



Munther Al-Jazairi, an alleged former operative with the military security before the fall of Bashar Assad, is arrested in Tadamon, Syria



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz following the informal summit of European leaders on the situation in Ukraine and European security, at the German Embassy in Paris



Canada's PM Justin Trudeau and Britain's Prince Harry, the Duke of Sussex, at the 2025 Invictus Games, in Vancouver, British Columbia



President Donald Trump arrives on Air Force One at Daytona Beach International Airport in Daytona Beach, Florida

allovertheworld



Guatemala's Interior Minister Francisco Jimenez looks on during a press conference with President Bernardo Arevalo (out frame) at Culture Palace in Guatemala City, on Monday

10 dead in building collapse in Egypt

CAIRO: A three-storey residential building in Egypt collapsed Monday morning, killing 10 people and injuring three others, officials said. The Health Ministry said that rescuers and ambulances were deployed in Kerdasa City, in the western part of Greater Cairo, where the building collapsed, to remove the rubble and search for victims. Giza Gov. Adel al-Naggar ordered the immediate evacuation of nearby buildings as a safety measure, according to a statement released by the Giza governorate on Facebook. The governorate received alerts at 5 am about the building's collapse. Security and forensic teams were investigating the collapse.

Israel says drone strike kills Hamas' military chief in Lebanon

JERUSALEM: An Israeli drone strike in southern Lebanon on Monday killed the head of Hamas' military operations in the country, Israel's army said. The strike came on the eve of the deadline for Israel's full withdrawal from southern Lebanon under the ceasefire agreement that ended the 14-month war between Israel and Hezbollah. The Israeli military said it killed Mohammad Shaheen, the head of Hamas' operations department in Lebanon. The army accused Shaheen of "recently planning terror attacks, directed and funded by Iran, from Lebanese territory against the citizens of the state of Israel." Hamas confirmed Shaheen's death but described him as a military commander. Footage showed a car engulfed in flames following the strike near a Lebanese army checkpoint and Sidon's municipal sports stadium.

Singapore's Indian-origin leader fined SGD 14,000 for lying to parliamentary committee

SINGAPORE: Singapore's Indian-origin Leader of the Opposition Pritam Singh was on Monday fined SGD 14,000 after a district court found him guilty on two counts of lying under oath to a parliamentary committee. Singh was fined a maximum of SGD 7,000 for each of his two charges. Speaking to reporters after the hearing, the Leader of the Opposition said he will be running for the general election which is due in November this year. The Constitution states that a sitting MP will lose his seat and be disqualified from standing for election if he is jailed for at least one year, or fined at least SGD 10,000. However, the Elections Department confirmed on Monday that the sentence imposed on Singh does not reach the threshold to disqualify him as an MP. It said disqualification is based on the sentence imposed for a single offence. In a Facebook post, Singh said that he has instructed his legal team to file a notice of appeal and to look into the written judgment in closer detail.

Trump administration wants SC to lift firing of whistleblower agency head proceed

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration wants the Supreme Court to permit the firing of the head of the federal agency dedicated to protecting whistleblowers, according to documents obtained Sunday that would mark the first appeal to the justices since President Donald Trump took office. The emergency appeal is the start of what probably will be a steady stream from lawyers for the Republican president and his administration seeking to undo lower court rulings that have slowed his second term agenda. The Justice Department's filing obtained by The Associated Press asks the conservative-majority court to lift a judge's court order temporarily reinstating Hampton Dellinger as the leader of the Office of Special Counsel.

Official says Ugandan opposition figure will be tried in civilian court instead of military one

KAMPALA (UGANDA): A prominent opposition figure facing military trial in Uganda will be charged before a civilian court instead, an official said Monday, as authorities faced mounting pressure to free him. Kizza Besigye, a four-time presidential candidate in the East African country, went missing in November in Kenya's capital, Nairobi, and appeared days later in a cage before a military tribunal in Uganda's capital, Kampala. Besigye's close associates have said his trial on charges including treachery, which carries the death penalty, is politically motivated.

Top Russian, American officials to hold talks on ending Ukraine war without Kyiv

AP, RIYADH: Senior American and Russian officials, including the countries' top diplomats, will hold talks on improving their ties and negotiating an end to the war in Ukraine, officials said Monday, in what would be the most significant meeting between the sides since Moscow's full-scale invasion of its neighbour nearly three years ago.

The talks, scheduled for Tuesday in Saudi Arabia, mark another pivotal step by the Trump administration to reverse US policy on isolating Russia, and are meant to pave the way for a meeting between US President Donald Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

The recent US diplomatic blitz on the war has sent Kyiv and key allies scrambling to ensure a seat at the table amid concerns that Washington and Moscow could press ahead with a deal that won't be favourable to them. France called an emergency meeting of European Union countries and the UK on Monday to decide how to respond.

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and Putin's foreign affairs adviser Yuri Ushakov set off for the Saudi capital on Monday, according to Russian state TV.

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AMERICAN DREAM DASHED, FUTURE TENSE FOR SARZORA YOUTH

Expressing his concerns, Velim MLA Cruz Silva said, "The villagers are deeply upset about the youth's deportation. This is a situation that affects many others from Goa as well. Many Goans are working illegally in America, and it's crucial that we address this issue swiftly." Silva suggested that the positive relations between the BJP government at the Centre and the US government could potentially pave the way for a solution. "A cooperative effort between the two governments could provide much-needed relief to the families of Goans working illegally abroad," he added. The story of the deported youth has sparked a broader conversation about the challenges faced by Goan families in pursuit of the American dream and the systemic issues that push many young people to take dangerous and illegal routes to find work overseas. As the community grapples with the harsh realities of this situation, many are calling for greater government action to address the causes and provide a legal framework that offers hope for those seeking a better future.

F-35S LATER, DEPORTEE PLANES ARRIVE FIRST

"It was too dangerous to traverse through the Panama jungles. We somehow managed to save ourselves from snakes, crocodiles and other animals," recalled Lovepreet Singh, a deportee who returned on Saturday, sharing the perils of donkey route. They were even beaten up by 'donkers' taking them to the US border through the donkey route, Lovepreet said. The family of Jasnoor Singh from Amritsar district said they spent Rs 55 lakh to send him to the US. "We sold our properties, commercial vehicles and one plot of land to raise the money," a family member said. Jasnoor was on the US military aircraft that brought back 112 Indians living illegally in that country on Sunday. Sharing his ordeal, Mandeep said, "When I spoke to my agent, he said within one month I will be taken to the US in a legal way". The agent demanded Rs 40 lakh, which he paid in two instalments. The journey began on a flight from Amritsar to Delhi last August. "From Delhi, I was taken to Mumbai, then Nairobi, and onwards to Amsterdam through another nation. From there, we were taken to Suriname. When I reached there, the sub-agents demanded Rs 20 lakh, which was paid back home by my family," Mandeep said. Detailing the uncertain journey that began from there, Mandeep said, "From Suriname, we boarded a vehicle which was cramped with many people like me. We were taken to Guyana. From there it was non-stop travel for days. We crossed Guyana, then Bolivia before reaching Ecuador."

The group was then made to cross the Panama jungles. "Here we were told by fellow travellers that if we ask too many questions, we could be shot. For 13 days, we moved through the treacherous route that included 12 canals. Crocodiles, snakes -- we had to bear all. Some were given sticks to deal with the dangerous reptiles," he said. "We ate half-baked 'rotis' and sometimes noodles, as proper food was a distant thing. We used to travel 12 hours a day," Mandeep said. The group made a halt at Costa Rica after crossing Panama, and then began their journey to Honduras, where, Mandeep said, "We got to finally eat some rice." "But we did not get to eat anything while crossing through Nicaragua. In Guatemala, however, we were lucky to get some curd rice. By the time we reached Tijuana, my beard was trimmed forcibly," Mandeep said. On the morning of January 27, they were arrested by the Border Police after they were made to cross the border to sneak into the US, he said. "The authorities told us that we will be deported. We were put in a detention centre for some days before we were sent back, he said. Lovepreet, who hails from Gurdaspur district, said he left home one year back. "My travel agent put me on the donkey route, which was

Zelenskyy off to UAE as momentum grows for talks to end war

AP, ABU DHABI: Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy met with the leader of the United Arab Emirates on Monday as momentum grows for potential peace talks ending Russia's war on the country.

US President Donald Trump last week suggested he would be meeting Russian President Vladimir Putin in Saudi Arabia. The UAE, home to Abu Dhabi and Dubai, has long been floated as a possible site for peace talks as well, given the large population of Russian and Ukrainian expatriates who have flooded the country since the war began, and due to the Emirates' work on prisoner exchanges in the past.

Zelenskyy arrived in Abu Dhabi late Sunday after attending the Munich Security Conference in Germany. Footage released by his office showed him and his wife, Olena Zelenska, being greeted by an Emirati official and honor guard at the airport. The trip is Zelenskyy's first to the UAE since the war began.

"Our top priority is bringing even more of our people home from captivity," Zelenskyy's office said in messages online. "We will also focus on investments and economic partnership, as well as a large-scale humanitarian programme."

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio, national security adviser Mike Waltz and Special Envoy Steve Witkoff will meet the Russian delegation, State Department spokesperson Tammy Bruce said. Ukraine will not participate. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said the talks will be primarily focused on "restoring the entire range of US-Russian relations, as well as preparing possible talks on the Ukrainian settlement and organising a meeting of the two presidents." Bruce said the meeting

is aimed at determining how serious the Russians are about wanting peace and whether detailed negotiations can be started.

"I think the goal, obviously, for everyone is to determine if this is something that can move forward," she told reporters travelling with Rubio in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Bruce said that even though Ukraine would not be at the table for Tuesday's talks, actual peace negotiations would not take place with Ukraine's involvement. Kyiv's participation in any

European leaders gather for emergency meeting

AP, PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron had a phone call with Donald Trump just as he was about to greet key European Union nations and the UK at the Elysee Palace on Monday for an emergency meeting on how to react to the US diplomatic blitz on Ukraine, which left the once rock-solid partner as a potential political liability.

Macron's office would not disclose details about the discussion. Leaders of Germany, the United Kingdom, Italy, Poland, Spain, the Netherlands, Denmark and the European Union are holding talks on how to deal with Europe's security quandary. NATO Secretary General Mark Rutte is also attending. Last week, top US officials from the Trump administration made their first visit to Europe, leaving the impression that Washington was ready to embrace the Kremlin while it cold-shouldered many of its age-old European allies.

Despite belligerent warnings for months ahead of Donald Trump's reelection as US president, EU leaders publicly ignored the ominous forebodings, hoping somehow that Trump would stand shoulder to shoulder with Europe while the continent would finally start to beef up its defences and become less reliant on American firepower.

peace talks was a bedrock of US policy under Trump's predecessor, Joe Biden.

Witkoff said he and Waltz will be "having meetings at the direction of the president," and hope to make "some really good progress with regard to Russia-Ukraine."

Witkoff didn't directly respond to a question about whether Ukraine would have to give up a "significant portion" of its territory as part of any negotiated settlement. US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth said last week that

NATO membership for Ukraine was unrealistic and suggested Kyiv should abandon hopes of winning all its territory back from Russia — two key items on Putin's wish list.

The talks would mark a significant expansion of US-Russian contacts, nearly three years into a war that has seen ties fall to the lowest level in decades. Lavrov and then-US Secretary of State Antony Blinken talked briefly on the sidelines of a G-20 meeting in India nearly two years ago.

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"We were taken to Mexico in a container. We weren't even allowed to answer nature's call. If we asked for it, the donkers would thrash us," Lovepreet said.

Twenty-year-old Nishan Singh from Kapurthala district also narrated a similar ordeal.

"We were beaten up, not given food. We spent 16 days in a jungle, surviving mainly on water. Our mobile phones and other items were taken away," said Nishan, whose family spent Rs 40 lakh to send him to the US.

MCLAUGHLIN MURDER: KILLER GETS LIFE, FAMILY FINDS CLOSURE

Bhagat was found guilty of charges under Sections 302 (murder), 376 (rape), 201 (destruction of evidence), and 394 (robbery) of the Indian Penal Code.

Bhagat, a resident of Bhagatwada, Char Rasta, Canacona, was arrested shortly after McLaughlin's body was discovered. He was seen with her at a shack in Colomb on the night of her death, along with three other locals.

During questioning, Bhagat admitted to raping McLaughlin after luring her to a remote spot in the late hours of March 13, 2017. He claimed to have killed her with a broken beer bottle to prevent her from identifying him.

McLaughlin's body was found in a nude state with multiple injury marks on her head and face, indicating a struggle. A post-mortem examination revealed severe cerebral damage and neck constriction, as well as significant injuries inflicted by a glass bottle. The autopsy also confirmed that McLaughlin had been sexually assaulted before her death.

Further investigation revealed that Bhagat's scooter and the victim's clothing were found in close proximity to his home, further implicating him in the crime. Additionally, McLaughlin's British passport was also seized by the police. Forensic evidence, including DNA samples, strengthened the prosecution's case.

The investigation was initially hampered by the challenge of keeping witnesses consistent with their statements. According to DySP Rajendra Prabhudessai, the prosecution faced significant hurdles, including threats to witnesses and the global disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which delayed court proceedings.

Despite these challenges, the trial saw the testimony of 46 witnesses, and the prosecution's efforts were vital in securing Bhagat's conviction. Public prosecutors V G Costa, Govind Gaunker and Sanjay Samant represented the State during the trial, while Bhagat's defence denied the charges, maintaining his innocence throughout the process.

McLaughlin had arrived in Goa in February 2017 and was staying in North Goa's Arambol before traveling to Canacona. CCTV footage captured her with Bhagat at a shack in Palolem, where they were seen together until around 9.30 pm on the night of March 13. The following day, McLaughlin's body was discovered in a remote area of Canacona.

McLaughlin's remains were repatriated to Ireland after the initial post-mortem in Goa, with a second post-mortem confirming the cause of death as brain damage and strangulation.

SANCOALE P'YAT ROCKED BY CORRUPTION CLAIMS

He further claimed that an ordinary panchayat meeting had been scheduled for February 18, during which attempts were being made to pass "illegal" bills amounting to Rs 65 lakh without the required tenders or approvals. Naik has requested that the Director of Panchayats intervene to prevent the meeting and direct the Sancoale panchayat to hold previous meetings before proceeding with any new decisions.

In addition, Naik raised concerns over the regular passing of large sums in each meeting, particularly related to garbage collection. He said, "Every meeting sees bills worth Rs 25 lakh being passed for garbage collection, and

nearly Rs 1.25 crore worth of bills are being approved, which is against the rules."

Panch Maurolio Carvalho also voiced his concerns, asserting that they had gathered substantial evidence of fraudulent activities carried out by the ruling panchayat members. "We will submit the proof of these illegalities to the court and ensure that those involved in corruption are held accountable," he said.

In response to the allegations, Sancoale Deputy Sarpanch Derrick Vales denied the accusations, claiming that all bills had been thoroughly discussed and passed during meetings. "What the two panchayat members are claiming is false. We are paying Rs 15 lakh, not Rs 25 lakh, to the contractor for garbage collection. We don't approve any bills without including them in the agenda," Vales stated.

He also explained that although there had been a delay in holding the ordinary meetings, the bills for the lawyers' services had been sent to the government for approval. "For the last three-and-a-half months, an ordinary meeting was not held, but everything has been done in accordance with the rules," Vales added.

SHALLOW EARTHQUAKE JOLTS NCR, ALERT FOR AFTERSHOCKS

In a post on X, the Delhi Police said, "We hope you all are safe, Delhi!"

It also urged citizens to call on the emergency 112 helpline for emergencies.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi urged people in the region to stay calm and follow safety precautions while keeping alert for possible aftershocks.

Modi said in a post on X, "Tremors were felt in Delhi and nearby areas. Urging everyone to stay calm and follow safety precautions, staying alert for possible aftershocks. Authorities are keeping a close watch on the situation."

The strong tremors triggered by the earthquake prompted residents of several high-rise buildings in Delhi, Noida, Greater Noida and Ghaziabad to rush out of their homes.

A woman in her 50s who was out on a morning walk in E Block of Noida Sector 20 said, "Hum log bahar park me walk kar rahe the toh pata nahin chala. Lekin kafi tej tha. Log bahar aa gaye. (We were walking in the park, so we didn't feel it strongly. But it was quite strong. People came rushing out)."

Visuals from PTI Videos showed people waiting outside their homes across Delhi-NCR, fearful of any aftershock.

Naresh Kumar, a resident of West Delhi, said this was the first time that he had experienced such a strong tremor.

Ratanlal Sharma, who was waiting at New Delhi railway station for a train to Prayagraj, said he was at the platform when he felt a sudden jolt. "It felt like a train suddenly came to a screeching halt," he said.

A resident of a high-rise in Ghaziabad said the tremors were so strong that everyone rushed downstairs in panic. AAP leader Atishi said on X, "A strong earthquake just hit Delhi. I pray to God that everyone is safe."

Resharing her post, AAP supreme Arvind Kejriwal said he prayed for everyone's safety.

"Massive tremors were felt 10 minutes back in Delhi, woke us up from sleep. I hope and pray everyone is safe and sound," AICC national spokesperson Ragini Nayak said in a post on X.

Delhi is located about 250 kilometres from the seismically-active Himalayan collision zone and experiences shaking frequently from far- and near-field earthquakes.

The national capital is placed in Seismic Zone IV in the seismic zoning map of India, the second highest in the country.

A 3.5-magnitude quake on April 12, 2020 and a 3.4-magnitude one on May 10, 2020, in northeast Delhi and a 4.4-magnitude earthquake on May 29, 2020, near Rohtak (about 50 kilometres west of Delhi), followed by more than a dozen aftershocks, sparked panic in the densely populated habitat.

Haryana also reported minor earthquakes in 2022-23.