

US Border Officials Arrest Illegal Indian Immigrant On Child Predator Charges

NEW YORK: Border authorities have arrested an Indian citizen living illegally in the US wanted for child predator charges.

Gurdev Singh, 42, was arrested Wednesday by US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers at the Port of Champlain border crossing in New York.

Singh had an active felony arrest warrant from Indiana.

Singh was processed by CBP officers and turned over to the New York State Police, as a fugitive from justice.

He is currently being held by the Clinton County Sheriff's Office, awaiting extradition.

CBP officers encountered Singh after he was refused entry into Canada.

During his primary inspection, the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) indicated that Singh was wanted in Indiana for child solicitation, solicitation for sexual intercourse.

Singh was taken into custody by CBP officers and escorted to the secondary examination area for further investigation.

CBP officers verified the identity of Singh and confirmed the arrest warrant issued against him.

Additionally, on inspecting Singh's possessions, CBP officers discovered several bladed weapons, including a sword and a hatchet. Further investigation revealed that Singh was also an illegal alien, who had overstayed his visitor's visa dating back to 2016. Champlain Port Director Steve Bronson lauded the CBP officers for identifying and arresting Singh, "a known child predator". "Effectively leveraging our national law enforcement resources in combination with our officer's unique skillset and experience led to the apprehension of this wanted fugitive," Bronson said, adding that those living illegally in the US will be held accountable, "especially those who prey upon our children".

Influencers To Legislatures, Brazil's 'Reborn' Dolls Craze Spares None

SAO PAULO: Videos featuring emotional moments with hyper-realistic baby dolls have sparked both online fascination and political debate in Brazil, with lawmakers even bringing the lifelike dolls into legislatures.

Influencers have staged situations such as birth simulations and strolls in shopping malls with the hand-crafted baby figures, known as "reborn" dolls, creating videos that have gone viral.

In Rio de Janeiro, the city council has passed a bill honoring those who make the lifelike dolls, pending Mayor Eduardo Paes' signature. Meanwhile, legislators elsewhere across the country have debated fines for those seeking medical help for such dolls, following a video allegedly showing a woman taking one to a hospital.

Lawmakers have brought the dolls into legislative chambers.

On Tuesday, Joao Luiz, a state lawmaker from Amazonas, appeared with a doll at the State House to announce plans to ban reborn dolls from receiving care in the state's public health system. However, local media reported that health authorities had never recorded any such cases.

Last week, congresswoman Taliria Petrone criticized the attention her colleagues were giving to the issue. "Can we focus on what really matters? If someone wants to have a doll, let them. I have two real children and they're more than enough work," she said.

Dozens of "reborn mothers" gathered at Villa Lobos Park, in Sao Paulo, on Saturday for a 10th annual meet-up. Participants say criticism should be aimed at attention-seeking influencers, not the broader community.

The hyper-realistic baby dolls are often used for grief therapy or parenting practice.

White House Says 'Errors' In RFK Jr's 'Make America Healthy Again' Report



WASHINGTON: The White House will fix errors in a much-anticipated federal government report spearheaded by US Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr., which decried America's food supply, pesticides and prescription drugs.

Kennedy's wide-ranging "Make America Healthy Again" report, released last week, cited hundreds of studies, but a closer look by the news organization NOTUS found that some of those studies did not actually exist.

Asked about the report's problems, White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt said the report will be updated.

"I understand there was some formatting issues with the MAHA report that are being addressed and the report will be

updated," Leavitt told reporters during her briefing. But it does not negate the substance of the report, which, as you know, is one of the most transformative health reports that has ever been released by the federal government.

Kennedy has repeatedly said he would bring "radical transparency" and "gold-standard" science to the public health agencies. But the secretary refused to release details about who authored the 72-page report, which calls for increased scrutiny of the childhood vaccine schedule and describes the nation's children as over-medicated and undernourished.

Leavitt said that the White House has "complete confidence" in Kennedy.

"Minor citation and for-

matting errors have been corrected," HHS Spokesman Andrew Nixon said in an emailed statement. He described the report as a "historic and transformative assessment by the federal government to understand the chronic disease epidemic afflicting our nation's children."

NOTUS reported Thursday that seven of the more than 500 studies cited in the report did not appear to have ever been published.

An author of one study confirmed that while she conducted research on the topics of anxiety in children, she never authored the report listed. Some studies were also misinterpreted in the MAHA report. The problematic citations were on topics around children's screen time, medication use and anxiety.

Kennedy's MAHA report had already been stoking concerns among Trump loyalists, including farmers who criticized how the report characterized the chemicals sprayed on US crops.

The report is supposed to be used to develop policy recommendations that will be released later this year. The White House has requested a \$500 million boost in funding from Congress for Kennedy's MAHA initiative.

Woman Gets Life Sentence For Trafficking 6-Year-Old Daughter

A South African mother has been handed a life sentence for selling her 6-year-old daughter so a "traditional healer" could cut out and use her skin and eyeballs.

Racquel "Kelly" Smith was found guilty earlier in May of abducting and trafficking her daughter, Joshlin Smith. The mother of three, 35, her boyfriend Jacquen Appollis, and his friend Steveno van Rhyn were also found guilty and sentenced to life. The sentences came over a year after Joshlin disappeared suspiciously from her Saldanha Bay house near Cape Town in February 2024, The New York Post reported.

Each of them received a concurrent 10-year prison sentence for kidnapping.

Despite a thorough nationwide search, Joshlin or her body was yet to be found.

During the sentencing, Smith admitted to selling her daughter for 20,000 rand (\$1,100) to a traditional healer known as a "sangoma," who claimed to be interested in the girl's "eyes and skin." Judge Nathan Erasmus stated in court that Smith was deceptive and had displayed "no indication of remorse" or concern about her daughter's absence.

The mother-of-three remained emotionless as her sentence was delivered, ending an eight-week trial that had to be rescheduled to a nearby stadium so that appalled community members could watch.

Indian-American Faizan Zaki Wins National Spelling Bee In US

OXON HILL: Faizan Zaki's enthusiasm for spelling nearly got the better of him. Ultimately, his joyful approach made him the Scripps National Spelling Bee champion.

The favorite entering the bee after his runner-up finish last year - during which he never misspelled a word in a conventional spelling round, only to lose a lightning-round tiebreaker that he didn't practice for - the shaggy-haired Faizan wore the burden of expectations lightly, sauntering to the microphone in a black hoodie and spelling his words with casual glee.

Throughout Thursday night's finals, the 13-year-old from Allen, Texas, looked like a champion in waiting. Then he nearly threw it away. But even a shocking moment of overconfidence couldn't prevent him from seizing the title of best speller in the English language.

With the bee down to three spellers, Sarvadnya Kadam and Sarv Dharavane missed their words back-to-back, putting Faizan two words away from victory. The first was "commelina," but instead of asking the requisite questions - definition, language of origin - to make sure he knew it, Faizan let his showman's instincts take over.



"K-A-M," he said, then stopped himself. "OK, let me do this. Oh, shoot!"

"Just ring the bell," he told head judge Mary Brooks, who obliged.

"So now you know what happens," Brooks said, and the other two spellers returned to the stage.

Later, standing next to the trophy with confetti at his feet, Faizan said: "I'm definitely going to be having nightmares about that tonight."

Even pronouncer Jacques Bailly tried to slow Faizan down before his winning word, "clair-cissement," but Faizan didn't ask a single question before spelling it correctly, and he pumped his fists and collapsed to the stage after saying the final letter.

The bee celebrated its 100th anniversary this year, and Faizan may be the first champion who's remembered more for a word he got wrong than one he got right.

"I think he cared too much about his aura," said

Bruhat Soma, Faizan's buddy who beat him in the "spell-off" tiebreaker last year.

Faizan had a more nuanced explanation: After not preparing for the spell-off last year, he over-corrected, emphasizing speed during his study sessions. Although Bruhat was fast last year when he needed to be, he followed the familiar playbook for champion spellers: asking thorough questions, spelling slowly and methodically, showing little emotion. Those are among the hallmarks of well-coached spellers, and Faizan had three coaches: Scott Remer, Sam Evans and Sohum Sukhantankar. None of them could turn Faizan into a robot on stage.

"He's crazy. He's having a good time, and he's doing what he loves, which is spelling," Evans said. Said Zaki Anwar, Faizan's father: "He's the GOAT. I actually believe that."

"Can't Get Food For My Children": Chaos At Food Distribution Sites In Gaza

NUSEIRAT, GAZA STRIP: Chaos erupted again Thursday as tens of thousands of desperate Palestinians in the Gaza Strip tried to collect food from distribution sites run by a new US- and Israeli-backed foundation. Multiple witnesses reported a free-for-all of people grabbing aid, and they said Israeli troops opened fire to control crowds.

In central Gaza, Associated Press video showed smoke bombs arching through the air around a distribution center, and gunfire was audible as an Israeli tank moved nearby. Witnesses said it was Israeli troops who fired the projectiles to clear large crowds of Palestinians after the center ran out of supplies Thursday.

"I came to get a sack of flour ... a sardine tin or anything," said Mahmoud Ismael, a man on crutches from an earlier leg injury who said he walked for miles to get to the center, only to leave empty-handed.

"There is no food in my house, and I can't get food for my children," he said.

Turmoil has plagued the aid system launched this



week by the Gaza Humanitarian Foundation, which runs three distribution centers in the territory. Israel has slated GHF to take over food distribution in Gaza despite opposition from the United Nations and most humanitarian groups.

Over the past three days, there have been reports of gunfire at GHF centers, and Gaza health officials have said at least one person has been killed and dozens wounded. The Israeli military said it has facilitated the entry of nearly 1,000 truckloads of supplies into Gaza recently and accused the UN of failing to distribute the goods. It claimed Hamas was responsible for the crisis by stealing aid and refusing to release the remaining

hostages. The military's spokesman, Brig. Gen. Efeif Defrin, said the army will continue "to provide for the humanitarian needs of the civilian population while taking necessary steps to ensure that the aid does not reach the hands of Hamas."

With media not allowed to access the centers, the circumstances remain unclear. The distribution points are guarded by armed private contractors, and Israeli forces are positioned in the vicinity. On Tuesday, the Israeli military said it fired warning shots to control a crowd outside one center. Dr. Khaled Elser, a surgeon at Nasser Hospital in the southern city of Khan Younis, told the AP he treated two people wounded at distribution cen-

ters on Thursday -- a 17-year-old girl and a man in his 20s. Both had gunshot wounds in the chest and stomach, he said, adding that other casualties had come in from the centers but that he did not have an exact number.

In a statement Thursday, GHF said no shots had been fired at any of its distribution centers the past three days and there have been no casualties, saying reports of deaths "originated from Hamas." Separately on Thursday, Israeli strikes in Gaza killed at least 34 people, according to local health officials. Israel said it would establish 22 more Jewish settlements in the occupied West Bank. Most of the international community views settlements as illegal and an obstacle to resolving the decades-old conflict.

Turmoil at aid distribution sites

Hunger and malnutrition have mounted among Gaza's 2.3 million Palestinians since Israel barred entry of food, fuel, medicine and other supplies nearly three months ago, allowing a trickle of aid in only the past two weeks.

"India A Very Important Key Supporter Of Peacekeeping": UN Official

UNITED NATIONS: India is a very important supporter of peacekeeping, including its support for various efforts such as its lead on efforts to ensure accountability for crimes against peacekeepers, the UN's top peacekeeping official has said.

Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix's comments came during a press briefing on Thursday on the occasion of International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers.

He had visited New Delhi to attend the first-ever Conference for Women Peacekeepers organised by India on February 24-25.

"Yes, I really wanted to go to New Delhi and to that conference," Lacroix said in response to a question by PTI about the conference and his assessment of it.

"First of all, because India is a very important troop and police contributing country. It's also a very important supporter of peacekeeping, beyond the important contribution of men and women from India, but also in terms of supporting various efforts. I'm thinking in particular, but there are many other examples, of the lead from India on the accountability for crime against peacekeepers," Lacroix said.

The Delhi conference with the theme of 'Women in Peacekeeping: A Global South Perspective' was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence and the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK).

It brought together women peacekeepers from 35 Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) from the Global South to discuss



the evolving challenges in peacekeeping and the critical role women play in advancing peace and security.

Lacroix added that the issue of women in peacekeeping has two dimensions.

"It's more women in peacekeeping, which guarantees a more effective peacekeeping, and it's more empowerment of women through peacekeeping, in terms of the role of women in political processes, their empowerment, making sure that they are part and parcel of all these peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts," he said.

Noting that "there is nothing ideological in this", the UN peacekeeping chief said it is "just plain realism that women need to be fully involved and participating in all these efforts, and that's why we are continuing our effort to have more women in peacekeeping." Accompanied by Acting Military Adviser of the United Nations Major General Cheryl Pearce at the briefing, Lacroix noted that the world organisation is "doing good in terms of the numbers of women peacekeepers "although we still have more to do".

Remains Of 3,000 Years Old Mayan City Found In Guatemala

Archaeologists have unearthed the remains of a Mayan city nearly 3,000 years old in northern Guatemala, with pyramids and monuments that point to its significance as an important ceremonial site, the Central American country's culture ministry said Thursday.

The Mayan civilization arose around 2000 BC, reaching its height between 400 and 900 AD in what is present-day southern Mexico and Guatemala, as well as parts of Belize, El Salvador and Honduras.

The city named "Los Abuelos," Spanish for "The Grandparents," once stood some 21 kilometers (13 miles) from the important archaeological site of Uaxactun, in Guatemala's northern Peten department, the ministry said in a statement. It is dated to what is known as the "Middle Preclassic" period from about 800 to 500 BC, and is believed to have been "one of the most ancient and important ceremonial centers" of the Mayan civilization in the jungle area of Peten near the Mexican border, it added.

"The site presents remarkable architectural planning" with pyramids and monuments "sculpted with unique iconography from the

region," said the ministry.

The city takes its name from two human-like sculptures of an "ancestral couple" found at the site.

The figures, dated to between 500 and 300 BC, "could be linked to ancient ritual practices of ancestor worship," said the ministry. "Unique canal system"

The city, which covers an area of about 16 square kilometers (six square miles) was discovered by Guatemalan and Slovak archaeologists in previously little-explored areas of the Uaxactun park.

Nearby, they also found a pyramid standing 33 meters (108 feet) high with murals from the Preclassic period and "a unique canal system," according to the statement.

"The set of these three sites forms a previously unknown urban triangle... These findings allow us to rethink the understanding of the ceremonial and socio-political organization of pre-Hispanic Peten," said the ministry.

In April, scientists discovered a 1,000-year-old altar from Mexico's ancient Teotihuacan culture at Tikal, elsewhere in the Peten department. That find was interpreted as proof of ties between the two pre-Hispanic cultures, which lived about 1,300 km apart.

Israel Stops Training Women Combat Soldiers Over 'Health Risks'



The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) has ended a pilot programme under which female soldiers due to health and fitness concerns. The trained women were to serve in "combat mobility units" that deliver equipment and supplies to infantry forces in enemy territory and recover wounded soldiers, but IDF Chief of Staff Lt-Gen Eyal Zamir decided to pull the plug on Thursday (May 29), according to a report in the Jerusalem Post.

As per IDF, though the professional performance of females undergoing the combat course was

strong and equal to their male counterparts, their "physical and combat fitness levels fell short of the standards required for the role".

IDF added that medical data indicated potential health risks for the women if they continued the current training, particularly since its intensity was due to increase.

The new pilot programme for female infantry recruits will start next year after the cancellation of the current six-month scheme. Meanwhile, women who had enrolled in the course would be offered other

combat opportunities in the military if they wished to continue, or they could switch to office duties if they preferred a change.

Military service in the IDF is mandatory for both sexes, barring some exceptions. Women fighters have successfully worked in several special units such as Oketz, which works with dogs, the Yahalom combat engineers, and the 669 rescue unit.

Israel-Hamas war

Ever since Hamas-led terrorists rampaged through southern Israeli communities and killed around 1,200 people on October 7, 2023, Tel Aviv has launched an all-out campaign to avenge the losses. Earlier this week, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu announced the death of Hamas' Gaza chief, Muhammad Sinwar.

Muhammad Sinwar was the brother of former Hamas chief Yahya Sinwar, who was killed in a clash with the Israeli military in October 2024. Yahya Sinwar had mas-

Canada Wildfires Spread To 2nd Province, Over 17,000 Residents Evacuated

OTTAWA: The western Canadian province of Saskatchewan declared a wildfire emergency on Thursday, becoming the second to do so after neighboring Manitoba had ordered 17,000 people to quickly flee their homes in remote communities a day earlier.

"It's a very serious situation that we're faced with in Saskatchewan," the province's Premier Scott Moe told a news conference.

"We are putting in place every measure possible to prepare our communities," he continued.

Around 4,000 residents were evacuated from the province earlier this week, and more evacuations appear possible with no rain in the weather forecast.

"Looking ahead, it doesn't look good. It looks like it is going to further deteriorate," Moe added.

Manitoba declared a province-wide state of emergency late Wednesday and ordered the evacuations of several small towns and Indigenous communities as the province experienced its worst start to a wildfire season in years.

Many of the weary

evacuees arrived in the provincial capital Winnipeg on Thursday after a long and harrowing nighttime drive on jammed roads.

In two remote northern Indigenous communities in Manitoba, "Air Force planes were deployed and...in the process of evacuating people," Canada's Emergency Management Minister Eleanor Olmoszewski said Thursday.

At a city hockey arena set up as an emergency shelter, Matthew LaRosa, who fled the town of Flin Flon in northern Manitoba with his mother Lisa, told the Free Press it had simply been a "long day."

"Yesterday, when we got the evac notice, it was, 'Go to the house, grab everything, load the truck and get out of town,'" he told the daily. Winnipeg Mayor Scott Gillingham said in a news release, "We know many families are arriving with little more than the clothes on their backs." "As thousands flee dangerous wildfires, Winnipeg will do what we've always done in times of crisis: open our doors and stand together," he said.