



AAP MP Sanjay Singh addresses a press conference, in New Delhi



A traffic police personnel gives a gift to a bike rider for wearing a helmet, in Surat

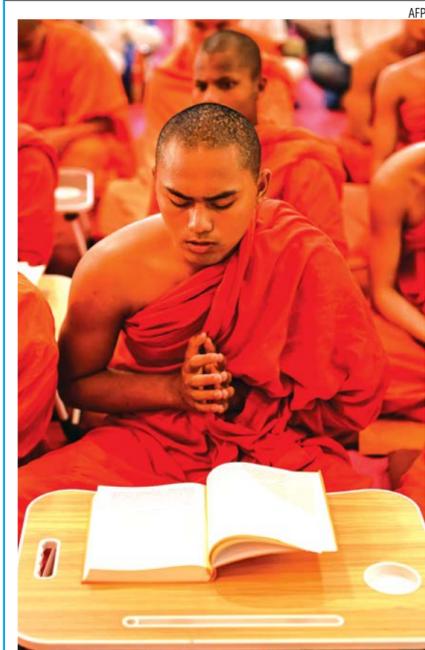


Former CM of Jammu and Kashmir and Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) President Mehbooba Mufti addresses party workers' convention, in Srinagar



Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah addresses during the felicitation ceremony, in Jammu

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Buddhist monks chant sacred texts Tipitaka Saddhamma Sijharyana, at the Maha Bodhi Society in Bengaluru, on Sunday

Two arrested for last year's violence over Sambhal mosque survey
SAMBHAL (UP): Two men were arrested on Sunday in connection with the violence that erupted here in November last year over the court-ordered survey of a Mughal-era mosque, killing four people. According to the police, Mohammad Hasan and Samad were arrested in the Nakhsha police station area. During interrogation, the accused admitted to being part of the mob that gathered near the mosque on November 24 to oppose the survey, they said. Police said the two accused informed them that upon hearing about the incident, they reached Anjuman Chauraha where a large crowd had assembled and incited the mob. Subsequently, the mob marched towards Hindupura Khara Nakhsha Tiraha, where they allegedly fired at police personnel, pelted stones, and set a police vehicle on fire with the intent to kill, police said in a press release.

Man held at Delhi airport for smuggling necklace worth Rs 6 crore: Customs
NEW DELHI: A man was arrested at the Delhi airport for smuggling into the country a diamond-studded gold necklace worth Rs 6 crore, the customs department said on Sunday. The passenger was intercepted after he arrived at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport here from Bangkok on February 12, it said. The detailed examination of the baggage and personal search of the passenger resulted in the recovery of a gold necklace studded with diamonds, weighing 40 grams, having a total value of Rs 6.08 crore, it said on X. The necklace has been seized and the passenger arrested. "The accused is a native of Gujarat," a customs official said, adding that further investigation was continuing.

Alert cop saves passenger who fell while boarding train at Andheri station
MUMBAI: An RPF personnel saved a man's life in the nick of time after he fell on a platform at Andheri railway station in Mumbai while trying to board a moving express train on Sunday, an official said. The incident occurred on platform number eight when Lok Shakti Express was leaving the station. "A passenger tried to board the running train but lost his grip and fell on the platform. He got stuck in the gap between the train and the platform," he said. Railway Protection Force (RPF) Assistant Sub-Inspector Pahup Singh, who was on duty, immediately rushed forward and pulled the passenger away to safety, preventing a potential tragedy. The rescued passenger has been identified as Rajendra Mangilal (40), a resident of Andheri's Seven Bungalows.

Man stabbed to death by brother, cousin on road in Hyderabad
HYDERABAD: A 24-year-old man was murdered in public view at Medchal here on Sunday by his own brother and a cousin, police said. The incident happened at 4 pm. The deceased, who worked as a private employee, was a drunkard and used to "harrass" his mother for many years, they said. His brother and cousin and other friends warned him for good behaviour, but he did not change, police said. The man's brother and cousin went to the house with a knife and stabbed him, and when he tried to run away towards the bus stop, the duo chased him and allegedly killed him, they said. The two persons were absconding, police said, adding that further investigation is on.

UP: Attack on woman student on campus sparks protest at govt paramedical college
JHANSI: A day after a woman student of a government paramedical college here was allegedly harassed and assaulted, her fellow students staged a protest outside the campus gate on Sunday demanding action against the perpetrators of the incident. The demonstration was called off after the college's director assured the protesters that their demands would be addressed, officials said. Additional Superintendent of Police (City) Gyanendra Kumar Singh said a student of BSc Radiology was heading from the girls' hostel to the administrative building on Saturday afternoon to seek permission to visit her home in Farrukhabad. On the way, two unidentified persons attacked her in a secluded area behind the hostel, sprayed a powder in her eyes and attempted to assault her, the officer said. In the scuffle, parts of her clothes were also torn and she briefly lost consciousness, he said.

2nd batch of US deportees also say they were handcuffed, chained

116 illegal Indian immigrants aboard US military aircraft landed at Amritsar late Saturday night

PTI, CHANDIGARH: A US military aircraft carrying 116 illegal Indian immigrants landed at Amritsar airport late on Saturday night, with the men among the deportees claiming they were in shackles during the journey and Sikh youths were allegedly without turbans.

The C-17 aircraft, which landed at the airport around 11.35 pm on Saturday, was the second batch of Indians to be deported by the Donald Trump administration as part of its crackdown on illegal immigrants.

Of these 116 deportees, 65 are from Punjab, 33 from Haryana, eight from Gujarat, two each from Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Maharashtra and Rajasthan, and one each from Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir. They were provided food upon reaching Amritsar, much to their reprieve after the exhausting journey.

According to sources, most of the deportees in the second batch were aged between 18 and 30.

A third plane carrying 112 deportees, that include people from Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat, is expected to land at Amritsar airport late on Sunday night, official sources said.

The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) Sunday strongly condemned the US authorities for allegedly not allowing Sikh deportees, who were part of the second batch of illegal Indian immigrants, to wear turbans.

The statement came after some video clips on social media showed Sikh deportees without turbans completing their immigration formalities at the Amritsar airport.

SGPC officials, who were deputed for providing 'langar' and bus service for depor-



Indians deported from the US being escorted by the police as they leave the airport upon their arrival, in Amritsar, early Sunday

tees at the Amritsar airport, gave 'dastar' (turban) to the Sikh deportees.

Among the second batch of deportees, those hailing from Punjab were taken to their homes in police vehicles around 4.30 am on Sunday after immigration and background checks.

However, two deportees belonging to Rajpura in Patiala district were arrested upon their landing in Amritsar in connection with a murder case. Sandeep Singh alias Sunny and Pradeep Singh were wanted in a murder case registered in Rajpura in 2023.

The second batch of deportees had tales of toil, journey through dangerous and illegal pathways in pursuit of the American dream and its ultimate shattering to share. Many claimed that they were duped by

travel agents.

Daljit Singh left his native Kurala Kalan village in Punjab for the US last year in a desperate bid to provide a better future for his family.

After being deported, he said, "Our legs were chained and hands cuffed throughout the journey. There were three women and three children on board who were not cuffed." He told reporters that the shackles were removed before the aircraft landed in Amritsar.

Daljit said he was taken to the US through a 'dunki' route -- an illegal and risky pathway used by migrants to enter the US.

Sourav (20), who reached Chandiwala village in Punjab's Ferozepur district on Sunday, told reporters that they were

PM didn't tell his good friend about country's outrage over handcuffing: Cong

PTI, NEW DELHI: The Congress Sunday accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was on a visit to the US recently, of not conveying to his 'good friend' Donald Trump about the outrage over the shackling of Indians being deported from America.

Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh referred to reports of shackling Indians deported from the United States and said, "It is abundantly clear that the PM did NOT convey to his good friend our country's outrage at the manner in which Indian citizens are being deported from the USA. Only towards boast of 56-inch chests."

shackled en route to Amritsar. "We were handcuffed and our legs were chained," he said.

Punjab NRI Affairs Minister Kuldeep Singh Dhaliwal and Power Minister Harbhajan Singh met some of the deportees at the airport on Saturday night and said the state government stood by them like a rock.

About the shackling of deportees, Dhaliwal, in a post on X, said, "You will be very sad to know that throughout the entire journey, once again the American soldiers had tied the hands and feet of our Indian immigrants. Despite opposition to earlier cuffing, the Indians were treated inhumanly."

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has been attacking the Centre over the landing of US planes carrying deportees at Amritsar airport. "Do not make our holy city a deport centre," he had said.

Stalin slams Centre for 'blackmailing' TN over NEP

PTI, CHENNAI: Chief Minister M K Stalin on Sunday accused Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan of "blackmail" for allegedly taking a stand that Tamil Nadu would not be provided funds till such time it accepted the National Education Policy (NEP) and the three language formula.

Tagging a video clip of Pradhan speaking to reporters in Varanasi on February 15, Stalin, in a post on 'X' quoted Pradhan as saying that Tamil Nadu has to come to the terms of the Indian Constitution and that the three language policy is the rule of law.

Accusing Pradhan of "blackmail" for his alleged stand that Tamil Nadu would not be provided education related funds by the Centre till such time the state accepted the three language policy, the chief minister termed it as unacceptable, and Tamil people would not tolerate it.

The state sought its due from the Centre, which is its right, and if the Central minister spoke arrogantly

M K Stalin wanted Pradhan to specify the constitutional provision that made mandatory the three language policy of English, the respective regional language and Hindi

as if the state claimed his personal wealth, then, in that case, Delhi would have to witness the trait of the Tamil people, the CM said.

Further, Stalin wanted Pradhan to specify the constitutional provision that made mandatory the three language policy of English, the respective regional language and Hindi.

States constitute the Indian union and education is on the concurrent list of the Constitution and hence, the union government cannot claim it to be their exclusive domain, the CM added.

Deputy CM Udhayanidhi Stalin and allies of the ruling DMK, including the Congress, Left parties and VCK condemned Pradhan.

Principal opposition AIADMK asserted that it is committed to the two language policy, and said whether the party is in power or not, it would never wa-

ver from its avowed policy. AIADMK general secretary and Leader of Opposition, Edappadi K Palaniswami, addressing a public meeting held by his party in Vellore, said that the Centre's insistence on implementation of NEP and three language norm for release of education funds to the state was not correct.

Palaniswami asserted that Tamil Nadu would only follow the two language policy of Tamil and English. The AIADMK is committed to that policy and there shall be no change in that stand, he emphasised.

The former chief minister asked the ruling DMK to fight for pending MGNREGA funds in the Parliament as people have elected 39 MPs belonging to the DMK and its allies. Also, he urged the Centre to release funds due to the state in order to benefit the people.

Nagpur: Two killed in blast at firecracker unit

PTI, NAGPUR: Two labourers died and three others were injured in a blast at a firecracker unit in Maharashtra's Nagpur district on Sunday, a senior police official said.

The explosion took place at 1:30pm at Asian Fireworks under Kalmeshwar police station limits in Katol tehsil, some 50 kilometres from the district headquarters, Nagpur Rural Superintendent of Police Harsh Poddar said.

"The two deceased labourers hailed from Seoni and Mandla in Madhya Pradesh. Three persons were injured. There were 31 persons at the firecracker unit when the blast took place," the SP said.

"The reason for the blast is unclear and a team of forensic experts is arriving at the site as part of the probe. The unit manufactures 'sutli' (cord) used to ignite firecrackers," Poddar said.

Another official identified the deceased as Muni Madavi (34) and Bhura Laxman Rajjak (25).

Rijju's remarks reflect plan to not grant statehood to J-K: Cong

PTI, JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Congress president Tariq Hameed Karra on Sunday said the statement of Union Minister Kiran Rijju declining a timeline for the restoration of statehood to the Union Territory reflects the Centre's intention to not fulfil its promise to the people in near future.

Rijju said Prime Minister Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah have made it clear that statehood to Jammu and Kashmir will be restored in due course of time.

However, Rijju, who holds the parliamentary affairs and minority affairs portfolios, declined to give a timeline for the restoration of statehood to the UT.

"Rijju's remarks are a clear message from the Modi government that it is not ready to grant statehood to J&K in near future," Karra said, address-

ing a workers' convention at Doongi in Rajouri district as part of the party's 15-day campaign to press for restoration of statehood.

Criticising the BJP-led central government for the failure to keep its promise on early restoration of statehood, he said the Centre made a commitment to the people of Jammu and Kashmir on the floor of parliament, before the Supreme Court and in numerous public rallies.

He called upon people to be ready for a struggle to get back their "dignity, status and rights" as a state.

Karra accused the BJP government of neglecting the border belt of Rajouri and Poonch districts during the last 10 years of its rule in the field of connectivity, health and education infrastructure.

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Athawale opposes Maharashtra government's 'love jihad' law plan

PTI, SHIRDI: Union Minister Ramdas Athawale on Sunday opposed the Maharashtra government's move to draft a law to stop "love jihad".

"Love jihad" is a term used by right-wing outfits to allege conspiracy by Muslim men to convert Hindu women through marriage.

The Maharashtra government has issued a Government Resolution (GR) stating that a committee headed by the director general of police (DGP) will suggest steps to tackle complaints of "love jihad" and forced conversions.

It will also look at legal aspects and the laws framed in other states and recommend legislation to prevent such instances.

"It is wrong to call interfaith unions as love jihad. There should be a provision to prevent conversions. Steps

It is wrong to call interfaith unions as love jihad. There should be a provision to prevent conversions. Steps should be taken to prevent disruption of social and religious harmony

— Ramdas Athawale, Union minister for social justice and empowerment

should be taken to prevent disruption of social and religious harmony," the Union minister for social justice and empowerment told reporters.

"Prime Minister Narendra Modi considers everyone as equal and has initiated welfare measures for all. Muslims also benefit. PM Modi is against extremist Muslims and not the community," the Republican Party of India (A) chief added.

There are intercaste marriages as well, Athawale, whose party is a member of the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance, pointed out.

Speaking reporters in Nagpur earlier in the day, Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis said there was nothing wrong with interfaith marriages, but steps need to be taken against matrimonial alliances through fraud and false identity.

The CM said the Supreme Court and Kerala High Court have made observations about the reality of "love jihad".

Meanwhile, speaking on local body polls, Athawale said the RPI (A) would contest them independently if it is not given space in the ruling Mahayuti, which comprises the BJP, Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar-led Nationalist Congress Party.