

BRAMPTON CENTRE MP RAMESHWAR SANGHA REMOVED FROM LIBERAL CAUCUS AFTER MAKING ACCUSATIONS IN AN INTERVIEW WITH Y MEDIA ON CHANNEL Y



DETAILS ON PAGE 4

PRIME MINISTER JUSTIN TRUDEAU SPEAKS WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA JOE BIDEN

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau spoke with the President of the United States of America, Joe Biden. The two leaders agreed to meet next month in order to advance the important work of renewing the deep and enduring friendship between Canada and the United States. The Prime Minister and the President recognized that both countries' fundamental priority is to end the global COVID-19 pandemic. They discussed collaboration on vaccines and acknowledged that the two countries' efforts are strengthened by existing exchanges of medical personnel and the flow of critical medical supplies. The two leaders discussed working closely together to defeat COVID-19 by responding to new variants and following expert advice.



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'JAI HIND', MODI WISHES NATION ON REPUBLIC DAY

NEW DELHI (IANS) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday extended his greetings to the citizens of India as the country marked its 72nd Republic Day. In a tweet both in English and Hindi, the Prime Minister said: "Wishing all the people of India a Happy Republic Day... Jai Hind." On this day in 1950, the Constitution of India came into force. The Prime Minister is scheduled to visit the National War Memorial near the India Gate later in the day, from where he will lead the nation in paying solemn tributes to the fallen heroes by laying a wreath. Thereafter, the Prime Minister and other dignitaries will head to the saluting dais at Rajpath to witness the 90-minute-long Republic Day parade ceremony.



US APPLAUDS 'TRUE FRIEND' INDIA FOR GIFTING COVID VACCINE TO SEVERAL COUNTRIES

WASHINGTON: Terming India a "true friend" which is using its pharmaceutical sector to help the global community, the US has applauded New Delhi for gifting COVID-19 vaccines to several countries. In the last few days, India has sent consignments of domestically produced coronavirus vaccines under grant assistance to Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Mauritius and Seychelles. It is also undertaking commercial supplies of the doses to a number of countries, including Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Brazil and Morocco.



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FARMERS' VIOLENCE ON R-DAY A WELL-PLANNED CONSPIRACY: BJP

NEW DELHI (IANS) The BJP on Tuesday said there was a well-planned conspiracy behind the farmers' tractor parade turning violent in the national capital, leading to disturbance in the law and order situation. According to BJP leaders, a violent demonstration was planned on the occasion of the nation's 72nd Republic Day to tarnish the image of the country, and the farmers' leaders will have to take full responsibility for this violence.



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BKU ACCUSES DELHI POLICE OF NEGLIGENCE, CONDEMNS HOISTING FLAG AT RED FORT

NEW DELHI (IANS) The Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) on Tuesday condemned the hoisting of a flag at the historic Red Fort in the heart of the national capital and accused the Delhi Police of "negligence" as they did not support the farmers' protest. Speaking to IANS after returning from the tractor rally, BKU spokesperson Rakesh Tikait said, "Whatever happened today was due to the negligence on the part of Delhi Police. They did not support us and they were unable to control the huge number of farmers."



CONTD. ON PAGE 4

REPUBLIC DAY CELEBRATIONS: INDIA DISPLAYS MILITARY MIGHT, DIVERSITY

NEW DELHI (IANS) India's military might, cultural diversity, social and economic progress were displayed during the 72nd Republic Day celebrations at the majestic Rajpath in New Delhi on Tuesday. Representing India's strides in indigenous defence technologies, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) contingent this year consisted of two tableaux depicting among others Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-Take off from INS Vikramaditya. Indian Army displayed main battle Tank T-90 Bhishma, infantry combat vehicle Ballway Machine Pikate (BMP-II) -- Sarath, Mobile Autonomous Launcher of the Brahmos Missile system, Pinaka Multi Launcher Rocket System and Samvijay Electronic Warfare System and others. The other marching contingents of the Army included the Jat Regiment, the Garhwal Regiment, the Mahar Regiment, the Jammu and Kashmir Rifles Regiment, the Bengal Sappers and the Territorial Army. Indian Navy in addition to tableau murals depicted Pakistan Army surrendering, a Petya class ship and Operation X undertaken by divers of Indian Navy and Mukti Bahini and some other ships which took part in the 1971 India-Pakistan War. The Naval contingent comprised 96 sailors and four officers led by Lieutenant Commander Lalit Kumar as Contingent Commander. It was followed by the Naval Tableau titled 'Swarnim Vijay Varsh'. The Indian Air Force showcased Mi-17 V5, Chinook and Apache helicopters and newly inducted fighter aircraft. The Air Force contingent, comprising 96 airmen and four officers, was

led by Flight Lieutenant Tanik Sharma. It was followed by the Air Force Tableau titled 'Indian Air Force: Touch the Sky with Glory'. The Air Force tableau showcased scaled down models of Light Combat Aircraft, Light Combat Helicopter, Su-30 MK-I aircraft and Rohini radar against a sky-blue background. The smartly attired officers in their flying overalls stood alongside the models. Thirty-two tableau -- 17 from states and union territories, nine from various ministries, departments and paramilitary forces and six from the defence ministry, depicting the nation's rich cultural heritage, economic progress and defence prowess rolled down the Rajpath. School children performed folk arts and crafts displaying skills and dexterity handed down from generations; Bajasal, one of the most beautiful folk dances of Kalahandi, Odisha; Fit India Movement, Aatmanirbhar Bharat. The 122-member proud contingent of the Bangladesh Armed Forces comprising soldiers of the Bangladesh Army, sailors of the Bangladesh Navy and Air Warriors of the Bangladesh Air Force lead the contingent march on the Rajpath. The Bangladesh contingent carried the legacy of legendary Muktiyoddhas of Bangladesh, who fought against oppression and mass atrocities and liberated Bangladesh in 1971. The grand event culminated with Rafale aircraft flying at a speed of 900 kilometre per hour carrying out a 'Vertical Charlie'.



CONSUL GENERAL OF INDIA APOORVA SRIVASTAVA ADDRESSING THE DIASPORA ON REPUBLIC DAY VIRTUAL CELEBRATIONS AT THE INDIAN CONSULATE IN TORONTO.

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AS SOON AS THERE IS CERTAINTY IN DELIVERIES AND AS SOON AS WE CAN START RECEIVING REGULAR SHIPMENTS OF VACCINES FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, IT'LL BE FULL STEAM AHEAD. IT'S OUR HOPE THAT BY THE SUMMER, EVERYONE WHO WANTS A VACCINE WILL BE ABLE TO GET A VACCINE - PREMIER FORD.

A TIMELINE: HOW THINGS TURNED VIOLENT IN DELHI ON R-DAY

NEW DELHI (IANS) Farmers, who were seen as friendly and peaceful for more than 60 days as they waited for government to accept their terms, suddenly left behind a trail of vandalism, violence, holliganism as they hoisted their flags at the 17th century iconic Red Fort after running amok through the capital clashing with the police personnel in several parts of the national capital.

IANS brings the entire timeline of the farmers proposed 'Kisan Gantantra parade' that turned violent unexpectedly and went from peaceful to bloody becoming "Occupy Delhi" movement in no time.

7 a.m.: Delhi-Haryana Tikri border: Farmers enter the national capital after breaking barricades.

8.30 a.m.: Delhi-Haryana Singhu border: Thousands of farmers enter Delhi after breaking barricades at Singhu border.

9.30 a.m.: Delhi-Uttar Pradesh Ghazipur border: Hundreds of farmers driving tractors, motorcycles and cars enter Delhi.

10 a.m.: Farmers clash with Delhi Police personnel near Sanjay Gandhi Transport Nagar. Police fires tear gas shells on the agitating farmers at Sanjay Gandhi Transport Nagar.

10.30 a.m.: Farmers clash with Delhi Police personnel near Akshardham intersection. Farmers damage the vehicles parked on the road and also damaged DTC buses near Akshardham intersection.

11 a.m.: Police fires tear gas shells and resort to mild lathi-charge. While some farmers armed with swords clash with police. Farmers move towards Sarai Kale Khan after deviating from the route assigned to them before the conclusion of the Republic Day parade at Rajpath.

The Farmer Ganatantra Rally was scheduled for 12 to 5 p.m.

12 p.m.: Farmers clash with Police near Mukarba Chowk. Farmers reach near ITO intersection in central Delhi and damage vehicles and DTC buses. Farmers also attack police personnel. Police fires several rounds of tear gas shells and resort to lathi-charge on multiple occasions.

Farmers chase police with their tractors, again damage several DTC buses near ITO as they are prevented from moving towards the Red Fort. Hundreds of famers riding tractors, bikes and cars reach Red Fort portico and enter its premises and hoist the farmer union flags and saffron pennant with a Sikh religious symbol on the first rampart of the iconic 17th century monument.

1 p.m.: A farmer named Navneet Singh dies after a tractor in which he was travelling turns turtle. However, the farmers claimed that he was shot dead. Farmers sit with the dead body at ITO over the death of the farmer. Police enters Red Fort premises and tries to remove the farmer union flags. This is exactly from where Prime Minister hoists the national flag every year on Independence Day.

2.30 p.m.: Farmers keep on clashing with police personnel near ITO intersection as well as Red Fort -- there's stone pelting. Thousands of farmers from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh have been camping at the several borders of the national capital since November 26 last year demanding the repealing of the three farm laws. Eleven rounds of talks of farmers with the farmers in last two months have remained inconclusive.

FIRST OFFICIAL TALKS BETWEEN MODI, JOE BIDEN GOVERNMENTS, BOTH REAFFIRM FOCUS ON INDO PACIFIC



New US defence secretary Lloyd Austin and the Indian defence Minister Rajnath Singh spoke on Wednesday, in what is the first official and public contact between the Indian govt and the new Biden administration. The talks that started around 7.30 pm IST on Wednesday, lasted for around 20 minutes. During the call, which was made from the US side, there was a reaffirmation of the Indo Pacific vision, backed by both Washington and Delhi. The Indian government readout said, "During the telephonic talk, they reaffirmed their commitment to work together to strengthen the multifaceted India - US defence cooperation and the strategic partnership. Raksha Mantri and Secretary Austin discussed bilateral, regional and global issues." Rajnath Singh also tweeted about the talks, saying that India reiterated its firm commitment to deepen ties with the US. "Spoke

with my US counterpart Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin and conveyed my warm wishes on his appointment. We reiterated our firm commitment to deepen India-US defence cooperation. We exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest to strengthen our strategic partnership," the tweet read. The fact that the US side reaffirmed its position on Indo Pacific, show no change of sentiment in Washington on the vision. It is given that China remained another focus area of the talks. The call comes a few days after the US Senate confirmed Austin as the US Defense Secretary. He is the first black defence secretary of US. Austin has so far spoken to his counterparts from Canada, Australia, South Korea, Japan, UK, Nato chief Jens Stoltenberg.

INDIA DISPATCHES COVISHIELD VACCINES TO BAHRAIN, SRI LANKA

Emerging as a reliable partner in COVID-19 assistance in Asia by sending coronavirus vaccines to multiple countries, India on Thursday dispatched the vaccines to Bahrain and Sri Lanka. In the past, India has sent the vaccines to several countries including Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives. Under the government's Vaccine Maitri initiative, Sri Lanka will be provided with a consignment of 50,400 doses of vaccines while Bahrain will receive 10,800 doses. The consignment was loaded to the cargo aircraft at Mumbai airport which left at 7:55 for Manama. For Colombo, the consignment left at 9 am. Bahrain had earlier approved Covishield to support its efforts towards vaccinating members at risk of developing complications from COVID-19. Meanwhile, India has supplied COVID-19 vaccines to neighbouring countries including Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Bangladesh under Neighbourhood First policy. India's Ministry of External Affairs on Tuesday had announced vaccine rollout for several countries from January 20. India sees international cooperation in the area of fight against COVID-19 pandemic as its duty; New Delhi has played the role of the first responder in the region.



US APPLAUDS 'TRUE FRIEND' INDIA FOR GIFTING COVID VACCINE TO SEVERAL COUNTRIES

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"We applaud India's role in global health, sharing millions of doses of COVID-19 vaccine in South Asia. India's free shipments of vaccine began with the Maldives, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal and will extend to others," the South and Central Asia Bureau of the US State Department tweeted on Friday.

"India's a true friend using its pharma to help the global community," it said.

Known as the 'pharmacy of the world', India produces 60 per cent of vaccines globally. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had said that India's vaccine production and delivery capacity would be used for the benefit of all humanity in fighting the coronavirus crisis. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Gregory Meeks also commended India's support to its neighbouring countries to fight the pandemic.

"I commend India's efforts to help its neighbours by providing them with free COVID-19 vaccines. Global challenges like the pandemic require both regional and global solutions," Meeks said. The US media also praised India's support to the global community in this health crisis.

According to a Washington Post report, India is giving away millions of coronavirus vaccine doses as a tool of diplomacy.

"The Indian government has sent free doses to Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives—more than 3.2 million in total. Donations to Mauritius, Myanmar and Seychelles are set to follow. Sri Lanka and Afghanistan are next on the list," it noted. "The shipments reflect one of India's unique strengths: It is home to a robust vaccine industry, including Serum Institute of India, one of the world's largest vaccine makers," the report said.

Meanwhile, India's Ambassador to the US, Taranjit Singh Sandhu, thanked the state department for recognising India's efforts to support the global community to combat the coronavirus pandemic. Quoting Prime Minister Modi, he tweeted on Friday night, "India is deeply honoured to be a long-trusted partner in meeting the health-care needs of the global community."

How the situation turned ugly at Red Fort



NEW DELHI (IANS) The farmers movement that had been peaceful for the last two months turned violent on Republic Day on Tuesday after scores of protesters deviated from the designated route for the proposed tractor rally.

After a clash between the farmers and the police at the ITO intersection where hundreds of protesters were seen chasing police personnel with sticks and ramming their tractors into the buses, they headed towards the Red Fort at around 1 p.m.

Hundreds of farmers on their tractors with flags raising 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisaan' slogans reached central Delhi from different parts of the national capital and ultimately made their way to the Red Fort after breaching all the barricades on the way.

The farmers swarmed the Red Fort at around 1.45 p.m. and waved flags from the ramparts of the 17th century monument. They even hoisted the Nishan Sahib flag on a flagpole inside the Red Fort, while some Nihangs were seen waving their swords from the dome of the historic monument.

Later the police were seen removing the flag while trying to disperse the protesters from Red Fort, resorting to lathi-charge which resulted in clashes between the two sides.

There was complete mayhem at the site as the agitators refused to budge and continued to raise slogans in support of the farmers' cause, often indulging in clashes with the police, which seemed to be outnumbered by the protesters.

At around 3.30 p.m., hundreds of protesters were seen chasing the cops with sticks and rods which left several police personnel injured. The protesters were also seen pelting stones at the police personnel besides destroying public property.

The protest went out of control for some time but later heavy deployment of the CRPF brought the situation under control to some extent. The protesters finally started to vacate the spot at around 5.15 p.m., after laying siege at the iconic monument for over two hours.

Soon after the unexpected scenes at the Red Fort, the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, an umbrella body of farmers' unions protesting against the three Central farm laws, issued a statement, distancing itself from the 'violent elements'.

The farmers' union said, "We condemn and regret the undesirable and unacceptable events that have taken place today and dissociate ourselves from those indulging in such acts."

The farmers were supposed to remain in the areas adjoining the Delhi borders and not venture towards central Delhi, but they violated all the agreements and guidelines given to them.



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Thousands of people continue to pass through Pearson every week without being tested, creating a real risk to all Ontarians.

That's why, in addition to pre-departure testing, we're asking the federal government to adopt mandatory testing upon arrival for all international travellers and impose a temporary ban on flights coming from countries where new COVID-19 strains are being detected.

—PREMIER DOUG FORD



WE'RE CALLING ON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO ADOPT MANDATORY TESTING UPON ARRIVAL FOR ALL INTERNATIONAL TRAVELLERS. ONE CASE COMING IN FROM ABROAD IS ONE TOO MANY. "UNTIL VACCINES ARE WIDELY AVAILABLE, WE ALL NEED TO DO OUR PART & THAT MEANS TIGHTER CONTROLS AT OUR BORDER - PREMIER DOUG FORD

Brampton Centre MP Rameshwar Sangha removed from Liberal Caucus after making accusations in an interview with Y media on Channel Y



POOJA LUTHRA

MP for Mississauga- Malton and former Minister of Innovation, Science, and Industry, Navdeep Bains' decision to leave his cabinet position surely bewildered everyone, but that was not the case for Brampton Centre MP Rameshwar Singh Sangha.

75-years-old MP Sangha, during a panel discussion with Y Media on Channel Y, said he 'was not that much astonished,' by claiming that Bains is sympathetic to 'Khalistani views'.

"As I reflect, if someone states I am an extremist or a Khalistani, are leaders with extremist ideas fit to be ministers? I have my doubts," he said. After these claims were made in the interview, Sangha was removed from the Liberal Party caucus as he was apprehended of making a groundless claim about his colleagues.

A statement from Mark Holland, a chief government whip, said after consultation with the Prime Minister about the "baseless and dangerous" accusations, they arrived at the decision to remove MP Sangha from the caucus.

"As we have made clear time and time again, we will not tolerate conspiracy theories or dangerous and unfounded rhetoric about Parliamentarians or other Canadians," the statement said. "Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for many Canadians to experience suspicions because of their background; we all know where this can lead."

Former Minister Bains in an earlier interview with Y media said he decided to leave politics as he wants to spend more time with his family. Sangha did not stop then and there. He openly declared himself to be 'no longer a bonded- Liberal but a liberated (Azad) Liberal now'.

Group Editor Yudhvir Jaswal kept on repeatedly challenging MP Sangha that there is no evidence to suggest that former Minister Bains is a Khalistani sympathizer. Yudhvir Jaswal also said that actually there is no Cabinet Minister or MP who supports Khalistan. "I have never heard any Indo Canadian Politician saying anything in support of Khalistan" First elected in 2015 and then reelected in 2019, Sangha now sits as an Independent Member of Parliament in the House of Commons. MP Sangha could not be reached for a response.

TEN POINTERS ON TRACTOR RALLY VIOLENCE AFTERMATH, DELHI POLICE NAMES DEEP SIDHU

Farmer unions protesting against the new farm laws have all distanced themselves from those who went inside the Red Fort and hoisted the Khalsa flag. They claimed that none of the unions had any plan to 'invade' the Capital on Republic Day. Farmer unions on Wednesday also called off their proposed march to the Parliament on February 1, in view of Republic Day violence. Meanwhile, the Delhi Police Commissioner S N Shrivastava on Wednesday said that the farmer leaders were also involved in the violence. He said, "As per the agreement, we wanted the rally to conclude peacefully. The violence occurred because terms & conditions were not followed." In his press conference, Delhi Police Commissioner SN Shrivastava said that 19 accused have been arrested and 50 people have been detained.

Two farmer unions, Rashtriya Kisan Mazdoor Sangathan and Bharatiya Kisan Union (Bhanu) have separated themselves from the ongoing farmer protests at Delhi borders.

TEN POINTS ON FARMERS' TRACTOR RALLY VIOLENCE

A section of farm leaders have accused Punjabi actor and activist Deep Sidhu of instigating the clashes and planting a Sikh religious flag at the Red Fort.

The Delhi Police is investigating farmer leaders as part of their probe into the violence on Republic Day. Notice has been sent to farmer leader Darshan Pal of Samyukt Kisan Morcha for alleged violation of the agreement with the police regarding the route and time of the rally.

The Samyukt Kisan Morcha has reiterated the "conspiracy" angle and distanced itself from Tuesday's violence.

Centre gave a stern warning on the unfortunate incident that unfolded on Tuesday. "Action should be taken against all of those who instigated others. India won't tolerate the manner in which the Tricolour was insulted at the Red Fort," said Union minister Prakash Javadekar.

The Congress said Union Home Minister Amit Shah was responsible for the violence.

At a press conference on Wednesday evening, Delhi police commissioner S N Shrivastava said farmer unions did not follow the conditions set for the tractor rally that was supposed to be held from noon to 5 pm or follow the designated route.

Nineteen people have been arrested in connection with the violence in which 394 police personnel have been injured, the Delhi Police said. Fifty people have been detained and are being questioned. Action has been taken against 300-odd Twitter accounts since Tuesday.

COVERING 7000 KMS, THREE MORE RAFALE FIGHTER JETS LAND IN INDIA FROM FRANCE

The third batch of three Rafale fighter jets landed at an IAF base in India from France after a non-stop flight. The IAF tweeted, "The third batch of three Rafale aircraft landed at an IAF base a short while ago. They flew over 7000Km with in-flight refuelling. The aircraft got airborne earlier in the day from #IstresAirBase in France. IAF deeply appreciates the tanker support provided by UAE Air Force." The Multi-Role Tanker Transport (MRTT) of the United Arab Emirates provided mid-air refuelling to the three Rafale jets, according to the Indian Embassy in France.

IAF has now inducted 11 of the 36 twin-engine Rafales, which are also capable of delivering nuclear weapons, under the Rs 59,000 crore deal inked with France in September 2016. All 36 will be delivered by end-2022.

The first batch of five Rafale jets arrived in India on July 29, 2020, nearly four years after India signed an inter-governmental agreement with France to procure 36 of the aircraft at a cost of Rs 59,000 crore. The second batch of three Rafale jets arrived in India on November 3. The Rafale jets, manufactured by French aerospace major Dassault Aviation, are India's first major acquisition of fighter planes in 23 years after the Sukhoi jets were imported from Russia. The new fleet of Rafale jets has been carrying out sorties in eastern Ladakh.

FARMERS' VIOLENCE ON R-DAY A WELL-PLANNED CONSPIRACY: BJP

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The party said the government is ready to meet the legitimate demands of the farmers, but the farmers' leaders do not want a solution.

"The police had repeatedly warned of the possibility of violence. It also appealed to the farmer leaders not to take out the tractor parade, but no one listened. Now since violence has taken place Delhi in the guise of an agitation, some farmers' leaders are just shrugging off responsibilities," Bharatiya Janata Party national spokesperson Gopal Krishna Agarwal told IANS. "Mere condemnation (by the farmer leaders) will not work... Individuals like Rakesh Tikait and Yogendra Yadav will have to take responsibility. The violence was a part of a well-planned conspiracy," he said. Agarwal said despite the violence earlier in the day, the Delhi Police acted with patience and restraint for which the force deserves congratulations. BJP MP Manoj Tiwari said: "Whatever has happened in the name of tractor parade at Red Fort on Republic Day is a matter of shame. The entire country is sad today. In the name of tractor parade, hoodlums tried to crush the policemen. People who insult the tricolour cannot be farmers.

BKU ACCUSES DELHI POLICE OF NEGLIGENCE, CONDEMNS HOISTING FLAG AT RED FORT

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He said the farmers had urged the Delhi Police on a number of occasions to change the plan, but they kept insisting on papers.

When asked about scores of protesters entering the Red Fort and hoisting a pennant on the ramparts of the 17th century monument, Tikait said, "I don't support such activity. We will take action against those who did this."

Hundreds of farmers clashed with the security forces at the Red Fort and hoisted a pennant on the ramparts of the monument. The farmers also chased the Delhi Police personnel.

Hundreds of farmers, who earlier in the day clashed with the Delhi Police near the ITO intersection, have now returned to the Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border in Ghazipur. A farmer also died during the protest after his tractor turned turtle after hitting a barricade near ITO. The farmers have taken the body of the deceased farmer to the Ghazipur border. The police had to fire tear-gas shells and resort to lathi charge on several occasions to control the rampaging farmers, who damaged vehicles and pelted stones on the police. The farmers took out the tractor rally before the scheduled time and also deviated from the route which was agreed upon.

PRIME MINISTER JUSTIN TRUDEAU SPEAKS WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA JOE BIDEN

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The Prime Minister and President discussed their shared vision for sustainable economic recovery, creating jobs, and growing the middle class. To that end, they discussed strengthening Canada-U.S. supply chain security and resilience.

Reflecting on the extraordinary and deeply interconnected economic relationship between the two countries, and with a view to promoting and protecting it, the Prime Minister and President agreed to consult closely to avoid measures that may constrain bilateral trade, supply chains, and economic growth.

The Prime Minister raised Canada's disappointment with the United States' decision on the Keystone XL pipeline. The Prime Minister underscored the important economic and energy security benefits of our bilateral energy relationship as well as his support for energy workers. The Prime Minister and President reiterated the urgent need for ambitious action on climate change, reaffirmed their commitment to the Paris Agreement, and agreed to work together on net-zero emissions, zero-emissions vehicles, cross-border clean electricity transmission, and the Arctic. The two leaders discussed their shared commitment to promoting diversity and inclusion, including by working in partnership with Indigenous peoples.

The Prime Minister and President agreed to expand cooperation on continental defence and in the Arctic, including the need to modernize NORAD, and discussed their Foreign Affairs and National Defence ministers and secretaries of State and Defense meeting at the earliest opportunity.

The Prime Minister and President reaffirmed their shared values and interests on the global stage. The two leaders discussed the arbitrary detention of Michael Kovrig and Michael Spavor and agreed to work together. The leaders reiterated their firm commitment to multilateral institutions and alliances. The Prime Minister raised the importance of the softwood lumber industry, and urged the removal of duties. Prime Minister Trudeau, President Biden and their respective teams look forward to further discussing their expanding cooperation at their upcoming meeting.

'NO ONE WILL BE SPARED,' SAYS DELHI POLICE COMMISSIONER

A day after the Farmers' tractor rally turned violent and clashes erupted with the police personnel in the National Capital, marring the Republic Day celebrations, the Delhi police held a press conference on Wednesday. Earlier in the day, Delhi Police registered 22 FIRs in connection with the violence that broke out during the farmers' tractor parade in the national capital leaving over 300 policemen injured, officials said. In his press conference, Delhi Police Commissioner SN Shrivastava said that 19 accused have been arrested and 50 people have been detained. They are being questioned. Shrivastava said, "By January 25 evening, it came to fore that they (farmers) were not keeping their words. They brought forward aggressive & militant elements who occupied the stage & delivered provocative speeches that made their intentions clear." He further added that keeping in mind the interests of the security of the people of Delhi, it was decided that some terms & conditions be imposed, it was given to them in writing. The rally was to last from 12pm to 5pm and was to be led by farmer leaders accompanying with their groups. Police Commissioner said that more than 25 criminal cases have been registered by the Delhi Police. "We are using the facial recognition system and taking the help of CCTV and video footage to identify the accused. No culprit will be spared."

IMAGES OF THE UK'S CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK, AS THE COUNTRY NEARS 100,000 COVID DEATHS:



ONTARIO ADJUSTS VACCINATION PLAN IN RESPONSE TO PFIZER-BIONTECH SHIPMENT DELAYS

VACCINATIONS FOR THE PROVINCE'S MOST VULNERABLE TO BE ACCELERATED

TORONTO — The Ontario government is accelerating the vaccination of residents in long-term care, high-risk retirement, and First Nations elder care homes by a new target date of February 5, 2021. To protect access to second doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for those who have already received their first dose, Ontario will maintain the maximum interval of 21-27 days for long-term care, retirement and First Nations elder care home resident groups and up to 42 days between the two doses for all other groups. These adjustments are being made following notification by the federal government of reductions in Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine shipments.

Details were provided today by Premier Doug Ford, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Solicitor General Sylvia Jones, and General Rick Hillier (retired), Chair of the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force.

"Due to the delay in the next shipment of Pfizer vaccine doses, we are ensuring all available supplies are redirected to those who need them most: our residents in long-term care and retirement homes," said Premier Ford. "I know this will mean that some people may have to reschedule their vaccine appointments, but it is critical that our most vulnerable seniors receive the protection they need as soon as possible."

On January 19, 2021, the federal government notified the province of further reductions in Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine shipments. Ontario will not receive vaccine deliveries for the week of January 25, 2021 and will receive just over 26,000 doses for the first weeks of February. As of today, Ontario has not been provided its allocation for the weeks of February 8, 2021 and February 15, 2021, creating further uncertainty for the province's vaccine rollout.

In response to the significant reduction in distribution by the federal government and the uncertainty of future shipments, the province and vaccination sites have worked together to develop a plan to accelerate vaccination of the province's most vulnerable. Second doses will continue to be administered based on availability of supply provided by the federal government. Actions being taken include: Accelerate vaccination of the most vulnerable populations across Ontario with the goal of visiting each home in the province to administer first doses by February 5, 2021, pending week of February 1, 2021 delivery dates. Doses of the Moderna vaccine will be reallocated to 14 public health units to ensure vaccines are administered at each long-term care home in the province. "Despite ongoing challenges with supply, together with our partners, we continue to vaccinate our most vulnerable as quickly as possible, and we continue to be ready to administer vaccines to Ontarians as soon as we receive them from the federal government," said Minister Elliott. "Until there is sufficient supply to vaccinate every Ontarian who wants to receive one, we continue to urge everyone to stay home and continue to follow public health measures." Ontario's initiative to vaccinate northern, remote First Nations communities will also continue. To date, 760 doses have been delivered by Ornge to Sioux Lookout, with 568 doses administered by Sioux Lookout Meno Ya Win Health Centre and 45 doses admin-

istered by Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority (SLFNHA). Ornge has also delivered 680 doses to communities across James Bay Coast, with 575 doses administered or scheduled to be administered to remote fly-in First Nations communities, including 100 staff at Weeneebayko Area Health Authority (WAHA) vaccinated with a first dose. In February, Ornge will lead Operation Remote Immunity, to rollout the vaccine to 31 fly-in communities.

"We are working diligently with our partners to ensure vaccines continue to reach our Phase 1 priority populations, despite limited supplies from the Federal Government," said Solicitor General Sylvia Jones. "It is critical that Ontarians continue to follow public health measures to ensure we limit the spread of COVID-19 and keep our communities safe." The government is ready to administer the COVID-19 vaccine and expand the number of vaccination sites as soon as doses are received. Ontario has capacity to vaccinate nearly 40,000 people per day and is building capacity to triple or quadruple that capacity pending federal government supply.

"We continue to push forward with our vaccination efforts across the province to ensure our frontline health care workers, remote First Nations and vulnerable populations are protected," said General (Ret'd) Rick Hillier. "We will be ready to ramp up our efforts once again when more doses become available."

Today, the government extended the declared provincial emergency for another 14 days. The declaration of emergency made under section 7.0.1 of the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (EMCPA), originally declared on January 12, 2021, will now expire on February 9, 2021, unless extended further. All orders under the EMCPA, including O. Reg 11/21 (Stay-at-Home Order), O. Reg 8/21 (Enforcement of COVID-19 Measures) and O. Reg 13/21 (Residential Evictions) were also extended. Orders under the Reopening Ontario Act (ROA) continue to be in force.

QUICK FACTS

Ontario is committed to vaccinating residents in long-term care and high-risk retirement homes as quickly as vaccines are received. To date, the first round of vaccinations have been completed, for those who are willing and eligible, in all long-term care homes in Toronto, Peel, York, Windsor-Essex, Durham, Halton, Hamilton, Niagara, Ottawa, and Simcoe-Muskoka regions.

To protect access to second doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for those who have already received their first dose, Ontario will maintain the maximum interval of 21-27 days for long-term care, retirement and First Nations elder care home resident groups and up to 42 days between the two doses for all other groups. These intervals are aligned with guidance provided by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI). The intervals will be adjusted down to 21-27 days as quickly as possible, once vaccine supply permits. As of January 25 at 10:00 a.m., over 287,000 vaccine doses have been administered across the province, including over 80,000 doses administered to long-term care staff and retirement home staff, over 114,000 doses administered to health care workers and over 68,000 doses administered to long-term care and retirement home residents.

Ontario Working with Multi-Sector Leaders to Improve Diversity in the Workplace

TORONTO — The Ontario government in partnership with CivicAction is bringing public, private and non-profit sector organizations together to identify concrete actions employers can take to enhance workplace opportunities for Indigenous, Black and racialized employees. During the Economic Inclusion virtual roundtable, the province's Anti-Racism Directorate and CivicAction will draw on the expertise and insights of participants to create digital tools and resources for employers, embedding equity in Ontario's COVID-19 recovery efforts.

"COVID-19 has exacerbated challenges faced by Indigenous, Black and racialized employees in the workplace, ranging from career progression obstacles to health and safety risks," said Solicitor General and Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism Sylvia Jones. "To better tackle these challenges, we are bringing together leaders across sectors to develop and share tools to help foster healthier and more equitable workplaces in Ontario."

The virtual roundtable discussion will focus on:

- Helping employers better understand the distinct experiences and challenges faced by Indigenous, Black and racialized talent in entering the workforce and advancing their careers.
- Identify promising practices and tools to help employers tap into Ontario's diverse workforce.
- "Racism is systemic and shows up in many ways and in many places including in the workplace. Practices in workplaces need to be redesigned and rebuilt for a more inclusive future economy," said Leslie Woo, CEO, CivicAction. "This roundtable will advance a collective journey to convert good intentions into tangible actions for a more equitable economic recovery."
- "Employers play a unique role in building a more inclusive province, where everyone can contribute to economic recovery and growth," said Minister Jones. "This new employer resource hub will help create workplaces that work for all."

QUICK FACTS

By 2036, racialized people are projected to account for approximately 48 per cent of Ontario's population. According to Statistics Canada, in October 2020, Canadians who belong to groups designated as racialized or Indigenous continued to have a higher unemployment rate (11.7 per cent) compared to Canadians who are not racialized or Indigenous (6.7 per cent). As an employer, the Ontario Public Service (OPS) is continuing to take action to diversify senior leadership in the organization and deliver mandatory anti-racism training. The OPS also launched a third-party review of its inclusive workplace policies and programs to better address systemic employment barriers.

CivicAction is a non-profit organization in Canada with nearly two decades of experience working to boost civic engagement and build better cities by creating and implementing effective solutions to the most pressing challenges in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area and beyond.

NEW HOURS COMING FOR OSLER'S COVID-19, COLD AND FLU CLINIC AND TESTING CENTRE AT PEEL MEMORIAL



BRAMPTON: As the number of COVID-19 patients in need of hospitalization remains high, William Osler Health System (Osler) is introducing new hours for its COVID-19, Cold and Flu Clinic and Brampton COVID-19 Testing Centre iV both located at Peel Memorial Centre for Integrated Health and Wellness iV in order to ensure continued capacity for safe, quality care delivery at its hospital sites. Effective February 1, Osler's COVID-19, Cold and Flu Clinic will open from 2:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. daily, to serve those who are eligible for COVID-19 testing and need to see a doctor without an appointment. The same day, Osler's Brampton COVID-19 Testing Centre will begin operating from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily for testing only by appointment.

The new hours allow Osler to redeploy highly skilled staff to areas of greatest need, while aligning the hospital's COVID-19 assessment and testing capacity to its peak hours of demand.

iSAs we continue to provide care to a high number of COVID-19 patients, it is important for us to optimally utilize our staffing and adapt our health care services to ensure we can serve the hospitals needs,i" said Kiki Ferrari, Chief Operating Officer, William Osler Health System. iThe new hours is one of many strategies we are employing to ensure we have the capacity to provide safe, quality care to even more patients iV if needed iV in the time ahead.i"

COVID-19 testing continues to be an essential tool to reduce the spread of the virus, and Osler works closely with Ontario Health, Public Health and Brampton Etobicoke Ontario Health Team partners to ensure sufficient COVID-19 testing is available in the community. With a number of COVID-19 Testing Centres now open in Brampton, testing is more convenient and accessible across the community. For more information about COVID-19 testing options, please visit Osler's website: williamoslerhs.ca

City of Mississauga Named One of Canada's Best Employers According to Forbes for 2021

The City of Mississauga was again recognized by Forbes as one of Canada's Best Employers in 2021; ranking among the top three per cent of all Government Services organizations in Canada and among the top 10 per cent of all 300 companies receiving recognition.

"The fact that the City of Mississauga has once again been acknowledged as a leading Canadian employer is a meaningful achievement. It is truly a reflection of the City's outstanding leadership especially during this time of uncertainty and unprecedented challenges," said Mayor Bonnie Crombie. "It is thanks to our staff, our greatest asset, and their ability to pivot, shift and deliver innovative ideas that the City has such a positive work culture that is helping attract and retain top talent." The list featured companies and corporations across Canada, including a number of Mississauga-based businesses who also received a number of accolades and recommendations.

"I am very pleased that our employees are so proud and think so highly of the City of Mississauga as an employer, especially during this time of COVID-19, that we continue to rank among the leading national employers in Canada," said Paul Mitcham, City Manager and Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). "At the City, we've been able to attract and retain a talented workforce by offering a total compensation package which includes competitive salaries and benefits, career development, corporate recognition, learning opportunities and training. We also promote a culture of work-life balance, a supportive and positive environment with growth opportunities. As responsible leaders, we're also committed to furthering equity, diversity inclusion and wellness in our workplace."

According to Forbes, the annual list is compiled by surveying 8,000 Canadians working for businesses with at least 500 employees. Forbes has partnered with a market research company to evaluate companies based on direct and indirect recommendations from employees that were asked to rate their willingness to recommend their own employers to friends and family. Employee evaluations also included other employers in their respective industries that stood out either positively or negatively.

About Mississauga

As Canada's sixth-largest city, Mississauga is home to 777,000 residents and more than 98,000 businesses, including more than 75 Fortune 500 companies with Canadian head offices or major divisional head offices. Mississauga is a diverse, progressive and award-winning municipality in the Greater Toronto Area. It's focused on delivering services, implementing its Strategic Plan, delivering value for money and maintaining infrastructure.



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HUMBER RIVER HOSPITAL MARKS THE ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST COVID19 CASE IN #ONTARIO. IN THE LAST YEAR, WE HAVE TREATED OVER 1,205 COVID PATIENTS AND DONE OVER 133K SWABS AT OUR ASSESSMENT CENTRES.

SAFETY OF SCHOOLS REMAINS PRIORITY NUMBER ONE FOR ONTARIO

MORE THAN 100,000 STUDENTS RETURN TO IN-PERSON LEARNING WITH ENHANCED SAFETY MEASURES TO PROTECT AGAINST COVID-19

TORONTO - Today, Stephen Lecce, Ontario's Minister of Education, issued the following statement to provide an update on the return to in-person learning for schools in seven Public Health Units:

"Our priority throughout this pandemic has been to keep students and staff safe. On the advice of Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and following the introduction of additional and tougher layers of protection, more than 100,000 students will return to in-person learning on January 25, 2021. Ontario has the most comprehensive and highest funded school safety plan in Canada, which includes the largest increase in teacher and staff hiring, an enhanced screening and masking policy, and the highest investment in ventilation improvements. In advance of a return to class, the government will also be implementing provincewide targeted asymptomatic testing, more comprehensive screening protocols, and mandatory masking for students in Grades 1-3 and outdoors where physical distancing cannot be maintained. These new safeguards have been informed by medical leaders and the best

available evidence in Canada.

SickKids confirmed that the return to school this past fall was successful at a time when community transmission was low. While leading medical experts have stated that schools in Ontario remain safe, with school boards reporting approximately 80% of schools at the end of last year not reporting an active case, and 99.6% of students never having reported a case of COVID-19, we will continue to review our plan and ensure it provides our schools with the latest safety measures and protocols so our students and staff have maximum protection. In areas of the province where students continue to learn remotely, the families of frontline workers will be able to access emergency child care. Our government has also listened to the voices of the special education community by directing school boards to provide in-person learning for those students who cannot learn remotely, ensuring they receive consistent and full supports. We also have strengthened mental health and special education funding for all school boards during the pandemic by \$42.5 million, including an additional \$10 million to support the needs of children who face adversity during the pandemic. I thank all parents, students, child care and education workers for their collaboration and hard work, and continue to encourage Ontarians to follow health and safety guidance so that we can reduce community transmission and get all Ontario schools open and our kids back to class."

City's 2021 Budget and 2021-2024 Business Plan to be Approved Following Region of Peel Budget Presentation



Council approval of the City of Mississauga's 2021 Budget and 2021-2024 Business Plan will follow the Region of Peel's budget approval. Regional Council discussions regarding operating and capital budgets begin on Thursday, January 28, 2021.

On November 23, 2021, City staff presented an overview of the proposed 2021 Budget and 2021-2024 Business Plan at Budget Committee. The 2021 impact from the City's portion on the residential tax bill is proposed at 1 per cent. On the commercial/industrial tax bill, the proposed amount is 0.6 per cent. This does not include impacts from Region of Peel services.

The 2021 Budget considers financial recovery strategies, outlined to Budget Committee throughout 2020, to offset budget pressures due to the pandemic. These include: Return to normal fee schedule and collection as soon as possible

No new material service level changes in 2021
Reduce discretionary spending
Critical assessment of capital expenditures
Use of reserves

Continued collaboration with other municipalities to seek assistance from higher levels of government

Increase user fees
Stormwater Charge

The Stormwater Charge funds the City's Stormwater Program. It is a dedicated source of funding separate from property taxes. The Stormwater Charge appears on the Region of Peel water bill and in 2021 the rate increase is set at 2 per cent. This means the average residence (approximately 75 per cent) will see an increase of \$2.20 or less.

For more details about City's budget and the budget process, visit mississauga.ca/budget.

Fees and Charges

The City's Budget Committee previously considered new and increased fees and charges for 2021. This included fees for Recreation and Parks, Forestry and Environment programs. Additional revenue of approximately \$1.9 million is expected from the increases and new fees. There was no increase to transit fares.

MidWeek

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FURTHER ACTION NEEDED TO PROTECT THE BORDER AND STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

ONTARIO MAKES STEADY PROGRESS TESTING TRAVELLERS AT PEARSON AIRPORT

TORONTO — Over 6,800 international travellers have been tested for COVID-19 as part of the Ontario government's voluntary and free border testing pilot program at Toronto's Pearson International Airport. This program was implemented to help quickly identify and stop the spread of COVID-19 in the province. Despite this steady progress, the province is calling on the federal government to take further action to protect the border, including mandatory testing of all incoming international passengers and a temporary ban on direct flights from countries where new variants are detected.

Details were provided today at Pearson Airport by Premier Doug Ford and Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

"While we've made steady progress through this pilot program, thousands of people continue to pass through Pearson every week without being tested, creating a real risk to all Ontarians," said Premier Ford. "That's why, in addition to pre-departure testing, we're asking the federal government to adopt mandatory testing upon arrival for all international travellers and impose a temporary ban on flights coming from countries where new COVID-19 strains are being detected. Until vaccines are widely available, we all need to do our part to stop the spread of this virus and that means tighter controls at our border."

On January 6, in partnership with the Greater Toronto Airports Authority, Ontario began offering COVID-19 testing at Pearson Airport for incoming international travellers who are staying in the province for at least 14 days. Since its launch, over 6,800 tests have been collected. For those participants that have received confirmed results from an Ontario lab, 146 cases, or 2.26 per cent, have tested positive. Participants receive their results within 24 to 48 hours of completing the test. The pilot program is working to detect positive cases even with the federal pre-departure requirement for travellers bound to Canada. Recent data shows that 1.8 per cent of all COVID cases are related to international travel.

Ontario is further calling on the federal government to strengthen enforcement of quarantine measures, including exploring new approaches that have worked in other jurisdictions, such as isolation hotels, to ensure compliance with the 14-day minimum quarantine requirement for incoming travellers.

"Ontario's border testing pilot program is helping us to trace and isolate COVID-19 cases early among travellers arriving in Ontario," said Minister Elliott. "In the meantime, we are in

continuous contact with our federal partners to advocate for further measures to stop the spread of COVID-19, protect our borders, and most importantly, the health and safety of Ontarians."

Ontario's first COVID-19 UK variant case was confirmed last month and was due to international travel. As other new variants are being detected globally, the Ontario government is calling on the federal government to impose a temporary ban on direct flights from countries where new variants are detected, including Brazil and Portugal. Banning flights with multiple stops in countries with a known variant should also be considered. This ban would be consistent with the prudent measures announced by the United Kingdom and several other countries, and the restrictions would remain in place until more is known about these new variants.

"Airport testing is yet another tool we are using to help fight the spread of COVID-19, especially with several, more contagious variants coming from other countries," said Solicitor General Sylvia Jones. "We continue to urge all Ontarians to follow public health guidelines and stay home, stay safe, and save lives." The province continues to work with the Public Health Agency of Canada and other jurisdictions to monitor the developing situation. Ontario will continue to coordinate and support efforts to protect the public to ensure all effective measures are in place, including increased staffing, enhanced screening measures and follow-up measures, as appropriate.

QUICK FACTS
Inbound international travellers can register to participate in the program at torontopearson.com/testing. Registration can be done in advance of arrival at the airport or upon arrival at Toronto Pearson airport.

Effective Thursday, January 14, 2021 at 12:01 a.m., a stay-at-home order is in effect. Ontarians are required to remain at home except for essential purposes such as food, health care, exercise, or work.

Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health strongly advises that travel out of the province should be limited to essential purposes only.

Ontario has completed over nine million COVID-19 tests to date, more tests than all Canadian provinces and territories combined.

Testing is available by appointment for those within provincial testing guidance at assessment centres, participating pharmacies and specimen collection centres. Please visit [Ontario.ca/covidtest](https://ontario.ca/covidtest) to find a testing location and for eligibility criteria to be tested.



Steven Guilbeault @ @s_guilbeault · Jan 25

Keeping you safe online is one of my priorities in this government. Like you, we believe that no Canadian should suffer from online abuse without recourse. That's why we will be introducing #OnlineHate legislation very soon.



ONTARIO EXPANDS BIG-BOX BLITZ TO OTTAWA, WINDSOR, NIAGARA AND DURHAM REGIONS

GOVERNMENT STEPPING UP INSPECTIONS TO PROTECT STAFF AND CONSUMERS

OTTAWA — The Ontario government is carrying out workplace inspections in Ottawa, Windsor, Niagara and Durham this weekend to ensure essential businesses that can continue to operate during the provincewide shutdown are following the public health guidelines. The province wants to ensure workers and customers are properly protected from COVID-19. The blitz, developed in consultation with local health units, will build on the recent provincewide inspection campaigns in the GTHA. Additionally, more than 300 provincial offences officers, as well as local public health inspectors and municipal bylaw officers, will continue to visit a variety of other workplaces such as retail establishments, restaurants providing take-out meals and essential service-sector establishments such as gas stations. "Our government is confident that the majority of workplaces in Ottawa, Windsor, Niagara and Durham are taking the necessary steps to protect their patrons and staff, while helping to reduce the spread of the pandemic," said Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development. "However, if we find that businesses are putting the safety of workers and customers at risk, our government will not hesitate to take immediate action. The only way to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and end the provincewide shutdown is for everyone — owners, customers and staff alike — to follow the proper guidelines."

Corporations can be now be fined \$1,000 for failing to comply with the

orders under the Reopening Ontario (A Flexible Response to COVID-19) Act and the Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act. Everyone in Ontario, including employees and patrons, can also be fined \$750 for failing to comply with orders under the acts. If a violation is more serious, a person can be charged with failing to comply with an order under the acts. If convicted, the court can impose fines as high as \$100,000 for individuals, and directors and officers of a corporation can be fined up to \$500,000. Both could also receive terms of imprisonment of up to one year. The maximum fine for a corporation on conviction of an offence is up to \$10,000,000. **QUICK FACTS** Last weekend, a team of approximately 50 ministry inspectors, as well as local bylaw and police officers, visited 240 big-box stores across the GTHA. Enforcement officials found 76 contraventions, and that 69 per cent of these businesses followed public health requirements. In collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development, the Ministry of the Solicitor General is continuing to encourage local police services and municipal bylaw enforcement officers to focus on COVID-19-related enforcement. To help businesses comply with the public health measures, the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development has developed more than 200 business guideline documents.

Assistance Sought to Identify Suspect in Stranger Sex Assault Incident

REGION OF PEEL — Investigators from the Special Victim's Unit are seeking the public's assistance in identifying a suspect involved in a sexual assault of a 12-year-old girl that took place in the City of Mississauga. On Thursday, January 21, 2021, at approximately 5:30 p.m., a 12-year-old girl and her younger sibling were in the park area located near the apartment buildings located at Bodmin Drive and Truscott Drive in the City of Mississauga. For a brief period, the suspect was sitting on the opposite end of a park bench near the 12-year-old girl before he sexually assaulted her. The suspect fled the park area on foot towards a plaza located in the same area. The victim did not sustain any physical injuries as a result of the assault. The suspect is described as male, white, average height, stocky build, uncut brown hair that is long on top, brown eyes, no facial hair, with thick eyebrows. He was wearing a black hooded sweater with a pocket in front, brown track pants, black Covid-style mask and black running shoes. Anyone with any information on this incident is asked to contact the Special Victims Unit at 905-453-2121 ext. 3460. Information may also be left anonymously by calling Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or by visiting www.peelcrimestoppers.ca For media inquiries, please contact the on-duty Public and Media Relations Officer at 905-453-2121, ext. 4027.

Church Youth Group Leader arrested for Sexual Assault in Brampton

REGION OF PEEL — Investigators from the Special Victims Unit have arrested a Youth Group Leader from a church in North Bramalea in the City of Brampton, relating to a historical sexual exploitation and sexual assault investigation involving three teenagers. The incidents spanned from 1998 to 2003. The victims did not sustain any physical injuries. On January 21, 2021, Daryl Holliday, a 43-year-old man from Mississauga, was charged with three counts of Sexual Exploitation and three counts of Sexual Assault. He was released on an Undertaking and will appear at the Ontario Court of Justice in Brampton on March 29, 2021. Investigators believe there may be additional victims and encourage them to contact the Special Victims Unit at (905) 453-2121 Ext 3460. Information may also be left anonymously by calling Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or by visiting www.peelcrimestoppers.ca

Attempt Murder and Firearm Charges Laid in Brampton Shooting

Region of Peel — Investigators with the 22 Division Criminal Investigation Bureau have charged two men with attempted murder, aggravated assault and numerous firearm related offences in a Brampton shooting incident that occurred on August 22, 2020. On Saturday, August 22, 2020, at approximately 7:50 p.m., officers responded to a business on Hale Road near Glidden Road in the City of Brampton, for reports of a shooting. Upon arrival it was learned that the victim, a 19-year-old man, and two other men were involved in an altercation which resulted in the victim being shot. The suspects fled the area in a vehicle and the victim was transported to a trauma centre. During the course of this investigation, several search warrants were conducted at residences in Mississauga and Brampton, resulting in the arrest of two men. Winward Saunders, a 33-year-old man from the City of Toronto, was charged with Attempted Murder using a Firearm, Aggravated Assault and 26 other firearm related offences, including violating a firearm Prohibition Order stemming from a conviction in December 2020 for a previous firearm related offence. Neil Wilson, a 31-year-old man from the City of Brampton, was charged with Attempted Murder Using a Firearm, Aggravated Assault and 6 other firearm related offences. They were both held for a bail hearing and attended the Ontario Court of Justice in Brampton on Saturday, January 23, 2021. Anyone with any information about this incident can contact our investigators at 22 Division Criminal Investigation Bureau at 905-453-2121, ext. 2233.

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ONTARIO SUPPORTS THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEXT GENERATION OF PPE

Leading universities to carry out research and testing to better protect frontline workers

TORONTO — The Ontario government is providing more than \$2.3 million to McMaster University and the University of Toronto through the Ontario Together Fund to carry out research, development and testing of the next generation of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). These projects will help improve the technology and better protect frontline workers.

"From the earliest days of the pandemic, Ontario's innovation and manufacturing might was unleashed to develop and produce the PPE, the ventilators and the other essential equipment we would need to face the challenge of COVID-19," said Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. "With this investment into research and testing at two of our leading universities, we are reinforcing our province's reputation as the gold standard for medical equipment across Canada and around the world."

Ontario is investing \$1,122,000 in the University of Toronto to support its Dalla Lana School of Public Health's testing facility as it ramps up filtration efficiency testing of N95, surgical and procedure masks to ensure that they meet Health Canada Personal Protective Equipment requirements. The project will increase U of T's capability to assist with the rapid development and validation of new masks and decontamination technologies, while providing evidence for decision making on issues related to mask performance, decontamination and reuse.

"U of T is proud to provide mask testing facilities and technologies that give hospitals and other health-care institutions rapid information and protect Ontario's frontline workers," says James Scott, Professor, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, Occupational and Environmental Health Division. "This funding allows us to scale up our work with the province's manufacturers and innovators inside and outside U of T and help our health-care system meet critical challenges this winter."

The province is also investing \$1,212,000 in McMaster University to accelerate the work at its newly created Centre of Excellence in Protective Equipment and Materials (CEPEM) to work with Canadian manufacturers with their R&D needs in designing, manufacturing and testing of PPE. The investment will support the centre's collaboration with its industry partners in developing and optimizing their products, getting them to market faster, and thereby protecting the community

and frontline workers. The centre's new testing and manufacturing facility will also help generate new technology that will increase the competitive edge of made-in-Ontario PPE over products from other jurisdictions. The centre is part of the university's Global Nexus for Pandemics and Biological Threats, an international network of scientists, clinical health and medical specialists, engineers, social scientists, and other experts working collaboratively to prevent future pandemics and mitigate global health threats.

"It's these kinds of partnerships supported by the Centre of Excellence within the Global Nexus for Pandemics and Biological Threats that set McMaster apart," says Karen Mossman, McMaster's Vice-President, Research. "Our faculty members have earned the trust of industry, and the CEPEM team led by Ravi Selvaganapathy exemplify that. Our partners have confidence in our work and recognize our evidence-based results give them a competitive advantage."

"Ontario's colleges and universities have been critical actors in providing PPE to our province's frontline workers throughout the global pandemic and will be essential in helping Ontario thrive and recover coming out of the pandemic," said Ross Romano, Minister of Colleges and Universities. "That's why our government is proud to invest in our postsecondary institutions and support their initiatives in researching cutting-edge technologies in the healthcare sector, helping Canadian manufacturers meet PPE demands, and developing the next generation of PPE that places Ontario at the forefront of PPE supply and development in Canada."

"Our acclaimed researchers at McMaster University and the University of Toronto are collaborating on a project that will provide further protection to our dedicated frontline workers," said Donna Skelly, MPP for Flamborough-Glanbrook. "This partnership is more evidence of how people in Ontario are working together in our fight against the spread of COVID-19."

Through the Ontario Together Fund, the government is delivering targeted investments that will increase the province's stockpile of made-in-Ontario products and PPE. This new manufacturing and research capacity will help the province to combat the current COVID-19 outbreak and prepare for potential challenges in the future, while supporting local businesses during the safe and gradual reopening of the province.

SCHREINER URGES GREEN AND CARING RECOVERY AT ROMA CONFERENCE



TORONTO - Earlier today, Mike Schreiner, Leader of the Green Party of Ontario and MPP for Guelph, spoke virtually to rural municipal leaders at the 2021 ROMA conference. Schreiner began by thanking rural municipal leaders for their efforts in combating the COVID-19 pandemic. He stressed the importance of working across party lines, and with all levels of government to help Ontarians. Addressing the ongoing pandemic, Schreiner called for a strategy for safer workplaces that includes paid sick days, rapid testing, and better inspections. He also stressed the importance of an economic recovery rooted in care.

Care that starts in Ontario's homes, communities, and municipalities.

"It starts with a commitment that housing is a human right and broadband Internet is an essential service," Schreiner stated. "Let's empower people to work from home and encourage young families to stay in rural communities by building broadband in all corners of the province."

The GPO leader emphasized that this can be achieved without damaging the environment, by building community-focused living that protects precious farmland and greenspace.

Schreiner highlighted the Ford government's reckless and irresponsible attack on Conversation Authorities, and reasserted that Greens will continue to do everything in their power to reverse schedule 6.



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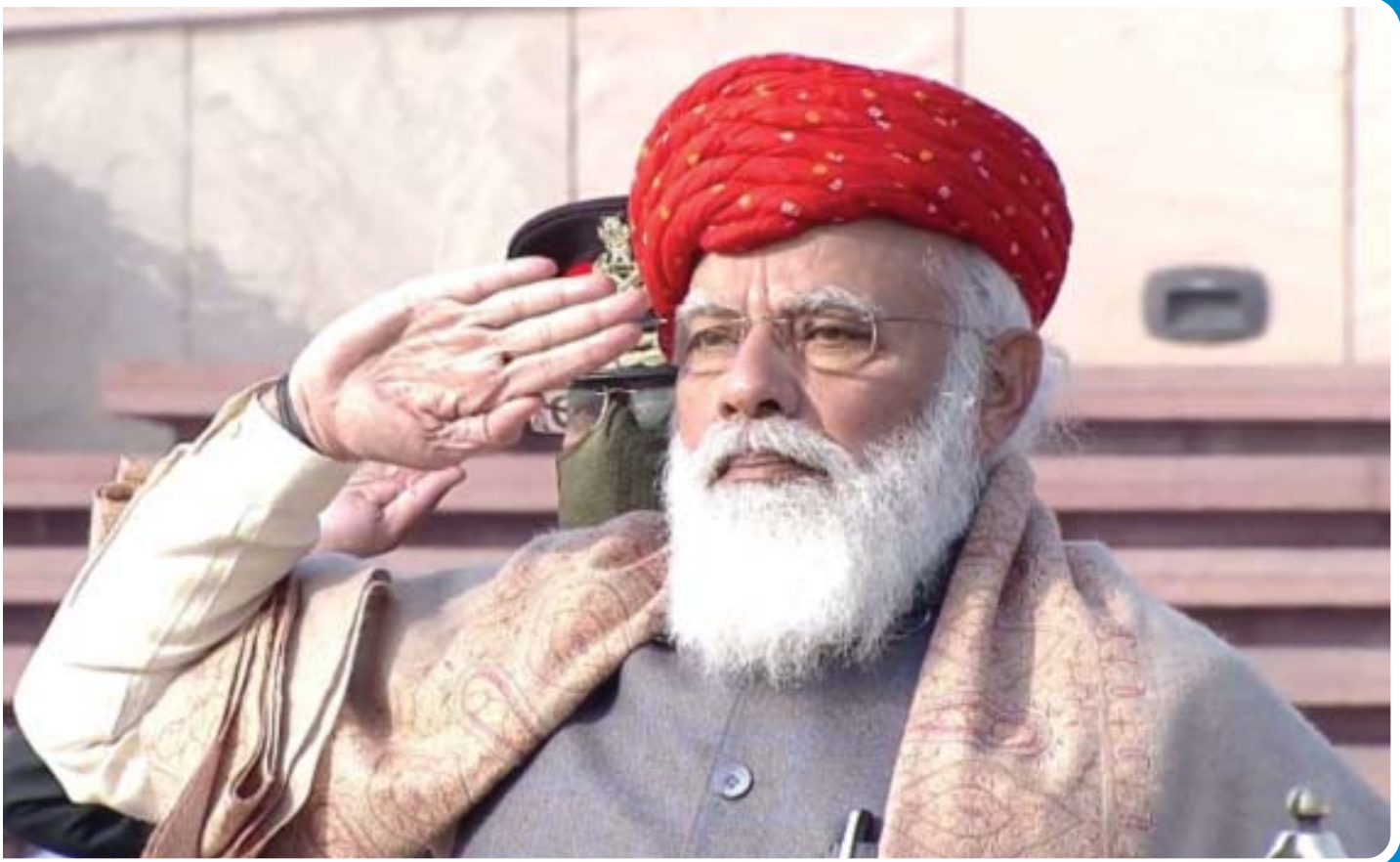
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REPUBLIC DAY 2021: PM NARENDRA MODI DONS COLOURFUL TURBAN GIFTED BY THIS ROYAL FAMILY



PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI SPORTED A SPECIAL TURBAN AS A PART OF HIS TRADITIONAL ATTIRE DURING THE CELEBRATORY REPUBLIC DAY PARADE.

On the occasion of the 72nd Republic Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi sported a special Jamnagar turban as a part of his traditional attire during the celebratory Parade. Continuing his annual tradition of sporting special traditional turbans during Republic Day celebrations, PM Modi wore 'Halari paghdi', a red turban with yellow dots, gifted to him by the royal family of Jamnagar, Gujarat. Along with the turban he was seen wearing his traditional kurta, pajama, and grey jacket along with a face mask. The royal family of Jamnagar holds special respect globally. In one of the defining acts of humanity during World War 2, the king of Jamnagar, Maharaja Jam Saheb Digvijay Singh, had saved 1000 children from Poland during World War 2. Poland still cherishes this gesture of Jamanagar's erstwhile King. The PM had also extended greetings to the nation on the special occasion. "Wishing all the people of India a Happy RepublicDay. Jai Hind!" PM had tweeted. Modi's sartorial choices have made headlines on

many occasions - from his headgears for Republic Day celebrations to the suit printed with his name - he surely knows how to stand out. For his maiden Independence Day address as the PM in 2014, he had opted for a Jodhpuri bandhej turban in bright red colour with green at the tail. During the Republic Day celebrations last year, the PM had worn a saffron bandhej headgear with a tail. In 2019, he had worn a yellowish-orange turban which had a red tail. Republic Day is celebrated in India every year on 26 January to commemorate the day the Constitution of the nation came into effect. Though we gained independence on August 15, 1947, nascent India did not have its own laws which were drafted and finally adopted in the year 1950. As the nation celebrates Republic Day, also known as Gantatra Diwas, a parade of many firsts was held in the shadow of Covid, featuring a fly-past of Rafale fighter jets, the first tableau from Ladakh and a contingent of Bangladeshi armed forces.

India extends COVID-19 vaccination drive to foreign mission

India has extended its vaccination drive to foreign missions based in the country. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) sent the offer to the mission, requesting them to respond by the 29th of January. India began its mega vaccination drive on the January 16 and so far over 16 lakh healthcare workers have been vaccinated against COVID. December saw India taking over 50 foreign envoys based in Delhi to the southern city of Hyderabad to showcase the country's vaccine production center at two biotechnology companies-- Bharat Biotech and Biological E. During the one-day visit, the foreign envoys were briefed on India's indigenous efforts to develop COVID-19 vaccines and the clinical trials. A release by MEA said, "India's R&D facilities, manufacturing capacity, foreign collaborations, etc in the fields of pharmaceuticals, including vaccine production, were highlighted....India is committed to partnering with all interested countries in vaccine-related efforts, in the service of humanity." India has been briefing the foreign envoys all through 2020 on its action plans to deal with the COVID pandemic. The most important of such meetings was in November when Foreign Secretary Harsh Shringla met the envoys in Delhi and gave a detailed presentation on India's response to the crisis. Around 190 heads of diplomatic missions were present in the briefing that took place in



Delhi's Vigyan Bhawan. Meanwhile, India's vaccine diplomacy continues with Bangladesh getting the first contracted commercial supplies later today. Go ahead to commercial supplies was given on Friday with COVID vaccine supplies reaching Brazil and Morocco. Last week, New Delhi sent COVID vaccine gift to seven countries in the region--Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Seychelles, and Mauritius. Sri Lanka will get India's COVID vaccine gift later this week.

REPUBLIC DAY 2021: EX-JAPANESE PM SHINZO ABE, SINGER SP BALASUBRAMANIAM AWARDED PADMA VIBHUSHAN



Former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and legendary singer SP Balasubramaniam have been awarded Padma Vibhushan, the second-highest civilian award of the country, on Monday (January 25). 'SPB' as he was fondly called died in 2020 after undergoing treatment for around two months. Here is the full list of Padma Vibhushan awardees: Shinzo Abe- Public Affairs- Japan S P Balasubramaniam (Posthumous)- Art- Tamil Nadu Dr. Belle Monappa Hegde- Medicine- Karnataka Narinder Singh Kapany (Posthumous)- Science and Engineering- United States of America Maulana Wahiduddin Khan- Others- Spiritualism- Delhi B. B. Lal- Others- Archaeology- Delhi

Sudarshan Sahoo- Art- Odisha Former Assam Chief Minister Tarun Gogoi and former Union Minister Ram Vilas Paswan, both of passed away in 2020, have been awarded the Padma Bhushan, the second highest civilian award. Former Lok Sabha speaker Sumitra Mahajan has also been conferred the Padma Bhushan. The Centre has honoured 102 people with the Padma Shri award, which include wrestler Virender Singh and famous musician Bombay Jayashri. The Centre announced the Padma awards on Monday honouring 119 personalities from different fields like sports, medicine, art, literature and others for their distinguished work. The awards are conferred in three categories: Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.

UK PM BORIS JOHNSON EXTENDS REPUBLIC DAY WISHES, SAYS 'LOOKING FORWARD TO VISITING INDIA LATER THIS YEAR'



British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Tuesday greeted India on its 72nd Republic Day. Johnson, in his Republic Day message, made a special reference to the vaccine collaboration and said that the UK and India are working side by side to free humanity from the coronavirus pandemic. Johnson was due to be in New Delhi as the chief guest at the annual parade to mark India's 72nd Republic Day but had to call off the visit to focus on the domestic crisis unleashed by the emergence of a new, deadlier variant of coronavirus in the UK at the end of last year. In his video message to celebrate the birth of an extraordinary Constitution that established India as the biggest sovereign democracy in the world, the UK PM reiterated his plan to visit India in the coming months. "I was hugely looking forward to joining you for this important occasion at the kind invitation of my friend Prime Minister Modi, alas our common struggle against COVID has kept me in London," said Johnson. "As I speak, our two countries are working side by side to develop, produce and distribute vaccines that will help to free humanity from the pandemic. And thanks to the combined efforts of Britain, India and many other nations, we are on the road to success against COVID. So, I look forward to visiting India later this year, strengthening our friendship, and striving for the quantum leap in our relationship that Prime Minister Modi and I have both pledged to achieve," he said. Addressing the Indian diaspora in the UK, he added, "All over the world, this virus is compelling people to stay apart, including family and friends in Britain and India, who form what Prime Minister Modi has called the living bridge between us. But for now, let me wish everyone in India as well as those celebrating here in Britain, a very happy Republic Day," the British prime minister said. India celebrates its 72nd Republic Day today, (January 26, 2021), which will be the first to be organised amid the Covid-19 pandemic. This year, the Republic Day celebrations will be a quieter affair as there will be a shorter parade, no chief guest to grace the occasion and much less public participation in the event.

CAPT AMARINDER ON DELHI CLASHES: 'SHOCKING, VIOLENCE BY SOME ELEMENTS UNACCEPTABLE'



After protesting farmers stormed central Delhi on Republic Day, Punjab Chief Minister Captain Amarinder Singh condemned the violence and urged all "genuine farmers" to vacate New Delhi and return to the capital's borders, where they have been camping for over a month now. "Shocking scenes in Delhi. The violence by some elements is unacceptable. It'll negate goodwill generated by peacefully protesting farmers. Kisan leaders have disassociated themselves & suspended #TractorRally. I urge all genuine farmers to vacate Delhi & return to borders," the Punjab CM tweeted. The Chief Minister also ordered a high alert in Punjab amid the tension and violence in Delhi, and directed DGP Dinkar Gupta to ensure that law and order in the state is not disturbed. The Chief Minister said the violence was apparently triggered by some people who violated the rules laid down for the tractor march through mutual agreement between the Delhi Police and the Kisan Unions. Wielding sticks and clubs and holding the tricolour and farmer union flags, thousands of farmers atop tractors broke barriers, clashed with police and entered New Delhi from various points to lay siege to the Red Fort and climb the flagpole on Republic Day on Tuesday. The Delhi Police resorted to tear gas on groups of farmers first at Singhu border. Amarinder had on Monday appealed to farmers to ensure that the tractor parade remains peaceful, calling it a "testimony to the celebration of the Indian Republic and its constitutional ethos". "Peace has been the hallmark of your (farmers') democratic protests all these months, and should remain integral to your agitation in the days ahead, including the R-Day tractor rally into the national capital," the Chief Minister had said in his Republic Day eve message. "The sight of your (farmers') tractors on Delhi roads tomorrow will underline the fact that the ethos of the Indian Constitution and the essence of our Republic is inalienable and

TRACTOR RALLY: PROTESTERS SWARM RED FORT, HOIST THEIR FLAGS FROM RAMPARTS



HUNDREDS OF FARMERS RIDING TRACTORS, BIKES AND CARS REACHED RED FORT AND ENTERED ITS PREMISES.

Farmers, who had occupied the borders of Delhi and were seen as friendly and peaceful for over 60 days as they waited for the government to revoke the farm laws, suddenly left behind a trail of vandalism, violence, and hooliganism as they hoisted their flags at the iconic Red Fort after running amok through the national capital clashing with the police personnel.

Hundreds of farmers riding tractors, bikes and cars reached Red Fort and entered its premises. One of the protesters went up the mast on the ramparts of the fort and hoisted the farmer union flags and saffron pennant with a Sikh religious symbol. The flag was hoisted at the place where the Tricolour is hoisted.

The protestors came to central Delhi deviating from the route which had been decided for tractor march. Violence erupted near ITO area after the protesters chased police with their tractors, damage several DTC buses near ITO as they are prevented from moving towards the Red Fort. Some of the protestors even tried to run over police personnel deployed in the area.

Several people including police personnel suffered injuries during the clash between protesting farmers and police. The police fired tear-gas shells and lathi-charged the protesters on multiple occasions as farmers remained adamant to move towards the Red Fort. Visuals from the site showed farmers swarming the Red Fort even as hundreds of others played a cat-and-mouse game with Delhi Police personnel near the ITO intersection in central Delhi, which witnessed chaos as security personnel were clearly outnumbered by the protesters. In wake of the deteriorating situation, the Ministry of Home Affairs has ordered a temporary suspension of internet services in various parts of Delhi-NCR till midnight. Internet services temporarily suspended in the areas of Singhu, Ghazipur, Tikri, Mukarba Chowk, Nangloi and their adjoining areas till 23:59 hrs on January 26, read an order from the home ministry. The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation also closed the entry and exit gates of various metro stations on the yellow, green, violet and blue lines in wake of the farmers' tractor rally running amok in the heart of the national capital.

KISAN RALLY TURNS VIOLENT, WORLD SAW IT DIFFERENTLY



As India celebrated its 72nd Republic Day with great pomp and show, the big day was marred with protesting farmers clashing with police at several places in the national capital of Delhi. Protesting farmers entered the iconic Red Fort and the ITO in the heart of national capital, with hundreds of them deviating from agreed routes, prompting security personnel to resort to lathicharge and tear gas.

More than 20 tractors entered the Red Fort with national flags this afternoon, hours after the farmers' parade began.

The visuals emerging from ITO, where the police headquarters is situated was even more disturbing. Policemen in riot gear appeared to be helpless as they were outnumbered by the protesting farmers, were seen running or hiding behind cars as farmers armed with sticks chased them ramming their tractors into the buses parked there.

The two buses that were rammed had been used to block the farmers from progressing further on the crucial road connecting to the top government offices in the capital. The world media covered this unfortunate incident which happened in the heart of India's capital on an auspicious day when the nation celebrated its Republic day - a day reminding that we, the people of this nation, are ruled by an elected government and an elected leader

The media wrote, "Thousands of protesting farmers poured into the Indian capital of New Delhi on Tuesday as they used their tractors to pull barricades apart, prompting police to fire tear gas and marking a chaotic start to an event that had already been set to pose a direct challenge to the government. The farmers protesting against India's new farm laws had been expected to start a procession of tractors through the city at noon local time, to prevent interferences with celebrations commemorating India's Republic Day holiday in central Delhi. But farmers began to dismantle barricades about two hours early amid some apparent confusion among protesters. The protest had already threatened to upstage the 72nd annual celebration of the inception of India's Constitution. Prime Minister Narendra Modi oversaw a lavish parade by the armed forces, but news broadcasters showed surreal scenes of Mr Modi saluting officers while chaos was breaking out in several parts of the city just a few miles away. At the city's border with the village of Ghazipur, where farmers have been camped out for months in protest, tractors removed a shipping container placed to block their route as police stood by helplessly. Elsewhere, thick clouds of tear gas rose over approved march routes as farmers on tractors, on horses and on foot forcefully began their rally hours ahead of schedule.

FARMERS PROTEST: CHAOS, VIOLENCE GRIP NATIONAL CAPITAL AS PROTESTERS CLASH WITH POLICE, 1 DEAD

Chaos prevailed at several places in the national capital Tuesday after stick-wielding farmers clashed with police and entered the iconic Red Fort and ITO on Republic Day. In unprecedented scenes, after entering the Red Fort complex, protesters attempted to climb the domes and the ramparts, some clambering up the flagpole to hoist a flag from the same place the prime minister unfurls the tricolour from on Independence Day. Police later removed protesting farmers from Red Fort premises. ITO, particularly, witnessed chaotic scenes as protesters could be seen chasing police personnel with sticks and ramming their tractors into the buses parked by police. Amid all this, a protesting farmer also died after his tractor overturned at ITO, police told PTI.

While the Delhi Police had given permission to farmers protesting against Centre's three farm laws to conduct their parade on pre-selected routes only, chaos ensued as farmers were adamant on heading towards central Delhi. Security personnel then resorted to lathicharge and tear gas on protesters after hundreds of farmers deviated from their pre-determined routes.

Earlier in the day, groups of protesting farmers camping at Singhu and Tikri border points of the national capital broke police barricades to force their way into the city. Thousands of farmers, mostly from Punjab, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh, have been camping at several Delhi border points since November 28, demanding a complete repeal of three farm laws and a legal guarantee on minimum support price for their crops. Police use baton charge, tear gas on farmers at Nangloi Chowk

Meanwhile, the Delhi Police resorted to baton charge and fired tear gas shells on farmers at Nangloi Chowk in West Delhi after they attempted to deviate from the pre-agreed route to enter the national capital. The agitating farmers broke cement barricades at Nangloi Chowk and Mukarba Chowk following which the police used heavy tear gas shells to disperse the unruly crowd, PTI quoted an official as saying. The official said that police personnel used tear gas to disperse groups of farmers coming from the Singhu border point as they tried to take out a march on the Outer Ring Road much ahead of the allotted time. In Shahdara, Police baton charged farmers at Chintamani Chowk when they broke barricades and smashed window panes of cars. A group of 'Nihangs' (traditional Sikh warriors) also clashed with security personnel near Akshardham Temple.

FARMERS WERE AGITATING WITH RESTRAINT BUT CENTRE DIDN'T SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS: NCP CHIEF SHARAD PAWAR



NCP president Sharad Pawar on Tuesday (January 26) blamed the central government for the violence that erupted during the farmers' tractor parade in Delhi.

The NCP supremo defended the farmers and said that they were agitating with restraint but the central government did not solve their problem by taking a proactive role. Pawar said that he does not support the violence that took place during the farmers' protest in Delhi but noted that the Centre should realise that why the chaos erupted during the tractor parade in Delhi.

"For the last 55-60 days, the farmers were agitating in a peaceful manner. The central government should have taken this into account and tried to solve their problem but the government failed to discharge its duties properly which spoiled the atmosphere. We do not support violence, but why it happened it should also be seen. For 60 days, the farmers of Punjab Haryana were agitating peacefully but why did the farmers feel tortured? He government failed to handle the situation properly," said Pawar.

Meanwhile, the farmers, who have been protesting on the borders of Delhi, have dissociated themselves from the violence that took place on Tuesday in the national capital and said that some 'anti-social' elements infiltrated their peaceful protest.

In a statement, the Samyukta Kisan Morcha, a conglomerate of farmers' unions, said it condemns and regrets the violence that took place in Delhi on Republic Day. The body said that despite all efforts, "some organisations and individuals have violated the route (for tractor rally) and indulged in condemnable acts."

'VIOLENCE NOT A SOLUTION': RAHUL GANDHI ON FARMER-POLICE CLASHES

As protesting farmers clashed with police at several places in Delhi on Republic Day, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said violence was never the solution to any problem and appealed to the Centre to scrap the three contentious farm laws. Taking to Twitter, Gandhi said, "Violence is not the solution to any problem. If anyone gets hurt, the damage will happen to our country. Take back the anti-farmer law for the benefit of the country."

BJP MP from North-East Delhi Gautam Gambhir said, "Violence and vandalism will lead us nowhere. I urge everyone to maintain peace & honour agreements. Today is not the day for such chaos."

The violence at ITO unfolded despite the police giving farmers camping at Delhi's three borders — Singhu, Tikri, and Ghazipur — permission to hold rallies on specific routes, only after the official Republic Day parade at Rajpath. As per the agreement, farmers were to remain in the adjoining areas of the borders and not venture towards Central Delhi. At Singhu, amid the chaos, the police resorted to lathicharge and tear gas to control the protesters.

Republic Day 2021: Preeti Choudhary only woman commander from Army in this year's parade



Captain Preeti Choudhary on Tuesday spearheaded the up-graded Schilika weapon system as it rolled down the Rajpath on the 72nd Republic Day parade, for the first time this year. Speaking about her role as the only woman contingent commandant, prior to the parade, Captain Preeti asserted that she received the opportunity because the upgraded weapon system belonged to her regiment, and not because of her gender. The upgraded Schilika Weapon system is equipped with modern radar and digital fire control computers and has the ability to destroy wartime targets for low-level air defence in all-weather, keeping an accurate eye on targets. It can track and shoot enemy targets up to 2 kilometres on the ground and about 2.5 kilometres in the air, Captain Preeti Choudhary had said.

"I received this opportunity because it's my regiment's equipment, not due to my gender," she said, adding that she last marched along Rajpath in the 2016 Republic Day celebration as a cadet with the National Cadet Corps (NCC). She had last marched in the Republic Day parade along the Rajpath in 2016 as a cadet with the National Cadet Corps. She is also the recipient of the Sword of Honour for being an all-round cadet at the Officers Training Academy (OTA) in Chennai. Her father honorary Captain Inder Singh had served in Army Medical Corps. Captain Preetu is a graduate of the Government College for Girls, Chandigarh.

US TO REVIEW TALIBAN DEAL, AFGHANISTAN ASKS PAK TO 'COMPEL' TALIBAN TO REDUCE VIOLENCE



THE US WILL ASSESS WHETHER THE TALIBAN WAS LIVING UP TO ITS COMMITMENTS TO CUT TIES WITH TERRORIST GROUPS AND TO REDUCE VIOLENCE IN AFGHANISTAN.

Even as the violence level remains high in Afghanistan, the new Biden administration has made it clear that they plan to review the US-Taliban agreement of last year. The agreement key to US presence in Afghanistan was followed by the start of the Afghan government-Taliban talks in September.

Last week saw talks between new US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and Afghan NSA Hamdullah Mohib with the White House readout saying, "Mr Sullivan also made clear the United States' intention to review the February 2020 US-Taliban agreement".

The read out pointed out the US will assess, "whether the Taliban was living up to its commitments to cut ties with terrorist groups, to reduce violence in Afghanistan, and to engage in meaningful negotiations with the Afghan government and other stakeholders".

The situation in the country remains precarious with no headway made on the talks between government and the Taliban and the latter increasing attacks in the country. In a bid to pave way for a "comprehensive political agreement", the Afghan government also released 6000 Taliban prisoners but it has not got any reciprocal strong response from the group. Over the weekend, the Afghan government asked Pakistan to "compel" the Taliban to reduce violence.

The Afghan foreign ministry in a statement said, "We expect the Government of Pakistan and all our international partners to compel the

Taliban to fulfill their commitments to reduce violence" and "to secure a nationwide ceasefire and to sever ties with terrorist groups so that the way for meaningful peace talks and political agreement is paved." Pakistan has been a major influencer on the Taliban with its security establishment hand in gloves with the group.

CLASHES BREAK OUT IN TUNISIA AFTER DEATH OF PROTESTER

Clashes in Tunisia between groups of young people and police broke out Monday evening, following the death of a local man in his 20s who participated in last week's protests. He is reportedly the first fatality of the demonstrations that swept the North African nation. Angry residents fired projectiles at police and attempted to enter a security post in Sbeitla in the Kasserine region, after blocking the town's main road by setting tires on fire, according to state news agency TAP. Law enforcement responded with tear gas canisters to disperse the protesters, and a chase took place through city streets. TAP said that the army was deployed to calm unrest there and protect public buildings. The family of the victim, Haykel Rachdi, claims he was shot in the head by a tear gas canister Wednesday and was transferred to Sousse hospital, where he died Monday.

BIDEN REVERSES TRUMP BAN ON TRANSGENDER PEOPLE IN MILITARY

President Joe Biden signed an order Monday reversing a Trump-era Pentagon policy that largely barred transgender individuals from serving in the military.

The new order, which Biden signed in the Oval Office during a meeting with Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin, overturns a ban ordered by President Donald Trump in a tweet during his first year in office. It immediately prohibits any service member from being forced out of the military on the basis of gender identity. The decision comes as Biden plans to turn his attention to equity issues that he believes continue to shadow nearly all aspects of American life.

Ahead of his inauguration, Biden's transition team circulated a memo saying Biden planned to use his first full week as president "to advance equity and support communities of colour and other underserved communities."

As he signed the order on Monday, Biden said, "What I'm doing is enabling all qualified Americans to serve their country in uniform." "America is stronger, at home and around the world, when it is inclusive. The military is no exception," the order says.

"Allowing all qualified Americans to serve their country in uniform is better for the military and better for the country because an inclusive force is a more effective force. Simply put, it's the right thing to do and is in our national interest." The order directs the departments of Defense and Homeland Security to take steps to implement the order for the military and the Coast Guard. And it says they must reexamine the records of service members who were discharged or denied reenlistment due to gender identity issues under the previous policy.

Turkey forsaking Uighur Muslims for Chinese COVID-19 vaccine

After a devastating year of COVID-19 in 2020, now the world has been set on the path of recovery with the help of the vaccine. However,vaccine production is still limited and for now, only a few countries have been able to access it. Given the severity of the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is understandable that countries are eager to get their hands on a potential vaccine. China is actively trying to exploit this desperation of the developing countries. Its latest prey in this regard seems to be Turkey. China is pushing for the extradition treaty with Turkey to be ratified by the Turkish authorities for handing over wanted persons from the Uighur diaspora living in Turkey to the Chinese authorities. The extradition treaty between China and Turkey was signed back in 2017 during Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's visit to Beijing. China recently announced ratification of the extradition treaty at the National People's Congress, while the Turkish Parliament is yet to ratify the treaty. Chinese push for ratification from the Turkish side has come at a time when China is due to supply the coronavirus vaccine to Turkey.



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US VICE PRESIDENT KAMALA HARRIS GETS SECOND DOSE OF COVID VACCINE



"I WANT TO URGE EVERYONE TO TAKE THE VACCINE WHEN IT IS YOUR TURN," KAMALA HARRIS SAID ON TUESDAY. "IT WILL SAVE YOUR LIFE."

US Vice President Kamala Harris on Tuesday took her second dose of the coronavirus vaccine in a televised setting at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and urged Americans to get vaccinated. "I want to urge everyone to take the vaccine when it is your turn," Harris told C-SPAN viewers on Tuesday. "It will save your life."

Harris received her first vaccine dose on December 29. Following a slow roll-out, after two coronavirus vaccines received emergency approval in December, the United States administered more than 1 million shots daily for the past week.

President Joe Biden has said the goal of his administration is to vaccinate 100 million Americans in the first 100 days of his presidency. Meanwhile, the White House today said in a press release that the

Biden administration is working to purchase additional 200 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to reach 600 million doses this summer and vaccinate 300 million people. "The Biden-Harris administration is working to purchase an additional 100 million doses of each of the two Food and Drug Administration-authorized vaccines - Pfizer and Moderna," the release said on Tuesday.

"This increases the total vaccine order for the US by 50 per cent, from 400 million to 600 million with these additional doses expected to deliver this summer."

The release added that with the additional doses the United States will have enough vaccines to fully vaccinate 300 million Americans by the end of the summer.

RUSSIAN PARLIAMENT OKS NEW START NUCLEAR TREATY EXTENSION

The lower house of Russian parliament on Wednesday approved the extension of the last remaining nuclear arms control pact days before it's due to expire. The State Duma voted unanimously to extend the New START treaty for five years.

The vote came a day after a phone call between US President Joe Biden and Russian President Vladimir Putin, in which they voiced satisfaction with the exchange of diplomatic notes about extending the New START treaty. They agreed to complete the necessary procedures in the next few days, according to the Kremlin.

HONG KONG'S FIRST COVID-19 LOCKDOWN EXPOSES DEEP-ROOTED INEQUALITY

When Shirley Leung, 60, woke up enclosed in Hong Kong's first coronavirus lockdown, she surveyed the tiny room she shares with her adult son, which fits a single bed and cardboard boxes and plastic tubs for storing clothes.

She tried to ignore the smell of the ceiling and walls, which were blanketed with mold. She rationed out the fresh vegetables she had at home, dissatisfied with the canned foods and instant noodles the government had provided when it imposed the restrictions Saturday. She considered the cramped, interconnected nature of her apartment building. "If one room is infected, then how is it possible for cases not to spread among subdivided flats?" Leung said in a telephone interview. "How can it be safe?"

IRAN, TALIBAN OFFICIALS SAY US PUSHING WAR IN AFGHANISTAN

Iranian and Taliban officials met in Tehran on Wednesday and accused the U.S. of provoking the continuation of war in Afghanistan, Iranian State TV reported.

Ali Shamkhani, secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council, told visiting Taliban political chief Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar that the US seeks to continue the war in neighbouring Afghanistan.

"The US strategy supports the continuation of war and bloodshed among various Afghan groups in the political spectrum", Shamkhani was quoted as saying.

He said the US tries to blame insecurity and instability in the country on individual Afghan groups.

There was no immediate comment from the US, which signed a peace agreement with the Taliban last February and met its goal this month of reducing the number of troops in Afghanistan to about 2,500.

Taliban representatives and the Afghan government earlier this month resumed peace talks in Qatar, the Gulf Arab state where the insurgents maintain an office. The stop-and-go talks are aimed at ending decades of conflict.

But frustration and fear have grown over a recent spike in violence, and both sides blame one another.

Baradar, who arrived Monday with a Taliban delegation, criticized the US for allegedly breaking its commitments to the February deal. He did not elaborate.

"We do not trust the US and will fight any group that is a mercenary for the US", he said.

UK TO BRING IN HOTEL QUARANTINE FOR HIGHEST-RISK ARRIVALS

The UK government will introduce a limited hotel quarantine system for passengers arriving from the highest-risk countries, according to a person familiar with the matter.

The move is aimed at curbing the spread of new variants of coronavirus that could prove resistant to vaccines, but is expected to apply to arrivals from countries with new forms of the virus, such as South Africa and Brazil.

Boris Johnson's government has so far stopped short of imposing a blanket quarantine system on all arrivals, amid concern about a lack of hotel space near airports and the consequences for a travel industry already on its knees.

The decision was made by ministers at a meeting Tuesday night, where they discussed a range of options for tightening border controls. It came as the UK recorded more than 100,000 deaths from coronavirus, the first European country to reach the milestone.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock said Sunday the government wanted to ensure that new, more virulent variants would not derail Britain's vaccination program — which has so far seen more than 6.8 million people receive a first dose. The new hotel quarantine policy will only affect Britons arriving from high-risk countries, as travel bans are already in place for non-UK visitors. The Labour opposition party said the move didn't go far enough and would leave "gaping holes in our nation's defences against different strains of the virus emerging around the world."

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