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Smoke billows after an artillery shell from Pakistan landed in the main town of Poonch district in India's Jammu region yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

Locals inspect debris of destroyed structures of the Government Health and Educational complex in Muridke, about 30km from Lahore. PHOTO: AFP

World urges calm as India strikes Pakistan

At least 31 killed in Pakistan, 12 in India in worst cross-border violence in decades

INDIA'S CLAIMS

- India claims hitting 9 'terrorist camps' in Pakistan
- Says strikes were 'right to respond' after Pahalgam attack
- Claims carried out 'precision strikes', which were 'non-escalatory in nature'
- Says three fighter jets 'crashed' in India's J&K
- New Delhi briefed US after strikes



AGENCIES

India and Pakistan exchanged war of words and also heavy artillery fire along their contested frontier yesterday, hours after New Delhi launched deadly missile strikes on its arch-rival.

The worst violence between the nuclear-armed neighbours in two decades sparked alarm and calls for restraint from around the world.

At least 43 deaths were reported, with Islamabad saying 31 civilians were killed by the Indian strikes and firing along the border, and New Delhi adding at least 12 dead from Pakistani shelling. Dozens were also injured in both countries.

The Indian army said "justice is served", reporting nine "terrorist camps" had been destroyed, with Delhi adding that its actions "have been focused, measured and non-escalatory in nature".

Pakistan Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif refuted the claims, saying civilian areas were

attacked.

He accused Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi of launching the strikes to "shore up" his domestic popularity, adding that Islamabad "won't take long to settle the score".

Later, in an interview with GEO TV, he said Pakistan will retaliate and will only hit military targets, not civilians.

Shehbaz said that it "took only a few hours" for the Pakistani military to bring the enemy to its knees.

He also claimed that the Pakistani military shot down five Indian jets and once again "proved their superiority over the enemy in conventional warfare".

He also vowed to avenge "every drop of blood" spilt in the Indian air strikes early yesterday.

Pakistan's DG ISPR said that

the National Security Committee authorised the country's armed forces to respond to Indian aggression at "time and manner" of their choosing.

"In consonance with article 51 of the UN charter, Pakistan reserves the right to respond, in self defence, at a time, place, and manner of its choosing to avenge the loss of innocent Pakistani lives and blatant violation of its sovereignty," said the DG, quoting a statement issued after the NSC meet.

The South Asian neighbours have fought multiple wars over the divided territory since they were carved out of the subcontinent at the end of British rule in 1947.

Pakistan military sources said they succeeded in shooting down five jets, including three Rafales, without crossing into the Indian airspace.

An Indian senior security source, who asked not to be named, said

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RELATED STORY ON PAGE 3, 5, B4

PAKISTAN'S CLAIMS

- Pakistan claims five Indian aircraft shot down
- Rejects 'terrorist camp allegation', says civilians hit
- Says world must hold India 'accountable' for attacks
- Claims hydropower plant in PoK damaged in strikes
- Summons Indian charge d'affaires

Refrain from any steps that can escalate situation

Dhaka urges New Delhi, Islamabad

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has expressed deep concern over the escalating conflict between India and Pakistan, urging both countries to remain calm, exercise restraint, and refrain from taking any actions that could further aggravate the situation.

The foreign ministry issued a statement yesterday saying the Bangladesh government is closely monitoring the evolving

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S Alam, associates laundered money thru shell firms

ACC probe finds; they bought properties with 'illegal loans'

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN and DIPAN NANDY

S Alam Group Chairman Mohammed Saiful Alam and his family have acquired vast wealth at home and abroad, using money siphoned off through loans taken in the name of front companies, according to an investigation by the Anti-Corruption Commission.

(eight acres), according to the land deeds reviewed by investigators.

"We have already seized these properties through the court. Now, a receiver will be appointed as per the law," ACC Deputy Director and Public Relations Officer Aktarul Islam told The Daily Star yesterday.

However, the appointment of a receiver (a custodian) would take some time as

S Alam Group Chairman Mohammed Saiful Alam, other entities related to him and his associates linked to those entities illegally took anonymous loans from various banks and embezzled the money, and acquired vast wealth in his and his family's name at home and abroad, according to the ACC filing.

Some of his associates, including his former domestic help and her husband, also acquired wealth beyond known sources of their income and laundered money abroad, it said.

Additionally, the business tycoon and a network of his affiliates bought more than 130 acres of land in Chattogram and Gazipur alone in the last few years. The land is worth around Tk 325 crore, the ACC found.

Most of the land -- about 7,770 decimals (77.7 acres) -- was bought in 2019. Alam acquired another 15 acres the next year, the ACC found in an investigation into money laundering allegations against the businessman and his associates.

Of the total 130 acres, nearly 47 acres were bought in Chattogram's Patiya upazila, S Alam's hometown.

Entities that own some of the land include S Alam Super Edible Oil Ltd (12 acres), S Alam Vegetable Oil Ltd (eight acres), and S Alam Cold Rolled Steels Ltd

the commission is now investigating dozens of graft allegations involving high profile Awami League politicians, including deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and her family members, as well as businesses known to have enjoyed her blessings during her authoritarian rule.

Over the last 15 years, S Alam took over one bank after another and allegedly took thousands of crores in loans from these banks, in some cases in the name of companies that exist only on paper, according to ACC findings and newspaper reports.

On April 8, 2025, ACC Deputy Director Tahsin Munabeel Haque applied to the Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court, Dhaka, for permission to seize some of the properties owned by S Alam and his associates and entities under Section 14 of the Money Laundering Prevention Act.

The ACC also submitted that attempts

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More gas for industries, less for power generation

Energy adviser tells business leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Energy Adviser Muhammad Fouzul Kabir Khan yesterday said that industries would soon get an additional 250 million cubic feet of gas per day (mmcf/d).

The authorities will do this by cutting gas supplies to the power sector and by importing additional liquefied natural gas (LNG).

At a special meeting with business leaders, the adviser assured them that gas supplies would improve.

After the meeting at his office, Fouzul told reporters that the authorities will cut gas supply to the power sector by 150 mmcf/d.



Fouzul Kabir

The power sector will receive around 1,050 mmcf/d, down from 1,200 mmcf/d during Ramadan, he said.

Additionally, the government will import one extra cargo of LNG each month from May to August, increasing the supply by another 100 mmcf/d, he added.

According to Petrobangla data, the power sector has received 1,050 mmcf/d in recent weeks. The gas-fired power plants produced up to 6,000 megawatts (MW). The national power generation, around 15,000MW, fell short of meeting demand by only 100MW to 150MW.

Asked whether there would be power

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India pushes 123 individuals into Bangladesh

BGB sends protest note to BSF; border on high alert

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) yesterday detained at least 123 individuals, including Rohingyas and Bangla-speaking individuals, after India pushed them into Bangladesh through Kurigram and Khagrachhari border points.

BGB currently has them in its custody and is verifying their identities. It has also issued a high alert along the border and lodged a strong protest note with Border Security Force (BSF), advising against such push-ins, said BGB Director General Maj Gen Mohammad Ashraffuzzaman Siddiqui.

Flag meetings with the BSF have also been called at various levels.

Meanwhile, the Police Headquarters alerted the superintendents of police in 31 bordering districts to ensure that national security is not compromised amid the escalation of the India-Pakistan conflict.

"Dhaka is trying to establish contact with New Delhi on the reported push-ins of people from India through the Indo-Bangladesh borders in Kurigram and Khagrachhari," said National Security Adviser Dr Khalilur Rahman yesterday.

Speaking to journalists after a meeting with Foreign Adviser Touhid Hossain at the foreign ministry, he said Bangladesh authorities are verifying each of the cases separately.

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The Khulna-Satkhira highway has been in a dismal condition for a long time. Due to constant movement of vehicles, the road remains shrouded in dust, tormenting pedestrians, residents, and local businesses. The photo was taken in the Zero Point area of Khulna city.

Freeze shares of Salman F Rahman, family in 94 entities

Court orders ACC

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the Anti-Corruption Commission to freeze all shares of 94 companies owned by Salman F Rahman, his wife Syeda Rubaba Rahman, son Ahmed Shayan Fazlur Rahman, elder brother Ahmed Sohail Fasihur Rahman, and Fasihur's son Ahmed Shahriar Rahman.

Salman was the private industry affairs adviser to ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina, while Fasihur is the chairman of Beximco Group of Industries.

The court also asked the anti-graft body to freeze 79 Beneficiary Owners' (BO) accounts owned by them. The court came up with the orders following corruption allegations against them.

Judge Md. Zakir Hossain of Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Special Judge's Court passed the order after ACC Deputy Director Muhammad Jaynal Abedin, who leads the inquiry team, sought the order.

In the application, Salman and others have been accused of embezzling billions of taka from shareholders through share manipulation and fraud, taking loans of about Tk 36 billion from various government and private banks of the country by using illegal influence, and laundering billions of taka abroad.

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