



Hon' Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE

“We Are Spending \$440 Million In Childcare Support”

“PM Trudeau's Comments On Indian Farmers Protest Was Not For Political Reasons

“We Are On The Frontline For Getting A Vaccine

| DETAILS ON PAGE 6

INDIA UPSET AFTER PM TRUDEAU ISSUES STATEMENT ON FARMERS PROTEST

India strongly reacted to comments by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and other leaders there regarding farmers' protest, calling the remarks as "ill-informed" and "unwarranted" as the matter pertained to the internal affairs of a democratic country.

"We have seen some ill-informed comments by Canadian leaders relating to farmers in India. Such comments are unwarranted, especially when pertaining to the internal affairs of a democratic country," External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said.

In a terse message, the ministry further added that "it is also best that diplomatic conversations are not misrepresented for political purposes."

Pm Trudeau has recently made comments on farmers protests in India said, "the situation is concerning and we are all very worried about family and friends and I know that is a reality for many of you. Let me remind you, Canada will always be there to defend the right of peaceful protest."

He also said, "we believe in importance of dialogue and that is why we have reached out through multiple means directly to Indian authorities to highlight our concerns."

In an exclusive interview with Y media Canada's federal minister for Families, Children and Social Development Ahmed hussen made the following statement. Y media's group editor Yudhvir Jaswal asked :- Recently, we have all seen farmers protests in India are concerning. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and other leaders also mentioned this. But India is quite upset and said they do welcome diplomatic channels, but the Canadian leaders' comments are for political gains. What



is your stance on this?

To which Minister Ahmed Hussen said It is not for political reasons. We continue to follow the ongoing farmers' protests in India closely. We always stand up for democratic rights, including the right to peaceful and productive assembly. We encourage peaceful and constructive dialogue on sensitive issues, and we have healthy people to people ties and diplomatic relations with India. It's a fellow democracy with Canada. But at the same time, we want to make sure that people's rights to protest peacefully are respected.

'HE PROMISED TO MARRY ME, GOT ME PREGNANT': PAKISTAN CAPTAIN BABAR AZAM ACCUSED OF SEXUAL ABUSE



Pakistan cricket has landed in fresh turmoil after a woman accused its captain Babar Azam of sexual abuse. The woman, whose name is not known, revealed that Babar exploited her for 10 years and gave her false marriage hopes, while making some unpleasant claims.

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\$6 MILLION INVESTMENT FOR TWO CANADIAN RESEARCH TEAMS ON TYPE 1 DIABETES ANNOUNCED BY MP SONIA SIDHU

"Diabetes continues to be a major health concern for many Canadians. We know that diabetes is a leading cause of stroke, heart attack, kidney failure, and blindness; it places a huge burden on Canada's health care system, and that is why we must continue to fund research and make strides towards overcoming this disease.



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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PLANS \$100 BILLION IN ECONOMIC STIMULUS

FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT

POOJA LUTHRA

Canada's Finance Minister Chrystia Freeland on Monday lists the fall economic statement with the projection of a deficit of approximately \$381.6 billion this fiscal year that includes the three-year stimulus program. The finance minister said the government's immediate priority is to do "whatever it takes" to help Canadians and businesses stay safe and solvent. "We are living through a very virulent second wave of the coronavirus, and I think we all know winter will be difficult," Freeland said.



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ONTARIO LAUNCHES VIRTUAL BUSINESS MISSION TO INDIA

TORONTO: The Ontario government is launching a virtual mission to India in December to continue to promote the province as a premier destination for international investment and create new opportunities for Ontario businesses. Led by Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, this mission builds off the success of the province's mission to India a year ago, which resulted in nearly 150 business-to-business meetings that brought Ontario companies in direct contact with Indian businesses to explore new partnerships.



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SAVE MAX CELEBRATED ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY AND ANNUAL AWARD CEREMONY IN A UNIQUE STYLE



RAMAN DUA
CEO - Save Max Real Estate

| DETAILS ON PAGE 3



INDER SIDHU, 23 YEAR OLD GIRL DIES IN AN ACCIDENT IN KITCHENER, FULL DETAILS ON Y MEDIA PLATFORMS



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SAVE MAX CELEBRATED ITS 10TH ANNIVERSARY AND ANNUAL AWARD CEREMONY IN A UNIQUE STYLE

LUXURY CARS RECEIVED BY TOP PERFORMERS | \$1 BILLION ACHIEVED IN 2020 ALONE



MISSISSAUGA: Save Max Real Estate Inc. held its 10th Annual Awards Ceremony on November 11th, 2020 to appreciate and encourage all their agents, employees and partners for their performance and service in the year 2019-2020 at Drive-in theatre location Oakville.

The event was attended by agents, their families, and a few esteemed as there was limited accommodation capacity. Keeping all COVID precautions in place, this event was extremely loved by everyone because of its uniqueness and willingness to not lose hope and still try and celebrate success for our agents, employees, partners and our success towards contribution towards the society.

Save Max also celebrated the commencement of its 10 years, the journey portrayal from a humble basement in Brampton to a well-established business with \$4.1 Billion Sales Volume till date wastruly inspiring to the audience. All COVID protocols and precautions were in place at the drive-in theatre location and Save Max made sure that everyone distanced from each other. This event was longed for by agents, employees, and partners. It was unique and was arranged keeping in mind the safety of everyone. This year also gave Save Max the opportunity to celebrate the benchmark of achieving\$1 billion sales volume in 2020 alonewhich was very much celebrated through a short video which showed the whole in glimpse and how people at Save Max made a difference during the difficult times of COVID.

All this was encapsulated with lots of entertainment, dance performances and a movie premier at the end with laughter and glee. Raman Dua, CEO and Owner of Save Max Real Estate Inc. said, "This has been the only 2020 moment that me and the team will remember for years to come. Not only because of our enormous achievements but because of the type of celebration we were able to arrange."

TOP PERFORMERS AWARDED DURING SAVE MAX EVENT 2019

At theSave Max10th Annual Awards ceremony the recognizable Top Agent of the Year Award went to Abhishek Grover from Save Max Supreme and & Lashika Katyal from Save Max Real Estate. Top Entrepreneur of the Year Award was given to Sachin Gupta, Broker of Record, Save Max Supreme Real Estate; Top Leader of the Year Award was bagged by Lalit Bhatla, Broker of Record, Save Max First Choice Real Estate and The Empire Life Award went to Balraj Puri, Broker of Record, Save Max Elite Real Estate.

Top Performers who achieved more than \$500,000 GCI in 2019 alone were awarded Luxury Cars during the event which

included, Top Agent Abhishek Grover, Hall of Fame Award Winner Ashish Parikh, and President Circle Award Winners Sampan Bhatia & Nitish Gabba.

Apart from Employees and agents at Save Max, even Franchising Partners were awarded for their performance in the year 2019. Best emerging Franchise of the year award was received by Save Max Infinityand Save Max Platinum, and Most Enterprising Franchise was awarded to Save Max Regal. Top Franchise of the year for the province of Alberta was received by Save Max Edge and for Ontario was received by Save Max Success. The fastest growing Franchise in term of number of agents and Best Starter Franchise in terms of sales volume was won by Save Max Success as well. Most Enterprising Franchise of the year award went to Save Max Prestige andFive Star Franchise Satisfaction was received by Save Max DreamHome. Team Awesome Award went to Save Max Fortune and Save Max Achievers received the SocialContributor Award for the year 2019. Most Progressive Team of the year was awarded to Save Max First Choice and Top Team of the Year Award was given to Save Max Supreme.

Raman Duaat the 10th Annual Awards expressed his gratitude to all the attendees and congratulated his team and the agents who did exceedingly well even in the year of Pandemic. He was humbled to see such a huge gathering despite the odds and mentioned that Save Max Team will keep on working tirelessly to provide the best real estate services to all clients. He commends his team for putting together this beautiful event that followed all protocols, but didn't limit the fun. He was enthusiastic to see what is in store for the coming events at Save Max as this was celebrated in a unique fashion.

About Save Max Real Estate

Save Max Real Estate is one of the fastest growing brokerages and opened its first real estate office in Brampton in 2010. From making history in the field of real estate by achieving \$100 million sales volume within 16 months of inception to achieving \$4.1 Billion sales volume until today, Save Max has always strived to stay true to its beliefs to deliver an exceptional real estate experience to all its valued clients.

The City of Brampton is home to Save Max and the company has had the opportunity to serve the residents and provide incomparable real estate services for past years and will keep doing the same in the future. Save Max is expanding and operating with 14 Franchisees all across Canada today. To learn more about Save Max, visit www.savemax.ca or email info@savemax.ca

Ontario Launches Virtual Business Mission to India

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"Now more than ever, we must let the world know that Ontario is still open for business and open for jobs," said Minister Fedeli. "Ontario-made products are recognized as the gold-standard across the country and around the world, and our province is one of the best places to invest and expand a business. With this virtual tour, our government will continue to develop partnerships in strategic markets in India, which will help us build the foundation for recovery in the short term, and prosperity in the long-term."

A business delegation of 13 Ontario tech companies will join Minister Fedeli at the India Mobile Congress, the largest digital and technology forum in India and South Asia. During the mission, Ontario businesses will have the opportunity to participate virtually in business to business meetings and networking events with hundreds of major players in the Indian telecom industry. Minister Fedeli will promote the province's advantage during proposed bilateral meetings with government and corporate leaders, including counterparts in the state governments of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh.

Minister Fedeli and the business delegation will also bring this message to international audiences at events hosted by the Indo-Canadian Business Chamber and the Canada-India Business Council.

"Our mission to India just over a year ago resulted in stronger commercial relationships and increased export and investment opportunities in the growing Indian market," said Parliamentary Assistant for Economic Development, Nina Tangri. "This year's virtual mission will build on those relationships and help Ontario businesses expand their global reach, which is a key component of

our Open for Business approach."

Two-way trade between Ontario and India was worth C\$3.4 billion (US \$2.6 billion) in 2019.

This year's mission will focus on strategic sectors where Ontario enjoys competitive advantages in key global markets, including Information and Communications Technologies and Advanced Manufacturing. Boasting a highly skilled workforce, world-class innovation system, competitive business costs and access to global markets, Ontario is well positioned to explore and expand trade and investment opportunities with India.

In order to position Ontario as a top tier destination for job-creating investment, the government has established Invest Ontario, a new investment agency that will energize the province's work to secure strategic projects and bolster the economy, with an initial focus on advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and technology. Invest Ontario will provide high-value investors with customized tools and services that support them to invest in Ontario and leverage the many benefits of Ontario including: a high quality of life, world-class education and research institutions, a highly skilled workforce, a strong and growing innovation sector, and a competitive business environment.

As announced in the government's 2020 Budget, Ontario's Action Plan: Protect Support, Recover, the government is providing \$3.75 million over two years to support work by the Ontario Centre of Innovation and the Toronto Business Development Centre to attract more international start-ups to Ontario. These two organizations will initially focus on attracting emerging companies from India to expand their operations across Ontario and create new jobs for local workers.

‘HE PROMISED TO MARRY ME, GOT ME PREGNANT’: PAKISTAN CAPTAIN BABAR AZAM ACCUSED OF SEXUAL ABUSE

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The woman claimed that Babar got her pregnant and threatened her. The video of the woman addressing a press conference was shared by journalist Saj Sadiq. "He promised to marry me, he got me pregnant, he beat me up, he threatened me and he used me," the woman was quoted as saying. "I have known Babar since the time he had nothing to do with cricket. He was from a poor household. I hope all my brothers and sisters here are going to help me get justice so that no daughter gets to go through what I have. Babar and I have grown up in the same colony, we used to stay together." The woman further stated that she and Babar have known each other from their school days and it was in 2010 that he proposed to her "He was my school friend. In 2010, he proposed to me and I accepted his proposal. He in fact proposed to me after coming to my house. As time progressed, our understanding got better. We had planned to get married and informed our families too but they refused," she added.

"Then Babar and I decided to have a court marriage. In 2011, Babar and I eloped and having promised me of marriage, kept me at rented places. During that time, I kept asking him to get married but he said 'we are not in a position to. With time, we will get married'." It was further revealed that the woman used to take care of all their expenses, including the money Babar needed for his cricket. However in 2016 when the lady got pregnant is when she sensed a huge change in the cricketer's attitude. The PCB is yet to respond to these claims. Babar and the rest of the Pakistan team are currently in New Zealand, undergoing a 14-day quarantine period in Christchurch. Seven members of the team have tested positive for Covid-19 and have been moved to a separate floor

\$6 MILLION INVESTMENT FOR TWO CANADIAN RESEARCH TEAMS ON TYPE 1 DIABETES ANNOUNCED BY MP SONIA SIDHU

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I was honoured to announce this investment on behalf of Canada's Minister of Health, the Honourable Patty Hajdu and I would like to thank our partners at JDRF Canada for their contributions to this great initiative."

— Sonia Sidhu, Member of Parliament for Brampton South

To mark the end of Diabetes Awareness Month, Sonia Sidhu, the Member of Parliament for Brampton South, on behalf of the Honourable Patty Hajdu, Minister of Health, announced an investment of \$6 million through the CIHR-JDRF Partnership to Defeat Diabetes for two Canadian research teams to accelerate the development of stem cell-based therapies for the treatment of T1D.

The two teams will build on Canada's demonstrated research excellence and leadership in clinical islet transplantation, stem cell biology, diabetes, immunology and genetic engineering to accelerate stem cell-based therapies for T1D. Teams will work in collaboration with other Canadian researchers to tackle some of the biggest scientific challenges that impede our progress in this area and move us closer to a future where people with T1D will no longer rely on insulin therapy.

Stem cells show great promise as a source of insulin-producing cells that could be transplanted to provide a new source of insulin, to replace dysfunctional, damaged or lost pancreatic beta cells. Canada has a remarkable legacy in leading discoveries in this area.

Stem cells were discovered in Toronto in 1961, and in 2000, a team in Edmonton were the first to pioneer transplantation of pancreatic islets (the part of the pancreas that contains insulin-producing cells). These achievements represent important steps toward a treatment that will allow people with T1D to live healthy lives without daily insulin injections.

BUNDLE UP FOR A SAFE AND HEALTHY VISIT TO WINTER WONDERLAND THIS SEASON IN BRAMPTON!

BRAMPTON— The City of Brampton is bundling up for Winter Wonderland - an exciting winter full of outdoor activities, including new ice rinks, trails, and more. Staying active is essential to our health and wellbeing and the City is offering many options for residents to enjoy safe, open air activities during the winter months while maintaining physical distancing. Activities will follow public health measures including limited capacity, physical distancing and masking and it is expected that all participants will do their part to follow the required protocols.

Here is what is in store for Winter Wonderland!

Outdoor skating

Four new ice rinks are in town for everyone to enjoy this winter at the following locations:

Valleybrook Park – synthetic ice pilot

Earncliffe Park– artificial ice

Morris Kerbel Park– artificial ice

Flower City Community Campus – artificial ice

Everyone is invited to use our existing outdoor ice rinks and trails at Gage Park, Gore Meadows Community Centre, Mount Pleasant Community Centre, and Chinguacousy Park.

Rinks are expected to open on December 18, weather permitting.

Those using the skating rinks and trails are encouraged to wear a Canadian Standard Association (CSA) certified hockey helmet. Please ensure your skates are sharpened. Double-bladed skates are not permitted.

The City may close its rinks during the season in the event of extreme or inclement weather, including when it is not cold enough to maintain ice or if temperatures get too cold (below -20 degrees Celsius).

Visit www.brampton.ca/winterwonderland to plan your visit and see if a rink is open or closed.

Outdoor Cross-Country Skiing and Snowshoeing Trails

The City is introducing a cross-country skiing trail and a snowshoeing trail at Chinguacousy Park for independent use this season. Bring your own skis, snowshoes and safety equipment to access the trail.

The trails are expected to open for public use on December 18, weather permitting. For the trail location within Chinguacousy Park and hours of operation, please visit www.brampton.ca/winterwonderland.

Walking Paths & Trails

Get festive and active this winter with the Walking Path Program. Discover Brampton's stunning parks and walking paths while attending themed, guided walks for all ages on various dates with Brampton Recreation Staff, such as a guided Holiday Hike with nature activities. Weather permitting, this program will occur using snowshoes provided by the City.

Children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Visit www.brampton.ca/winterwonderland in December to view Walking Path locations, dates, and times.

BIDEN ADMINISTRATION MIGHT BE RISKY FOR CHINESE ECONOMY, HERE'S WHY



CHINA MUST DROP ITS ILLUSION THAT ITS RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES WILL AUTOMATICALLY IMPROVE UNDER US PRESIDENT-ELECT JOE BIDEN'S ADMINISTRATION.



As tensions between the US and China continue to worsen under the current President Donald Trump's administration due to Beijing's human rights violations and hiding vital information regarding COVID-19, a leading economist said that the incoming Biden administration might impose sanctions thus affecting the Chinese economy next year. David Li Daokui, a professor at Tsinghua University and a former adviser to China's central bank, according to South China Morning Post warned that economic planners should not rule out the possibility of a Trump comeback in 2024 and added that President-elect Biden might "continue Trump's hard-line approach to China."

"If you ask me what are the risks facing the Chinese economy next year ... Number one, will Biden introduce restrictive policies that are precisely targeted at certain China's industries? That remains a question mark," he said at the China Macroeconomy Forum.

He added, "Next year, China's foreign policy, certain industries and certain companies are likely to face some risks."

The economist claimed that it would be much easier to communicate with Biden's team than Trump's administration. However, he said that China should still be prepared for a Trump comeback in 2024. "It is

very likely [that Trump will run again], he is still very healthy," Li said. China must drop its illusion that its relations with the United States will automatically improve under President-elect Joe Biden's administration, a Chinese government advisor has said, adding that Beijing should be prepared for a tough stance from Washington.

Zheng Yongnian, the Dean of the Advanced Institute of Global and Contemporary China Studies, a Shenzhen-based think tank, has said that the Chinese government should utilise every opportunity to mend ties with the US, South China Morning Post has reported.

"The good old days are over... the cold war hawks in the US have been in a highly mobilised state for several years, and they will not disappear overnight," Zheng said in an interview on the sidelines of the Understanding China Conference in Guangzhou recently.

Biden pledged that he would force China "to play by the international rules" regarding trade, treatment of foreign companies, and its actions in the South China Sea if he is elected to office. "We need to be having the rest of our friends with us saying to China: these are the rules. You play by them or you're going to pay the price for not playing by them, economically," said Biden during a Presidential debate.

UK APPROVES PFIZER-BIONTECH COVID-19 VACCINE, ROLLOUT 'NEXT WEEK'

The U.K. became the first western country to approve a Covid-19 vaccine, with its regulator clearing Pfizer Inc. and BioNTech SE's shot ahead of decisions in the US and European Union. The emergency authorization clears the way for the deployment of a vaccine that's expected to play a significant role in the global effort to halt the coronavirus. Pfizer and its German partner said in November that the shot, relying on novel technology called messenger RNA, was 95% effective in a final analysis of clinical-trial data. The vaccine will be available in Britain from next week, according to a government statement. The U.K. regulator, the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency, said on Wednesday that the vaccine "met its strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness."

The U.K. had signaled it would move swiftly in approving a vaccine to protect its population, and doctors across the country were put on standby for a possible rollout. For the government, it's an opportunity to make up for missteps during the pandemic as Britain's death toll nears 60,000. Regulators are facing pivotal decisions as companies including Pfizer, Moderna Inc. and the University of Oxford's partner, AstraZeneca Plc, sprint ahead in a bid to deliver coronavirus vaccines in record time.



China 'planned' Galwan Valley clash, US commission says in report to Congress

The Chinese government had planned the clash with Indian troops in Galwan Valley in June, which resulted in the death of 20 Indian soldiers and unspecified Chinese casualties, a US commission has concluded in a new report to Congress.

The US-China Economic and Security Review Commission, in the report submitted on December 1, described the nearly eight-month-long India-China standoff along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) as the "most severe border crisis in decades".

Referring to the "massive physical brawl in the Galwan Valley" between People's Liberation Army (PLA) and Indian troops on June 15, the report said, "Some evidence suggested the Chinese government had planned the incident, potentially including the possibility for fatalities. For instance, several weeks prior to the clash, Defense Minister Wei [Fenghe] made his statement encouraging Beijing to 'use fighting to promote stability'." It added, "Satellite images depicted a large Chinese buildup in the Galwan Valley, including potentially 1,000 PLA soldiers, the week before the deadly skirmish." The report further noted that just "over two weeks before the incident, in another potential indication of Chinese leaders signalling their intent to escalate tensions, an editorial in China's state-owned tabloid Global Times warned that India would suffer a 'devastating blow' to its trade and economic ties with China if it got 'involved in the US-China rivalry'". The India-China border standoff emerged in the open after two clashes between troops of the two sides in the Sikkim and Ladakh sectors of the LAC. The two countries have been unable to agree on disengagement and de-escalation at friction points despite several rounds of diplomatic and military talks.

Donald Trump's H-1B visa rule that hurt Indians scrapped by US judge

A US judge on Tuesday threw out two rules proposed by the Trump administration to narrow eligibility for H-1B visa aspirants and raise their salaries in an effort to make it tougher for companies, mostly in IT, to use this short-term employment programme to hire foreigner workers instead of local Americans.

US district judge Jeffrey S. White of the Northern District of California ruled that the changes were introduced in a hurry and did not abide by the usual transparency obligations: provide notice and sufficient time for public comments.

The administration had sought to rush it through in October arguing urgency - as a "good cause exception" - in view of the Covid-19 pandemic. "The court cannot countenance - reluctantly or otherwise - defendants' reliance on the Covid-19 pandemic to invoke the good-cause exception," White wrote. "The pandemic's impact on the economy is the only reason DHS proffered as good cause, and defendants do not dispute that the failure to provide notice and comment was prejudicial." The United States issues 85,000 new H-1B visa every year. More than 70% of them go to Indian professionals hired by American companies such as Facebook, Google and Microsoft, and Indian IT services companies such as TCS, Wipro and Infosys. Many of them tend to stay on and graduate to permanent residency or Green Cards, and eventually citizenship - such as Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai, who came to the US to study on an F-1 visa, got hired by McKinsey on H-1B and went on to become a US citizen via the mandatory Green Card. "This ruling has many companies across various industries breathing a huge sigh of relief today," said Jon Baselice, director of immigration policy for the US Chamber of Commerce in a statement. "Both of these rules had the potential to be incredibly disruptive to the operations of many businesses."

RUSSIA'S SPUTNIK V COVID-19 VACCINE TO COST LESS THAN RS 740 PER DOSE IN GLOBAL MARKETS



Russia's Sputnik V COVID-19 vaccine will cost less than Rs 1,480 (USD 20) per person on international markets and will be free of charge for Russian citizens, according to a statement on the official Sputnik V Twitter account.

The Sputnik vaccine is administered in two shots, each of which will cost less than Rs 740 (USD 10) each, according to the official Sputnik V Twitter account.

Meanwhile, Moscow has aimed to produce more than a billion doses of Sputnik V at home and abroad next year, its backers and developers said on Tuesday.

Kirill Dmitriev, head of Russia's RDIF sovereign wealth fund, said Moscow and its foreign partners have capacity to make more than a billion doses starting from next year, enough to vaccinate over 500 million people.

The pricing announcement comes as Russia looks to scale up distribution and production.

Price of other coronavirus vaccines

The international market price for Sputnik V unveiled on Tuesday is cheaper than some other Western rivals such as a vaccine produced by Pfizer-BioNTech, which costs 15.5 euros per shot, but more expensive than a vaccine produced by AstraZeneca which will be sold in Europe for around 2.5 euros per shot.

Sputnik V 95% effective

RDIF and the Gamaleya National Center said earlier on Tuesday that new clinical trial data based on 39 confirmed cases and 18,794 patients who got both shots had shown that Sputnik V was 91.4% effective on day 28 and over 95% effective on day 42.

Moscow has been criticised by some scientists in the West who have accused it of cutting corners in an effort to try to rush out the vaccine. Russia has denied that, alleging a Western dirty tricks campaign to put people off its vaccine in what it believes has become a battle for legitimacy and market share.

As 'Dilli Chalo' protests enter day 7, Rahul Gandhi fires 'suit-boot' jibe at Centre



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who has been vehemently criticising the central government over the three contentious farm laws passed by it in September, on Wednesday once again fired a 'suit-boot' jibe at it as the 'Dilli Chalo' protests against the legislations entered day seven.

"What the government said: farmers' income will be doubled. What the government did: increased income of its cronies four times and will halve farmers' income. This is a government of lies and a 'suit-boot' government," Gandhi tweeted on Wednesday.

In the last few days, Gandhi has been vocal on the anti-farm law protests which have only intensified despite government's efforts to stop them. "While the country's food providers are protesting on the roads, the liars are giving speeches on national television. Farmers' hard work is a debt on all of us. This debt can only be paid back by giving them justice and not by lathi-charging them or firing tear gas at them. Wake up, put your ego aside and give the farmer what he deserves," he had tweeted on Tuesday.

Farmers, majority of whom are from Punjab - a state where Gandhi's Congress is in power - have been protesting, against what they call "black laws," since these were passed. Initially, they blocked railway tracks in Punjab and later announced the 'Dilli Chalo' march towards Delhi. They began their march on November 26 and reached Delhi, despite attempts by the Haryana police to stop them. While a section of farmers is protesting at the capital's Nirankari grounds in Burari, majority are camping at various borders of the city and have vowed not to leave till the laws are taken back. A meeting between the government and farm union leaders on Tuesday was inconclusive. The farm leaders rejected the government's proposal to set up a panel to discuss the laws and said that the protests will continue. The next round of talks between the two sides will take place on Thursday.



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RENDERING OF THE NEW GURU NANAK EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT SIGN AT BRAMPTON CIVIC HOSPITAL WHICH IS SLATED FOR INSTALLATION IN THE NEW YEAR.

Osler Celebrates the Contributions of Local Sikh Community on Gurburab

BRAMPTON: As Sikhs and other followers around the world celebrate Guru Nanak Dev Ji’s birthday today, William Osler Health System (Osler) is using the occasion to recognize the local Sikh community for their contributions toward Brampton Civic Hospital. Brampton Civic opened in 2007 and funds raised by the Sikh community helped complete the development of the hospital. The generosity of the Sikh community was recognized with the hospital’s Emergency Department being named for Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism. As an update to the hospital, the original ‘Guru Nanak’ signage near the Emergency Department entrance on the south side of the building will be replaced with new, more prominent signage atop the entrance. This is being made possible thanks to a gift from Karnail Singh Khalsa of Best Canadian Truck and Forklift Training Centre, who has provided funds to purchase and install the new lettering, as well as support from community member, Satpaul Singh Johal. The new sign was unveiled today during a virtual press event. Installation and an in-person celebration will take place in the new year, when health and safety restrictions allow. “It’s an honour to help celebrate Guru Nanak Dev Ji’s Gurburab today by acknowledging the support of the Sikh community, which stepped forward in unprecedented ways to support the opening of Brampton Civic thirteen years ago,” said Dr. Naveed Mohammad, President and CEO of William Osler Health System. “The richness of our community’s diversity is reflected in our staff, physicians, volun-

teers, and patients, and we’re so pleased we can recognize that through the name of our Brampton Civic Hospital Emergency Department – which continues to provide vital care for all residents in the area.” Guru Nanak Dev Ji’s Gurburab is one of the most important festivals in the Sikh calendar, celebrated with prayer, parades and community service. “We wish a very happy Gurburab to all who are celebrating today. When we were raising funds to build Brampton Civic, the Sikh community committed support to help bring this much-needed new hospital to the city, and we are forever grateful,” said Ken Mayhew, President and CEO, William Osler Health System Foundation. “Now, as we face certainly one of the greatest community challenge of our lives, community support is needed now more than ever to ensure our Health Care Heroes have the tools they need to keep saving lives.” The Brampton Civic Emergency Department is one of the busiest in Canada, providing care to Brampton and area residents. Last year, its staff and physicians provided care through more than 134,000 emergency patient visits. Community funds pay for 100% of the equipment in hospitals. Donations to the Health Care Heroes campaign will help purchase essential equipment like ventilators, electric beds and vein finders to help Osler physicians meet the increased demand caused by the pandemic.

COVID-19 Lockdown – Week 1 Enforcement Includes Thousands of Inspections

Mississauga, as part of Peel Region, has been in the Grey-Lockdown zone of the Government of Ontario’s Keeping Ontario Safe and Open Framework for one week. In that week, there have been enhancements as to how the City’s Enforcement Division has approached the new regulations. “We launched an ambitious proactive inspection plan designed to get ahead of violations and correct behaviours quickly and purposefully,” said Sam Rogers, Director of Enforcement for the City of Mississauga. “Enforcement Officers were re-assigned from their regular duties to double our ‘boots on the ground’ and conduct thousands of inspections.” Rogers added that public complaints have tripled in the past week and 4,500 inspections were conducted in the first seven days of the lockdown which resulted in 57 charges and 51 notices of contravention. “Violations were observed across all sectors including house parties, gyms, retail stores, car dealerships, pet retail, salons, furniture stores, restaurants and electronics stores,” noted Rogers. “The vast majority of people and businesses are complying but there are some out there who are intentionally breaking the rules and putting lives at risk.” “I want to thank the vast majority of residents and businesses who are complying with the lockdown restrictions,” said Mayor Bonnie Crombie. “These enhanced enforcement measures will allow us to better identify those who are not in compliance with the regulations and penalize those who flagrantly flout the rules. Everyone has a part to play in limiting the spread of this virus.”

GMGG FOOD SUPPORT PROGRAMME, SLOUGH, U.K.



SIKHS AWARDED FOR COMMUNITY RESOURCEFULNESS IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

On Monday 30 November 2020, the volunteers at Guru Maneyo Granth Gurdwara (GMGG) accepted, on behalf of all Sikhs, a special award and recognition for ‘Community Resourcefulness in Response to Covid-19’ at The London Faith & Belief Community Awards. For the past 20 years, The Faith & Belief Forum has worked to build good relations between people of all faiths and beliefs, and to create a society where difference is celebrated. This year they introduced a special category to the awards, to celebrate those who had quickly adapted their services and/or through swift innovation created new projects with a focus on the common goal of assisting those affected by the pandemic. GMGG is one of the U.K.’s largest Sikh temples based in Slough, Berkshire. Since March 2020, when Covid-19 closed all places of worship, like many other Sikh Gurdwaras all over the world our kitchen stayed open and we were still able to serve Langar to people all over the UK. We have since collaborated with over 130 charities, organisations and places of worship to:

- Provide over 1 million freshly cooked, nutritious, vegetarian hot meals to the homeless, needy & NHS staff, all over London & Greater London.
- Distribute over 430 tonnes of fresh produce to charities, faith organisations and individuals.

Our food programme has been completely self-funded and no grants or monetary donations have been taken for this initiative. GMGG works on the premise of three Sikh tenets: 1. Simran, by which one can eliminate thoughts and gain clarity & purpose. By doing Simran the importance of the following two tenets is profound. 2. Sangat - Congregation & Community. 3. Seva - Selfless Service, the importance of giving back, serving the community and helping humanity come together. The concept of Langar - Free Community Kitchen, was started by Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji 550 years ago and has never stopped. “It highlights the importance of understanding true equality; The same light is within each and everyone one of us regardless of colour, creed, gender, age, or social background.” (Deep Kaur)

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Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE

WE ARE PLANNING FOR LIFE AFTER COVID, TO MAKE SURE THAT WE BUILD BACK BETTER: MINISTER HUSSEN

BY POOJA LUTHRA

So much has happened in Canada and worldwide in the past months- COVID-19, economic changes, protests, and many more. Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, presented his viewpoints on varied topics like Liberals' fall economic report, COVID-19 vaccine procurement and even ongoing farmers' protest in India. He discussed his opinions with Y Media's Group Editor, YudhvirJaswal, who touched on these different issues. Read on.

YudhvirJaswal: We did hear an ambitious plan by PM Trudeau government for a \$100 billion recovery plan. Could you give us some details on that?

Minister Ahmed Hussen: "We want to build a more resilient economy. We are still not out of the woods with respect to the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. But we also are planning for life after COVID, to make sure that we build back better. We have a targeted stimulus plan of up to three to four per cent of GDP and would be spending that as a stimulus plan over three years to foster strong economic growth. We want to make sure that we provide up to 700,000 grants to homeowners to help them make their homes' energy efficient. We want to make sure that we put the foundational pieces in place to create a Canada-wide early learning and childcare system. We are spending and investing \$420 million to ensure that we recruit and retain early learning and childcare workers. We want to make sure that we are growing in a way that protects our environment and grows our economy. And in the months ahead, we will develop a stimulus plan to make our economy more resilient and certainly more competitive. We will extend the Canada emergency wage subsidy to summer next year and make sure that we increase the maximum wage subsidy rate to 75 per cent for the period beginning in December until March 13. That is because we recognize that businesses are under increasing pressure. The Canada emergency business account will also be expanded, and we will allow more qualifying businesses to get interest-free \$20,000 loan where they needed. We are extending the supports to workers, the employment insurance supports, and Canada covered benefits. We will keep those until the fall of next year. The



Canada emergency business account itself has helped over 790,000 small businesses. So we want to make sure that Canadian businesses are taken care of because they will be better positioned to bounce back better. We are providing a little bit more support to families with a payment of \$1,200 for children under six in the year 2021."

YudhvirJaswal: Could you please elaborate on the \$20 million funding that will be spent in the next five years for national childcare, and is there any other support provided by the government?

Minister Ahmed Hussen: "Actually, that is misinformation. \$20 million is to establish a federal early learning and childcare secretary. But in addition to that, we will be spending \$420 million to help retain

and attract early childhood educators. We promise to set up a national system of early learning and childcare, but you need the workers to educate the children. To put those foundational pieces in there, we are hiring and retaining the educators to build the system. We are also increasing the first time the amount eligible under the first-time homebuyer incentive. We introduced the first time home buyer incentive for a maximum eligible amount of \$500,000 to purchase a home, and the Government of Canada would help first time homebuyer by contributing 10 per cent as a down-payment. For example, if somebody is buying a home for \$500,000, the Government of Canada would give them \$50,000 support in the form of a down-payment. So we're introducing changes to the first-time homebuyer incentive to reflect the actual financial realities of those living in GTA, the Greater Vancouver area and Victoria. So that was also in the fall economic statement."

YudhvirJaswal: There has not been any starting line mentioned by the PM related to vaccine acquirement, and the opposition is questioning that. Do you have anything to comment on this?

Minister Ahmed Hussen: "Well, Canada is in the best position. We have contracted and obtained the rights to the largest amount of doses of any country in the world, over 400 million doses. That works out to more than ten doses for each Canadian. We have hedged our bets by putting those contracts and entering into contracts with seven of the most promising

vaccines; four of those vaccine candidates are now undergoing Health Canada's regulatory approval. As soon as they're approved, Canadians will be ahead in the line because we've already secured the doses. So I don't know what the conservatives are talking about in saying we're in the back end of the line; we're not. We're in the front of the line, and you don't have to own, only listen to our government to believe that. Listen to the CEO of Moderna, one of the manufacturers of vaccines, who said that Canada is at the head of the line, and Canada has the right to receive the doses once they approve. Both industry and our government say that, so I don't know where the consumers are getting this false information. It is very unfortunate."

YudhvirJaswal: Could you please throw light on the number of vaccines we might be getting in the first quarter of 2021?

Minister Ahmed Hussen: Regarding the amount, I can tell we have secured over 400 million vaccine doses of promising vaccine candidates. That is the highest secured number of possible doses by any country in the world. No other government has obtained the contractual rights and paid money to secure that many vaccines. No, no other country has done that. Second, because we have secured those vaccines, we must make sure that we get them as soon as they become available. Now, I cannot answer specific timelines because they are undergoing Health Canada's approval. And that process takes some time. They are trying to fast track it as much as possible because of the need. But as soon as any of those four become viable, we will start to deploy and distribute those vaccines. And I know that provinces like Ontario also have their plans for distribution. So, we are ready to go. We will deploy all resources to make sure that we vaccinate as many Canadians as possible.

YudhvirJaswal: Recently, we have all seen farmers' protests in India are concerning. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and other leaders also mentioned this. But India is quite upset and said they do welcome diplomatic channels, but the Canadian leaders' comments are for political gains. What is your stance on this?

Minister Ahmed Hussen: It is not for political reasons. We continue to follow the ongoing farmers' protests in India closely. We always stand up for democratic rights, including the right to peaceful and productive assembly. We encourage peaceful and constructive dialogue on sensitive issues, and we have healthy people to people ties and diplomatic relations with India. It's a fellow democracy with Canada. But at the same time, we want to make sure that people's rights to protest peacefully are respected.

MidWeek

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E-MAIL : FORADVERTISING
'YMEDIA@SOUTHASIANDAILY.COM'YUDHVIR JASWAL
CHIEF EDITOR & CEO
yudhvir@southasiandaily.com
647-272-8182GURPREET SINGH LOONA
CONTENT EDITORDR. PUSHPINDER BRAR
CONTRIBUTING WRITERSIA LAKHANPAL
REBECCA TANDON
POOJA LUTHRA
REPORTERSSUNIL VERMA
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FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PLANS \$100 BILLION IN ECONOMIC STIMULUS

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

"We have a plan to get through the winter, we have a plan to provide vaccines to Canadians, and we have a plan to build our economy back." The Liberal government plans to spend up to \$100 billion to boost the post-pandemic economy. The short-term stimulus program is estimated at \$70 billion to \$100 billion over roughly three years.

Ahmed Hussen, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, said in an exclusive interview with Y media, the government is "also planning for the life after COVID-19 to make sure it (government) builds a better back."

"We want to build a more resilient economy. We are still not out of the woods concerning the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have a targeted stimulus plan of up to three to four per cent of GDP to foster strong economic growth," he said.

The government says the stimulus spending anticipates building a more inclusive, more innovative, greener, and competitive economy that will launch after vaccine distribution and life begins to return to normal.

"When the virus is under control, and our economy is ready for new growth, we will deploy an ambitious stimulus package to jump-start our recovery," Freeland said in a statement read in the House of Commons. Freeland said the stimulus program would help guard against long-term damage to the economy. She said government debt is highly affordable now due to Canada's strong past economic performance and low-interest rates.

The finance department gives four scenarios for utilizing the money starting in fiscal 2021-22 but did not include that money in its current fiscal framework.

"Make no mistake: We commit to providing fiscal support until the economy is firmly back on track," the government said.

Part of the stimulus includes providing a \$20 million "down payment" to fund the design and implementation of a national childcare program and providing more direct supports for low- and middle-income families with young children this year.

"We will be spending \$420 million (\$20 million being part of it) to help retain and attract early childhood educators. We promise to set up a national system of early learning and childcare, but we need the workers to educate the children, Hussen said. (unsure about the figures, though!) Canada also plans to spend more than \$3 billion over ten years to plant two billion trees and \$2.6 billion over seven years to help people make their homes more energy-efficient.

Minister Ahmed Hussen also said the government intends to provide up to 700,000 grants to homeowners to help them make their homes' energy efficient.

The financial statement extends help to struggling students by promising to reduce debt and eliminating interest on the federal portion of Canada student loans and Canada apprentice loans for the next fiscal year.

OPPOSITION VIEWS

Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole called the fall economic statement a "stealth budget" and blamed the government for "burning money to hide its incompetence."

O'Toole said there could be no plan for rebuilding the economy until there is a solid plan to procure vaccines, thereby calling the government's response to the pandemic as "erratic and confused."

"Our government had the duty to learn from its errors in the first wave, but

instead of that, it failed to provide vaccines for Canadians at the same time as our allies," he said.

NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh said the Liberal plan helps those who are profiting during the pandemic and fails those who need help the most, including smaller businesses.

"We see a Liberal government that is not willing to ask the wealthiest to pay their fair share. They have not really taken any concrete steps to look at revenue sources from the pandemic profiteers, the excess profits made during this pandemic, nor a tax on wealth," Singh said.

LIBERALS' AIM

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says that the Liberal approach to lifting the country out of the COVID-19 economic recession will not be achieved through cuts.

"We all remember what happened when the previous government cut support too quickly during the 2008-2009 recession. That will not be our approach," Trudeau said during his Rideau Cottage address.

"This (fall economic report) will be a significant investment to get our economy back on track, and it's an investment that will make sure no one gets left behind. We need to address the very real gaps this crisis has laid bare... Because we are all the better off when everyone can contribute to their full potential," Trudeau said.

Here are a few important highlights:

Protecting Canadians's health, and supporting Canadians through the pandemic: Ensuring every Canadian can be confident they will have access to an effective vaccine, for free, once it's ready Working with provinces and territories to set new, national standards for long-term care and providing \$1-billion for a new Safe Long-term Care Fund that will help keep our seniors protected Investing in our emergency health response, including rapid testing, personal protective equipment, and more Investing \$150 million to improve ventilation in public buildings and help reduce the spread of COVID-19 Supporting jobs and businesses with an extended 75% wage subsidy, and a new stream of credit supports for hard-hit sectors including tourism, hospitality, and arts and culture Providing direct rent and mortgage support (up to 90%) until June 2021 for businesses and organizations affected by COVID-19 with the Canada Emergency Rent Subsidy and the Lockdown Support Providing immediate relief to low and middle-income families through the Canada Child Benefit Reducing student debt by eliminating interest on the federal portion of Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprentice Loans for 2021-22 And when the virus is under control, building a more resilient economy: Laying the groundwork for a Canada-wide child-care system Putting climate action at the centre of the Liberal government's plan to create one million jobs Bolstering training support for those hardest hit by the pandemic, including marginalized communities and racialized Canadians Providing grants to homeowners to help them make energy-efficient improvements to their homes This recovery plan will help ensure no one is left behind — and as we work to build back better, it will also help ensure that the economy that comes after this pandemic is more innovative, inclusive and resilient than the one that preceded it. As Chrystia Freeland said today, "We will do whatever it takes to help Canadians stay healthy, safe, and solvent. We will invest in every necessary and helpful public health measure. And we will support Canadian families and Canadian businesses, in a deliberate, prudent and effective way.

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF GURU NANAK DEV JI

OTTAWA: The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement to mark the anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji:

“Today, Sikhs in Canada and around the world will celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism and the first Sikh Guru.

“The anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji’s birth is an important day for Sikh Canadians. It celebrates his life and his teachings of unity, equality, selflessness, and service.

“This year, as we continue to fight the global COVID-19 pandemic, those teachings have never been more important. Whether it is supporting a local charity, being there for neighbours, or helping those who are more vulnerable, Sikh Canadians continue to show

selfless service.

“This year will look different as we follow public health guidelines to keep each other and our communities safe, but the Sikh values of compassion and inclusion will remain strong. These values, which form the core principles of Sikhism, are also important for all Canadians.

“Today is an opportunity to recognize the significant contributions that Canada’s Sikh community – one of the largest and most dynamic Sikh populations in the world – makes to build a better, fairer, and more inclusive Canada.

“On behalf of our family, Sophie and I offer our warmest wishes to everyone celebrating the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, here in Canada and around the world.”

Ontario Calls on Ottawa for Certainty as COVID-19 Vaccine Preparation Continues

TORONTO: The Ontario government is calling on the federal government to immediately lay out its plan to allocate COVID-19 vaccines across the country as the province continues to prepare for the distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccine doses, which will be the largest vaccine rollout in a generation. This federal plan will inform the work of the new Ministers' COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Task Force being led by General (retired) Rick Hillier.

With recent reports that COVID-19 vaccines will come later to Canada than other countries, the federal government must put forward a comprehensive plan for a national immunization program, including the ongoing review, procurement, warehousing, and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines to Ontario and the other provinces and territories. While Ontario is doing everything it can to prepare, the government will continue to work closely with the federal government and local partners to ensure the province is ready when the vaccine is made available.

“With other jurisdictions ready to roll out vaccines as early as next month, Ontario and Canada should not be last in line to receive this vaccine,” said Premier Ford. “I’m calling on the Prime Minister today to provide certainty that the contracts we’ve signed are rock solid and that Ottawa will provide detailed information to support provincial planning, including when, how much, and what type of each vaccine we’re getting. The sooner we get a vaccine, the sooner we can offer that added protection for our frontline staff and most vulnerable, take pressure off of our hospitals, and begin to return life back to normal.”

The task force, chaired by retired General Rick Hillier, will support the government in the planning and execution of this historic logistical undertaking. This task includes ensuring the province is ready to receive, store, and administer the vaccines in an ethical, timely and effective manner as soon as they are available.

“It was my duty to agree to the Premier’s request to lead the task force

in this war to defeat COVID-19,” said General Hillier. “We will be ready as of December 31, 2020 to receive the vaccine, no matter when it arrives, and to ensure the people of Ontario are vaccinated. Our task force team is integrated, professional, and committed.”

The COVID-19 vaccines require special handling and storage, including in some cases the need for ultra-cold or freezer units to keep millions of doses at the right temperature. The logistics will have to be well planned for people to get the vaccines in a prompt, equitable fashion. For those reasons, Ontario needs the federal government to share the volume and timing for when the province will receive its allocations.

“Our government is building the capacity to undertake this monumental task, and I know that with General Hillier at the helm we are in good hands as we move forward with Ontario’s COVID-19 immunization program,” said Minister Elliott. “This is a critical stage in our fight against COVID-19 that will require us to work together, as a province and as a country, to face the challenges ahead of us to protect the health and well-being of each and every Ontarian.”

“Our government continues to take all measures necessary to stop the spread of COVID-19 while planning for the availability of a safe and effective vaccine once it is ready,” said Solicitor General Sylvia Jones. “We are confident that the work of our task force, led by General Hillier, will ensure Ontario is ready for the next step of our recovery, and we are calling on the federal government to provide the information and assurances we need to move forward for Ontarians.”

As part of its initial work, the task force will be guiding the development of an ethical framework, develop a logistical roadmap, and identify the key risks and mitigation strategies for the rollout of the program. Additional members will be announced in the coming days.

MPP NATALIA KUSEDOVA BECOMES PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANT TO THE MINISTER OF FRANCOPHONE AFFAIRS

MISSISSAUGA CENTRE — Last week, MPP Natalia Kusendova, who represents the riding of Mississauga Centre, was promoted to serving as the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Francophone Affairs, Hon. Caroline Mulroney. The appointment comes after over two years of a robust working relationship between MPP Kusendova and the Franco-Ontarian community. Particularly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, MPP Kusendova enjoyed great relationships with local Francophone groups, such as le Centre Francophone du Grand Toronto, ensuring that the particular needs and concerns of French speakers in the area were recognised in the government’s pandemic response. Moreover, this appointment comes timely after MPP Kusendova’s private member’s Bill 182, the Franco-Ontarian Emblem Amendment Act, received Royal Assent and was enacted into law, thus making the Franco-Ontarian flag an official provincial symbol. MPP Kusendova’s robust history of championing Francophone causes will provide a good cornerstone for her mandate as the new Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Francophone Affairs. Parliamentary Assistants play a crucial role in the functioning of the government of Ontario, helping Ministers deliver on their commitments made to the people, families, and businesses of the province. Within their mandate, Parliamentary Assistants support Ministers with both legislative and committee matters, handling special projects and other related assignments which require dedicated leadership to achieve important objectives. Further, Parliamentary Assistants help to build relationships and communicate key government messaging to diverse groups and communities across Ontario. “I am beyond thrilled to have taken on this role as the Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Francophone Affairs,” said MPP Kusendova. “Being able to leverage the connections I’ve made in the Franco-Ontarian community in these last two years serving my constituents will, I feel, make a difference in the way our government connects with its large Francophone community. I look forward to working with Minister Mulroney and her staff in the years to come, and doing my part to ensure our government is, truly, for the people.”



GREATER TORONTO AREA (GTA) WOMEN SHARE PERSONAL STORIES OF COURAGE AND TRANSFORMATION IN A NEW BOOK OF ESSAYS

TORONTO—21 Resilient Women: Stories of courage, growth and transformation is launching at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic has many people searching for hope and inspiration. Daisy Wright, Executive Leadership Coach, based in Brampton, ON, Canada knows that ordinary women often lead extraordinary lives. Therefore, she invited 20 women to share stories about their challenges, triumphs and journeys for a book releasing this week. “We are constantly bombarded with stories about celebrities’ lives, but ordinary women have powerful lessons to teach us. The women in this book found the courage to overcome challenges that range from devastating health diagnoses to bias and discrimination. Others reflect on their experiences of motherhood, menopause and adapting to life in a new country. I hope readers will see themselves in some of these stories and say: ‘If she overcame that, I can, too!’ says Wright. Taranum Khan, Ph. D, who was born, brought up and started her career in Jammu Kashmir, India, is now a well recognized Outstanding Career Leader in Canada, and an international bestselling author, also contributed to the book. Taranum has shared a career-focused story titled ‘Finding Opportunity In Adversity’, which underlines resilience in keeping with her way of life. Many of us can relate to her words, ‘My career life is filled with adventures to be documented in a memoir someday. Have you ever looked at some parts of your life and thought, “Perhaps it could make a good movie one day?” Allow me to share a specific career experience where I was made to feel inadequate – less than – and how it pulled me down to the breaking point and back!’ writes Taranum. This is Taranum’s third book; her others are Ignite Your Life for Women and Ignite Your Female Leadership. The other contributors write about experiences that include: immigrating to Canada and having to work two jobs to support their family; starting non-profit organizations; being diagnosed with a brain aneurysm; and dealing with microaggressions and harassment in the corporate world. The 21 co-authors featured in the book reflect the diversity of the GTA. All Canadians with roots in Canada, Chile/Venezuela, Guyana, India, Jamaica, Nigeria, Nepal, Philippines, Saint Lucia, Sri Lanka, Trinidad & Tobago, and the United Kingdom. They were determined to use this sombre downtime that 2020 brought to do some deep reflection and contribute to this legacy. They also decided that part of the proceeds from the book’s sales will be donated to a local women’s shelter.

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SERVICE ONTARIO OFFERING APPOINTMENT BOOKING TO HELP ALLEVIATE WAIT TIMES

TORONTO: To help reduce wait times and manage customer flow, ServiceOntario is now offering appointment booking at 42 of its busiest locations. Appointments will minimize lineups and wait times for customers and help staff to safely facilitate services that need to be completed in-person.

Due to the risks associated with COVID-19, it is strongly recommended that customers continue to access services available online and only book an in-person appointment if necessary. For transactions that need to be completed in-person, appointments can be booked up to two weeks in advance at Ontario.ca/ Appointment

"By offering appointment booking and online options, we aim to

make renewals and other key services easier and safer for customers and staff at ServiceOntario," said Lisa Thompson, Minister of Government and Consumer Services. "I encourage Ontarians to take advantage of these options to save time, make headway on to-do lists, and help protect our communities."

ServiceOntario centres offering appointment booking:

Aurora: Bloomington and Yonge

Aylmer: John and Progress

Barrie: Simcoe and Mary

Belleville: Front and Bridge

Brampton: Gateway and Summerlea

Brampton: Wexford and Hurontario

Brockville: King and Market

Burlington: Brant and North Service

Chatham: Grand and Mitchener

Cornwall: Brookdale and Fourteenth

Dresden: St. George and Main

Dubreuilville: Des Pins and Épinettes

Georgetown: Marketplace Mall

Guelph: Stone Road and Gordon

Hamilton: King and MacNab

Kemptville: Campus and Concession

Kingston: Division and Dalton

Kit chener: Duke and Ontario

Lindsay: Kent and Angeline

Lively: Regional Rd 24 and Jacobson

London: Dundas and Talbot

Massey: Sauble and Imperial

Milton: Highpoint and Regional Rd 25

Mississauga: Westdale Mall

Napanee: Snow and Advance

Oakville: North Service and Dorval

Orangeville: Broadway and 4th

Ottawa: Bank and Alta Vista

Ottawa: Main and Casleton

Cathcart

Ottawa: Merivale and Slack

Ottawa: Ottawa City Hall

Renfrew: Plaunt and Prince

St. Catharines: St. Paul and Carlisle

Toronto: Bay and College

Toronto: Bloor and Islington

Toronto: Cedarbrae Mall

Toronto: Leslie and Lake Shore

Toronto: Sheppard and Doris

Toronto: Sheppard and Kodiak

Welland: Niagara and Thorold

Whitby: Rossland and Civic Centre

Windsor: McDougall and University

Statement by the Prime Minister on the anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today issued the following statement to mark the anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji: "Today, Sikhs in Canada and around the world will celebrate the anniversary of the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, the founder of Sikhism and the first Sikh Guru. "The anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev Ji's birth is an important day for Sikh Canadians. It celebrates his life and his teachings of unity, equality, selflessness, and service. "This year as we continue to fight the global COVID-19 pandemic, those teachings have never been more important. Whether it is supporting a local charity, being there for neighbours, or helping those who are more vulnerable, Sikh Canadians continue to show selfless service. "This year will look different as we follow public health guidelines to keep each other and our communities safe, but the Sikh values of compassion and inclusion will remain strong. These values, which form the core principles of Sikhism, are also important for all Canadians. "Today is an opportunity to recognize the significant contributions that Canada's Sikh community – one of the largest and most dynamic Sikh populations in the world – makes to build a better, fairer, and more inclusive Canada. "On behalf of our family, Sophie and I offer our warmest wishes to everyone celebrating the birth of Guru Nanak Dev Ji, here in Canada and around the world."

Officer Charged With Criminal Offences

Region of Peel – As a result of a fourteen-month investigation, investigators from Peel Regional Police Professional Standards Bureau arrested and charged Constable Michael Konwerski, an 8-year-member of the service with several criminal offences.

On Tuesday, December 1, 2020, Constable Michael Konwerski was charged with three counts of Unauthorized Possession of a Prohibited Device, three counts of Careless Storage of a Prohibited Device and one count of Careless Storage of Ammunition.

In September 2019, the Peel Regional Police Professional Standards Bureau received an internal complaint alleging that after his shift, the officer reported off duty leaving behind three prohibited firearm magazines loaded with ammunition in the trunk of the police cruiser that he was operating. These items were not issued by the service.

ERIN O'TOOLE RESPONDS TO FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT

OTTAWA, ON – The Hon. Erin O'Toole, Leader of Canada's Conservatives and the Official Opposition, today released the following statement in response to the Trudeau government's Fall Economic Statement:

Without a plan for vaccines, there can be no plan for the economy.

"Canadians have only asked one thing of this government: what is the plan? This Fall Economic Statement answers that question – there is no plan.

"I am really glad the Liberals took my proposal from my leadership platform this spring on support for parents by boosting the Canada Child Benefit. I'm glad because this was a concrete proposal to help families, and especially moms, who need it the most. But we know Canadians need more. "The truth is the Liberals' economic response has been erratic and confused. Millions more Canadians were put on the CERB than necessary when their jobs could have been maintained if the Liberals had implemented a wage subsidy earlier.

"The Canadian economy was already showing serious signs of weakness before the pandemic hit. Ignoring our warnings, the Liberals took pride in running large structural deficits and raising taxes in good economic times. Now, Justin Trudeau is running a historic deficit of almost \$400 billion – and still leaving millions of Canadians behind. "My experience in the military and in business demands of us to learn from our failures. We must provide stability and certainty to those who rely on us. While the Prime Minister prefers to compare himself to the worst student in the class, I want to strive for Canada to be the best.



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Horizontal Ducting:3-1/8" x 10"
Vertical Ducting : 6" Diameter
Revolutions : 1700 RPM
Wind Exhaust : 520-680 CFM
White, Black & Stainless Steel



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Model: R-8168M
DIMENSION: 29 3/4" x 21" X 6" H
Wind Exhaust: 250-680 CFM
White or Stainless Steel

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- Patented twin oil trapping cones with filters
- Front steam baffle
- Maximum power with intelligent sensor
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- One year warranty on electronic switch
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- Two mode lighting (R8168M model only)
- ODOR FREE - Twin motor with high CFM

R747 II Generation



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- **DiameterRevolutions:**1700 RPM**Wind Exhaust:**520-680 CFM**Weight (lbs):** 29.70 - 31.90**Illum.:** 60W Max**Power**
- **White, Black & Stainless Steel**

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Delhi-Noida border closed due to farmers' protest



THE DELHI TRAFFIC POLICE HAS ADVISED COMMUTERS TRAVELLING TO DELHI TO AVOID USING THE CHILLA ROUTE AND INSTEAD TAKE THE DND OR KALINDI KUNJ ROUTE.

Farmers protesting against Centre's farm laws continued their sit-in at the Noida-Delhi border for the second day on Wednesday, leading to closure of a key route that connects Uttar Pradesh with the national capital. The Delhi Traffic Police has advised commuters travelling to the national capital to avoid using the Chilla route and instead take the Delhi-Noida Direct (DND) or Kalindi Kunj road.

"The Chilla border on Noida-link road is closed for traffic due to farmers protests near Gautam Budh Dwar. People are advised to avoid Noida-link road for going to Noida and use NH-24 and DND instead for Noida," Delhi Traffic Police tweeted.

Hundreds of farmers affiliated to the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) and other groups had gathered at UP border on Tuesday evening. Heavy security was deployed to prevent them from proceeding towards Delhi to join farmers of Punjab and Haryana in their protest.

Farmers are protesting against the three agricultural laws passed by

Parliament in September. The three laws, that according to the farmers would make them vulnerable to exploitation by big corporations, are - The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2020, the Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Act, 2020 and the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Act 2020.

However, the government has stuck to its stance that the laws are beneficial for the farmers. On his monthly radio programme Mann Ki Baat on Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "New dimensions are being added to agriculture and its related activities in India. The agriculture reforms in the past few days have also now opened new doors of possibilities for our farmers." "These reforms have not only broken shackles of farmers but have also given new rights and opportunities for them. These rights started mitigating problems that were being faced by farmers in a short span of time," he added.

UK-BASED KHALSA AID OFFERS FREE FOOD, ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES TO PROTESTING FARMERS



UK-based global Sikh charity body Khalsa Aid on Wednesday said it has volunteered to offer free food and essential supplies to farmers agitating at Singhu and Tikri borders of the National Capital.

The organization has been a partner of farmers in the 'Dilli Chalo' movement for the last two months.

Volunteers are providing langar, tea and refreshments and even medical help around the clock to the protesting farmers who at present are stationed at Singhu and Tikri border, Khalsa Aid Director Amarpreet Singh said in a statement. Since women were facing hardships, Khalsa

Aid has ordered 50 portable washrooms as well, he added.

Farmers from about 35 farm organizations, mostly from Punjab, are protesting at Delhi borders since last week seeking repeal of the three new farm laws enacted by the central government.

The Centre has held several rounds of meetings to address concerns of the protesting farmer and end the deadlock at the earliest.

The next round of talks with them will be on December 3. Khalsa Aid provides support around the world to victims of natural and human-made disasters such as floods, earthquakes, famine and war.

KEJRIWAL CLAIMS AMARINDER 'HAD SEVERAL CHANCES TO STOP FARM BILLS, BUT DID NOT DO SO'

NEW DELHI: Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday claimed that the BJP-ruled Centre was angry with him for not permitting stadiums to be used as temporary jails for farmers protesting against the farm laws.

In a press briefing, Kejriwal also hit out at Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh saying that he was speaking "BJP's language" by accusing him of "passing" three farm laws in Delhi.

Last week, the AAP government had denied permission to the Delhi Police to convert the city's stadiums into temporary jails.

"The BJP-ruled Centre is angry with me for this," the Delhi chief minister said.

He also accused the Punjab CM of doing "dirty politics" and levelling false allegations on him.

"Captain saheb you are levelling allegations against me and speaking BJP's language. Is it the pressure of ED cases on your family members and the notices being sent?" Kejriwal asked.

The three farm laws were implemented across the country with the signature of the president and no state can stop them, he said about the three farm laws being stiffly opposed by farmers.

The Delhi government has notified one of the three laws.

"The Punjab CM accused me of passing the three black laws. How can he do such lowly politics at such a crucial time," Kejriwal



said. "Amarinder Singh had several chances to stop farm bills but did not do so," he added. Kejriwal appealed to the Centre to immediately fulfil all the demands of the farmers and guarantee the minimum support price for their crops.

RHEA CHAKRABORTY'S BROTHER SHOWIK GETS BAIL



MUMBAI: A Mumbai court on Wednesday granted bail to actress Rhea Chakraborty's brother Showik Chakraborty, who was arrested in a drugs case linked to actor Sushant Singh Rajput's death.

The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) had arrested Showik Chakraborty in September this year under provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Special NDPS court judge G B Guroo granted bail to him on Wednesday on a personal bond of Rs 50,000.

In his bail plea, Showik Chakraborty had relied on a recent Supreme Court judgment which said that "confessional statements" made to NCB officials cannot be considered as evidence. He reiterated that he has been "falsely implicated" in the case.

Earlier, the court had also granted him bail in a related case. The NCB alleged said that Rhea Chakraborty, who was Sushant Singh Rajput's girlfriend, and her brother used to facilitate drug deliveries and payment through credit cards, cash and other payment gateways.

The agency is conducting a probe into various drug angles linked to death of Rajput, who was found hanging at his residence in suburban Bandra on June 14 this year.

The NCB its investigation after the Enforcement Directorate (ED), which was probing money laundering charges linked to the case, shared some social media chats retrieved from Rhea Chakraborty's mobile phone, hinting at the alleged use of banned drugs. The central agency had earlier also arrested Rhea Chakraborty and some staff members of Rajput and a few others under various sections of the NDPS Act. Rhea Chakraborty and some other accused are currently out on bail.

WILL TAKE FIRST SHOT OF COVID VACCINE IN PUNJAB: AMARINDER

CHANDIGARH: With the Covid vaccine in the final stages of operationalisation in India, Chief Minister Captain Amarinder on Wednesday announced that he would take the first shot of the vaccine in Punjab, once it is cleared by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).

The Chief Minister made the announcement at the virtual Cabinet meeting, during a presentation to discuss the Covid situation in Punjab and the state's preparedness to roll out the vaccine. In line with the Government of India strategy for vaccination, Punjab has prioritised healthcare workers, frontline workers, the elderly population (over 50 years of age), and people with co-morbidities (< or = 50 years), the meeting was informed. According to Punjab Health Secretary Hussan Lal, the state has compiled data of 1.25 lakh government and private healthcare workers to be vaccinated in the first phase. Approximately 23 per cent (70 lakh) of the state's population – estimated at around 3 crore – will be vaccinated in terms of the Centre's guidelines on vaccine prioritisation, Lal added.

Defer all engagements to solve farmers' problems: SAD to PM Modi

CHANDIGARH: The Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) on Saturday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to "put all other engagements on hold and personally address and resolve the genuine demands of the agitating annadata of the country as a top national priority".

"The agitators' demands on the three anti-farmer Acts are perfectly legitimate, secular and constitutional," said the party. "The Prime Minister and his colleagues have repeatedly maintained that the assured marketing of farmers' produce at minimum support price will be continued under all circumstances. That being so, there should be no objection to nor any problem in giving a legal shape to the government's commitments through necessary legislation."

The core committee of the party which met here this afternoon, also came down heavily against the Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar for his "highly provocative, dangerous and divisive statement" dubbing the farmers as "Khalistanis". "Do these beleaguered elderly men and ladies from farmers' families look like Khalistanis to Khattar and his party? It is not the farmers but the Haryana CM himself who is guilty of flouting the Constitution of the country on the anniversary of the Adoption Day of the Statute," the party said in a statement.

The party also accused the Haryana CM of trying to revive the old Congress tactics to paint its political opponents as separatists. "It is the same mindset that was responsible for the Congress repression against Akali agitators in 1982 and continued for a decade and a half, painting a fiercely patriotic community as separatist," read the SAD resolution.



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DELHI WITNESSED COLDEST NOVEMBER IN LAST 71 YEARS; HERE'S THE REASON BEHIND IT



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE LAST 71 YEARS, DELHI RECORDED A MINIMUM TEMPERATURE OF 10.2 DEGREES CELSIUS IN NOVEMBER.

The month of November was the coldest for national capital Delhi in the last 71 years. The reason behind such severe cold in November was the absence of global factors like La Nina and Western Disturbance. Apart from this, the absence of rain in September and the lack of clouds in the sky also caused such cold weather in Delhi. For the first time in the last 71 years, Delhi recorded a minimum temperature of 10.2 degrees Celsius in November. It may be noted that according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), the lowest temperature recorded in Delhi is generally around 12.9 degrees in November. Significantly, not only in the month of November 2020, but low temperatures were recorded in October also, and the cold had broken the record of the last 58 years. In October this year, the minimum temperature was recorded at 17.2 degree Celsius. Such a cold winter in October was recorded in the year 1962 when the tempera-

ture was recorded at 16.9 degree Celsius. This situation may get even worse. As per the weather department, Monday (November 30) was the coldest day of November in Delhi, when the minimum temperature dropped to 6.9 degrees Celsius. Director-General of Indian Meteorological Department M Mahapatra says that global factors like La Nina have already made their impact felt. The weather reaches its peak when local and regional factors also contribute along with global factors. Due to this, such a cold November was seen in Delhi. He further said that the absence of rain in the month of September also caused so much cold in Delhi in November. Due to no showers, the atmosphere was mostly dry and there was a lack of moisture, as a result, the sky was clear and there was a lack of clouds. When the sky is clear, it is cold.

CROSS-BORDER TERRORISM FROM PAKISTAN, REFORMS AT WHO REMAIN TOP FOCUSES

India strongly raised the issue of cross-border terrorism from Pakistan and attempts to raise the bilateral issue at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) heads of government meet. Vice-President Venkaiah Naidu said, "The most important challenge faced by us in the region is terrorism, particularly cross-border terrorism. Terrorism is truly the enemy of humanity. It is a scourge we need to collectively combat." Pointing at Pakistan, Naidu explained, "We remain concerned about threats emerging from ungoverned spaces and are particularly concerned about States that leverage terrorism as an instrument of state policy. Such an approach is entirely against the spirit and ideals and the Charter of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization." This is the first time since India became a member of the SCO in 2017, that it hosted such a large meet of SCO leaders. It was expected to take place physically but took place virtually due to the COVID pandemic. The Vice-President also raised the issue of Pakistan trying to raise bilateral issues at the grouping. He said, "It is unfortunate to note that there have been attempts to deliberately bring bilateral issues into SCO and blatantly violate the well-established principles and norms of SCO Charter safeguarding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of SCO Member States." The Pakistani NSA, earlier this year, sat in SCO virtual meet with a map of Pakistan which showed incorrect boundaries of India, irking New Delhi. In fact, Russia, which is the host of the grouping this year, also said, bilateral matters should not be raised at the body. Meanwhile, COVID also remained a key focus of New Delhi, which



highlighted how it has "been at the forefront of producing quality medicines and vaccines at low cost." But Naidu also called for, "much-needed reforms to our global institutions, including WHO, and rework our development strategies to face a post-COVID-19 world." The World Health Organisation (WHO) has been at found missing when the pandemic broke towards the end of 2019, for which it has been criticized. India offered to annually host the Special Working Group on Startups and Innovation and also the SCO Startup Forum. On the shared cultural front, India earlier on Monday inaugurated an Exhibition on Buddhist Heritage of SCO Member States in a virtual format, hosted by the National Museum of India.

FARM REFORM LAWS HAVE GIVEN NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO FARMERS, SAYS PM MODI

In a bid to allay fears of farmers who have been protesting against the new farm laws, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that the agricultural reforms have opened the doors of new opportunities for farmers and gave them more rights. "Recent agri-reforms have opened the doors of new opportunities for farmers. Decades-old demands of farmers which were promised by many political parties have now been met. Parliament has recently passed farm reform laws after rigorous brainstorming. These reforms have not only broken shackles of farmers but have also given new rights and opportunities to them," PM Modi said while addressing the nation in the 71st edition of his monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat'. "Under this law, it is mandatory to pay farmers within three days of purchasing the produce. If payment is not made, then the farmer can lodge a complaint. Another major provision is that the SDM of the area must address the complaint of the farmer within one month," he said. The Prime Minister requested the youth especially those studying agriculture to go to nearby villages and make farmers aware about modern farming and recent farm reforms. "By doing this, you will become a partner in big change that is happening in the country," he said. The Prime Minister's comments came even as hundreds of farmers continue to camp in and around the national capital as part of their agitation against the Centre's agricultural laws. In his radio broadcast, Modi touched upon various other topics ranging from the idol of goddess Annapurna, stolen in 1913 from Varanasi, being brought back to India from Canada to emphasising that educational institutions should harness the strengths and talents of their alumni. Remembering Guru Nanak Dev, whose birth anniversary is on Monday, Modi lauded his noble ideals and added that he considered himself to be fortunate for his involvement in



various works related to Sikh gurus and gurudwaras. He also hailed the opening of the Kartarpur Sahib corridor in November last year as historic. In his remarks, PM Modi talked about a gurudwara in Kutch, which is considered very sacred and special. The culture of India is gaining popularity all over the world, he noted. "One such effort is by Jonas Masetti, who is based in Brazil and popularises Vedanta as well as the Gita among people there. He uses technology effectively to popularise our culture and ethos," Modi said. The prime minister also lauded Gaurav Sharma, the MP for Hamilton West, New Zealand, for taking his oath of office in Sanskrit. Farmers from various states have embarked on 'Dilli Chalo' march to protest against the three farm laws. Reaching out to protesting farmers, Union Home Minister Amit Shah had on Saturday said the Central government was ready to hold talks on their "every problem and demand". He urged the farmers, who are protesting against three farm laws enacted recently, to shift to Nirankari Samagam Ground marked for their protest by Delhi Police and said the Centre was ready to talk to them earlier than December 3.

India test-fires anti-ship version of BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from Andaman Nicobar Islands



India on Tuesday test-fired the anti-ship version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands territory, news agency ANI quoted sources as saying. The test was conducted as part of the trials being conducted by the Indian Navy, the sources added. A land-attack version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile was also successfully test-fired from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands territory last week. "The test was conducted by the Indian Army which has many regiments of the Defence Research and Development Organisation-developed Missile system. The strike range of BrahMos missile has now been enhanced to over 400 km," sources said. The BrahMos supersonic cruise missile is the world's fastest operational system in its class. The DRDO recently extended the range of the missile system from the existing 298 km to around 450 km. Last week, the Indian Army successfully test-fired a land-attack version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands territory, news agency ANI reported. The supersonic cruise missile was test-fired at 10 am on November 24 and it successfully hit its target, which was on another island, the report added. "The test was conducted by the Indian Army which has many regiments of the DRDO-developed Missile system. The strike range of BrahMos missile has now been enhanced to over 400 km," the news agency quoted sources as saying. In the last two months, DRDO has been successful in testing both new and existing missile systems including the Shaurya missile system which can hit targets at over 800 km and technology demonstration vehicles for hypersonic missile technology.

Uttarakhand government allows curfew to be imposed in 13 districts

In the wake of rising coronavirus cases, the Uttarakhand government on Monday permitted the District Magistrates (DM) of all 13 districts of the state to impose curfew (not lockdown), if necessary, in their neighbourhoods to contain the spread of the infection. "The government has given the right to impose curfew power to District Magistrates as per the requirement in their districts for the prevention of corona, however, they are not allowed to impose lockdown," Om Prakash, Chief Secretary of Uttarakhand said on Monday while issuing the guidelines. Speaking to ANI he said, "Those coming from other states to Uttarakhand have to get registered and thermal screening of the passengers will be done at the state borders, check posts, railway stations, airports, according to the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). "He said instructions have been given to the DMs that 80 percent of the people who came in contact with the corona positive person in the containment zone have to be traced within 72 hours. Moreover, the government has reduced the number of people attending cultural, social, political and religious programmes to 100 instead of 200. Meanwhile, the Uttarakhand state capital Dehradun is observing weekly lockdown of all market places from today, with the exception of shops selling essential items. Presently, the state has 4,970 active cases of COVID-19 including 67,457 recoveries and 1,222 deaths reported in the last 24 hours, the state health department informed on Sunday.

Urmila Matondkar is NOT joining Shiv Sena; shuts down rumours



Bollywood actor Urmila Matondkar, who had contested the 2019 Lok Sabha elections on a Congress ticket and quit the party later has thoroughly dismissed the reports stating that she will be joining the Shiv Sena on Tuesday. When we, at DNA, quizzed Urmila about the reports of her joining Maharashtra's ruling party Shiv Sena, the actor simply said, "No, I am not." For the uninformed, in a report, it was stated that Harshal Pradhan, a close aide of Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray, on Sunday said that Urmila will join the party in the CM's presence. The report further stated that Urmila's name has been forwarded to governor B S Koshiyari by the Shiv Sena for nomination to the Legislative Council from the governor's quota. The names of 11 others have also been forwarded by the three-party Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government for their nomination from the governor's quota. Urmila had unsuccessfully contested the 2019 Lok Sabha election from the Mumbai North constituency as a Congress candidate. However, she had later quit the party over the functioning of the Mumbai unit of the Congress. The actor had recently grabbed headlines after she criticised actor Kangana Ranaut for comparing Mumbai with Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and the nepotism issue.

JOE BIDEN EXPRESSES SENSE OF URGENCY IN ADVANCING CLIMATE GOALS



LAST MONTH, BIDEN NAMED FORMER SECRETARY OF STATE JOHN KERRY AS CLIMATE ENVOY FOR NATIONAL SECURITY. KERRY, 76, WAS ONE OF THE LEADING ARCHITECTS OF THE PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT. (REUTERS PHOTO)

Joe Biden has expressed a clear sense of urgency in advancing climate goals as the US President-elect discussed his decision to rejoin the historic Paris Agreement on his first day in office during a meeting on climate policy. In the virtual meeting with national security and climate policy staff on Monday, Biden reiterated his intention to ensure climate change is a core national security priority, according to a readout issued by the Office of the President-elect. He expressed a clear sense of urgency in advancing his climate goals, it said.

Biden was joined by Vice President-elect Kamala Harris during the meeting to discuss ways to meet the president-elect's wide-ranging and ambitious international climate commitments. The discussions included his decision to rejoin the Paris Agreement on his first day in office, the readout stated.

On November 4, the Trump administration formally withdrew from the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change, a decision originally announced three years ago.

The Paris accord committed the US and 187 other countries to keeping rising global temperatures below 2C above pre-industrial levels and attempting to limit them even more, to a 1.5C rise. Biden has pledged that his administration would rejoin the historic Paris Agreement on climate change. Climate change is among the top four priorities of Biden. "President-elect Biden is leading the world to address the climate emergency and leading through the power of example," said a policy paper issued by his transition.

"Biden knows how to stand with America's allies, stand up to adversaries, and level with any world leader about what must be done. He will not only recommit the United States to the Paris Agreement on climate change -- he will go much further than that. He is working to

lead an effort to get every major country to ramp up the ambition of their domestic climate targets," it said.

The US is the second leading producer of all carbon dioxide emissions globally, behind China.

US President Donald Trump's decision to quit the Paris accord has led to condemnation from environmentalists and expressions of regret from world leaders. According to the policy paper, Biden will ensure that — coming out of this profound public health and economic crisis, and facing the persistent climate crisis — the US is never caught flat-footed again.

"He is working to launch a national effort aimed at creating the jobs we need to build modern, sustainable infrastructure now and deliver an equitable clean energy future," it said.

Last month, Biden named former secretary of state John Kerry as climate envoy for national security. Kerry, 76, was one of the leading architects of the Paris climate agreement. Introducing Kerry to the nation for this position, Biden had said that for the first time ever, the US will have a full-time climate leader who will participate in ministerial-level meetings.

The current coronavirus crisis destroyed millions of American jobs, including hundreds of thousands in clean energy. It has exacerbated historic environmental injustices, the policy paper noted. "Biden will immediately invest in engines of sustainable job creation — new industries and re-invigorated regional economies spurred by innovation from our national labs and universities; commercialised into new and better products that can be manufactured and built by American workers; and put together using feedstocks, materials, and parts supplied by small businesses, family farms, and job creators all across our country," it said.

UN WARNS THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC WILL FAN 'DARKEST' SURGE IN HUMANITARIAN NEEDS IN 2021



The United Nations(UN) humanitarian office says needs for assistance have ballooned to unprecedented levels this year because of Covid-19, projecting that a staggering 235 million people will require help in 2021. This comes as a result of the coronavirus pandemic and global challenges including conflicts, forced migration and the impact of global warming.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, or OCHA, expects a 40% increase in the number of people in need of such assistance in 2021 compared to this year — a sign that pain, suffering and torment brought by the coronavirus outbreak and other problems could get worse even if hopes of a vaccine are rising.

OCHA made the projections in its latest annual Global Humanitarian Overview on Tuesday, saying its hopes to reach 160 million of those people in need will cost \$35 billion. That's more than twice the record \$17 billion that donors have provided for the international humanitarian response so far this year — and a target figure that is almost certain to go unmet. "The picture we're painting this year is the bleakest and darkest perspective on humanitarian needs we've ever set out, and that's because the pandemic has reaped carnage across the most fragile and vulnerable countries on the planet," said UN humanitarian chief Mark Lowcock, who heads OCHA.

"For the first time since the 1990s, extreme poverty is going to increase, life expectancy will fall, the annual death toll from HIV, tuberculosis and malaria is set to double," he said. "We fear a near doubling in the number of people facing starvation." Lowcock told a UN briefing in New York on the overview that he thinks the UN appeal will probably raise a record \$20 billion by the end of the year -- \$2 billion more than last year. But he said the gap between needs and funding is

growing and the UN is looking to "new players" coming on the scene in 2021, including US President-elect Joe Biden's new administration. The UN aims to reach about two-thirds of those in need, with the Red Cross and other humanitarian organizations trying to meet the rest, Lowcock explained.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said humanitarian aid budgets are now facing dire shortfalls as the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic continues to worsen, and said extreme poverty has risen for the first time in more than a generation.

"The lives of people in every nation and corner of the world have been upended by the impact of the pandemic," he said. "Those already living on a knife's edge are being hit disproportionately hard by rising food prices, falling incomes, interrupted vaccination programs, and school closures." The overview, which is billed as one of the most comprehensive looks of the world's humanitarian needs, has put together nearly three dozen individual response plans for a total of 56 "vulnerable" countries. Lowcock said the biggest problem is in Yemen where there is danger of "a large-scale famine" now, saying a prime reason is lack of funding from Gulf countries that were major donors in the past which has led to cuts in aid and the closing of clinics.

He said the biggest financial request is for the Syrian crisis and its spillover to neighbouring countries where millions of Syrians have fled to escape the more than nine-year conflict.

OCHA said other countries in need include Afghanistan, Congo, Haiti, Nigeria, South Sudan, Ukraine, and Venezuela. New-comers to this year's list are Mozambique, where extremist activity has increased in the north, Pakistan and Zimbabwe.

Lowcock said it's not the pandemic, but its economic impact that's having the greatest effect on humanitarian needs.

"These all hit the poorest people in the poorest countries hardest of all," he said. "For the poorest, the hangover from the pandemic will be long and hard."

IRAN MOVES AHEAD ON BILL THAT COULD END NUCLEAR INSPECTIONS



Iran's parliament gave preliminary approval to draft legislation that could end inspections of its nuclear sites by early next year, a move that would further weaken the country's commitment to an already fragile nuclear deal. Inspections by international monitors would be restricted if US oil and banking sanctions aren't lifted within three month's of the bill's approval. The proposal still requires final approval by parliament and the Guardian Council that vets laws.

In accordance with the multi-party nuclear pact struck five years ago, Iran agreed to give United Nations inspectors more intrusive access to atomic sites.

The draft legislation would also revive the mothballed core of a contentious reactor and increase Iran's stockpile of uranium enriched to 20%, which could then be purified to weapons-grade material at short notice.

The legislation was first proposed in early November as a signal to the US ahead of its presidential election, but the conservative-majority parliament fast-tracked it after a top Iranian nuclear scientist was assassinated on Friday in an attack Iran blamed on Israel.

US President-elect Joe Biden has said he aims to rejoin the agreement President Donald Trump quit two years ago, provided Iran returns to the full compliance it abandoned in response to the US withdrawal.

Kim Jong Un given experimental Covid-19 vaccine by China, says US analyst



China has provided North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his family with an experimental coronavirus vaccine, a US analyst said on Tuesday, citing two unidentified Japanese intelligence sources.

Harry Kazianis, a North Korea expert at the Center for the National Interest think tank in Washington, said the Kims and several senior North Korean officials had been vaccinated. It was unclear which company had supplied its drug candidate to the Kims and whether it had proven to be safe, he added. "Kim Jong Un and multiple other high-ranking officials within the Kim family and leadership network have been vaccinated for coronavirus within the last two to three weeks thanks to a vaccine candidate supplied by the Chinese government," Kazianis wrote in an article for online outlet 19FortyFive.

Citing US medical scientist Peter J. Hotez, he said at least three Chinese companies were developing a coronavirus vaccine, including Sinovac Biotech Ltd, CanSinoBio and Sinopharm Group. Sinopharm says its candidate has been used by nearly one million people in China, although none of the firms was known to have publicly launched Phase 3 clinical trials of their experimental Covid-19 drugs.

North Korea has not confirmed any coronavirus infections, but South Korea's National Intelligence Service (NIS) has said an outbreak there cannot be ruled out as the country had trade and people-to-people exchanges with China - the source of the pandemic - before shutting the border in late January. Microsoft said last month that two North Korean hacking groups had tried to break into the network of vaccine developers in multiple countries, without specifying the companies targeted. Sources told Reuters they included British drugmaker AstraZeneca.

The NIS said last week it had foiled North Korea's attempts to hack into South Korean Covid-19 vaccine makers.



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YJ Yudhvir Jaswal

GROUP EDITOR & CEO - Y MEDIA GROUP

647-272-8182 / 416-475-5000

Ymedia@southasiandaily.com