

'Sansad Chalo' violence: Protesters' chat messages, 'secret app' under scanner



Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) supporters gather during a protest demanding the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan over alleged irregularities in the NEET examination in New Delhi on Tuesday. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, July 21 (PTI)

AS DELHI Police have begun its investigation into CJP's 'Sansad Chalo' march, which turned violent on Monday, some chat messages allegedly exchanged between protesters have come to light suggesting preparations to maintain connectivity during a possible Internet shutdown, while others point towards a willingness to sacrifice lives for the cause.

Sources said on Tuesday that investigators were verifying the authenticity of the chats and the identities of the persons involved before drawing any conclusions.

Some of the alleged messages referred to maintaining communication in the event of Internet services being disrupted, with users discussing alternative ways to stay connected and relay information during the march, a police source said.

PTI has accessed those group conversations which allegedly took place around the time of the clashes, which left 118 police per-

sonnel and 70 protesters injured and over 15 to 20 Government vehicles damaged. "After reaching the protest site you might not get network in your device. Policelast time also used network jammers and this time too can do so. However it is very important to stay connected to the group you came with," read one of the alleged chats.

Investigators said that the protesters also suggested some applications which could work using Bluetooth signals, the source said, adding their links were also shared in the same chat. Police were investigating such applications and said that they would take action accordingly. "Make sure all of your group have the same app installed and are already connected before entering the protest site," one of the messages read. The digital material was being analysed alongside CCTV footage, drone visuals, mobile phone videos and other electronic evidence collected during the probe.

The messages also contained politically charged remarks and calls for mobilisation. In one exchange, a participant claimed the following day would mark the "last day of Modi Government." A few messages reflected a willingness among some participants that they are ready to even sacrifice their lives during the protest.

"Dekho yarr jo jean dene tak ko taiyaar woh ye sunlo ke kam se kam (umbara ehisan to rahen aane wali pidiyon par, aane wale bacho par (if someone died, future generations would remember such sacrifice)," read the alleged message. "Bhai agar kisi ki maat hoti hai to usme to sarkar pe zyada pressure aayega (if someone dies, then it will create a lot of pressure on the Government)," read another message. Investigators were examining the context in which these remarks were made. They were trying to ascertain whether the chats merely reflected personal opinions exchanged

among participants or formed part of a coordinated effort connected with the events that unfolded during the protest. According to police, forensic examination of digital communications was underway, while cyber experts were assisting investigators in establishing the origin, circulation and authenticity of the messages. "Every message was being subjected to technical verification before being treated as evidence," said the source.

KEJRIWAL SEEKS RELEASE OF FIR, DETAINEE LISTS AFTER CJP PROTEST: AAM Aadmi Party national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday wrote a letter to DCP, New Delhi, seeking immediate release of the lists of FIRs and detained protesters following the Cockroach Janata Party protest. Kejriwal also visited the Parliament Street police station and reiterated the demands before Delhi Police.

"I am given to understand that a number of FIRs have been registered against the people who were protesting at Jantar Mantar yesterday demanding accountability from Prime Minister Narendra Modi about failures in the education system," Kejriwal said in his letter to DCP New Delhi Sachin Sharma. "I am also given to understand that a number of people have been held in custody after the protest without any registration of FIRs," he added.

Kejriwal reached the Jantar Mantar protest site on Tuesday and expressed solidarity with the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) protesters, claiming that they forced Prime Minister Narendra Modi to yield.

Addressing the supporters, the former Delhi chief minister also assured full legal aid to the protesters who were detained during their 'Chalo Sansad' protest on Monday.

Protesters remain at Jantar Mantar, Dipke apologises to injured supporters



Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) founder Abhijeet Dipke during the protest in New Delhi on Tuesday. (PTI)

NEW DELHI, July 21 (PTI)

THE Cockroach Janata Party protesters camped at Jantar Mantar through the night despite heavy rain, tight security and a police crackdown on them during the "Sansad Chalo" march a day ago.

On Tuesday morning, volunteers cleaned the protest site, while CJP founder Abhijeet Dipke apologised to supporters injured in the police action.

Heavy security remained in place around the protest venue as volunteers were seen cleaning the stage, the only structure left standing after police removed the tents and other temporary installations on Monday. Even the tent covering the stage was in a tattered condition.

A group of young supporters narrated their experiences to Dipke, alleging that police personnel without name tags had beaten up the protesters, including women, and called

them "terrorists". Dipke was seen folding his hands and apologising to them.

He told the gathering that contrary to the allegations circulating on social media, none of the movement's leaders had abandoned the protest site. CJP spokesperson Ashutosh Itanka and Saurav Das had gone to meet Union Minister JP Nadda in an effort to find a resolution to the standoff, he told them.

Later, in an X post, Dipke apologised to those injured in the crackdown. "I apologise to all our supporters, especially the girls who were brutally beaten up by male police officers. We could have done better. I could have done better to protect you from the inhumane actions of the Delhi Police," he wrote.

"To protect one Dharmendra Pradhan, who is responsible for the deaths of more than 20 students, the government was willing to spill the blood of many more young students," Dipke alleged.

Wangchuk shifted from Safdarjung Hospital to Medanta

NEW DELHI, July 21 (PTI)

ACTIVIST Sonam Wangchuk was discharged from the Safdarjung Hospital on Tuesday evening and shifted to Medanta Hospital in Gurugram for further treatment in compliance with a Delhi High Court order, Safdarjung Hospital authorities said.

The Delhi High Court ordered immediate shifting of Wangchuk, who has been on an indefinite fast since June 28 over alleged examination irregularities, from the Safdarjung Hospital here to Medanta Hospital in Gurugram.

"Sonam Wangchuk has been discharged from VMMC and Safdarjung Hospital today at 06:40 pm and has been handed over to the team of doctors from Medanta Hospital, Gurugram for further medical care as per the order dated 21.07.2026 of Hon'ble High Court of Delhi," a statement from the Safdarjung Hospital said.

"At the time of discharge, his vital parameters were stable. However, pancytopenia persists, and his serum potassium level was 3.4 mEq/L."

"Copies of all relevant medical records, investigation reports, and treatment documents have been handed over to the receiving medical team to ensure continuity of care," the statement said.

Iranian official meets mediators in Pak as attacks continue for 10th day

■ By Jon Gambrell and Munir Ahmed
ISLAMABAD, July 21 (AP)

AN IRANIAN official began meetings Tuesday with mediators in Pakistan as diplomats sought to salvage the collapsed interim deal between Iran and the United States, even as both countries continued to launch attacks for a 10th day of renewed fighting.

The visit by Iran's Interior Minister Eskandar Momeni comes as Pakistan has intensified diplomatic efforts in recent days to resuscitate the deal. However, it remains unclear just what new arrangement could be reached to end the fighting.

Iran attacked a tanker in the Strait of Hormuz early on Tuesday, forcing its crew to abandon the ship, while the United States conducted yet another



People stand on a bridge destroyed after a strike in Hormozgan province, southern Iran. (AP/PTI)

round of airstrikes targeting the Islamic Republic. The 10 consecutive nights of US airstrikes haven't compelled Tehran to loosen its grip on the strait, through which about a fifth of all crude oil and natural gas trad-

ed once passed in peacetime. The interim deal signed last month that was meant to end the fighting has crumbled. Shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has largely stalled. And as fighting intensifies, both sides have tar-

geted civilian infrastructure used on by millions of people.

"Iran and groups supportive of Iran may target other US interests overseas or at locations associated with the United States and Americans throughout the world," the US State Department said in a new warning to Americans.

The escalation has pushed oil prices higher in recent weeks. Benchmark Brent crude traded Tuesday at nearly USD 90 a barrel and regular gasoline in the US climbed to an average of USD 4 a gallon, keeping pressure on Americans' wallets ahead of midterm elections this fall.

President Donald Trump took to social media on Monday to warn that "Every time Iran kills an American Soldier they will pay for that killing many times over!"

Momeni met Pakistan's Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir, according to two officials who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the closed-door negotiations. Momeni later met Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Pakistan's political leadership and Munir, who serves as both the chief of army staff and defense forces, have played a key role in brokering last month's interim agreement between the United States and Iran. Islamabad has been working to persuade both sides to return to the negotiating table to resolve outstanding issues under the June memorandum of understanding.

Authorities did not immediately release details of the meeting, which came as Tehran continued its attacks on Gulf Arab allies of the US.

S-E Asia's top diplomats hold security talks in Manila as Iran war rages

■ By Jim Gomez
MANILA, July 21 (AP)

SOUTH-EAST Asia's top diplomats opened three days of talks in the Philippine capital on Tuesday with an agenda topped by their most daunting security problems and a backdrop of unfolding crises led by the resurging war in Iran and a violent skirmish in the disputed South China Sea.

The Foreign Ministers of the Association of South-East Asian Nations met behind closed doors in Manila before issuing a joint statement calling for an immediate halt to fighting in the Middle East and the full and safe reopening of the Strait of Hormuz.

"We expressed serious concern over the rapidly evolving situation in the Middle East, particularly the renewed hostilities involving the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran," the ASEAN Ministers said.

The Ministers also said they reaffirmed the obligations of states to peacefully resolve their differences and respect national sovereignty and territorial integrity.

NEET
PAPER
LEAKS

Strong action taken to ensure no one plays with future of youth: PM

■ Delhi Bureau and Agencies
NEW DELHI, July 21

PRIME Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday asserted that strong action was taken against those involved in the NEET paper leaks so that no one plays with the future of the youth, and said states should join hands with the Centre to tackle the menace in national interest.

Modi made the remarks at a meeting of the NDA MPs here, a day after thousands of students led by the Cockroach Janta Party (CJP) took part in the 'Sansad Chalo' march against irregularities in the NEET exam and to demand Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan's resignation.

Briefing journalists after the NDA Parliamentary Party meeting, which was named 'Mangal



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Union Ministers Nitin Gadkari and JP Nadda and others during the 'Mangal Milan' meeting at GMC Balayogi Auditorium in the Parliament Library Building, in New Delhi, on Tuesday. (PTI)

Milan' since it is held mostly on Tuesdays, Union Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju said the Prime Minister told the MPs that the Government acted immediately after reports of the paper leak surfaced, and 13 people were arrested and sent to jail.

"At the same time, the Prime Minister said, to ensure that students' future was not affected, the NEET re-examination was given priority, conducted successfully, and the results were declared without delay," Rijiju said after the hour-long meeting.

He said the Prime Minister also said that strict steps have been taken to prevent such paper leaks in the future. Modi told the NDA MPs that those found involved in the paper leak racket have been arrested and jailed.

(Contd on page 3)

Crude import bill up over 60% in Q1 despite refiners buying less oil

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New Delhi: India's crude oil import bill shot up more than 60% in the April-June quarter despite refiners buying less oil, highlighting the heavy cost of the disruption in West Asia and the sharp rise in global crude prices.

Provisional data released by the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell showed the country spent \$49.8 billion on crude oil imports during the first quarter of the current fiscal, up 61.2% from a year ago. Import volumes, however, fell 4.5% to 59.8 million tonnes, indicating the higher bill was driven almost entirely by costlier crude rather than higher demand. In the corresponding quarter last year, India spent \$32.9 billion to import 62.6 million tonnes of crude.

Global benchmark Brent crude and Indian crude basket averaged \$65-70 per barrel before US-Iran conflict broke out on Feb 28. At the peak of the conflict, Brent crude crossed the \$120-a-barrel mark, while the Indian basket touched \$150 amid a spike in West

Asian crude prices, spot purchases by Indian refiners at steep premiums, and higher freight and insurance costs. Analysts estimate that every \$1 increase in crude oil prices raises India's annual import bill by about \$1.5-2 billion.

Adding to the pressure is the weakening rupee, which has made dollar-denominated crude imports more expensive. The latest figures come amid renewed uncertainty in West Asia after fresh hostilities reversed the brief easing that followed the US-Iran understanding in June.

The impact of elevated prices was visible across the energy basket. LNG imports declined 8.6% in volume during April-June, but the import bill still rose nearly 6% to \$3.6 billion as spot gas prices remained high.

The data showed petroleum product exports fell by a fourth in volume terms to 11.3 million tonnes as refiners prioritised domestic fuel supplies amid global uncertainty. Export earnings, however, rose 40% because of higher international fuel prices.

Arunachal's electorate shrinks by 1/5th in SIR draft rolls

New Delhi: Arunachal Pradesh's electorate has shrunk by almost one-fifth in the draft electoral roll published Tuesday as part of the SIR exercise.

Only 80.9% electors in the border state submitted their enumeration forms, while the remaining 19.1% were marked as permanently shifted, absent, dead or enrolled at more than one place.

The draft roll of the state — which borders China — published Tuesday has a total 7.18 lakh electors, as against 8.9 lakh electors on June 2, 2026, when SIR Phase 3 was announced. As many as 78,980 electors (8.9%) were marked as permanently shifted, 54,678 (6.2%) as absent or untraceable, 25,573 as dead (2.9%) and 5,281 (0.6%) as others (not willing to be enrolled for some reason or other).

As per the Arunachal chief electoral officer, genuine electors can still be added back to the rolls during the claims and objection period from July 21 to Aug 20.

These claims/objections will be disposed of by Sept 18 and the final rolls of the state published on Sept 22. **TNN**

50% quota for ex-Agniveers in CAPF, Assam Rifles posts: MHA

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: Former Agniveers will get 50% reservation in posts of constable (general duty) and rifleman in the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and Assam Rifles, the home ministry told Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

In reply to a written question, junior home minister Nityanand Rai said govt has created a new category of 'ex-Agniveer' in the aforementioned posts with the provision of 50% vacancies, a three-year relaxation in the prescribed upper age limit and an age relaxation of five years beyond the prescribed age limit for candidates from the first batch of ex-Agniveers.

Apart from this, he added, ex-Agniveers applying to CAPF constable (general duty) and rifleman posts will be exempted from the physical standards test



CRPF introduced a similar amendment in recruitment rules last year

physical efficiency test and written examination. "A dedicated ex-Agniveer wing under the ministry of home affairs has been established for the purpose of coordinating further progression of ex-Agniveers," said Rai.

The first batch of Agniveers have not yet completed their four-year tenure. A notification issued by home ministry in Dec 2025 had amended the Border Security Force, General Duty Cadre (Non-Gazetted) Recruit-

ment Rules, 2015, to increase the quota for ex-Agniveers in constable (general duty) posts to 50% from 10%.

"By direct recruitment (including 50%), vacancies shall be reserved for ex-Agniveers in every recruitment year, 10% for ex-servicemen and up to 3% for combatised constable (tradesmen) in absorption of annual vacancy," the notification had stated. The CRPF introduced a similar amendment in recruitment rules in May last year

SC panel seeks inputs on Aravali protection, Aug 31 date for report

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Gurgaon: A Supreme Court-appointed panel has invited public suggestions, representations and documentary evidence on protection of Aravali hills and ranges, with its report due before the court by Aug 31.

Petitioners, environmentalists and former forest officials have cautioned that the exercise should strengthen legal protection for the mountain range rather than introduce a new definition that could create ambiguity and weaken conservation. The high-powered committee, constituted through SC's May 25 order, has been asked to submit its report by Aug 31.

The Union environment ministry said stakeholders from Haryana, Rajasthan, Delhi, Gujarat and other states linked to the Aravali ecosystem may sub-



Delhi has already identified the Aravalis based on geomorphology

mit suggestions and representations within 21 days through email or a dedicated portal. The consultation is important as the committee's recommendations could influence future judicial directions on the identification, protection and regulation of the Aravalis. The issue became contentious after an earlier central committee suggested that, for

mining regulation, only hills rising more than 100 metres above the surrounding terrain should be treated as part of the Aravalis. Conservationists said such a criterion could exclude large ecologically important areas, especially in Haryana and Delhi.

"Neither man nor the legislature can define nature. The Aravalis are already a defined geological formation, just like the Himalayas," said SS Oberoi, one of the petitioners. Former conservator of forests (south Haryana) RP Balwan, who is also a petitioner, said the Aravalis is defined by its rock formations and stratigraphic sequence. "The presence or absence of hills has nothing to do with whether an area is part of the Aravali," he said.

Former conservator of forests MD Sinha said the committee must focus on conservation. "There is no need to redefine something that has already been identified. If this is done, it could set a precedent for other natural formations, such as Western Ghats and Vindhya, to be redefined as well. Delhi has already identified the Aravalis based on geomorphology, and there should be one uniform method of identification for all states through which the Aravalis pass," he said.

NOTICE INVITING e-Tender

Notice Inviting e-Tender No.: 04/EE(R&B)/NKDA of 2026-27
(SI No. 01, 02 & 03)

The Executive Engineer - (R&B), New Town Kolkata Development Authority invites online Notice Inviting e-Tender. 1. Repairing of Bituminous roads by patching potholes & depressions on different roads at AA I under NKDA for upcoming Saradia Festival. 2. Repairing and mending Pot holes on different roads at AA-II in New Town under NKDA. 3. Repairing and mending Pot holes on different roads at AA-III in New Town under NKDA. Last date of submission 05.08.2026 at 01.00 PM For details please visit websites : <http://wbtenders.gov.in> & www.nkdamar.org

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
(Road & Building)

US unveils new 50% tariffs on Canada

Ottawa: Canadian PM Mark Carney said he and US President Trump agreed to intensify trade negotiations after speaking on Tuesday, but warned he would consider all options if the tariffs Trump threatened on Monday go ahead.

Trump on Monday unveiled plans for 50% tariffs on a wide range of imports from Canada in retaliation to what he described as discriminatory treatment of American-made cars, alcohol and dairy goods. Relations between Canada and its largest trading partner have been tested by Trump's repeated jibes to make Canada the 51st state, disagreements over a new bridge and sharp comments about



Trump with PM Mark Carney

wildfire smoke.

"I've spoken with the president, we agree to intensify discussions. We'll begin that right away, and this is part of the negotiation. So the first objective is to get a comprehensive agreement," Carney told reporters. Trump, when asked whether Canada tariffs were in response to the wildfires, said: "No,

that's separate. We're looking at that separately."

Carney said the Canadian provinces should only lift their bans on US alcohol as part of a broader US trade deal. Nearly every Canadian province except for Alberta and Saskatchewan has banned or severely restricted the sale of American beer, wine and spirits in response to earlier US tariffs.

Leaders of Canada's provinces blasted the new tariffs. Ontario premier Doug Ford, leader of Canada's most populous province, said Canada should respond "dollar for dollar" to the new tariffs, while Alberta premier Danielle Smith said the new tariffs would hurt both Canadian and

American workers.

Saskatchewan premier Scott Moe called for gov't to intensify talks with the US, saying the relationship with Washington "is more important than any president or prime minister". British Columbia premier David Eby delivered the starkest message: "There is not a chance in hell that US alcohol is going back on the shelves in British Columbia."

The new tariffs would also apply to dairy products, swimming pools, furniture, fishing rods, seeds, clothing and wigs, among other items. The US trade representative's office said that the tariffs would apply to nearly \$20 billion of imports from Canada. REUTERS

US, Iran hostilities go on for 10th straight day

Trump Says US Has No Interest In Meeting Iranians Until They're Ready With Anything Meaningful

Tankers with Saudi crude turn back after Houthi threats

Islamabad: A 10th straight day of attacks between the US and Iran across West Asia Tuesday overshadowed diplomatic efforts in Pakistan to salvage an interim ceasefire deal that collapsed earlier this month as the two countries battled for control of a waterway vital to world energy supplies.

Iranian interior minister Eskandar Momeni visited Pakistan, a key mediator in the conflict that is seeking to rejuvenate diplomacy, but it was unclear what new arrangement might be reached to end the war. Speaking from the Oval Office, US President Donald Trump gave a dim view on possible talks, saying the US had "no interest in meeting." "I will tell you, they want to desperately meet. And until they're ready to meet in a meaningful way, we have no interest in meeting," Trump told reporters at the Oval Office. He said that in dialogue behind the scenes, Iranian officials have said "they want to meet desperately to try and end it, because they're getting decimated".

Iran and the US have escalat-



A screenshot shows US forces launching what the military said were precision strikes targeting Iranian military capabilities for the tenth consecutive night

ated attacks recently as their interim deal to end the war falls apart. Following the deaths of at least three US soldiers in recent days, the US launched a new round of attacks against Iran on Monday. The deaths bring to 17 the number of fatalities among US service members. Nearly 100 US service members have been wounded since war resumed on July 7, the Pentagon said Monday.

Shipping through the Strait of Hormuz has largely stalled,

and as the fight for control over the waterway intensifies, both sides have targeted civilian infrastructure in the region relied on by millions of people. A barrage of US strikes hasn't compelled Tehran to loosen its grip on the strait. The US continued its airstrikes on the Islamic Republic early Tuesday, and Iran attacked a tanker in the strait, forcing the crew to abandon the ship. Iran also kept up attacks against US allies in the region. Sirens in Bah-

rain and Kuwait warned residents on Tuesday afternoon of incoming projectiles. Iran said it had struck infrastructure belonging to Amazon in Bahrain, where the US tech company operates a regional data centre. Amazon did not immediately comment and Reuters could not verify the report.

In the Red Sea, Iran-backed Houthi rebels have opened a new front against Saudi Arabia by declaring a naval blockade of the kingdom, threatening the flow of global oil supplies and trade. With the Strait of Hormuz blocked up, Saudi Arabia has been relying on a pipeline to the Red Sea to get millions of barrels of oil out to market. When asked about the Houthi blockade, Trump said he would "take care of" the Houthi rebels if the group follows through on its threatened blockade of Saudi ports.

A news agency in Yemen that is run by the Houthis, SABA, said Tuesday that six ships in the Red Sea were forced to reroute after they received warnings from the rebel group. AP could not immedi-

tely confirm the claim. Three Houthi officials said the group warned international shipping companies on Monday to avoid transiting in the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, the gateway to the Red Sea at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity, saying they weren't authorised to speak to journalists. AP

US alert for citizens: The US state department on Monday issued an alert urging American citizens around the world to "exercise increased caution" over the war with Iran. The alert said that "due to heightened tensions in the Middle East, the security environment remains complex with the potential for unforeseen escalation. Americans outside the Middle East should reconsider travel to and through the region." It also warned of heightened possibility of attacks targeting US diplomatic facilities "or at locations associated with the United States and Americans throughout the world." AFP

Dubai: Two oil tankers carrying Saudi crude to Asia reversed course in the Red Sea on Tuesday after threats from Yemen's Iran-aligned Houthis, as a widening West Asia conflict disrupted shipping through two of the world's most critical energy chokepoints.

The Houthis, who control northern and western Yemen including the coast at the mouth of the Red Sea, announced a naval blockade on Saudi Arabia on Monday, opening a potential new front in the war. In a letter to shippers, they threatened to attack any ships that load or discharge Saudi oil.

The Houthi announcement already appeared to be having an impact. Two tankers which had just loaded Saudi crude bound for China and India at Saudi Arabia's Red Sea port of Yanbu made U-turns on Tuesday, heading towards the Suez Canal rather than out through the Bab el-Mandeb into the Indian Ocean. REUTERS

1 : Trump admin can't