Calm prevails in Punjab after understanding between India, Pak to stop military actions

camps under Operation

CHANDIGARH: Calm prevailed in Punjab, especially in the border areas, on Sunday, following an understanding between India and Pakistan to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea.

Authorities have asked people to resume their normal activities and maintain

At around 8:30 am, the district administration in Amritsar asked people to resume their normal routine. The Jalandhar district administration also said there was nothing to worry about and work may resume as usual.

"All is well here in Jalandhar. According to the information received, there is nothing to worry and work may resume as usual. Forces are on a constant vigil," Jalandhar Deputy Commissioner Himanshu Aggarwal said.

However, the district authorities have requested people not to burst firecrackers or fly drones

"We will take immediate action and inform you in time if there is any information of any threat in the area," the DC said.

In Amritsar, Deputy Commissioner Sakshi Sawhney along with Police Commissioner Gurpreet

ed, police said on Sunday.

tation proceedings, they said.

of the city and its markets.

"Thank you to the brave and resilient people of Amritsar. We are incredibly proud of how each one of you responded with bravery, patience, and trust in one another and in the administration. Wishing you a pleasant day-Enjoy your Sunday," DC Sawhney posted on X. Many locals said that during the recent escalation in tension between India and Pakistan, Amritsar, which remains packed with tourists, had seen a decline in tourist footfall. Punjab, which shares a 553-km border with Pakistan, various routine day-to-day activities

were back to normal. Morning walkers, especially in border districts like Amritsar, Pathankot and Ferozepur, thanked the country's armed forces.

"It is because of our forces that you see us here today without any fear. Over the past few days, we saw how Pakistan carried out drone attacks targeting several parts of Punjab and some other states,' said Amarjit Singh, a resident of

"But our brave forces acted as a shield and thwarted their misadventures. They gave a strong reply to perpetrators of ter-

Four illegal Bangladeshi immigrants held

in Delhi, deportation process initiated

NEW DELHI: Four Bangladeshi nationals residing illegally

in southwest Delhi's Vasant Vihar area have been apprehend-

Arif (19), Asadul (30), Asia Begum (47) and Zuhur Ali

(80), were found staying int he country without valid docu-

ments. They have been sent to the detention centre for depor-

According to police, a team was tasked with intensified

During one of the patrols, the team noticed three men and a

woman acting suspiciously. On being signalled to stop, they

tried to flee but were chased and apprehended. Upon ques-

tioning, they revealed their identities and admitted to being

"Identity documents recovered from Asia Begum and Zuhur

Ali confirmed their Bangladeshi nationality and illegal stay in

All four were taken to Safdarjung Hospital for a medical

examination and later handed over to the Foreigners Regional

Registration Office (FRRO) for deportation procedures.

India without a valid visa or permit," an officer said.

patrolling to curb illegal immigration in the area.

natives of Phoolwadi village in Bangladesh.

Sindoor. Now that an understanding has come into effect, let us hope that peace prevails, but if Pakistan again commits any misadventure, they will be given a stern reply," he Another Amritsar resi-

dent, Pawan Kumar, said after days of tension, things are back to normal. "Over the last few days, Amritsar saw a decline in tourist footfalls because of the tense situation. Now, hopefully, peace shall prevail," he said.

Simran from Pathankot, a border town that had also remained quite tense in view of the situation, said, "Though there was anxiety among people over the last few days, we were confident that our armed forces were there to protect us against any Pakistani misadven-

"However, the understanding between the two countries (to stop military action) has come as a

Ferozepur was out on a morning walk with a group of friends. "We have resumed our morning routine after staying indoors for a few days," he said.

"Things are back to normal and we hope that peace will prevail," he said.

Another morning walker from the industrial hub of Ludhiana said, "Nobody wants a war as it only causes destruction and hits the economy. But if Pakistan or any other country indulges in any misadventure, India will hit back hard and give a befitting reply. Besides, India has a firm policy

against any act of terror." In Chandigarh and adjoining Panchkula in Harvana and in many other towns in Haryana, morning walkers were heard discussing the current situation and shared similar sen-

Earlier, in view of the prevailing situation, authorities had put in place a blackout and other measures in several Punjab districts, including Amritsar,

Kanpur has started moving towards regaining its old glory: Rajnath

STATE TIMES NEWS

LUCKNOW: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday expressed confidence that Kanpur --- once known as the 'Manchester of the East' --- has started moving towards regaining its old glory after the construction of the Defence

"Tomorrow when any region in the west will make tremendous development, it will be known as the Kanpur of the West," he said virtually addressing from Delhi the inaugural ceremony of the BrahMos Aerospace Integration and Testing Facility at the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor

The minister said that there was a time when Kanpur and adjoining areas were known for manufacturing of products, adding this region was very prosperous from the economic

"This was known as the Manchester of the East, but after Independence due to many reasons it lagged behind in the path of economic progress and was left behind. I don't want to go into those reasons, but I would like to say that after the construction of the Defence Corridor, this region has started moving towards regaining its old glory," said Singh.

"I have no doubts that Kanpur will touch such heights of development that it will become an example for the developed areas of the world. Tomorrow when any region in the west will make tremendous development, it will be known as the Kanpur of the West," he added.

Singh further said that in this manner, "we are committed to develop each node of the Defence Industrial Corridor".

Fazilka and Pathankot.

At a media briefing late on Saturday evening, Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri called upon Pakistan to take appropriate steps to address these violations and deal with the situation with "seriousness and responsibility".

The armed forces have been given instructions to deal strongly with any instances of repetition of the violations along the International Border as well as the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir, he said.

The directors general of operations (DGMOs) of the two countries had agreed to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea with effect from 5 pm on Saturday, Misri announced earlier.

Modi govt gave free hand to Armed Forces, worsened Pak's condition: Yadav

INDORE: Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav on Sunday lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government for Operation Sindoor and said the government has made things worse for Pakistan by giving the Indian Armed Forces a free hand to destroy terrorist

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

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

The chief minister said that the Modi government made things worse for Pakistan by giving the armed forces a free hand to

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

Yaday said the Modi government has kept the countries," he said.

try safe by making quick

"Prime Minister Modi has increased respect for the country by showing India's military capability to the world. He has already said that we do not provoke anyone, but if someone provokes us, we do not spare him either," he said.

He said the whole country is united in this hour of crisis, and the state government has made tight securi-

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

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

Putin proposes direct peace talks with Ukraine, Zelenskyy insists on ceasefire before negotiations

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday proposed holding direct peace talks with Ukraine in Istanbul on May 15 without any preconditions, a move wel-Ukrainian comed by President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who insisted that Moscow must agree to a ceasefire first.

Putin said talks are intended to "eliminate the root causes of the conflict' and "reach the establishment of a long-term, durable peace."

"We would like to start talks immediately, already next Thursday, May 15, in Istanbul, where they were held before and where they were interrupted,' Putin said in an address.

He emphasised the talks should be held "without any preconditions.'

Putin's address came just hours after the leaders of Germany, France, the United Kingdom and Poland stood alongside Zelenskyy in Kiev and

urged Putin to agree to a 30-day ceasefire starting on Monday or face possible "massive sanctions."

Root causes are generally understood to cover a range of Russian grievances, from NATO's expansion eastwards to the size of Ukraine's military, according to reports. Putin reminded that after the beginning of Russia's special military

operation (SMO) in Ukraine, the representatives of Russia and Ukraine had met for several rounds of talks in Belarus and, after advanced negotiations in Istanbul facilitated by Turkey, they finalised a joint agreement in 2022. However, after the visit of former Minister Boris Johnson, this draft was trashed.

Putin categorically rejected the demand for an immediate 30-day ceasefire.

Citing a bad record of Kiev in observing ceasefire and truces, Putin accused Ukraine of not honouring a 30-day moratorium on attacks on the

Donald Trump, as well as the Easter truce.

Reacting to Putin's offer, Zelenskyy reiterated the precondition of a full. lasting, and reliable ceasefire starting May 12. "It is a positive sign that

the Russians have finally begun to consider ending the war. The entire world has been waiting for this for a very long time. And the very first step in truly ending any war is a ceasefire," Zelenskyy posted on

"There is no point in continuing the killing even for a single day. We expect Russia to confirm a ceasefire - full, lasting. and reliable - starting tomorrow, May 12th, and Ukraine is ready to meet," he said. For two months now.

Ukraine has said it wants an immediate 30-day ceasefire. But Russia has so far refused to commit, saying it supports the idea of a pause in principle, but insists there are what it calls "nuances" that need addressing first. The Kremlin argues that

focus.

day ceasefire without agreed-upon "nuances" to replenish human and hardware to resume military operations against Russia, which has an upper hand on the battle-

"This will be a trap for Russia, and Ukraine will rearm to continue the war with the help of its Western backers," Senator Alexi Pushkov was quoted as saying by the state-run VestiFM.

US President Trump welcomed Putin's offer of direct talks.

"A potentially great day for Russia and Ukraine! Think of the hundreds of thousands of lives that will be saved as this neverending "bloodbath" hopefully comes to an end," Trump wrote on Truth

Social "It will be a whole new, and $_{
m much}$ WORLD. I will continue to work with both sides to pens. The USA wants to instead. Rebuilding and Trade. A

India follows its defence, diplomatic strategy: **Union Minister Pralhad Joshi**

STATE TIMES NEWS

BENGALURU/HUBBALLI: Union Minister Pralhad Joshi on Sunday said that India its defence and dinlo. macy follow their strategy, and that the government, after discussions with the armed forces, reached an understanding with Pakistan to stop all firing and military action.

However, before reaching this understanding, the Government decided that India would treat any future act of terror on its soil as an "act of war" and respond accordingly,

"India has its strength. Earlier, even after major terror attacks, our response was mild. But this time, on the very first day, our soldiers attacked about nine terror bases or launch pads in Pakistan. A large number of terrorists were killed. So, I don't want to respond to those criticising the ceasefire announcement," Union Minister for Consumer Food and Public Distribution, said in response to a

Joshi said that ever since Narendra had taken a strong stand even before thy, once again tried to attack India Modi became Prime Minister, terrorist activities, which earlier occurred across the country, have been restricted to the border areas-and even there, the government is taking serious action.

"India and its defence forces have strategies, including diplomacy and foreign affairs. After thorough discussions with the defence forces, the Government of India has made its decision. In the coming days, spokespersons from the External Affairs and Defence Ministries will share more details," he added.

In response to a question about US President Donald Trump's claim of mediation, Joshi said that reports suggest that Pakistan's Director General of Military Operations (DGMO) spoke to his Indian counterpart regarding the ceasefire violation. For further information, the concerned Ministry will respond, he

Speaking to reporters in Hubballi, Noting that the Indian government announcing the ceasefire that any future act of terror would be treated as an "act of war", he said Pakistan should learn a lesson.

Meanwhile, Union Minister of State Shobha Karandlaje, speaking in Bengaluru, hit out at Pakistan for violating the ceasefire.

She said the time had come for the world to consider how to punish a country that has become a "haven" for terrorism.

"Pakistan is exporting terrorists." she claimed. She noted that in retaliation for the Pahalgam terror attack, India and its soldiers had destroyed nine terror bases in Pakistan and killed hundreds of terrorists, including the brother and family members of Jaishe-Mohammad chief Maulana Masood

Karandlaje added, "Fearing our retaliation, Pakistan ran to the US and other countries, pleading for a cease-

"But Pakistan, which is untrustworlast night after the ceasefire announ ment. We, the people of India, stand firmly behind our armed forces, and it is every citizen's responsibility to support their families," she added.

Karandlaje was speaking to reporters after participating in a "Walk for the Nation" march held in Bengaluru.

She said people from all religions, castes, and political affiliations united in the march, showing their support for the armed forces.

Stating that Pakistan continues to train terrorists despite its people lacking necessities, Karandlaje said the country has been troubling India for the past seventy-eight years by sending terrorists to kill innocent civilians and

"This must end. The people of India are with the Government. We are all standing in support of our soldiers,

Cong remembers Indira Gandhi's leadership amid Indo-Pak conflict

STATE TIMES NEWS NEW DELHI: Asserting

it is time to remember Indira Gandhi's leadership, the Congress on Sunday cited her action in 1971 that led to the formation of Bangladesh when she remained undeterred by the US action of sending a nuclear-powered naval task force in the Bay of Bengal.

Congress general secretaries Jairam Ramesh and Sachin Pilot cited the 1971 incident, claiming that she went ahead with the action in national interest despite being asked not to do anything in Bangladesh.

"Now is also the time to

Meet Miss World contestants from subcontinent, no

recall what happened in the second week of Dec 1971, which is well documented. The Kissinger duo sent a nuclear-powered nuclear-weapon capable US naval task force of its Seventh Fleet led by the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise into the Bay of Bengal. Indira Gandhi was undeterred. Pakistan surrendered on Dec 16th, 1971," Ramesh said on X.

Pilot told reporters at the party headquarters here that the United States had said they will deploy the seventh fleet to the Bay of Bengal.

"Despite that, the then government and Indira Ji

went ahead and did what was in a supreme national interest. We remember them today and that leadership was such where national interest was foremost," he said. The Congress also remembered the former prime minister on its social media handles, saying, "Today the nation misses the courageous leadership of Indira Gandhi". The party also highlighted some past speeches of Indira Gandhi during the 1971 conflict with Pakistan. "A symbol of unyielding strength and unwavering courage - Smt. Indira Gandhi," the Congress said in one of the

20 years on, Chhota Rajan acquitted in builder threat case as prosecution fails to prove charge

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

MUMBAI: In a setback for CBI, gangster Chhota Rajan was acquitted by a special court two decades after he was booked for threatening a builder, with the judge noting the prosecution has failed to prove the charge as nothing incriminatory was found during witnesses' testimonies.

The gangster will, however, continue to remain in the Tijar Jail where he is serving a life term for the murder of Mumbai-based crime reporter J Dev.

While acquitting Chhota Rajan on Thursday, special judge AM Patil of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) court noted that the most reliable witness of the prosecution is not certain whether the person who had

called him on the phone to threaten the builder was indeed Chhota Rajan.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), which investigated the case, stated that real estate developer Nandkumar Harchandani had received multiple threats in the name of Chhota Rajan, asking him to clear the dues he purportedly owed to some businessmen.

The prosecution maintained Harchandani had invited displeasure of the accused (Chhota Rajan) in the matter of payment of money who hatched a plan to teach a lesson

Rajan, through his accomplices, had allegedly told Harchandani to stop work at the construction site, it said.

In September 2004, seven unidentified persons entered Harchandani's office and fired at his accountant, but he escaped narrowly.

The court stated that nothing incriminatory against the present accused came on record during the testimonies of two eyewitnesses examined by the prosecution. "The most reliable witness

against the present accused is Irshad Shaikh, who received Rajan's alleged call about the threat. But, during his crossexamination, he admitted that he is not certain whether the person who made the call was 'Chhota Rajan' or somebody else. This is the crucial admission given by this witness, which goes to the very roots of the case." the judge stated.

"In sum and substance, it can be said that the prosecution has failed to prove the guilt of the accused," the court added.

STATE TIMES NEWS

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

A representative of the Miss World competition said this has nothing to do with the con-

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

He pointed out how in 2023, when Erica Robin represented

Pakistan at the Miss Universe pageant for the first time in its

72-year history, it sparked outrage in the Islamic country, with many calling it "shame-This year, India is being represented by Nandini Gupta, who hails from Kota in

Rajasthan. Gupta is pitching for an inclusive world, and vows to make a difference in the lives of differently-abled through her 'Project Ekta'.

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

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

representative from Pakistan

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

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

today's problems. Her project emphasises climate action grounded in ancestral values.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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