

**FORMER IG KUNWAR VIJAY PRATAP SINGH A MAN ON MISSION 2022 FOR PROGRESSIVE & VIBRANT PUNJAB**



**YUDHVIR JASWAL**  
Group Editor - Y MEDIA

**Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE**

NAVJOT SIDHU'S DECISION MAKES NO DIFFERENCE TO AAP

AAP WILL WAIVE FARMERS' LOANS

AAP WILL BRING REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE IN PUNJAB

PUNJAB POLICE HAS TO BE REVAMPED & REFORMED

CENTRE MUST TAKE BACK 3 FARM LAWS, DRAFT NEW LAWS WITH STAKEHOLDERS' INCLUSION



**KUNWAR VIJAY PRATAP SINGH**  
AAM AADMI PARTY

**WATCH DETAILED INTERVIEW ON CHANNEL Y**

**NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU BECOMES PRESIDENT OF PUNJAB PRADESH CONGRESS COMMITTEE**

**CHANDIGARH, (IANS)** After days of hectic lobbying and parleys within the Congress in Punjab over "defiant" former Cabinet minister Navjot Singh Sidhu, who was in direct loggerheads with Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, Sidhu was on Saturday night appointed the state unit party President, replacing Sunil Jakhar, a prominent Hindu face who was at the helm for over four years.

His appointment comes in the wake of serious objections raised by Amarinder Singh, who wrote to interim Congress President Sonia Gandhi against the elevation of Sidhu, a Jat Sikh, to the post, saying it would upset senior leaders representing the Hindu community. Gandhi appointed Sidhu as the party's new Punjab unit President along with four working Presidents. They are Sangat Singh Gilzian, Sukhvinder Singh Danny, Pawan Goel, and Kuljit Singh Nagra. A day before his appointment, Sidhu did hectic "lobbying" by reaching out to as many of his party colleagues while the "sulking" Chief Minister met Congress state in-charge Harish Rawat here on Saturday and categorically told him that he won't meet Sidhu until he apologises for his "derogatory" tweets.

Reiterating that he would accept any decision taken by Sonia Gandhi, Amarinder Singh termed the meeting with Rawat as fruitful, adding the latter would take up the issues raised by him with Gandhi. It was learnt that Rawat came to Chandigarh for a meeting between Amarinder Singh and his bete noire Sidhu, ahead of the official announcement of the latter's appointment as the state unit chief by Sonia Gandhi. However, an adamant Amarinder Singh, who is reportedly upset with Sidhu for targeting his government over the power crisis and the sacrilege issue, categorically had told Rawat that there would



be no rapprochement until Sidhu apologises in public for his "derogatory tweets and interviews". Earlier, Amarinder Singh had even written to Sonia Gandhi, warning that the party would split if Sidhu was given charge of the state Congress. In his letter, the Chief Minister had said that he will not contest under Sidhu if he is elevated to the top organisational post in the state. The letter was delivered to Sonia Gandhi at her residence in Delhi before she met cricketer-turned-politician on July 16. Just hours ahead of the revamp in the state unit, 10 MLAs issued a joint statement in support of the Chief Minister and said Sidhu was a celebrity and undoubtedly an asset to the party, but criticism of his own party in public has created the rift. Cricketer-turned-politician Sidhu's political innings with the Congress is just a new and his rivals see him a turncoat politician.

**| CONTD. ON PAGE 4**

**RAJ KUNDRA ARRESTED FOR ALLEGEDLY 'MAKING', 'PUBLISHING' PORN CONTENT; REMANDED TO POLICE CUSTODY TILL JULY 23**



**SHILPA SHETTY MUM AFTER RAJ'S ARREST**



**MODEL SAGARIKA SHONA SUMAN ACCUSES RAJ KUNDRA OF DEMANDING NUDE AUDITION**



**SHERLYN URGES MEDIA TO SEEK EXCERPTS OF HER STATEMENT FROM CYBER CELL**



**THIS IS WHY I CALL MOVIE INDUSTRY A GUTTER: KANGANA**

**DETAILS ON PAGE 13 & 15**

**NOT A SINGLE SHRED OF EVIDENCE TO LINK GOVT, PARTY TO PEGASUS REPORT: BJP**

**CONGRESS DEMANDS PROBE & SACKING OF HOME MINISTER AMIT SHAH OVER SNOOPING**

**NEW DELHI, (IANS)** Calling the reports of alleged snooping on prominent citizens using Israeli Pegasus spyware as "baseless", the ruling BJP on Monday said there is not a single shred of evidence so far that links either the central government or the party to this controversy. Addressing a press conference, former Information Technology minister and senior BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad said, "BJP strongly refutes, condemns the baseless and bereft of political propriety comments levelled by Congress against the BJP."



**| CONTD. ON PAGE 9**

**'NATIONAL HOME SALES DECLINED BY 8.4% ON A MONTH-OVER-MONTH BASIS IN JUNE': CANADIAN REAL ESTATE ASSOCIATION**



Statistics released today by the Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) show national home sales were down between May and June 2021.

**| CONTD. ON PAGE 7**

**AFGHAN AMBASSADOR TO PAK CALLED BACK FOLLOWING DAUGHTER'S ABDUCTION**

**NEW DELHI, (IANS)** Following the abduction of the Afghan Ambassador's daughter in Pakistan, the Afghan leadership has called back the envoy and senior diplomats from Pakistan until all security threats are addressed, including the arrest and trial of the perpetrators of abduction. An Afghan delegation will visit Pakistan soon to assess and follow up on the case and all related issues and subsequent actions will follow based on the findings. On Saturday, the Afghanistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the Ambassador of Pakistan to Kabul, Mansoor Ahmad Khan, and lodged a strong protest over the abduction of the daughter of Afghanistan's Ambassador to Islamabad.

**| CONTD. ON PAGE 4**

**INDIANS TO BENEFIT FROM CANADA'S FAMILY REUNIFICATION PROGRAMME**



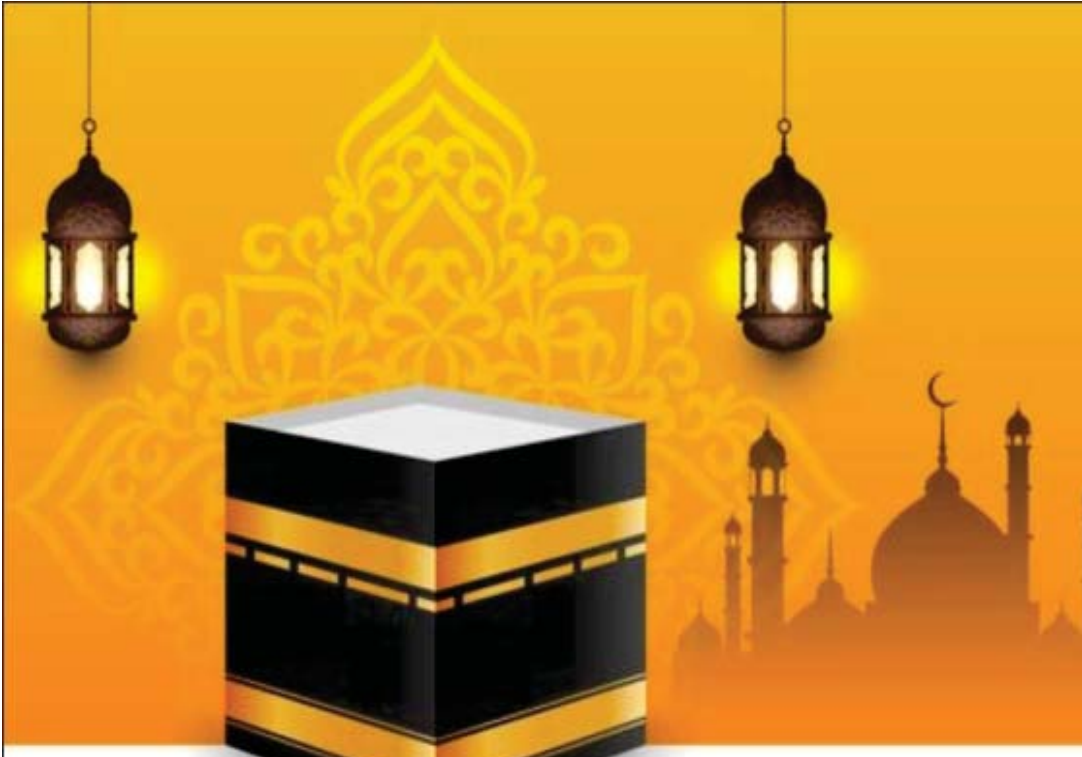
**TORONTO, (IANS)** A record number of 40,000 immigrant families will be allowed to sponsor their parents and grandparents to bring them to Canada in 2021. This means 30,000 additional applications will be accepted as against the annual intake of 10,000 under the Parents and Grandparents Programme (PGP), which is aimed at family reunification. Since Indo-Canadians are one of the fastest-growing communities in Canada, they will be the major beneficiaries of the programme.

**| CONTD. ON PAGE 10**

**Y MEDIA COVID & VACCINE REPORT**

- **Starting August 9, Canada will allow entry to fully vaccinated American citizens & Permanent Residents for non-essential travel.**
- **On September 7, Canada's borders to reopen to any fully vaccinated travellers.**
- **Canada suspends flights from India until august 21, 2021. Ontario enters Step 3 of 'Roadmap to Reopen.'**
- **Over 82% Ontarians received one dose of Covid-19 vaccine, more than 62% fully vaccinated.**
- **Canada's vaccination rate surpasses U.S. as more than 56% eligible Canadians received both doses of Covid-19 vaccine.**
- **Canada to receive 7.1 million Covid-19 vaccine doses this week- 3.1M Pfizer doses, 4M Moderna doses.**





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# MOSQUE IN CAMBRIDGE, ONTARIO SEVERELY VANDALIZED IN ACT OF HATE

National Canadian Muslim Community shocked to learn of extensive damages to its mosque in Cambridge

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at Canada was deeply distraught to learn that the Baitul Kareem Mosque in Cambridge was severely vandalized in an act of hate, with damages exceeding tens of thousands of dollars including stolen property. Police are investigating the attack and have collected evidence at the scene.

"We are deeply troubled to learn of this attack on the Baitul Kareem Mosque," said National President of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at Canada, Mr. Lal Khan Malik. "Our mosques have always served as symbols of peace in the community, and it is hurtful for us to see our mosque attacked and vandalized in this fashion."

In addition to the damaged and stolen property, the perpetrators also targeted Islamic literature and destroyed dozens of boxes filled with books and flyers.

The Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at Canada has heightened security measures at its mosques and prayer centers across the country.

PM Justin Trudeau said, "I'm disheartened and disgusted by the rising number of violent attacks and hateful incidents in Toronto, Cambridge, Kelowna, and other cities. This behaviour is completely unacceptable, and we must always stand united against it - because every Canadian deserves to feel safe."



# BANK OF CANADA MAINTAINS POLICY RATE AT 0.25%, CUTS GROWTH FORECAST FOR 2021

The Bank of Canada today held its target for the overnight rate at the effective lower bound of ¼ percent, with the Bank Rate at ½ percent and the deposit rate at ¼ percent. The Bank is maintaining its extraordinary forward guidance on the path for the overnight rate. This is reinforced and supplemented by the Bank's quantitative easing (QE) program, which is being adjusted to a target pace of \$2 billion per week. This adjustment reflects continued progress towards recovery and the Bank's increased confidence in the strength of the Canadian economic outlook. The global economy is recovering strongly from the COVID-19 pandemic, with continued progress on vaccinations, particularly in advanced economies. However, the recovery is still highly uneven and remains dependent on the course of the virus. The recent spread of new COVID-19 variants is a growing concern, especially for regions where vaccinations rates remain low. Global GDP growth is expected to reach 7 percent this year and then moderate to about 4 ½ percent in 2022 and just over 3 percent in 2023. This is a slightly stronger forecast than the one in the Bank's April Monetary Policy Report (MPRR) and primarily reflects a stronger US outlook. Global financial conditions remain highly accommodative. Rising demand is supporting higher oil prices, while non-energy commodity prices remain elevated. The Canada-US exchange rate is little changed since April. In Canada, the third wave of the virus slowed growth in the second quarter. However, falling COVID-19 cases, progress on vaccinations and easing containment restrictions all point to a strong pickup in the second half of this year. The Bank now expects GDP growth of around 6 percent in 2021 – a little slower than was expected in April – but has revised up its 2022

forecast to 4 ½ percent and projects 3 ¼ percent growth in 2023. Consumption is expected to lead the recovery as households return to more normal spending patterns, while housing market activity is projected to ease back from historical highs. Stronger international demand should underpin a solid recovery in exports. As domestic and foreign demand increases and confidence improves, business investment will gain strength. Employment has once again begun to rebound, and we expect the hardest-hit segments of the labour market to post strong gains as the economy re-opens. However, the pace of the recovery will vary among industries and workers, and it could take some time to hire workers with the right skills to fill jobs. The aftermath of lockdowns and ongoing structural changes in the economy both mean that estimates of potential output and when the output gap will close are particularly uncertain. CPI inflation was 3.6 percent in May, boosted by temporary factors that include base-year effects and stronger gasoline prices, as well as pandemic-related bottlenecks as economies re-open. Core measures of inflation have also risen but by less than the CPI. In some high-contact services, demand is rebounding faster than supply, pushing up prices from low levels. Transitory supply constraints in shipping and value chain disruptions for semiconductors are also translating into higher prices for cars and some other goods. With higher gasoline prices and ongoing supply bottlenecks, inflation is likely to remain above 3 percent through the second half of this year and ease back toward 2 percent in 2022, as short-run imbalances diminish and the considerable overall slack in the economy pulls inflation lower. The factors pushing up inflation are transitory, but their persistence and magnitude are uncertain and will be monitored closely.

# Yogi to remain boss in UP as party gears up for assembly polls

**NEW DELHI, (IANS)** Words of appreciation by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and BJP chief J.P. Nadda have not only silenced the critics of Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath, but it also shows that he will be the choice of party leadership to lead in the next year's assembly polls. A senior party functionary of Uttar Pradesh told IANS that now all the doubts among cadres about the party's face in next year's assembly polls have been removed. "Recent moves of the party have shown that the central leadership have full faith in the Yogi Adityanath government and the BJP will contest the assembly polls under his leadership," he said.

A party insider pointed out that removal of Santosh Gangwar from the union cabinet also cemented Adityanath's position in the state even before the words of praise came from the Prime Minister and the party chief. In May, then union labour minister Gangwar had written to the Uttar Pradesh chief minister pointing out mismanagement in handling of the second wave of Covid in his parliamentary constituency Bareilly. During a reshuffle in the union cabinet this month, Gangwar was dropped. Recent thumping victory of the saffron party in zila panchayat and block head elections has also established the political skills of chief minister Adityanath. A senior party leader said, "Despite allegations by the opposition party of misuse of state machinery, one thing is clear that he (Adityanath) knows how to play the game. Results show that he knows all the tricks of politics."

Words of Prime Minister and Nadda have given a boost to the Adityanath government which was facing criticism from the opposition and within the party over its handling of the second Covid wave. A senior party functionary told IANS that back to back words of appreciation sent a strong message against the Adityanath detractors that they must get themselves ready to fight the Uttar Pradesh assembly polls under his leadership. "Message is loud and clear that there is no change of guard in the state and Adityanath will be leading the elections under the leadership of Prime Minister and central leadership. He will be the face of the party in the state," he said.

On July 14 during a visit to his parliamentary constituency Varanasi, Prime Minister Modi lauded the efforts of Adityanath's government in managing the second wave of Covid. He said efforts made by the Uttar Pradesh government to tackle the coronavirus situation are com-



mendable. The Prime Minister also appreciated the development oriented approach of the Adityanath government and ensuring rule of law in Uttar Pradesh.

On July 15, addressing Uttar Pradesh BJP state executive meet, Nadda lauded Adityanath's style of governance and said he had turned Uttar Pradesh into a 'leading state'. "While PM Modi had given a new direction to the country, Yogi Adityanath had put Uttar Pradesh on the path to development," Nadda had said. Amid speculation of his removal in June, union defence minister Rajnath Singh was the first one to appreciate the works of the Adityanath government. A senior party leader said that Prime Minister Modi and Nadda have also silenced the chief minister's criticism on the social engineering front by giving representation of different castes in organizational appointments made recently. "All the recent organizational appointments have taken all the factors of social engineering and given representation to all the caste and region," he said.

# BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY(BSP) TO WOO BACK BRAHMIN IN UP



**LUCKNOW, (IANS)** The Bahujan Samaj Party is all set to woo back Brahmins and make a bid for return to power in Uttar Pradesh. BSP President Mayawati, on Sunday, said the Brahmins will not vote for the BJP and her party will begin a campaign from Ayodhya next week to "awaken" the community.

Talking to media persons, Mayawati said she is fully assured that the Brahmin community will not get misled by the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and vote for the party in the upcoming elections.

"A campaign, led by BSP General Secretary Satish Chandra Mishra, will be launched from Ayodhya on July 23 to awaken the Brahmin community once again. The Brahmins will be assured that their interests will remain safe under the BSP regime," she said. The BSP had formed a majority government in UP in 2007 with the support of Brahmins.

Mayawati also slammed the Narendra Modi-led Central government on the issue of farmers. She said all political parties should come together and hold the Centre accountable. "The indifferent attitude of the Centre towards farmers protesting against the three farm laws is extremely sad. It is necessary that pressure of all kinds is put on the Centre in Parliament," she stated.

# SAMAJWADI PARTY (SP) TO REBOOT WITH 'KAAMBOLTA HAI' SLOGAN FOR 2022



**LUCKNOW, (IANS)** The Samajwadi Party (SP) will reboot for the 2022 assembly elections in Uttar Pradesh with its popular slogan 'KaamBolta Hai'.

SP President Akhilesh Yadav has been regularly tweeting about the achievements of his government and also pointing out that the majority of the incumbent Yogi Adityanath government's 'achievements' had actually been initiated in his regime.

The party will now compare and contrast the work done by the SP government with that done by the BJP government. It does not wish to address caste issues blatantly and will try to veer the voters' attention towards its past performance.

"We will let our work speak for itself. There is going to be no rhetoric - just plain simple facts," said a party functionary.

For instance, when the Union cabinet approved international status for the Kushinagar airport, Akhilesh had tweeted: "SP works for people. Congratulate those who initiated the Kushinagar airport work during the SP's rule. Also approve the SP government's pending airport projects in Meerut, Moradabad, Chitrakoot, and Azamgarh."

Earlier, he had tagged a video of the Ghaziabad-Delhi elevated road as 'Kaamboltahai' and also a photograph of the Jai Prakash Narain International Centre (JPNIC), the construction of which has been halted in the Yogi regime.

He has constantly been slamming the ruling BJP for claiming his projects as their own.

"Can the BJP tell us which projects they have completed on their own? What are their major achievements - except spreading disharmony and hatred. We had the expressway, metro and so many other projects to benefit the common man," said Akhilesh.

The SP, in the run-up to the 2017 assembly elections, had launched its campaign with the catchline 'Kaamboltahai'.

However, when the SP-Congress alliance was forged just before the assembly polls, the slogan changed to 'UP ko yeh saathpasandhai' and the posters showed Akhilesh Yadav and Rahul Gandhi holding hands.

In the 2019 Lok Sabha elections too, the SP had to drop the slogan when it entered into an alliance with the Bahujan Samaj Party and suffered a humiliating defeat.

"We obviously could not use our slogan for an alliance. This time, we are contesting the 2022 polls on our own strength and 'Kaamboltahai' will be our focal point," the party functionary said.

Another slogan that the party has floated is '22 mein bicycle', that is being extensively used in pre-election activities to boost the morale of party cadres.

The party has also got a new election song that says, "Akhilesh hoon main, pragati ka sandeshhoon main" and another one that goes, "Nayihawaahai, NayiSaPahai".

The SP aims to showcase collective leadership, involving both elders and youth and signalling a wave for change in the 2.16-minute new song "NayiSaPahai, nayihawaahai" (It is a new SP, there is a new wave for it). "Badon ka haath, yuva ka saath, ye nayiSaPahai," has been sung by regional singers this time and not by big names from Bollywood.

The party is apparently trying to dispel the notion that there is no room for veterans in the party that has a young leadership - especially after the much-publicized feud in the family in 2017 that had cost the party dearly.

The party has already slipped into an election mode and Akhilesh is interacting with party workers from different districts on an almost daily basis.



# UNINTERRUPTED, 300-UNIT FREE POWER: CM KEJRIWAL'S POLL PROMISE TO GOA

**PANAJI, (IANS)** Launching a string of poll promises ahead of the 2022 Assembly elections in Goa, Delhi Chief Minister and AAP supremo Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday announced free non-commercial electricity to the tune of 300 units, 24-hour power supply and free electricity for farmers if the party is voted to power in the coastal state. The BJP has, however, slammed Kejriwal's election promise, terming it as a "poll gimmick".

Addressing a press conference in Panaji, Kejriwal, who arrived in Goa on Tuesday, also said that the promises are not "chunavi jumla", but a solemn guarantee by the party to the people of Goa. "Each family will get 300-unit power free of cost per month. The bill will come to your home... 87 per cent of Goa will start getting a zero electricity bill. This is my guarantee," Kejriwal said, adding that all the outstanding bills will be waived and the power billing system will start with a "clean slate".

"We have done this in Delhi, we are not simply talking," Kejriwal said. The Delhi Chief Minister also said that Goa would receive a 24-hour electricity supply without any power cuts.

"Before we came to power in Delhi, there were 7-8 hours of power cuts in the summer. There are problems in the distribution network in Goa just like Delhi. We changed the transformers and cables. It took two-and-a-half years, but today we get 24-hour electricity," Kejriwal said while announcing free electricity for farmers.

The Delhi CM said that the move would ensure that women of the state — who hold household purse-strings — would be happy because more money would be saved.

Kejriwal also said that Goa's politics is plagued by corruption and defection and said his party wants to change the culture of politics in the state on its head.

"Goa wants to change. Goa wants clean politics," the AAP national



convenor said.

"Goa's weather is beautiful. But your politics is very corrupt. Two years back, on July 10 (2019), 10 Congress MLAs switched over to the BJP. The people had given the mandate to the Congress but the government was formed by the BJP," Kejriwal said.

"The party (BJP) that was given 13 MLAs, has 28 today. The party (Congress) which had 17 MLAs now has 5. So why have elections at all? Elections have become a farce. There is no meaning to hold elections. This is cheating. This is not right," he said.

Reacting to Kejriwal's announcement Goa BJP President Sadanand Shet Tanavde said that AAP, which does not have a single MLA in the current state Assembly, should not fool the people of Goa with promises that cannot be fulfilled. "They have no MLA and can hence promise anything. But the people of Goa have full faith in BJP. The picture will be clear in the coming elections... Delhi is Delhi and Goa is Goa... people will not fall for his election gimmick," Tanavade said.

## FORMER CANADIAN CHIEF OF DEFENCE STAFF JONATHAN VANCE CHARGED WITH OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE

**OTTAWA, (IANS)** Former Canadian chief of defence staff Jonathan Vance has been charged with one count of obstruction of justice, according to the Ministry of National Defence.

The Ministry said the Canadian Forces National Investigation Service (CFNIS) charged the now-retired general with one count of obstruction of justice, contrary to section 139 of the Criminal Code of Canada, on Thursday, reports Xinhua news agency.

The CFNIS assumed investigative responsibility for allegations of misconduct in the Canadian military on February 4, and it was during the course of this investigation that the obstruction of justice allegedly occurred.

The CFNIS is considered a specialised unit within the Canadian military police.

Its mandate is to investigate serious and sensitive matters in relation to military property, employees, and Canadian Armed Forces personnel serving in Canada and around the world.

The Ministry said the CFNIS decided to pursue the relevant criminal charge in the civilian justice system.

Now that this is proceeding through that system, the Ministry said, no further details can be released at this time.

This year, the Canadian Armed Forces have been rocked by sexual

misconduct scandals, including investigations into allegations against Vance.

Almost two weeks after Vance retired as chief of the defence staff in January, Canadian media reports alleged that Vance had a "long-standing relationship with a female subordinate".

It was later revealed that the alleged inappropriate relationship involved Kellie Brennan, a reservist and staff officer at the army headquarters in Ottawa.

The allegations against Vance have sparked two sets of parliamentary committee hearings where Brennan testified and revealed the allegations which appear to be the basis of the charge against Vance. She claimed that Vance counselled her to lie to military police, claiming to have tape recordings.

Vance denied the allegations.

The allegations touched off a series of revelations and accusations involving other senior leaders in the Canadian military, including Vance's successor Art McDonald who voluntarily stepped aside in February after sexual misconduct allegations against him.

The investigations into both senior leaders set off a crisis within the Canadian military, which has been grappling with the scourge of sexual misconduct for decades.

## 'VAX TO SCHOOL' FAST LINE WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR PEEL YOUTH 12-17

Time is running out for youth to get fully vaccinated before school is back in session

The window of opportunity is closing. It is time to act now and get youth vaccinated so they can begin the school year as safely and normally as possible.

Why the rush?

This is our 'Last Chance to Vax' before school begins!

In order for youth aged 12-17 to be fully vaccinated by the first day of school, they need to receive their second vaccine no later than August 24th. Full coverage against COVID-19 comes two weeks after the second dose.

Walk-in, skip the line! No appointment is necessary!

This Wednesday and Thursday only (July 21 and 22) a 'Vax to School' fast line will be available for youth and their families who walk in. We welcome youth and families to walk in at any Peel Public Health clinic and present themselves at the front of the line with proof of age in order to skip the line. This will make vaccination quick and easy for them, and their accompanying parents, who can also get vaccinated at the same time. Youth aged 12-17 will be guaranteed to receive the Pfizer vaccine, which is the only product approved for use in this age group. Accompanying parents and caregivers can get an mRNA vaccine that is available at the time of the visit (both Pfizer and Moderna may be available.)

Where can you go to get vaccinated?

Walk-ins are accepted anytime at Peel Public Health clinics (does not include hospital clinics)

Skip the line this week on Wednesday and Thursday only!

Youth can also book an appointment at any clinic in Peel Region.

We have added youth-focused appointments on the following dates and times at specific clinics:

July 23, 24, 25 at 10 Peel Centre Drive from 7:30 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

July 30, 31 and Aug 1 at 10 Peel Centre Drive from 7:30 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

July 24, 25, at International Centre from 1 p.m. – 8 p.m.

July 27 at Lincoln Alexander Secondary School from 2 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

July 29 at David Suzuki Secondary School from 2 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

July 31 at Judith Nyman Secondary School from 11 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Bookings for these clinics can be made through the Region of Peel website.

Why is this important?

The lives of youth in Peel have been turned upside down by the pandemic, and this has impacted their mental health and their education. Our goal for this September is not only for a safe return to school, but a return to school that is as close to 'normal' as possible for Peel students. To make this happen, with the delta variant circulating, we need to aim for 100% coverage among youth who are 12-17 years old in Peel.

Youth in Peel who are 12-17 are eligible for first and second doses with the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. Information for parents and youth about the COVID-19 vaccine is available – Youth Vaccine Seminar – YouTube. Youth still have a way to go to reach the same level of protection as adults in Peel. As of July 19, 70% of eligible 12-17-year-olds have had their first dose and 40% are protected with two doses.

I'm urging all eligible youth aged 12-17 to get fully protected through 'Vax to School'! We know kids want to get back to their friends, classrooms and extra-curricular. The quickest and safest way for them to do so is to get vaccinated at least two weeks before school starts.

Dr. Lawrence Loh, Medical Officer of Health, Peel Region.

## NAVJOT SINGH SIDHU BECOMES PRESIDENT OF PUNJAB PRADESH CONGRESS COMMITTEE



**CONTD. FROM PAGE 1**

In March 2017, he was inducted as a Cabinet minister in the new Congress government in Punjab headed by Amarinder Singh. At that time, Sidhu was not designated as Deputy Chief Minister, as was being speculated in political circles.

Sidhu, who joined the Congress in January, just days ahead of the February 4 assembly elections in Punjab, won the Amritsar-east Assembly seat with a margin of over 42,000 votes.

Sidhu had earlier remained Member of Parliament from Amritsar when he was part of the Bharatiya Janata Party. He was elected MP in 2004, 2007 (by-election) and 2009.

He was nominated to the Rajya Sabha by the Narendra Modi government in April 2016.

Ahead of the 2017 Assembly elections, Sidhu had resigned from the Rajya Sabha and said: "At the behest of the Prime Minister, I had accepted RS nomination for the welfare of Punjab. With the closure of every window leading to Punjab, the purpose stands defeated, now a mere burden. I prefer not to carry it."

Within the Congress, Sidhu had been lying low since his resignation from the state Cabinet in July 2019.

He had resigned from his post as a Cabinet Minister in the state on July 14, 2019 after differences with Amarinder Singh over portfolio allocation. Sidhu was in-charge of local bodies but was shifted to the Power Department. Time and again he was meeting top party leaders, including Sonia Gandhi in New Delhi, and apprised them of the political situation in Punjab. Appealing to the people to join him and "be part of the resurrection", Sidhu, who has never been far from controversies, even hogging the limelight as fallout -- whether for good or bad.

Only time will tell that whether Sidhu will be able to return his party to power with Amarinder Singh remaining the Chief Minister's face for the upcoming election, slated in early 2022.

## AFGHAN AMBASSADOR TO PAK CALLED BACK FOLLOWING DAUGHTER'S ABDUCTION

**CONTD. FROM PAGE 1**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked Khan to convey the strong protest and deep concerns of the Government of Afghanistan to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Government of Pakistan about this grave incident.

"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs explicitly called on the Pakistani government to take immediate action to identify and punish the perpetrators of this crime and ensure the full security and immunity of Afghan diplomats and their families in accordance with international conventions," a statement said. Silsila Alikhil was abducted for several hours in Islamabad on Friday, and was released after being tortured. Earlier, Afghanistan stated that on July 16, the daughter of the Afghan Ambassador to Islamabad Silsila Alikhil, was abducted for several hours and severely tortured by unknown individuals on her way home. After being released from the kidnappers' captivity, Alikhil is under medical care at the hospital. "The MoFA strongly condemns this heinous act and expresses its deep concern over the safety and security of diplomats, their families, and staff members of the Afghan political and consular missions in Pakistan," it said. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs called on the Pakistan government to take immediate necessary actions to ensure full security of the Afghan Embassy and Consulates as well as the immunity of the country's diplomats and their families in accordance with international treaties and conventions. "While the Afghan Ministry of Foreign Affairs is following the matter with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, we urge the Pakistani government to identify and prosecute the perpetrators at the soonest possible time," it said.

## PAKISTAN CITIZENS URGED TO FOLLOW SOPS AMID 4TH WAVE CONCERNS

**ISLAMABAD, (IANS)** Health experts and officials in Pakistan have urged citizens to strictly adhere to the standard operating procedures (SOPs) amid concerns of the fourth wave of Covid-19 pandemic. On Friday, Pakistan reported 2,327 new Covid-19 cases and 31 deaths, with a positivity rate of over 6 per cent, according to the data released by the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC), a body leading Pakistan's response to the pandemic. The new additions have increased the country's overall infection tally and death toll to 986,668 and 22,760, respectively. Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health, Faisal Sultan said the fourth wave had started, urging the public to comply with safety measures and get vaccinated as soon as possible.

"We must keep in mind that Covid-19 vaccines are the most effective weapons against the virus... Every person must at least get one dose of the vaccine," he said.

Pakistan has enhanced the pace of vaccination and hit a new daily vaccination record by administering half a million doses during the past 24 hours, with an aim to further increase the process of vaccination and inoculate 70 million eligible people by the end of this year, according to government officials.

The authorities imposed fresh smart lockdowns in parts of the country with the highest positivity rate and launched crackdowns against businesses violating the SOPs. On Wednesday, the country's worst-hit Sindh province decided to re-impose restrictions on indoor dining, cinemas, gyms, recreational centres and schools, directing public transporters to operate with 50 per cent of occupancy.

## Reuters Photojournalist Danish Siddiqui, Killed In Afghanistan While Covering Clash Between Afghan Forces, Taliban; UN Secy General 'Grieves' His Death

**UNITED NATIONS, (IANS)** UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres "grieves" the death of Reuters photographer Danish Siddiqui who was killed while covering the Afghanistan security forces operation against the Taliban, according to his deputy spokesperson Farhan Haq. Guterres is "concerned" about "the increasing threat to journalists in Afghanistan", Haq said at his daily briefing on Friday. Siddiqui's death "is also an example of the particular problems that we're facing in Afghanistan right now", he said referring to the rise in Taliban attacks after President Joe Biden pulled US troops out of the country ending the 20-year presence there.

Guterres "grieves" the killing of journalists "anywhere in the world and the case of Danish Siddiqui is one such case," Haq said.

Reuters said that Siddiqui, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist from India, was killed on Friday while he was embedded with the Afghan Special Forces who were trying to retake the main market in Spin Boldak, a key town on the border with Pakistan.

Siddiqui covered war zones and crises from Iraq to Hong Kong to Nepal, the wire service said. He won the 2018 Pulitzer Prize for covering the Rohingya refugees fleeing Myanmar.

A resident of Delhi, Siddiqui was on a reporting assignment with the Afghan security forces when he was killed.

Siddiqui's father Professor Akhtar Siddiqui told IANS: "I got information about my son about one hour ago. The last time I spoke to my son was two days ago, and he was very happy at that time."

Afghanistan's ambassador to India, Farid Mamundzay, tweeted, "Deeply disturbed by the sad news of the killing of a friend, Danish Seddiqi in Kandahar last night. The Indian Journalist & winner of the Pulitzer Prize was embedded with Afghan security forces. I met him 2 weeks ago before his departure to Kabul. Condolences to his family & Reuters."

Danish Siddiqui was constantly capturing Afghan happenings on his camera and was informing people through his social media posts. Two days ago, he tweeted: "The Humvee in which I was travelling with other special forces was also targeted by at least 3 RPG rounds and other weapons. I was lucky to be safe and capture the visual of one of the rockets hitting the armour plate overhead". He also posted a short video about the action. He was a student of Jamia University and his father has been a professor at the university. "Danish was an outstanding journalist, a devoted husband and father, and a much-loved colleague. Our thoughts are with his family at this terrible time," Reuters President Michael Friedenberg and Editor-in-Chief Alessandra Galloni said in a joint statement.





Y MEDIA COVID & VACCINE REPORT

# CANADA ANNOUNCES EASING OF BORDER MEASURES FOR FULLY VACCINATED TRAVELLERS

The Government of Canada is prioritizing the health and safety of everyone in Canada by taking a risk-based and measured approach to re-opening our borders. Thanks to the hard work of Canadians, rising vaccination rates and declining COVID-19 cases, the Government of Canada is able to move forward with adjusted border measures.

On September 7, 2021, provided that the domestic epidemiologic situation remains favourable, the Government intends to open Canada's borders to any fully vaccinated travellers who have completed the full course of vaccination with a Government of Canada-accepted vaccine at least 14 days prior to entering Canada and who meet specific entry requirements.

As a first step, starting August 9, 2021, Canada plans to begin allowing entry to American citizens and permanent residents, who are currently residing in the United States, and have been fully vaccinated at least 14 days prior to entering Canada for non-essential travel. This preliminary step allows for the Government of Canada to fully operationalize the adjusted border measures ahead of September 7, 2021, and recognizes the many close ties between Canadians and Americans.

"Canadians' safety and security always come first. With rising vaccination rates and fewer cases in Canada, we can begin to safely ease border measures. A gradual approach to reopening will allow our health authorities to monitor the COVID-19 situation here and abroad. Canadians have worked hard and sacrificed for each other, and because of that work, we can take these next steps safely," said Patty Hajdu, Minister of Health.

Subject to limited exceptions, all travellers must use ArriveCAN (app or web portal) to submit their travel information. If they are eligible to enter Canada and meet specific criteria, fully vaccinated travellers will not have to quarantine upon arrival in Canada.

To further support these new measures, Transport Canada is expanding the scope of the existing Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) that currently directs scheduled international commercial passenger flights into four Canadian Airports: Montréal-Trudeau International Airport, Toronto Pearson International Airport, Calgary International Airport, and Vancouver International Airport. Effective August 9, 2021, international flights carrying passengers will be permitted to land at the following five additional Canadian airports: Halifax Stanfield International Airport; Québec City Jean Lesage International Airport; Ottawa Macdonald-Cartier International Airport; Winnipeg James Armstrong Richardson International Airport; and Edmonton International Airport.

These airports, in cooperation with the Public Health Agency of Canada, the Canada Border Services Agency and Transport Canada, are working to implement the measures necessary to safely welcome international passengers as soon as possible after August 9, as conditions dictate.

All travellers, regardless of vaccination status, will still require a pre-entry COVID-19 molecular test result. However effective August 9, 2021, the Government of Canada is adjusting its post-arrival testing strategy for fully vaccinated travellers. Using a new border testing surveillance program at airports and land border crossings, fully vaccinated travellers will not need a post-arrival test unless they have been randomly selected to complete a Day 1 COVID-19 molecular test. There are no changes to the mandatory testing requirements for unvaccinated travellers.

This strategy allows the Government of Canada to continue monitoring variants of concern in Canada and vaccine effectiveness. Using these layers of protection, the Government of Canada can monitor the COVID-19 situation in Canada, respond quickly to threats, and guide decisions on restricting international travel.

Dominic LeBlanc, President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs said, "The health and safety of Canadians remain our top priority. Using a risk-based and measured approach to

easing border measures will allow for non-essential international travellers who meet vaccination and other requirements to enter Canada. Working collaboratively with provinces, territories, Indigenous partners, and others to encourage Canadians to get vaccinated and follow public health advice is enabling us to begin welcoming more travellers back to Canada. Our government will continue to work with Canadian and international partners to ensure the border reopening is done in a safe and responsible way."

Finally, with the advent of increased vaccination rates in Canada, declining COVID-19 cases and reduced pressure on health care capacity, the three-night government authorized hotel stay requirement will be eliminated for all travellers arriving by air as of 12:01 A.M. EDT on August 9. Fully vaccinated travellers who meet the requirements will be exempt from quarantine; however, all travellers must still provide a quarantine plan and be prepared to quarantine, in case it is determined at the border that they do not meet the necessary requirements.

"The Government of Canada recognizes that people have been anxiously awaiting a re-opening of the border to the world. We have been fully engaged with our American counterparts given the deep economic and family ties between our two countries. Today's announcement is another big step in our approach to easing border measures which is guided by facts, scientific evidence and the advice of our public health experts, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Bill Blair said.

Omar Alghabra, Minister of Transport Canada said, "Thanks to the extraordinary commitment of Canadians to getting vaccinated and following public health advice, we are seeing improvement in the public health situation in Canada. As a result, today we announced new steps in our re-opening approach, including that international flights carrying passengers will be allowed to land at five more Canadian airports."

While Canada continues to trend in the right direction, the epidemiological situation and vaccination coverage is not the same around the world. The Government of Canada continues to advise Canadians to avoid non-essential travel outside of Canada – international travel increases your risk of exposure to COVID-19 and its variants, as well as of spreading it to others. Border measures also remain subject to change as the epidemiological situation evolves. As Canada looks to welcome fully vaccinated travellers from the U.S., the federal government will continue to monitor the situation and provide updated travel advice to Canadians.

"Thanks to the incredible progress that Canadians have made in our fight against the pandemic, we are now able to take the next step in Canada's gradual reopening of the border. We look forward to welcoming fully vaccinated Americans shortly, followed by travellers from the rest of the world in early September. Not only will this make a big difference for Canada's travel and tourism industry and all those whose jobs depend on it, it will also make it easier for those with a Confirmation of Permanent Residence letter to come to Canada and play a role in our recovery from the pandemic," said Marco Mendicino, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada.

Melanie Joly, Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages said, "The easing of Canada's border measures is welcome news for tourism businesses across the country, the thousands of Canadians employed by the sector and the communities who rely on it. It has been a challenging year as we balance the need to protect both the health of Canadians and our economy but tourism businesses have demonstrated incredible resilience. Our government has been proud to be by their side since the beginning of this crisis and we will continue to be there as they prepare to begin to welcome vaccinated travellers from around the world to our beautiful shores."

## PEEL CELEBRATES ANOTHER VACCINE MILESTONE IN MARKING TRANSITIONS TO CLINIC OFFERINGS



As Peel Region celebrates close to 2 million doses delivered and over 79% percent of eligible residents aged 18+ receiving their first dose and 75% percent of residents aged 18+ receiving their second dose, the Region of Peel is making changes to aspects of the vaccination program.

As part of this approach, the International Centre mass vaccination clinic will close on July 26th. All other clinics will continue to operate at this time with some adjustments based on community needs.

Mobile clinics and outreach efforts will continue to reach residents who have not yet accessed first doses or complete vaccination with second doses, and it is anticipated that increased focus on these efforts will ramp up soon. This includes continued vaccination of home-bound residents and pop-up clinics in the community at schools and other neighbourhood spaces. These efforts will continue to reduce barriers to vaccination in areas of lower uptake, so no one gets left behind.

All residents who are 12 years or older are encouraged to book their first dose if they haven't received it yet. Residents are also being asked to rebook their second dose as quickly as possible if it has been 28 days since their first dose. Appointments are available, including walk-in appointments at select clinics.

Residents can book appointments at:

- A different Peel Public Health vaccination clinic. Book online through the provincial booking system or call the provincial call centre at 1-833-943-3900.
- Any of Peel's pop-up clinics.
- A participating pharmacy or a primary care setting.

Evidence is increasingly clear that currently available vaccines are safe, effective, and interchangeable, and widespread two-dose protection will assure our continued reopening. Data shows that those who are most at risk of severe outcomes of COVID-19 infection are those who are wholly or partially unvaccinated.

The Region of Peel is committed to ensuring that every resident who wants to get vaccinated gets both doses as quickly as possible; including youth as they prepare for going back to school in September.

"We want to thank all residents who have rolled up their sleeves and quickly accessed first and second dose protection. Because of you, we can celebrate these fantastic milestones. If you haven't been vaccinated yet, I urge you to access this protection as soon as possible. We have appointments available, including walk-in appointments, so please don't delay," said Dr. Lawrence Loh, Medical Officer of Health.

## COVID VACCINES SUBJECT TO MISINFORMATION IN US: DR. FAUCI



**LONDON, (IANS)** The campaigns to eradicate smallpox and polio would not have succeeded if the vaccines were subject to misinformation, akin to the "false information" on Covid-19 shots, the US top scientist on infectious diseases, Anthony Fauci, has said.

Smallpox was eradicated worldwide over 40 years ago and polio has been eliminated in almost every country. Fauci said such efforts would have faltered under the current climate of misinformation, the Daily Mail reported on Sunday.

Fauci's comments reflected mounting frustration over the sharp drop in the Covid-19 vaccination rate in the US, even as the deadly infectious disease is rising.

He also blasted the media for spreading false information on Covid jabs. "If we had had the pushback for vaccines the way we're seeing on certain media, I don't think it would've been possible at all to not only eradicate smallpox, we probably would still have smallpox, and we probably would still have polio in this country if we had the kind of false information that's being spread now," Fauci was quoted as saying to the CNN. The US continues to be the worst-hit country with the world's highest number of cases and deaths at 34,067,424 and 608,881, respectively, according to Johns Hopkins University. After an initial burst of vaccinations around the country, the pace has slowed sharply.

President Joe Biden's announced goal of having 70 per cent of adults vaccinated by July 4 fell short by about three points, and the vaccination rate has slowed further since then, even as the disease's Delta variant has spread rapidly.

Meanwhile, the White House Covid Response team has warned Americans that the US outbreak is becoming "a pandemic of the unvaccinated" and nearly all hospital admissions and deaths are now among those who have not got their shots. The seven-day average of new cases is up nearly 70 per cent over the last week, hospital admissions have climbed about 36 per cent and deaths by 26 per cent, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The "extreme vulnerability" of people who are not vaccinated will account for infections, hospitalisations, and, ultimately, deaths, Fauci warned.

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**Indoor/Outdoor: capacity limited to permit physical distancing of 2m**

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**Ontario enters Step 3 on July 16**

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# Who is behind the attack on Chinese in Pakistan

BY AMJAD AYUB MIRZA

The deadly attack, carried out on July 15, on a coach carrying Chinese engineers to an under-construction tunnel site at the 4300 MW Dasu Hydro-power project site in Upper Kohistan in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province has left 9 Chinese and 4 Pakistanis dead of which two belong to the security forces. It has left everyone bamboozled.

No one has yet claimed responsibility for the attack. This is surprising. Considering the high profile nature of the attack, had it been the work of the TTP or Baloch saramchars from the neighbouring province of Baluchistan, the credit for such a 'victory' would have been claimed much sooner.

Whenever an attack on a foreign mission or US marines took place on the Pakistani soil in the past it was mostly considered a job of the deep state. Surprised? Do not be. It is part and parcel of Pakistan military's double game. In order to make hefty demands for financial assistance from its western 'allies' to combat terrorism, the Pakistan army has allegedly been engineering attacks on the US marines, NATO goods transport vehicles, and even its own civilians.

But, since the rocky relations during recent weeks between Pakistan and America precipitated after the refusal of Pakistan to allow the US to use its airspace against Taliban in Afghanistan, the natural donor of the anti-terrorism funds seems to have shut their vaults. Hence, the need for a new donor could have conveniently made the Chinese engineers a valuable target. If so, then it seems to have backfired. Immediately after the attack, the Chinese company responsible for the construction of the Dasu hydro-power project sacked all of its Pakistani staff. Not only that but China also threatened to stop all work on CPEC pending the investigation. Their demand was simple and straightforward. Allow Chinese investigation team to visit the blast site and conduct its own investigation. Pakistan refused. Why? Well, no credible explanation was provided.

Later, as Pakistan promised to include Chinese investigators, the sacked Pakistani staff at Dasu was reinstated. But by then the military could have very easily removed any trace of evidence that would point the investigation in the right direction.

After refusing to acknowledge that it was a bomb blast and calling it an accident caused by a gas leakage on the coach caused after it had plunged into the ravine, the Pakistan government has accepted the fact that the explosion was the cause for the coach to fall over the cliff. Then they started pointing fingers towards the Baloch Freedom Movement which is led by Hyrbiyar Marri in Sweden. Well, only a month ago Prime Minister Imran Khan had paid a visit to Dasu Dam. How could have Hyrbiyar missed such a candid opportunity to execute an attack on Imran Khan? Obviously, his organisation does not seem to have the cadre to undertake such an upfront operation. Pakistan is suffering from critical shortage of cash. It has sunk neck deep in debt and the value of its increased foreign remittances is cancelled by double digit inflation. The war in Afghanistan has exposed Pakistan as the main sponsor and supporter of the Taliban which in itself is a disastrous policy of nurturing proxies.



“THEIR DEMAND WAS SIMPLE AND STRAIGHTFORWARD. ALLOW CHINESE INVESTIGATION TEAM TO VISIT THE BLAST SITE AND CONDUCT ITS OWN INVESTIGATION. PAKISTAN REFUSED. WHY? WELL, NO CREDIBLE EXPLANATION WAS PROVIDED. LATER, AS PAKISTAN PROMISED TO INCLUDE CHINESE INVESTIGATORS, THE SACKED PAKISTANI STAFF AT DASU WAS REINSTATED. BUT BY THEN THE MILITARY COULD HAVE VERY EASILY REMOVED ANY TRACE OF EVIDENCE THAT WOULD POINT THE INVESTIGATION IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. AFTER REFUSING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT IT WAS A BOMB BLAST AND CALLING IT AN ACCIDENT CAUSED BY A GAS LEAKAGE ON THE COACH CAUSED AFTER IT HAD PLUNGED INTO THE RAVINE, THE PAKISTAN GOVERNMENT HAS ACCEPTED THE FACT THAT THE EXPLOSION WAS THE CAUSE FOR THE COACH TO FALL OVER THE CLIFF. THEN THEY STARTED POINTING FINGERS TOWARDS THE BALOCH FREEDOM MOVEMENT WHICH IS LED BY HYRBIYAR MARRI IN SWEDEN. WELL, ONLY A MONTH AGO PRIME MINISTER IMRAN KHAN HAD PAID A VISIT TO DASU DAM.

Therefore, in all probability it seems that the 9 Chinese engineers who died in the terrorist attack in Kohistan was masterminded by none other than the Pakistani military establishment. This is a money extortionist army. They loot their own public by raising taxes each month. The army plunders the natural resources of every part of the country. They control and own billions of dollars' worth of businesses and banks and thrive on foreign loans.

It will be no surprise if after some time the Pakistan army's involvement in this attack is revealed. Until then no one seems to be safe in terroristan.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed within this article are the personal ideas of the author. The facts and conclusions appearing in the article do not reflect the views of Y Media and Midweek Newspaper, and Y Media does not assume any responsibility or liability for the same.

## SAD CONDEMNS BJP GOVT FOR DENYING ADJOURNMENT MOTION ON FARM LAWS

**NEW DELHI, (IANS)** Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) President Sukhbir Badal on Monday condemned the NDA government for turning down the adjournment motion moved by the party in conjunction with the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) and others, demanding repeal of the three agricultural laws in keeping with the sentiments of the farming community of the country.

The SAD President held a protest in this regard along with wife and former minister Harsimrat Kaur Badal and BSP MPs, including its national General Secretary Satish Chandra Mishra, outside Parliament and asserted the SAD-BSP alliance would continue to protest to demand that the demands of farmers be discussed in Parliament and duly accepted by the Union government.

Badal also urged all political parties to unite on the issue of forcing a discussion on the "black laws".

"We must prioritize this issue. There is nothing more important than this at this moment. Farmers have been agitating for their demands for more than eight months now. More than 500 farmers have been martyred. We had even moved a resolution calling for paying tribute to the farmers who were martyred in the cause of the Kisan Andolan. It is

unfortunate that obituaries were not paid to the farmers in Parliament."

He also asked the NDA government to show sensitivity towards farmers by "acting in a responsible manner befitting an elected government", claiming that "instead of listening to the farmers, the Union government tried to defame and repress the peaceful movement". "Even now no attempt is being made to talk to farmers and resolve their grievances. Such an attitude does not hold well for democracy." He demanded the Union government explain why it was stonewalling the just demands of farmers, saying "this is the reason why farmers have lost faith in the government".

Asserting that the "black laws" were pushed through Parliament in utter disregard for farmers, farm labourers and traders, Badal said the laws were also in brazen violation of the spirit of federalism as envisaged by the founding fathers of the Constitution.

He said farmers also felt that the farm laws were designed to pave the way for the corporatization of agriculture and would result at the end of the assured government purchase of food grains and throw farmers to the mercy of corporations.

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# FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HELPING OVER 300 FAMILIES FIND RENTAL HOUSING IN BRAMPTON BY INVESTING \$120 MILLION



Every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. To address high housing costs in Ontario and across the country, the Government of Canada continues to make smart investments in rental housing. These investments will help us build stronger communities, create jobs, and grow our middle class while supporting vulnerable Canadians and helping end homelessness. The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, announced an investment of nearly \$120 million to help build a new 26-storey multi-residential, energy-efficient building in Brampton, Ontario. This project will help over 300 local families find rental housing units. “We know that finding an affordable place to live is a challenge for many Canadians in communities across the country. Today’s announcement is great news for families in Brampton, and the Government of Canada will continue to invest to increase affordable housing options for all Canadians. We will keep working to ensure that everyone can find a place to live, raise their families, and build their future,” said PM Justin Trudeau. A solid and reliable supply of rental housing is critical to ensuring that more Canadians have access to housing that is affordable and meets their needs. Today’s announcement is part of the Rental Construction

Financing Initiative, which supports rental housing construction projects across the country by providing low-cost, insured loans to developers and municipalities in places where there is a need for additional rental housing units. Since 2015, through programs like the First-Time Home Buyer Incentive and the Rapid Housing Initiative, the Government of Canada has helped more than one million Canadians have a safe and affordable place to call home. The government is committed to eliminating chronic homelessness in Canada and will continue working to grow the middle class, build back strong communities, and make life more affordable for Canadians. “Every Canadian deserves a place to call home. That’s why the government is taking action to increase the supply of rental housing through projects like the one we are announcing today in Brampton. This new rental housing will provide families better access to jobs, services, and the amenities they need. This is the National Housing Strategy at work,” Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation said.

## 27 Fast and Easy Fix Ups to Get the Best Price for Your GTA Home

TORONTO - Because your home may well be your largest asset, selling it is probably one of the most important decisions you will make in your life. And once you have made that decision, you’ll want to sell your home for the highest price in the shortest time possible without compromising your sanity. Before you place your home on the market, here’s a way to help you to be as prepared as possible. To assist homesellers, a new industry report has just been released called “27 Valuable Tips That You Should Know to Get Your Home Sold Fast and for Top Dollar.” It tackles the important issues you need to know to make your home competitive in today’s tough, aggressive marketplace. Through these 27 tips you will discover how to protect and capitalize on your most important investment, reduce stress, be in control of your situation, and make the best profit possible.

In this report you’ll discover how to avoid financial disappointment or worse, a financial disaster when selling your home. Using a common-sense approach, you will get the straight facts about what can make or break the sale of your home. You owe it to yourself to learn how these important tips will give you the competitive edge to get your home sold fast and for the most amount of money. Order your free report today. To order a FREE Special Report, visit [www.yellowhomes.ca/27tips](http://www.yellowhomes.ca/27tips) or to hear a brief recorded message about how to order your FREE copy of this report call toll-free 1-855-907-2934 and enter 8023. You can call any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Get your free special report NOW.

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## ‘NATIONAL HOME SALES DECLINED BY 8.4% ON A MONTH-OVER-MONTH BASIS IN JUNE’: CANADIAN REAL ESTATE ASSOCIATION

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Summary: National home sales declined by 8.4% on a month-over-month basis in June. The actual (not seasonally adjusted) activity was up 13.6% year-over-year. The number of newly listed properties edged back by 0.7% from May to June. The MLS® Home Price Index (MLS® HPI) rose 0.9% month-over-month and was up 24.4% year-over-year. The actual (not seasonally adjusted) national average sale price posted a 25.9% year-over-year gain in June. Home sales recorded over Canadian MLS® Systems fell by 8.4% month-over-month in June 2021, marking the third straight monthly slowdown since activity hit an all-time record back in March. While sales are now down a cumulative 25% from their peak, and below every other month in the last year, June transactions still managed to set a record for that month. (Chart A) Month-over-month declines in sales activity were once again quite broad-based, with sales moderating in around 80% of all local markets, including almost all large markets across Canada. The actual (not seasonally adjusted) number of transactions in June 2021 was up 13.6% on a year-over-year basis and marked a new record for that month. “While there is still a lot of activity in many housing markets across Canada, things have noticeably calmed down in the last few months,” said Cliff Stevenson, Chair of CREA. “There remains a shortage of supply in many parts of the country, but at least there isn’t the same level of competition among buyers we were seeing a few months ago. As these conditions continue to evolve over the summer and fall, your best bet is to consult with your local REALTOR® for information and guidance about buying or selling a home at this stage in the cycle,” continued Stevenson. “It feels like maybe the theme of this summer is ‘slowly getting back to normal,’ in our own lives and for many housing markets across Canada as well,” said Shaun Cathcart, CREA’s Senior Economist. “That said, it’s a long road to get back to normal, and for many housing markets, the main issue is that supply shortages are as acute as ever. At the same time, the break we’ve had on the population growth side of things is likely now coming to an end. So while the frenzy and emotion of earlier in the pandemic seem to have dissipated, for now, the key ingredients of a seller’s market are all still in place. Housing has been a major election issue before and it will be this time around as well. The difference this time will likely be a focus on getting more housing built in the years ahead, so at least we’re finally having the right conversation.” The number of newly listed homes edged back a slight 0.7% in June compared to May. In contrast to the past year’s synchronicity in demand and supply trends, the little-changed national new supply figure in June reflected a mixed bag of results, with about half of local markets seeing gains – welcome news for frustrated buyers. The national sales-to-new listings ratio was 69.2% in June 2021, the lowest reading since last August. That said, the long-term average for the national sales-to-new listings ratio is 54.6%, so it remains historically high; although, it has been steadily moderating since peaking at 90.8% back in January. Based on a comparison of sales-to-new listings ratio with long-term averages, more than half of all local markets were in the balanced market territory in June, measured as being within one standard deviation of their long-term average. The was a significant shift compared to most of the past year which saw a majority of markets well into seller’s market territory. The number of months of inventory is another important measure of the balance between sales and the supply of listings. It represents how long it would take to liquidate current inventories at the current rate of sales activity. There were 2.3 months of inventory on a national basis at the end of June 2021, up from 2.1 months in May and up from an all-time record-low of just 1.8 months in March. That said, it is still very much in the seller’s market territory. The long-term average for this measure is a little over 5 months.

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## Federal Government Investing \$5 Million To Help Over 320 Canadian Families Find Affordable Homes In Ontario

Every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home, yet many Canadians in Ontario and across the country continue to struggle with high housing costs. That is why the Government of Canada continues to invest in affordable, energy-efficient housing to build back better, grow the middle class, and tackle climate change while working to end homelessness and help vulnerable Canadians. The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, announced \$5 million in funding to help over 320 Ontario families and individuals find a place to live and build their future. This funding will be delivered through the Affordable Housing Innovation Fund, which was expanded in Budget 2021, and will build a total of 30,000 affordable housing units for Canadians.

“As we finish the fight against COVID-19, finding an affordable place to live remains a challenge for many Canadians in communities across the country. Today’s announcement is great news for families in Ontario, and we will continue to help all Canadians find safe, affordable housing. Thanks to smart investments like these, we will grow our middle class, fight climate change, and build back better for all Canadians,” said PM Trudeau.

Through this initiative, the government is helping to build 95 new rental units in Hamilton, 72 in London, 68 in Mississauga, 50 in Simcoe, and 43 in Kitchener. All projects will be built with energy-efficient passive housing design, which will result in significant reductions in the energy consumption and pollution of the buildings. This will lower operating costs for building operators and increase affordability for tenants.

Since 2015, through programs like the First-Time Home Buyer Incentive and the Rapid Housing Initiative, the Government of Canada has helped more than one million Canadians find a safe and affordable place to call home. The government will continue to do whatever is necessary to grow the middle class, build back stronger communities, and make life more affordable for Canadians while getting us



closer to our goal of eliminating chronic homelessness in Canada. Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development and Minister responsible for Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation said, “Every Canadian deserves a safe and affordable place to call home. The government is taking action by investing across the housing spectrum in innovative solutions to housing challenges, to increase the supply of affordable housing. These projects will provide over 320 families much-needed places to live, as well as jobs, services, and amenities. In addition, through the Affordable Housing Innovation Fund, we are encouraging innovative ways to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. This is the National Housing Strategy at work.”

## HAMILTON POLICE ARRESTS VINCE LICATA, 40, FROM CAMBRIDGE AFTER A HATE CRIME ATTACK THAT TARGETED MUSLIM MOTHER & DAUGHTER

Hamilton Police have arrested a 40-year-old male from Cambridge after a hate crime attack that took place in Hamilton.

On Monday, July 12, 2021, at approximately 9:30 p.m., a mother and daughter were walking through a parking lot in a plaza in the Ancaster Meadowlands. An interaction occurred after a vehicle pulling out of a parking spot almost struck one of the victims.

The interaction escalated with the suspect uttering threats towards the victims while using slurs targeting the Muslim community.

The victims ran across the street and hid behind some bushes while the suspect searched for them. He eventually located them and threatened to kill them. One of the victims ran screaming for help and witnesses intervened as the suspect fled the area.

The incident is being investigated as a hate crime.



Licata has been remanded to court on July 15, 2021.

As the charges are before the courts no additional information will be released.

PM Justin Trudeau condemned the attack and said, “I’m deeply disturbed by reports of an Islamophobic attack on Muslim women in Hamilton yesterday – and I strongly condemn this violent, hateful, and abhorrent behaviour. It has no place in our country or any of our communities. We will continue to stand together and take action.”

## ONTARIO INVESTING MORE THAN \$3.1 MILLION TO SUPPORT YOUNG VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN PEEL REGION

**BRAMPTON** – The Ontario government is investing more than \$3.1 million over the next five years in a new community-based program to provide more young victims and survivors of human trafficking in the Peel Region with the services they need. With this funding, the region is creating an integrated services hub, providing on-site health care, trauma counselling, addictions support, legal aid, education and employment services. Providing better protection and increased supports for children and youth who have been sexually exploited or are at risk is a key focus of Ontario’s strategy to combat human trafficking. “It is critical that victims and survivors of sex trafficking have access to specialized supports to heal and rebuild their lives,” said Jane McKenna, Associate Minister of Children and Women’s Issues. “This investment will increase services dedicated to children and youth who have been trafficked or are at risk, so more young people have access to the help they need to stay safe and recover.”

This new program is funded through Ontario’s Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports Fund to increase services across the province. The government is investing a total of \$96 million in community-based services and Indigenous-led supports for victims and survivors of human trafficking over five years as part of the province’s Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy 2020-2025. “This investment in Peel Region further underlines our government’s commitment to end human trafficking and reinforces our pledge to build awareness, protect victims, provide support for survivors and hold offenders accountable,” said Solicitor General

Sylvia Jones. “These valuable community resources, coupled with our recently passed Combating Human Trafficking Act, will help prevent and respond to the threat of human trafficking and support our efforts to fight this heinous crime.” “Increasing supports for victims and survivors of sex trafficking will help keep our communities safe,” said Prabmeet Sarkaria, MPP for Brampton South and President of the Treasury Board. “This investment will ensure more children and youth in Brampton and across Peel Region will have access to the critical services they need to support their recovery.” In total, 27 new projects are being funded through the Anti-Human Trafficking Community Supports and Indigenous-led Initiatives funds to provide a more comprehensive network of supports across the province. This investment is part of Ontario’s \$307-million Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy to raise awareness of the issue, protect victims and intervene early, support survivors and hold offenders accountable. “On behalf of Peel Regional Council, we are pleased to partner with the province of Ontario, Peel Regional Police, and our community partners to tackle the heinous crime of human sex trafficking in Peel,” said Nando Iannicca, Chair, Region of Peel. “This significant investment from the province enables us to support encourage, our integrated collaborative services hub that provides wraparound supports such as trauma counselling, risk assessment, safety planning, client navigation, health care and access to many other supports and services. We need to support victims and survivors in rebuilding their lives, as we continue working together to build a safe, equitable and connected community for all.”

### CANADA LAUNCHES TASK FORCE TO REVIEW THE EMPLOYMENT EQUITY ACT

The Employment Equity Act is an important tool for Canada to promote fairness, equality and diversity in federally regulated workplaces. Since its introduction in 1986, continued progress has been made for the four designated groups covered by the Act. However, there is still work ahead to address inequalities and long-standing barriers that limit workers from reaching their full potential.



The COVID-19 pandemic, recent tragedies and movements for social change have made this even clearer.

As we work to identify ways to make work environments more inclusive and representative, we must recognize the lived experiences of women, LGBTQ2 Canadians, Indigenous peoples, Black and racialized Canadians, persons with disabilities and other under-represented groups in federally regulated workplaces, and ensure that the Act reflects the realities of today’s workplaces. That is why today the Minister of Labour, Filomena Tassi, launched a Task Force to conduct the most extensive review of the Employment Equity Act since its introduction. The Minister made this announcement along with the Minister of Diversity and Inclusion and Youth, Bardish Chaggar, and the newly announced Chair of the Task Force, Professor Adelle Blackett. “The Employment Equity Act is a critical tool to ensure that our workplaces are equitable, diverse and representative spaces. The Task Force’s work will be vital in identifying changes to help bring this Act into the 21st century and embrace the true potential of all workers. The pandemic, as well as many recent and tragic events, has demonstrated the depth to which change is needed now. As we look toward our future, we have an opportunity to make the kinds of changes that will result in more fair and equal opportunities for everyone to succeed—and that benefits workers, employers and all Canadians,” said Minister of Labour, Filomena Tassi. Over the next months, the Task Force will study the Act and consult with stakeholders, communities and Canadians on issues related to employment equity.

### ONTARIO INVESTING \$5.8 MILLION TO HELP 100,000 WORKERS TRAIN FOR IN-DEMAND JOBS



The Ontario government is investing \$5.8 million in free online training to help 100,000 workers gain the skills they need to find good jobs and restart their careers. Courses will focus on building skills most in-demand by employers in fields such as information technology, finance and business administration. This funding is part of the government’s \$115 million Skills Development Fund to address challenges to hiring, training and re-training workers because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“As our province safely and steadily reopens we’re seeing strong demand for qualified workers across many industries,” said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. “There are more than 250,000 jobs in Ontario going unfilled today. Many hardworking people are eager to start these new, well-paying and purpose-driven careers. Through this partnership with LinkedIn, we’ve identified the top skills employers are looking for and we’re offering free online training to help workers and their families get back on their feet.”

Mario J. Calla, Executive Director, COSTI said, “We are proud to be a member of a network of organizations that include the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, First Work and many community service providers that work diligently at making employment a reality for many people.”

Workers will have access to over 17,000 courses, including videos taught by global industry experts. Employment Ontario career experts will coach each worker on which courses match their needs and personal career goals.

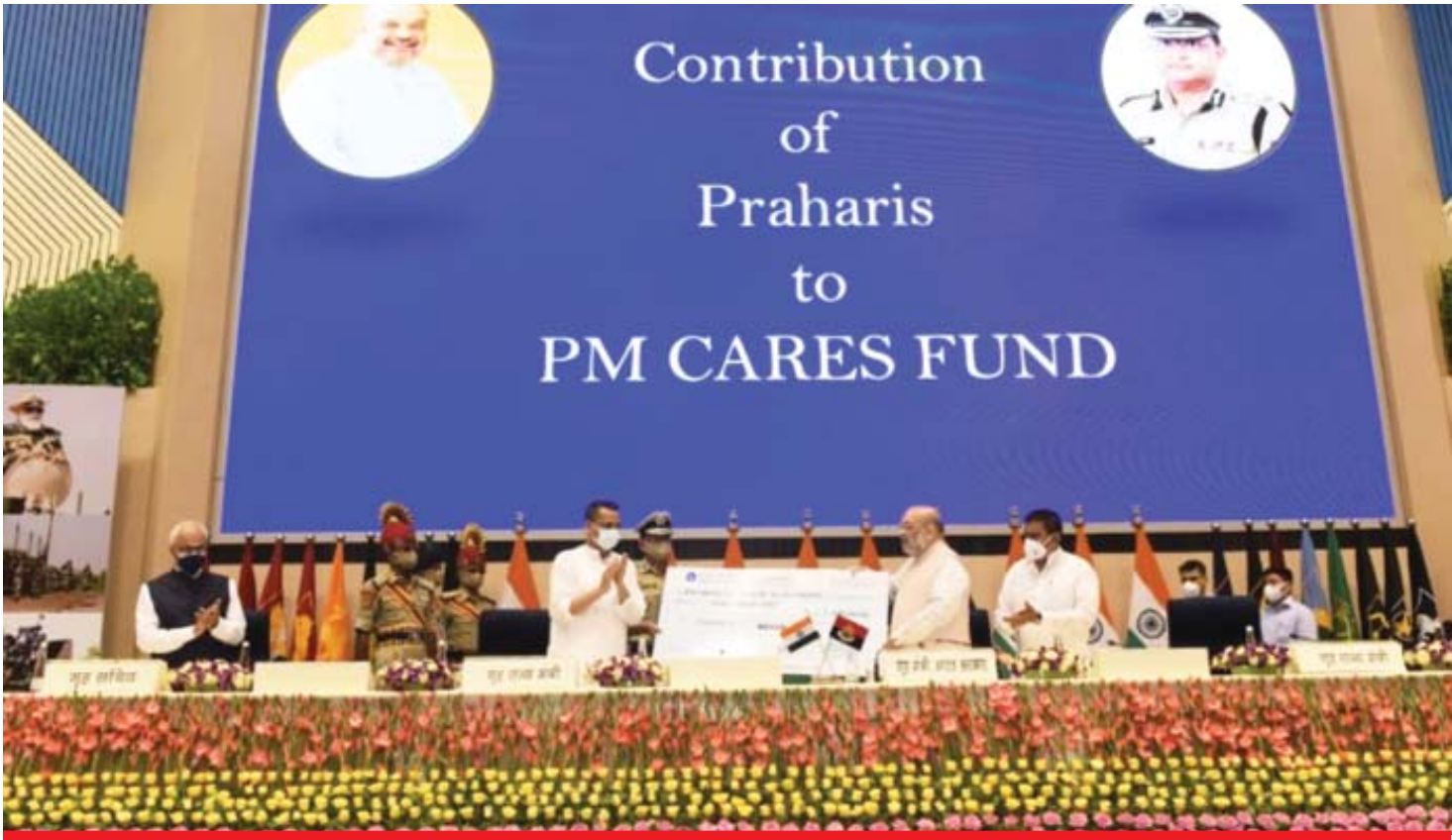
“Together with the Youth Job Connection program, the Digital Jobs Strategy partnership will help youth just like me. They will learn important skills that they won’t learn anywhere else, including looking for work in the digital age,” Adeola Thompson, COSTI Employment Services Client, said.

“We are excited to facilitate economic growth in Ontario through our learning, labour market insights, and recruiting products,” said Mark Lobosco, Vice President of LinkedIn Talent Solutions, “Together, we can create more equal access to opportunity through learning and skills and help prepare Ontarians for the jobs of today and tomorrow.” This partnership aligns with Ontario’s efforts to quickly re-skill laid-off workers, reach traditionally under-represented groups and support the talent needs of small businesses. It will also provide employment services organizations with access to local labour market data to ensure workers are building skills reflected in local job postings. Employment service providers will also be able to use the platform’s employer outreach tools to build relationships with local employers to connect workers with job placements more quickly.

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# INDIA TO GET INDIGENOUS ANTI-DRONE TECHNOLOGY SOON: AMIT SHAH

**NEW DELHI, (IANS)** The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and other agencies are working together to develop an indigenous counter-drone technology which will be available soon, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Saturday. The Home Minister's statement came days after a drone attack on Jammu Air Force base last month. Two Indian Air Force personnel suffered minor injuries in the explosions that took place a little before 2 a.m. at the high security airport located around 14 km from the border with Pakistan on June 27. As per sources, drones have since been repeatedly spotted hovering over military installations in the region and over 250 drones have been sighted along the border with Pakistan since 2019. Noting that smuggling of drugs, arms, and explosives through tunnels and drones is a major challenge, Shah said it is very important for us to deal with these challenges at the earliest. "DRDO is working to develop anti-drone 'swadeshi' (indigenous) technology to get over this new danger. We have given all support to anti-drone research and development projects. I am confident that we will soon improve anti-drone technology," Shah said while addressing the 18th Border Security Force (BSF) Investiture Ceremony. "Use of Artificial Intelligence by groups across border against India could happen. Working to defeat that too." Shah reminded top security officers at the investiture ceremony that it is their responsibility to find new technology with the help of experts to help India deal with the threat of the use of Artificial Intelligence and robotics technology by enemies and terrorists. Intelligence Bureau chief Arvinda Kumar, Research and Analysis Wing head Samant Goel, BSF Director General Rakesh Asthana and heads of other central police forces attended the ceremony. The Home Minister also made it clear that "India wants peace but security policy is clear to give answer in the same language as the enemy understands".

## DISMISSED CONGRESS LEADER NIKHIL SAWANI JOINS AAP

Former vice-president of Gujarat Pradesh Youth Congress, Nikhil Sawani, who was dismissed from the party on July 8, joined Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Monday. Sawani, known to be a close aide of Congress leader Hardik Patel, became a poster boy of Patidar reservation movement in Gujarat. Addressing the mediapersons, Sawani said, "My purpose of joining the AAP is to work for youths, women and men in the state and bring them justice. The Congress has a major problem of groupism of which I have become a victim." Nikhil Sawani said, "It was Ashwin Sakdasariya from Surat and me who had began Patidar movement in 2015. To create awareness among the Patidar people, we took the help of the social media and got an immense response. Later leaders from Patidar community like Hardik Patel, Alpesh Katheirya, Dharmik Malaviya, Vishal Vasoya and others joined the movement and took it forward." He added, "I joined the BJP a few months before the assembly election in 2017 demanding that all the cases against Patidar youths be withdrawn. I remained with BJP for 14 days and then left the party after I realised that the demands would not be met. I had joined the Congress hoping that I would be able to work for the community, mostly youths. But after four years I have realised that it will never happen." AAP leader Isudan Gadhvi said, "Like Arvind Kejriwal's government in Delhi announced Rs 50,000 to the family members of those who died due to Covid-19, we will do the same, in fact raise the amount, if we form a government here. We are also planning to erect a memorial in Gandhinagar in memory of those who died of coronavirus in Gujarat."



## RED FORT TO BE SHUT FROM JULY 21 TILL I-DAY: ASI

**NEW DELHI, (IANS)** Delhi's iconic Red Fort will be shut for the public from July 21 till Independence Day celebrations on August 15 are over, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) said on Tuesday. "In exercise of the powers conferred under Rule 6 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Rules, 1959, the Director General, Archaeological Survey of India hereby direct that there shall be no entry inside the Red Fort from the morning of 21st July, 2021 to 15th August, 2021 till the Independence Day celebration is over," ASI order stated. It came after the Delhi Police in a letter on July 12 had suggested that the Red Fort be shut from July 15 in view of the Covid pandemic and security reasons. Delhi Police has already beefed up security in the capital, including near its three borders at Singhu, Tikri and Ghazipur, in view of the Monsoon Session of Parliament that commenced on Monday and run up to the Independence Day. Delhi Police Commissioner Balaji Srivastava had conducted a citywide patrol on Sunday night with over 30,000 police personnel. Stressing on the need for vigil and alertness on the part of every staff on duty in the capital, Srivastava had asked all police personnel to remain prepared 24x7, saying, "Delhi Police have been entrusted with public trust to keep the capital safe and secure. The city never sleeps, neither do we."

## GOVERNMENT STILL OPEN TO DISCUSSION WITH FARMERS' UNIONS

**NEW DELHI (IANS)** Even as the farmers continue their protest at the borders of Delhi against the three Central farm laws, the government has reiterated its stand that it is "always open to discussion with farmers' unions and will remain open to discussion with the agitating farmers to resolve the issue". "In reply to multiple questions in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday posed by various MPs, including one on 'repeal of new farm laws' by Manoj Tiwari, Adoor Prakash, Sangam Lal Gupta, Saptagiri Sankar Ulaka, Pradyut Bordoloi and Amar Singh, the government said the new farm laws -- The Farmers Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, The Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020, and The Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act, 2020 -- are intended to provide an ecosystem where the farmers can enjoy the freedom of choice relating to the sale of their produce which facilitates remunerative prices to the farmers through competitive alternative channels for selling their produce." "These farm laws will facilitate direct buying from the farmers by the traders, processors, exporters, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), agriculture co-operative societies etc., so as to facilitate farmers with better price realisation due to shortening of supply chain and reduction in marketing cost to enhance their income, the government said." "Farmers, mostly from Punjab and Haryana, had barged towards the national capital in November 2020 and since then they are carrying out a sit-in protest to demand complete repeal of the three farm laws." "Minister for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, Narendra Singh Tomar, informed the Lok Sabha that the government has engaged "actively and constantly with the agitating farmers' unions to end the protests and 11 rounds of negotiating talks have been held between the government and the agitating farmers' unions to resolve the issues".

## RESUME DIALOGUE WITH FARMERS, PUNJAB CM TO PM MODI



**CHANDIGARH, (IANS)** Citing the heightened cross-border threat and increased drone and other terrorist activities by ISI-backed groups, including plans by Khalistanioffits to target certain farmer leaders, Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Friday urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi to resume dialogue with the agitating farmers and make concerted efforts to resolve their issues. The Chief Minister has proposed to lead an all-party delegation from Punjab for discussions with the Prime Minister to find a durable and amicable solution to the vexed problem of the prolonged farmer agitation, which is threatening the social fabric of the state and impacting economic activities as well. In a letter to the Prime Minister, Amarinder Singh warned that the powers across the border "may try to play upon the charged emotions of the proud, sincere and hard-working farmers" of Punjab, which has a long and live international border. "The situation is presently under control, but I fear that provocative statements and conduct of some political parties and the emotional backlash might create law and order problems and also lead to irreversible damage to the hard-earned peace in the state," said the Chief Minister, underscoring the need for the government of India to address the genuine concerns of the farmers. The Chief Minister's letter comes amid rising resentment in Punjab on account of the three Central farm laws, which Amarinder Singh said he had asked to be reviewed even in his earlier letters of June and December 2020. The latest development comes in the backdrop of increase in drone activity along the villages falling within 5-6 km of Indo-Pak border in Punjab, with consignments of weapons and drugs being delivered into India by Pakistan. Intelligence reports also suggest that with the Assembly elections in Punjab scheduled early next year, ISI-led Khalistani and Kashmiri terror outfits are planning terrorist actions in the state in the near future. In his letter, the Chief Minister pointed out that the farmers have been agitating for the past seven months on Delhi-Haryana borders, and also in the state, demanding repeal of the farm laws and their protests have been more or less peaceful so far. "It is a little unfortunate that the multiple rounds of engagement between the Union ministers and the representatives of farmers' groups have not proved successful," he said. Besides the threat to the state's socio-economic fabric due to the unrest caused by the farm laws, the day-to-day political activities in line with people's democratic rights are also adversely affected due to the agitation, though the state government has tried its best to maintain law and order, said the Chief Minister. Highlighting some other issues and concerns of the farmers, which warrant immediate attention, Amarinder Singh referred to his demi-official letter written to Narendra Modi on September 28, 2020 through which he sought to compensate the farmers for the additional cost of managing crop residues at the rate of Rs 100 per quintal of paddy, apart from minimum support price (MSP) as residue burning always remains a no-cost option for them.

**NOT A SINGLE SHRED OF EVIDENCE TO LINK GOVT, PARTY TO PEGASUS REPORT: BJP**

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It is a new low for a party that has ruled India for more than 50 years." "There is not a single shred of evidence so far that links either the central government or BJP to this controversy. This is a case of digital spyware, and thus at least some concrete evidence in data form should be presented to vindicate the charges made by the Congress," the former IT minister said. "There could be any number of potential databases across the world that contain the numbers or names of people. How does any such database concern the government of India unless some evidence is presented? Even for the supposed leak from this database, the people who broke this story itself claim that the presence of a phone number in the database does not mean there was an attempted hack or to infect with Pegasus," Prasad said. Hitting out at the web portal (The Wire) which published the reports, Prasad said, "Yesterday, we saw a sensationalist report by a fringe news portal which is infamous for circulating fake news. However, even after days of build-up, it turned out to be a damp squib, as admitted by many people on social media." He also attacked Amnesty International and said, "Can we deny that bodies like Amnesty had a declared anti-India agenda in many ways? They withdrew from India when we asked them about their foreign funding as per law." "Those who broke the story themselves did not claim that a presence of a particular number in the database confirms that it is infected with Pegasus. It is of paramount importance to reveal all facts in front of the nation. WhatsApp very specifically contended before the Supreme Court that its data cannot be hacked by Pegasus," he said. Prasad asked why only India is being targeted for the use of spyware when 45 nations are using it. "The NSO, which is the manufacturer of Pegasus, has clearly said that its clients are mostly Western nations. So why is India being targeted in this matter? What is the story behind this? What is the twist in the tale? Some people were brought in and their names were dropped," he said. Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and Randeep Singh Surjewala held a press conference here on Monday and held the Narendra Modi government guilty of "treason", claiming that the "Centre's spyware has dismantled national security", after it emerged former party President Rahul Gandhi, among others, was one one of the potential targets of snooping using the Pegasus spyware developed by Israel's NSO Group. At least two mobile phone accounts used by Rahul Gandhi were among the 300 verified Indian numbers listed as potential targets by an official Indian client of the Israeli surveillance technology vendor, NSO Group, The Wire reported. "Shouldn't Home Minister Amit Shah, in-charge of the country's internal security, be sacked forthwith? Does this not warrant a full investigation into the role of the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and others involved," the Congress leaders asked. The Congress said that it's "shocking and sensational" that news reports disclosing illegal and unconstitutional hacking of cellphones of Constitutional functionaries, Union Cabinet ministers, present and former heads of security forces, senior leaders of the opposition, journalists, lawyers and activists reflect treasonous and inexcusable dismantling of national security by the BJP government. "Rule of law, 'fundamental right to privacy' and 'Constitutional duties' have been murdered in broad day light by the Modi government," the Congress leaders said. They further said that it is an 'unpardonable sin' that snooping and hacking of cellphones through Pegasus has given someone illegal access to the entire conversations, passwords, contact lists, text messages and live voice calls of India's security apparatus, Union ministers, opposition leaders, Supreme Court judges and others. "This is clearly treason and total abdication of national security by the Modi government, more so when a foreign company could possibly have access to this data. "And the person responsible for this is no one less than the Home Minister of India, Amit Shah. Of course, it could not be done without the consent and concurrence of the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi. This is an unforgivable sacrilege and negation of Constitutional oath by the Home Minister and the Prime Minister," the Congress leaders said in a statement.





Opposition spreading lies about Covid and shortage of vaccine: PM Modi

NEW DELHI, (IANS) Hitting out at the opposition parties, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said political rivals are spreading lies about Covid-19 and shortage of vaccine. The Prime Minister Modi asked BJP MPs to counter lies spread by the opposition parties. Prime Minister Modi was speaking at the BJP's Parliamentary Party meeting. Sources said that the Prime minister asked the party MPs to focus on highlighting the truth and tell the people about government's work in managing Covid pandemic. It is learnt that the Prime Minister said that Congress only believe in the politics of obstruction and don't want to debate and discuss. "The Prime Minister said that despite losing polls, Congress is not raising issues nor expanding its base. They only believe in the poli-

tics of obstruction and don't want to debate and discuss over issues," a BJP MP said. Prime Minister expressed concern over low rate of vaccination of frontline workers and stressed that there is no shortage of vaccine. Sources said that the Prime Minister told the party MPs that while opposition indulge in politics over pandemic, the BJP continues to serve the humanity. According to sources, the Prime Minister asked the BJP MPs to tell the truth to the people and explain the work of the government. "The Prime Minister also told us that despite losing grounds everywhere, Congress is more concerned about us than themselves," another BJP MP said. The Prime Minister also asked the BJP MPs to regularly attend the Parliament and to keep themselves updated about the issues that the opposition is likely raise on the floor of house.

INDIA TO BE FIRST COUNTRY TO HAVE DNA VACCINE: HEALTH MINISTER

NEW DELHI, (IANS) Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday said it is not correct to say that the third Covid wave will affect children as in the two waves till now children were relatively less infected. He said we will soon have vaccines for children and the clinical trials are ongoing. Mandaviya said, "Zydus Cadila has applied for Emergency Use Authorisation (EUA) for its Covid-19 vaccine and Hyderabad-based Biological E will enter the market with 7.5 crore doses of its Covid-19 vaccine by September-October." The Drugs Controller General of India will soon give approval as per norms and "India will be the first country in the world whose scientists will have developed a DNA vaccine," he said.



ONLY COURAGEOUS PEOPLE ARE WELCOME IN CONGRESS: RAHUL GANDHI



NEW DELHI, (IANS) Addressing the party's social media volunteers virtually on Friday, former Congress President Rahul Gandhi said that the party only needs courageous people and not those who are afraid of the BJP. "Bahut sare log Congress ke bahar hai jo dar nahi rahein hain, unko andar lao. Jo hamare yahan dar rahein hain, unko bahar nikalo (There are many outside the party who are not scared. Bring them into the Congress. Remove those from the party who are scared)," he said. "We need brave and courageous people, this is our ideology," he said. Rahul Gandhi's clear message comes in the wake of many state leaders flexing their muscles. It is also an indication that the party will not give in to arm twisting. Some feel that the Congress leader was reacting to Jitin Prasada leaving the Congress for the BJP recently. Prasada was considered close to the Gandhi family. The comments came at a time when Congress is busy handling the Punjab crisis, besides managing infighting in the party in a number of states, a year before six states — Uttarakhand, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Manipur and Gujarat — go to the polls.

INDIANS TO BENEFIT FROM CANADA'S FAMILY REUNIFICATION PROGRAMME

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1 Applications can be submitted online over a two-week period, starting September 20. Using the random selection process, those whose applications are accepted would be allowed to bring their parents and grandparents to Canada. Since the sponsors have to show a certain minimum income requirement, the Canadian government has allowed them to include state benefits received during the Covid lockdown towards their income. This will ensure that applicants are not penalized for lost income during the pandemic. Unveiling the programme, Canadian Immigration Minister Marco E.L. Mendicino said, "The importance of family has never been clearer than during the pandemic. That is why we are delivering on our commitment to helping more families reunite in Canada. "By strengthening the Parents and Grandparents Programme, inviting a record number of sponsors to apply, and by adjusting our requirements to adapt to the current times, we are once again proving our commitment to helping Canadian families stay together, and thrive together."



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## 4TH WAVE HITS FRANCE, TOUGHER SANCTIONS ANNOUNCED

**PARIS, (IANS)** A fourth wave of the Covid-19 pandemic has hit France which is spreading at "lightning" speed, government spokesman Gabriel Attal said and also announced tougher sanctions on non-compliance with the health pass rules. "We are seeing a wave faster than all the previous ones," Attal said while addressing a press conference late on Monday. He noted that the incidence rate has spiked by nearly 125 per cent in one week, "an increase so strong, so sudden that we had never known since the beginning of the epidemic in our country", reports Xinhua news agency. "For several days we have crossed the threshold of 10,000 positive cases every day. This virus contaminates at lightning speed." The Delta variant now accounts for 80 per cent of the overall infections in France, he added. The overall caseload and death toll currently stood at 5,931,923 and 111,678.




**UN Secretary-General Guterres warns against tensions in Old City Jerusalem**


**JERUSALEM, (IANS)** UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has warned against new tensions in the Old City of Jerusalem between Jews and Muslims. "The Secretary-General is following with concern the heightened tensions in and around the Holy Sites of the Old City of Jerusalem," Xinhua news agency quoted Farhan Haq, Guterres' deputy spokesman, as saying on Monday. "He (Guterres) underscores that the status quo must be upheld and fully respected. He calls upon community, religious and political leaders on all sides to refrain from provocative action and rhetoric, in the interest of peace and stability," said Haq. At least 1,300 Jews on Sunday visited the flashpoint Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in East Jerusalem to mark the Jewish holy day of Tisha B'Av, despite tensions between Palestinians and Israeli police. The Al-Aqsa Mosque compound is a site holy to both Muslims and Jews, the latter of whom call it the Temple Mount. Israel captured East Jerusalem in the 1967 war and annexed it shortly later, claiming it part of its "indivisible" capital, in a move unrecognised by most of the international community.



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