

## US SECY OF STATE TELLS INDIA, PAK TO DE-ESCALATE

**PTI, NEW DELHI:** The US has urged India and Pakistan to work together to de-escalate tensions over the Pahalgam terror attack as US Secretary of State **Marco Rubio** held separate talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to emphasise on maintaining "peace and security" in South Asia.

In his phone conversation with Sharif, the US Secretary of State called for Islamabad's cooperation in investigating the "un-conscionable attack" that killed 26 people.

The "perpetrators, backers and planners" of the April 22 Pahalgam terror attack must be brought to justice, Jaishankar said

on X, hours after speaking to Rubio who reaffirmed Washington's support to India's fight against terrorism.

The US Secretary of State spoke to Sharif and Jaishankar on Wednesday amid speculation about India's possible military strikes against Pakistan in view of the cross border linkages to the dastardly terror attack.

A day after the Jaishankar-Rubio talks, US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth dialled Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and conveyed that Washington supports New Delhi's "right to defend" itself and its fight against terrorism.

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### IN A FIRST, ISI CHIEF NAMED PAK NAT'L SECURITY ADVISER

**PTI, ISLAMABAD:** Pakistan has appointed serving ISI chief Lt Gen Muhammad Asim Malik as the new National Security Adviser (NSA) amidst raging tension with India.

Lt Gen Malik, currently serving as Director General of Pakistan's spy agency – Inter-Services Intelligence

(ISI), will hold the additional charge of the NSA.

He is the country's tenth NSA, but it is for the first time that a serving ISI chief has been given the task to serve concurrently in the two key positions.

Malik was appointed as the Director General of the ISI in October 2024.

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