

Leaves cancelled, schools shut as Punjab, Raj go on high alert post 'Op Sindoor'

CHANDIGARH/JAIPUR, May 8 (PTI)

RAJASTHAN and Punjab are in full alert mode with schools closed in border districts and leave of all police personnel and administration officials cancelled, officials said on Thursday, a day after India struck terror infrastructure in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir.

Both States are getting ready for a possible escalation in tensions between Pakistan and India, the officials said.

While Punjab shares a 532-km border with Pakistan, in Rajasthan, the border stretches about 1,070 km.

Punjab Police has cancelled leaves of all its personnel while the State Government has shut

schools in six border districts, officials said on Thursday.

The Rajasthan Government too has cancelled leaves of all administrative officials and police personnel deployed in the border areas, sources said.

LEAVES OF POLICE PERSONNEL CANCELLED, SECURITY UPPED IN COASTAL AREAS NEIGHBOURING PAKISTAN IN GUJ: SECURITY has been stepped up along the Gujarat coast, and authorities have cancelled the leaves of police personnel "due to unforeseen situation", asking them to return to duty immediately, officials said on Thursday.

The move follows 'Operation Sindoor', during which Indian armed forces struck terror bases in Pakistan and Pakistan-occu-

pied Kashmir (PoK) in the early hours of Wednesday, following the killing of 25 tourists and a local near Pahalgam in Kashmir on April 22. Gujarat shares land and sea borders with Pakistan.

The office of the State Director General of Police, Vikas Sahay, on Wednesday night issued an order cancelling the leaves of all police officers of cities and districts "due to unforeseen situation" and asked them to return to duty with immediate effect.

Ashok Kumar Yadav, Inspector General of Rajkot Range, said police along the coast have been put on "alert" mode after India's anti-terror strikes in Pakistan.

Of the five districts under the Rajkot Range, Jamnagar, Morbi, and Devbhumi Dwarka have a coastline, said Yadav.

India adhered to Indus Waters Treaty for 65 years despite so many provocations from Pakistan: MEA

NEW DELHI, May 8 (IANS)

SLAMMING the disinformation being spread by Pakistan on the suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) following the horrific terror attack in Pahalgalam on April 22 which resulted in the death of 26 innocent civilians, India on Thursday said Islamabad has repeatedly rejected New Delhi's several calls for holding negotiations on modification of the 1960 agreement.

"There have been fundamental changes in the circumstances in which the Indus Waters Treaty

was concluded, and they called for a reassessment of the obligations under the treaty. Over the last year-and-a-half to two years, India has been in communication with the Government of Pakistan, we sent several notices to them requesting for negotiations to discuss modification of this treaty. India has for six-plus decades now honoured the treaty, even during periods when Pakistan

imposed multiple wars on us," Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri said during a media briefing in New Delhi on Operation Sindoor.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi has assured India's unwavering resolve to act decisively against terrorism and those who support it and the Indian government has acted swiftly, taking several critical decisions against Pakistan in the aftermath of the Pahalgalam massacre.

By suspending the Indus Waters Treaty, India has deftly used international law as a tool to achieve its longstanding objective of ending

Pakistan's support for terrorism and reaffirming its previous stand that blood and water cannot flow together. "Pakistan is the one that has been acting in violation of the treaty, deliberately creating legal roadblocks in India exercising its legitimate rights on the Western rivers.

Any projects that India sought to build on the Eastern and even the Western rivers, which were allowed to as per the treaty, were always challenged by Pakistan thereby hampering our rights to use our legitimate waters under the treaty.

Ukraine accuses Russia of violating its own truce over 700 times as Kyiv ratifies US minerals deal

KYIV, May 8 (AP)

RUSSIA and Ukraine both reported attacks on their forces on the first day of a 72-hour ceasefire called by President Vladimir Putin.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Andrii Sybiha accused Russia of violating its own ceasefire 734 times between midnight and midday Thursday. He called the ceasefire a "farce" on the social media platform X.

His comments came as Ukraine's parliament unani-



mously approved a landmark minerals deal with the US. Ratification is a key step in setting in motion a deal which will

allow Washington access to Ukraine's largely untapped minerals, deepen strategic ties and create a joint investment fund

with the US for the reconstruction of Ukraine.

"This document is not merely a legal construct, it is the foundation of a new model of interaction with a key strategic partner," Ukraine's Economy Minister Yuliia Svyrydenko wrote on X.

Russian bombs struck north-east Ukraine in the opening hours of Moscow's unilateral ceasefire, killing at least one civilian, Ukrainian officials said. Artillery assaults took place across the 1,000-kilometre front line, although with less intensity than

in the previous 24 hours, officials said.

The ceasefire coincides with Russia's biggest secular holiday, the 80th anniversary of victory over Nazi Germany. Kyiv has pressed for a longer-term ceasefire.

Putin on Thursday welcomed Chinese President Xi Jinping in the Kremlin. Xi, who Putin earlier described as "our main guest" at Friday's Victory Day festivities, arrived in Russia on Wednesday for a four-day visit.

India, Chile ink terms of reference for comprehensive free trade pact



NEW DELHI, May 8 (PTI)

INDIA and Chile on Thursday signed terms of reference (ToRs) to negotiate a comprehensive free trade agreement.

The two countries implemented a preferential trade agreement (PTA) in 2006 and are now planning to widen its scope for a comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA).

An expanded PTA was subsequently signed in September 2016 and became effective from May 16, 2017.

In April 2019, both countries agreed to pursue a further expansion of the PTA.

To deepen their economic engagement, both sides expressed their intention to negotiate a CEPA to unlock the full potential of their trade and commercial relationship, boosting employment, facilitating investment promotion, and

cooperation and exports, the commerce ministry said.

The CEPA aims to build upon the existing PTA between the two nations and seeks to encompass a broader range of sectors, including digital services, investment promotion and cooperation, MSME (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises), and critical minerals.

They emphasised the importance of enhancing the existing trade framework to unlock new opportunities for growth. In this spirit, the two leaders acknowledged the signing of the mutually agreed Terms of Reference (ToR) and welcomed the launch of negotiations for a CEPA, aiming to establish a balanced, ambitious, comprehensive, and mutually beneficial agreement for a deeper economic integration. "India and Chile signed the ToR for a CEPA today, marking a significant advancement in their bilateral trade relations," it said.

The mutually agreed ToR were duly signed by Juan Angulo, Ambassador of Chile in India and Vimal Anand, Joint Secretary, Department of Commerce, Ministry of Commerce & Industry, also the Chief Negotiator for India-Chile CEPA from the Indian side.

LEO XIV ELECTED NEW POPE

ROME, May 8 (IANS)

AMERICAN prelate Robert Francis Prevost was elected the new Pope on Thursday.

The Chicago-born Prevost, 69, a member of the Augustinian order and who had served extensively in Peru, was Prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops and President of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America since 2023. He was appointed to the posts by Pope Francis, who elevated him as a Cardinal. He will take the pontifical name of Leo XIV.

Significantly, he is the second successive Pope from the Americas after the Argentinian-born Pope Francis. There was eager wait to find who was the new Pope would be, as trademark white smoke billowed out of the chimney high above St Peter's Square in the evening to signify the conclave of the Cardinals had selected the successor to Pope Francis, who

passed away last month.

Joy erupted among the clergy and laity awaiting a decision, and all eyes were on the balcony, awaiting the first appearance of the new head of the Roman Catholic Church. Addressing the cheering crowd in Italian, the new Pope said: "Peace be with all of you." "Brothers and sisters dearest, this is the first greeting of Christ resurrected. I would like to offer a greeting of peace to reach your families, all of you, wherever you are. May peace be with you," he said, the BBC reported. The 133 cardinals making up this conclave, taking place in the Sistine Chapel, had reassembled after a lunch break following Thursday morning's inconclusive ballots.

A new Pope requires a two-thirds majority - which translates to 89 votes in this conclave. The average length of time for the last few conclaves was three days and seven ballots, as per the BBC.



Trump announces trade deal with UK

WASHINGTON, May 8 (AP)

US President Donald Trump said from the White House on Thursday that his government has reached a trade agreement with the United Kingdom.

The deal affirms that "reciprocity and fairness is a vital principle of international trade" and increases access for US agricultural products, Trump said, though he added that the final details were still being written up. The deal also fast tracks

American goods through the UK's customs process, Trump said.

"They're opening up the country," Trump said. "The country is a little closed."

"The final details are being written up," he said in the Oval Office. "In the coming weeks, we'll have it all very conclusive."

Trade agreements are notoriously complex and can be time consuming to finalise. However, Trump has been racing to reach deals as he tries to fulfil his promises since launching his tariff agenda last month.

India foils 15 Pak missile/drone attacks

Destroys air defence system in Lahore

NEW DELHI, May 8 (PTI)

INDIA on Thursday said, it foiled Pakistan military's attempts to attack 15 places in Northern and Western India using missiles and drones, and destroyed a Pakistani air defence system in Lahore as tensions between the two sides mounted amid fears of a wider conflict.

The Defence Ministry said, the Pakistani military attempted late on Wednesday night to target Awantipura, Srinagar, Jammu, Pathankot, Amritsar, Kapurthala, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Adampur, Bhatinda, Chandigarh, Nal, Phalodi, Uttarlai, and Bhuj.

These attempts were neutralised by the Integrated Counter Unmanned Aircraft System (Grid and Air Defence systems), it said.

According to sources, Indian Air Force S-400 Sudarshan

NAVY ATTACKS KARACHI - AFTER 1971

■ Special Correspondent



Projectile debris found in an open field at Makhanwindi village, in Amritsar on Thursday. (ANI)

EVEN as the Pakistani forces found themselves blocked at every step of the way as they tried to attack Indian installations through air and on land, India opened another front by positioning the Navy across Karachi, Pakistan's major port through which much of its maritime commerce is conducted, according to reports streaming in close to midnight.

It was in 1971 that the Indian Navy had pounded Karachi to keep Pakistan engaged in the west even as the Indian Forces were handing down a crushing defeat to Pakistan in the east -- leading to formation of Bangladesh.

Continuing with extended "Operation Sindoor", India opened the naval front to corner Pakistan all the more by pounding the critical port city.

"It was also reiterated that any attack on military targets in India will invite a suitable response," it said.

"Today morning Indian armed

forces targeted air defence radars and systems at a number of locations in Pakistan. Indian response has been in the same domain with (Contd on page 5)

Harpy drones

Target enemy air defence systems



NEW DELHI, May 8 (ANI)

THE Harpy drones designed to attack radar systems were used by the Indian Armed Forces to target enemy air defence systems in Pakistan.

The Harpy is designed to attack radar systems and is optimised for the suppression of enemy air defences (SEAD) role. It carries a high-explosive warhead. Equipped with an Anti-Radiation (AR) seeker, Harpy can autonomously seek and strike emitting, high-value targets. The Harpy operates in deep strike missions lasting up to 9 hours, day and night, in all weather conditions, and in Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS)-denied or contested battlefields.

Harpy is equipped to hunt--seek targets in a designated area, locate and identify their frequency, and autonomously pursue a strike from any direction, at shallow or steep dive profiles.

Chakra air defence missile systems were fired last night against targets moving towards India.

The Pakistani attempt came after Indian Armed Forces early Wednesday carried out missile strikes on nine terror targets in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Pakistan under Operation Sindoor.

The Defence Ministry said, India called its anti-terror response as "focused, measured and non-escalatory" and that Pakistani military establishments had not been targeted.

Indian drones attack Islamabad, injure 4 Pak soldiers

■ By Sajjad Hussain

ISLAMABAD, May 8 (PTI)

THE Pakistan army on Thursday said its four soldiers were injured in a drone attack and claimed that armed forces shot down several UAVs launched by India, as tension continued between

the neighbours.

In Islamabad, Pakistan Army spokesman Lieutenant General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said one drone crashed near Lahore and four soldiers sustained injuries as a result of the attack.

Chaudhry claimed that drones were neutralised in

Lahore, Gujranwala, Chakwal, Bahawalpur, Mian, Karachi, Chhor, Rawalpindi, and Attock.

"So far, 25 Israeli-made Herop drones have been shot down by the Pakistani Army's soft kill (technical) and hard kill (weapons)," the Pakistan Army claimed in a statement.

India downs Pak's one F-16 & two JF-17 fighter jets

■ Special Correspondent

NEW DELHI, May 8

BY LATE Thursday evening, Pakistan stepped up its attacks on multiple points in the Indian territory, freely using Kamikaze Drones as well as F-16 and JF-17 fighter jets. Around 10 in the evening, different sources started claiming that the Indian air defence systems downed one F-16 and two JF-17 fighter jet as the two Pakistani aircraft tried to mount attacks on air force stations in Jammu and Rajasthan areas. Pakistan also resorted to using missiles liberally to make a quick impact. Reports also started pouring in stat-



ing that Pakistan indulged in heavy artillery shelling in the Rajouri main city.

Responding to a severe escalation by Pakistan, Indian forces on high alert acted swiftly to shoot down several Kamikaze Drones and neutralised several Pakistani missiles before they could breach the air defence systems set up in key positions. The Indian forces also reportedly used S-400 defence systems to block and neutralise Pakistani missiles. By late



evening, Indian forces mounted missile counter attack and neutralised Pakistani defence at several places including Lahore.

The civilian authorities in border areas in Jammu and Kashmir and Rajasthan have effected widespread blackouts with a view to countering air attacks from Pakistani forces.

Only Allah can save us now: Pak MP breaks down in Parli

NEW DELHI, May 8 (IANS)



THE tremors of India's Operation Sindoor are now echoing inside the halls of Pakistan's Parliament. In an extraordinary and emotional moment, Retired Major and current MP Tahir Iqbal, a former officer of the Pakistan Army, broke down in Parliament, delivering a passionate plea in Urdu, begging Allah to protect Pakistan.

This emotional outburst came just a day after Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif appealed to the world for help in shielding his country. Now, even Pakistani lawmakers are publicly expressing fear and helplessness in the face of India's strong response to

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