

## Citing his mother's difficulty as example, SC judge says Aadhaar 'serious issue'

Agency  
New Delhi, May 10,

Supreme Court judge, Justice D Y Chandrachud, the son of late Chief Justice of India Y V Chandrachud, on Wednesday recalled a personal experience during the hearing on the Aadhaar issue that his mother, who was suffering from Alzheimer's disease, had faced difficulty in authentication to get pension. Justice Chandrachud is part of the 5-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra, which is hearing a batch of petitions challenging the constitutional validity of the Aadhaar scheme and its enabling law of 2016. During the hearing, the bench, also comprising Justices A K Sikri, A M Khanwilkar and Ashok Bhushan, said Aadhaar authentication failures could

create problems for those in need and some solution has to be found to address the issue. Recalling his experience, Justice Chandrachud said "my mother, who was suffering from Alzheimer's disease was entitled to family pension being the wife of a former Chief Justice of India (late Justice Y V Chandrachud). "She had to give a thumb impression for authentication. I recall, every month the bank manager or his representative would come home and affix her thumb print on certain documents and only then could she get the pension", Justice Chandrachud said. "So it (authentication) is a serious issue. It's not a large issue. It is not charity... we have to find answers for these problems," he said, adding that there was a class of needy people who may not

get the benefits due to authentication failures. The top court judge was responding to the arguments of senior advocate Shyam Divan, appearing for former High Court judge Justice (Retd) K S Puttaswamy, who said a 90-year-old woman suffering from various ailments is being threatened that her bank account could be closed for non-authentication by Aadhaar. Divan said that through that bank account, she was getting her pension and she uses that money for her treatment as she has no one else to look after her. "There are numerous cases where the Aadhaar authentication failures of the elderly, people suffering from any disease or physical disability, leads to denial of benefits to those otherwise entitled to it," Divan said. He said in many villages, young people have now

migrated to cities or nearby towns and only the elderly residing there were dependent on their pension or other grants. But due to Aadhaar authentication failure, they were not getting the benefits. Divan sought to assail a World Bank report which had praised the Aadhaar project and which was relied upon by the government to bolster its case for the 12-digit unique identification number. He said the World Bank had partnered with a private entity for preparing the report titled 'Identification for Development'. Divan claimed that the same private entity was also the company with which UIDAI had partnered to facilitate Aadhaar. He said there were 144 notifications issued by various ministries and departments of the government which covered 252 schemes. The senior lawyer concluded his rejoinder arguments saying that essential government schemes that apply to children or relate to citizen's rehabilitation, food, health and nutrition, should be excluded from the requirement of Aadhaar authentication. The hearing remained inconclusive on Wednesday and will continue on Thursday. On May 3, the centre had strongly defended its decision to seed Aadhaar numbers with mobile phones, telling the top court that it could have been hauled up for contempt if the verification of mobile users was not undertaken by it. However, the court had said that the government had misinterpreted its order and used it as a "tool" to make Aadhaar mandatory for mobile users. The petitioners had referred to the technical experts' views on the technical aspect of the Aadhaar architecture and said that a real time surveillance of citizens was possible. For the first time in a democracy, something like CIDR has been implemented and the apex court has to balance the human rights and new technologies that is capable of being misused, they had said. Earlier, the court also did not agree with the government's contention that the Aadhaar law was correctly termed as a Money Bill by the Lok Sabha Speaker as it dealt with "targeted delivery of subsidies" for which funds come from the Consolidated Fund of India.

## Major Israeli raids hit 'Iranian' targets in Syria after rocket fire

Agency  
Jerusalem, May 10,

Israel's army said today it had carried out widespread raids against Iranian targets in Syria overnight after rocket fire towards its forces which it blamed on Iran, marking a sharp escalation between the two enemies. The incident came after weeks of rising tensions and followed US President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw from a key 2015 Iran nuclear deal on Tuesday, a move Israel had long advocated. The raids were one of the largest Israeli military operations in recent years and the biggest such assault on Iranian targets, the military said. "We hit nearly all the Iranian infrastructure in Syria," Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman told a security conference on Thursday morning. "They need to remember the saying that if it rains on us, it'll storm on them. I hope we've finished this episode and everyone understood." Israel carried out the raids after it said around 20 rockets, either Fajr or Grad type, were fired from Syria at its forces in the occupied Golan Heights at around midnight. It blamed the rocket fire on Iran's Al-Quds force, adding that Israel's anti-missile system intercepted four of the projectiles while the rest did not land in its territory. No Israelis were wounded. If confirmed, the incident would be the first such rocket fire by Iranian forces in Syria towards Israel. "We know that comes from the al-Quds force," army spokesman lieutenant-colonel Jonathan Conricus said, referring to the special forces unit affiliated with Iran's Revolutionary Guard. The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group said dozens of rockets were fired from Syria toward the Israeli-occupied Golan, but did not confirm they were fired by Iranian forces. It alleged the rockets followed a "first Israeli bombardment on the town of Baath" in Quneitra province. A senior pro-regime military source in Syria confirmed the salvo of rockets, but insisted Israel had fired first. Later, in the early hours of the

morning, explosions were heard in Damascus, while live images were broadcast on television showing projectiles above the Syrian capital and several missiles destroyed by Syrian anti-aircraft systems. Syrian state media reported that Israeli missile strikes had hit military bases as well as an arms depot and a military radar installation, without specifying the locations. The official SANA news agency added that "dozens of missiles were shot down by anti-aircraft systems in Syrian airspace", saying a number of missiles had reached their targets. Israel's military later confirmed it had carried out the raids, saying dozens of Iranian military targets had been struck and all of its aircraft had returned safely. Conricus said intelligence, logistics, storage and vehicles as well as the origin of the rockets were targeted. Syrian air defences, which fired dozens of times on Israeli forces, were also targeted, he said. There had been no comment from Iranian officials. Lieberman called the rocket fire "a new phase". "We don't want an escalation, but won't let anyone attack us or build an infrastructure to attack us in the future," he said. "We're facing a new reality. The Iranian attempt to bring anti-aircraft systems to our borders and close our skies is intolerable and unacceptable." An Israeli military statement said "this Iranian aggression is another proof of the intentions behind the establishment of the Iranian regime in Syria and the threat it poses to Israel and regional stability."

It added that it "will not allow the Iranian threat to establish itself in Syria. The Syrian regime will be held accountable for everything happening in its territory." French President Emmanuel Macron called Thursday for "de-escalation" between Israel and Iran, adding that he would discuss the issue later in the day with German chancellor Angela Merkel. Israel has long warned that it will not accept Iran entrenching itself militarily in neighbouring Syria, where Tehran is supporting

President Bashar al-Assad's regime in the country's seven-year civil war. Israel has been blamed for a series of recent strikes inside Syria that have killed Iranians, though it did not acknowledge those raids. It does acknowledge carrying out dozens of raids in Syria to stop what it says are advanced arms deliveries to Iran-backed Hezbollah, another key foe of Israel. Israel had been preparing itself for weeks for possible Iranian retaliation. Trump's withdrawal from the nuclear deal has added to tensions and led to a new level of uncertainty over how Iran will respond. Yesterday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu held talks in Moscow with Russian President Vladimir Putin, whose country has provided massive military and diplomatic backing to Assad's regime. "I told President Putin that it is the right of every state, certainly the right of Israel, to take the necessary steps in order to protect itself from this aggression," Netanyahu said in a statement, referring to Iran's presence in Syria. Netanyahu and Putin have held a series of meetings and telephone conversations in recent months, particularly regarding Syria.

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#### Director

South Asian Institute of Rural and Agricultural Management,  
Langjing Achouba, P.O. & P.S. Patsoi, Imphal West, Imphal - 795005, Manipur, INDIA  
Website: <http://sairam.org.in/> Email: YRS001@GMAIL.COM  
Phone: 8258801014, 7085124378

## Name changed

I, the undersigned, **Roji Thapa** of Lower Kalapahar, P.O/PS Senapati, Manipur, do hereby declare that, I have wholly renounced, relinquished and abandoned the use of old name **Rogy Thapa**, as I have assumed my new name **Roji Thapa**.

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## Sports News

### India U-16 football team registers 2-1 win against Jordan

AIR  
Serbia, May 10,

India's Under-16 national football team started the four-nation international tournament in Serbia today, with a 2-1 victory over Jordan. After conceding in the second minute of the match, India made a strong comeback in the 17th minute, thanks to a terrific finish by Ridge. Rohit Danu scored India's second goal nine minutes later which eventually proved to be the difference between the two teams. India will next face hosts Serbia on Saturday.