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Prime Minister Trudeau wishes his wife on Valentines' Day



"YOU'RE MY ROCK, YOU'RE MY PARTNER, YOU'RE MY BEST FRIEND. HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY, MON AMOUR. XO"

INDIA TO SUPPLY 1 MILLION COVID VACCINES TO CANADA WITHIN A MONTH, AFTER PM TRUDEAU'S REQUESTS TO PM MODI

POOJA LUTHRA

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's phone call on vaccine supply to India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to fruition when India agreed to supply 1 million Covid-19 vaccines 'in less than a month. Canada had requested India to allow the supply of the Covid-19 vaccine produced by the Pune-based Serum Institute of India. On Monday, Adar Poonawalla, the chief executive of Serum Institute of India (SII) - the world's largest vaccine maker - reaffirmed the consignment.

"As we await regulatory approvals from Canada, I assure you, @SerumInstIndia will fly out #COVISHIELD to Canada in less than a month; I'm on it!" tweets Poonawalla. Canada has an agreement of 20 million vaccine doses with Oxford-AstraZeneca, which is still 'in-final stages' of getting approval from Health Canada. Covishield is the name the Serum Institute uses for the vaccine developed by the British-Swedish firm AstraZeneca with Oxford University, which it mass-produces in India. At a press conference,



PM Trudeau said Canada is looking at additional vaccines that could potentially come from India.

"We are looking at possible extra vaccines coming from India, from the Serum Institute. Work is being done closely on that," Trudeau said. The tweet by Poonawalla also hinted the diplomatic dispute triggered by Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's remarks on farmers' protests in India was soothing.

Earlier, while expressing concern about farmers' protest, PM Trudeau had said, "The situation is concerning, and we are all very worried about family and friends. Canada will always be there to defend the rights of peaceful protest." His comments provoked outrage in India,

and New Delhi termed PM Trudeau's remarks as "unwarranted." Last week, however, both the Prime Ministers discussed the two countries' commitment to democracy. "You would have seen the readouts from both sides on the farmer's protest, and PM Trudeau commended efforts of India to choose the path of dialogue as befitting in democracy.

He also acknowledges the responsibility of his government in providing protection to Indian personnel and premises in Canada," MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava told reporters in India.

I CONTD. ON PAGE 6

OPINION

FRAGMENTED SOCIETY CAN ONLY GO THUS FAR: YUDHVIR JASWAL

In the past 30 years while covering many news i have witnessed several polarized debates like Babri Masjid and Ram Mandir's issues, where opinions were divided. In Canada, we have seen a fierce discussion on many social and political issues.



I CONTD. ON PAGE 6

ONTARIO RETURNING 27 PUBLIC HEALTH REGIONS TO STRENGTHENED COVID-19 RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

TORONTO - In consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, the Ontario government is transitioning twenty-seven public health regions out of the shut-down and into a revised and strengthened COVID-19 Response Framework: Keeping Ontario Safe and Open (the "Framework").

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DISHA RAVI TOOLKIT CASE: RULING BJP AND OPPN EXCHANGE BARBS OVER TWITTER

BENGALURU, (IANS) Even as the scenario post arrest of 22-year-old Bengaluru based climate change activist Disha Ravi is evolving elsewhere in the country, a full-blown twitter war has erupted in Karnataka between the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the opposition Congress party.



I CONTD. ON PAGE 4

ONTARIO DELAYS MARCH BREAK IN AN EFFORT TO REDUCE COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19

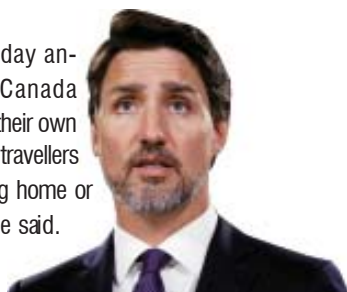
TORONTO - Today, Stephen Lecce, Ontario's Minister of Education, issued the following statement regarding March break: "In support of our collective efforts to keep schools safe, we are postponing March break until April 12-16, 2021. This decision was made with the best advice of Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and public health officials, including consultations with many local Medical Officers of Health.

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AIR TRAVELLERS TO CANADA TO QUARANTINE AT HOTELS STARTING FEB 22: PM TRUDEAU

POOJA LUTHRA

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Friday announced air travellers coming to Canada would have to quarantine at a hotel- at their own expense, starting Feb. 22. "All returning travellers must quarantine for 14 days after coming home or risk heavy fines and possible jail time," he said.



I CONTD. ON PAGE 4

CHINA REFUSED TO GIVE RAW DATA ON INITIAL COVID-19 CASES IN WUHAN: REPORT

Chinese authorities refused to provide the World Health Organisation (WHO) investigators with raw, personalised data of the preliminary days of COVID-19 pandemic last year that could have contributed to determining how and when the novel coronavirus first began to spread in China, Wall Street Journal reported citing WHO investigators who described the dramatic exchanges over the lack of crucial detail on SARS-CoV-2.



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COUNCILLOR DHILLON ADVOCATES FOR FAIR AUTO INSURANCE RATES IN BRAMPTON

BRAMPTON- Regional Councillor Gurpreet Singh Dhillion is advocating for fair auto insurance rates in Brampton currently holds the title for most expensive insurance premium in Ontario with an average of \$2,698. The city's most expensive postal code of L6R at \$3301 is approximately 123% higher than the provincial average.

I CONTD. ON PAGE 4



RIMMY JHAJJ

BRAMPTON - WEST

BRAMPTON WEST LIBERALS NOMINATE RIMMY JHAJJ AS 2022 ONTARIO LIBERAL PARTY CANDIDATE



ELIZABETH MENDES

MISSISSAUGA - LAKESHORE

ELIZABETH MENDES NOMINATED FOR 2022 LIBERAL CANDIDATE FROM MISSISSAUGA—LAKESHORE

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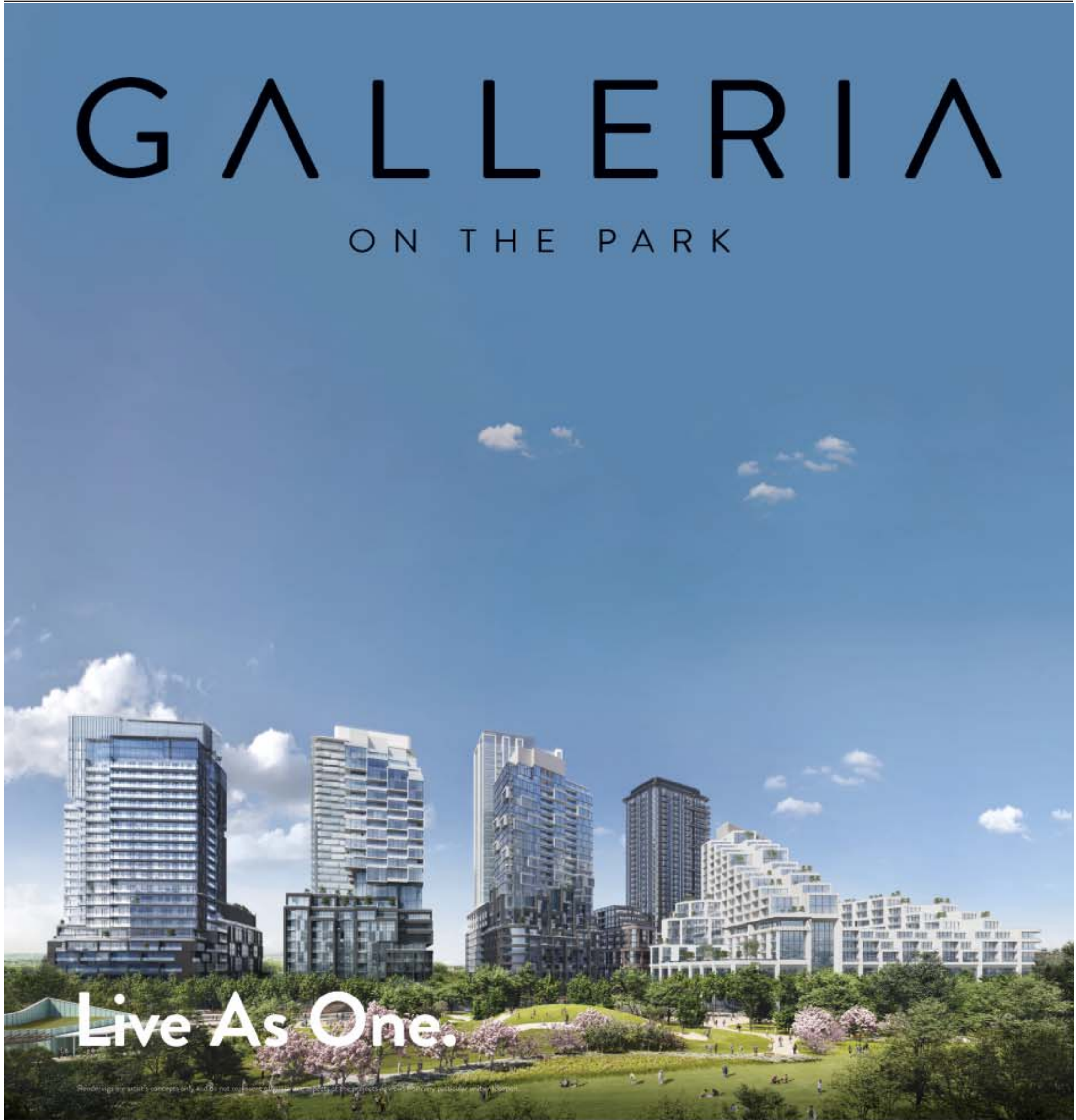
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ELADCANADA

CONGRESS SWEEPS URBAN LOCAL BODIES IN PUNJAB, BJP, SAD TAKE MASSIVE HIT AMID FARMERS' STIR



PATIALA: CONGRESS CANDIDATE AMANDEEP SINGH NAGGI CELEBRATES HIS WIN IN THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION. (PTI PHOTO)

Canadian housing markets set records again in January

OTTAWA- Statistics released today by the Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) show national home sales set another all-time record in January 2021.

Summary:

* National home sales rose 2% on a month-over-month (m-o-m) basis in January.

*Actual (not seasonally adjusted) activity was up 35.2% year-over-year (y-o-y).

*The number of newly listed properties dropped by 13.3% from December 2020 to January 2021.

*The MLS® Home Price Index (HPI) rose 1.9% m-o-m and was up 13.5% y-o-y.

*The actual (not seasonally adjusted) national average sale price posted a 22.8% y-o-y gain in January.

Home sales recorded over Canadian MLS® Systems climbed 2% between December 2020 and January 2021 to set another new all-time record.

Seasonally adjusted activity was running at an annualized pace of 736,452 units in January, significantly above CREA's current 2021 forecast for 583,635 home sales this year. Sales will be hard pressed to maintain current activity levels in the busier months to come absent a surge of much-needed new supply; although, that could materialize as current COVID-19 restrictions are increasingly eased and the weather starts to improve.

The month-over-month increase in national sales activity from December to January was led by a mixed bag of gains under the surface, including in Edmonton, the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), Chilliwack B.C., Calgary, Montreal and Winnipeg. There was more of a pattern to the declines in January. Many of those were in Ontario markets, following predictions that sales in that part of the country might dip to start the year with so little inventory currently available and many of this year's sellers likely to remain on the sidelines until spring.

Actual (not seasonally adjusted) sales activity posted a 35.2% y-o-y gain in January. In line with activity since last summer, it was a new record for the month of January by a considerable margin. For the seventh straight month, sales activity was up in almost all Canadian housing markets compared to the same month the previous year. Among the 11 markets that posted year-over-year sales declines, nine were in Ontario where supply is extremely limited at the moment.

"2021 started off just like 2020 ended, with a number of key housing market indicators continuing to set records," stated Costa Pouloupoulos, Chair of CREA. "The two big challenges facing housing markets this year are the same ones we were facing last year - COVID and a lack of supply. It's looking like our collective efforts to bring those COVID cases down over the last month and a half are working. With luck, some potential

sellers who balked at wading into the market last year will feel more comfortable listing this year. As lockdowns are once again easing and the spring market begins to ramp up, we will remain vigilant in adhering to all the latest government and health officials' directives to keep our clients safe. Now as always, REALTORS® remain the best source for information and guidance when negotiating the sale or purchase of a home," continued Pouloupoulos.

"The problem with this time of year is that the buyers and sellers that will in time define the Canadian housing story of 2021 are mostly all still waiting in the wings," said Shaun Cathcart, CREA's Senior Economist. "It's the dead of winter and we're only just starting to get the second wave of COVID under control. We're unlikely to see a rush of listings until the weather and public health situations improve, and we won't see buyers until those homes come up for sale. The best case scenario would be if we see a lot of sellers who were gun-shy to engage in the market last year making a move this year. A big surge in supply is what so many markets really need this year to get people into the homes they want, and to keep prices from accelerating any more than they already are."

The number of newly listed homes dropped by 13.3% in January, led by double-digit declines in the GTA, Hamilton-Burlington, London and St. Thomas, Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec and Halifax Dartmouth.

With sales edging higher and new supply falling considerably in January, the national sales-to-new listings ratio tightened to 90.7% - the highest level on record for the measure by a significant margin. The previous monthly record was 81.5% set 19 years ago. The long-term average for the national sales-to-new listings ratio is 54.3%.

Based on a comparison of sales-to-new listings ratio with long-term averages, only about 20% of all local markets were in balanced market territory in January, measured as being within one standard deviation of their long-term average. The other 80% of markets were above long-term norms, in many cases well above. This was a record for the number of markets in seller's market territory.

The number of months of inventory is another important measure of the balance between sales and the supply of listings. It represents how long it would take to liquidate current inventories at the current rate of sales activity.

There were only 1.9 months of inventory on a national basis at the end of January 2021 - the lowest reading on record for this measure. At the local market level, some 35 Ontario markets were under one month of inventory at the end of January.

The Aggregate Composite MLS® Home Price Index (MLS® HPI) rose by 1.9% m-o-m in January 2021. Of the 40 markets now tracked by the index, prices were up on a m-o-m basis in 36.

CONG CAN'T TELL UNDER WHICH CLAUSE OF FARM LAWS MANDI WILL BE SCRAPPED: THAKUR

Union Minister of state for Finance Anurag Thakur on Saturday said that despite repeatedly asking, the Congress wasn't able to explain under which clause of new farm laws "mandis" will be scrapped.

Addressing a meeting of women entrepreneurs on the union budget in the national capital, Thakur said, "A Congress MP in Lok Sabha said that 'mandis' will be scrapped and when I asked him repeatedly four times to tell me under which clause it will happen, he failed to answer." "They (Congress) did not have an answer even when I intervened in the Rajya Sabha and asked them to tell me the clause which talks about scrapping of mandis or withdrawal of MSP they failed to answer. A Congress MP in Rajya Sabha accepted that mandis will not be scrapped," he said.

"On one side former Congress president Rahul Gandhi says that mandis will be scrapped and on the other hand another MP of Congress says they won't be scrapped. The Congress is moving in two directions and if things go like this the Congress may split in two parts," said the

minister. He further said the truth must be told to the country. "We have done more procurement and also paid more MSP," said the minister. Taking a dig at Rahul Gandhi, Thakur said that he is not able to tell the difference between two crops like his father, former PM Rajiv Gandhi. "If I ask Rahul Gandhi what is the difference between wheat and barley, he would not be able to tell the difference. His father Rajiv Gandhi also was not able to explain the difference between red and green chilies. What should I ask from such a leader...but they come and tell lies," he said. "Due to such novice politics, Congress has become a party of 40 MPs from once being a party of 400 MPs. The reason for this downfall is 'parivarvad' (dynasty) politics," he said. Talking about defence budget, he said that budget for defence has been increased by 18.8 per cent. "India has made China buckle down under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," said the minister. The minister said no bulletproof jackets were purchased during ten years of Congress rule but the Modi government has provided two lakhs bulletproof jackets.

CONGRESS WANTS TO REHABILITATE SIDHU IN PUNJAB

NEW DELHI/CHANDIGARH (IANS) The Congress' central leadership is trying to rehabilitate cricketer-turned-politician Navjot Singh Sidhu in Punjab for which deliberations are on between party state in-charge Harish Rawat and Chief Minister Amarinder Singh. After Sidhu met party interim chief Sonia Gandhi in Delhi, Rawat has met the Chief Minister to convey the decision of the Congress leadership to the Chief Minister and rehabilitate former minister Sidhu in the state. Speaking over phone from Haldwani, Rawat said Sidhu is a very important leader of the party and he will be accommodated soon in the state and his presence will strengthen the party. The Congress in Uttar Pradesh has roped in Sidhu to hold Kisan Panchayats and wants that Sidhu should be given due importance Punjab. While sources say that Sidhu wants to be appointed as Punjab state Congress President but the Chief Minister is not willing to concede that post to Sidhu. However Rawat said "both leaders will sit and talk and sort out differences and will find an amicable solution. My work to arrange meetings of both is over." Congress sources say that Sidhu is likely to made a minister in the state. Punjab is going to polls in 2022 and due to the farmers' agitation against the farm laws the bargaining power of Sidhu has reduced, though the party doesn't want to lose him due to his pan-India popularity and also because he is a popular star campaigner for the party. Sidhu had resigned from as Cabinet minister in the state on July 14, 2019 after differences with Chief Minister Amarinder Singh over portfolio allocation. Sidhu was in-charge of local bodies but was then shifted to the Power Department. However, the tension was simmering between the two leaders when Sidhu's wife Navjot Kaur was denied a party ticket for the Lok Sabha election, said sources.



MYANMAR DIASPORA GOES GLOBAL WITH ANTI-COUP PROTESTS

NEW DELHI, (IANS) The Myanmar diaspora has gone global in their protests against the military coup in their homeland by staging demonstrations in countries like Japan, Taiwan, India and Thailand. The Myanmar diaspora is protesting in Tokyo outside the Japan Foreign Ministry office asking the Japanese government to condemn the army action in Myanmar. Japan enjoys close relations with Myanmar as it has been providing development aid, setting up industrial projects and even talking to the Arakan Army rebels with a view to bringing stability to Myanmar. Japan has also been involved in promoting the democratic process in Myanmar along with ensuring that different ethnic communities are not left behind in the country.



UK PM TO HOST VIRTUAL MEETING OF G7 LEADERS

LONDON, (IANS) UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson will host a virtual meeting of the G7 leaders on Friday to discuss efforts to ensure an equal distribution of Covid-19 vaccines and prevent future pandemics. Johnson will call for a new global approach to pandemics, drawing on lessons from the divisions that characterised the initial international response to the coronavirus outbreak, according to a press statement released Saturday night by Downing Street. "The solutions to the challenges we face, from the colossal mission to get vaccines to every single country, to the fight to reverse the damage done to our ecosystems and lead a sustainable recovery from coronavirus,



TRUMP ACQUITTED IN 2ND IMPEACHMENT, BUT REPUBLICAN LEADER BLASTS HIM

NEW YORK, (IANS) Former US President Donald Trump has been acquitted for a second time by the Senate after Republicans overwhelmingly voted against convicting him on the charge of inciting the January 6 riot at the Capitol, but senior party leader Mitch McConnell blasted him soon afterwards for provoking it. The Senate voted 57 to 43 to convict him on Saturday and although seven Republicans went over to the Democrat's side to convict him, it was 10 votes short of the 67 needed for the two-thirds majority needed for conviction.



MYANMAR AMENDS LAW ON PROTECTING CITIZENS' PERSONAL FREEDOM, SECURITY

NAY PYI TAW, (IANS) Myanmar's new military-led State Administration Council led by Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services Senior Gen Min Aung Hlaing issued an order amending the Protection of the Citizens for the Personal Freedom and Personal Security Law. According to the order issued on Saturday, Sections 5, 7 and 8 of the law will be suspended during the state of emergency declared on February 1, reports Xinhua news agency.

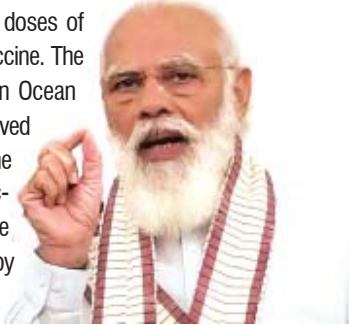
CHINA WITHDRAWS 140 TANKS, 60 ARTILLERY GUNS, 7,000 TROOPS IN LADAKH DEESCALATION



NEW DELHI: Indian and Chinese tanks were seen disengaging from the south bank of Pangong lake area in eastern Ladakh where they were deployed amid a standoff areas along the Line of Actual Control. Multiple videos and images released by the Indian Army today show the continued process of disengagement between Chinese and Indian forces on both banks of the lake, seen to be a breakthrough after the forces of both sides were involved in a face-off on this area for nearly a year. From Pangong South Bank, the Chinese withdrew 130-140 tanks, 30 artillery guns and some 2,000 troops. From Pangong North Bank, 30 artillery guns and some 4,000-5,000 troops were withdrawn by the Chinese. No Chinese tanks were deployed in the North Bank. India and China have agreed to pull back troops from both banks of the bitterly contested lake area high in the western Himalayas, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh Singh had said last Thursday. The "synchronised and organised disengagement" began last week.

INDIA'S VACCINE DIPLOMACY GARNERS PRAISE FROM GLOBAL MEDIA

India is being lavishly praised in the international media for its vaccine diplomacy and helping other countries in time of need. "India has emerged the surprise leader of the global vaccine diplomacy race. It has exported three times more doses than it's given its own citizens and can spare even more without hurting its own rollout", Eric Bellman of Wall Street Journal said in a tweet. Yaroslav Trofimov and Bellman wrote a piece for Wall Street Journal titled, "In Covid-19 Diplomacy, India Emerges as a Vaccine Superpower". The WSJ report said when an Indian Navy aircraft landed in the archipelago nation of Seychelles last month, the country's foreign minister and other senior officials lined up on the tarmac to welcome its precious cargo: 50,000 doses of Indian made AstraZeneca coronavirus vaccine. The report said two weeks earlier, the Indian Ocean island nation-total population, 98,000-received a separate shipment of 50,000 doses of the Sinopharm coronavirus vaccine manufactured in China, which is seeking to make strategic inroads in a region long seen by India as part of its sphere of influence.



MYANMAR COUP: THOUSANDS RALLY AGAINST MILITARY BUILD UP



DEMONSTRATORS BLOCK A ROAD IN YANGON. (AP PHOTO)

DISHA RAVI TOOLKIT CASE: RULING BJP AND OPPN EXCHANGE BARBS OVER TWITTER

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Coming out in support of Ravi, Karnataka Congress launched #DishaRaviArrested Twitter campaign, as Leader of the Opposition Siddarmaiah said that her arrest has exposed the cracks in the Indian democracy under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He wondered how can the act of supporting farmers be charged under sedition? "I strongly condemn this politically motivated act by Delhi Police," he said in his tweet. In his twitter, former minister Priyank Kharge charged that this country is becoming a joke. "Why is the establishment targeting kids? How come they have not bothered asking questions on how a news editor gets prior information on #PulwamaTerrorAttack," he said. AICC Tamil Nadu in-charge Dinesh Gundu Rao in his tweet said, "Disha Ravi arrested. Two more activists in Mumbai fear arrest. Can't believe what is happening to #India." "Farmers are terrorists, journalists are anti-nationals, activists are seditious, Opposition are 'deshdrohis' (anti-national) and students are traitors. Under BJP, India has changed," he said. While All India Mahila Congress general secretary Sowmya Reddy in her three-part tweet quipped that arresting climate activist @climatedisha for editing an online document. Wah Modi ji wah, too much of democracy! She added that this is a clear message that the @BJP4India led Cen-

tral government will send anyone to jail who dissents and will be punished even if you are a 21-year-old climate activist/animal lover. "Students and activists peacefully protested today at the police station. Students, it's time to speak up at least now. Terrorists are free and activists are in jail? This is the promised #Achhedin, dear youth!," she tweeted. In a strong rebuttal to Congress' campaign, the BJP national general secretary B.L. Santhosh said in his tweet that as the great drama of #Toolkit unfolds many anarchists who are rallying behind #DishaRavi as a 21-year-old, sole breadwinner, daughter of a single mother, climate change activist will run for cover. "WhatsApp groups, editing options, conversations will unravel many characters," he said. Karnataka BJP termed that Greta Thunberg's toolkit was nothing but a tool to create instability in the country. "Disha Ravi has confessed with the Delhi police that she too had a role in preparing that toolkit. Is Congress supporting terrorists," the Karnataka BJP questioned. Union Parliamentary Affairs and Coal Minister Prahlad Joshi tweeted that the only thing that this arrest has exposed is @INCIndia's poor planning to keep this anti-India conspiracy a secret. "If you had thought about farmers half as much as you claim their condition in the State would have been different. Wake up @siddaramaiah ji, the nation already has," he sarcastically said in his tweet.

ONTARIO RETURNING 27 PUBLIC HEALTH REGIONS TO STRENGTHENED COVID-19 RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

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The four remaining public health regions, Toronto Public Health, Peel Public Health, York Region Public Health and North Bay Parry Sound District, will remain in the shutdown, and the Stay-at-Home order and all existing public health and workplace safety measures will continue to apply to these four public health regions. "The health and safety of Ontarians remains our number one priority. While we are cautiously and gradually transitioning some regions out of shutdown, with the risk of new variants this is not a reopening or a return to normal," said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "Until vaccines are widely available, it remains critical that all individuals and families continue to adhere to public health measures and stay home as much as possible to protect themselves, their loved ones and their communities." Based on a general improvement in trends of key indicators, including lower transmission of COVID-19, improving hospital capacity, and available public health capacity to conduct rapid case and contact management, the following public health regions will be moving back to the Framework on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 12:01 a.m. and will no longer be subject to the Stay-at-Home order:
Grey-Lockdown:
· Niagara Region Public Health
Red-Control:
· Chatham-Kent Public Health;
· City of Hamilton Public Health Services;
· Durham Region Health Department;
· Halton Region Public Health;
· Middlesex-London Health Unit;
· Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services;
· Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit;
· Southwestern Public Health;
· Thunder Bay District Health Unit;
· Wellington-Dufferin Guelph Public Health; and
· Windsor-Essex County Health Unit.
Orange-Restrict:
· Brant County Health Unit;
· Eastern Ontario Health Unit;
· Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit;
· Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit;
· Huron Perth Public Health;
· Lambton Public Health;

- Ottawa Public Health;
 - Porcupine Health Unit; and
 - Public Health Sudbury and Districts.
- Yellow-Protect:
- Algoma Public Health;
 - Grey Bruce Health Unit;
 - Northwestern Health Unit; and
 - Peterborough Public Health.
- Green-Prevent:
- Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit; and
 - Timiskaming Health Unit.

For North Bay Parry Sound District, Peel Public Health, Toronto Public Health and York Region Public Health, it is proposed that the shutdown measures and the Stay-at-Home order will continue to apply until at least Monday, February 22, 2021. Please visit Ontario.ca/covidresponse for the full list of public health region classifications. After returning to the Framework, public health regions will stay in their level for at least two weeks at which time, the government will assess the impact of public health and workplace safety measures to determine if the region should stay where they are or be moved to a different level. Public health regions will move up through the levels, if necessary, based on the set indicators and thresholds outlined in the Framework. Visitor restrictions for long-term care homes will once again apply to those homes in the public health regions that are in the Orange-Restrict level or higher. In addition, long-term care homes must implement enhanced testing requirements. Recognizing the risk posed by new variants to the province's pandemic response, Ontario is introducing an "emergency brake" to allow the Chief Medical Officer of Health, in consultation with the local medical officer of health, to immediately advise moving a region into Grey-Lockdown to interrupt transmission. Local medical officers of health also have the ability to issue Section 22 orders under the Health Protection and Promotion Act, to target specific transmission risks in the community. "While the trends in public health indicators are heading in the right direction, we still have work to do," said Dr David Williams, Chief Medical Officer of Health. "Everyone is strongly advised to continue staying at home, avoid social gatherings, only travel between regions for essential purposes, and limit close contacts to your household or those you live with." The Chief Medical Officer of Health will continue to consult with public health and other experts, review data, and provide advice to the government on the appropriate and effective measures that are needed to protect the health of Ontarians.

AIR TRAVELLERS TO CANADA TO QUARANTINE AT HOTELS STARTING FEB 22: PM TRUDEAU

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These measures are implemented as the federal government attempts to curb the spread of the coronavirus's new, more contagious variants. "We're not trying to punish people; we're trying to keep people safe," PM Trudeau said outside Rideau Cottage. "These border measures will help stop the spread of COVID-19 and new variants." "With new COVID-19 variant detections increasing in the country, the Government of Canada is announcing today further testing and quarantine requirements for international travellers arriving in Canada's air and land ports of entry," said the Government of Canada in a press release. Health Minister Patty Hajdu said travellers must book a hotel in the city where they first arrive in Canada, either Calgary, Toronto, Vancouver, or Montreal. Travellers could book their government-authorized stay starting Feb. 18, 2021. "Costs of these hotel stays may vary slightly at each location. It is up to the traveller to choose where they wish to stay and book in advance of departure," said Hajdu. "The price will include costs associated with the room, food, cleaning, infection prevention and control measures, and security as well as transportation." The press release mentioned all travellers, whether arriving by land or air, will be required to submit their travel and contact information, including a suitable quarantine plan, electronically via ArriveCAN before crossing the border or boarding a flight. "If you are travelling, it is your responsibility to understand and to follow all of the rules," Blair said. "Now is not the time to travel, so please cancel any plans you might have," he added.

CHINA REFUSED TO GIVE RAW DATA ON INITIAL COVID-19 CASES IN WUHAN: REPORT

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As per the report, Chinese authorities dismissed the calls by the UN health agency to provide data including 174 cases of COVID-19 that they have identified from the early phase of the outbreak in the Chinese city of Wuhan in December 2019. Thee investigators are part of WHO team that this weak completed the monthlong, highly-political visit to Wuhan where the novel coronavirus had first emerged late 2019, to investigate the origin of the disease. Both Chinese officials and scientists provided their own extensive summaries and analysis of data on the initial cases, reportedly claims the WHO team members. As per the report, the investigators were provided info about the analysis carried out by Chinese experts along with aggregated data and retrospective analysis based on medical records made in the months before the outbreak. However, when the WHO experts asked about a raw, personalised data, the request was denied even though it might have helped the investigators in determining the origin. Other information regarding the disease in the country was also not readily forthcoming. However, China maintained its narrative of denying that coronavirus had an origin in the country despite being the first nation to have a massive outbreak.

ONTARIO DELAYS MARCH BREAK IN AN EFFORT TO REDUCE COMMUNITY TRANSMISSION OF COVID-19

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Many students have been learning remotely since the start of 2021. It is critical we follow public health advice to protect schools and avoid a repeat of the concerning spike in youth-related cases over the winter break, when students and staff were out of schools for a prolonged period of time. We are taking this precaution based on advice from health experts, including the province's Science Table and the Chief Medical Officer of Health, to help protect against the emerging COVID-19 variants of concern. We appreciate the hard work of students and staff in the education sector and I want to be clear: March break is being postponed, not cancelled. To keep schools open, we must keep them free of COVID-19. The actions announced today serve to limit opportunities for congregation - while reaffirming the evidence that schools are safe for students. By continuing to follow public health advice, and by introducing additional safety measures and more testing, we are supporting our collective efforts to keep COVID-19 from entering our schools. With respect to travel, our government's position on this is unchanged. Ontarians should refrain from travelling, particularly given the increase in new variants that pose a direct risk to our country. Please stay at home as much as possible and continue following the direction of public health officials so that we can keep schools open and protect our seniors, frontline health workers and all families. These decisions - based on the advice of medical experts - are never easy, but they are necessary to keep Ontario families safe."

COUNCILLOR DHILLON TO MOVE MOTION ADVOCATING FOR FAIR AUTO INSURANCE RATES

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

The motion asks for the city's current Fair Deal for Brampton healthcare advocacy campaign to be expanded to include auto insurance, and for a petition to be created. The full motion reads:
Moved By: Councillor Dhillon
Seconded By:
Whereas the City of Brampton and its residents have not received a fair deal, and have been underserved and discriminated against in regards to auto insurance rates for decades.
Whereas currently there are no standardized rates for auto insurance in Ontario as the rates are dependent on a number of factors, many of which are not in the drivers' control.
Whereas Ontario residents were promised a 15% reduction in 2015 but rather saw a 2% increase.
Whereas a report commissioned by the Provincial government in 2016 found that Ontario had the most expensive auto insurance rates in Canada despite also having one of the lowest levels of accidents and fatalities.
Whereas Ontario's average auto insurance rates cost \$1,505 per year.
Whereas the cost of insuring a vehicle in the City of Brampton is approximately 123% higher than Ontario's average.
Whereas Brampton currently holds the title of the most expensive insurance in Ontario with an approximate average of \$2,698.
Whereas the following postal codes currently pay the highest average rates in Brampton: L6R at \$3301, L6T at \$3068, L7A at \$2980, L6P at \$2792, L6Z at \$2581, L6Y at \$2573, and at L6S \$2540.
Whereas the lowest average rate in Brampton belongs to L6X at \$2066, which is still well above the provincial average.
Whereas other municipalities in Ontario pay significantly lower rates, for example Kingston, Belleville and Napanee average approximately \$1,000 per year.
Whereas rates in Brampton are expected to rise in 2021.
Whereas Bill 42 was introduced in Provincial Parliament in 2019 to prohibit insurance companies from using postal codes or area codes as primary factors in setting insurance rates, and is currently in the process of being reviewed by the Ontario Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.
Whereas due to Covid-19 there is no identified timeline for when the committee will announce recommendations or what the outcome of the recommendations will be.
Whereas Brampton residents have been suffering and continue to suffer from decades of neglect from the Province, including healthcare in our city that is underfunded and overburdened.
Whereas Brampton has been continuously overlooked by the Provincial government, despite being one of the fastest growing cities in the country.
Whereas this Council has been a staunch supporter for fairness for healthcare through its "Fair Deal for Brampton" campaign, which has been successful in raising awareness and creating change.
Whereas Brampton residents MUST have their voices heard in regards to their demand for decisive and prompt action relating to auto insurance rates.
Whereas Brampton residents refuse to wait any longer.
Therefore be it resolved that:
1. The Fair Deal for Brampton campaign be expanded to include a section on the reduction of auto insurance rates in Brampton.
2. An online petition be created demanding that the Province must give Brampton residents a Fair Deal by delivering urgently needed reductions in auto insurance rates.
3. All data collected from the petition be sent to the Premier of Ontario along with a letter from Brampton City Council.
4. A copy of the correspondence also be sent to all Brampton MPs, MPPs, and AMO.



FORMER MAYOR OF MISSISSAUGA HAZEL MCCALLION CELEBRATES HER 100TH BIRTHDAY.

PSB SENIORS CLUB CANADA CELEBRATES PRAKASH UTSAV OF SRI GURU GOBIND SINGH JI



PSB SENIORS CLUB CANADA Celebrated virtually the Prakash Utsav of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji, on Sunday, February 07,2021, through Zoom in which about 75 members and spokespersons participated. The President of the Club S. Gurcharan Singh Khakh welcomed the participants and briefly described about the Club which is registered with the City of Brampton and is strived for the welfare of the seniors and neighbour hood. Clubmembers participated in the celebrations and recited shabads spoke about the life, achievements and teachings of Guru Gobind Singh Ji, Giani Gulzar Singh renowned Gurbani Preacher spoke about the early childhood of Sri Guru Gobind Singh ji. He explained that the Guru was a famous poet and himself played the musical instruments and promote the other poets. He has a group of 52 famous poets in his kingdom and enjoyed the poetry of sung by them. Guru ji was a lover of peace. Mrs. Balbir Sohi Trustee School Board talked about the future of education for the next generation. She also stressed about the importance

of our mother tongue Punjabi and explained that there are free Punjabi classes in the month of April for the children in Peel region. Dr. Sukhdev Singh Jhand also spoke on the occasion. He emphasized that we are privileged to be born in Sikh family and explained the importance of Sikh which means always try to learn more and more and which is also the theory of life. This also help to improve mental health. The Sikhism also believe in the wellbeing and upliftment of all the human being. Prof. Raja Singh a well-known missionary also talked about the sacrifices made by Guru Ji. At the age of just 9 years guru ji asked his father to sacrifice His life the survival of Hindu religion. His 4 sons, father Guru Teg Bahadur ji, Grand mother also sacrificed their livethe humanity. The office bearer of the PSB SENIORS CLUB Sh. Gian Paul President, S. Harcharan Singh Secretary, S, Manjit Singh Gill Treasure, S. Ram Singh, S. Sukhdev Singh Bedi, S Mukhtiar Singh Multani and S Raghbir Singh also participated in the function.



ONTARIO RESTARTING PASSENGER ROAD TESTS IN MOST DRIVE TEST CENTRES ACROSS THE PROVINCE

TORONTO - The Ontario government is safely restarting in-vehicle passenger road tests on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at most DriveTest centres across the province. Road tests will not be starting in public health unit regions still subject to a Stay-at-Home order (Toronto, Peel, York and North Bay Parry Sound), or in regions in Grey-Lockdown zones, such as Niagara Region. Strict public health and workplace safety measures will be in place for all in-vehicle passenger road tests to prevent the spread of COVID-19. "As we safely and gradually transition out of the provincewide shut-down and return to the COVID-19 Response Framework, it's important that we ensure drivers are able to get tested in order to keep our roads and highways safe," said Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation. "For those who book an appointment, I strongly urge you to follow all public health and workplace safety requirements when visiting a DriveTest centre to protect yourself, staff and other clients." Applicants living in a region subject to the Stay-at-Home order, or in a Grey-Lockdown zone may not book an in-person road test at a DriveTest centre in another region. Those who try to attend a DriveTest centre in a lower COVID-19 region (Green-Prevent, Yellow-Protect, Orange-Restrict, Red-Control) will be turned away. The DriveTest centres in regions still subject to the Stay-at-Home order are located in Brampton, Downsview, Etobicoke, Metro East,

Mississauga, Newmarket, North Bay, Port Union and St. Catharines. These DriveTest centres along with those in all other regions remain open for essential indoor services, such as knowledge tests, with capacity limits and COVID-19 preventative measures in place. The Ministry of Transportation also continues to offer commercial road testing and other commercial vehicle services to ensure the continued safe movement of essential goods and services. If any region is moved back into Grey-Lockdown, in-vehicle passenger road testing will be immediately suspended, and all road tests will be cancelled to protect the health and safety of DriveTest customers and employees. Customers will receive a credit on the system so they can rebook a test when their region reopens. **QUICK FACTS** To protect the safety of Ontarians, DriveTest continues to require customers to wear face coverings inside centres and during road tests, sanitize their hands when they enter the building and submit to temperature checks and screening questions for those taking road tests. Exceptions will be made for those taking motorcycle road tests and for people with a medical condition or a disability. All DriveTest staff will wear appropriate personal protective equipment when serving customers and driver examiners will also be equipped with face shields, sanitizer packages and seat covers when conducting road tests.

Jagmeet Singh introduces mass vaccination plan to get Canadians vaccinated

OTTAWA – Canadians who have spent the last eleven months under lockdown and staying home from work to stop the spread of COVID-19 need to know when they'll get vaccinated. Under Justin Trudeau, Canada is falling behind other countries in vaccination efforts while his government fails to rollout a vaccination plan for Canadians. Today, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh announced a plan to get vaccines into Canadian's arms and to ensure this situation never happens again. "Canadians want to go back to some kind of normalcy but are frustrated with this Liberal government that isn't doing everything necessary to get people vaccinated as soon as possible," said Singh. "This is a Team Canada effort without a captain – the Prime Minister isn't delivering the leadership Canadians need. The NDP's plan sets out a course to vaccinate Canadians quickly so that we can start recovering from the pandemic." The NDP's plan includes a mass national vaccination campaign that would involve everyone who can help get people vaccinated – health care professionals, medical and nursing students, retired health care workers and military personnel. "We need all hands-on deck to end this crisis," said Singh. "COVID-19 forced small businesses to shut their doors while so many people across the country lost their jobs. A national plan for the vaccination of every Canadian will help small businesses get their footing and get people back to work to support their families. Why isn't this the Liberals' number one priority? Canadians expect better and deserve better. Our plan will let Canadians know when and where they'll be vaccinated." Furthermore, the NDP's plan calls for the ramp up of domestic production of vaccines and PPE by establishing publicly owned production facilities. To ensure Canada doesn't tap into the vaccine supply intended for developing countries, the NDP calls for more international collaboration to increase global supply of vaccines.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND PRAISES CANADA'S COVID-19 ECONOMIC RESPONSE PLAN

OTTAWA: Today, the Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, welcomed the International Monetary Fund (IMF)'s annual Article IV mission report that found Canada's strong and decisive actions at the onset of the pandemic "provided crucial support to the economy and the functioning of financial markets, and helped protect lives and livelihoods." The report remarked on the importance of avoiding premature withdrawal of policy support and welcomed Canada's adoption of fiscal guardrails. The IMF noted that "Canada's strong history of prudent policymaking afforded it the policy space to respond forcefully to the crisis and avert much steeper declines in economic activity and employment." The report also highlighted the unprecedented size and scope of Canada's policy actions, which have provided support for households, businesses, and vulnerable groups. The report drew attention to the importance of enhancing long-term growth in the future and the value of liberalising internal trade. The IMF observed that the Government of Canada's recovery plan, which aims to be inclusive, is a welcome step. It also highlighted Canada's commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050, and commented that Canada's price on pollution could be a "valuable prototype for an international arrangement among large emitting countries." In its report, the IMF forecast real GDP in Canada will expand by 4.4 percent in 2021 as the pandemic is brought under control. The government is currently consulting with Canadians, Canadian businesses, and experts as it prepares Budget 2021. The government has a growth plan to invest between up to 3 to 4 per cent of GDP, or \$70 billion and \$100 billion, over the next three years to jumpstart Canada's recovery, create jobs, and ensure long-term prosperity. **QUOTE** "The social, economic, and health impacts of COVID-19 in Canada, and around the world, have been unprecedented. Today's report from the IMF recognizes the decisive effect our government's actions have had on stabilizing the Canadian economy and supporting people throughout this crisis. We are squarely focussed on supporting Canadians and fighting to defeat this virus. We will continue to do whatever it takes, for as long as it takes. And we have a plan to provide meaningful investment to build our way out of the coronavirus recession, so our economy comes roaring back stronger than before." The Honourable Chrystia Freeland, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance

Ontario Continues Unprecedented COVID-19 Response During Upcoming Legislative Sitting

TORONTO - During the next sitting of the legislature the Ontario government plans to continue its unprecedented response to COVID-19 while laying the foundation for a strong economic recovery. It is also proposing to break down barriers to justice for Ontarians and accelerate the government's modernization of Ontario's legal sector, as well as build on Ontario's Anti-Human Trafficking Strategy. "The fight against COVID-19 and variants of concern will remain our highest priority as we return to the Legislature today," said Minister Paul Calandra, Ontario's Government House Leader. "Over the last year the people of Ontario have demonstrated an unbelievable spirit, determination, and selflessness, doing their part to stop the spread. They expect every Member of Provincial Parliament to bring that same commitment to the business of the House." The legislature itself will be operating under ongoing COVID-19 safety protocols including masking requirements, physically-distanced voting in the lobbies adjacent to the Chamber, cohorting of Members to reduce close contact, and the use of video-conferencing technology in committee meetings. "The COVID-19 safety protocols we have instituted in the legislature over the last year have proven incredibly effective in allowing Members of Provincial Parliament to safely engage in legislative business and these measures will continue," Minister Calandra added. "Last fall our careful and cautious approach to legislative operations allowed us to pass 36 bills including 10 Private Members' Bills. During this next sitting we will continue to build on this success." In the first weeks of the winter sitting, the government plans to proceed with important labour and public safety legislation, and support Ontario's recovery by proposing changes to help people resolve their legal matters with fewer delays. The government has also wrapped up consultations for the 2021 Ontario Budget. People and organizations shared their ideas via an online survey, email, mailed submissions, and through a series of virtual consultations across the province. The 2021 Ontario Budget, to be delivered by March 31, 2021, will build on Ontario's plan to continue protecting and supporting people through the pandemic, while preparing the province to emerge in a position of economic strength. The legislature is scheduled to sit for 13 weeks of business before rising for the summer.



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NEW FIREARMS MEASURES TO COMBAT CRIME AND INCREASE PUBLIC SAFETY

OTTAWA: Gun violence has had devastating effects on communities across the country, and on too many Canadians who have lost loved ones. According to Statistics Canada, firearms were used in over 40 per cent of homicides in Canada in 2019. This violence must stop. This is why, last May, the Government of Canada banned over 1,500 models and variants of assault-style firearms and some of their components. The government is continuing to take every step necessary to combat gun violence and keep Canadians and communities safe. The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, today announced the introduction of new legislation to amend the Criminal Code and the Firearms Act to make communities safer while respecting law-abiding gun owners. Through the proposed legislation and other measures, the government would: Combat intimate partner and gender-based violence, and self-harm involving firearms by creating "red flag" and "yellow flag" laws. These laws would allow people, such as concerned friends or relatives, to apply to the courts for the immediate removal of an individual's firearms, or to ask a Chief Firearms Officer to suspend and review an individual's licence to own firearms. Fight gun smuggling and trafficking by increasing criminal penalties, and by enhancing the capacity of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Canada Border Services Agency to combat the illegal importation of firearms. Help create safer communities by supporting municipalities that ban

handguns through by-laws restricting storage and transportation in their jurisdictions. Individuals who violate these municipal by-laws would be subject to federal penalties, including licence revocation and criminal sanctions. Give young people the opportunities and resources they need to avoid criminal behaviour by providing funding to municipalities and Indigenous communities to support youth programs. Protect Canadians from gun violence by creating new offences for altering the cartridge magazine component of a firearm and depicting violence in firearms advertising, introducing tighter restrictions on imports of ammunition, and ensuring the prohibition of imports, exports, sales, and transfers of all replica firearms. Complete the prohibition of assault-style firearms to ensure these weapons cannot be legally used, transported, sold, transferred, or bequeathed by individuals in Canada. We also intend to move forward with a buyback program in the coming months to support the safe removal of these firearms from our communities. These measures are part of a broader firearms strategy to increase public safety and build upon previous legislation and policies already in place. This includes the ban on assault-style firearms, significant funding to provinces and territories to combat gun and gang violence, and investments in border security to tackle firearms smuggling. The Government of Canada will continue to work with Parliamentarians, provincial and territorial governments, Indigenous communities, and municipalities to do what it takes to keep our country safe from gun violence.

QUOTES

"One Canadian killed by gun violence is one too many. The tragedies we have seen in Ste-Foy and Portapique, and more recently in Toronto and Montréal, should never happen. This is why our government has taken some of the strongest action in our country's history against gun violence. We will continue to take steps to strengthen gun control measures, remove dangerous weapons from our streets, and make sure everyone can feel safe from violence."

The Rt. Hon. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada

"Too many Canadians have been killed or injured because of gun violence, and we need to take every reasonable step to stop more Canadians from suffering the same fate. These concrete measures we're announcing today build on actions already taken to address some of the most serious firearms safety issues and are part of our government's detailed firearms strategy that will help make our communities safer for everyone."

FRAGMENTED SOCIETY CAN ONLY GO THUS FAR: YUDHVIR JASWAL

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

The world has completely changed after the 9/11 incident. Nationalism, populism and other identity issues mixed within a cocktail of politics divide the community more than ever. And, sometimes, we lose focus on the common denominators that affect our day-to-day lives. The current havoc that the pandemic has created across the globe is one such example that reminds us that instead of focusing on an infrastructure for healthcare, we are fighting against each other rather than working on commoner's priorities for a better life. When identity issues take the centre-stage, healthcare, jobs, climate change, the fight against drugs, human trafficking and many other problems take a back seat. As our Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, has time and again mentioned- we are strong, not despite our diversity but because of our diversity. I second that. Diversity helps in fighting the significant challenges only if we leave our identity issues behind and fight for the common causes that impact the lives on this planet.

INDIA TO SUPPLY 1 MILLION COVID VACCINES TO CANADA WITHIN A MONTH, AFTER PM TRUDEAU'S REQUESTS TO PM MODI

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

However, in the readout of the call between the two leaders on Wednesday, the farmers' demonstration was not explicitly mentioned. The statement added that the leaders discussed Canada and India's commitment to democratic principles, recent protests, and the importance of resolving issues through dialogue."

Even PM Trudeau, during the press conference, said his call with PM Modi was "on a range of subjects, including the role that India is playing in producing vaccines for the developing world, and other issues that are important to us."

He did not mention the farmers' protest at all.

India's SII has emerged as a critical vaccine supplier amid the pandemic. Like many other countries, Canada is relying on foreign supplies because it is unable to produce the vaccine locally. Experts and officials say India has been trying to use its vaccine dominance to shore up diplomatic assistance.

Last week, PM Trudeau also appreciated India's vaccination efforts and said if the world manages to conquer Covid, it would be significant because of India's tremendous pharmaceutical capacity and India's strong-headed leadership in sharing this capacity with the rest of the world.

MiWay Resumes School Routes and Other Service Changes in Response to Customer Demand



On Tuesday, February 16, MiWay will restore school bus route services as schools reopen in Peel Region. Service on nine 300-series school routes will resume and additional supplementary trips will be added to other local routes that serve high schools in Mississauga.

In addition, in response to evolving customer demand and road construction, on February 22, MiWay will make the following planned service changes:

Scheduled changes on various routes in response to changes in ridership demand

Route 44 Mississauga Road will have revised routing due to construction on Mississauga Road

Route 53 Kennedy will have revised routing and travel to Cooksville GO

On Family Day (Monday, February 15) and Good Friday (Friday, April 2), buses will operate on a holiday schedule with reduced scheduling

Wearing a face covering is still required under City by-law in all indoor public spaces, including when riding on MiWay and inside transit terminal buildings. Children under the age of two and people with disabilities or other medical conditions that prevent them from wearing a face covering are not required to wear one.

Customers are encouraged to use PRESTO as a contactless way to pay for their ride. With PRESTO, your transfer is active for two hours from when you first tap your card on the bus (and you don't need a paper transfer).

More information about these service changes is available at the following:

- February 16 school route updates: miway.ca/students
- February 22 service changes: miway.ca/feb22
- All MiWay service updates: miway.ca/updates

ONTARIO DEPLOYS RAPID TESTS TO MORE ESSENTIAL WORKPLACES AND SETTINGS

TORONTO — Based on the successful use of rapid tests in select settings across the province the Ontario government is deploying test kits to more essential workplaces and sectors in order to quickly identify and help stop the spread of COVID-19. Rapid tests are now being used in long-term care homes, retirement homes, congregate care settings, First Nations communities and many essential workplaces. "The use of rapid tests are real gamechangers as they provide results in a matter of minutes instead of hours or days," said Premier Ford. "It's important to get them out the door as quickly as possible to provide an added layer of protection for our frontline workers and vulnerable citizens, especially those in rural and remote areas of the province." To enhance protection against COVID-19 variants and support a safe and gradual return to the COVID-19 Response Framework, Ontario has deployed approximately two million rapid antigen tests and 175,000 rapid diagnostic tests to essential workplaces and highly vulnerable settings like long-term care homes and retirement homes. At scale, the province will be deploying approximately one million tests per week across targeted sectors.

"Our government is committed to providing Ontarians with more access to innovative testing options to help stop the spread of COVID-19," said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "Based on our success to date, we continue to expand the use of rapid tests to protect patients, long-term care residents, and our frontline and essential workers."

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DRIVING SAFELY IN SNOW STORMS



We received quite a bit of snow recently. The lengthy storm was a beautiful display of what we expect from a real Canadian winter. However, as I'm sure we all wish to watch the snowfall from our homes' warmth, some still had to bravely travel on the slushy, icy, snow-covered roads. Peel Regional Police are pleased to share some tips on driving more successfully through snowstorms. Firstly, it takes a lot of extra patience to overcome the often stressful challenges of driving through heavy snowfall. As visibility and road conditions are significantly compromised, the usual need for awareness increases that much more, so take all the time you need, be alert and breathe. Secondly, ensuring that others see you pose the most significant safety risk in decreased visibility. Therefore, Peel Regional Police recommends ensuring that your vehicle's night headlamp and rear lighting

systems are always on and we encourage the use of fog lamps when necessary. Thirdly slowing down, allowing more distance between vehicles, and using cooperative driving principles are practices that become more crucial during these times. A trick of the trade you can use is to follow transport vehicles, plows, and salt trucks (at a safe distance, of course), to shield yourself from the weather. It may also offer you a safer road to travel. However, we can impart the most important thing to other drivers before even putting a vehicle into drive. It is being prepared in advance for the journey ahead. Please feel free to watch our video about preparing for winter driving. When the next snowstorm comes, you will be relieved that you got the reminder. For more road safety information, please visit our road safety webpage.

Enhanced Safety Measures in Place as In-Person Learning Resumes in Brampton Schools on 16th February 2021

BRAMPTON – Elementary and secondary schools in Brampton will reopen for in-person learning on 16th February 2021. The Government of Ontario made that decision based upon the advice of Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health, the unanimous recommendation of the Council of Medical Officers of Health, and with the support of local Medical Officers of Health. This positive news for working families in Brampton was recognized by MPP Amarjot Sandhu, MPP for Brampton West. "This announcement is great news for Brampton parents and students," said MPP Amarjot Sandhu, MPP for Brampton West. "I strongly agree with parents and medical experts that kids need to be learning in class and I am proud our government is prioritizing student health and safety by providing this additional support and introducing new measures that promote a safe return to in-person learning." To further promote health and safety for students and staff, Ontario recently made an additional \$381 million in funding available for schools. Provided under the federal Safe Return to Class Fund, this funding will be used to improve air quality and ventilation in schools, support online learning, promote student mental health and hire additional staff. In total, the Government of Ontario has provided publicly-schools with \$1.6 billion in COVID-19 resources to protect students, school staff and their families from the virus. "Following the best medical advice, with the clear support of both Ontario's and the local Medical Officers of Health, we are reopening schools across the province knowing that we have taken additional steps and made additional investments to better protect our students and staff," said Education Minister Stephen Lecce. "Nothing is more important than returning kids to school safely because it is crucial for their development, mental health, and future success." To support the safe return of in-person learning, Ontario has introduced new measures to continue to protect students and staff against COVID-19 in the classroom. These measures include:

- * Province-wide access, in consultation with the local PHU, to targeted asymptomatic testing for students and staff;
- * Mandatory masking requirement for



students in Grades 1-3, and masking requirement for Grades 1-12 outdoors where physical distancing cannot be maintained;

- * Providing 3.5 million high quality cloth masks to schools as back-up supply for Grade 1-12 students;
- * Enhanced screening for all students and staff;
- * New guidance discouraging students from congregating before and after school; and,
- * Temporary certification of eligible teacher candidates who are set to graduate in 2021 to stabilize staffing levels, following high levels of absenteeism.

The complete list of Public Health Units (PHUs) with elementary and secondary students returning to in-person learning on Monday, February 8, 2021 is as follows:

- * Brant County Health Unit
- * Chatham-Kent Public Health
- * Durham Region Health Department
- * Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit
- * Halton Region Public Health
- * City of Hamilton Public Health Services
- * Huron Perth Public Health
- * Lambton Public Health
- * Niagara Region Public Health
- * Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit
- * Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services
- * Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health
- * Windsor-Essex County Health Unit

The complete list of Public Health Units (PHUs) with elementary and secondary students returning to in-person learning on Tuesday, February 16, 2021 is as follows:

- * Peel Public Health
- * Toronto Public Health
- * York Region Public Health

PHUs continue to reserve the authority to close schools to in-person learning based on local circumstances.

First Round of COVID-19 Vaccinations Completed in All Ontario Long-Term Care Homes

TORONTO — The first round of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in every long-term care home across Ontario to eligible residents who wanted one. This goal was achieved despite repeated delays and reductions of vaccine shipments. To date, more than 62,000 long-term care residents have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and more than 34,000 residents have received their second dose. "It is critically important to vaccinate, and provide an extra layer of protection, for the residents in our long-term care homes and those who care for them," said Premier Doug Ford. "But due to a shortage of supply and unpredictable deliveries, meeting our goals has been a challenge. Thanks to the well-oiled machine here in Ontario, led by General Hillier and his team, we have made incredible progress in our vaccine rollout, offering our seniors and their families peace of mind during this difficult period." "This milestone marks an important step towards the immunization of our most vulnerable," said Dr. Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Long-Term Care. "As we await details and timelines on further shipments from the federal government, I remain grateful for the coordinated efforts of all of our health care partners for quickly delivering the available vaccines to our loved ones." As the administration of second doses continues, Ontario will maintain the recommended interval of 21-27 days for residents who received the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Ontario has invested \$1.38 billion to ensure that long-term care homes have the resources they need to battle this virus. The government has also taken action to address urgent staffing shortages, including enabling the deployment of hospital staff to long-term care homes.

Conservative statement on the Liberals' firearms legislation

Ottawa, ON – Shannon Stubbs, Conservative Shadow Minister for Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, and Richard Martel, Conservative Quebec Political Lieutenant, issued the following statement in response to today's announcement on the firearms buy back program: "It is disappointing that during a pandemic, Justin Trudeau is focused on his own re-election and advancing the Liberals' ideological agenda instead of helping Canadians get vaccines. "Just recently, the Liberals voted against and defeated Bill C-238, a Conservative bill that would have imposed tougher sentences for criminals smuggling or who are found in possession of illegal firearms. The Trudeau Liberals' decision to vote against this bill shows they are not serious about stopping dangerous criminals from getting their hands on illegal guns." "The reality is, the vast majority of gun crimes are committed with illegally obtained firearms. Taking firearms away from law-abiding citizens does nothing to stop dangerous criminals and gangs who obtain their guns illegally. "Instead of targeting law-abiding Canadians and firearm retailers, the government should be investing in police anti-gang and gun units and the CBSA to provide law enforcement with the resources they need to stop illegal smuggling operations and get dangerous criminals and gangs off the streets."

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PEOPLE ABOVE 50 TO GET COVID-19 VACCINES FROM MARCH, SAYS UNION MINISTER HARSH VARDHAN



HARSH VARDHAN, HOWEVER, REQUESTED PEOPLE TO NOT BE COMPLACENT AND MAINTAIN SOCIAL DISTANCING.

Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan on Monday (February 15), said that India will start administering vaccines to people above the age of 50 in March, 2021. "We will be in a situation to administer vaccines to those above 50 years of age in March," he said adding that an expert group on vaccination will discuss how to pay for vaccination of those above 50 years of age. He also said that a formal decision on the funding of the vaccination of this group is yet to be taken. Talking about the COVID-19 vaccination in India, which commenced on January 16, Harsh Vardhan said that 80-85% of frontline workers are vaccinated and 20-25 countries will benefit from the vaccine. "80-85% frontline workers vaccinated and over 20-25 countries to be availed with vaccines. At least 18-20 vaccines are in preclinical, clinical & advanced stages and are expected in the coming months," he said while addressing the media. "In the coming days, 27 crore people who are of above 50 years of age and those under 50 with co-morbidities will be vaccinated," he added.

The Union Ministry told reporters that in the last 7 days, no new cases of COVID19 have been reported in 188 districts of the country. The ministry further added that 18 states and UTs have not reported any deaths in a span of 24 hours. These are Assam, Rajasthan, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Manipur, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Sikkim, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ladakh, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Lakshadweep. Harsh Vardhan, however, requested people to not be complacent and maintain social distancing. "It is crucial that people continue to follow COVID appropriate behaviour, which I had called a social vaccine, along with real vaccines," he stated. While praising India's efforts against the Coronavirus disease, Harsh Vardhan said, "Covid strengthened the country's health potential. We turned a crisis into an opportunity. From 1 lab to 2,500 labs, we improved. Genome sequencing, which is being talked about now, has been in Indian labs since May-June last year."

PM MODI PAYS TRIBUTE TO PULWAMA MARTYRS, SAYS THEIR BRAVERY WILL 'INSPIRE GENERATIONS'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday paid tribute to the security personnel who were killed in a terror attack in south Kashmir's Pulwama in 2019. "No Indian can forget this day. Two years ago, the Pulwama attack happened. We pay tribute to all those men martyred in the Pulwama terror attack," Modi said during his visit to Chennai. The Prime Minister said that the people were proud of the Indian security forces and their bravery would continue to inspire generations. He said the country's armed forces had shown time and again they were fully capable of protecting "our motherland". On February 14, 2019, a car filled with explosives had exploded near a Central Reserve Police Forces convoy while on its way to Srinagar from Jammu, killing 40 men. The country's armed forces signify India's ethos of courage, he said. "They have shown time and again that they are fully capable of protecting our motherland. Time and again they have also shown India believes in peace, but India will protect sovereignty at all costs. Sainya shakti and dhairya shakti (strength and courage) of our forces are remarkable," the PM said. The Prime Minister was speaking after the inauguration and foundation stone laying ceremony of several key projects in Chennai. Modi inaugurated a slew of infrastructure projects which he said were examples of innovation and the idea of 'Swadeshi' which would promote development. Quoting Tamil writer and poet Subramania Bharati, PM Modi said: "Let us make weapons, let us make paper, let us make factories, let us make schools, let us make vehicles, let us make ships." Inspired by Bharati's vision, India has undertaken a massive effort to become self-reliant in the defence sector, the Prime Minister said.



"One of the two defence corridors is located in Tamil Nadu. It has already received an investment commitment of over Rs 8,100 crores. Today, I am proud to dedicate to the nation one more warrior to protect our frontiers. I am proud to hand over the indigenously designed and manufactured Arjun Main Battle Tank (MK-1A)," he said. Modi handed over the tank to Army Chief General MM Naravane. He said that Tamil Nadu is already a leading manufacturing hub of India and now he sees the state evolving as the tank manufacturing hub. The Prime Minister also inaugurated the Chennai Metro Rail Phase-I extension completed at a cost of Rs 3,770 crore and flagged off passenger services from Washermenpet to Wimco Nagar. He noted that the work was completed on time despite the Covid-19 pandemic. He said the material for the 9.05-km stretch was procured locally and supports his idea of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'. Modi also inaugurated 22-km fourth railway line between Chennai Beach and Attipattu. It will be an additional track to Thiruvallur districts meant to ease traffic from Chennai Port.

BLOW TO CONGRESS AS CM V NARAYANASAMY'S GOVERNMENT IN PUDUCHERRY LOSES MAJORITY AHEAD OF POLLS



In yet another blow to the Congress, Chief Minister V Natarajan's government in Puducherry slipped into minority months ahead of polls. The Congress government lost the majority after four MLAs resigned in the past two days. Congress had 15 members in 30-member Puducherry Assembly and along with the DMK's two, the party was just ahead of the majority mark of 16. After the resignations of four MLAs, the Congress now has 11 lawmakers in Puducherry Assembly. It is to be noted that the four Congress MLAs resigned just before Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's visit to Puducherry on Wednesday

(February 17). This is Rahul Gandhi's first visit to Puducherry since the party formed the government in the Union Territory. Out of the four MLAs, two resigned on January 25, one on Monday (February 15) and one left the party on Tuesday (February 16). Notably, elections are due in Puducherry and Tamil Nadu in May. In 2016 election, the Congress had won 14 assembly seats, including the Speaker. The Congress formed the government with the support of the DMK and an Independent. In Puducherry Assembly, the AIADMK has four MLAs, the AINRC has seven and there are three nominated members of the BJP.

FARMER UNIONS DEMAND HIGH-LEVEL JUDICIAL INQUIRY INTO JANUARY 26 VIOLENCE



The farmer unions protesting against the three Central farm laws, on Saturday demanded a high-level judicial inquiry into the January 26 violence. The violence took place during the tractor rally in the national capital during Republic Day celebrations. The Samyukta Kisan Morcha (SKM) during a press conference at Delhi's Singhu border, asked farmers who are getting police notices not to appear before the force directly and instead, approach the legal cell constituted by the unions for any assistance. A member of SKM's legal cell, Kuldeep Singh said that a retired judge of the Supreme Court or High Court should probe the incidents to unravel the 'conspiracy' behind the January 26 violence and the alleged 'false cases' against the farmers.

Key pointers by Samyukta Kisan Morcha

The SKM leaders stated that 16 farmers who had participated in the tractor parade are still untraceable. Farmer leader Ravinder Singh said that 122 farmers had been arrested by Delhi Police in connection with 14 of the 44 FIRs. He also added that SKM will provide legal and financial aid to all the arrested farmers. The Morcha will provide Rs 2,000 to every arrested farmer for spending in the prison canteen. Retired judge of the Supreme Court or High Court should probe the incidents to unravel the 'conspiracy' and alleged 'false cases'. Farmers getting police notices should approach the legal cell instead of appearing before the force directly. Legal cell is constituted by the unions for any assistance to the farmers.

What happened so far

The farmers' tractor rally on January 26 in Delhi had turned violent and clashes were reported between several farmers and the Delhi Police personnel. Thousands of farmers have camped at three Delhi border points since late November 2020 and are demanding a repeal of the three agri laws. They protesting farmers are also demanding a legal guarantee on minimum support price (MSP). The farmer representatives and the Centre have had 11 round of talks but have failed to break the deadlock.

Congress MP gives notice for privilege motion against Finance Minister for "Doomsday man" remark

Congress MP Prathapan gave a notice for a privilege motion in Lok Sabha against Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman for her "Doomsday man of India" remark against Wayanad MP Rahul Gandhi during her response to the budget debate on Saturday in Lok Sabha. Speaking on the matter, Congress MP Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, said Sitharaman should not indulge in such unparliamentary activity inside the House. "I objected to the comments (against Rahul Gandhi) made by the Finance Minister in the House. She should not indulge in such unparliamentary activity inside the House. Immediately, we took serious action to the comment made by her," he said. Sitharaman in her reply to the Budget session on Saturday had also accused Gandhi of creating "fake" narratives on various issues and said that he is probably becoming the "Doomsday man of India". "The veteran leader is building fake narratives identifying with the break India fringe group and is constantly abusing the constitutional heads of the nation. I am scared that the veteran leader is probably becoming the 'doomsday man of India'. The Opposition is being led by the 'Doomsday man,'" she said. Sitharaman further said that the Congress leader has been constantly insulting India by not 'trusting' the nation. "I remember what he said about the COVID-19 pandemic. I don't want to waste the time of the House by repeating the same but in summary, it was like I will continue to demean India," she had said. Rahul Gandhi received flak from the ruling party and several political leaders after he spoke on farm laws during the discussion on the union budget in Lok Sabha on Thursday.

India-China disengagement at Pangong Tso to be over by this week

Complete disengagement at the Pangong lake as agreed between India and China last week is expected to be over by end of this week. Last week, it was agreed that as part of disengagement, Chinese forces will move east of Finger 8 of the north bank of the lake, while India will base its troops at the permanent base -- Dhan Singh Thapa post near Finger 8. Right now, on the ground, between Finger 4 and Finger 8, things are in various stages of dismantlement. Remember as part of the agreement, it was agreed that any structure built by both sides after April 2020 will be removed. April 2020 was the month when Chinese attempts to change things on the ground unilaterally started. Once the disengagement is over at Pangong Tso, no patrolling will take place in the area from Finger 4 to finger 8 till both sides agree via diplomatic and military talks. The 10th round of military talks, which was agreed to happen 48 hours after complete disengagement, will happen expectedly next week. The talks will focus on disengagement on Gogra, Depsang, and hot spring.

LEAKED: WHATSAPP CHATS BETWEEN DISHA RAVI, GRETA THUNBERG OVER 'TOOLKIT'



DISHA RAVI WAS ARRESTED FOR ALLEGEDLY EDITING AND DISSEMINATING THE "TOOLKIT" ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND SENT TO FIVE DAYS POLICE CUSTODY.

In a major development in the Toolkit case, WhatsApp chats between Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg and 21-year-old climate activist from Bengaluru Disha Ravi, who was arrested by Delhi Police, has come to light. As per Delhi Police, this chat took place just after Greta uploaded the original toolkit which was later deleted. The chat shows the conversation between the two in which Disha asks Greta not to tweet the toolkit at all until she talks to the lawyers about it. In the chat, Disha is panicking, telling Greta that she might be charged under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA). However, she later assured Greta that she will 'make sure she is in the clear.'

Disha Ravi was arrested for allegedly editing and disseminating the "toolkit" on social media and sent to five days police custody. According to the Delhi Police, which is investigating the Toolkit case,

a zoom meeting was held to make it. About 70 people were involved in this meeting. Most of these people had hidden their identities, that is, they were attending this meeting without mentioning their names. Police says that Disha is a key lead in the "toolkit" case as she had admitted during the initial interrogation to editing, adding some things in the "toolkit" and spreading it further. Last week, the Delhi Police sent a communication to Google seeking registration details and activity log of the account through which a "toolkit" related to the farmers' protest was created and uploaded on the social media platform. Two e-mail IDs, one Instagram account, and one Uniform Resource Locator (URL) were mentioned in the toolkit and police have asked for details from the respective platforms. The police had registered an FIR against unidentified persons in connection with the creators of the 'toolkit'.

UTTARAKHAND FLOODS: 13 MORE BODIES RECOVERED, DEATH TOLL RISES TO 51

Rescuers on Sunday found 13 bodies, including six from the tunnel where 25-35 people are reportedly trapped at the disaster-hit Tapovan project in Chamoli district in Uttarakhand, officials said. The six bodies were found during the excavation work inside the tunnel, state police spokesperson said, DIG Nilesh Anand Bharné. This is the first time since the February 7 floods that the rescuers have found bodies inside the tunnel.

"We are expecting more bodies as hopes are receding for survival of those trapped," a top official admitted. There is still no contact with the remaining trapped people inside. Officials also said that the rescue work had been speeded up with the installation of some additional machines like excavators on Saturday. Presently, the rescuers are working on two strategies - drilling a big hole vertically downward on one hand and digging and excavating debris and sludge inside the tunnel on the other. Two days ago, the rescue workers had started drilling the tunnel

vertically downward. However, within hours, the drilling work was also intermittently disrupted due technical reasons. But the rescuers made another attempt on Friday night and made a small hole vertically downward. After days of digging and excavation works, jawans of the army, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, the National Disaster Response Force and the State Disaster Response Force, who are engaged in the rescue work, had managed open up a sizeable portion of the tunnel. But the presence of heavy silt and sludge inside the tunnel slowed down the excavation and digging work, top government officials said. Rescuers had also consulted NTPC officials to understand the complicated design of the tunnel.

Elsewhere, seven bodies were recovered - six from disaster-hit Reni village and one from Alaknanda river in Rudraprayag area. With the recovery of 13 more bodies on Sunday, the total toll has gone up to 51. Nearly 200 people went missing after the February 7 morning deluge.

INDIA'S VACCINE DIPLOMACY RECEIVES GLOBAL ACCOLADES, NATION HEADING IN RIGHT DIRECTION



India has provided over 229 lakh doses of coronavirus vaccines to various countries out of which 64 lakh doses have been supplied as grant assistance and 165 lakh on commercial basis, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said on Friday. The "vaccine diplomacy" aims to raise New Delhi's global profile and push back against China. As the world's largest vaccine producer, India is at the forefront of supplying affordable shots against COVID-19 to low- and middle-income countries.

India's Serum Institute, the world's largest producer of vaccines, is producing millions of doses of the shot developed by Oxford University and AstraZeneca.

China, too, has given its locally developed vaccines to countries such as Indonesia and Turkey, and promised it to many others across Africa, Asia and South America.

However, South Asian countries such as Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka had asked India for supplies of the AstraZeneca vaccine, developed in Britain.

The government has donated millions of doses to neighbouring countries including Bangladesh, which initially had an agreement with China before opting to sign a deal with the Serum Institute.

So far, with the vaccination infrastructure still being set up, India has exported more than three times the amount of doses that it has supplied to its own citizens, reported the Wall Street Journal. Chinese vaccine makers, meanwhile, have been delaying shipments abroad as new outbreaks of the virus keep erupting at home, it said.

MEA Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said India will continue to take forward the global vaccine supply initiative and cover more countries in a phased manner.

"As of date, we have supplied a total of 229.7 lakh doses to the global community. Of these, 64.7 lakh doses have been supplied as grant while 165 lakh doses have been supplied on a commercial basis," he said at a media briefing.

IN A FIRST, INDIAN AND SAUDI ARABIA ARMIES TO UNDERTAKE JOINT BILATERAL EXERCISES



In a significant development, Indian and Saudi armies will undertake joint bilateral exercises. This will be the first such exercises of both the armies together. The Indian forces contingent will be travelling to Saudi Arabia for the exercises which will be taking place in the next financial year. In December 2020, in another significant development, Indian Army Chief General MM Naravane had visited Saudi Arabia. It was the first time any Indian Army chief had visited the West Asian country in what is a clear sign of growing ties between New Delhi and Riyadh. The Army Chief during his trip to Saudi Arabia, he had visited the Headquarters of Royal Saudi Land Force, the Joint Force Command Headquarters and King Abdul Aziz Military Academy. Saudi Arabia identifies India as one of the Kingdom's Strategic Partner Countries under its 'Vision 2030'. Last few years have seen an increased engagement between the two countries. The year 2019 saw the visit of Indian PM Modi to the country during which the Strategic Partnership Council Agreement was signed. Earlier that year in February, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman had visited New Delhi. During the visit, Riyadh announced investments targeting a value of USD 100 billion in India.

COVID-19 vaccines not to be available in open market anytime soon, says Health Minister

The health ministry on Monday indicated that COVID-19 vaccines won't be available in the open market anytime soon because the Centre is unwilling to take chances with technical protocols and the responsibility of a national vaccine roll-out. This comes almost a month after the vaccination drive commenced.

"It is emergency use authorisation and during this time it is the responsibility of the government to keep things under control. That is why it cannot be brought in the open market yet ... If some wrong product comes to the market, then who would be responsible for it?" Business Standard quoted Union Health Minister Harsh Vardhan as saying.

The Health Minister on Monday said that 18-19 potential vaccines against novel coronavirus were in different stages of clinical trials, adding that vaccination of around 27 crore Indians above the age of 50 will begin three weeks from now.

"Some are in Phase I, some in Phase II, and a few approaching Phase III of the clinical trials. We are elated to have a huge portfolio in the near future," he said at a press conference here.

The Minister said that the Department of Biotechnology had been provided with a budget of Rs 900 crore for the development of potential vaccines against COVID-19.

EAM JAISHANKAR PITCHES FOR CONNECTIVITY FROM ARABIAN SEA TO SOUTH CHINA SEA



India's external affairs minister Dr S Jaishankar has pitched for connectivity from "Arabian Sea to South China Sea" even as New Delhi and Tokyo work together in tandem. Speaking at an event in Guwahati, EAM said, "approach to create connectivity to and within Assam, beyond to the North-East, then to neighbouring Myanmar and Bangladesh, but eventually push all the way by road, by sea, by air to Vietnam, to Japan." India is working on a number of connectivity projects to connect North-East with East Asia. The India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, with an aim to expand it to Vietnam via Laos. The Kaladan Multi modal transport link will provide North-East access via Sittwe Project and the Paletwa Inland Water Terminal. Work is on BIMSTEC masterplan on transport connectivity via 264 projects. He lauded India-Japan partnership, calling it "natural and close" and said, "India-Japan collaboration has always had a central place in our national modernisation and development efforts". Japan has been involved in funding of the Guwahati water supply project, road connectivity in the North-East, construction of primary school in Manipur, etc. Recently New Delhi and Tokyo reached a pact for people from India to jo to Japan under "specified skilled workers" visa and will increase people to people engagement. Interestingly he pointed out to Assam becoming a "major player" in producing refined petroleum products, and "a pipeline to supply Bangladesh high speed diesel is an important beginning". India and Nepal recently opened a cross country oil pipeline, the first such pipeline in South Asia.

MYANMAR POLICE FILE ADDITIONAL CHARGE AGAINST AUNG SAN SUU KYI – LAWYER



MYANMAR, UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL, AUNG SAN SUU KYI, CROWDS DEFIED CURFEWS, MYANMAR JUNTA, CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, ANTI-COUP DEMONSTRATIONS, MYANMAR NEWS, WORLD NEWS, INDIAN EXPRESS WORLD NEWS.

Myanmar police have filed a second charge against former leader Aung San Suu Kyi, after the military deposed her and seized power in a coup on Feb. 1, her lawyer said on Tuesday. She has already been charged with importing walkie talkies, but lawyer Khin Maung Zaw told local media she was facing a second charge of violating the country's Natural Disaster

Law. He said Suu Kyi had met with a judge on a videocall due to COVID-19 regulations, but lawyers could not attend because they had not been granted power of attorney. Asked about her health, Khin Maung Zaw said: "No news is good news. We haven't heard or received bad news. "The date of the next court hearing will be March 1, he added.

Joe Biden takes center stage with ambitious agenda as Trump's trial ends

President Joe Biden's allies say that with the distraction of the impeachment trial of his predecessor now over, he will quickly press for passage of his \$1.9 trillion coronavirus relief plan before moving on to an even bigger agenda in Congress that includes infrastructure, immigration, criminal justice reform, climate change and health care. Biden has so far succeeded in pushing his agenda forward even amid the swirl of the impeachment, trial and acquittal of former President Donald Trump. House committees are already debating parts of the coronavirus relief legislation he calls the American Rescue Plan. Several of the president's Cabinet members have been confirmed despite the Trump drama. And Biden's team is pressing lawmakers for quick action when senators return from a weeklong recess. Without the spectacle of a constitutional clash, the new president "takes center stage now in a way that the first few weeks didn't allow," said Jennifer Palmieri, who served as communications director for President Barack Obama. She said the end of the trial means that "2021 can finally start." In a statement after the trial, Biden restated his hopes for bipartisan support, vowing to work across party lines to "heal the very soul of the nation." But Biden's prospects are complicated by the fact that much of his agenda is aimed at dismantling Trump's policies or addressing what Democrats have cast as his failures, most significantly the fumbled response to the pandemic. And the 43 "not guilty" votes from Senate Republicans on Saturday cast in sharp relief both the political opportunities and challenges ahead for Biden: a small minority of Republican senators willing to brave the wrath of Trump's powerful political movement by voting to convict him, while Trump continues to hold sway over most of his party. The reality is that Trump's influence with Republicans will be an obstacle for Biden's priorities even with the former president's departure from Washington. Even with control of both houses of Congress, Democrats will still need some Republican support on many of Biden's agenda items to overcome a filibuster in the Senate.

France votes on anti-radicalism bill that worries Muslims

France's lower house of parliament is voting Tuesday on a bill that would strengthen government oversight of mosques and religious schools and crackdown on polygamy and forced marriage, among other measures aimed at rooting out Islamic radicalism. The bill is part of broader French efforts to fight extremism in recent years that gained new urgency after a teacher was beheaded in October and other attacks. President Emmanuel Macron says the efforts are also needed to protect French values like gender equality and secularism from encroaching on fundamentalism in some communities. But many French Muslims say the draft law limits religious freedom and unfairly targets them, and say France already has enough laws to fight terrorist violence. Critics call the bill a political manoeuvre by Macron to win support from conservative and far-right voters ahead of next year's presidential election.

Japan set to start inoculation drive with 40,000 medical workers

Japan will begin its COVID-19 inoculation drive on Wednesday, starting with 40,000 medical workers, Japan's vaccination programme chief Taro Kono said at a news conference on Tuesday. The government officially approved Pfizer Inc's COVID-19 vaccine on Sunday, the first such approval in the country grappling a third wave of infections. "We will start our inoculation drive tomorrow, with about 40,000 medical workers who have been raised as candidates" to become the first to get the vaccine, Kono said. The European Union has approved the second shipment of COVID-19 vaccines to Japan, which is expected to arrive next week, he added. Japan will be the last member of the Group of Seven (G7) industrialised nations to launch a vaccination drive.

Will live in Pakistan, won't go abroad, says Maryam Nawaz

Pakistan's deposed prime minister Nawaz Sharif's daughter Maryam Nawaz said on Monday that she will not leave the country to join her father in London for her treatment despite the Imran Khan government's apparent offer to go abroad. "Even if someone (from the government) comes to my home and offers me to go abroad, I will decline it straight away," she said while talking to reporters at her Jati Umra Raiwind residence here. "I know some ministers are saying that if Maryam is allowed to go abroad the opposition's movement (against the government) will fizzle out. But let me make it clear that I will not leave my country come what may, and will not seek removal of my name from the no-fly list," she said.



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