

Death toll in Spain and Morocco border crisis in Ceuta reaches 67

Tens of thousands migrants cross back

CEUTA (Spain), Aug 1 (AP)

THE death toll in Spain's Ceuta border crisis with Morocco has climbed to 67, the Spanish Government said on Saturday. They included some who drowned and some who were killed in a stampede to cross a breakwater barrier.

Spain announced it was installing a 500-metre-long containment barrier along the breakwater fence into the sea after some 60,000 migrants breached the tiny Spanish territory's frontier between Thursday and Friday. A handful of exhausted

migrants who swam to Ceuta's urban Tarajal beach Saturday morning were met by soldiers who escorted them back across the border. Spain's Interior Ministry says the majority of those who entered the Spanish territory in North Africa have already returned to Morocco.

After days of chaos and streets packed with people who had hoped for a better life in Spain, residents of Ceuta woke up Saturday to an uneasy calm.

Even so, security for residents of the autonomous city of 84,000 remained bruised.

"Life in this city has been dis-

rupted as a result of the border incident," said Ceuta's President Juan Jesus Vivas. "The return of people has begun satisfactorily, but the process must be completed," he said. "The city has not yet returned to normal."

Some determined migrants, however, remained in Ceuta. Among them was Mohamed Hatri, a 23-year-old Moroccan.

"They've closed everything down so that we can't buy anything to eat, to force us to return to our country," he said.

"But even if they close it down we're round to stay here, whether we're hungry or not.

Unrest in PoK escalates

BRUTAL CRACKDOWN BY PAK FORCES kill 50, hundreds injured in 4 days

ISLAMABAD, Aug 1 (IANS)

AS UNREST in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) continues to escalate, more than 50 people have been killed and hundreds injured over the past four days in a brutal crackdown by Pakistani forces in the occupied territory.

Taking to social media platform X on Saturday, Joint Awami Action Committee (JAAC) member Sardar Umar Nazir Kashmiri said, "In the past 4 days, the forces have killed more than 50 of our people through brutal terrorism, and hundreds are injured..."

In a separate post, the JAAC said that late-night protests continued across the Muzaffarabad region in PoK, with people remaining on the streets, while demanding the protection of their fundamental rights and the implementation of commitments made by the local authorities.

Meanwhile, US-based rights body Human Rights Foundation (HRF) on Saturday strongly condemned the reported use of force by Pakistani forces against unarmed peaceful protesters in PoK, which left over 50 dead and hundreds injured in the region.

The organisation called on Pakistani authorities to end the violent crackdown, restore mobile communications, and ensure accountability for all

unlawful use of force.

Citing a local civil society group, the HRF said Pakistani security forces opened fire on thousands of peaceful protesters during demonstrations in PoK.

"Protest organisers claimed that Pakistani officials removed bodies from hospitals and detained activists in an apparent attempt to conceal evidence," it stated.

The rights body further said that "the crackdown has been accompanied by an internet blackout and severe restrictions on media access, making independent reporting nearly impossible."

Expressing solidarity with the people of PoK and those peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, the HRF said Pakistani authorities must promptly investigate the reported killings, ensure accountability, and uphold due process for all those detained in the occupied territory.

Furthermore, a delegation of United Kashmir People's National Party (UKPNP) led by its Chairman Sardar Shaukat Ali Kashmiri, held a series of meetings at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to brief the UN officials about the brutalities committed by Pakistani forces in PoK.

WILL HAMAS DISARM IN GAZA?

Hamas' armed resistance lies at the heart of its legitimacy among Palestinians. And for Palestinians, this resistance is linked inextricably with the advancement of efforts to attainment statehood.

BY MARTIN KEAR

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump has announced that Hamas and other militant groups in Gaza have agreed to disarm. He's calling it a "critical step" toward lasting peace and security in the strip. Trump said Hamas' disarmament would allow for a Palestinian committee to take over governing in Gaza and Israel's military withdrawal from the enclave, as mandated under his 20-point peace plan, to which Hamas and Israel agreed last October.

Hamas officials say they have agreed to the process, though a member of the negotiating team cautioned that its disarmament was dependent on Israel's full withdrawal from Gaza.

So, is this a major step forward, or are there still too many questions left unresolved?

HAMAS' LEGITIMACY: If Hamas does agree to a complete disarmament, this would be an enormous concession by the movement in its nearly 40-year resistance to Israel's occupation of the West Bank, Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem.

Hamas was launched in 1987 with the dual goals of resisting Israel's occupation and challenging the Fatah party's domination of Palestinian politics.

In its 2017 charter, Hamas said it "rejects any attempt to undermine the resistance and its arms". It added that "armed resistance is regarded as the strategic choice for protecting the principles and the rights of the Palestinian people".

Additionally, Hamas' armed resistance lies at the heart of its legitimacy among Palestinians. And for Palestinians, this resistance is linked inextricably with the advancement of efforts to attainment statehood.

This means that while Palestinians may not necessarily support Hamas politically or agree with its Islamist agenda, they do respect the movement. Many view its continued armed resistance to Israel's occupation

as either advancing efforts to achieve statehood or inhibiting Israel's efforts to make its occupation permanent.

In the most recent polling of Palestinians by the People's Company for Polls and Survey Research (PCPSR) in October 2025, 60% of respondents (66% in the West Bank and 51% in Gaza) were satisfied with Hamas'

the dismantling of its military infrastructure in Gaza. This would include its tunnel network, heavy weapons, production facilities and weapon depots.

Given the wholesale destruction of the Gaza Strip, it is unclear how much of this infrastructure still exists.

It's also unclear how many weapons its military wing actu-

ing. Also, Hamas does not just exist in the Gaza Strip, it has a presence in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, too. It's unclear whether the disarmament would extend to those elements of the group. Given the continued violence being perpetrated by radical Jewish settlers against Palestinians in the West Bank and East Jerusalem, it is not inconceivable that members of Hamas or other Palestinian armed movements may seek to resist this violence with their own. Agreeing to disarm and give up its administrative responsibilities in Gaza could very well be a strategic move on the part of Hamas. It could enable the group to recover organisationally from the severe battering it took from Israel, while still retaining its resistance agenda among the broader Palestinian population.

WHAT WILL ISRAEL DO?: Israel's response to the agreement is the other major challenge. Initial reports suggest the government is objecting to Trump's plan.

According to an Israeli official quoted by the "Times of Israel", there will be no Israeli withdrawal from the Yellow Line in the Gaza Strip before Hamas is disarmed and the Strip is fully demilitarised. Just two weeks ago, Israel's far-right Defence and Finance Ministers also proposed the creation of three "nahal" outposts in northern Gaza.

These types of outposts combine a military presence with agricultural and community activities. Historically, they have been the precursor for permanent Israeli settlements.

This opposition from Israel is where the agreement could likely break down, unless Trump can put suitable pressure on Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to allow the peace process to continue. This pressure was already starting to mount with a US official saying Trump would be "very disappointed" if Israel stood in the way.

(The Conversation)



The war between Israel and Hamas have left the main city of the Gaza Strip all but destroyed. (AP)

performance and 69% (87% in the West Bank and 55% in Gaza) were opposed to the disarmament of Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

Given this, it is hard to believe Hamas will risk this level of support among Palestinians.

DETAILS ARE VAGUE: According to initial media reports, Hamas' disarmament would consist not only of surrendering its weapons, but also

ally has. Recent reports suggest it may have tens of thousands of automatic rifles and heavy weapons like anti-tank rockets, but it could be far fewer now.

Other details also remain unclear: who would undertake the task of disarming Hamas and how it would be confirmed? AUS official told the BBC a third-party committee would be responsible for this, without elaborat-

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Vice Admiral AN Pramod assumes charge as Dy Chief of Naval Staff

NEW DELHI, Aug 1 (ANI)

VICE Admiral AN Pramod assumed charge as the Deputy Chief of Naval Staff on Saturday.

An alumnus of the 38th Integrated Cadet Course, Naval Academy, Goa, Vice Admiral AN Pramod was commissioned into the Indian Navy on July 1, 1990.

According to the release, the Flag Officer is a CAT 'A' Sea King Air Operations Officer and a Communication and Electronic Warfare Specialist. He is an alumnus of the Defence Services Staff College, Wellington, and the Naval Higher Command Course at the Naval War College, Goa.

In a distinguished career spanning over 36 years, the Flag Officer



has held a wide range of command, operational, instructional, and staff appointments, both afloat and ashore. His important

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Air Marshal Tejpal takes charge as new dy chief of IAF

NEW DELHI, Aug 1 (PTI)

AIR Marshal Tejpal Singh, a fighter pilot with over 3,500 hours of flying experience, on Saturday took charge as the new Deputy Chief of the Air Staff, officials said.



The air officer succeeds Air Marshal Awadhesh Kumar Bharti, who superannu-

ated on Friday after 39 years of distinguished service to the nation.

Air Marshal Singh laid a wreath at the National War Memorial and paid homage to soldiers who laid down their lives in service of the nation. Air Marshal Singh who was commissioned on June 16, 1990, as a fighter pilot has over 3,500 hours of flying experience, the Defence Ministry said in a statement.

He is a Cat 'A' Qualified Flying Instructor and an Experimental Test Pilot. The air marshal has held key operational, command and staff appointments in the Indian Air Force.

Anti-paper leak law gets President's assent

NEW DELHI, Aug 1 (PTI)

A BILL that proposes to set up fast-track courts in every state for speedy trials of accused and enhance punishment in public examination question paper leak cases has received the assent of the President.

In a gazette notification issued on Friday, the Law Ministry said President Droupadi Murmu has given assent to the Public Examinations (Prevention of Unfair Means) Amendment Bill, 2026 after it was cleared by both Houses of Parliament earlier this week. Now, investigations into paper leak cases are to be completed within two months.

According to the legislation, individuals involved in paper leaks or unfair means in exams will get jail terms for a minimum of 5 years and a maximum of 10 years, and a fine of up to Rs 50 lakh.

India-China border trade at Nathula resumes after 6 years

GANGTOK, Aug 1 (PTI)

THE border trade between India and China through the Nathula Pass resumed on Saturday after six years, marking the revival of one of the oldest trading corridors along the ancient Silk Route, officials said. The trade had remained suspended since 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent strain in India-China border relations.

A formal reopening ceremony was held at Nathula in East Sikkim, where officials from the two neighbouring nations participated, signalling the return of seasonal trade through the strategically significant mountain pass at over 14,000 feet.

Announcing the resumption, Sikkim's Commerce and Industries Department Secretary Karma D Youtso said the seasonal trade will be conducted from Monday to Thursday until November under the existing bilateral trade protocol.

"Thirty-eight registered traders have been issued trade passes this year. Around 36 notified items, including handicrafts, handloom products, traditional religious articles, ready-made garments and other approved goods, will be traded through the route," Youtso said.

She added that elaborate security arrangements have been put in place, with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) enforcing the Standard Operating Procedure. Additional ITBP personnel have been deployed at Nathula, including a women's platoon for the first time.

The reopening is expected to inject fresh momentum into the local economy by generating business for registered traders, transport operators and other stakeholders dependent on border trade.

Nathula was reopened for border trade in 2006 after remaining shut for more than four decades following the 1962 India-China war. The pass serves as one of the designated border trade points between the two countries and traditionally operates from May to November each year.

BOXERS LEAD INDIA'S MEDAL SURGE

Preeti Pawar, Jaismine Lamboria, Sakshi Chaudhary, Arundhati Choudhary, Priya Ghanghas, Sachin Siwach, Ankush Phangal win gold medals. Pugilists Jadumani Singh, Lovlina Borghain, Narender Berwal secure silver medals. Para shot putter Soman Rana wins gold in men's F57 event. Javelin thrower Neeraj Singh wins silver. Triple jumper Praveen Chitravel bags silver.

GLASGOW, Aug 1 (PTI)

IT RAINED medals for India on the penultimate day of Glasgow Commonwealth Games with the boxers leading the chart clinching seven gold and three silver medals in different weight categories on Saturday.

Boxers Preeti Pawar, Jaismine Lamboria, Sakshi Chaudhary, Arundhati Choudhary, Priya Ghanghas, Sachin Siwach, Ankush Phangal all won gold medals.

Jadumani Singh, Lovlina Borghain and Narender Berwal clinched silver medals in their weight categories. Apart from boxers, Indian para shot putter Soman Rana claimed a gold medal in men's F57 event. Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra won silver with a sea-

son best javelin throw of 85.83m late on Friday night. Yashvir Singh (85.41m) fetched a surprise bronze with his last throw as two Indians finished on the podium.

The day was dominated by boxers with Preeti Pawar win-

ning the women's 54kg with a dominant 5-0 victory over Canada's Scarlett Delgado to start India's golden run.

Reigning world champion Jaismine Lamboria then clinched another yellow metal for India with the same score-

line against the defending champion Northern Ireland's Michaela Walsh.

Jaismine took the first round by a split verdict after a close contest with both boxers challenging each other.

She then won the second round by a unanimous verdict, having landed some hard blows on her opponents.

Sakshi then beat Ruby White of England in women's 51kg final 5-0 to win India's third boxing gold of the day.

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Preeti Pawar



Jaismine Lamboria



Soman Rana



Sakshi Chaudhary



Priya Ghanghas



Arundhati Choudhary



Sachin Siwach



Ankush Phangal