

JAYANTH JACOB @ New Delhi

SOMETIMES, the disappearance of a single word can reveal more than a major policy announcement. The growing preference within the Trump administration for “Asia” over “Indo-Pacific” may seem semantic, but in geopolitics, language often signals strategic intent. The shift has sparked a debate over whether Washington is recalibrating its regional priorities, and what that could mean for India, the Quad, and the balance of power in Asia.

The debate intensified after the US Defense Department renamed the Indo-Pacific Command (INDOPACOM) as Pacific Command (PACOM), restoring its original title. Combined with the November 2025 US National Security Strategy’s use of “Asia” rather than “Indo-Pacific”, the move was read by policy experts as a retreat from a concept that has shaped regional diplomacy for nearly a decade. For India, its implications could extend well beyond terminology.

Why Indo-Pacific matters

The concept of the Indo-Pacific emerged from the growing recognition that the Indian and Pacific oceans had become a single interconnected strategic theatre. Trade routes, energy flows, military deployments, and geopolitical competition increasingly linked East Asia, Southeast Asia, South Asia, and the western reaches of the Indian Ocean.

The idea gained prominence during the late 2010s, particularly under the first Trump administration. It reflected a growing concern in Washington, Tokyo, Canberra and New Delhi about China’s expanding economic influence, military modernisation and increasingly assertive regional posture.

By replacing the older framework of “Asia-Pacific” with “Indo-Pacific”, policymakers were making a deliberate statement. The change in terminology explicitly recognised India as a central strategic actor rather than a peripheral one.

It broadened the geographic map of regional security and signaled that the future balance of power would depend not only on developments in East Asia but also on the Indian Ocean.

The phrase quickly became embedded in official documents, defence strategies, diplomatic dialogues, and alliance structures across several countries.

The Quad and the Indo-Pacific vision

Perhaps no institution embodies the Indo-Pacific concept more clearly than the Quad-rilateral Security Dialogue, or Quad. The

grouping brings together Australia, India, Japan and the United States. First proposed in 2007, it remained dormant for several years before being revived during Trump’s first term. Its revival coincided with growing concerns about China’s regional influence and a shared desire among the four countries to preserve a rules-based order in the region.

Although Quad members have consistently rejected descriptions of the grouping as an anti-China alliance, its emergence has often been understood as a response to Beijing’s growing geopolitical weight.

The Quad has expanded beyond traditional security concerns to include cooperation on maritime awareness, critical technologies, supply chains, infrastructure, cyber security, climate resilience et al. The Indo-Pacific framework provided the conceptual glue that held this agenda together. It gave the four countries a shared strategic geography for discussing regional challenges.

That is why any apparent retreat from the term “Indo-Pacific” immediately raises questions about the Quad’s future trajectory. If the organising concept loses prominence in Washington, observers naturally wonder whether the institution built around it could

‘INDO’ DROP LOADED SIGNALS FOR INDIA, THE QUAD, U.S. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

lose momentum as well. The debate intensified after the publication of the US National Security Strategy in November 2025. The document continued to view India as an important partner and expected New Delhi to

contribute to regional security. But unlike the 2017 NSS, which repeatedly emphasised the “Indo-Pacific”, the 2025 document referred instead to “Asia”. Security documents are carefully crafted

texts. Every phrase reflects internal debates, bureaucratic compromises, and policy preferences.

When a term disappears, analysts wonder whether it reflects a broader rethinking of strategy.

The key question is whether the new terminology represents a genuine strategic shift or simply a rhetorical adjustment. The shift away from the term “Indo-Pacific” may reflect more than a change in diplomatic vocabulary. It could signal a broader reassessment of how the Trump administration views America’s role in Asia and, crucially, its relationship with China.



ILLUSTRATION : SOURAV ROY

The term Indo-Pacific was first coined and conceptualised by German geopolitician Karl Haushofer in the 1920s

He imagined it as a region where Japan, China and India would ally with Germany in a struggle against imperialist forces

Addressing the malady of judicial delays

As CJJ Surya Kant recently said, people’s confidence in the justice delivery system rests on quick verdicts



MANISH KU MAR @ Chennai

ON June 3 this year, Justice G Jayachandran of the Madras High Court penned one of the most strident indictments of India’s justice delivery system in recent memory. The reason: an election petition filed by DMK neta M Appavu in 2016 shortly after losing to AIADMK’s I S Inbadurai by a slim margin of 49 votes from the Radhapuram assembly constituency in Tirunelveli district, got decided 10 years later, by which time the outcome was academic.

It was not just that two assembly elections happened in between. It was that the Supreme Court ordered a stay on announcing the outcome of a recount of postal ballots in the case in 2019. It then sat on it for six long years before vacating the stay and remanding the matter back to the Madras high court.

Curiously, the SC also let the question that was at the heart of the litigation go undecided: Do middle school headmasters qualify as gazetted officers to attest postal ballots?

Significantly, an SC bench extensively heard the matter on March 23, 2021 but inexplicably failed to wrap it up. One plausible explanation for leaving the core legal question on

headmasters open could be that the bench that heard the arguments in 2021 had changed.

As Chief Justice of India Surya Kant observed in a recent case, “The interval between the hearing and the pronouncement also affects the quality of the adjudication, as a judgment bears the imprint of the arguments that preceded it, and it reflects them most faithfully when it follows them closely.”

The Appavu verdict is not just a story about a disputed election, but a mirror held up to a system in which justice grinds so slowly that it often defeats its purpose.

As per the National Judicial Data Grid, a whopping 49 lakh cases have been pending in high courts across the country for over 10 years. They constitute 10% of the pendency of all high court cases.

A decade for a 49-vote margin

The Appavu case reads like a slow burn thriller. After the May 2016 Tamil Nadu assembly election, the returning officer declared Inbadurai the winner by 49 votes.

Appavu challenged it, alleging that 203 postal ballots, which were attested by headmasters of middle schools, had been wrongly rejected on the ground that “headmasters were not gazetted officers.” He also alleged irregularities in the 19th,

20th and 21st rounds of counting of EVM votes. The case went to Justice Jayachandran, who on September 24, 2019 reserved his order. A week later, on October 1, 2019, he delivered a categorical finding: the 203 postal ballots had been wrongly rejected as headmasters were indeed gazetted officers. Further, the judge ordered a postal ballot recount.

Inbadurai immediately approached the SC, which on October 4, 2019, let the counting proceed but stayed the declaration of result. What followed was a series of adjournments, part-heard listings, and indifferent orders that stretched till the third week of May this year. As Justice Jayachandran eventually observed, it was a “grave mockery of justice.” (see graphic)

The SC apparently lost interest in the case after the assembly’s term ended in 2021. By February 2023, the SC acknowledged the awkwardness of the situation, noting that “even the next elections are over” and that there were “better and more urgent matters” to hear. The case was listed for a future date.

By the time it disposed of the case this year, two more assembly elections had been held - in 2016 and 2026. While lifting the stay on May 21 this year, the SC kept the legal question open on whether the attestation of postal ballots by headmasters was valid, and sent it back to the Madras high court “to pass appropriate consequential orders”.

The matter went back to Justice Jayachandran, who recalled that he had in October 2019 determined that 203 of the contested postal votes were valid. Upon their recount in same year, Appavu had received 153 while Inbadurai received just 1.

In effect, Appavu had won the 2016 election by 103 votes (153-49) but the SC’s stay prevented its announcement. Eventually, the HC declared him the elected MLA for the 2016-2021 term on June 3 this year.

“The term unfortunate may not be an adequate expression to describe the present case,” Justice Jayachandran wrote, “since in view of this Court, a grave mockery of justice, under the guise of dispensing justice, has been committed to the people of India, particularly the voters of Radhapuram Assembly Constituency, who were forced to bear a person as their Assembly representative though he is not duly elected.”

TAMILNAD MERCANTILE BANK LIMITED
VINUKONDA BRANCH
D.No. 23-194, 1st Floor, Palnadu Road, Vinukonda District, Vinukonda, Andhra Pradesh - 522 647 Mob No. 9177285567, 08546-273963. Email: - vinukonda@tmbank.in
CIN : L65110TN1921PLC001908

Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Properties
Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets mortgaged / charged to the Bank under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) and 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) Borrower / Mortgagor / Guarantors : 1) Mr. Muppalla Naga Raju S/o Bhikshamaiah and 2) Mrs. Muppalla Suhasini W/o Naga Raju that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Limited, Vinukonda Branch will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" on 09-07-2026 for recovery of Rs. 20,02,247.03/- (Rupees Twenty Lakhs Two Thousand Two Hundred and Forty Seven and Three Paise Only) as on 20-06-2026 due to the Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Limited, Vinukonda Branch with subsequent interest and expenses.
The Reserve Price will be Rs. 10,50,000/- (Rupees Ten Lakhs Fifty Thousand Only) and the earnest money deposit will be Rs. 1,05,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Five Thousand Only) for Item No.1
The Reserve Price will be Rs. 14,00,000/- (Rupees Fourteen Lakhs Only) and the earnest money deposit will be Rs. 1,40,000/- (Rupees One Lakh Forty Thousand Only) for Item No.2

Place of Submission of EMD and Auction:	Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd., Vinukonda Branch, D.No. 23-194, 1st Floor, Palnadu Road, Vinukonda, Palnadu District Andhra Pradesh - 522 647. Email:- vinukonda@tmbank.in Mob No. 9177285567
Date and Time of Auction Sale:	09-07-2026 and 03:00 PM to 04:00 PM for Item No. 1 09-07-2026 and 04:00 PM to 05:00 PM for Item No. 2
Upset Price	Rs. 10,50,000/- (Rupees Ten Lakhs Fifty Thousand Only) for Item No.1, Rs. 14,00,000/- (Rupees Fourteen Lakhs Only) for Item No. 2

Description of the immovable properties to be sold,
Item No. 1: All that parts and parcel of the Residential vacant land to the extent of 183.33 Sq. Yards or 153.28 Sq. Meters in Plot No. 57 in Approval Layout named as Golden City (Sector - B) in D. No. 178/5, 180/1, 180/2, 181/1, 181/3 situated at Naragayapalem Village Panchayath, Vinukonda Mandal, Palnadu District (Formerly Guntur District) standing in the name of the Mr. Muppalla Nagaraju S/o Bhikshamaiah. East- Plot No. 61 belongs to Muppalla Suhasini. South- Plot No. 56, West- 25 Feet wide Road, North- Plot No. 58 belongs to Sangu Lakshmi Reddy
Item No. 2: All that parts and parcel of the Residential vacant land to the extent of 200 Sq. Yards or 168.00 Sq. Meters in Plot No. 19 in Approval Layout named as Golden City (Sector- B) in D. No. 178/5, 180/1, 180/2, 181/1, 181/3 situated at Naragayapalem Village Panchayath, Vinukonda Mandal, Palnadu District (Formerly Guntur District) standing in the name of the Mr. Muppalla Nagaraju S/o Bhikshamaiah. East- 20 Feet wide Road, South - Site in Plot No. 20, North- Site in Plot No. 18, West- Site in Plot No. 5

Authorized Officer,
Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Ltd.,
For Vinukonda Branch

Place: Vinukonda
Date: 20-06-2026

OSBI STATE BANK OF INDIA
STRESSED ASSETS RECOVERY BRANCH, #54-20/1B/3/F/06,
3rd Floor, Upstairs of KFC, Surya Prakash Square, Gurumanak Nagar
Road, Vijayawada - 520008, N.T. R. District., A.P. Ph: 0866-2546922

POSSESSION NOTICE
(Rule 8(1)) (For Immovable Property)
Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the State Bank of India, Stressed Assets Recovery Branch, Vijayawada under Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (No.3 of 2002) and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notice dated: 01.12.2025 calling upon the Borrowers: M/s Paritala Cold Storage Mg Partner Sri Sajja Nithin Chakravathy / S/o S. Suresh, Regd Office: D.No.11-568, Kanchikacherla, NTR District-521180. M/s Paritala Cold Storage, Partner: Smt Sajja Padmavathi, W/o Suresh, Regd Office: D.No.11-568, Kanchikacherla, NTR District-521180. Sri Sajja Nithin Chakravathy, S/o Suresh, Flat No.4, Sharma Apartments, Methodist Colony, Begumpet, Hyderabad, Telangana-500016. Smt Sajja Padmavathi, W/o Suresh, Flat No.4, Sharma Apartments, Methodist Colony, Begumpet, Hyderabad, Telangana-500016 to discharge the debt due to the bank calling upon the borrower to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being Rs.5,94,91,074/- (Rupees Five Crores Ninety Four Lakhs Ninety One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy four only) as on 01.12.2025, plus further interest and expenses thereon, within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
The borrower/guarantors having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act, read with Rule 8 of the security interest enforcement Rules, 2002 on this 20.06.2026
The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with property will be subject to the charge of the State Bank of India for an amount of Rs.5,94,91,074/- (Rupees Five Crores Ninety Four Lakhs Ninety One Thousand Seven Hundred and Seventy four only) as on 01.12.2025 and further interest w.e.f. 02.12.2025, costs, etc. thereon.
The borrower attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.
DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
Property owned by: M/s Paritala Cold Storage Rep by its Managing Partner 1) Sri Sajja Nithin Chakravathy, S/o Suresh and Partner Smt Sajja Padmavathi, W/o Suresh: Property covered by Regd Sale Deed No.150/2011, dated 25.01.2011 at S.R.O.Kanchikacherla, Commercial Building with an extent of 11567.60 Sq.yds of site together with G+3 Floors RCC Cold Storage building covered in R.S.No.41774, bearing D.No.11-568, Assessment No.4632 situated at Kanchikacherla Village and Gram Panchayat Area, NTR District, Andhra Pradesh. Bounded by: East:Donka, South: Property of Maganti Veerabhadra Rao, North: Property of Penna Yagna Narayana and Others. West: Property of Ramana Rao.
Note: Earlier Possession Notice issued by the Bank in respect of above said account stands withdrawn and the present notice is being issued afresh in supersession of earlier possession notice.
Date : 20.06.2026
Place : Vijayawada
Sd/- Authorized Officer
State Bank of India

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा Bank of Baroda
TANGUTUR Branch, Survey No.1245/1, D.No.4-69, Chellammathota, Tangutur, Prakasam (Dist) - 523274, AP. Ph: 89775 13982. E-mail : vjtang@bankofbaroda.com, website : www.bankofbaroda.com

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES (APPENDIX- IV-A [See proviso to Rule 8(6) & 9 (1)]
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) & 9 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/ charged to the Secured Creditor, possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Bank of Baroda, Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" "without recourse" basis for recovery of dues in below mentioned accounts. The details of Borrower(s) / Guarantor (s) / Secured Asset/s/Dues/Reserve Price/Auction date & Time, EMD and Bid Increase Amount are mentioned below.

Name & address of Borrower/s / Guarantor/ s/ Mortgagor (s)	Description of the Immovable Property (Mortgaged by Mrs. Pulivarthi Venkata Seshamma)	Total Dues	Date & Time of E-Auction	Reserve Price, EMD, Bid Increase Amount
Borrower: M/s. Jagadeesh Enterprises, Rep. by it's Proprietor: Mrs. Pulivarthi Venkata Seshamma, Address: H.No.2-521, Jammulapalem Village, Tangutur Mandal, Prakasam District - 523274. Mrs. Pulivarthi Venkata Seshamma , Proprietor of M/s. Jagadeesh Enterprises, H.No.2-521, Jammulapalem Village, Tangutur Mandal, Prakasam District - 523274. Guarantor: Pulivarthi Brahmaiah, H.No.2-521, Jammulapalem Village, Tangutur Mandal, Prakasam District - 523274.	All the piece and parcel of property bearing Survey No.603 in that 2639.78 Sq.yards site and ground floor RCC 846 Sq.ft, First Floor RCC 846 Sq.ft and ACC sheet shed plinth area of Ground floor 4782.60 Sq.ft having Door No.2-252, Jammulapalem hamlet of Tangutur Village, Jammulapalem Panchayat Area, Tangutur Mandal, Ongole SRO, Prakasam District in the name of Mrs. Pulivarthi Venkata Seshamma and Bounded by: Boundaries: East: Property belongs to P. Ramaiah, West : Property of S. Vijaya Kumar, South: Kondapi Tangutur Road, North: Property of A. Venkata Subbaiah.	Rs. 69,83,760.69 Ps (Rupees Sixty Nine Lakhs Eighty Three Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty and Paise Sixty Nine. (2025) as on 30.11.2023 + unapplied interest from 01.12.2023 and other charges if any till date of realization.	07-07-2026 Time: 02.00 PM to 06.00 PM (With auto time extension of 10 minutes each till sale is completed)	Reserve Price: Rs.1,49,38,000/- EMD: Rs.14,93,800/- Bid Increase Amount: Rs.50,000/-

Possession Status: PHYSICAL

For detailed terms and conditions of sale, please refer/visit to the website link <https://www.bankofbaroda.in/e-auction.htm> and online auction portal <https://baanknet.com> Also, prospective bidders may contact the Authorised officer on Tel No. (08592) 243561, Mobile: 8977513908.
Date : 19-06-2026, Place : Tangutur
Sd/- Authorised Officer, BANK OF BARODA