

**DIA, DEOGHAR IAS ACADEMY**

# ***Daily News Feed***

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# 'U.K.'s Chagos Islands deal with Mauritius risks entrenching exile of some islanders'

**Agence France-Presse**  
LONDON

Human Rights Watch said on Friday the U.K. government's deal to hand over the Chagos Islands to Mauritius could "entrench" the exile of Chagossians from the archipelago's biggest island.

While the agreement "may result in some Chagossians returning to some islands... it also appears to entrench their exile from Diego Garcia, the largest island," said Clive Baldwin of the New York-based rights group.

The group described the forcible displacement of the "entire Chagossian indigenous people, mostly



The deal may result in the exile of Chagossians belonging to the Diego Garcia, the largest island in the group. AP

to Mauritius, for a U.S. military base on the island of Diego Garcia" as an "ongoing colonial crime against humanity".

British Prime Minister

Keir Starmer on Thursday announced an agreement to give the remote Indian Ocean archipelago to Mauritius in exchange for control of a crucial U.S.-

U.K. military base on Diego Garcia island.

## 99-year lease

The deal, first touted in autumn last year, will see Britain pay its former colony £101 million (\$136 million) annually for 99 years to lease the facility, Mr. Starmer said.

As part of the agreement, Mauritius will be able to resettle Chagossian islanders, expelled from the archipelago by Britain in the 1960s, to all of its over 50 islands, apart from Diego Garcia. Under the deal, the British government will set up a £40-million (\$54 million) trust fund for the 10,000-strong Chagossian diaspora.



# Introspecting counter-terrorism after Operation Sindoor

The Pahalgam terror strike, on April 22, perpetrated by Pakistan proxies, and India's retribution through Operation Sindoor, on May 7, have fundamentally altered the security landscape of the region. While Operation Sindoor represents an undeniable tactical and operational success, its strategic efficacy in diminishing the long-term terrorist threat remains uncertain. At present, the discourses across all the forums in the country, unfortunately centre exclusively on matters of foreign policy and the external application of military force. The aspects concerning internalisation of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) have often been given a miss, thereby missing the wood for the trees. Here, it is crucial to understand that in the overall context, it has always been about winning Kashmir rather than defeating Pakistan.

## The complex reality of terrorism in J&K

It is beyond any doubt that Pakistan bears substantial accountability for the security situation in J&K, since Independence. After exploding in 1989, the security landscape was transformed from predominantly indigenous insurgency to significant participation of foreign terrorists, around the mid-1990s. Notwithstanding the foreign terrorists, a long-term analyses of patterns of terrorism reveal that local dynamics related to identity, marginalisation, repression and political disenfranchisement have played pivotal roles. These factors have given Pakistan the fuel to foment trouble. The interplay between external sponsorship and internal vulnerabilities creates a complex ecosystem of terrorism that defies simplistic military solutions, internally or externally.

Since 1989, the security forces have achieved substantial progress in J&K. As in South Asia Terrorism Portal (SATP) data, overall fatalities have reduced from over 4,000 lives in 2001 to 127 in 2024. This achievement stems from the



**Shashank Ranjan**

is a retired Indian Army colonel with substantial experience of serving in a counter-terrorism environment. He currently teaches at the O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonapat, Haryana

In the focus on India's foreign policy and military force what is being missing out are the aspects that concern the internalisation of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir

consolidation of the security grid, the government's outreach to local populations and Pakistan's diminishing capacity to wage a high-intensity proxy war. This positive trajectory suggests that India's multifaceted approach has yielded tangible results, even as significant challenges remain and more needs to be done in the context.

## Detering Pakistan

Analysing terror-related fatalities in J&K over the last decade shows that kinetic actions such as surgical strikes (2016) and the Balakot aerial strike (2019) have not deterred Pakistan. SATP data show that fatalities went up to 267 in 2016 from 175 in 2015 and continued to rise through 2019. Even after the Kargil victory (1999), terror indices in the region shot up to an all time high. In Operation Sindoor, although our military actions ascended several notches above the surgical strikes or Balakot, these may still not deter Pakistan.

The government of Pakistan and the Pakistani people claim that they won the 100 hours war, from May 7 to 10. Pakistan's General Asim Munir has been elevated to the rank of Field Marshal and according to Ayesha Siddiqua, a Pakistani political scientist, military nationalism has been revived in Pakistan. Detering Pakistan in the present circumstances seems ambitious.

The participation of local terrorists in J&K, at present, is very low in contrast to the Burhan Wani days. Even though foreign terrorists are now technologically savvy and are relatively less dependent on local terrorists, the role played by local terrorists cannot be underestimated. Amid heightened security concerns following the Pahalgam attack, intelligence agencies have identified scores of local terrorists with links to their foreign counterparts.

The voids in the security grid in the Jammu region, caused by troops being moved to Galwan, were exploited by terrorist cadres in new groups such as The Resistance Front, the People's

Anti-Fascist Front, and the Kashmir Tigers, to name a few. The deteriorating security situation in the Jammu region has been marked by a kill ratio that favours the terrorists. What is worrying is the prevalent degree of local support for the terrorists. Human intelligence, or HUMINT, seems to have dried up, which explains the sustenance of terrorists (this includes the perpetrators of Pahalgam, who continue to be at large).

## Beyond kinetic operations

The bipartisan support of the local population in J&K against the Pahalgam massacre was spontaneous and unprecedented. Such a swell in support presents us with a strategic opportunity that must be consolidated rather than squandered through counterproductive measures such as demolishing the houses of alleged terrorists or mass arrests.

While the externalisation of terrorism through high-impact, war-like response is necessary, the caveat here is that it may end up distracting us from the primary goal – terrorism in J&K. Expert commentary following Operation Sindoor suggests a concerning tendency to oversimplify the complex challenge of terrorism in J&K, potentially numbing policymakers to harder questions regarding terrorism and its roots in both external sponsorship and internal grievances.

Operation Sindoor has demonstrated India's growing prowess in kinetic non-contact warfare, but this must be complemented by non-kinetic tools to establish a more effective deterrent against Pakistan. Most critical is to contextualise the multidimensional approach to the internal dynamics, where the fundamental principle of 'people as the centre of gravity' is the driving force. Sustained political engagement, economic development and social integration, complemented by security-centric measures, can complete the picture. Deterrence can materialise only through an in-depth approach that is backed by our national resolve.

IAS Academy





# Caste census is a 'moral obligation' of the Indian democracy, says Kharge

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

A caste census is not a mere statistical exercise but a "moral obligation" of Indian democracy, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge said on Friday as he urged party spokespersons to take the message of social justice to the people.

Mr. Kharge was virtually addressing a workshop for the Congress's national and State-level spokespersons, while Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi held closed-door interactions with them.

Mr. Kharge urged his colleagues to treat social justice as an ideological commitment and not an election issue.

He said that it was the responsibility of the spokespersons to take the issue to the grassroots and create awareness about it among the masses.



Mallikarjun Kharge

"This is not only a fight for social justice but also a fight to protect the soul of the Constitution. I appeal to you not to consider this campaign as just an election issue, it is our ideological commitment. Today's dialogue is a proof of our unity in this direction," Mr. Kharge said.

Terming the party spokespersons as the voice of "our thoughts", the Congress chief said that as the country is becoming aware of the upcoming caste census, "it is our responsibility

to take this topic to the public with facts, with sensitivity, and without fear".

Mr. Kharge said the issue of a caste census is not new, as the Congress has constantly raised it, in its manifestos and in Parliament.

## Not just statistics

"Today we have to ask, what is the participation of OBC, Dalit and Adivasi communities in the power structures of the country? Are they represented in proportion to their population in the media, bureaucracy, judiciary, corporate sector and higher education institutions? If not, what is the reason for this? The solution is to bring out the truth, make the data public, and then rebuild policies. This is why we consider caste census not just a statistical exercise but a moral obligation of Indian democracy," he said.

# Russia, Japan, and UAE leaders express solidarity with India's anti-terror policy

**Press Trust of India**

MOSCOW/TOKYO/ABU DHABI

The diplomatic leadership of Russia, Japan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on Friday came forward to join hands with New Delhi against all forms of terrorism as the Indian multi-party parliamentary delegation held wide-ranging discussions on counter-terrorism combat and briefed them on Operation Sindoor.

"#TeamIndia sends a strong and united message on combating terrorism," External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, who is on a three-nation tour of Europe, said in a post on X as the three delegations exchanged views on furthering cooperation in counter-terrorism and combating radicalism, especially after the Pahalgam terror attack that left 26 people dead.

India embarked on a global outreach with its seven multi-party delegations travelling to 33 global



The delegation led by DMK MP Kanimozhi with a Russian official in Moscow on Friday. ANI

capitals to meet the international community – political leadership, media, senior officials, and members of the diplomatic corps – on Pakistan's designs and India's response to terror and sharing information about Operation Sindoor.

Earlier, the delegation led by DMK MP Kanimozhi arrived in Moscow late on Thursday night amid Ukrainian drone attacks. The plane circled in the air and later landed, and there was

a delay of 45 minutes, sources said.

Moscow reiterated its decisive commitment to an uncompromising joint fight with New Delhi against all forms of terrorism as the Indian multi-party Parliamentary delegation held wide-ranging discussions on and briefed the Russian side on Operation Sindoor.

A statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry issued after Deputy Foreign Minister Andrey Rudenko

met with the visiting parliamentary delegation, led by Ms. Kanimozhi, expressed readiness to increase close cooperation on the issue at regional and global venues.

"A decisive commitment to an uncompromising joint fight against all forms of terrorism was confirmed. Readiness was expressed to increase close cooperation on these issues at regional and global venues, primarily in the UN, BRICS and SCO," the Foreign Ministry statement said.

In Japan, the delegation led by JD(U) MP Sanjay Jha held a "focused and lively" press engagement held at the Indian Embassy in Tokyo where the MPs "briefed the Japanese media on India's 'New Normal' against cross-border attacks, zero tolerance for terrorism, and all parties resolve to stand united in all matters of national interest," the Embassy said in a post on X.





# 'Creation of theatre commands will kick-start next generation of reforms'

**Dinakar Peri**  
NEW DELHI

In an indication of the proposed restructuring of the Indian armed forces into Integrated Theatre Commands (ITC), the Chief of Defence Staff, General Anil Chauhan, says in a book authored by him that the theatre commanders will be responsible for force application, or the operational aspects, while the service chiefs will look after the functions of "Raise, Train and Sustain".

"The concept of establishing theatre commands is to create two parallel and complementary streams for 'Force Application' and 'Force Generation'. The Force Application component will become the responsibility of a theatre commander, whereas service chiefs, in



Gen. Anil Chauhan

their transformed role will be responsible for what is colloquially called the 'Raise, Train and Sustain (RTS) function'. In other words, the service chiefs will preside over the Force Generation, an equally important aspect," General Chauhan writes in the book *Ready, Relevant and Resurgent: A Blueprint for the Transformation of India's Military*, which was released on Thursday.

Recalling that it has

been 22 months since he was appointed the country's second CDS, General Chauhan notes that one of the tasks entrusted to the CDS has been to facilitate the restructuring of military commands for the optimal utilisation of resources and bringing about integration in operations.

This, he writes, will be visibly manifested in the establishment of joint operational structures at various levels and echelons, and this switch will be one of the "most revolutionary" changes attempted by the Indian armed forces in the post-Independence era. "The creation of the Theatre Commands is the beginning of this change and will kick-start next generation of reforms in the armed forces."

In this regard, General Chauhan states that an es-

sential prerequisite for the establishment of theatre commands is a high degree of jointness amongst the three services and physical integration of several processes, activities, and essential infrastructure.

"The structural transformation at the apex level will usher in conceptual and cultural changes," he writes, stating it will trigger cascading organisational changes at headquarters and establishments at lower levels, which will come with its own set of challenges. The acceptability will only happen once officers at all levels are aware of the impending changes, he adds.

The mandate of the CDS is to ensure "jointness" of the three services, and the top priority is the reorganisation of the armed forces' geography-centric ITC.



# NE to be gateway for trade with Southeast Asia: Modi

Inaugurating Rising Northeast Summit, PM says region is no longer a 'frontier', but a 'frontrunner of growth'; the region offers a wide range of economic and industrial opportunities, he points out

**Kallol Bhattacharjee**  
NEW DELHI

India's Northeast is not a "frontier region" any more, it is the "frontrunner of growth," Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday, pitching for investments in the eight States that constitute the region.

Inaugurating the Rising Northeast Summit, the Prime Minister said that the region offers wide range of economic and industrial opportunities. India has "new dreams" for the Northeast, he said, adding that the region would emerge as a gateway for trade with Southeast Asia over the next decade.

The event comes against the backdrop of the May 17 order by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade to close land ports with Bangladesh. Officials have said that the decision will provide the Northeast a level playing field to develop the commercial potential of its own supply chains, and an impetus to manufacture competitively.

The Prime Minister paid tribute to the diversity of the region, reflected in its products and people. "India is termed as the most diverse nation in the world. But our Northeast is the most diverse part of our diverse nation. From trade to tradition, textile to tourism, Northeast's diver-



**Manifesting a dream:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the Rising Northeast Investors Summit 2025 in New Delhi on Friday. PMO

sity is a very big strength of the region," Mr. Modi said.

## 'Powerhouse of energy'

He listed the bio-economy, bamboo, tea production, petroleum, sports and eco-tourism as some of the areas where the region is an emerging hub. "Northeast is the powerhouse of energy," said Mr. Modi, describing the region as 'Ash-ta Lakshmis' or the eight forms of Goddess Lakshmi.

He said the Northeast would emerge as a gateway to trade with the ASEAN bloc over the coming decade. "Northeast will be a strong bridge of trade with Southeast Asia. We are working on the necessary infrastructure to realise that goal," Mr. Modi said, announcing that India is working on projects to directly connect Myanmar, Thailand, Vietnam, and Laos to India.

"These projects will give the Northeast a new commercial identity among the Indo-Pacific countries," he added. "East does not mean just direction for us. It means, Empower, Act, Strengthen and Transform," Mr. Modi said.

Union Ministers have visited the region more than 700 times in the past decade, the Prime Minister said. "They saw hope in the eyes of the people of the Northeast and they converted that trust into principles of development. We moved from Look East to Act East mantra," he said.

The summit is being attended by a large number of industry representative, foreign delegates and development strategists.

Chief Ministers in attendance include Himanta Biswa Sarma of Assam, Meghalaya's Konrad Sangma, Tripura's Manik Saha, Lalduhoma of Mizoram, and Sikkim's Prem Singh Tamang.

The Northeast's economic future received considerable attention in March when Bangladesh's Chief Advisor Mohammed Yunus described the region as "land locked" and offered his country as the "guardian of the ocean" that could help China access the region's commercial space. India had strongly objected to that characterisation.

