

Trump admin cuts legal help for migrant children travelling alone

PTI, WASHINGTON: The Trump administration has ended a contract that provides legal help to migrant children entering the country without a parent or guardian, raising concerns that children will be forced to navigate the complex legal system alone.

The Acacia Center for Justice contracts with the government to provide legal services through its network of providers around the country to unaccompanied migrant children under 18, both by providing direct legal representation as well as conducting legal orientations often referred to as know your rights clinics to migrant children who cross the border alone and are in federal government shelters.

Acacia said they were informed Friday that the US Department of Health and Human Services was terminating nearly all the legal work that the centre does, including paying for lawyers for roughly 26,000 children when they go to immigration court. They're still contracted to hold the

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TRUMP VOWS TO PAY STRANDED ASTRONAUTS' OVERTIME FROM HIS POCKET

PTI, WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump on Friday said he would pay out of his pockets the overtime for astronauts Barry "Butch" Wilmore and Sunita "Suni" Williams, who returned to Earth this week after spending nine months in space. The two astronauts, who were supposed to be on an eight-day mission, spent 286 days in space -- 278 days longer than anticipated after their spacecraft malfunctioned. While speaking with reporters in the Oval Office, Trump, when asked about the calculated overtime, said: "Nobody's ever mentioned this to me. If I have to, I'll pay it out of my own pocket." Trump said this when a Fox News reporter highlighted Wilmore and Williams each received USD 5 per diem for each day in space, amounting to USD 1,430 in extra pay.

legal orientation clinics.

It's extremely concerning

because it's leaving these kids without really important support, said Ailin Buigues, who heads Acacia's unaccompanied children programme. "They're often in a very vulnerable position.

People fighting deportation do not have the same right to representation as people going through criminal courts, although they can hire private attorneys.

But there has been some recognition that children navigating the immigration court system without a parent or guardian are especially vulnerable.

The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2008 created special protections for children who arrive in the US without a parent or a legal guardian.

Emily G. Hilliard, deputy press secretary at Health and Human Services, said in an emailed statement that the department continues to meet the legal requirements established by the Act as well as a legal settlement guiding how children in immigration custody are being treated.

Four killed in Ecuador bridge collapse

AFP, QUITO: At least four people were killed after a busy 200-meter (656-foot) suspension bridge collapsed in Ecuador, government officials said Friday.

Four trucks, a car and two motorbikes fell into the Magro river some 50 kilometers (31 miles) north of the port of Guayaquil when the bridge collapsed on Wednesday.

Footage of the aftermath showed a truck teetering over a guardrail at the edge of the bridge, meters from a river submerging the structure. "The bodies of four missing people have been found," the National Secretariat of Risk Management posted on X.

Rescuers were searching for one person still missing, it added.

The bridge connected the province of Guayas, where Guayaquil is situated, with other provinces in the north. Guayas governor Marcela Aguinaga said she had received no reports of it being faulty.

"From what we can deduce at this point, the bridge was overloaded," she added on social network X.

Russian drone attack kills three on Ukraine despite truce

AP, KYIV: Russia launched a drone attack on the Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia, killing three people and wounding 12, Ukrainian officials said Saturday, despite agreeing to a limited ceasefire. Zaporizhzhia was hit by 12 drones, police said. Regional head Ivan Fedorov said that residential buildings, cars and communal buildings were set on fire in the Friday night attack. Photos showing emergency services scouring the rubble for survivors.



Ukrainian emergency personnel work at the site of a destroyed building following an air attack, in Zaporizhzhia

Ukraine and Russia agreed in principle Wednesday to a limited ceasefire after US President Donald Trump spoke with the countries' leaders, though it remains to be seen what possible targets would be off-limits to attack.

The three sides appeared to hold starkly different views about what the deal covered. While the White House said "energy and infrastructure" would be part of the agreement, the Kremlin declared that the agreement referred more narrowly to "energy infrastructure." Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he would also like railways and ports

to be protected.

The dead in Zaporizhzhia were three members of one family. The bodies of the daughter and father were pulled out from under the rubble while doctors unsuccessfully fought for the mother's life for more than 10 hours, Fedorov wrote on the Telegram messaging app.

The Ukrainian air force reported that Russia fired a total of 179 drones and decoys in the latest wave of attacks overnight into Saturday. It said 100 were intercepted and a further 63 lost, likely having been electronically jammed.

Officials in the Kyiv and Dnipropetrovsk regions also reported fires breaking out due to the falling debris

from intercepted drones.

Russia's Ministry of Defence, meanwhile, said its air defense systems shot down 47 Ukrainian drones.

Local authorities said two people were injured and there was damage to six apartments when a Ukrainian drone hit a high-rise apartment block in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don on Friday night.

Zelenskyy told reporters after Wednesday's call with Trump that Ukraine and US negotiators will discuss technical details related to the partial ceasefire during a meeting in Saudi Arabia on Monday. Russian negotiators are also set to hold separate talks with US officials there.

UNICEF calls on Taliban to lift ban on girls' education as new school year begins in Afghanistan

PTI, ISLAMABAD: The UN children's agency on Saturday urged Afghanistan's Taliban rulers to immediately lift a lingering ban on girls' education to save the future of millions who have been deprived of their right to education since the

Taliban returned to power in 2021.

The appeal by UNICEF comes as a new school year began in Afghanistan without girls beyond sixth grade. The ban, said the agency, has deprived 400,000 more girls of

their right to education, bringing the total to 2.2 million.

Afghanistan is the only country in the world that bans female secondary and higher education, with the Taliban justifying the ban saying it doesn't

comply with their interpretation of Sharia, or Islamic law.

For over three years, the rights of girls in Afghanistan have been violated," Catherine Russell, UNICEF executive director, said in a statement. All girls must

be allowed to return to school now. If these capable, bright young girls continue to be denied an education, then the repercussions will last for generations.

A ban on the education of girls will harm the future of millions of Afghan girls, she said, adding that if the ban persists until 2030, "more than four million girls will have been deprived of their right to education beyond primary school. The consequences, she added, will be catastrophic.

Russell warned that the decline in female doctors

and midwives will leave women and girls without crucial medical care. This situation is projected to result in an estimated 1,600 additional maternal deaths and over 3,500 infant deaths. These are not just numbers, they represent lives lost and families shattered, she said.

The Afghan Taliban government earlier this year skipped a Pakistan-hosted global conference where Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai condemned the state of women's and girl's rights in Afghanistan as gender apartheid.

Pregnant woman, unborn child die at fake hospital in UP

PTI, MUZAFFARNAGAR: A pregnant woman and her unborn child died during delivery at an unregistered "hospital" in Budhana town here, leading to the arrest of an unqualified woman posing as a doctor, police said on Saturday.

The incident occurred at "Raj Health Care," a facility that was found to be operating illegally.

Lalit Kasana, in charge of the Budhana police outpost, said, "One Kusum (25) was admitted for delivery at Raj Health Care on Friday evening, but both

the mother and the child died during delivery in the early hours of Saturday." Following the deaths, authorities sealed the hospital and took Sarika Rajput, the woman posing as a doctor, into police custody for questioning.

Dr Arjun Singh, in charge of the government community health center, confirmed the findings and said that strict action would be taken against the illegal facility.

The police have sent the bodies for a postmortem examination.

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ANTI-MALL PROTESTS IN OLD GOA GATHER STEAM

Speaking to mediapersons, SOGAC coordinator Peter Viegas claimed that the Department of Tourism has planned to construct a mega shopping mall in the buffer zone by cutting a large number of trees.

"A petition signed by as many as 35,000 people was submitted to Chief Minister Pramod Sawant during the Exposition of the Sacred Relics of St Francis Xavier, urging him not to give permission to the shopping mall project in the buffer zone. But the Department of Tourism has begun its work on the shopping mall project by destroying the heritage site. To this act, we will take out a morchha near the Basilica of Bom Jesus at Old Goa at 4 pm on Sunday," Viegas said.

Jacqueline Fernandes, a SOGAC member alleged that the authorities have cut a large number of trees to facilitate construction of the alleged mall which is coming under PRASAD or Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive scheme of the Government of India.

"It is being done only to destroy our heritage site. We are holding the protest as we have to protect the land for our next generation," Fernandes said.

Caterina Peres, another member, said, "This shopping mall project is nothing but an attempt to destroy our heritage site. We will not allow this."

Last year, the SOAC had written to the Chief Minister to save UNESCO World Heritage site at Old Goa before the decennial Exposition of "Amcho Goencho Saib" and to stop all illegalities and unwanted projects.

On Saturday, the villagers found cannon balls and arsenal near the ruins of Five Wounds of Christ Church.

Later in the evening, SOGAC member Evaristo Rodrigues filed a police complaint alleging illegal construction work opposite Bom Jesus Basilica. In his complaint, he stated that excavation work is going on using earthmovers and that many trees have been felled.

He said that during excavation a large quantity of archaeological material was dug up and transported out.

Using heavy machinery, the contractor built an internal road and cut the ground below one metre. A concealed road has been built from the rear side of the site to transport the excavated archaeological material, Rodrigues claimed.

During the visit, the activists saw many cannon balls at the excavated site and opined that there was no permission for this work. "This is an archaeological and heritage protected site where such works cannot be carried out without permission from the ASI as well as permission from the Church authorities," Rodrigues said.

"I just reached in time at Old Goa. I saw workers excavating the mud, I questioned them for the excavation and for felling trees within the heritage site. Seeing a large number of people at the site and before police could reach the spot, the workers along with one earthmover fled from the site, abandoning another earthmover and a truck at the site. There was large-scale destruction under the nose of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)," said Goa Green brigade convenor Avertino Miranda.

CONG RAISES RS 300 CR SCAM STINK IN GOA

"No ED, No CBI, No I-T, No CVC will investigate these series of contracts," Kherra further said, citing some contracts in the roads and infrastructure sector.

"When the ED can register 193 cases against politicians across the country in the last 10 years, will PM Modi answer how many cases the ED or the CBI has registered in Goa for financial irregularities? Has your ED conveniently gone blind in the BJP-ruled Goa," he asked.

He asked who these people were who were being awarded government contracts, bypassing the rule book. "Will any action ever be taken against the Chief Minister, Ministers and the BJP politicians involved in this cabal to promote a distinct lobby in Goa?" he asked.

BETUL BLAST: COMPANY'S LICENCE SUSPENDED

The company has been given 21 days to submit a written explanation as to why its licences should not be permanently revoked.

District Collector Cleetus highlighted that PESO's suspension was based on the findings from her office, which confirmed the fire had been quickly contained, preventing further damage. The PESO inspection team is expected to release a detailed report in the coming days, outlining the cause of the fire and the extent of the violations.

FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE GOING TO HOSPITAL, POPE TO BE SEEN IN PUBLIC

On July 11, 2021 he recited the Angelus prayer from his balcony on the 10th floor of the hospital following colon surgery.

The current hospitalisation is the longest in Francis's papacy and has raised questions over who might lead the busy schedule of religious events leading up to Easter, the holiest period in the Christian calendar.

The Vatican's press office on Wednesday said that no definite decisions had been taken yet in that regard.

The Vatican also said Wednesday that Francis had suspended the use of an oxygen mask, adding that his clinical condition was "improving".

For most of the pope's hospital stay, including critical stages, the Vatican was publishing daily bulletins on the health of Francis, who had part of one lung removed as a young man.

Despite Francis's improvement, speculation abounds that he could step down due to his fragility, following in the footsteps of his predecessor, Benedict XVI.

On Monday, Vatican Secretary of State Pietro Parolin told reporters that he had noted an improvement in Francis' health during a visit.

But asked whether the conversation had turned to the pope's resignation, he replied: "No, no, no, absolutely not."

Catholics and others worldwide have been praying for his speedy recovery. Many have been leaving flowers, candles and notes for Francis outside the Gemelli hospital.

TAKING AIM WITH YOUNG GOANS TO KEEP ARCHERY ALIVE

"Three years ago, I spoke to the Sports Minister, who promised help, but in vain. He promised to recognise the Pilar-based Zito Archery Club. I conduct training sessions thrice a week and am associated with different schools on different days of the week. At present, I am training around 300-400 children, he said.

Asked as to when Goa would win a medal, he smiled saying, "There is talent, but there is no passion for the sport. Love for the sport pushes you forward, which is missing. In India the archers are training eight hours daily. They complain of not being able to handle the bow for more than an hour. I have spent my hard-earned money to provide them with a bow and an arrow, which cost between Rs 15,000-20,000. These are the Recurve bows."

He further said, "Some of my students have been selected to represent the State at the Nationals in Guntur. I expect medals in the sub junior level and hope my students will attain higher glory in future. I am feeling frustrated at the present state of affairs."

"I wish the government could provide me with some kind of assistance to carry on with the sport but the association is doing its bit. My students whom I have trained, don't seem to take their training seriously," he said.

Jose said, "Their bow is sleeping. I would like to see that change. If one is passionate about the sport, there will be results. I am hoping for the best because there is talent."

As he reaches the fag end of his career, Jose can only hope his dreams become a reality.

Bihar: One criminal shot dead, two injured in separate encounters with police

PTI, ARARIA/VAISHALI (BIHAR): A criminal, carrying a bounty of Rs 3 lakh on his head was killed and two others were injured in two separate encounters with police in Bihar's Araria and Vaishali districts on Saturday, officials said.

In Araria district, a criminal identified as Chunmun Jha alias Rakesh Jha, who was wanted in several murder cases was killed in an encounter with police in Narpatganj area of Araria

district at around 4 am on Saturday, an officer said.

Four policemen were also injured in the encounter in Araria, Additional Director General of Police (STF) Kundan Krishnan said.

"Jha was wanted in several cases of jewellery showroom loot in Bhojpur and Purnea district. He was also wanted in a case of robbery that took place at a branded jewellery showroom in Bhojpur districts Ara on March 10," said the ADG.

Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of STF and Araria district police reached the spot where Jha along with his associates were hiding, the officer said.

"The Bihar Police's Special Task Force (STF) has been tracking them for several days. They kept on changing their hideouts from Varanasi, Mirzapur, Dehri and Muzaffarpur to Araria. Finally, they were intercepted in the Narpatganj area around 4 am on Saturday," the ADG said.

"After noticing the police personnel, Jha tried to escape and fired at the police. The STF team retaliated. Jha was injured in the encounter and one of his accomplices was arrested," Krishnan told PTI.

Jha was immediately taken to the nearest government hospital where he died during treatment, the ADG said. Four policemen were also injured in the operation, but they were stated to be out of danger, he said.

Student-led NCP calls for ban on Hasina's Awami League

PTI, DHAKA: The student-led National Citizen Party (NCP) on Saturday called for a ban on deposed premier Sheikh Hasina's Awami League, claiming that the party "established fascism" in Bangladesh. Addressing a protest rally in Shahbagh, Member Secretary of the National Citizen Party (NCP) Akhtar Hossain called on authorities to take steps to revoke the registration of the Awami League as a political party, state-run news agency BSS reported. Asserting that people defeated the Awami League at the cost of thousands of lives and blood, Hossain said the party would not be allowed to rehabilitate in the country.

The party's 16-year regime was toppled by a massive student-led protest last year in August, following which Hasina fled to India. Not just the Awami League, but all allies and beneficiaries of fascism should be held accountable, he said.

TOMORROW

KALA ACADEMY'S 50TH A GROUP TIATR COMPETITION

Goan.com Socio & Cultural Association

Sador kortat Tiatr

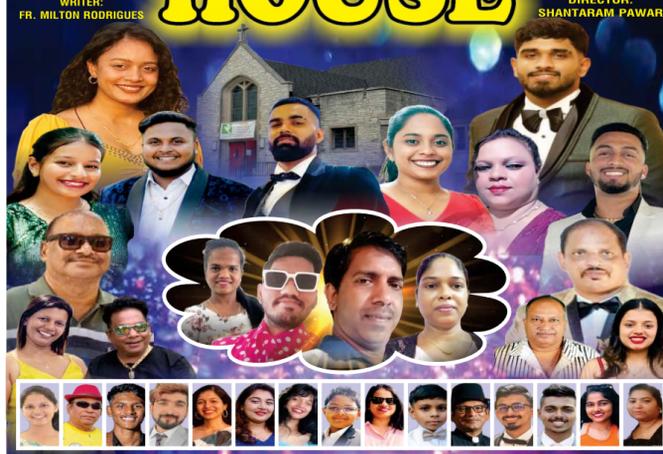


WRITER:
FR. MILTON RODRIGUES



DIRECTOR:
SHANTARAM PAWAR

THE HEALING HOUSE



Lights: Tejas Khedekar

Stage Set: Mayur Ghadi

Background Music: Kiran Barve

Live Music: Roy Menezes & Group

Make up: Tutshidas Nalik

Lyzet: Peter Onilla, Fr. Dominic Alvarez, Big Mas Mathew, Patrick Tronco & Rany De Vozas

24TH MARCH 2025 7:00 pm

MONDAY

KALA ACADEMY PANJIM

Ticket: 100/-

SUPPORTED BY: TIATR ACADEMY OF GOA