

INTENSE HEATWAVE

Jammu and Kashmir is currently in the grip of an intense heatwave, with temperatures soaring several degrees above normal for this time of year. The unrelenting heat has disrupted daily life across the Union Territory, particularly in the plains of Jammu region, where temperatures have breached the 44°C mark in several areas. Even the usually cooler Kashmir Valley is witnessing unusually warm days, sparking concern among residents, health authorities, and environmental experts alike.

In Jammu, mercury levels have consistently remained between 42°C to 45°C for the past week. The cities of Samba, Kathua, and Udhampur are facing particularly harsh conditions, with power outages and water shortages adding to the woes of the public. Authorities have issued heatwave alerts, urging people to stay indoors during peak hours, avoid strenuous outdoor activity, and stay hydrated.

Meanwhile, the Kashmir Valley, which typically enjoys a temperate climate even during summer months, is experiencing daytime temperatures hovering between 30°C and 34°C - significantly above average. Srinagar recorded 33.6°C this week, a temperature rarely seen during May. Residents in the Valley, many of whom are not accustomed to such high temperatures, are feeling the impact more acutely, with an increase in heat-related ailments being reported in local hospitals and clinics.

Medical professionals are witnessing a rise in cases of heat-stroke, dehydration, fatigue, and other heat-related illnesses. Dr. Farooq Ahmed, a physician at a government hospital in Srinagar, advised the public to take necessary precautions. "Avoid direct sunlight, wear light clothing, drink plenty of water, and take care of vulnerable groups such as children and the elderly," he said.

The agricultural sector, too, is feeling the brunt of the heat-wave. Farmers in both Jammu and Kashmir regions are worried about the impact on crops, especially in areas where irrigation is dependent on already-stressed water resources. The early drying up of streams and shrinking groundwater levels have raised alarm about long-term water scarcity and agricultural sustainability.

Environmental experts link the current heatwave to larger climate change patterns, pointing out that such extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and intense in the Himalayan region.

The administration has begun responding to the crisis by issuing advisories through social media and local news channels.

For now, the residents of Jammu and Kashmir are doing their best to endure a summer that has come with unprecedented intensity - a stark reminder of the changing climate dynamics in the region.

Operation Sindoor till POK retrieved, trans border terrorism wiped out

■ PURAN CHAND SHARMA

It has been a proud and a very significant moment when the bravest Indian Army launched well thought out and meticulously planned operation 'Sindoor' to forcefully and successfully avenge the most heinous and barbaric selective killing of innocent tourists coming from different parts of the country at Pahalgam severely assaulting humanity and denting the National prestige of our country which has never violated and dishonoured the sovereignty of any other country out of arrogance or for the purpose of satisfying the expansionist appetite. Deadly Pahalgam massacre on April, 22, triggered a powerful wave of anger; revengefulness plus befitting response to assuage the emotional outburst of the countrymen at the earliest. The victims were Indian tourists who represented different parts of the National horizon and every Tom, Dick and Harry in the country knows that all these such people who choose to visit Kashmir, the heaven on earth in hordes along with their families to feel and enjoy the phenomenal beauty of Kashmir were cowardly assaulted and martyred inclusive of women folk. This tyrannical Act deeply bruised the psyche of the Nation and prompted our Prime Minister to unleash Military blitzkrieg against Pak.

Accordingly our Govt and the Army took their time, meticulously planned 'Operation Sindoor' attacked the major hideouts of terrorists at different locations tentatively, civilians and the Military installations were not targeted flashing the clear message that our war is against the terrorists and not against common masses and the army of Pakistan.

In response, thereof, our wily neighbour sharply retaliated, endeavoured to blast our important civilian and military installations

but in vain, all their drones and other bombs were destroyed mid air; however, no substantial damage was done. Thereafter, on their severe provocation we initiated the retaliatory action, destroyed their most significant Air Bases and made them unworthy of operating the fighter jet flights. Subsequently on the initiative of Pak DGMO calling Indian DGMO on Hot Line and proactively begging for de-escalation of emerging warlike situation, accordingly calming down the things in favour of enforcing the ceasefire. Really it was a good move for which both the country had agreed, however, India, made it clear, 'we are pausing 'Operation Sindoor' and not stopping it permanently'.

India's three strategic points

1. Any terrorist attack being launched on Bharat will be treated as an Act of War and shall be handled accordingly .
2. Now on Nuclear Blackmail from Pakistan will not be tolerated.
3. POJK is our territory, Pakistan must vacate it within the shortest possible time failing which we shall be within our right to retrieve the same by dint of Military action.

Pak sponsored terrorism, India's proactive approach and liberation of POJK

The Pak sponsored terrorism has been a ongoing process for the time being, it is required to be thrown out of gear once for all. Operation Sindoor was initiated and put into action to give a befitting reply to our wily neighbour and bring them to justice for perpetrating the Pahalgam massacre. It has been successfully executed and kept on hold to wait and watch as to which way our intractable next door neighbour proceeds. If need be it shall be operational at the spur of the moment.

Terrorism From Pakistan: We have witnessed a prolonged history of sponsoring

cross-border terrorism through non-state actors like Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, etc. Getting rid of this chronic malaise is extremely challenging and complicated on account of 1. Deep rooted support from Pakistan's military and ISI. 2. Disproportionate International pressure on Pakistan. 3. Evolving tactics like Drone based-Arms delivery and hybrid warfare etc.

What India Can Do Independently

India has already taken several measures to wipe out terrorism such as Hard Power-Conducted surgical strikes in 2016, Balakot air strike in 2019 , Border fencing has been done, Better surveillance techniques are being used for better results. We need be more aggressive, Knee jerk reactions are not enough, Terrorism shall have to be comprehensively stamped out. We can also isolate Pakistan diplomatically, leverage 'Financial Action Task force' and build global coalitions against terrorism. It is a remarkable initiative of the Govt to send delegations of Members of Parliament to different countries to apprise them about the implications of hydra headed terrorism and the corrective measures taken by the Government. This is also a very significant step to garner the good will of International community.

Internal Security: Strengthening local intelligence, counter radicalization programmes and political outreach in Jammu and Kashmir.

Cyber And Information Warfare: Countering propaganda from across the border through digital defence and narrative control need be done in a very professional manner.

Trump Did Not Broker A Ceasefire

Trump made several public offers to mediate on Kashmir, which India rejected out rightly, citing it as a bilateral issue. The 2021 ceasefire reaffirmation has been the

result of backchannel talks, reportedly facilitated by Gulf states like UAE but not the USA directly. However, USA's strategic interest in South , especially vis-a-vis China does influence peace pushes indirectly.

Not Govt vs Opposition, why the conflict

During the times of national security, unity is the ideal and the buzzword. But mutual distrust , political mileage over military actions e.g. Pulwama- Balakot narrative and blame games on intelligence do cause worst kind of friction, must be dispensed with.

Lack Of Transparency

The Govt often restricts information under the guise of national interest. The opposition accuses it of hiding failures or politicizing the Army. Better understanding and counselling would prove to be a game changer

Election Dynamics

With ongoing or upcoming elections, every incident becomes a tool for narrative building rather than joint resolution.

Final Take

While terrorism from Pakistan can be significantly curtailed, wiping out completely requires sustained coordination and internal resilience. India must blend military readiness, diplomatic muscle and internal coherence. But achieving this requires a ceasefire not just at the LOC -but within the Indian political ecosystem too. There should be no politics on frivolous issues, negative tendencies aimed at leg pulling by the adversaries shall have to kept at the lowest ebb, at the moment our country is fully charged and energised for accomplishing our long cherished goals like uprooting Pak sponsored terrorism and retrieval of POK in one stroke, which is our final take. Operation Sindoor shall prove to be turning point in India's approach to addressing terrorism, reflecting a more assertive and strategic military posture.

Minimalism Vs Consumerism: A Loud Battle Between Need And Greed

■ ANUSHREE BHATTACHARYA

We all know that we need three basic things to live a simple life; clothes, food, and shelter. But do we seriously need only these three things? Well for a basic life we only have the necessity of these three things but for a comfortable life we must need some personal items also. But these personal items are not supposed to be luxurious. The thought of simplicity is somewhere lost in today's time. Everyone wants to compete with each other. If one person has a luxurious item then another must have it, just to maintain their status in front of others, doesn't matter if the item is desirable for the individual or not. The reason behind this is the increasing influence of media, advertisements, and social trends that create a false idea of happiness that can only be achieved by having luxury goods and services. Media and advertising industries show us that a successful person must own expensive things, branded products, and live a luxurious lifestyle. This becomes a culture of bragging through the social media platforms just like the influencers on Instagram, YouTube, where they post pictures or videos of their latest gadgets, trendy clothes, and luxury vacations and just by seeing that we also want to have the exact same life. This will be known as Consumerism, where people encourage others to buy more and more things, even if they don't need them. Most of the people buy expensive things not because they need them, but because they want to show them to others or just to maintain their social status. It becomes a competition now

"Who has the latest phone?"

"Who is wearing branded shoes?"

"Who is living the "perfect" life?"

Sadly, people who cannot afford these things are getting judged,

humiliated or mistreated. This is not right because a person's value should not be decided by what products or services they can afford. This creates pressure on young people to spend more on unnecessary items, even if it affects their savings or mental peace. People actually believe that their happiness depends on some material things. Brands and influencers grab the opportunity through smart advertising strategies. They are not doing anything wrong as it's their duty to attract customers and increase the sales for the company; it's the people's fault that they make others feel left out if they don't follow the trend. People are becoming more judgemental rather than supporting each other. Everyone is judging everyone here on the scale that is also built up by society. But the actual question is 'Who are we to judge anyone?' 'Who are we to decide the scale of anyone's happiness or their status?' 'Why can't we be happy with whatever we have with us?' Life is not a race which you have to win. Everybody's style of living their own lives is totally different from others. So we should stop judging people by the items they own and start respecting each other's decisions and abilities. As a result, people start living beyond their needs. Most of us fall into debt just to maintain a fake image in the society. The constant comparison seen on social media leads to dissatisfaction, anxiety, and a fear of missing out (FOMO). In this environment, minimalism is emerging as a refreshing and much-needed shift. Minimalism helps people find satisfaction in non-materialistic things like time with family, nature, and self-growth. It encourages mental clarity and helps to reduce unnecessary stress and constant pressure to "keep up" with others. Choosing minimalism is not about sacrificing comfort it's about choosing peace over pressure. However, in recent times,

Minimalism style of living is becoming popular especially among the young generations who are tired of fake lifestyle trends. This teaches us to live with only what is necessary. It focuses on quality, not quantity, promotes saving money, caring for the environment, and finding happiness in experiences rather than materialistic things. Some people nowadays embrace the "less is more" mindset proudly. Clean aesthetics, careful shopping, reusable fashion, and decluttering items are becoming popular. Even educational institutions also discuss these concepts through awareness programs, sustainability clubs, and media literacy classes. It is very much important to teach students the difference between 'a need' and 'a want', and think critically before buying anything. Many brands have started promoting minimalist ideas through sustainable products, eco-friendly packaging, simple designs and honest marketing. This is becoming a positive change in the market that we all need. This shift shows that consumers are becoming more aware and responsible towards themselves.

Conclusion:

In the end, we must understand that life is not a race where we have to come first otherwise there will be nothing left in our life. We should never judge anyone based on what they have or don't have. The real luxurious thing of a human life is peace of mind, good health, and meaningful relationships. Media and advertising will always try to influence us, it's their duty but it is our responsibility to make smart choices. Owning less is not considered a weakness, it is a strength. Simplicity is the new luxury.

(The writer is Master's Degree Mass Communication student at Central University of Jammu)

The Experience of War Between India and Pakistan

■ AGRIVA GUPTA, 8TH FALCON

The war came near, a ghostly tread,
It filled our hearts with fear and dread.
Yet in that fright, a fire burned bright-
Our Army stood, a nation's light.

I watched the skies, I held my breath,
The news of wounds, of life and death.
And though I feared, my family stayed,
And by their side, I felt less afraid.

I mourned the lives in Poonch that fell,
Their stories lost, too dark to tell.
But still I saw the soldiers' grace,
A shield of hope in danger's face.

My teachers spoke, "Stay calm, be strong,"
Their voices helped me move along.
Until the ceasefire's peaceful sound
Brought back the life that war unwound.

Though peace has come and guns are still,
The memory walks with me at will.
And in my soul, a quiet pride-
For those who fought, for those who died.

(The writer is a student of JK Public School Kunjwani)

Operation SINDOOR: A Bold Step to Stop Terror

■ PROF (DR) ASHISH GUPTA

In a multi-domain conflict era, where the nature of conflict changes faster than the drawing of borders, India's national security architecture has emerged as something exemplary of jointness, agility, and strategic clarity. Operation SINDOOR, launched in the early hours of May 7, 2025, in the immediate aftermath of the Pahalgam terror attack in which 26 innocent people were massacred, is testament to the evolving operational doctrine. The operation was not meant for reactive reprisal; it represents a premeditated tri-services offensive whose orchestration of air, land, and cyber capabilities clearly conveys that India will not tolerate acts of terror nor allow its sovereignty to be encroached upon. While punishment was a factor, the most crucial changes occurred in the calculus of security. Deep strikes across the LoC, hitting key nodes of Pakistan terror infrastructure, have shown the retaliation on the Indian side to be now free from any sort of tactical restraint but rather based on strategic considerations and the fine art of operational excellence.

Operation SINDOOR held prominence for the application of power, but also for its precision and calculated use of strategy. Using solid intelligence from multiple agencies, nine major terror camps were identified and targeted with surgical strikes. The Indian response was in no way rushed. The operation provided for by Pakistan was deliberate and had a high degree of detail, and using accurate data to conduct strikes to ensure the jeopardy of civilian life is as minimal as possible. When this operation was done, and with all ethical considerations and in the interest of being responsible, India had shown that it acted sensibly but decisively with its options. Pakistan operationalised its retaliation by utilizing drones and unmanned combat aerial vehicles (UCAV) to attack Indian airbases and supply lines, only for these to be thwarted by India's advanced air defence capacity. A key component in achieving the capacity of India's defence air system was the Integrated Command and Control Strategy (ICCS) context in which it could strip down to detect and respond very closely to a threat. The very aspect

that made Operation SINDOOR extremely effective was the seamless cooperation of Army, Navy, and Air Force with full backing of the Government and key agencies. . What made the response even stronger was the IAF's Integrated Air Command and Control System, which facilitated all the air units to coordinate instantly in real time. This enabled India to target and destroy enemy drones rapidly, while remaining completely networked across various operations. The IAF's performance during Operation SINDOOR was a clear indication of India's growing strength in air power, technology, and coordination.

Operation SINDOOR demonstrated how capable and robust India's military is in defending the country from all sides-land, air, and sea. The Indian Army demonstrated its might not only to safeguard our land but also to strike back when necessary. Cooperating closely with the Air Force, the Army employed various forms of weapons-ranging from shoulder-fired missiles and light guns to missiles with a long range-to destroy numerous drones and Pakistani weapons launched by Pakistan. Despite repeated assaults, the Indian Army ensured that both the military and civilian zones stayed secure. It was a colossal demonstration of how joint capability, sound planning and national will could thwart a country from a contemporary threat.

Operation SINDOOR was an extraordinary demonstration of the long-term capability of India's Army, Air Force and Navy operating synergistic ally on land, in air and sea. The Indian Air Force (IAF) took extensive part in applying surgical strikes on terror camps deep inside Pakistan, including high-value targets like Nur Khan and Rahimyar Khan Air Bases. These successful surgical strikes were supplemented by visuals presented during official briefings that illustrated India's transparency and ability to provide high profile targeting accuracy. While Pakistan tried to get their revenge by attacking Indian positions with shortcomings using drones and UAV, the IAF's thick air defence coverage made sure that Indian airspace remained secure. Next-Generation Systems are being brought into service in the form of the Akash missile system

made-in-India.

Even old and reliable platforms like Pechora and OSA-AK would go through layers to intercept any forthcoming threat.

Concurrently, the Indian Navy dominated the seas during the operation. Through its highly advanced Carrier Battle Group, armed with MiG-29K fighter aircraft and early warning choppers, the Navy guarded the sea and intercepted any military movement, particularly along Pakistan's Makran coast. Their robust air defense ensured no enemy aircraft penetrated Indian waters. The Navy pilots undertook non-stop flights, demonstrating India's complete preparedness to counter sea-based threats. The dominance of the western sea route by the Navy kept Pakistan's air force grounded, indicating India's prowess in defence as well as tactics. The Border Security Force (BSF) also responded quickly and courageously at this time. BSF troops, in the Samba district of Jammu and Kashmir, thwarted a large-scale infiltration bid. They saw suspicious activity in the early morning and promptly acted, resulting in a deadly gunfight. They ended up killing a minimum of two infiltrators and recovered weapons and other hazardous substances. This event proved how vigilant and prepared the BSF is to protect our borders, even in times of high tension.

As a whole, Operation SINDOOR wasn't merely a successful operation-it was a strong and clear message. It indicated that India is capable of executing powerful, well-planned attacks on every front when provoked to excess. This operation became a reality due to years of preparation, practice, and robust government backing in defence. India demonstrated that although we are peace- and diplomacy-loving people, we are not going to remain quiet during sustained attacks. Operation SINDOOR will be remembered as a turning point-a sign of India's military strength, teamwork among its forces, and firm national will. It not only removed serious terror threats but also made it clear that India will always defend itself with strength and smart action.

(The author is Dental Sr. Surgeon and Senior Fellow of International College of Dentist at New Delhi)


■ VINOD CHANDRASHEKHAR DIXIT

In order to raise awareness about turtles and tortoises, their conservation needs, and the threats they face we celebrated World Turtle Day on May 23rd. It's also a day to celebrate the beauty, diversity, and unique roles that turtles and tortoises play in their ecosystems. The Day serves as a call to action, encouraging individuals, organizations, and governments to support turtle and tortoise conservation efforts. The day was first celebrated by American Tortoise Rescue in 2002 and it highlights the suffering and the dwindling numbers of these animals due to human interference and environmental hazards. Schools, rescue centres, and nature lovers all come together on this day to learn more about these creatures and pledge their allegiance to help save them. Turtles are magnificent creatures that may seem mostly sedentary and low-key but are very fascinating. They belong to one of the oldest reptile groups in the world - which makes them significantly older than snakes, crocodiles, and alligators. The celebration of World Turtle Day 2025 is an opportunity to reflect on the importance of active protection and scientific research for the conservation of species such as Emys orbicularis, and on the need for careful and sustainable management of wetlands, environments rich in biodiversity but highly threatened.

It is said that an American Tortoise Rescue organisation helps in wellbeing and rescue of tortoises and turtles. Learning the differences between the two creatures is the first step in understanding them better. It was started in the year 2000 by American tortoise Rescue as a way of urging people to come together to understand tortoises and turtles better. Turtles and tortoises are different

creatures, however, many people often consider them one. Both turtles and tortoises are two distinct creations that play significant roles in the well-being and development of the ecosystem.

Tortoises can live up to 300 years, while the



lifespan of turtles is 40 years. However, despite the differences, both turtles and tortoises play significant roles in the ecosystem. Turtles can be of all shapes and sizes, such as the bog turtle which can be as small as 4 inches, and then the Leatherback sea turtle which can weigh over 1000 pounds and 8 feet long. It's easy to get confused between a tortoise and a turtle. The main difference between the two is that turtles sometimes live in the water, while tortoises only live on the land. Turtles live up to the age of 40 and have streamlined and mostly flat shells. On the other hand, tortoises can live up to 300 years and they have larger, more domed shells. You will mostly find turtles in the sea, while tortoises inhabit dense jungles and grasslands. Turtles and tortoises are two different animals but this day is dedicated to celebrating and protecting both.

One must remember that World Turtle Day is a great day to remind ourselves about their disappearing habitats around the globe and ways we can make changes to save these amazing creatures.