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**WATCH Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH SEAN FRASER,
MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP ONLY ON CHANNEL Y**



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WATCH Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH SEAN FRASER, MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP, CANADA ONLY ON CHANNEL Y.

IT'S A BATTLE AMONG SIKHS TO CHOOSE 'SARDAR' OF PUNJAB

It's the battle among Sikhs to choose the 'Sardar' of Punjab, the state with a debt burden of at least Rs 2.82 lakh crore at the end of the current government's tenure. Based on caste considerations, all four major political parties in the state vying for the February 20 polls for the 117-member Assembly have fielded Sikh gentlemen --- right from the 'maharaja' to the billionaire businessman with interests in hotels, resorts, media, agriculture and to the 'entertainer' to the common man, a former handball player who is commonly seen on cricket pitch and hockey turf during campaigning. Two-time Chief Minister and Captain Amarinder Singh, the scion of erstwhile Patiala, 80, is politically matured among the four chief ministerial faces. He's seen as the nationalist widely respected leader of the BJP-led alliance. His fledgling Punjab Lok Congress (PLC) is contesting the polls in alliance with the BJP, which had earlier played second fiddle to its former ally Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), and SAD (Sanyukt), an Akali Dal rebel. In the 2019 parliamentary polls, CaptAmarinder Singh steered his former party the Congress to a victory in his ruling Punjab in eight out of 13 Lok Sabha seats despite Prime Minister Narendra Modi wave across the country. He's contesting from his stronghold Patiala (Urban), the seat that he has won for four consecutive terms since 2002 when he first contested. At a public meeting, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday had a



special praise for CaptAmarinder Singh that he always rose above partisan considerations when it came to the issues concerning national security.

| CONTD. ON PAGE 7

PM TRUDEAU MAKES HISTORY AS HE INVOKES THE EMERGENCIES ACT TO DEAL WITH CONVOY PROTESTERS

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Monday declared a public order emergency to support provinces in ending the ongoing blockades caused by truck convoy protests. Trudeau said in a press conference that he invoked the Emergencies Act for the first time in Canada's history to give the federal government extra and "temporary" powers to handle the issue, adding the move targets to those areas in need, not the whole country, Xinhua news agency reported.

The act will be used to protect critical infrastructure such as borders and airports from the blockades and the government will enable the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to enforce municipal bylaws, Trudeau said, dismissing the involvement of military force.

The measures also include giving banks the power to suspend or freeze accounts of blockade supporters without a court order, and force crowdfunding platforms and cryptocurrencies to follow anti-money laundering and terrorist financing laws. Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland said at the same event that companies with trucks involved in the illegal blockades will have their corporate bank accounts frozen, and their insurance suspended. The Emergencies Act, which replaced the War Measures Act in the 1980s, provides special powers to respond to emergency scenarios affecting public welfare (natural disasters, disease outbreaks), public order (civil unrest), and international emergencies or war emergencies.



PUNJABI ACTOR-ACTIVIST DEEP SIDHU DIES IN ROAD ACCIDENT



| DETAILS ON PAGE 12

CANADA TOPS G7 GROWTH DESPITE COVID: STATSCAN

Our world has dramatically changed from the last time we took the pulse of the nation, in 2016, to the census we conducted in the spring of 2021. Thanks to Canadians who responded to the census during the third wave of the pandemic, we can better understand where we are at today as we continue to navigate this life changing pandemic.

| CONTD. ON PAGE 10

INDO-CANADA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDER PRESIDENT KISHORE C DOSHI PASSES AWAY AT 85

Kishore Chandra (K.C.) Doshi passed away peacefully at home on February 4, 2022. He was 85. He was the founding President of the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce (ICCC). He held the President's position from 1977 to 1978 and then from 1979 to 1980. He will be greatly missed by his loving wife of 55 years, Sudha, daughter Sonal, and grandson Aidan, as well as friends and family who remember his kindness and generosity.



| CONTD. ON PAGE 10

CANADA AIMS TO WELCOME 431,645 NEW PERMANENT RESIDENTS IN 2022

Our immigration system has helped shape Canada into the country it is today --- one that is prosperous, diverse, and welcoming to those in need. Newcomers enrich and better our communities, and they work every day to create jobs, care for our loved ones, and support local businesses. Throughout the pandemic, they have been on the front lines, working in key sectors like health care, transportation, and manufacturing. Without them, Canada would not have been able to overcome challenges in critical industries and sectors of the economy over the past 2 years. Now, more than ever, immigrants are a key part of our country's continued success.

| CONTD. ON PAGE 10

PARAMJIT DHANASER, 38, OF BRAMPTON CHARGED FOR CRIMINAL HARASSMENT INVOLVING A WEAPON

Investigators from 11 Division Criminal Investigation Bureau have arrested and charged a man for an alleged stranger Criminal Harassment (Stalking) involving a weapon that occurred in the City of Mississauga. Police are seeking any other victims and witnesses to come forward.



| CONTD. ON PAGE 10

WHY UKRAINE IS TESTBED FOR BIG POWER CONTESTATION?

MAJOR GENERAL S.B. ASTHANA

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky declares February 16, 2022 as 'Day of Unity' apprehending Russian invasion based on US assessment, after speaking to his American counterpart Joe Biden about Russias military buildup along Ukraines borders, with both committing to pursue "diplomacy and deterrence". It comes after inconclusive talks between Russian President Vladimir Putin andBiden suggesting 'swift and severe costs in case of invasion, as well as Normandy format between Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany.

| CONTD. ON PAGE 13

DID CONGRESS COMMIT A BLUNDER BY SIDE- LINING CAPTAIN AMARINDER SINGH?

All the opinion polls have been released and we now wait for the exit polls after the last phase of polling on March 7, 2022. However, there is much to introspect for the Congress in Punjab, especially related to the infighting triggered by the unsavoury resignation of Captain Amarinder Singh from the post of the chief minister as well as from the party.



| CONTD. ON PAGE 12

Y MEDIA COVID & VACCINE REPORT

- **Effective March 1, Ontario To Remove Vaccine Passport System, Masking Requirements To Remain In Place.**
- **Ontario Increases Social Gathering Limits To 50 People Indoors & 100 People Outdoors.**
- **Ontario Removes Capacity Limits At Restaurants, Bars, Gyms, Cinemas.**
- **Ontario Expands Booster Dose Eligibility To Youth Aged 12 To 17.**
- **Federal Government Dropping Pre-arrival PCR Test For Fully Vaccinated Canadian Travellers Starting Feb. 28**

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Y MEDIA GROUP COVERED GRAND OPENING OF TIKKA JUNCTION



SHEILA SUGUMAR DONATED RS. 5 MILLION TO JAFFNA HOSPITAL & \$50,000 TO SCARBOROUGH HEALTH NETWORK



Sheila Sugumar, the wife of Ganesan Sugumar (Owner- Saravanaa Bhavan restaurants, Canada), and mother of Sanjay and Sofia, recently passed away. On Saturday, Feb. 12, her life was celebrated at Scarborough Convention Centre, Toronto.

"To us, Sheila was a friend, a companion, and the most devoted wife and mother we could wish for. There are simply no words to capture the many things she meant to us. She was a simple person with a large heart. She was kind, generous, intelligent, loving and compassionate. We were fortunate enough to share many wonderful years and are grateful for every minute we shared as a family, say Sugumar, Sanjay and Sophia.

Many dignitaries, friends, and family members attended. The following persons delivered the speeches: Han Dong, MP Dan Valley, North; Derek Lee, Former MP- Scarborough East & Corporate Lawyer; Hon. Maria Minna, Former Minister, Beaches-East York; Ms. Yasmin Ratansi, Former MP Dan Valley East; Khalid Usman, Ward-7 Councillor, City of Markham; Sivasri Vijaykumara Kurukkal, Chief Priest, Sri Varasithi Vinnayagar Hindu Temple; Dr. Pon Shivaji, Physician & Family Friend; R.N. Logendralingam, Chief Editor, Uthayan newspaper; Ilaya Bharathi, Founder of CTBC, radio & family friend; Soo Wong, Former MPP; Tom Yarmin, Former Employer of Sheila Sugumar; Han. George Smitherman, Former Deputy Premier & Health Minister; Rajiv Sivanesan, Sugumar's nephew; Ganesh Selvaraj, Godson of Mr. & Mrs. Sugumar; Salma Zahid- Member of Parliament Scarborough Centre; Jean Yip- MP Scarborough-Agincourt; Cynthia Lai- City of Toronto Councillor-Ward 23; Jim Karygiannis, Former MP & City Councillor; Dr. Dhun Noira; Dr. VI Lucky Lakshmanan, Vice-Chair & CEO, Process Research ORTECH Inc; Michael Mazza Executive Director at the Terry Fox Foundation; Thushara Rodrigo, Consul General for Sri Lanka in Toronto were also in attendance. From Scarborough Hospital, Elizabeth Buller-President & CEO, SHN & Alicia Vandermeer, President & CEO, SHN Foundation, attended. Sofia Sugumar, deliver the vote of thanks.

In the end, a cheque for \$50,000 was handed over to SHN. The event ended with a sumptuous lunch.

(Story and photos by Charles Devasagayam)

AAP'S TORONTO VOLUNTEER TEAM ORGANIZED PARTY'S MEET & GREET IN BRAMPTON



PEEL HOSTED 'DOSES AFTER DARK' COVID-19 VACCINE CLINIC AT ROCKWOOD MALL IN MISSISSAUGA



DR. LAWRENCE LOH, MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH, REGION OF PEEL.



BONNIE CROMBIE, MAYOR OF MISSISSAUGA.



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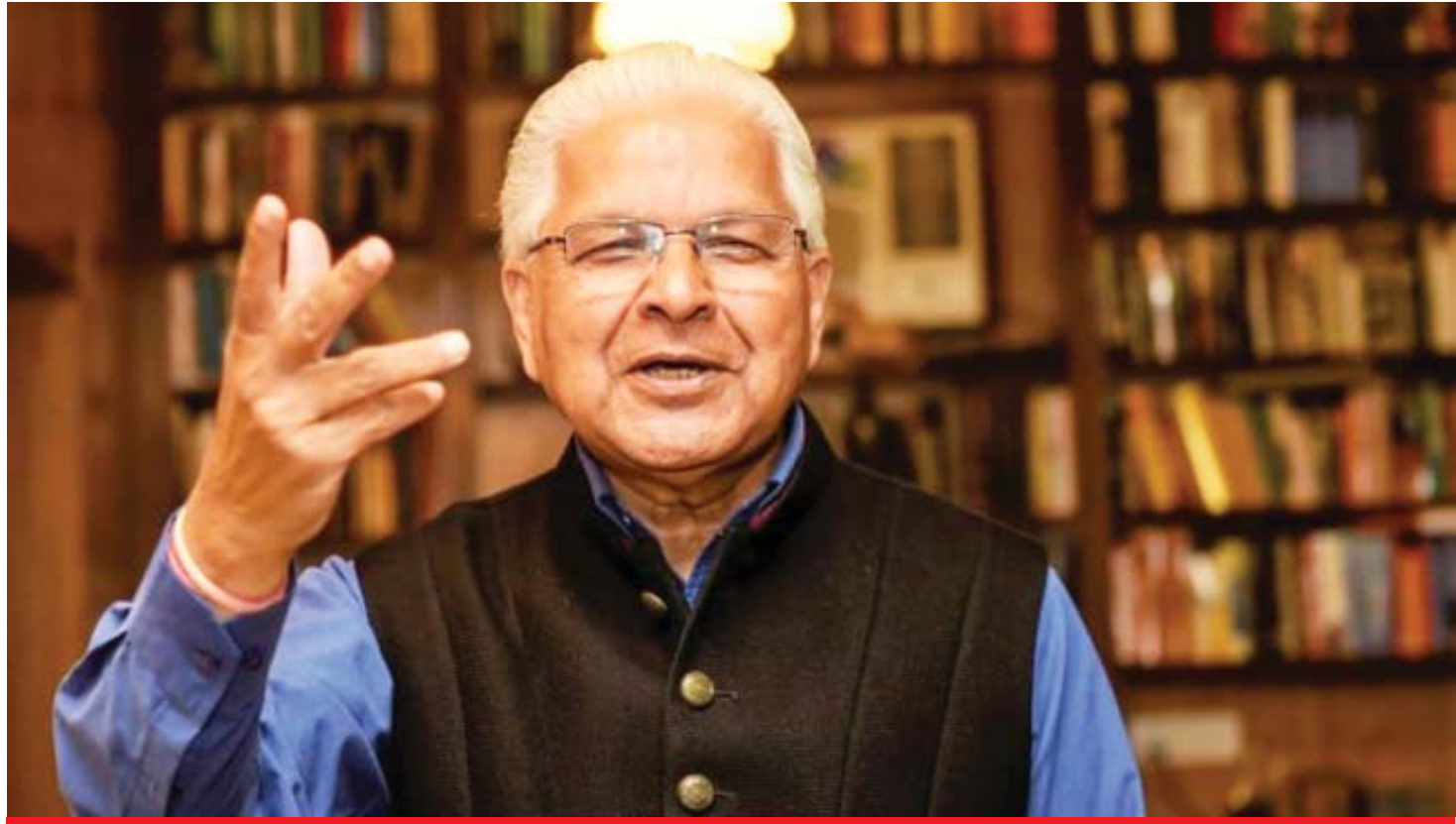
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Congress is losing in Punjab, says Ashwani Kumar after quitting party

Former Union Minister Ashwani Kumar, who resigned from the Congress on Tuesday, targeted Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi and claimed that the party's defeat in the state in the February 20 Assembly polls is certain. In an interview to IANS, Ashwani Kumar, who was perceived as a loyalist of the Gandhi family and had supported against the 'G23', said it was getting difficult to continue in the party. He also said he is open to join any other party. Here are excerpts of the interview.

Q. After being so long in the Congress, you have decided to quit now. Why?

A. I was feeling uncomfortable, helpless and ignored for the last many months and I understood that now I am not needed in the party. Therefore, I distanced myself. I was not able to do whatever I wanted to do by staying inside the party. That's why I decided to fulfil my duty and now I can do what I feel comfortable to do.

Q. You tried to keep your point on the party platform. Were all those points ignored?

A. What is the platform of the party now... I tried to tell them (the top leadership) in my own way, but indication was clear that I am not needed in the party. I gave a lot of thought to this and came to the decision that according to the current circumstances and my limitations, it would be better for me to break away from the party and work in the national interest on a larger scale.

Q. Is everything going well in the Congress in Punjab? You have indicated that result will be shocking.

A. I have been involved in the work of party organisation in the campaign of Punjab for many weeks and from what I have seen on the ground, it seems that the Aam Aadmi Party is moving ahead there with a huge majority.

Q. Why do you feel that Congress is losing in Punjab?

A. Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi says he is from a poor family, then how come he has Rs 10-12 crore in his house. So the definition of poverty has changed in the eyes of the Congress, especially for Channi. Now let's see how many people in Punjab have Rs 10-12 crore in their homes. Those who have so much money will definitely vote Congress. Congress is being made fun of in Punjab. Apart from two-three leaders, no one has done anything for the party. It is beyond my understanding how such an old party will move forward in such circumstances. As far as I understand, Congress is losing elections in Punjab and Aam Aadmi Party is winning hands down. In rural areas, where once Akali Dal, Congress dominated, new candidates are getting support.

Q. You were in the Congress for about 46 years and were also the Union Law

Minister. Now that you have resigned, what advice would you give to the Congress?

A. This is not my duty to give advice. Now I will do politics on my own strength, will write my own destiny because today the country needs politics that connects people.

Q. Have you thought of joining other party?

A. I have not given any thought so far, but no party is untouchable. It is also not right to hold Prime Minister Narendra Modi responsible for every shortcoming in the country. I have always believed that ideas should be fought, not persons.

Q. Will you go to BJP like Jitin Prasada, Jyotiraditya Scindia and R.P.N. Singh or with Aam Aadmi Party?

A. I said earlier that no decision has been taken yet in this regard, nor have I talked to the BJP or the AAP. I have met (AAP chief) Arvind Kejriwal and (West Bengal Chief Minister) Mamata Banerjee also. I have good relations with all the leaders but have not decided yet.

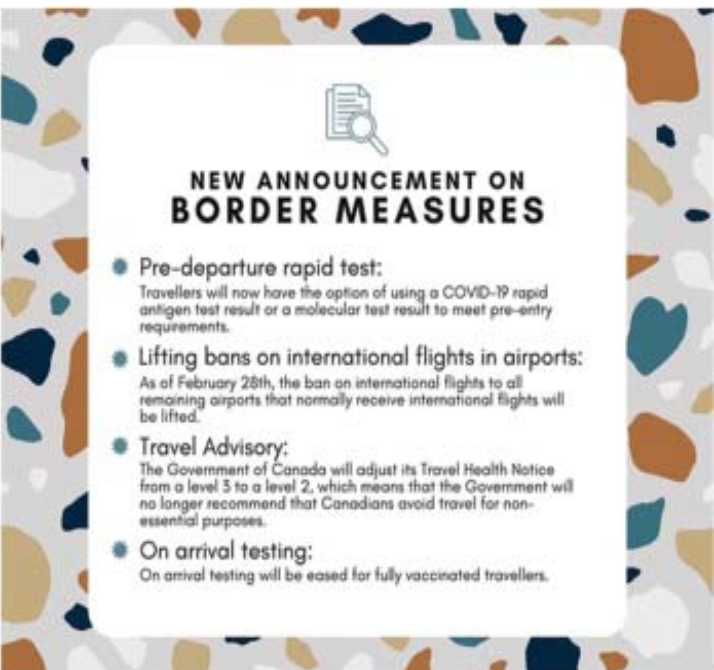
RAHUL DISTANCES FROM CAMPAIGN IN UP, PRIYANKA LEADS THE CHARGE

Former Congress President Rahul Gandhi has not stepped in UP so far after two phases of voting in politically crucial Uttar Pradesh. The firefighting in UP has been left to Congress General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra who is in charge in the state. Though Rahul Gandhi has been named star campaigner in UP elections by the party, but he is keeping safe distance as sources say that party's prospects are not good and the Congress may not win seats as it expects. The party is contesting all the seats in the state for the first time in two decades as it is not in alliance with any political party. Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has now emerged as the main campaigner for the party in the state and outside UP, however Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi are scheduled to attend the Ravidas Jayanti program in Varanasi on Wednesday but there is no campaign schedule given by the party yet. However, the Congress sources say that Rahul Gandhi will step in the state after Punjab elections and that the party has high stakes in the state where the Congress is expecting to return to power.



SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL RICHEST CANDIDATE IN PUNJAB POLLS

With a declared net worth of Rs 202 crore, Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) President Sukhbir Singh Badal is the richest candidate in the assembly elections in Punjab, the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) and Punjab Election Watch said on Wednesday. However, Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi is among the 21 MLAs whose assets have decreased over the past polls. An analysis of election affidavits of 101 legislators in the fray for the elections has found that on an average, the assets of the re-contesting MLAs have increased by 21 per cent since the last assembly polls in 2017. Out of the 101 re-contesting MLAs, assets of 78 MLAs (77 per cent) have increased ranging from two to 2,954 per cent and assets of 21 MLAs (21 per cent) have decreased ranging from minus two to minus 74 per cent. According to the ADR and Punjab Election Watch, the average assets in 2017 of these 101 re-contesting MLAs fielded by various parties, including independents, was Rs 13.34 crore. This time, the average asset of the re-contesting legislators is Rs 16.10 crore with the average asset growth between 2017 and 2022 of Rs 276 crore. Sukhbir Singh Badal, who is in the fray from Jalalabad, has declared the maximum increase in assets of Rs 100 crore i.e. from Rs 102 crore in 2017 to Rs 202 crore in 2022. The assets of his estranged cousin and Congress leader Manpreet Singh Badal, who is contesting from Bathinda Urban have increased by Rs 32 crore, from Rs 40 crore in 2017 to Rs 72 crore in 2022.



CANADA LIGHTENS BORDER MEASURES AS PART OF TRANSITION OF THE PANDEMIC RESPONSE.



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IT'S A BATTLE AMONG SIKHS TO CHOOSE 'SARDAR' OF PUNJAB

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

He said when he became the Home Minister in 2019, he felt quite concerned about the security along the Punjab border. "But once I spoke to CaptAmarinder, I felt relaxed," he recalled at his rally in Patiala town. Among the race for the chief minister is former Deputy Chief Minister Sukhbir Singh Badal, 59, the man known for micro poll management for his now own controlled century old party, SAD. A billionaire businessman himself with interests in hotels, resorts, media, agriculture and other investments and known for corporate style functioning, Sukhbir Badal, whose party is in alliance with Mayawati's Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), surely knows how to set the ball rolling and hit back the political rivals with surprises. Having led the party to an unprecedented second consecutive term in Punjab in 2012, Sukhbir Badal, whose father Parkash Singh Badal, 94, the country's oldest candidate in the fray for the sixth consecutive term, is trying hard to save the 'sinking ship' after party's humiliating defeat in the 2017 Assembly polls. Also, for the first time SAD is testing waters after severing its ties with the BJP with which it joined hands in 1997 during the state polls and remained its oldest ally for 23 years. SAD patriarch Badal, a founding member of the NDA, who before parting ways had always referred to ties as 'nau-maas da rishta' (nail-and-flesh ties). His son Sukhbir Badal, the Ferozepur Lok Sabha member, is contesting from his stronghold Jalalabad for the fourth time. Ending months of suspense and leaving belligerent Navjot Singh Sidhu sulking, party leader Rahul Gandhi on February 6 announced incumbent Charanjit Singh Channi as the party's chief ministerial face. Political observers believe the decision of the Congress to go to the polls in the state, which is witnessing a five-cornered contest, under the leadership of three-time legislator Channi, the state's first Dalit Chief Minister, is to woo the Dalit Sikh votes that constitutes 32 per cent Scheduled Caste population in the state, the country's largest. In 2017, the Congress won 41 per cent of the Dalit votes and 34 seats in the state are reserved. Former handball player, Channi is leading the party and fielded him from two seats -- his bastion Chamkaur Sahib that he won three times and his new battlefield Bhadaur. Channi, who entered politics at the age of 20, replaced CaptAmarinder on September 19, 2021, as a stopgap Chief Minister. He's been the first non-Jat Sikh since 1977 in the state. Channi, 58, is testing the political waters in Bhadaur constituency for the first time where he's touring extensively. He won the Chamkaur Sahib seat in Ropar district thrice in a row. Both are reserved assembly constituencies. He has been given the second seat to counter the growing influence of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) in the Malwa region by consolidating the scheduled caste votes. To reinforce his image as a people's chief minister, Channi is commonly seen playing cricket with youngsters and card games with village elders

in campaigns. For AAP that is banking on 'Hun ek mauka Kejriwal' (now one chance to Kejriwal) -- arguably one of the biggest advertisement blitz campaigns -- comedian-turned-politician and two-time MP, Bhagwant Mann, is the newly anointed chief minister's face of AAP. In the 2017 Assembly elections, AAP had made inroads among Jat Sikhs by emerging as the second largest party with 20 seats, 18 of them in the Malwa region. However, it failed to make a mark in Majha and Doaba regions. Mann held his fort despite Modi wave across the country in 2019 by retaining the Sangrur Lok Sabha seat for the second time in a row. "The fight is not to save some political families but to save Punjab, the farmers, the agriculture, the industry and the youth. Owing to lack of employment and better education infrastructure, our youth is moving abroad," said Mann in his folksy style in his recent campaign in Dhuri town from where he's in the fray. Formerly a popular comedian-actor, Mann, known for his trademark 'basanti' turban, a colour associated with Shaheed Bhagat Singh, has had his fair share of controversies in recent years, especially linked to his drinking habit. Except Channi, all others -- CaptAmarinder Singh, Sukhbir Badal and Bhagwant Mann -- are Jat Sikhs who are estimated to be 20 per cent and have overwhelmingly ruled the state politics. The counting of ballots on March 10 will reveal that a non-Jat Sikh or a Jat Sikh will dominate the political landscape. In the 2017 Punjab Assembly polls, the Congress won 77 seats in the 117-member House, while the SAD-BJP alliance could win only 18 seats. The AAP emerged as the second-largest party with 20 seats

PM MODI EYEING URBAN HINDU VOTERS TO STRENGTHEN PUNJAB GRIP

Campaigning for his party just days before the Assembly polls in the Sikh-dominated Punjab, the birthplace of the year-long mass agitation against three now repealed market-friendly farm laws, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is believed to have taken religious consideration into account while deciding to woo the urban Hindu voters to strengthen the BJP's hold. Also, the saffron party is testing waters for the first time as a major ally after playing second fiddle for over two-decades with its once regional ally, the Akali Dal, which initially supported the laws but later reversed its stand and quit the government to support the farmers' agitation, arguably the world's biggest, gained momentum. Located close to the India-Pakistan border, Modi held an election rally on Wednesday, the second in series in the state, in Pathankot town from where he as the PM candidate held a rally on April 25, 2014. He's holding his culminating election campaign on Thursday in Abohar, the town in Fazilka district known for the saffron coloured kinnow production and accounts for 60 per cent of the state's fruit produce.

NDA WILL FORM GOVT IN PUNJAB, FREE IT FROM DRUGS: PM MODI



Promising to work on the teachings of Sikh gurus with principles of non-discrimination and equality for all, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Monday that the NDA would form the government in Punjab and would free the state from drugs. "You might have everything, including money and property, but if your son becomes a drug-addict, what will you do with money and property? I am indebted to Punjab and I want to make the state 'nashamukt'. This battle is for you," Modi said at an election rally here, his first after the major security breach during his visit to the state last month. Slamming the Congress for allegedly instigating the 1984 anti-Sikh riots after the assassination of then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, Modi said, "Our government formed an SIT (special investigation team) to probe the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. But the Congress gave high posts to the accused. The Congress is under the control of a family. As long as the family rules the Congress, Punjab will never benefit." Praising former Congress leader and two-time Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, who was sitting next to the Prime Minister at the rally, Modi said, "Captain (Amarinder Singh) worked in collaboration with the Union government under the federal system, but they (Congress) sent him home. The Congress is being punished for its sins as you can see the fate of this party now. They are fighting among themselves." Also missing no opportunity to take a jibe at BJP's former alliance partner, the Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD), the Prime Minister said, "There was a time when SAD was not having absolute majority and with BJP's support, it could form the government. "But SAD did not pick a Deputy CM from the BJP and Badal sahib (Parkash Singh Badal) chose his son as Deputy CM, but we stayed with them because we wanted Punjab's development." The policies of the Congress have destroyed the industries in Punjab, where unemployment is at its peak, and this condition can only change with an NDA government in the state, Modi said. The Prime Minister further said that 70 per cent sports goods are manufactured in Jalandhar, but the Congress never talked about 'Vocal for Local' to support these manufacturers. Barring for the need for a 'new Punjab' to build a 'new India', Modi said, "For a new Bharat, we need a 'Naya Punjab' (new Punjab), in which there will be no place for corruption or 'mafia raaj'." Modi also questioned the security arrangements of the state government, saying, "I wanted to pay obeisance at the Devi Talab Mandir, but the police administration asked me to go back by helicopter. This is the state of affairs of the Punjab government." Reiterating the need for a double-engine government for development, Modi said the state "needs a double-engine government (Centre and state) for the unprecedented development of Punjab". "Twenty-three lakh Punjab farmers are getting PM Kisan payment directly in their accounts. We provided pesticides and fertilisers at a lower rate than the global market. We'll also work on natural and organic farming," he said.

UTTARAKHAND: BJP CLAIMS WIN ON 60 PLUS SEATS, CONG 45 PLUS



Incumbent Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami on Monday claimed that the BJP will win handsomely in the Uttarakhand assembly polls creating a new record for the state that is voting for all 70 constituencies. However, Bhuvan Chandra Kapadi, who is the Congress candidate against Dhami, denied any such situation and expressed confidence that Congress will form the government with 45 plus seats. "Ever since (Prime Minister Narendra) Modi assumed charge, all myths have busted, all historical records have been broken. This year, Uttarakhand too will witness a new history," Dhami told IANS as he went to cast his vote in his constituency here. Dhami was commenting in view of the fact that ever since the state was formed in 2000, Uttarakhand has had a history of not repeating any party in the assembly elections. Asked about the prospects, Dhami said, "AbkiBaarSaathPaar (This time, we shall win more than 60 seats)." His rival from the seat and Congress' executive president Kapadi, on the other hand said, it is Dhami's misunderstanding and that his party will form the government. "It is not a question of a person's post or his personal stature. What matters most is his work. And there is no work done in Khatima. He has favoured business people. All that he gave people of Khatima is traffic jams whenever he came here during the last six months," Kapadi said. Asked why the people of Khatima would vote for him, Kapadi said, "Congress had given 8.5 acres land for Goshala but till 2019, BJP did not allow building of that Goshala. In that year, they cancelled it and allotted it to other people, leaving the SC brothers who were tilling that land for the last 50 years. Then, who is responsible for the loss of lives and loss of crops due to stray cattle all these years?" Taking a jibe at BJP's claims of winning over 60 seats, he said, "They also promised Rs 15 lakh for all, they also promised 2 crore employment. It is only an election stunt." Apart from Dhami and Kapadi, former Congress Chief Minister Harish Singh Rawat, Aam Aadmi Party's Chief Ministerial candidate Col Ajay Kothiyal and other leaders such as Satpal Maharaj (BJP), Madan Kaushik (BJP), Yashpal Arya (Congress), Subodh Unniyal (BJP), Dhan Singh Rawat (BJP), Arvind Pandey (BJP), Ganesh Godiyal (Congress state president) and Preetam Singh (Congress) are trying their luck at the hustings.

IT'LL BE DOWN TO THE WIRE FOR BJP, SP IN SECOND PHASE OF UP POLLS



Uttar Pradesh will be voting for 55 assembly seats in the second phase of elections on Monday. A total of 586 candidates are in the fray, but the main contest is between the BJP and the Samajwadi Party. However, the BSP is in a position to make the contest triangular at some seats. In the last assembly elections in 2017, out of the 55 seats going to polls on monday, 38 went to the BJP, 15 to Samajwadi Party (SP) and two seats to the Congress as there was an alliance between SP and the Congress. Muslim candidates won 10 of the 15 seats they contested which all went to the SP. History shows alliance politics benefited both the SP-Congress alliance in 2017 and BSP-RLD alliance in 2019, but this time with no alliance among the major political parties, political analysts claim that there will be a split of votes which can benefit the BJP. In the last assembly elections, when SP and Congress won a total of 17 seats, in the Lok Sabha elections of 2019, seven of the 11 seats in this region went to the BSP-SP alliance. Of these, the BSP won four (Saharanpur, Nagina, Bijnor and Amroha), while the SP won three seats in Moradabad, Sambhal and Rampur. The alliance formula of Muslim, Jat and Dalit voters in this region was a total success. The SP this time entered into the electoral fray in alliance with Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD) and Mahan Dal which are believed to have considerable influence over Jat, Shakya, Saini, Kushwaha, Maurya, and Koiri voters. A total of 2,01,42,441 voters will exercise their franchise in 55 assembly seats of which 1,07,61476 are male voters, while 93,79,704 are female voters and 1,261 voters are the third gender. In 2017, the highest number of 77.53 per cent votes were cast in NakudVidhan Sabha seat. In the 2012 assembly elections too, the same seat had recorded 77.18 per cent voting. The Election Commission has marked Deoband of Saharanpur, Manihar of Rampur, Sambhal and Asmoli seats of Sambhal, Nagina, Dhampur and Bijnor seats of Bijnor as sensitive. Additional companies of Central Armed Police force will be deployed in these areas. All activities in these areas are strictly monitored by the security forces. A total of 586 candidates are in the fray for the second phase of elections to be held on Monday on 55 assembly seats in nine districts of Saharanpur, Bijnor, Moradabad, Sambhal, Rampur, Amroha, Badaun, Bareilly and Shahjahanpur. Maximum 15 candidates are in the fray in Kanth, Bareilly Cantt and Shahjahanpur. Incidentally, no assembly seat has more than 15 candidates making it easier for the EC to conduct polls as up to 16 candidates can be included in one voting machine. In the second phase, 8 assembly seats come under the reserved category of which BJP had won 7 in 2017. There are also 8 such seats in this phase on which the BJP in 2017 had won with a thin margin. The veterans whose prestige is at stake include ministers Suresh Khanna, Gulabo Devi and Baldev Singh Aulakh. From the SP, Azam Khan, former minister Dharampal Singh Saini, Kamal Akhtar and Mehboob Ali's fate will also be sealed in the voting machine on Monday.

Hijab or no hijab: A fundamental question

On February 5, the Karnataka government, passed an order in exercise of its powers under Section 133 of the Karnataka Education Act, 1983, inter-alia directing that in colleges that come under the pre-university education department's jurisdiction, the uniforms mandated by the College Development Committee, or the board of management, should be worn and in the event, the management does mandate a uniform, students should wear clothes that are in the interests of unity, equality, and public order.

When this order was sought to be implemented by the Government PU Colleges in Udupi which barred few girls from wearing hijab and insisted on implementing a uniform dress code, few girls opposed the ban which for political reasons evolved into agitations and counter agitations, first across Karnataka and subsequently, to other parts of the country, supporting or opposing the right to wear hijabs in class rooms. Therefore, a fundamental question arises as to whether Article 25 of the Constitution protects the right of students to wear Hijabs in Class rooms which will now be decided by the Karnataka High Court and most probably by the Hon'ble Supreme Court.

A similar controversy arose in 2003 when the Bombay High Court in the case of Fatima Hussain Syed v/s Bharat Education Society and Others, ruled that it was not a violation of Article 25 of the Constitution for the principal to prohibit the wearing of head scarf or head covering in the school.

Further in 2018, the Hon'ble Kerala High Court in its Judgment dated December 4, 2018 titled Fathima Thasneem (Minor) vs State of Kerala & Others has sought to balance the fundamental right of a woman to have the choice of dress based on religious injunctions and the fundamental right to establish, manage and administer an institution. In the said background, the Kerala High Court held that individual rights/ interest must give yield to the larger public interest and therefore, it is for the institution to decide whether the petitioners can be permitted to attend the classes with the headscarf and full sleeve shirt and if a student does not wish to abide by the dress code, they can seek Transfer Certificate.

However, despite the said decision, the said dispute is being raised again and has now attained the status of a national debate only due to vested political interest and ongoing elections in several states wherein people have started to take extreme position where one side is insisting on Hijabs and the other side is insisting on wearing Saffron Shawls and scarves in class rooms.

It is a settled legal position that no fundamental right is absolute in nature. Article 25 of the Constitution which provides the fundamental right to profess, practice and propagate a religion is also subject to restrictions in the interest of public



A SIMILAR CONTROVERSY AROSE IN 2003 WHEN THE BOMBAY HIGH COURT IN THE CASE OF FATIMA HUSSAIN SYED V/S BHARAT EDUCATION SOCIETY AND OTHERS, RULED THAT IT WAS NOT A VIOLATION OF ARTICLE 25 OF THE CONSTITUTION FOR THE PRINCIPAL TO PROHIBIT THE WEARING OF HEAD SCARF OR HEAD COVERING IN THE SCHOOL. FURTHER IN 2018, THE HON'BLE KERALA HIGH COURT IN ITS JUDGMENT DATED DECEMBER 4, 2018 TITLED FATHIMA THASNEEM (MINOR) VS STATE OF KERALA & OTHERS HAS SOUGHT TO BALANCE THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT OF A WOMAN TO HAVE THE CHOICE OF DRESS BASED ON RELIGIOUS INJUNCTIONS AND THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO ESTABLISH, MANAGE AND ADMINISTER AN INSTITUTION. IN THE SAID BACKGROUND, THE KERALA HIGH COURT HELD THAT INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS/ INTEREST MUST GIVE YIELD TO THE LARGER PUBLIC INTEREST AND THEREFORE, IT IS FOR THE INSTITUTION TO DECIDE WHETHER THE PETITIONERS CAN BE PERMITTED TO ATTEND THE CLASSES WITH THE HEADSCARF AND FULL SLEEVE SHIRT AND IF A STUDENT DOES NOT WISH TO ABIDE BY THE DRESS CODE, THEY CAN SEEK TRANSFER CERTIFICATE.

order, morality, health and other interests of the State. Even assuming that wearing hijab is a religious practice, the same is not absolute and must give way to larger interests of public order and state. The said position has also been upheld by the Hon'ble Supreme Court in Asha Ranjan and others v/s State of Bihar and others (2017) holding that individual interest must yield to the larger public interest. Thus, conflict over competing rights can be resolved not by negating individual rights but by upholding the larger right to remain, to hold such relationships between institutions and students.

A uniform dress code is introduced with an objective to bring homogeneity and a sense of uniformity and to implement a sense of order and discipline amongst the students and any insistence on deviating from the said dress code, defeats the said objective. The right to establish and administer an institution under Article 19(1)(g) or Article 29 & 30 will also include the right to maintain order and discipline in the same and if the institutional rules are not followed by a student, the institution has a right to deny entry to that student as well.

For example, if an institution prohibits burqa or short skirts or lungis in class, the students cannot insist on wearing the same on the ground that the right to wear a clothe as per their choice at all places is their fundamental right and therefore the same must also be allowed in schools and colleges. Similarly, if a minority institution mandates Hijabs as part of their mandatory dress code, no student can deny to wear the same on the ground that wearing them violates their religion.

Therefore, the larger question i.e. whether wearing hijab is an essential practice of Islam and therefore, the students have a fundamental right to wear hijabs is only being stoked due to vested political interests and Courts must be very careful in dealing with the same as the same will directly affect the unity

and social fabric of our country. Further, even if the same is held to be a fundamental right, the same must be subject to restrictions which must include a respect for the dress code sought to be implemented by the Institution.

We also need to understand that banning hijabs or other face covering from school uniforms is not confined to our country or something unique being imposed by the ruling party. In 2011, France banned burqa covering the face in public schools and barred students from displaying any form of religious symbols. Subsequently, several other countries such as Switzerland, Netherlands, Belgium, China, Austria, Bulgaria, and Sri Lanka amongst others have imposed a ban on hijabs and other facial and head coverings on public transportation, in government buildings and at health and education institutions.

In order to paint all these countries as Islamophobic on account of the ban imposed by them, may not be correct. Public security, sense of equality and checking religious extremism have been a valid reason for upholding the ban on the hijab, which anyways is perceived as a symbol of women oppression and no freedom of choice can be allowed to trump these valid concerns of the Society at large.

"What to wear in a classroom is not important, what to learn is" and therefore, instead of fighting for wearing Hijab in classrooms, we need to fight for better teachers, laboratories and colleges which is the need of the hour.

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

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Starting February 28

Brampton Senior Residents

RIDE BRAMPTON TRANSIT FOR FREE



Brampton Transit

EFFECTIVE FEBRUARY 28, BRAMPTON SENIORS 65+ WILL BE ABLE TO USE THE BRAMPTON TRANSIT FREE OF CHARGE

Starting February 28, Brampton's senior residents can ride Brampton Transit for free with a Brampton Senior Identification Card and a PRESTO card loaded with an annual free pass.

As approved in the 2020 Budget, the free annual pass will provide unlimited travel for Brampton seniors at no cost on Brampton Transit.

Brampton Transit will no longer sell the \$15 senior resident monthly pass or offer the \$1 senior resident cash fare. All non-resident seniors can continue to use their PRESTO cards and pay the senior e-purse fare at \$1.60.

Mayor Patrick Brown said, "We are proud to launch free transit for Brampton's senior residents on February 28, 2022. This is a milestone in transit affordability and caring for our senior residents. Brampton is a Green City, and as part of our 2040 Plan we're committed to providing efficient, affordable and sustainable transit through our Brampton Transit network."

Brampton Transit is committed to providing affordable and sustainable transportation. The free Brampton Transit pass for Brampton seniors builds on the Term of Council Priorities and improves transit access for seniors in Brampton.

"Brampton City Council is on a mission to reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated in the city by 80% by 2050. Offering free fare to Brampton

seniors is an important milestone in affordable and sustainable transit and driving Brampton's climate change goals forward, as we work to equalize all forms of transportation in our city," Doug Whillans, City Councillor Wards 2 & 6; Member, Environment Advisory Committee; Member, CEERP Community Task Force said.

This free pass comes after the success of the \$15 senior resident monthly pass that was introduced in September 2019, which resulted in an increase in seniors obtaining Brampton Senior Identification Cards.

For details on eligibility and where to get your cards, visit www.bramptontransit.com or call 905.874.5120.

Paul Vicente, Regional Councillor, Wards 1 & 5; Chair, Public Works and Engineering, said, "Brampton City Council approved free Brampton Transit fare for Brampton's seniors as part of the 2020 Budget, and that commitment comes to life this year. I encourage our seniors to enjoy free transit and active living with the free fare pass. It is only fitting that the seniors who have built our community receive a break on transit." "Brampton Transit is focused on constant and consistent improvements to our transit system as we continue to efficiently move people around the city. This is a big year for Brampton Transit as we implement free senior fares for Brampton residents and continue to see electric buses on our roads," said Alex Milojevic, General Manager, Brampton Transit.

Ontario Names the Hurontario LRT After Former Mississauga Mayor Hazel McCallion



Today, Premier Doug Ford and Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation, issued the following statement regarding the Hurontario LRT:

"As of today, the Hurontario LRT will be known as the Hazel McCallion Line to commemorate the great achievements and contributions of former City of Mississauga Mayor, Hazel McCallion.

With decades of public service under her belt, McCallion, known locally as "Hurricane Hazel", is a trailblazer and inspirational figure in Canadian history, and it is only fitting to have her legacy honoured today, on her

101st birthday. The Hazel McCallion Line will be a gamechanger for the people of Brampton and Mississauga. The 18-kilometre LRT line will connect people to public transit and link GO Transit's Milton and Lakeshore West lines, the Mississauga Transitway, Brampton Transit, Züm and MiWay. Once complete, it will support fast, frequent and reliable rapid transit ready to meet the needs of the residents of Mississauga and Brampton. All while stimulating further economic growth in the Greater Golden Horseshoe.

SAVE MAX GROUP OF COMPANIES MAKES EMPLOYEES & REALTORS® OWNERS OF THE COMPANY



Mississauga, ON – Save Max, a holding corporation that owns and manages the Save Max Group's franchise business spread all over Canada with 56 franchisees, 650 Realtors® and 100+ employees, proudly announces the launch of a new member shareholding program. Save Max is offering all its group Realtors® and employees to participate in the development and growth of the platform by making them the stakeholders in the company. The settlement and delivery of the new shares to be issued are expected to be completed by March 2022.

Raman Dua, CEO of Save Max Group talking to media said that "The employee shareholder program is the first step towards our larger goal of an initial public offering. Save Max will be going public in the next 6-12 months and this is a unique opportunity for all of the existing Realtors® and employees who have been working with the company and contributing towards the growth of the company to become an owner and benefit before the company gets listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange."

This initiative is part of the company's policy of developing an employee shareholding program. Mr. Dua also mentioned that with this program, he wishes to involve all employees even more closely in the group's development, by offering them the possibility of subscribing to the shares of Save Max. "While CEOs strive to maximize earnings and return value to shareholders, the best-run businesses go above and beyond. These businesses prioritize the needs of their customers and make investments in their employees and communities. In the end, it is the most promising method to create long-term wealth. Save Max's transformation into a public corporation will be a huge moment in the company's history. The commitments from the entire team show that they believe in our company and the future of the real estate," added Mr. Dua.

Mr. Kapil Kalra, CFO, Save Max said, "The company has decided to issue 3 million equity shares to its own Realtors® and employees. We are about to conclude our first round of equity share issuance wherein all Save Max employees, Realtors®, and associates will have an opportunity to own the stock at pre-IPO value. The capital raised will be used towards the aggressive expansion plans for Save Max and will fuel exponential targeted growth with a sales volume of over \$100 billion and brand presence in 11 countries in the next 5 years."

Save Max has kept its "People First" approach in the forefront by giving all its employees an opportunity to benefit from the shareholding program as per the guidelines and criteria set by the company.

About Save Max:

Save Max opened its first real estate office in Brampton in 2010 is one of the fastest-growing profit-making companies in Canada. To date, Save Max has a proven track record of C\$ 7+ billion sales volume with 11,000+ transactions in past 11 years. Save Max has revolutionized the industry standards in real estate and is currently operating with a strong & professional team of 650+ Real Estate Agents, 56 franchisees across Canada & India. Save Max is working towards expanding its base internationally and has registered its trademark in 11+ countries including India, Australia and U.S.A.

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INDO-CANADA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE FOUNDER PRESIDENT KISHORE C DOSHI
PASSES AWAY AT 85

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

A private family funeral service will be held on Wednesday, February 9th. A Celebration of Life with extended family and friends will follow this spring. When the ICCC celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2002, Mr. Doshi remembered the formation of the institution in an interview with Renu Mehta, ICCC’s then Vice President. “Harshad Patel, Jay Chauhan and I first conceived of the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce in early January 1977. Numerous organizations served the social, cultural and religious community, but none where businessmen and professionals could network to enhance development, or find support in becoming contributing members of the economic, social and cultural fabric of Canada. We felt that only a secular and non-political organization could achieve this. On 15 January 1977, at a meeting attended by 13 people, we put together a task force to develop the aims, objectives, structure and a name for the proposed association. Thus, on 12 March 1977 the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce came into being. A Board of Directors was elected which, in turn, elected founding President.” Mr. Doshi was born in Mumbai, India, one of 8 siblings and countless cousins. After his schooling at St Xavier’s School, he pursued his dream of education in North America and attended Syracuse University for his MBA. He began his working and married life in Lindsay, Ontario, and they continued building their strong community of friends in Ottawa, and finally Toronto. He began his career with Union Carbide followed by Cochrane Dunlop. His entrepreneurial spirit then led him to co-found Video Captions, a pioneering business that brought closed captioning to Canada. Mr. Doshi was awarded the Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012 in recognition of his contributions to Canada. He volunteered many years for the Liberal Party of Canada in the Don Valley East riding. His family would like to thank Drs. Casey, Cheung and Shah at Sunnybrook Hospital, family Dr. Kithani, and the stem cell transplant team at Princess Margaret for gifting Kishore an extra 14 years with loved ones. They are also grateful for the compassionate care provided by his personal support workers over the past year at home.

CANADA TOPS G7 GROWTH DESPITE COVID: STATSCAN

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

One thing that has not changed from five years ago is that Canada remains the fastest growing country in the G7. Most of that growth is attributable to more people arriving here from around the world to start a new life. Approximately 1.8 million more people were calling Canada home in 2021 compared with five years earlier, with four in five of these having immigrated to Canada since 2016. Although the onset of the pandemic slowed population growth from a record high in 2019 (up 583,000 or +1.6%) to its lowest growth rate in a century in 2020 (up 160,000 or +0.4%), Canada’s pace of population growth remains the highest in the G7. For the first time in the census since the 1940s, the population of the Maritimes grew at a faster pace than the Prairie provinces, due to rising immigration levels and an influx of Canadians migrating from other parts of the country. Conversely, the population of neighbouring Newfoundland and Labrador declined (-1.8%) from 2016 to 2021. Yukon’s population (+12.1%) grew at the fastest pace nationally from 2016 to 2021 and among the provinces, Prince Edward Island experienced the fastest growth (+8.0%). Canada continues to urbanize. Among the 36,991,981 people living here in the spring of 2021, close to 27.3 million people, or nearly three in four Canadians, lived in one of Canada’s 41 large urban centres. Today, Statistics Canada is releasing the first results from the 2021 Census, including the number of Canadians counted, population growth across the country, and how the pandemic has affected the demographic makeup of the nation. Over the coming months, Statistics Canada will be releasing the full results from the 2021 Census, which will paint a complete statistical portrait of the Canadian communities from coast to coast to coast. Please see the 2021 Census release schedule to find out when data and analysis on the upcoming topics will be released throughout 2022.

CANADA AIMS TO WELCOME 431,645 NEW
PERMANENT RESIDENTS IN 2022

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

Today, the Honourable Sean Fraser, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, tabled the 2022-2024 Immigration Levels Plan, which charts an ambitious but responsible path for immigration that will help the Canadian economy recover and will fuel post-pandemic growth, all while strengthening communities and industries across the country that rely on immigration. The pandemic has highlighted the contributions of newcomers to the well-being of our communities and across all sectors of the economy. Last year, Canada welcomed more than 405,000 new permanent residents—the most immigrants in a single year in our history. Despite having regained many of the jobs lost during the pandemic, there are still hundreds of thousands of positions in all sectors waiting to be filled. Immigration already accounts for almost 100% of labour force growth, and with 5 million Canadians set to retire by the end of this decade, the worker to retiree ratio will drop down to only 3:1. This is a clear sign that we have a strong economic need for increased immigration. To ensure Canada has the workers it needs to fill critical labour market gaps and support a strong economy into the future, the 2022–2024 Immigration Levels Plan aims to continue welcoming immigrants at a rate of about 1% of Canada’s population, including 431,645 permanent residents in 2022, 447,055 in 2023, and 451,000 in 2024. This plan builds on the previous levels plan, with an increased focus on supporting our economic resurgence and post-pandemic growth.

PARAMJIT DHANASER, 38, OF BRAMPTON
CHARGED FOR CRIMINAL HARASSMENT
INVOLVING A WEAPON

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

On Friday, November 26, 2021, at approximately 1:00 a.m., a 19 year-old woman allegedly was approached by an unknown male driving a 4 door white sedan, and offered the victim a ride home, for which she refused. This took place while the victim waited at a Mississauga Transit bus stop in the area of Britannia Road West and McLaughlin Road, Mississauga. Upon reaching her destination, the unknown male followed her home and confronted her while brandishing a weapon. The male fled the area after seeing approaching vehicles. The victim did not sustain any physical injuries. On February 12, 2022, 38-year-old Paramjit Dhanaser of Brampton, was arrested and charged with: Criminal Harassment (Stalking) Possession of a Weapon for a Dangerous Purpose He appeared for a bail hearing and attended the Ontario Court of Justice in Brampton on February 13, 2022 Investigator are encouraging any witnesses and victims to come forward and report any incidents to police, and want to ensure that everyone has access to support services, regardless of their decision to proceed criminally. Investigators are requesting that anyone with information or may have had contact with Paramjit Dhanaser to call the 11 Division Criminal Investigation Bureau at (905)453-2121, ext. 1133. Information may also be left anonymously by calling Peel Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477), or by visiting www.peelcrimestoppers.ca.



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HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA POSTS WARNING TO ITS
CITIZENS IN CANADA DUE TO PROTESTS

The Canadian capital city of Ottawa and several other major cities including Toronto are currently witnessing protests with road blockages, demonstrations, large gatherings, and general strikes. This has led to disruptions to traffic, public transportation, and shortages of essential items, including food and water. Owing to the prevailing situation, a state of emergency has been declared for the City of Ottawa. The impact on traffic and services is likely to continue and local authorities in other major cities of Canada may also impose curfews or other restrictions at short notice. In view of the ongoing situation, Indian citizens in Canada and those planning to visit Canada are hereby advised to:

1. Exercise a high degree of caution and remain alert;
2. Avoid areas where demonstrations and large gatherings are taking place, such as downtown Ottawa;
3. Follow the instructions of local authorities, including curfews;
4. Monitor local media for information on ongoing demonstrations and the evolving situation.

Indian citizens in Canada are also encouraged to register with the High Commission of India in Ottawa or Consulates of India in Toronto and Vancouver through their websites, or the MADAD portal madad.gov.in Registration would enable the High Commission and the Consulates to better connect with Indian citizens in Canada in the event of an emergency.



Consulate General of India, Toronto will be organizing Consular
Camp in Brampton on Saturday, 26 February

Consulate General of India, Toronto will be organizing Consular Camp in Brampton on Saturday, 26 February, 2022 to address and resolve various queries related to Consular matters viz, Passport, Visa, OCI, PCC, Surrender Certificate, Attestation, Life Certificate, etc as per details given below :

Venue for Consular Camp	Date	Time
Nanaksar Gurudwara, 64 Timberlane Dr, Brampton, ON L6Y 4V7	Saturday, 26 February, 2022	10.00 AM – 01.30 PM

2. The Consular Camp is meant to resolve any long-pending issues and is repeat NOT meant to provide the consular service on the spot. However, the applications for PASSPORT, VISA, OCI, PCC, SURRENDER CERTIFICATE, ATTESTATION and LIFE CERTIFICATE services if found complete in all respects will be accepted, and fee will be payable through Debit Card only. Please note in the case of Attestation services, fee will be payable only through Demand Draft in favour of “Consulate General of India, Toronto”. Applicants are therefore requested to go through the following links to understand the documentary requirements and applicable fee :
- Link 1: <https://www.cgitoronto.gov.in/>
Link 2: <https://www.blsindia-canada.com/toronto-jurisdiction/index.php>
3. Applications will be perused only if all documents and forms are submitted. Applicants are required to submit original and photocopy of all the documents and the forms as prescribed in the above links. Soft copy of any document will not be accepted.
4. The Covid-19 guidelines must be strictly adhered to at the camp.

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PAMA CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH AND WILL WELCOME BACK VISITORS FOR A ONE-DAY-ONLY FREE FAMILY DAY EVENT!

This February, Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives (PAMA) is celebrating Black History Month and will be hosting a one-day-only Family Day event on Monday, Feb. 21 (with limited capacities) with in-person as well as virtual activities and exhibits! A partial re-opening in Spring 2022 of the Art Gallery and Courthouse buildings is being planned. The Museum and Archives buildings are set to reopen in Fall/Winter 2022, once the airflow upgrade project is complete. Limited capacities are in effect. Proof of vaccination will be required for all visitors over the age of 12 years. PAMA requires visitors to book timed tickets ahead of arrival, between 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., for entrance into the exhibition and Family Fun Activity.

PAMA at Home February Virtual Events

Unearth Uncover, A community showcase created by students from Cawthra Park Secondary School – On now

The Unearth Uncover Historical Plaque Project began as an act of protest. In the summer and fall of 2021, signs appeared throughout Toronto and Brampton, commemorating significant people, places and events in Black Canadian history. A passionate group of teachers and students created the signs to shine a light on Black Canadian history. Specifically, the group wanted to bring attention to lesser-known histories not being taught in schools, and to the Black scholars and activists who, for decades, have been working to elevate Black history.

Who was putting up these signs? A passionate group of teachers and students created the signs to shine a light on Black Canadian history. Specifically, the group wanted to bring attention to lesser-known histories not being taught in schools, and to the Black scholars and activists who, for decades, have been working to elevate Black history. Take a tour now.

Power Play Sneak Peek Virtual Discussion

Thursday, Feb. 3, 7 p.m. (tomorrow!)

Join in a conversation about Power Play: Hockey in Contemporary Art with guest curator Jaclyn Meloche and featuring artists Didier Morelli, Hazel Meyer and Laura Millard. The artists will explain their individual practices and will discuss the ways their work is connected to hockey

and identity. We will look at sculpture, performance, photography, video and installation. Reserve your free spot now. Virtual Panel Discussion with the Brampton Museum of African History and Culture – Wednesday, Feb. 9, 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Join PAMA and the group creating The Brampton Museum of African History and Culture in conversation about the making of a museum. Co-chairs Myrna Adams and Charles Matthews will discuss the importance of building this museum to help us learn from the past, take action in the present and look to the future. We will learn about the journey thus far, the museum themes, the plans for further action and how the community can get involved. Reserve your free spot now.

PAMA Family Day Online – Monday, Feb. 21

PAMA will be offering a special Family Day Escape Room Challenge and a fantastic Family Fun Activity for February! Check our PAMA at Home Family page for all the details.

One Day Only in Person Family Day Event

Power Play: Hockey in Contemporary Art, guest curated by Jaclyn Meloche – Feb. 21 – June 5, 2022

Virtual 360 and one-day-only, in-person exhibition on Feb. 21

Inspired by the idea that hockey is much more diverse than the popular stereotypes have led Canadian society to believe, this exhibition questions the relationship between hockey and the Canadian identity by making the invisible bodies in the sport visible. Through 45 works of art in diverse media by 13 artists and a selection of archival objects from the Hockey Hall of Fame, timely conversations will be explored surrounding nationalism, gender and racial equity, physical and mental health, and the value of self-esteem.

Family Fun Activity: Abstract Hockey Players – February 21, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Visit PAMA this Family Day for your hockey and art fix! Explore Power Play: Hockey in Contemporary Art and create abstract art inspired by the new exhibition in this instructor-led activity.

Limited capacities are in effect. Proof of vaccination will be required for all visitors over the age of 12 years. PAMA requires visitors to book timed tickets ahead of arrival, between 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., for entrance into the exhibition and Family Fun Activity.

FAMILY DAY HOLIDAY SERVICE HOURS AT THE REGION OF PEEL

Region of Peel offices and non-emergency services will be closed for the Family Day Holiday on Monday, February 21, 2022.

The following non-emergency services are closed and will reopen on Tuesday, February 22, 2022:

Access Peel Counters (by appointment only)

Dental Services Contact Centre

Early Years and Child Care Services

Family Health Call Centre

Healthy Sexuality Clinic

Needle Exchange Program – Mobile Van

Ontario Works in Peel

Peel Living Office

Vaccination clinics

First and second doses are available for eligible individuals 5 years or older.

Adults 18 years or older, and other select groups are eligible to receive a third or booster dose. Walk-ins are accepted. To book your appointment, visit COVID-19 Vaccine appointment.

Emergency shelter, food, medication, or personal support

For urgent homelessness supports, including food, supplies, referrals, and shelter, call the Street Helpline 24/7 at 1-877-848-8481. For information on emergency shelter, visit the emergency shelter web page or call 905-450-1996.

Peel Living Maintenance Requests

For Peel Living maintenance requests, contact the 24-hour request line at 905-790-7335.

TransHelp

All trips for Monday, February 21 and Tuesday, February 22 must be booked by 6 p.m. on Sunday, February 20.

On February 21 (Family Day):

All subscription trips, with the exception of dialysis trips, will be cancelled. TransHelp will operate from 6 a.m. to 1 a.m.

The TransHelp office will be closed, with regular hours resuming on Tuesday, February 22.

Email transhelp@peelregion.ca or call 905-791-1015 with any questions.

Public Transit

Visit Brampton Transit and Mississauga Transit for holiday schedules.

Waste collection Brampton, Mississauga, Caledon

There will be no waste collection on Monday, February 21. Waste will be collected one day later that week. Check your collection calendar to find your pickup day or sign up to receive free waste collection reminders.

All Community Recycling Centres will be closed Monday, February 21, and will return to regular schedule on Tuesday, February 22.

Peel Art Gallery, Museum and Archives (PAMA)

BREAST CANCER SOCIETY OF CANADA PAIRS WITH COLLINS CLOTHIERS FOR NATIONAL SOCK DESIGN CONTEST



The Breast Cancer Society of Canada (BCSC) and Collins Clothiers, Canada's largest independent formal wear company, are inviting Canadians to help them take big steps in breast cancer research — by designing a unique pair of socks! BCSC has paired with Collins Clothiers to bring all Canadians a fun and creative challenge, no design skills required. Participants can visit collinsclothiers.com/bcscdesign to print a sock template and create their design using their favourite coloring tool or by uploading the PDF to a design program of their choice.

Two winning designs will be made into socks by high-quality men's wear company Collins Clothiers, then sold across Canada. 50% of proceeds will go to BCSC. "Breast cancer research is near and dear to my heart and our company's core value is to always support and give back to the communities we're part of, so partnering with BCSC just makes sense for Collins Clothiers," said Curt Collins, President of Collins Clothiers. "Their creativity in engaging Canadians with our product combined with their fundraising efforts around Million Steps to Mother's Day is the perfect fit." This contest is the first step in BCSC's annual Mother's Day Walk fundraiser, an event that has been raising funds for breast cancer research in Canada for the past 31 years. This year, the theme is 'Million Steps to Mother's Day'.

The deadline for designer sock submissions is March 6, 2022. Up to 20 finalists will be selected and then voting will open March 10 – 20, 2022 for people to vote for their favourite design. In addition to having their socks sold across Canada, the final two winners will get a prize pack and a \$1,500 donation made in their honour to their local cancer treatment centre. "The World Health Organization reported last year that breast cancer is the #1 diagnosed cancer worldwide," said Kimberly Carson, CEO of the Breast Cancer Society of Canada. "Our partnership with Collins Clothiers will help us engage Canadians in making a difference to support life-saving breast cancer research. Research saves lives, and we are thrilled to have their support to fulfill our mission". Both companies want Canadians to knock their socks off with creativity and encourage people to visit collinsclothiers.com/bcscdesign to learn more and submit their designs. Follow BCSC on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for updates and use #BCSCdesign.

BLOCKADE BACKLASH: THREE-IN-FOUR CANADIANS TELL CONVOY PROTESTERS, 'GO HOME NOW,' ANGUS REID SURVEY SUGGESTS



If the goal of the Freedom Convoy was to capture the attention of millions of people in Canada and around the globe – mission accomplished. If, however, the goal was to build support for their demands to end pandemic-related restrictions – it has backfired utterly.

New public opinion data from the non-profit Angus Reid Institute shows after more than two weeks of unrest, Canadians are now more likely to oppose measures sought by protesters.

Overall, more than two-in-five now say Canadians say the protests have made them more inclined to support ongoing restrictions related to masking indoors (44%) and vaccination requirements to cross the Canada-U.S. border (44%).

As the country rolls into another week of uncertainty, nearly three-quarters of Canadians (72%) say the time has come for protesters to "go home, they have made their point."

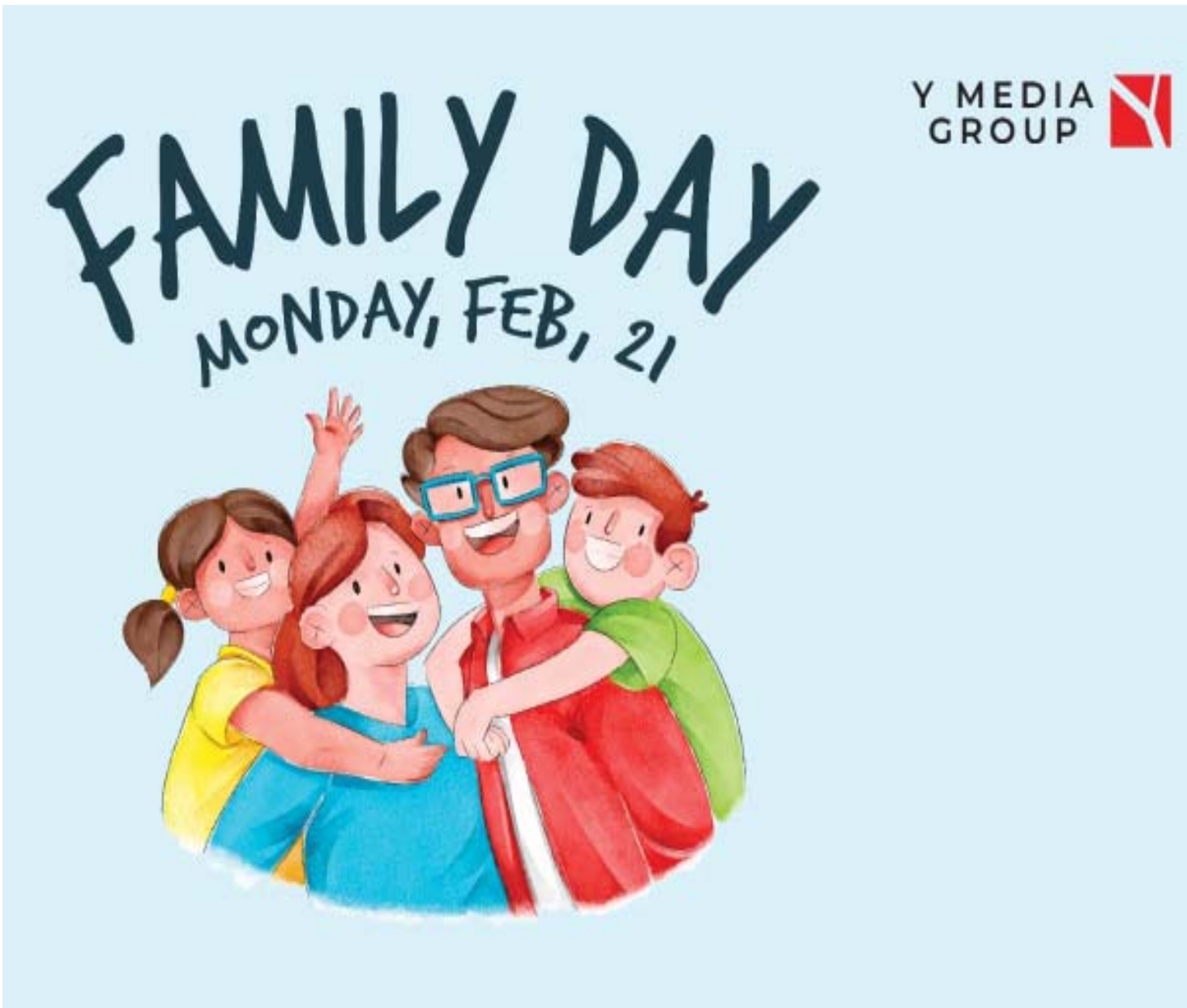
As to how the situation should be resolved – most feel the time for talking is done. Nearly seventy per cent either think local police need to step in and send people home (45%) or that the military should be summoned (23%). One quarter (26%) say it's up to politicians to negotiate a dénouement. However, those same politicians, including the prime minister and the leader of Canada's official opposition, are roundly criticized for harming, not helping events. Two-thirds (65%) say Prime Minister Justin Trudeau comments and actions have worsened the situation, while two-in-five (42%) say this of Candice Bergen, leader of the official opposition. The Ottawa police and Ontario Provincial Police also garner considerable criticism, with more Canadians – and Ontarians – saying they have worsened rather than helped to resolve the situation.

More Key Findings:

The story has caught the attention of many Canadians. Two-thirds (64%) say they are following it in the news and discussing it with friends and family. A further three-in-ten (28%) say they are still paying some attention to it. Very few, one per cent, say they had not heard about the situation (see detailed tables).

Those who support some form of action (93% of Canadians) to remove protesters are largely supportive of arrests if demonstrators refuse to leave. Three-in-five (62%) say this should happen.

Half of Canadians believe premiers Doug Ford (50%) and Jason Kenney (49%) have harmed the situation more than they have helped. For both, that is also the majority opinion in their own provinces.





PUNJABI ACTOR-ACTIVIST DEEP SIDHU DIES IN ROAD ACCIDENT

Punjabi actor-turned-activist Deep Sidhu, who had been named in connection with the violence at Red Fort in Delhi on Republic Day last year, died in a road accident near Delhi on Tuesday.

The 38-year-old actor was active in the farmers' protest against the three now repealed Central farm laws.

The accident took place on the Kundli-Manesar-Palwal (KMP) Expressway that bypasses the national capital. Sidhu was going from Delhi to Bathinda in Punjab when the car in which he was travelling rammed into a trailer truck at 9.30 p.m., the police said. His woman co-driver escaped in the accident.

Sidhu was declared brought dead at the Kharkhoda hospital in Haryana's Sonapat district. On January 26 last year, Sidhu was seen amid the crowd that reached the iconic Red Fort by violating the planned route of the proposed farmers' tractor march, and was accused of provoking the protesters to instal a Nishan Sahib, a symbol of Sikh religion, on its ramparts. Belonging to Muktsar's Udekaran village in Punjab, Sidhu's family had left the village in the 80s. His father was an advocate who

practised at Gidderbaha. In a Facebook live from the Red Fort, Sidhu, who was once known for his proximity to actor and BJP MP Sunny Deol, was heard saying after he was accused in the violence: "We have only hoisted the Nishan Sahib flag on the Red Fort while exercising our democratic right to protest."

He had also said that the national flag was not removed from the flagpole at the Red Fort and that nobody raised a question over the country's unity and integrity. In another video, Sidhu could be seen fleeing from the Red Fort on a bike. Sidhu, along with gangster-turned-social activist LakhaSidhana, were named as the main accused in the January 26 violence in Delhi. Sidhana is a gangster-turned-politician who was acquitted in several cases before he contested the 2012 Assembly polls as a candidate of the People's Party of Punjab, once led by Manpreet Singh Badal, who is currently the Finance Minister in the Congress government in Punjab.

Farmer leaders had, in fact, distanced themselves from both Sidhu and Sidhana and blamed them for inciting violence.

KEJRIWAL TRIES TO WOO INDUSTRIALISTS AHEAD OF PUNJAB POLLS

In the run-up to the February 20 Assembly polls in Punjab, Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday made three announcements to woo industrialists and traders by ensuring their safety and ending bureaucratic hassles.

Accompanying AAP's chief ministerial candidate Bhagwant Mann in Mohali, near here, Kejriwal promised that for the safety of the businessmen, no leader or official would intimidate anyone or get him raided.

"After the formation of AAP government in Punjab, if any of our MLAs or ministers asks for a share from a businessman, we will take immediate action against him," the Delhi Chief Minister told the media.

He alleged that leaders of the Akali Dal and the ruling Congress in the state ask the traders for share and weekly cuts.

"If people refuse to pay, they are intimidated with threats of raids. The businessmen of Punjab are most troubled by corrupt politicians and officials. To eliminate the fear among the traders, we will completely eliminate the 'inspector raj' and illegitimate taxation to create a safe environment for business," the AAP leader said.

Kejriwal appealed to all the traders and 'arhtiyas' for support and said this time they should give a chance to the Aam Aadmi Party.

"Just as we have won the hearts of traders in Delhi, we will win yours too," he said. On the issue of security of the people, Kejriwal accused the previous Akali Dal and Congress government of registering false cases to intimidate people, and said the governments of both the parties misused the police to register false cases against thousands of people who raised their voice against corruption.

EC launches signature campaign in Manipur to promote ethical voting

Ahead of the February 28 and March 5 assembly elections, the Election Commission on Tuesday launched a signature campaign to promote ethical voting.

Additional Chief Electoral Officer of Manipur Naorem Praveen Singh launching the campaign under the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) said that the campaign was launched to promote ethical voting for the forthcoming elections for the 12th Manipur Assembly.

He said that the theme of the campaign is "Yes, I will vote to the Right Candidate". The official stressed that such a campaign would give the voters the mindset of choosing the right candidate who would work with commitment for the welfare of the people and the development of the state. The campaign would also play a crucial role in spreading the message of the importance of ethical and inducement free voting to young voters, he added.

The signature campaign, which was organised by the Manipur Innovation Society, was held on Tuesday in different areas of Imphal city near Kangla, Nupi Keithel and Assembly Road and Thangmeiband. The campaign will also reach out to other areas of the poll bound state before the elections. In an important step, 16.4 per cent all-women polling stations out of the total 2,968 polling stations would be set up in Manipur and in five assembly constituencies -- Singjamei, Thoubal, Yaikul, Wangkhei, Churachandpuri. The election officials said that 487 all-women managed polling stations would be set up in Manipur and women security personnel would be deployed in many of these stations.

DID CONGRESS COMMIT A BLUNDER BY SIDELINING CAPTAIN AMARINDER SINGH?



CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

The manner in which he was speaking, "deposed and exiled" could cost the Congress very dearly, especially if results on March 10 reveal that the Congress has lost the state. No forecast is always accurate, but a plethora of polls conducted by various agencies seem to point towards a Congress defeat. Oddly enough, the Punjab Congress state head Navjot Singh Sidhu, who started the critical fight within the Congress rank and file to upstage Captain Amarinder Singh, is now considered to be out of the power equation altogether.

Chief Minister Charanjit Channi had to be roped in as a stop gap arrangement initially and later declared as official Congress CM candidate for the elections. And jury is still out if Congress leadership blundered in picking sides with Sidhu to start with. In the CVoter IANS tracker last month the respondents were asked the direct question: Who is a better leader: Captain Amarinder Singh or the man who led the revolt against the Captain: Navjot Singh Sidhu? Overall, 37.1 per cent of the voters of Punjab preferred Amarinder Singh, more than 11 per cent above the 26.7 per cent who opted for Sidhu. The preference gap was especially wide in the Hindu community with 48.8 per cent preferring Amarinder Singh while just 17.5 per cent opted for Sidhu.

In all the talk about the Jat and the Dalit Sikh vote, analysts often forget that as per the 2011 Census, Hindus constitute more than 38 per cent of the population of Punjab. This is seen to be having an impact even on Congress supporters. Among traditional Congress voters, a clear majority of 35 per cent said Amarinder Singh is a better leader even after his exit from the party while only 23 per cent said Sidhu was a better leader. The Captain's equation with Hindu voters is testified by the 2014 Lok Sabha elections where despite a Narendra Modi wave, the captain defeated the late Arun Jaitley with a big margin in Amritsar that has a significant Hindu population. In Assembly elections, it is a widely known fact that the late swing of Hindu voters in Punjab tilted the results in favour of Congress five years back. With that critical mass getting away from the Congress due to Sidhu's unpopularity and the Captain's move towards the BJP camp, the problems for Congress camp could multi-fold negating the gains among Dalit voter by CM Channi.

LAKHIMPUR KHERI CASE: ACCUSED ASHISH MISHRA WALKS FREE AFTER FOUR MONTHS

Ashish Mishra, son of union minister Ajay Mishra Teni, who was accused of mowing down four farmers in Lakhimpur on October 3 last year, following a protest by farmers, was released from Lakhimpur jail on Tuesday evening, after the Allahabad High Court corrected its order.

Ashish Mishra had moved the Lucknow bench of the High Court seeking insertion of sections 302 (murder) and 120 B (criminal conspiracy) of IPC that were 'inadvertently' not mentioned in the high court order as the jail authorities would not release him due to the omission.

"It is a mere typographical error, while the court already considered the bail under these sections too and, as such, the same may be allowed making the addition of these sections in the order," said the application. Ashish Mishra was arrested on October 9 last year by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) that was probing the incident.

"Ashish Mishra has been arrested as he was not cooperating during the interrogation and did not answer a few questions," DIG Upendra Agarwal had told reporters at the time of his arrest. An FIR was registered against him and a few others over the incident, but the UP police did not move against him until the Supreme Court decided to take up the matter. His arrest came a day after the apex court expressed its dissatisfaction with the UP government over the action taken in the case. Ashish turned up for questioning the second time he was summoned, and after 12 hours the nine-member SIT headed by DIG Agarwal, arrested him. It may be recalled that eight people were killed on October 3, 2021, after violence erupted during a farmers' protest, claiming the lives of farmers and BJP workers ahead of a visit to Lakhimpur by UP deputy chief minister Keshav Prasad Maurya.

75,000 CHILDREN GET CANCER IN INDIA EVERY YEAR: WHO

India is home to at least 20 per cent of the global childhood cancer burden, with nearly 75,000 kids getting cancer every year, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Non-communicable diseases, including cancer, account for nearly 50 per cent of the total deaths among children aged between 5 years and 14 years and this situation can be improved by ensuring there is an enhanced awareness about the problem and ensuring access to quality healthcare for all, say doctors on International Childhood Cancer Day on February 15. Most common types of childhood cancers are leukemias, brain cancers, lymphomas, and solid tumours like neuroblastomas and Wilms tumours. The burden of childhood cancers is high in low- and middle-income countries where the health system is weak and contributes to cure rates of less than 30 per cent due to significant barriers in early diagnosis, inability to accurately diagnose, poor access to health care facilities, and inability to initiate treatment promptly.



Dr Srikanth Soma, Consultant Surgical Oncologist, SLG Hospitals, said: "In spite of drastic improvement in cancer care services over the past few decades, India continues to have a low success rate when it comes to curing childhood cancers completely. That is because most of the malignancies brought to the notice of doctors are at advanced stages. Lack of awareness, treatment refusal, and financial constraints are among the prime reasons for this delay in seeking right medical care.

"Another major problem is that childhood cancer care services are currently available only at tertiary health centres in major cities, forcing a majority of India to depend on these few centres."

Dr Narender Kumar Thota, Consultant Medical Oncology & Haemato Oncologist & Stem Cell Bone Marrow Transplant Specialist, KIMS Hospitals, said: "(As many as) 1.6 to 4.8 per cent of all cancer in India is seen in children below 15 years of age and the overall incidence of 38 to 124 per million children, per year, is lower than that in the developed world. "The considerable inter-regional variation in incidence and mortality rates across India suggests a possible deficiency in ascertainment of cases and death notification, particularly in rural areas. Unlike adult malignancies, childhood cancers do not have a known cause in a majority cases. Only 10 per cent cases are due to genetic reasons. Childhood cancers cannot be prevented nor identified through screening."

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TAKEAWAY FROM THE THE QUAD FOREIGN MINISTERS MEET--UNRELENTING PRESSURE ON CHINA

ASHOK SAJJANHAR

The fourth meeting of the Quad foreign ministers was held in Melbourne on February 11. It is a testament to the importance that the Quad members viz Australia, India, Japan and the US attach to this grouping that the foreign ministers of the last three countries invested the time, effort and energy to travel to Australia for the meeting. This was the third in-person meeting between the Quad foreign ministers, the first two having taken place on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in 2019, and, in Tokyo in the dying months of the Trump Presidency in October, 2020. The fourth meeting between the Quad ministers was a virtual interaction organised by the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken in February, 2021, within a month of assumption of office by President Joe Biden.

India can assume quite some credit for the rapid advance and momentum that the Quad has registered in recent years. India is the only country amongst the Quad that shares a long 3,488 kms land boundary with China. The ostensible reason for the coming together of the Quad after a hiatus of about 10 years was the aggressive and coercive stance of China in the South and East China Seas as well as its belligerence against countries of the Indo-Pacific region including India. It was speculated at the time of Chinese intrusions in Doklam in 2017 and in Eastern Ladakh in 2020 that China was expressing its displeasure at India's growing closeness to the US. However, it is precisely China's actions over the last few years in the region that have been instrumental in providing greater energy and oxygen to the Quad and also to the launch last year of AUKUS (Australia, UK, US) partnership in the security and defence domain.

The pace at which the Quad has evolved over the last four years is quite extraordinary. The second incarnation of the grouping was launched on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit in Manila, Philippines in November, 2017 during the visit of the then US President Donald Trump along with leaders of the other three countries. For the first few years, discussions took place on the margins of major inter-

national meetings and conferences at Joint Secretary/ Director General level. These meetings were upgraded to the foreign minister level in September, 2019 in New York. The grouping has not looked back since then. When Biden became President last year, there was concern whether he would accord the same priority and attention to the Quad and to China as his predecessor had done. It was thought that since the revival of the Quad was a Trump initiative, Biden might not wish to associate himself with it. Biden, however, surprised everyone by doubling down on his support for the Quad. He organised the first virtual Summit between the Quad leaders in March, 2021 followed by the first in-person meeting in Washington DC in September last year. Holding two Summits of a multi-lateral or regional grouping within a year is truly exceptional. By arranging these Summits in 2021, Biden sent out a strong message that the US is fully invested in the Quad objectives as well as in implementation of the decisions.

This time, the Quad foreign ministers meeting focused on the implementation of the decisions taken since the first Summit in March last year. Issues that have occupied the greatest attention of the Quad leaders over this period are the production and supply of Covid-19 vaccines, dealing with the climate change challenge, collaboration in critical and emergent technologies, and others like maritime domain awareness and security, infrastructure, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Response (HADR), education, counter-terrorism, cyber security, infrastructure, peaceful use of outer space, education, countering disinformation and others. All these issues find considerable space in the Joint Statement issued on conclusion of the meeting. The ministers appear to have realised that time for general omnibus statements and pronouncements is over and it was essential to demonstrate action on the ground to inspire confidence and trust of the international community in the grouping. The ministers have been largely successful in achieving this objective. In addition, without naming China or Pakistan, the statement expresses its strong condemnation of their activities in the maritime domain (in the case of China) and terrorism (for Pakistan).

ENDING MASK MANDATE PROBABLY PREMATURE: PRESIDENT BIDEN



But Biden stated that lifting indoor mask mandates was "probably premature", but acknowledged that making that decision is a "tough call", New York Times reported.


The President also suggested that rising rates of childhood vaccination, as well as the potential authorisation of vaccines for even younger children, could allow schools to end their own mask mandates. "Every day that goes by, children are more protected," Biden said, adding that "the more protection they have, probably you're going to see less and less requirement to have the masks."

US cases are falling fast, down to about 1,74,000 daily, a two-thirds drop over two weeks, according to a New York Times database. But hospitalisations, at about 95,000, and deaths, at more than 2,400 daily, remain very high.

A recent CBS poll found that a majority of Americans still support mask mandates, including in schools, but that many are exhausted and frustrated by a pandemic that is grinding into its third year. In schools, public health experts agree that mask requirements should not last forever, but differ on whether the time has come to remove them. "I love how people talk about personal freedom.

My family is my life,
and everything else comes second
as far as what's important to me.

Happy Family Day!



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AND START PACKING

HOW COVID VARIANTS ESCAPE CELLULAR IMMUNE RESPONSE



A team of Spanish researchers have identified a number of existing strains of SARS-CoV-2, as well as future variants, which have the potential to escape the immune system's cytotoxic T cell response in some portion of the population. The T cell response in humans is genetically encoded by HLA molecules -- this means different individuals have different HLAs, programmed to recognise invading pathogens based on different parts, or "epitopes" of the pathogens. While experimental evaluation of the immune response of every human HLA allele to every viral variant is not feasible, the team from Carlos III Health Institute, Spain, turned to computational methods. The researchers first determined the full set of epitopes from an original reference strain of SARS-CoV-2 from Wuhan, China.

The team discovered 1,222 epitopes of SARS-CoV-2 that were associated with major HLA subtypes, covering about 90 per cent of the human population; at least nine out of every 10 people can launch a T cell response to Covid-19 based on these 1,222 epitopes. Then, the researchers computationally analysed whether any of 118,000 different SARS-CoV-2 isolates from around the world, described in a National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) dataset, had mutations in these epitopes. About 47 per cent of the epitopes, they showed, were mutated in at least one existing isolate.

WILL PAKISTANIS GO HUNGRY AS VALUE OF CURRENCY PLUMMETS?

A steady depreciation of Pakistan's currency has led to an increase in the country's food import bill in the current financial year. In the beginning of July last year-the beginning of the Pakistani financial year, the country's currency was pegged at around 158 to the US dollar. The Pakistani rupee at present is valued at 175 to a dollar. At a time when global oil and commodity prices are rising, the depreciation of the rupee would surely add to the worries of the country's policymakers. And now with building geopolitical tensions over Ukraine, the pressure on the country's currency is likely to continue.

According to Pakistan based newspaper Dawn, Islamabad's oil and food import bill rose 73 per cent to \$14.97 billion in the July-December period compared to \$8.67 billion in the corresponding period of the previous financial year. "A steady increase in the import bill of these two sectors has widened the trade deficit and raised fears about the country's food security," the newspaper said. Pakistan imports a large chunk of its total requirements of edible oil, including palm, soyabean and olive from countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia and Brazil among others.

However, challenges have multiplied since agriculture land has been thinning in Pakistan with growing urbanization. The News International said that "there is no doubt that this construction has its own benefits, but it causes the country's food production to drop drastically. This in turn leads to an exorbitant increase in the prices of food supplies." Depreciation in the currency has also pushed inflation, which touched at 13 per cent in January. It also leads to a widening import bill. "The world is going through uncertainties and countries need to be watchful..risks have risen for almost the entire world but countries which are already facing a number of challenges on the economic front, will be the worst affected," an analyst said.

Meanwhile, Islamabad received a \$1 billion tranche from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as part of the Extended Fund Facility, providing the much-required breather to Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan. However, at the same time, inward remittances slowed down. In January Pakistan received remittances worth \$ 2.1 billion, a fall from \$2.5 billion in December, 2021. This is the lowest since August 2020, when the Covid 19 pandemic had just hit the world.

WHY UKRAINE IS TESTBED FOR BIG POWER CONTESTATION?

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

USA continues to hype the threat, following it with evacuation of troops and citizens, whereas Russia maintains that it has no intention to invade Ukraine, but draws a red-line for Ukraine not to join NATO. Ukraine stands encircled from three directions by Russian troops with largest military posturing since World War II. Mass concentration of troops in Eastern borders, posturing and joint exercises with Belarus and Russian Black Sea Fleet combat ready with bases at Crimea. Ukraine too, fully aware of its military capacity limitations, is getting combat ready to protect its sovereignty. While the flashpoint may be Ukraine but contestation is of big powers involved directly or indirectly. The outcome of this face-off has global implications not only in Europe, but globally including countries who are outside the region. Diplomacy is trying its best, but failing so far. The geo-strategic location of Ukraine is such that, in the midst of continuing geopolitical maneuverings, it can't help but be the test bed for this Russia-NATO competition.

Main Stake Holders and their Stance

Russia: In his meeting with former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev on February 9, 1990, then US Secretary of State James Baker's famous "not one inch eastward" assurance about NATO expansion was one of a cascade of guarantees about Soviet security provided by Western leaders, but no agreement was signed. Post USSR disintegration in 1991, NATO adopted open door policy allowing erstwhile USSR countries to join NATO, if agreed by all existing members, which was viewed as eastward expansion of NATO and resented by successive leaders, but NATO prevailed. When such eastward expansion, after adding 14 countries, reached at consideration of Georgia and Ukraine, Putin drew a red-line, failing which Russia would have to face a direct land border with NATO at strategically sensitive area and perhaps deployment of NATO arsenal threatening Russia. It would have also made Russian Black Sea fleet redundant, thus compromising security of Russia. Russia thus reacted with annexation of Georgia, Crimea and posturing Ukraine, after it renewed its effort to join NATO, and is firm that it will not allow Ukraine's entry into NATO at any cost. Ukraine: Ukraine is tensed, but getting ready for confrontation knowing fully well that the recent threat is asymmetric in favour of Russia, if conflict is not prevented by diplomacy. Ukraine has a reason to feel betrayed because in 1994, 'The Memorandum of Security Assurance' was signed at Budapest, in which Russia, US and UK assured that its sovereignty will not be compromised, which was a major factor in Ukraine giving up its nuclear arsenal (Third largest nuclear arsenal in the world at that time) and signed NPT. Now, Russia appears to be threatening its sovereignty, and the United States and the United Kingdom are unwilling to send boots on the ground to protect it. Ukraine is not yet a member of NATO, so NATO and the US are not obligated to defend it. Instead, they are opting for the easy option of assisting Ukraine in building its capacity to fight Russians, with the threat of crippling sanctions on Russia if it invades Ukraine, which haven't been effective in the past. Strategically and geographically, Ukraine finds itself as test bed to gauge Russian resolve against NATO having lost Crimea already, with threat of proxy war from Eastern region, even if it shelves/postpones decision of joining NATO. Ukraine continues with its demand to join NATO as its sovereign decision, although there are many NATO members, who don't want to include it.

US: Struggling with loss of face post annexation of Georgia, Crimea and recently botched withdrawal from Afghanistan, losing footprints in most of West Asia, US wants to checkmate Russian aggressive stance by taking up sovereignty issue of Ukraine in terms of freedom to join NATO or otherwise. It however, has no appetite to put boots on ground in Ukraine, but is worried that a westward expansion of Russia can make some of the existing NATO allies vulnerable and is doing symbolic strengthening of its allies, with hardware support to Ukraine. US is also concerned that if Nord Stream 2 pipeline project succeeds many more NATO allies will be dependent on Russia, which will strategically weaken the declining NATO. It is also a test case for US-Taiwan relationship, which has almost similar equation with slight variation. If it blinks here, it loses psychological edge against China too. The US hype about full scale invasion could also be influenced of lobby of arms dealers to promote sales. European Union (EU): EU members who are NATO allies are trying to put up a joint brave front, but the cracks are visible. EU's 40 per cent dependency on Russia is crucial to preserve its energy interest. It may be easy for Biden to say that Russian offensive will be end of Nord Stream 2, but it may not be easy for Germany to second it. The best option for them is diplomacy, which they are trying hard with inconclusive visit of French President Emmanuel Macron and the ongoing visit of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to Ukraine and Russia with no worthwhile success so far.

Other Global Players

China: Its happiest situation for China, as the face-off has diverted attention of US from China to Europe, to some extent. It can derive pleasure out of awkward position of US, cementing ties with Moscow as never before, at the same time test the appetite of Biden, in case it decides to invade Taiwan. It bears no obligation and can watch from sidelines playing neutral with no cost to bear. India: India has good relations with all affected parties and can remain neutral. No country including Ukraine can criticize India for neutral stance, as most stake-holders held similar position when China violated all CBMs to enter areas, where it was not supposed to and Ladakh standoff continues. Indian concerns will include its diaspora, trade (edible oils, pharmaceutical exports etc) with Ukraine and impact of sanctions on Russia, if announced by Washington.

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77¢ lb

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Save: \$1.02

\$1.97 lb

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Save: \$0.59

\$1.00 lb

Lamb Tripe 羊肚 Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$1.00

\$3.99 lb

Fresh Beef Outside Round 新鮮牛腩 Reg: \$5.99

Save: \$1.00

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\$5.97 lb

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Save: \$2.02

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Save: \$1.02

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Ideal Brand Deglet Nour Dates Of Tunisia 400g 理想牌提子(突尼斯) Reg: \$3.99

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\$1.97 ea

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Aurora Extra Virgin Olive Oil 750ml 奧羅特級初榨橄欖油 Reg: \$7.99

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Nestle Milo Chocolate Malt Drink Mix 400g 雀巢米羅巧克力麥芽飲品粉 Reg: \$5.99

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Ribera Blackcurrent Beverage 850ml 瑞伯拉黑醋栗飲品 Reg: \$8.99

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Nestle Everyday Powder Tea Whitener 350g 雀巢日常茶粉(白) Reg: \$8.99

Save: \$2.02

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Save: \$1.02

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Divya Maida All Purpose Flour 4lb 迪瓦麵粉 Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$2.02

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Global Choice Rice Flour 4lb 全球選擇米粉 Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$1.02

\$3.97 ea

Britannia Toasted Milk Biscuits 560g 寶蘭牛奶威化餅 Reg: \$5.99

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Al Safa Halal Uncooked Chicken Drumsticks 1kg 阿薩法清真生雞腿(1kg) Reg: \$11.99

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97¢ ea

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\$5.97 ea

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\$6.97 ea

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\$7.97 ea

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Save: \$2.02

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Save: \$4.02

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Save: \$1.02

\$3.97 ea

Tiger Mackerel 1kg 虎標馬鯊(1kg) Reg: \$1.99

Save: \$0.02

97¢ ea

Canadian Prime Pork Loin Roast 1kg 加拿大頂級豬柳(1kg) Reg: \$9.99

Save: \$0.02

\$9.97 ea

Maggi Masala Sauce 1kg 瑪吉馬沙拉醬(1kg) Reg: \$2.99

Save: \$1.02

\$1.97 ea

Grade Sweetener 1kg 糖精(1kg) Reg: \$1.99

Save: \$0.02

\$1.97 ea

Asahi Sake 1.8L 朝日清酒(1.8L) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$0.02

\$3.97 ea

Head Crushed Garlic 400g 頭牌碎蒜(400g) Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$0.02

\$4.97 ea

Asahi Fried Noodles 1kg 朝日炸麵(1kg) Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$0.02

\$4.97 ea

Brar's Sweet Corn 1kg 瑞爾的甜玉米(1kg) Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$0.02

\$4.97 ea

Maggi Masala Sauce 1kg 瑪吉馬沙拉醬(1kg) Reg: \$2.99

Save: \$1.02

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Grade Sweetener 1kg 糖精(1kg) Reg: \$1.99

Save: \$0.02

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Asahi Sake 1.8L 朝日清酒(1.8L) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$0.02

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Head Crushed Garlic 400g 頭牌碎蒜(400g) Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$0.02

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Asahi Fried Noodles 1kg 朝日炸麵(1kg) Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$0.02

\$4.97 ea

Brar's Sweet Corn 1kg 瑞爾的甜玉米(1kg) Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$0.02

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Fresh Striped Bass 新鮮鱈魚 Reg: \$11.99

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Pre-Ribbed Tilapia Fish / Warden 預切帶骨鱈魚(瓦登) Reg: \$5.99

Save: \$0.02

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Pre-Ribbed Tilapia Fish / Warden 預切帶骨鱈魚(瓦登) Reg: \$5.99

Save: \$0.02

\$5.97 lb

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Fresh Chicken Leg (Back Attached) 新鮮雞腿(帶皮) Reg: \$1.59

Save: \$0.59

\$1.00 lb

Lamb Tripe 羊肚 Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$1.00

\$3.99 lb

Fresh Beef Outside Round 新鮮牛腩 Reg: \$5.99

Save: \$1.00

\$4.99 lb

DAIRY

Neillon Milkshake 370ml 尼倫牛奶shake(370ml) Reg: \$2.99

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\$1.77 ea

Silk Ture Almond Drink 945ml 絲綢杏仁飲品(945ml) Reg: \$2.99

Save: \$0.72

\$2.27 ea

Seven Baskets Dried Wild Shrimp 100g 七籃乾蝦(100g) Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$2.02

\$2.97 ea

Armstrong Cheese Block 400g 亞摩斯乳酪塊(400g) Reg: \$7.99

Save: \$3.52

\$4.47 ea

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Vidhya Chat Papdi 285g 維德雅茶點(285g) Reg: \$1.99

Save: \$0.42

\$1.57 pk

French Baguette 450g 法國長棍麵包 Reg: \$2.19

Save: \$0.42

\$1.77 ea

Coconut Tart 8pcs 椰子塔(8個) Reg: \$2.99

Save: \$0.32

\$2.67 pk

Mini Chocolate Croissant 12pcs 迷你巧克力牛角包(12個) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$0.72

\$3.27 pk

Mini Swiss Roll 瑞士捲(12個) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$0.52

\$3.47 pk

Crispy Cake Rusk 750g 酥脆蛋糕(750g) Reg: \$5.99

Save: \$1.52

\$4.47 pk

GROCERY

Canton Instant Noodles 70g 廣式即食麵(70g) Reg: \$0.50

Save: \$0.77

\$1.00 ea

Kalona Skintu 40g 科拉納(40g) Reg: \$2.99

Save: \$1.02

\$1.97 ea

Marshall's Pacific Mackerel in Tomato Sauce 125g 馬沙爾太平洋馬鯊(125g) Reg: \$2.99

Save: \$1.02

\$1.97 ea

Grace Coconut Milk 400ml 葛瑞斯椰奶(400ml) Reg: \$2.99

Save: \$1.02

\$1.97 ea

Rouffey Digestives 400g 魯菲消化餅(400g) Reg: \$2.99

Save: \$0.77

\$2.22 ea

Deep Reser Macaroni 400g 深瑞爾通心粉(400g) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$2.02

\$1.97 ea

Redeemon Lemon Juice 945ml 瑞德蒙檸檬汁(945ml) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$1.02

\$2.97 ea

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Save: \$0.02

\$3.97 ea

Kool-Aid Jammers 10180ml 酷樂艾果汁(10180ml) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$0.02

\$3.97 ea

Caribbean Delight Sun Dried Sorrel 100g 加勒比風味乾蘇打(100g) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$0.02

\$3.97 ea

Aha Sparkling Water Beverage 12x350ml 阿哈氣泡飲(12x350ml) Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$2.02

\$2.97 ea

Cedar Pure White Vinegar 4L 西達純白醋(4L) Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$1.02

\$3.97 ea

Handi Fried Onion 400g 手牌炸洋蔥(400g) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$1.02

\$2.97 ea

Sera California Grade Grapes 900g 塞拉加州葡萄(900g) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$0.02

\$3.97 ea

Nutrament Energy Nutrition Drink 350ml 納特曼能量飲品(350ml) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$0.02

\$3.97 ea

SEAFOOD

Fresh Striped Bass 新鮮鱈魚 Reg: \$11.99

Save: \$2.02

\$9.97 lb

Pre-Ribbed Tilapia Fish / Warden 預切帶骨鱈魚(瓦登) Reg: \$5.99

Save: \$0.02

\$5.97 lb

Pre-Ribbed Tilapia Fish / Warden 預切帶骨鱈魚(瓦登) Reg: \$5.99

Save: \$0.02

\$5.97 lb

Pre-Ribbed Tilapia Fish / Warden 預切帶骨鱈魚(瓦登) Reg: \$5.99

Save: \$0.02

\$5.97 lb

MEAT

Fresh Chicken Leg (Back Attached) 新鮮雞腿(帶皮) Reg: \$1.59

Save: \$0.59

\$1.00 lb

Lamb Tripe 羊肚 Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$1.00

\$3.99 lb

Fresh Beef Outside Round 新鮮牛腩 Reg: \$5.99

Save: \$1.00

\$4.99 lb

DAIRY

Neillon Milkshake 370ml 尼倫牛奶shake(370ml) Reg: \$2.99

Save: \$1.32

\$1.77 ea

Silk Ture Almond Drink 945ml 絲綢杏仁飲品(945ml) Reg: \$2.99

Save: \$0.72

\$2.27 ea

Seven Baskets Dried Wild Shrimp 100g 七籃乾蝦(100g) Reg: \$4.99

Save: \$2.02

\$2.97 ea

Armstrong Cheese Block 400g 亞摩斯乳酪塊(400g) Reg: \$7.99

Save: \$3.52

\$4.47 ea

BAKERY

Vidhya Chat Papdi 285g 維德雅茶點(285g) Reg: \$1.99

Save: \$0.42

\$1.57 pk

French Baguette 450g 法國長棍麵包 Reg: \$2.19

Save: \$0.42

\$1.77 ea

Coconut Tart 8pcs 椰子塔(8個) Reg: \$2.99

Save: \$0.32

\$2.67 pk

Mini Chocolate Croissant 12pcs 迷你巧克力牛角包(12個) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$0.72

\$3.27 pk

Mini Swiss Roll 瑞士捲(12個) Reg: \$3.99

Save: \$0.52

\$3.47 pk

Crispy Cake Rusk 750g 酥脆蛋糕(750g) Reg: \$5.99

Save: \$1.52

\$4.47 pk

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