, and customs facilitation.

While willing to reduce tariffs for American goods, India is reportedly seeking to protect some domestic segments. Mechanisms such as "exclusion lists" and "tariff rate quotas" (TRQs) are being discussed to provide targeted protections where needed.

The US has focused on market access for its products, addressing what it describes as India's high tariff structure (averaging 17% compared to the US average of 3.3%) and various regulatory barriers.

Trump's opposition specifically to Apple's India manufacturing ambitions, however, are new.

Prime Minister Modi has in recent years promoted India as a smartphone manufacturing hub, and Apple's suppliers have significantly increased production in the country as a pivot away from China - the biggest trade rival to Washington.

In March, Apple's main India supplier Foxconn and Tata shipped nearly \$2 billion worth of iPhones to the US—an all-time high—to bypass Trump's impending tariffs.

The US is India's largest trading partner, with bilateral trade totalling approximately \$129.2 billion in 2024. The trade balance currently favours India, which runs a \$45.7 billion surplus with the US.

CHOKSI HEARING

nearly Rs 13,000 crore.

An official familiar with the development said: "Last year, along with an extradition request sent in August, we sent evidence and non-bailable warrants issued by Indian courts against Choksi in two cases - the February 2018 PNB case in which Choksi is accused of swindling Rs 6,097 crore and the May 2022 case pertaining to a Rs 25 crore fraud involving IFCI".

"We have now sent fresh evidence and warrants to the Belgian authorities to strengthen our existing extradition request against Choksi and ensure that he doesn't get bail", this officer added.

The four bank fraud cases in which documents have been now sent are: a July 2022 case related to Choksi cheating a consortium of banks led by Canara Bank of Rs 55.27 crore; three separate first information

reports (FIRs) filed in December 2022 - related to cheating 28 banks led by ICICI Bank of Rs 5,564 crore; cheating a consortium of nine member banks led by PNB of Rs 807 crore; and another fraud on PNB of Rs 375 crore.

Although extradition will be argued by Belgian prosecutors on behalf of India, a second officer said that "CBI is also in the process of hiring a private European law firm as the Indian government is serious about bringing Choksi to India".

Officials said that during the extradition proceedings, India will highlight that Choksi is a habitual offender who deliberately evades court proceedings so that fresh extradition proceedings are initiated in a new country, a delaying tactic he has used in the past.

"We first sent an extradition request against him to the US; he fled from there to Antigua and Barbuda. As he realized that Antiguan courts may soon give an order in India's favour, he fled to Belgium. If released on bail, he can easily flee to another European country within hours," said the second officer cited above.

Choksi's lawyer Vijay Aggarwal was not immediately available for comment.

Choksi was tracked by CBI to Belgium in July last year after which it approached the Belgian government with a formal extradition request.

The extradition has been sought under Indian Penal Code (IPC) sections - 120 B (criminal conspiracy), 201 (destruction of evidence), 409 (criminal breach of trust), 420 (cheating), 477A (falsification of accounts), and sections 7 and 13 (bribery) of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Besides, CBI has also invoked the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) in its extradition request.

Belgium examined India's request at various levels and approved initiating action in the matter after it was convinced about the "dual criminality" clause which is listed in the 1901 extradition treaty between two countries.

Choksi has evaded CBI and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) - which is conducting a parallel money laundering probe - since 2018. After fleeing from India in January 2018, he acquired citizenship of Antigua and Barbuda.

bail, subject to such conditions as it may deem appropriate to impose," the order said.

In 2021, the woman accused the man of repeatedly raping her since 2016 under the pretext of marriage. A trial court on September 5 last year convicted the man of repeated rape and fraud, and awarded him 10 years of rigorous imprisonment.

The accused approached the Madras high court, which upheld the trial court order.

The details of their marriage shall be worked out by their respective parents and we hope that the marriage takes place as expeditiously as possible. In the above circumstances, we suspend the sentence and release the petitioner on bail," the bench of justices BV Nagarathna and Satish Chandra Sharma said in a social media post.

"Good conversation with acting Afghan foreign minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi this evening. Deeply appreciate his condemnation of the Pahalgam terrorist attack," Jaishankar said in a social media post.

"Welcomed his firm rejection of recent attempts to create distrust between India and Afghanistan through false and baseless reports," Jaishankar said, in an apparent reference to a report in a section of the Pakistani media that claimed India had "hired" the Taliban to carry out a "false flag" operation at Pahalgam.

Jaishankar said he had emphasised India's "traditional friendship with the Afghan people and continuing support for their development needs", and discussed ways of taking cooperation forward.

A readout from the Taliban side said Jaishankar and Muttaqi exchanged views on enhancing bilateral ties, promoting trade and "advancing diplomatic engagement".

Muttaqi referred to India as a key regional country and highlighted the historic nature of Afghanistan-India relations", and expressed optimism that the ties "will grow stronger".

Muttaqi sought the Indian side's facilitation in issuing visas for Afghan traders and patients, and called for the release and return of Afghan prisoners currently held in India, the readout said.

Jaishankar also assured Muttaqi that prompt attention will be paid to the issue of Afghan prisoners and steps will be taken to streamline the visa process, the readout said.

Justice Arun Kumar Singh Deshwal noted that while the Quran allows polygamy for a fair reason and it is conditional polygamy, men use that provision today for a selfish purpose.

"There is a historical reason why the Quran allows polygamy...

It was under such circumstances that the Quran allowed conditional polygamy to protect orphans and their mothers from exploitation," the court said in its

order of May 8 which was made public on Thursday. The court also laid down the circumstances under which such marriages may or may not attract the offence of bigamy.

Noting the misuse of the liberties, the court said that the enactment of a uniform civil code must be considered by the legislature.

The bench was hearing a plea filed by a man named Furkan seeking quashing of a charge sheet and a case registered against him for offences of bigamy and rape, among others.

The case was filed after the woman alleged that when she married Furkan, the fact that he was already married was not disclosed to her. Furkan argued that Muslim law allows him to marry four times. The court held that the offences of bigamy and rape are not attracted against the accused because the marriage is valid in this case. It listed the matter in its week commencing May 26. HTC

SC suspends jail term of rape accused after he agrees to marry victim

EAM WELCOMES CONDEMNATION OF PAHALGAM TERROR ATTACK BY TALIBAN MINISTER

Rezaul H Laskar

letters@hindustantimes.com

NEW DELHI: In the highest level of contact between India and Afghanistan since Taliban came to power in 2021, external affairs minister S Jaishankar had his first interaction with Taliban acting foreign minister Amir Khan Muttaqi over a phone call on Thursday.

Jaishankar said he appreciated Afghanistan's condemnation of the Pahalgam terrorist attack and his counterpart's firm rejection of recent attempts to create distrust between the two countries.

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Polygamy under Muslim law 'misused', says HC

PRAYAGRAJ: The Allahabad high court has observed that while Islam permits more than one marriage with certain conditions, the permission if "widely misused" goes against the mandate of Muslim law.

At the outset, the court referred to the concept of nikah (marriage) according to the Muslim Personal Law and other authorities on Mohammedan Law to note that the plurality of marriages is not unconditionally conferred upon the husband.

Justice Arun Kumar Singh Deshwal noted that while the Quran allows polygamy for a fair reason and it is conditional polygamy, men use that provision today for a selfish purpose.

The case was filed after the woman alleged that when she married Furkan, the fact that he was already married was not disclosed to her. Furkan argued that Muslim law allows him to marry four times. The court held that the offences of bigamy and rape are not attracted against the accused because the marriage is valid in this case. It listed the matter in its week commencing May 26. HTC

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WORLD



US President Donald Trump applauds as he leaves after speaking at the Al-Udeid air base, in Doha, Qatar, on Thursday.

Trump: US, Iran have 'sort of' agreed to nuclear deal

Associated Press

letters@hindustantimes.com

DOHA, QATAR: President Donald Trump said on Thursday that the United States and Iran have "sort of" agreed to terms on a nuclear deal, offering a measure of confidence that an accord is coming into sharper focus.

Trump, in an exchange with reporters at a business roundtable in Doha, Qatar, described the talks between American envoy Steve Witoff and Iranian foreign minister Abbas Araghchi as "very serious negotiations" for "long-term peace" and were continuing to progress.

Still, throughout his visit with Arab Gulf leaders this week, the president has underscored that military action against Iran's nuclear facilities remains a pos-

sibility if the talks derail.

"Iran has sort of agreed to the terms: They're not going to make, I call it, in a friendly way, nuclear dust," Trump said at the business event. "We're not going to be making any nuclear dust in Iran." Without offering detail, he signalled growing alignment with the terms that he has been seeking.

But a top political, military and nuclear adviser to Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, told NBC News on Wednesday that Tehran stands ready to get rid of its stockpiles of highly enriched uranium that can be weaponised, agree to enrich uranium only to the lower levels needed for civilian use and allow international inspectors to supervise the process. Ali Shamkhani added

that in return, Iran wants an immediate lifting of all economic sanctions.

Trump said his demands have been straightforward.

"They can't have a nuclear weapon. That's the only thing. It's very simple," Trump said. "It's not like I have to give you 30 pages worth of details. It is only one sentence. They can't have a nuclear weapon."

Wrapping up his time in Qatar, Trump stopped at a US installation at the centre of American involvement in the Middle East and spoke to US troops. The Republican president has used his four-day visit to Gulf states to reject the "interventionism" of America's past in the region.

Trump later flew to Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates for the final leg of his trip.

Al-Udeid Air Base was a major staging ground during

the US wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The base houses some 8,000 US troops, down from about 10,000 at the height of those wars.

Trump told the troops that his priority is to end conflicts, not start them. "But I will never hesitate to wield American power if it's necessary to defend the US of America or our partners," he said.

Trump has held up Gulf nations such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar as models for economic development in a region plagued by conflict. He urged Qatari officials to use their influence to entice Iran to come to terms with his administration on a nuclear deal.

Trump later flew to Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates for the final leg of his trip.

Trump's Qatari 747 may not be secure as Air Force One

Reuters

letters@hindustantimes.com

WASHINGTON: A Boeing 747 jet offered to President Donald Trump by Qatar as a temporary flying White House might need fighter jet escorts and could be restricted to flying inside the US unless significant costly security upgrades were made, aviation experts and industry sources said.

Even if numerous improvements to the plane's communications and defences are made over the coming months once any deal is completed, the military escort and domestic restriction could remain in place, the experts and sources said.

As the commander-in-chief, however, Trump could waive any and all requirements like these, a former Air Force official noted.

Retrofitting the luxury plane offered by Qatar's royal family would require security upgrades, communications improvements to prevent spies from listening in and the ability to fend off incoming missiles, experts said. The costs were not known, but could be significant given Boeing's current effort to build two new Air Force One planes exceeds \$5 billion.

There are serious questions about whether any combination of fighter escorts and short-term upgrades would be enough to provide sufficient protection for the president. "I don't think it's possible," said Mark Cancian, a senior adviser with the Centre for



The US Air Force One at Al-Udeid air base in Doha, Qatar.

Strategic and International Studies' Defence and Security Department, referring to short timeline for the deep modifications.

"Air Force One is designed to be survivable in all kinds of environments, including a nuclear war," he added, noting the jet's ability to tolerate the electromagnetic pulse from a nuclear blast is embedded in the jet's wiring and systems from the bottom up. "That's not something you add on."

Trump has dismissed criticism of his widely-reported plan to accept the 13-year-old airplane with a \$400 million list price, saying it would be "stupid" to turn down the offer.

Trump also called it a practical decision, and that he was disappointed Boeing had taken so long to deliver on already delayed contracts for the two new Air Force One planes that he renegotiated during his first term. "If he wants it, and he says I'll accept any risk associated with not having all the

stuff the real Air Force One has, he can do that," the former Air Force official said.

While Air Force One does not normally fly with fighter escorts, the new plane may need them to defend against missile threats, the former official added.

An escort could be necessary because the Qatari plane "wouldn't have the electronic warfare and missile warning systems and whatever else you associate with survivability on Air Force One," said Richard Aboulafia, managing director of consulting firm AeroDynamic Advisory.

He added international travel may be off-limits because "you can't guarantee the level of security in international airspace or airports". Air Force One almost never requires fighter escorts because it is equipped with a range of advanced defensive systems including flares, electronic jammers and infrared detection systems that protect against missile strikes.

ISRAEL STRIKES ACROSS GAZA, OVER 100 KILLED

GAZA CITY: Palestinian rescuers reported more than 100 people killed on Thursday in Israeli strikes on blockaded Gaza, where a US-backed organisation said it intends to begin distributing aid by the end of the month.

Israel blocked all aid from entering Gaza on March 2, before resuming operations on March 18, ending a six-week ceasefire.

"Israel's blockade has transcended military tactics to become a tool of extermination", Human Rights Watch (HRW) interim executive director Federico Borelli said in a statement on Thursday.

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Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, and Ketanji Brown Jackson on Thursday peppered a government lawyer with questions about the constitutionality

of Trump's order. At the hearing, the Trump administration is asking the court to let the order take effect in some parts of the country while multiple lawsuits proceed.

The order is currently being blocked across the country by three nationwide injunctions issued by district court judges. The government seeks to limit those rulings to only the seven pregnant women who sued, along with 11 identified members of two advocacy groups that are also involved.

Much of the sharp questioning — which was also joined by

conservative Justices Amy Coney Barrett and Brett Kavanaugh — asked the government to assume for the moment that the executive order was illegal, in order to address the crucial question of whether nationwide injunctions are proper. But the liberal justices hinted at their broader views about the legality of the order itself.

"As far as I see it, this order violates four Supreme Court precedents," Sotomayor said to the Trump administration's top attorney, Solicitor General D. John Sauer.

Sauer argued that the use of



Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky (centre) leaves Ankara airport upon his arrival, in Ankara, on Thursday.

AP

Ukraine talks: Zelensky plays down truce breakthrough

Agencies

letters@hindustantimes.com

ISTANBUL: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Thursday he had sent a team to Istanbul for the first direct peace talks with Russia in three years, but played down expectations of a breakthrough, saying Moscow was "not serious" about ending the three-year war.

After hours of confusion which saw both sides hurling insults at the other and uncertainty over whether Ukraine would show up for the talks, Zelensky ended the uncertainty.

He said his defence minister was en route to Istanbul from Ankara with a mandate to push for a ceasefire. Talks could take place late on Thursday or Friday, Zelensky added. Kyiv has balked at what Zelensky called the "dummy" delegation of relatively low-level figures sent by Russia, after days spent calling on President Vladimir Putin to personally show up.

Turkey remained optimistic and Russia's top negotiator Vladimir Medinsky said Moscow was ready to discuss "possible compromises" at the talks.

"Unfortunately, they are not taking the real negotiations very

seriously," Zelensky told reporters after a meeting with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Ankara.

But "out of respect" for Erdogan and US President Donald Trump, Zelensky said he would still send a reduced delegation, led by defence minister Rustem Umerov, to Istanbul for the talks where he would press for a halt to the three-year war.

The Russian side is being led by Vladimir Medinsky, a hawkish adviser to Putin who has questioned Ukraine's right to exist and led failed talks in 2022 at the start of the war.

Zelensky renewed his call for a meeting with the Russian leader. "I believe that the Kremlin leader must demonstrate his leadership. If he is ready for negotiations, then we must meet," he said. "A ceasefire is the priority," Zelensky added.

on Air Force One as he flew from Qatar to the UAE. "But we're going to have to get it solved because too many people are dying."

Asked if he was disappointed about the Russian level of attendance, Trump said: "I haven't even checked. He [Putin] was going to go, but he thought I was going to go. He wasn't going if I wasn't there."

Nothing's going to happen until I meet Putin: Trump

ABOARD AIR FORCE ONE: US President Donald Trump said on Thursday that he did not expect progress on Ukraine until he meets Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, who did not show up to talks with Kyiv in Turkey.

"I don't believe anything's going to happen, whether you like it or not, until he and I get together," Trump told reporters

on Air Force One as he flew from Qatar to the UAE. "But we're going to have to get it solved because too many people are dying."

Asked if he was disappointed about the Russian level of attendance, Trump said: "I haven't even checked. He [Putin] was going to go, but he thought I was going to go. He wasn't going if I wasn't there."

Nothing's going to happen until I meet Putin: Trump

Germany backs 5% Nato def spending target

Agence France-Presse

letters@hindustantimes.com

ANTALYA, TURKEY: Germany's foreign minister said on Thursday that Berlin was willing to "follow" US President Donald Trump's demand for Nato to ramp up its defence spending target to 5% of GDP.

Johann Wadephul said Nato chief Mark Rutte had laid out a

plan to reach "the five percent that President Trump demanded, which he considers necessary". "And we follow him there," Wadephul told a meeting of the alliance in Turkey.

Berlin's signal of support will put more pressure on other European allies and Canada to strike a deal on spending at a Nato summit in The Hague next month. Rutte has floated a pro-

Nato's current spending target of 2% of GDP.

Rutte declined to go into details of the discussions as foreign ministers gathered near the Turkish coastal resort of Antalya. But he said broader spending, such as on infrastructure like bridges needed to move military hardware around, had to "be taken into account".

Stepped aside after finally feeling old: Buffett

HT Correspondent

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NEW DELHI: Warren Buffett, the towering figure of American finance who built Berkshire Hathaway from a struggling textile maker into a corporate behemoth, has revealed that his decision to step down as chief executive came after finally feeling the effects of his advanced age. In an interview with the Wall Street Journal published on Wednesday, the 94-year-old billionaire investor said he began experiencing the limitations of ageing only in recent years, despite remaining sharp-minded well into his ninth decade.

"Israel's blockade has transcended military tactics to become a tool of extermination", Human Rights Watch (HRW) interim executive director Federico Borelli said in a statement on Thursday.

Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, and Ketanji Brown Jackson on Thursday peppered a government lawyer with questions about the constitutionality

despite sharing the stage. Buffett described noticing occasional balance problems and difficulty recalling names as his body began showing signs that convinced him the time had come for leadership transition.

"There was no magic moment," Buffett explained in the interview. "How do you know the day that you become old?"

The legendary investor pointed to the stark contrast between his capabilities and those of 62-year-old Abel, who joined Berkshire through its 1999 investment in MidAmerican Energy. "The difference in energy level and just how much he could accomplish in a 10-hour day compared to what I could accomplish — the difference became more and more dramatic," Buffett said.

Despite stepping down as CEO, Buffett will continue as chairman and maintain an office presence in Omaha. He assured the Journal his decision-making abilities — particularly during market turmoil — remain intact.

"I will be useful here if there's a panic in the market because I don't get fearful when things go down in price or everybody else gets scared," he said. "And that really isn't a function of age."

Abel, whom Buffett has praised as both manager and dealmaker, will assume leadership of Berkshire's vast portfolio of businesses and investments in December. The conglomerate now operates insurance companies, utilities, a railway and household brands from Dairy Queen to Duracell.

U.S. APPROVES \$304MN MISSILE SALE TO TURKEY AS TIES WARM UP

WASHINGTON: The US approved the sale of \$304 million-worth of missiles to Turkey as the Nato allies work to strengthen trade and defence ties.

The deal, which still needs Congressional sign-off, came as Secretary of State Marco Rubio visited Turkey to attend a meeting of Nato foreign ministers on Thursday. Rubio is expected to travel on to Istanbul the following day for potential talks between Russian and Ukrainian officials about a ceasefire.

Turkey has requested 53 advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles at an estimated cost of \$225 million and 60 Block II missiles at \$79.1 million, the Defence Security Cooperation Agency said. The RTX Corporation will be the principal contractor for the sales.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has been looking for a tentative meeting with US President Donald Trump to reset strained relations stemming from Ankara's purchase of a Russian missile defence system and Washington's support for a Syrian Kurdish militia that Turkey views as a threat to the country.

Turkey and the US have been holding talks over the integration of the US-backed Kurdish forces, who have links to a separatist Turkish group, the PKK, into a new Syrian army. Earlier this week, the PKK announced it would lay down its arms to end a 40-year war for autonomy against Turkey, a historic step that could strengthen Ankara's aspirations to become a regional powerhouse.

BLOOMBERG

{ THE MEDIEVAL ENGLISH DOC } A 1297 VERSION FETCHED \$21.3 MILLION AT AN AUCTION IN 2007

Harvard Magna Carta 'copy' is actually rare original: Experts

world as well as human rights conventions.

Dating from June 1215, the Great Charter — considered one of the world's most important documents — first put into writing the principle that the king and his government were not above the law. It was a key document in the drawing up of the US Declaration of Independence and Constitution.

Experts from King's College London and the University of East Anglia (UEA) said the document, which the US institution acquired in the 1940s for \$27.50, is just one of seven from King Edward I's issue of Magna Carta in 1300 that still survive.

The Magna Carta is seen as a precursor of democracy and the basis of legal systems across the

UnitedHealth facing fraud probe: Report

Goods trade deficit at five-month high in April

Goods imports rose to \$64.91 bn by value in April, up from \$54.49 bn a year ago

Good news

India's overall merchandise trade deficit widened to a five-month high of \$26.42 billion in April 2025, driven by a sharp rise in imports



A negative figure denotes a trade deficit.

Graphic: Paras Jain/Mint

*estimates
Source: Ministry of commerce and industry

Dhirendra Kumar & Rikhi Kundu
feedback@livemint.com

NEW DELHI: India's merchandise trade deficit rose to a five-month high of \$26.42 billion in April on the back of higher imports, as exports rose at a slower clip, provisional data released by the ministry of commerce and industry on Thursday showed.

Merchandise exports rose to \$38.49 billion in April from \$35.30 billion in the year-ago period.

Goods imports rose to \$64.91 billion by value in April, up from \$54.49 billion a year ago.

March's goods exports stood at \$41.97 billion, while imports were \$63.51 billion, compared with \$36.91 billion of exports and \$50.96 billion of imports in February. The merchandise trade deficit—the difference between exports and imports—stood at \$21.54 billion in March, \$14.05 billion in February, \$23 billion in

January and \$19.19 billion in April.

The latest figure exceeded economists' expectations of \$20 billion, according to a Reuters poll. India's widening trade deficit in April comes amid lingering global trade tensions.

Last month, US President Donald Trump briefly imposed reciprocal tariffs on imports from key partners, including India, before pausing them to allow space for negotiations.

The instability also deters

investor confidence in the region, compounding challenges for India's trade outlook amid already rising import bills and global tariff uncertainties.

India's good exports to the US stood at \$8.42 billion in April, down from \$10.13 billion in March.

Services exports rose to \$35.31 billion by value in April, up from \$31.64 billion in March and \$30.18 billion in the same period of the previous year.

Services imports stood at \$17.54 billion in April, rising from \$13.73 billion in March and \$16.76 billion in the year-ago period. The combined value of merchandise and services exports touched \$73.80 billion in April, up from \$65.48 billion a year ago.

Engineering goods, petroleum products, electronic goods, gems & jewellery, drugs & pharmaceuticals, organic and inorganic chemicals, ready-made textile garments and rice were among the top export commodities during April, while top imports included petroleum and crude products, electronic goods, machinery, gold, coke, transport equipments, etc., according to commerce ministry data.

Nifty's 7-month high on tariff hope, conflict end

Dipti Sharma

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MUMBAI: India's benchmark Nifty 50 index surged past the key 25,000 mark on Thursday, notching its highest close in seven months, amid signs of easing geopolitical tensions. The rally coincided with the weekly derivatives expiry, pushing volume turnover on the National Stock Exchange to ₹1.28 lakh crore—the highest since March 27's ₹1.5 lakh crore mark.

Besides, short-covering got a lift after US President Donald Trump said India had offered a "zero-tariff" trade deal for American goods. However, after market hours, India dismissed Trump's claim, with external affairs minister S. Jaishankar clarifying that trade talks with the US were still ongoing and "complicated".

On Thursday, FIIs net purchased Indian equities worth ₹5,393 crore while domestic institutional investors net sold shares worth ₹1,668 crore, provisional data showed. Adding to the market buzz, MSCI India's upcoming index rejig on May 30 likely prompted mutual funds and exchange-traded funds (ETFs) tracking the index to begin realigning their portfolios.

According to Abhilash Pagaria, head of Nuvama Alternative & Quantitative Research, Nifty Midcap 100 edged up just



The volume turnover on the NSE reached ₹1.28 lakh cr.

0.7% and the Nifty Smallcap 250 managed a modest 0.8% gain.

Irrespective of geopolitical developments, investors need to focus on "fundamentals like economic growth, where India stands out among major economies, a falling interest rate regime, lower oil prices, and relatively robust earnings, to name only a few", said Sunil Singhania, founder of Abakkus Asset Manager.

Sandeep Bagla, chief executive officer of Trust Mutual Fund, said while the worst of geopolitical tensions may have eased, volatility could still remain elevated in the near future.

"India is a distinct and attractive opportunity compared to other emerging markets," he said, adding, however, that although investors have several opportunities on a relative basis, valuations remain high. Still, Bagla remains optimistic about the long-term prospects of sectors such as defence, premium consumption, and financials.

On Thursday, Nifty 50 jumped 1.6% to settle at 25,062.10 points, the highest since it reached 25,127.95 on October 14, 2024. The S&P BSE Sensex climbed 1.5% to close the day at 82,530.74 points, the highest since 82,497.1 on October 3.

Thursday belonged to the large-caps, which outshone their mid- and small-cap peers. The Nifty Midcap 100 edged up just

(With inputs from Ram Sahgal).

DELHI HC ORDERS SEIZURE OF ANOTHER 76 BLUSMART EVS

Krishna Yadav

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NEW DELHI: Gensol Engineering Ltd and ride-hailing startup BluSmart have lost control of another leased 76 electric vehicles after the Delhi High Court ordered seizure of the cars and barred the companies from transferring or selling them.

Justice Jasmeet Singh, acting on a plea by investment firm Vriksh Advisors, on Thursday restrained Gensol, BluSmart, and their promoters from selling, alienating, or creating any third-party rights over the 76 Tata Tigor electric cars.

The high court's latest order is the fifth such in under three weeks, bringing the total number of Gensol and BluSmart leased EVs under judicial protection to 698.

The court also appointed a receiver to take possession of the vehicles and ensure their safety.

"Issue notice. For the reasons stated, Respondent No. 1 (Gensol Engineering Ltd), its shareholders, directors, including Respondent No. 2 (Anmol Singh Jaggi) and other officers, are restrained from selling, alienating, transferring, encumbering, or creating third-party rights in the 76 Tata Tigor EVs owned by the petitioner, until the next date of hearing. The petitioner shall have the right to repossess the vehicles in case of default," the court said.

Vriksh Advisors had leased the vehicles to Gensol under an agreement signed in August 2023. The agreement was executed by Gensol's promoter-directors, Anmol Singh Jaggi and Puneet Singh Jaggi.

The lessor alleged that Gensol defaulted on its lease rental obligations and raised concerns over ongoing investigations and fraud allegations involving the company and its promoters. Fearing misuse or dissipation of assets, Vriksh approached the High Court seeking protection of its leased fleet.

The court noted that Gensol and its promoters are under multiple investigations related to alleged fraud and financial mismanagement.

Unemployment rate in April at 5.1%

Abhishek Jha

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NEW DELHI: India's unemployment rate stood at 5.1% in April, the National Statistics Office (NSO) said on Thursday in its first ever monthly data on labour market indicators. Monthly employment numbers, before the NSO released them yesterday, were only available from private sources like the Centre for Monitoring of Indian Economy (CMIE).

Compared to the 5.1% overall unemployment rate, rural and urban India had rates at 4.5% and 6.5% respectively. The other two key labour metrics, LFPR and WPR were 42% and 39.8% respectively. LFPR is the share of population working or looking for a job and WPR represents the employed. LFPR was 42.9% for rural areas and 39.9% for urban areas. WPR was 41% in rural areas and 37.3% for urban areas.

Since these numbers are the first ever monthly employment estimates, they cannot show a trend yet.

To be sure, the April numbers for urban unemployment rate are lower than the quarterly urban unemployment rate for the April-June quarter in all seven financial years up to 2024-25 for which this data is available. After a sharp uptick in 2020-21, urban unemployment rate fell in all quarters compared to earlier years. However, this was accompanied with a qualitative deterioration in jobs, a trend that appeared to reverse only last year. No data on quality of jobs was published in the monthly bulletin for April.

Experts suggested that the changes in design should not affect comparability of quarterly estimates made earlier for urban estimates or annual estimates made for both rural and urban areas. This is because even the current sample size can only allow estimates up to NSS regions (sub-regions smaller than big states) without the error margin becoming big, and because both designs allow for these regions to be scientifically represented, said Himanshu, associate professor of economics at JNU. Quarterly estimates were not made for rural areas earlier because labour market characteristics do not change that quickly in rural India, Himanshu added.

The NSO could publish monthly estimates as it changed the sampling design of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS), India's official labour market survey since 2017-18, in January this year. The change increased the annual sample size to around 272,000 households,

from 120,000 in the previous PLFS.

Under the new design, the sample size is larger and more representative of the population, which should lead to more accurate estimates.

NSO officials said the new design will help in getting more accurate data on employment and unemployment rates.

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SPORT

How well will IPL teams recover from the break?

Some teams have lost players, others have lost momentum but at this critical point, they will need to find a way to win matches

Somshuvra Laha

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KOLKATA: At the peak of his batting might, Don Bradman had to stay away from Test cricket for eight years because of the Second World War. By the time normalcy returned, Bradman was 38 but nowhere close to being done with the game. He went on to score eight hundreds in 15 Tests, averaging a surreal 105.72 while leading the Australian team that remained unbeaten in 32 matches during the 1948 tour of England.

The spectre of war can be cruel but also curiously galvanising. Its aftermath, however, can't always be dictated, especially in these days, and particularly for a tournament like the IPL that depends on multiple stakeholders. Key players have pulled out, venues have been changed, and more importantly, momentum

has been lost. After the entire country was on edge for a week, will IPL 2025 prevail once again? Only time will tell.

The IPL has been postponed before, notably because of a pandemic that had held the world hostage for nearly two years. A week of escalating hostilities between India and Pakistan however felt equally grim, specifically on the day an ongoing IPL match (May 8) had to be abandoned in Dharamsala amidst reports of nearby Pathankot coming under fire. Details from the 'Willow-Talk' podcast that had Alyssa Healy—Australian women's captain and wife of Mitchell Starc—filling in with more details, paints an even bleaker picture of what actually transpired behind the scenes.

"Couple of the light towers went out and we were just there waiting. I heard a rumour a couple of sets down that we might have to evacuate the stadium cause the lights had gone down," Healy was quoted as saying.

"And we are a large group of family and extra support staff. And next minute the guy that kind of wrangles the group of us and gets us on the bus, comes up and his face was white. 'And he was like, we need to go right

now.' Inside the dressing room reigned confusion. "The boys (players) are there. Faf (du Plessis) didn't even have shoes on," said Healy. "They're all just waiting there, looking stressed. I asked Mitch, 'what's going on?' And he said, 'the town 60 kilometres away had just been smacked by some of the missiles.'" Sanity could have nosedived but for the BCCI that assured the safe passage of the spectators and players that night. Barely a week has passed and the IPL is returning with tweaks and changes, but not entirely free of apprehensions.

Like Delhi Capitals, who will have to live with the news of Starc not coming back for the remainder of the IPL. Royal Challengers Bengaluru, aiming for a top-two finish, are still sweating on an update from Cricket Australia (CA) regarding Josh Hazlewood. CA has taken an official stance that the decision to rejoin the IPL teams will be entirely personal.

And with the World Test Championship final—featuring Australia and South Africa—set to begin at Lord's on June 11, quite a few participating players could be called away sooner or later. As of now, South Africans

Kagiso Rabada (Gujarat Titans), Aiden Markram (Lucknow Super Giants), Marco Jansen (Punjab Kings), Tristan Stubbs (Delhi Capitals), Lungi Ngidi (Royal Challengers Bengaluru), Wiaan Mulder (Sunrisers Hyderabad), Ryan Rickleton and Corbin Bosch (both Mumbai Indians) are reportedly leaving on May 30, meaning they will miss the playoffs for their respective teams.

This also means reworking strategy, which for some franchises translates to going back to the white board. The towering Jansen's left-arm pace has been key to Punjab Kings stifling runs in the middle overs. Mustafizur Rahman is no Starc, and even if the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) eventually sorts out his NOC, he has too few matches to make an impact.

RCB is one of the few teams lucky enough to still play at home but if Hazlewood ultimately doesn't travel, replicating his probing lengths will be almost impossible. Similarly, not having Moeen Ali for the rest of the phase means Kolkata Knight Riders will lose some edge in their spin bowling attack at a time pitches are expected to be drier.

Professional teams are expected to tide over such hurdles but it could be overwhelmingly difficult for some teams who have evidently been too reliant on a few players. Gujarat Titans are just one win away from making the playoffs but that is when they are set to lose Jos Buttler, who will join the England ODI team.

Which means losing out on a third of their most successful run-scoring trio (Shubman Gill and Sai Sudharsan being the other two) just when the former England skipper might be needed the most. Kusal Perera has been drafted in, but he can't be a like-for-like replacement.

For franchises like Mumbai Indians who basically thrive on momentum, no one knows how this break would have hit them. And for some of the other teams sitting on the fringe, this could be a chance to catch a break.

There is always the example of KKR, who had strung just two wins out of seven games till the 2021 IPL had to be paused in May, only to return in September to win five out of the next seven matches and qualify for the Eliminator. An encore on those lines would surely spice up the business end.

To get best out of Bumrah, solid back-up crew needed

Sanjeev K Samyal

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MUMBAI: With the Indian team about to get a new captain for the England series, it will be interesting to see the approach the skipper, along with coach Gautam Gambhir, will want to adopt.

Under Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, the team took to fielding five specialist bowlers as a draw was looked upon as a loss. But will the new captain want to fight Bazball with Bazball or will he make wickets his target?

The key to winning a Test match is to take 20 wickets and the player holding the trump cards for India is Jasprit Bumrah. Looking at the conditions in England, the performance of the pace department will be crucial to the team's chances. India's hopes in the upcoming five-Test series will depend a lot on their tactical plan to get the best out of their pace ace.

To make optimum use of Bumrah, managing his workload and providing him strong support with the right selection picks in the pace department will be important.

Bumrah's backup

The pacer from Ahmedabad was brilliant in the last Test series Australia too, picking up 32 wickets, but he missed support from the other end. It led to him being overworked and ultimately breaking down. Hence it's essential that the bowlers be able to hunt in a pack. It is how it was on the last tour to England when India tied the five-match series, 2-2. With Ishant Sharma, Mohammed Shami and Shardul Thakur, the captain could ensure the pressure was always on the England batters.

India will need a repeat of that showing if they have to hold their own this time as well.

Former India pacer Karsan Ghavri feels the pace unit will have extra work to do this time due to a weak batting unit. "With no Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, who will hold the innings together? To win games a team has to get 400 plus scores, if there is a small total, there will be extra pressure on the bowlers," said Ghavri, who shared the new ball with Kapil Dev in the four Tests in the 1979 series in England.

The challenge against Ben Stokes' England is starkly different from Cummins' Australia as their Bazball brand of batting can take the match away from the opposition.

Siraj finished with 20 wickets in the last Australia series but was inconsistent to be able to forge a successful partnership with Bumrah.



AP

rah. Bumrah toiled hard from his end but the team was not able to build the desired pressure from both sides. India's think-tank, however, will be banking on Siraj being more effective in England. After returning from Australia, he has worked hard on his game. The results can be seen in his performances in the IPL.

Though it is a different format, the selectors will be happy with his bowling rhythm and the way he is moving the ball. In helpful conditions in England, he should be incisive. He has the experience of bowling there. In six Tests he has 23 wickets, the highlight being an eight-wicket haul in 2021 in India's Lord's Test win, four wickets in each innings.

Prasidh Krishna and Arshdeep Singh is yet to play in England, however Ghavri feels they have the skills to do well there. The two are in form, being among the top wicket-takers in the IPL. In the only Test he played in Australia, the fifth game at Sydney, Prasidh underlined his potential with a six-wicket match haul.

"Shami to me looks doubtful because there's a question mark over his fitness. Bumrah is in good form, Siraj is in good form. They need good support from Prasidh and Arshdeep."

So Arshdeep is looked at as a white-ball specialist, but Ghavri says the left-arm pacer will be a good pick. "In England, he could be very effective, has a good line length, has a good inswinger, outswinger, sharp bouncer and yorker."

Playoffs in sight

The IPL resumes on Saturday with 13 league matches left. Seven teams are vying for 4 berths. Here's a look at what teams need to do

Gujarat Titans

16 Points

0.793 NRR

3 Remaining matches

DC, LSG, CSK

GT are a win away from making the playoffs. More than that can give them a top two finish and two chances in the playoffs.

Royal Challengers Bengaluru

16 Points

0.482 NRR

3 Remaining matches

KKR, SRH, LSG

RCB are placed second but only by NRR. A win in their remaining three matches will ensure them a playoff berth. A top-two finish will give them two chances to qualify for the final.

Punjab Kings

15 Points

0.376 NRR

3 Remaining matches

RR, DC, MI

PBKs play all their remaining matches in Jaipur. One win is likely to be good enough for a top-four finish. A better showing could see them end up in the top two.

Lucknow Super Giants

10 Points

-0.469 NRR

3 Remaining matches

SRH, GT, RCB

Three wins can take them to 16 points which may give them an outside chance of qualifying. But then will need to majorly perk up their NRR if teams are bunched on same points.

Kolkata Knight Riders

11 Points

0.193 NRR

2 Remaining matches

RCB, SRH

Wins in both their remaining matches will take them to 15 points which may not be enough for a playoff berth. But IPL have sprung bigger surprises in the past.

Cracking the squash code

Rutwick Mehta

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MUMBAI: From 2013 to 2016, through his early- and mid-twenties, New Zealand squash star Paul Coll floated between the world ranking of 100 and 25. It's a space India's current top pros find themselves in, hoping to kick on to the next level. Nicknamed "Superman" for his on-court athleticism, Coll soared to that level and continued to fly high.

Since 2017 when he broke into the top 10, Coll has been a constant among squash's elite. In that period, he became the world No.1 in 2022, won four Worlds and two CWG medals, including the 2022 gold beating Saurav Ghosal in the semi-final. Now ranked 4th, the 33-year-old is chasing more glory at the ongoing Worlds in Chicago.

Indian squash hasn't yet seen a pro go from 25 to 5 in the rankings; the closest to that came Ghosal, Joshua Chinappa and Dipika Pallikal (all former world No.1s). Coll did that by moving out of his comfort zone, in terms of coaching and training for modern squash, that according to him, is evolving "in a high-paced direction".

"We were never really close friends or something. But, because of this (India-Pakistan border tensions), it will not be like before," Coll said.

The two Asian stars are not expected to face off anytime soon with Chopra set to compete in Janusz Kusociński Memorial in Poland on May 23 while Nadeem will be in action at the Asian Championships in Gumi, South Korea from May 27-31. The Indian has decided to skip the Asian event. Besides Chopra, the other Indians in Doha are Kishore Jena, Gulveer Singh in men's 5000m race and Parul Chaudhary in women's 3000m steeplechase.

"I always moved around and looked for people that could offer the skills that I needed to improve," Coll told HT. "I was very aware of my weaknesses, and always set out to improve those as much as maintain what I was

Know Paul Coll

Age 33

PSA rank 4

Best ranking:

1 (Apr 2022)

W/L record: 433/163

PSA titles: 27

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

Jun 2022: Voted 2021-22 PSA Male Player of the Year after winning his 2nd British Open

Aug 2021: Becomes NZ's first ever male British Open champion

Jun 2019: Wins 5th successive New Zealand Nationals title



GETTY IMAGES

World Champs

1 Silver: 2020 Doha

3 Bronze: 2021 Chicago, 2022 Cairo, 2024 Cairo

prerequisite for pros now.

In a 2017 video where the Professional Squash Association shadowed Coll on a training day, he began with an early morning stretching session, followed by exhaustive weight training at the gym, dry needling physio work, and an on-court ghosting block to wrap up the evening. That's how an average training day still largely looks like for Coll, depending on the tournament schedule. It ramps up in the off season in July-August.

"It becomes a lot hotter and higher in intensity and durations, where I can set my body up for the season," he said.

Gym work and weight training is "hugely important" for today's squash of grueling physicality. If you don't do gym work, you're asking for injuries. It's a sport that requires every aspect of fitness—speed, endurance, strength, flexibility. If you're not covering all bases, you're putting yourself at a higher risk," he said.

That's another challenge a lot of Indian pros face as they push for a harder climb up the ladder. The depth of Indian squash, though, impresses the world No.4. "There's a good number of Indian players on the tour, which is great to see. India tends to be very strong in the team events, because they have quite a good depth of players who are always quite skillful," Coll said.

The key, though, will be to get out of the comfort zone.

Shafali returns for England tour

Shalini Gupta

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CHANDIGARH: Swashbuckling opening batter Shafali Verma returned to the national team on Thursday with selectors ending her seven-month exile for the upcoming T20I series in England. The five-match series will be followed by three ODIs with in-form Delhi batter Pratiksha Rawal keeping Shafali out in the 50-over format.

Shafali was dropped from the Indian team last November after a string of poor performances.

Later, she slugged hard in the domestic circuit and emerged as the leading run-getter in the Senior Women's One Day Trophy (527 runs, 152.31 strike rate, 75.29 aver-

age) and the Senior Women's One Day Challenger Trophy (414 runs, 145.26 strike rate, 82.80 average) while captaining Haryana.

T20I squad: H Kaur (c), S Verma, S Mandhana (vc), J Rodrigues, R Ghosh (wk), Y Bhatia (wk), H Deol, D Sharma, S Rana, S Charani, S Upadhyay, A Kaur, A Reddy, K Gaud, S Satgheare.

ODI squad: H Kaur (c), S Mandhana (vc), P Rawal, H Deol, J Rodrigues, R Ghosh (wk), Y Bhatia (wk), T Hasabnis, D Sharma, S Rana, S Charani, S Upadhyay, A Kaur, A Reddy, K Gaud, S Satgheare.

In tennis too, India have lacked depth for a long time. The All India Tennis Association has done well to groom talent. A sports ministry official said on Thursday there was no harm in relooking at the 2008 policy that allowed only Indian citizens to represent the country. Tapping into the diaspora is practised by many football federations of which Malaysia, Indonesia and Philippines are some examples.

How Indian chess got its 86th Grandmaster

After over a year's wait India has its newest Grandmaster in 19-year-old Srihari LR from Tamil Nadu

Susan Ninan

BENGALURU: In the oasis town of Al-Ain in Abu Dhabi, a group of young Indian chess players from Tamil Nadu have been training together, exchanging opening ideas, rigging up quick cricket sessions with squeeze balls and exam pads inside their coach's hotel room, and chasing GM norms. One of them — 19-year-old Srihari LR — checked off his final GM norm at the Asian Individual Men's Chess Championship, held in the eastern part of the UAE, becoming India's 86th Grandmaster.

Between 2020 and 2023, India churned out 19 Grandmasters. Seven of them in 2023 alone. In 2024, just one new Indian GM was added — 32-year-old Shyam Nikhil, whose final GM norm arrived after over a decade. After over a year's wait, India now has a new GM.

Srihari picked up his first GM norm in 2023 and crossed 2500 Elo in the published ratings (one of the requirements for a GM title) last year. He arrived in Al-Ain in the hunt for his final GM norm. Academy mate Ilamparthy A.R. too had similar ambitions. The 16-year-old, though, ended up missing it after a draw in the penultimate round. The Sharjah Open, which starts on May 16, is his next best bet.

For coach Shyam Sundar, the decision to leave his academy in Chennai behind and travel with six of his trainees — four International Masters and two Grandmasters, Bharath Subramanyam and Pranav V., who became world junior champion in April — for a slew of tournaments in the Middle East for over a month (starting with the Baku Open in late April to the Dubai Open ending in early June) stemmed from what he describes as 'desperation'.

"It's been a while since India has had a GM," Shyam told HT. "We need a steady trickle of new GMs to get more players into the



19-year-old Srihari LR became India's latest GM.

game. It's hard to be away from my academy for over a month but I was super desperate to create new GMs. I thought I'd travel with the players and see what best I can do. Having a coach around can make a difference. Apart from Ilamparthy, there's

Ashwath who needs two more GM norms and Muthaiha who needs one norm and roughly 15 Elo points."

In Al-Ain, Srihari faced Grandmasters in eight of the nine rounds, defeating both former and reigning world junior champions — Abhijeet Gupta and Pranav — and losing only one game, to fellow Indian PA Iniyar in the final round. Srihari earned his first GM norm at the 2023 Qatar Masters, a tournament where he was paired against a certain Magnus Carlsen in Round 1.

What followed was an instructive lesson for the young Indian and a fine 23-move win for the five-time world champion. The Indian teen's second GM norm came at the 2024 Chennai GM Open.

"Chasing GM norms often takes a toll on players," says coach Shyam, "Srihari tried his luck in round robin events earlier to get his final norm, but it didn't work out. The pressure builds as the wait grows. It can affect the way you play too. Srihari, for instance, is an extremely solid player. But after his second GM norm, perhaps

the pressure to get to a GM title soon led him to change his style and be more dynamic. It backfired so I asked him to hit pause and just get the final norm out of the way rather than changing his style under pressure."

To get the group to blow off steam between rounds, the 32-year-old coach kept up their cricket-playing tradition, a regular fixture at the 'Chess Thulir' academy.

When they were huddled together with laptops discussing openings, Shyam's spacious hotel room in Al-Ain served as the setting for two-hour cricket games with soft foam squeeze stress balls and clipboard exam pads for bats.

"Sometimes these guys carry

TT rackets to serve as bats," says Shyam, "but this time we used exam pads. It's also a way to get them to bond, and not let the pressure of norms get to them."

Apart from Bharath, the others don't have sponsors covering expenses. "So, we divide it up among ourselves since we're travelling together."

On days any two of his trainees play each other, Shyam usually sits it out and lets them make their own decisions. He's pleased with what he's built so far. "What really moved me was seeing these guys share their PGN files with each other on our WhatsApp group during the tournament. It's pretty rare to see players do that."



Nihal finishes 2nd in Asian Chess

AL-AIN: Top-seeded Indian GM Nihal Sarin defeated overnight leader Bardia Daneshvar of Iran in the final round to finish second at the Asian Individual Open Chess Championship. Nihal matched Daneshvar on 7 points but the Iranian had better tiebreak. The Indian also booked his seat in the World Chess Cup to be held later this year in New Delhi.

ICC doubles prize for WTC winners

DUBAI: The winners of the 2025 WTC final will be richer by \$3.6 million, more than double of what was awarded in the previous edition. Australia had received \$1.6 million for winning the final against India in 2023. The 2025 final will be played between Australia and South Africa at Lord's from June 11.

Indian shuttlers exit Thailand Open

BANGKOK: Trisha Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand lost 20-22, 14-21 to Japan's Rui Hirokami and Sayaka Hobara in the second round of the Thailand Open. Unnati Hooda lost to top seed Pornpawee Chochuwong 14-21, 11-21. Malvika Bansod went down to Ratchanok Intanon 12-21, 16-21 and Aakarshi Kashyap was outplayed by Thai southpaw Supanida Katethong 9-21, 14-21 and Tharun Mannepal lost to second-seeded Anders Antonsen 14-21, 16-21.

ECB appoint Southee as consultant

LONDON: Former NZ pacer Tim Southee was named England's Specialist Skills Consultant till the end of the five-match Test series against India. The tour will start with the first Test at Leeds on June 20, and will conclude with the July 31-August 4 Test at the Oval. Southee retired in December, 2024, as New Zealand's all-time leading wicket-taker.

**Aapke sapne nahin rukte,
toh investments kyun?**



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