

“I MADE A MISTAKE”, SHOULD HAVE RECUSED MYSELF: TRUDEAU ON WE CHARITY CONTROVERSY



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WHEN CAN WE EXPECT TO GET A VACCINE?

The scientific community at a global level is currently engaged in a collective effort to develop a vaccine for the novel coronavirus. Researchers in over dozens of countries are currently developing and testing potential vaccine candidates. Meanwhile, countries including Britain, France, Germany, and the United States have already ordered hundreds of millions of doses of vaccines that haven't proven to work.

PM TRUDEAU ADVOCATES FOR GLOBAL AVAILABILITY AND EQUAL ACCESS TO VACCINES

In an opinion piece published in the Washington Post's 'Global Opinions' section, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, along with leaders of Spain, New Zealand, South Korea, Ethiopia, and three other countries have called for equitable access to a COVID-19 vaccine when one is developed.

The leaders urged countries to co-operate on manufacturing and distributing a vaccine to ensure that less-developed countries do not fall behind. The op-ed read, “As the world is still in the midst of the deadliest pandemic of the 21st century, with the number of cases still rising at the global level, immunization is our best chance of ending the pandemic at home and across the world – but only if all countries get access to the vaccine.”

They added, “This cannot be a race with one winner. When one or more vaccines are successful, it must be a win for all of us.”

The leaders also urged governments to develop a set of transparent, fair and scientifically-sound principles to guide the distribution of vaccines.

RUSSIA ALLEGEDLY TRIED TO STEAL COVID-19 VACCINE RESEARCH ; CANADA, US & UK SAY HACKING GROUP LINKED TO RUSSIAN INTEL

A report by Canada's Communications Security Establishment (CSE) reveals a Russian hacking group has targeted COVID-19 vaccine research in Canada, the UK, and the US. Calling out APT29, also known as ‘Cozy Bear’, or ‘The Dukes’, the CSE said they are responsible for Canada’s foreign signals intelligence. In a statement released Thursday morning, CSE said the group “almost certainly operates as part of Russian intelligence services.”

The organisation also shared an advisory that highlights the tactics, techniques, and procedures used by the hacking group “throughout 2020, including custom malware known as ‘WellMess’ and ‘WellMail’ to target a number of organisations globally.”

CSE also added, “These malicious cyber activities were very likely undertaken to steal information and intellectual property relating to the development and testing of COVID-19 vaccines, and serve to hinder response efforts at a time when healthcare experts and medical researchers need every available resource to help fight the pandemic.”

BILL GATES LAUDS INDIAN PHARMACEUTICAL INDUSTRY, SAYS INDIA CAN PRODUCE COVID-19 VACCINES FOR ENTIRE WORLD

Microsoft co-founder and philanthropist Bill Gates has claimed that the Indian pharmaceutical industry will be able to produce COVID-19 vaccines for the entire world. Speaking for a Discover Plus documentary ‘COVID-19 : India's War Against the Virus’, Gates said a lot of “very important things have been done” in India, and that its pharma industry is doing work “to help make the coronavirus vaccine building on other great capacities that they have used for other diseases”.

“VAST MAJORITY” OF ONTARIO TO ENTER STAGE 3 ON FRIDAY, JULY 17 EXCEPT GTA AND PARTS OF SOUTHERN ONTARIO

The Ontario government announced nearly all businesses and public spaces will reopen in Stage 3 of the province's reopening framework with public health and workplace safety measures and restrictions in place. As Ontario continues down the path to economic recovery, decisions on which regions will enter Stage 3 and when will be made in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health and other health experts and based on trends of key public health indicators.



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GOVT TO EXTEND WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAM IN TO DECEMBER



Federal COVID-19 emergency benefit, the Wage Subsidy program has been extended to December of this year. The program covers 75 per cent of wages, up to a weekly maximum of \$847, for workers at eligible companies and non-profits.

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CITY OF TORONTO FACES \$1.35 BILLION SHORTFALL IN ITS OPERATING BUDGET DESPITE SERIES OF CUTS

Toronto Mayor John Tory said the City faces a shortfall of \$1.35 billion and may have to implement a series of “grim strategies” to balance its budget. A 76 page report said the city “anticipates a financial impact of \$1.9 billion by the end of 2020, prior to any offsets through mitigation strategies, including spending and workforce restraints. With these mitigation strategies in place, the City projects a reduced total year-end shortfall of \$1.35 billion.”



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CANADA-US BORDER TO REMAIN CLOSED TO NON-ESSENTIAL TRAVEL UNTIL AUGUST 21

Reports reveal the Canada-US border will closure will be extended until August 31. The agreement which was to expire on July 21, is now being renewed for the fourth time since the border closed to non-essential traffic on March 21. Reports of the extension comes a day after Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and US President Donald Trump spoke on the phone over a range of issues.

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FACE MASKS NOW MANDATORY IN THE PEEL REGION, GTA

Face coverings are now mandatory across most of the GTA, as new bylaws took effect in Peel and Durham regions last week. Separate bylaws requiring masks in indoor settings went into effect in Mississauga, Brampton, and Caledon. A report quoted Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown as saying, “We believe this is critical for the reopening.



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AS INDIA CROSSES 1M TOTAL CASES, MODI GOVT FIGHTS THE BALANCE BETWEEN HEALTH AND ECONOMY

India is officially the only third country in the world, after the United States and Brazil, to hit a million COVID-19 cases. The tragic milestone was crossed as the country booked 36,247 new cases, along with 690 deaths. India took a total of 137 days to reach a million cases, half of which were in a hard nationwide lockdown announced in the early days. While the Narendra Modi-led government vouched for the strategy, stating it bought the country enough time to prepare for the onslaught, the lockdown came at a massive economic cost.



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HOUSE PRICES UP BY 6.5%, HOME SALES UP BY 63% IN JUNE: CREA



BANK OF CANADA KEEPS KEY INTEREST RATE SAME AT 0.25%, PREDICTS 8% SHRINK IN ECONOMY FOR 2020

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Public Health Canada adding more on-site employees at 36 Canada-US border crossings ; Increase COVID checking



The Public Health Agency of Canada is reportedly adding on-site employees at 36 points of entry between Canada and the US, including New Brunswick crossings in St. Stephen, Woodstock, and Edmundston as the volume of travellers enter Canada. Health Canada spokesperson Tammy Jarbeau said the “increased presence” of officials is at air and land points of entry. She said, “PHAC officials, including quarantine officers, clinical screening officers and screening officers will be on-site to screen travellers entering Canada at these ports of entry.” The news came at a time when the US reported a record surge of new COVID-19 cases.

Deepak Anand, MPP

Mississauga - Malton

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“I MADE A MISTAKE”, SHOULD HAVE RECUSED MYSELF: TRUDEAU ON WE CHARITY CONTROVERSY

“I made a mistake” said Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Monday, in not recusing himself from cabinet conversations about the controversial student grant program to be run by WE Charity. Speaking from outside Rideau Cottage, he addressed the issue for the first time since the scandal broke out. Trudeau said, “I made a mistake in not recusing myself immediately from the discussions, given our family’s history, and I’m sincerely sorry about not having done that.” He added that he regrets the scandal left students in the lurch. The scandal surrounds Trudeau administration’s decision to allow WE Charity to deliver a now-halted \$900 million COVID-19 student grant program. The ethics commissioner has launched an investigation and will probe a potential conflict of interest with the PM. The controversy shows no signs of dying down, with news erupting Trudeau’s wife, mother, and brother

received a range of payments amounting up to \$300,000 for speaking at the charity events. Meanwhile, the Conservatives have urged the RCMP to look into the matter. The Opposition are also looking to convene a third committee probe with the intent to uncover as many documents as possible. Conservative MP and ethics critic Michael Barrett released a statement saying, “Revelations that Justin Trudeau’s family was paid to speak at events for an organization, which later received a \$900 million sole-source contract, are deeply disturbing.” The charity also weighed in, with co-founders Craig Keilburger and Marc Kielburger issuing a statement on their website stating they want “to set the record straight”. They said WE “has not profited from this contract in any way.”

House prices up by 6.5 per cent, home sales up by 63 per cent in June : CREA

Home sales recorded over Canadian MLS® Systems in June 2020 rebounded by a further 63%, returning them to normal levels for the month – some 150% above where they were in April. Transactions were once again up on a m-o-m basis across the country. Among Canada’s largest markets, sales rose 83.8% in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), 75.1% in Montreal, 60.3% in Greater Vancouver, 99.7% in the Fraser Valley, 54.9% in Calgary, 59% in Edmonton, 22.5% in Winnipeg, 34.8% in Hamilton-Burlington, 67.9% in London and St. Thomas, 55.6% in Ottawa and 43.6% in Quebec City.

Actual (not seasonally adjusted) sales activity posted a 15.2% y-o-y gain in June.

“Realtors across Canada are increasingly seeing business pick back up,” stated Costa Pouloupoulos, Chair of CREA. “With sellers and buyers returning to the market, we continue to make sure clients stay safe by complying with government and health officials’ directives and advice, increasingly using technology to list and show properties virtually while providing secure methods to complete required forms and contracts. As always, but maybe now more than ever, REALTORS® remain the best source for information and guidance when negotiating the sale or purchase of a home,” continued Pouloupoulos.

“While June’s housing numbers were mostly back at normal levels, we are obviously not back to normal at this point,” said Shaun Cathcart, CREA’s Senior Economist. “I guess the bigger picture is one of cautious optimism. The market has recovered much faster than many would have thought, but what happens later this year remains a big question mark. That said, daily tracking suggests that July, at least, will be even stronger.”

Bank of Canada keeps key interest rate same at 0.25 per cent, predicts 8 per cent shrink in economy for 2020

The Bank of Canada today maintained its target for the overnight rate at the effective lower bound of ¼ percent. The Bank Rate is correspondingly ½ percent and the deposit rate is ¼ percent. The Bank is also continuing its quantitative easing (QE) program, with large-scale asset purchases of at least \$5 billion per week of Government of Canada bonds. The Bank’s short-term liquidity programs announced since March to improve market functioning are having their intended effect and, with reduced market strains, their use has declined. The provincial and corporate bond purchase programs will continue as announced. The Bank stands ready to adjust its programs if market conditions warrant. While economies are re-opening, the global and Canadian outlook is extremely uncertain, given the unpredictability of the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. Reflecting this, the Bank’s July Monetary Policy Report (MPR) presents a central scenario for global and Canadian growth rather than the usual economic projections. The central scenario is based on assumptions outlined in the MPR, including that there is no widespread second wave of the virus.

After a sharp drop in the first half of 2020, global economic activity is picking up. This return to growth reflects the relaxation of necessary containment measures put in place to slow the spread of the coronavirus, combined with extraordinary fiscal and monetary policy support. As a result, financial conditions have improved. The prices of most commodities, including oil, have risen from very low levels. In the central scenario, the global economy overall shrinks by about 5 percent in 2020 and then grows by around 5 percent on average in 2021 and 2022. The timing and pace of the recovery varies among regions and could be hampered by a resurgence of infections and the limited capacity of some countries to contain the virus or support their economies.

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Osler Foundation announces \$5 million fundraising goal for essential health care needs



—William Osler Health System Foundation (Osler Foundation) has met its \$2.5 million fundraising goal in support of William Osler Health System (Osler) and its response to COVID-19. Osler’s staff and physicians—our community’s Health Care Heroes— are continuing to care for all those who need them, through the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.

As Osler hospitals begin to resume operations in a phased approach, critical pieces of equipment are needed to help meet the demand created by the health crisis. Osler Foundation has set out to raise an additional \$2.5 million (total of \$5 million) through its Health Care Heroes campaign to help purchase essential equipment, like ventilators, vital signs monitors, vein finders, stretchers, wheelchairs and electric beds. “It’s a fact that 80% of the care we receive in our lifetime will be at our community hospital, and never before has it been more important to have exemplary health care available close to home,” said Ken Mayhew, President & CEO, Osler Foundation. “The reality is, this pandemic will be here with us for some time. Day in and day out, our health care heroes are working to ensure our families, and our communities have access to the care we need when we need it most. It’s up to all of us to support our physicians and staff to ensure they have the equipment they need to continue delivering quality health care. We are grateful to those who have stepped forward and generously donated.”

To help mobilize the community behind this new fundraising goal, Armour Insurance Brokers Ltd. will generously match new donations—dollar for dollar—up to \$500,000. Donations made to the campaign will fund essential pieces of equipment at



Osler’s Brampton Civic Hospital, Etobicoke General Hospital and Peel Memorial Centre for Integrated Health and Wellness. “We are going through the toughest time in 100 years. The only way our health system can survive is to have enough funds for equipment, education and facilities,” says Sukhdeep Kang, CEO, Armour Insurance Brokers Ltd. “When we need it, we all receive the best services from our hospitals. Our frontline workers have always been there for us—including in the face of life-threatening challenges like COVID-19. Our hospitals need funds, and we must support them. Contributing even a small amount will help to enhance the services for all of us.” The original \$2.5 million goal was met thanks to the incredible support from more than 3,500 donors. A special thank-you goes out to Martha Rogers, Chair, the Rogers Foundation, Sajjad Ebrahim and to Osler Foundation Board member Steve Robinson, whose matching gifts helped inspire the community to donate in support of Osler.

CANADA INDIA HEALTHCARE FORUM 2021 SET TO TAKE PLACE IN TORONTO



The Consulate General of India (“CGI”), Canada India Foundation (“CIF”) and Toronto Rehab Institute (“TRI”) are partnering with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (“FICCI”), to organize Canada India Healthcare Forum 2021 (“CIHF 2021”), with emphasis on Post-COVID Healthcare, Biotechnology, and Artificial Intelligence, scheduled to take place on May 21, 2021, in Toronto, Canada.

The current global healthcare crisis, caused by the spread of COVID-19, has resulted in significant loss of human life and unprecedented disruption of economic activity and social welfare around the world. This crisis has heightened the urgency for democratic countries to develop new approaches to healthcare in the post-COVID world, utilizing new developments in Biotechnology and Artificial Intelligence (“AI”).

The third time that Canada India Healthcare Forum, CIF will be organizing, coming after its earlier initiatives in 2015 in Toronto and in New Delhi in 2017. “The Forums brought together healthcare experts, governments, and business leaders to explore opportunities for Canada and India to work together on the important theme of healthcare”, said Dr. V.I. Lakshmanan, who co-chaired both forums as well as several similar theme forums held by CIF earlier. “Key partners and participants included the Government of Ontario, Ministry of Ayush (Government of India), Apollo Hospitals, Apotex, and many others. The Forums facilitated many new collaborative ventures,” he added. Among the main deliverables of CIHF2021 are:

- Enabling private sector, government, universities, and research institutions in Canada and India to collaborate in exploring Biotechnology & AI-driven healthcare solutions
- Understanding lessons learned from managing the COVID-19 healthcare crisis
- Leveraging R&D in Healthcare, Biotechnology & AI to create economic opportunities and ensure better universal healthcare
- Helping to shape public policy in Canada and India to provide optimum healthcare to its residents through Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

“The Indian Consulate in Toronto has been very supportive of CIF in all its past Forums and hold the organization in high regard for its passion and ability to bring Canada and India together”, said Ms. Apoorva Srivastava, Consul General of India

in Toronto. “The Consulate is pleased to co-organize CIHF 2021, which will showcase India’s accomplishments in healthcare-related emerging technologies”, she added.

Toronto Rehab Institute (“TRI”) will lead this Forum, wherein Canadian healthcare initiatives would be demonstrated. TRI is the world leader in new technologies for rehabilitation, “TRI co-organized the 2015 Forum with CIF and is excited to partner with them again”, said Alex Vaccari, Vice-President and chief development officer TRI. “We look forward to connecting with India’s technology leaders in healthcare, exploring ground-breaking ways to benefit patients needing rehabilitation”, he said.

A strong delegation of healthcare industry leaders and professionals from India will participate in CIHF 2021, courtesy of FICCI, India’s leading organization of private sector companies. “FICCI is delighted to accept the organizers’ invitation to lead the Indian delegation,” said Dr. Sangeeta Reddy, President of FICCI and Joint Managing Director of Apollo Hospitals Group. “We hope that the forum will result in healthcare solution providers from the two countries to collaborate using the PPT model for mutual benefit”, she added.

The immediate outcome of CIHF 2021 will be the preparation of a policy document, including recommendations for Canadian and Indian governments and healthcare sector, specifically addressing the following:

- Necessity of a rethink to maintain Canada’s universal system financially viable while keeping and even raising the bar on the current high standard of delivery
- Need to enhance India’s currently inadequate delivery capacity in primary and secondary healthcare delivery while exploiting its cutting-edge technological expertise in tertiary healthcare.

“CIF pioneered the organization of high-level thematic Canada India Forums with a public policy focus.”, said Anil Shah, Chair of Canada India Foundation, “These forums not only facilitated dialogue among public, industry and academic leaders in the respective fields but also created opportunities for new business initiatives”. Satish Thakkar, National Convener of CIF, added, “CIF will continue to leverage these forums and create awareness about the tremendous potential between Canada and India to partner on matters benefiting their citizens.”

CITY OF TORONTO FACES \$1.35 BILLION SHORTFALL IN ITS OPERATING BUDGET DESPITE SERIES OF CUTS

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Tory addressed the report along with Budget Chief Gary Crawford early Tuesday morning. They stressed the “need for emergency financial support for Toronto and other municipalities from the federal and provincial governments.”

“Mitigation strategies include \$513.7 million in anticipated cost savings from a combination of workforce restraints, spending constraints and cost avoidance, including emergency layoffs, decreased TTC operating costs and matching service capacity to demand,” a release said. “An additional \$34.1 million is also available from favourable budget variance within Municipal Land Transfer Tax revenues from January 1 to March 31, prior to COVID-19 impacts.”

Tory said, “Municipalities are on the frontlines responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and have been since the beginning, just as we will be on the front lines of the recovery. But the fact remains that, while cities continue to respond to the pandemic, they are experiencing unprecedented costs and significant revenue losses. These unprecedented financial circumstances require unprecedented action from the federal and provincial governments.”

“We remain hopeful a federal-provincial funding agreement to support municipalities can be reached to avoid devastating cuts to frontline services or unaffordable property tax increases. The City staff report released today makes clear the stark reality we are facing and the measures we have taken to save what we can. I look forward to working with my council colleagues to review this report and to make it clear – as a strong and united council – that we need support from the other governments and we need it now.”

The report also highlighted that City transit, the TTC alone faces a nearly \$700 million shortfall in its budget by the end of 2020.

CANADA-US BORDER TO REMAIN CLOSED TO NON-ESSENTIAL TRAVEL UNTIL AUGUST 21

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On Monday, Trudeau had said, “We recognise that the situation continues to be complex in the United States in regards to COVID-19. Every month, we have been able to extend the border closures to all but essential goods and services and those discussions are ongoing.” Bloc Quebecois Leader Yves-Francois Blanchet addressed a press conference said the border should remain closed because the pandemic is still out of control in the US. He said, “If we take examples of countries who managed well this crisis, in the list of those who did well, you won’t find the United States. As long as the border appears to be a threat in the health of Quebecers and Canadians, it should remain closed.”

Rajasthan Political Crisis : Cong fires Sachin Pilot as Deputy CM, State Party Chief, BJP holds out invite

As the Rajasthan ruling Congress party continues to remain marred with political chaos, the Bharatiya Janata Party has issued invites to former deputy chief minister and Rajasthan Congress unit chief Sachin Pilot. Shortly after the leader was dropped from the Ashok Gehlot cabinet, Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat said “if anybody joins us we will welcome him with open arms.” The Party has not formally contacted nor approached Pilot yet. Another BJP leader and former union minister of state PP Chaudhary said he expected more people to join his party from the Congress. “So many people joining Sachin is a big thing, and I believe more will join him. BJP’s doors are open for everybody if he believes in our ideology. If Sachin Pilot joins us, I don’t think there will be any problem. Our national leadership, though, will take the final call.” The national BJP meanwhile, has indicated that it is adopting a hands-off approach and keenly watching the unfolding of political situation in Rajasthan. Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot blames the BJP for setting up Pilot to destabilise the state government. BJP responded by rejecting the allegations and said the entire episode is a “film” that was six months in the works.

FACE MASKS NOW MANDATORY IN THE PEEL REGION, GTA

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If we want to get to stage three we have to get our numbers down and all the top medical officials are saying this is the tool to do it.” The City of Brampton also launched an initiative to mail three disposable masks to every household as a way to promote the new bylaw.

Meanwhile, Mississauga Mayor Bonnie Crombie addressed a press conference, where she said wearing a mask in public will just become “the new way of life”. She added, “We can’t get complacent. If you leave our house don’t forget your keys, your wallet and your mask. I know they are uncomfortable and awkward but I think we can all agree that it is far better than to get the virus or to knowingly give it to someone else.”

Violation of the mask bylaws could face fines of up to \$100,000.

AS INDIA CROSSES 1M TOTAL CASES, MODI GOVT FIGHTS THE BALANCE BETWEEN HEALTH AND ECONOMY

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The plight of the Indian economy pushed the government to unlock the country in June, right when the outbreak was on a sharp upward trajectory. Meanwhile, experts state the next million will take less than a month to cover at the current rate. As health officials struggle to contain the virus, NaMo is reportedly meeting top officials of the finance and commerce ministries to assess the impact of the pandemic on the national economy. Reports reveal the PM is focused on a speedy economic recovery and has taken inputs from top 50 officials.



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Applications to open April 27

Canada Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA)

Loans and/or forgivable loans to commercial property owners who will in turn lower or forgo rent of small businesses for the months of April, May, and June

Tax Deferral

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“Vast Majority” of Ontario to enter Stage 3 on Friday, July 17 except GTA and parts of Southern Ontario

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Details on the Stage 3 reopening framework were provided by Premier Doug Ford, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, Rod Phillips, Minister of Finance, and Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education.

“Our success in reducing the spread of COVID-19 and getting Ontario to a place where we are ready to reopen most of the province is a testament to the hard work of business owners, individuals and families right across the province,” said Premier Ford. “So many have stepped up and played by the rules, demonstrating that we can restart our economy safely and responsibly. Small actions can make a big difference. Now more than ever, we must continue to follow the public health advice to preserve the progress we have made together.” As part of the Stage 3 reopening, Ontario will be increasing gathering limits for those regions entering the next stage to the following: Indoor gathering limits will increase to a maximum of 50 people; Outdoor gathering limits will increase to a maximum of 100 people; Gathering limits are subject to physical distancing requirements. Public gathering limits apply to indoor and outdoor events, such as community events or gatherings, concerts, live shows, festivals, conferences, sports and recreational fitness activities, fundraisers, fairs, festivals or open houses. A two metre distance must still be maintained at such events.

Regions remaining in Stage 2 will maintain the existing gathering limit of 10. Social circles in all stages at this point will also be kept to a maximum of 10 people province-wide, regardless of stage.

The Chief Medical Officer of Health, public health experts and other officials have advised the following, high-risk places and activities are not yet safe to open, even if a region has entered Stage 3, due to the likelihood of large crowds congregating, difficulties with physical distancing, or challenges maintaining the proper cleaning and sanitation required to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Amusement parks and water parks;
 - Buffet-style food services;
 - Dancing at restaurants and bars, other than by performers hired by the establishment following specific requirements;
 - Overnight stays at camps for children;
 - Private karaoke rooms;
 - Prolonged or deliberate contact while playing sports;
 - Saunas, steam rooms, bath houses and oxygen bars;
 - Table games at casinos and gaming establishments.
- The province is committed to working closely and collaboratively with businesses and sectors not yet able to reopen or who are experiencing significant challenges for reopening due to Stage 3 restrictions.

These businesses can visit Ontario.ca/reopen to work with the government on a reopening proposal that will enable them to safely resume or increase operations. Government and public health officials will review proposals and contact businesses for feedback or clarifications.

“With almost all businesses and services able to resume operations, Stage 3 is a major step forward in our plan to reopen the province,” said Minister Phillips. “We have to keep treating each other with respect and acting responsibly to keep up the progress in our fight against COVID-19. Our government will continue working with our partners across Ontario to rebuild our economy so that our province is a place of economic strength and prosperity for every person and family.”

The following public health unit regions will be allowed to move into Stage 3 first, on Friday, July 17, 2020:

- Algoma Public Health
- Brant County Health Unit
- Chatham-Kent Public Health
- Eastern Ontario Health Unit
- Grey Bruce Health Unit
- Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit
- Hastings Prince Edward Public Health
- Huron Perth Public Health
- Kingston, Frontenac and Lennox & Addington Public Health
- Leeds Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit
- Middlesex-London Health Unit
- North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit
- Northwestern Health Unit
- Ottawa Public Health
- Peterborough Public Health
- Porcupine Health Unit
- Public Health Sudbury & Districts
- Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services
- Renfrew County and District Health Unit
- Simcoe-Muskoka District Health Unit
- Southwestern Public Health
- Thunder Bay District Health Unit
- Timiskaming Health Unit
- Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health

Businesses and municipalities will be permitted to enter Stage 3 based on their region and, as in the previous stages, may choose to take more time before reopening. For a list of regions that will remain in Stage 2, visit Ontario.ca/reopen.

At the beginning of each week, the province will continue to reassess local trends in public health indicators, including rates of transmission, hospital capacity, progress on testing and contact tracing, to determine if additional public health unit regions can progress to Stage 3. The Chief Medical Officer of Health and other public health experts

will continue to closely monitor the evolving situation to advise when public health restrictions can be further loosened or if they need to be tightened or reapplied.

“Having seen a decline in the number of new COVID-19 cases as the province safely re-started over 90 per cent of economic activity with Stage 2, we now have the confidence to move certain regions into Stage 3, including expanding the size of gatherings indoors and outdoors,” said Minister Elliott. “As we do, it’s never been more important for all Ontarians to continue to practise physical distancing and wear a face covering when doing so is a challenge, such as safely visiting a favourite local store. Together, we’ll continue to move Ontario forward.”

As the province safely and gradually enters Stage 3, child care centres and home child care providers across Ontario will be able to continue to operate with strict safety and operational requirements in place. Beginning on July 27, 2020, child care centres will be permitted to operate with cohorts of 15 children, which is an increase from the current cohort cap of 10. This change will allow parents to return to work, and bring the child care sector to approximately 90 per cent of its operating capacity before the COVID-19 outbreak.

“Providing child care for parents is critical so that, as more Ontarians return to work, they can do so with confidence in knowing that their children are being safely cared for,” said Minister Lecce. “Child care is an integral enabler to the continued restart of Ontario’s economy, and we remain committed to working to ensure child care remains accessible, affordable and, most importantly, safe as we gradually increase capacity of Ontario’s child care sector.”

The government, in partnership with health and safety associations, has released over 170 guidance resources at Ontario.ca/COVIDsafety to help employers in multiple sectors ? including fitness, restaurant and food services, and the performing arts ? keep spaces safe for workers and customers. Guidance will be available for all spaces permitted to open in Stage 3. As they prepare to reopen, employers are strongly advised to review and implement appropriate measures to help protect their communities.

“As we enter Stage 3 and continue on the path to economic recovery, it is more important than ever that we support business owners and workers,” said Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. “That is why we launched the Workplace PPE Supplier Directory to provide businesses with information on personal protective equipment suppliers so they can keep their employees, customers and clients safe as they resume their operations. By continuing to work together, we will ensure Ontario is prepared and well-supplied for any future challenges.”

Based on community needs, some municipalities and local medical officers of health have implemented more restrictions or requirements, such as mandatory face coverings in commercial establishments and all indoor public places. Check your local public health unit’s or local municipality’s website.

GOVT TO EXTEND WAGE SUBSIDY PROGRAM IN TO DECEMBER

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

Making the announcement on Monday from outside Rideau Cottage, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said “This week we’ll be announcing an extension to the wage subsidy program until December, to give greater certainty and support to businesses as we restart the economy.” The wage subsidy has reportedly paid out \$18.01 billion to 252,370 companies as of July 6. Trudeau said his government would provide more details on federal financial support for provinces. “We’ve also been working very hard, with Deputy Prime Minister Freeland and I, on the safe restart program with the provinces, and we will have an update on that later this week,” he said.

ONTARIO WILL NEVER BE LEFT AT THE MERCY OF OTHER NATIONS, FORD LAUDS LOCAL BUSINESSES

The Ontario government is providing Cambridge-based Eclipse Innovations Inc. with \$1,408,475 from the Ontario Together Fund to scale up its operations to manufacture made-in-Ontario N95 masks. These masks are an essential piece of personal protective equipment (PPE) used to protect workers in healthcare and industrial settings. This investment is part of the government’s plan to increase the capacity of Ontario-made PPE, while supporting local businesses during the safe and gradual reopening of the province.

The announcement was made on Tuesday at the company’s facility by Premier Doug Ford and Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade.

“As part of our government’s made-in-Ontario plan for renewal, growth, and recovery, we are actively working with local companies to manufacture the critical PPE we need to protect our frontline workers today and well into the future,” said Premier Ford. “We have the most talented and innovative people anywhere to make the highest quality products in the world. Ontario is the manufacturing powerhouse of Canada and we encourage everyone to buy local to help our businesses and factories get back on their feet.”

Today also marked the beginning of the Premier’s tour to acknowledge and thank strong local businesses and exceptional individuals across the province who have stepped up to help out during the outbreak of COVID-19. Over the coming months, Premier Ford will visit a number of communities to recognize those who have gone above and beyond, hear ideas from the people on how the government can help them succeed in the new environment, and support made-in-Ontario products as a key part of the province’s path to recovery.

“As our government continues to move forward with the gradual and safe reopening of our economy, we have been working closely with our business community to mobilize Ontario’s manufacturing and innovation might,” said Minister Fedeli. “Businesses like Eclipse Innovations have stepped up with solutions to help at a critical time. Together with our entrepreneurs and innovators, we will ensure Ontario has the factories, plants, and assembly lines to respond to any future crisis, should the need ever arise.”

With Ontario’s support, Eclipse Innovations will create the capacity to manufacture made-in-Ontario N95 respirators, enabling it to bring a qualified, domestically produced N95 respirator to market. N95 respirators filter 95 per cent of airborne particles, making it highly effective in protecting the wearer from airborne pathogens, such as viruses and bacteria that could damage the respiratory tract. By adding this new capacity, Eclipse Innovations will be able to make one million N95 respirators per week, which will help serve domestic market



demand to ensure a safe reopening of the economy and combat COVID-19 safely and effectively.

Eclipse Innovations Inc. is a Cambridge-based company established in April 2020 as an affiliate of Eclipse Automation Inc., a leading manufacturer of custom automated equipment for the life sciences, energy, transportation, consumer, industrial and electronics industries. Eclipse Automation has 450 Ontario-based employees and this project will include the creation of 17 new permanent full-time jobs at its affiliate company, Eclipse Innovations. “Eclipse is a company that does not stand still, especially at a critical time like now. We are nimble and ready to take action, and that’s exactly what we did when we established Eclipse Innovations,” said Steve Mai, CEO of Eclipse Innovations Inc. “We are pleased to work with the Ontario government to begin manufacturing respirators as soon as possible. By working in partnership, we can rapidly create automation systems to support the design, assemble these important medical supplies and pave the way for a domestically produced N95 respirator.”

When the outbreak of COVID-19 hit, Eclipse quickly pivoted its business and collaborated with global players IREMA and Harmontronics to create a solution to design, produce and distribute N95 respirators for the domestic market. This investment will also allow Eclipse to develop a range of different mask sizes and styles, such as horizontal and vertical fold, providing multiple options for an optimal fit. This is important because, for a N95 respirator to work effectively, it must properly fit the face of the wearer. Eclipse also has a partnership with Conestoga College for the development of a N95 predictive fit testing software using facial scanning technology.

MidWeek

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Brampton approves implementation of ASE across 200 locations to reduce speeding



On July 8, City Council unanimously approved the implementation of Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) throughout 200 locations annually to reduce speeding and traffic-related incidents, and enhance road safety for all users in Brampton. Currently, there are five locations with ASE notification signs in place that will have cameras installed by September 2020:
Ward 1 Vodden Street East (between Kennedy Road and Centre Street)
Ward 2 Richvale Drive North (between Kennedy Road and Sandalwood Parkway)
Ward 3 Ray Lawson Boulevard (between Hurontario Street and McLaughlin Road)
Ward 8 Avondale Boulevard (between Bramalea Road and Birchbank

Road)
Ward 9 Fernforest Drive (between Bovaird Drive and Sandalwood Parkway)
In an effort to build awareness, signs will be installed at entry points into the city to advise motorists that ASE is in effect and that speeding is not tolerated in the community. Mayor Patrick Brown said, "There is absolutely zero tolerance for speeding in Brampton and our Council will continue to take action to make this message clear. Through measures like increasing Automated Speed Enforcement to 200 locations across our city, we are working towards reducing vehicle incidents and increasing safety for all road users, especially those most vulnerable."

MINISTER MENDICINO ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO HELP INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

International students make immense cultural and social contributions to Canada, and generate more than \$21 billion in economic activity. Since the onset of the pandemic, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, Marco Mendicino has announced a number of temporary policy changes to support and reassure international students and learning institutions. As the fall season is fast approaching, the Minister has announced additional measures to support international students beginning a new program online this fall with a Canadian learning institution, if their institution is offering the program online, so that they can pursue their education while ensuring everyone's safety. These changes will give students more certainty about their ability to enter Canada once travel and health restrictions are eased in Canada and their own home countries. They mean that students will be eligible to work in Canada after graduation, even if they need to begin their studies online from overseas this fall. The changes will continue Canada's reputation as a premier destination for international students and demonstrate the importance of the international student program and the contributions international students make to Canada. The new measures include :
providing priority study-permit processing for students who have submitted a complete application online, to ensure that permits are processed as quickly as possible
allowing students to count the time spent pursuing their studies online abroad toward their eligibility for a post-graduation work permit, if they have submitted a study permit application and if at least 50% of their program is completed in Canada
providing reassurances to international students who cannot submit all of the documentation needed to complete processing of their applications, and who choose to pursue programs through distance learning, by implementing a temporary 2-stage approval process
The temporary process will allow applicants to count the time spent studying

online abroad towards their post-graduation work permit once they receive an approval-in-principle, as long as they are able to satisfy all requirements and receive the full approval of their study permit application at a later date. As services begin to reopen, applicants will be required to submit remaining documents and receive an approved study permit before being allowed to travel to Canada. This process is available to students starting a program in the fall semester who submit a study permit application before September 15, 2020. This measure will reassure students that they can enrol and begin their studies this fall online, even when they are not able to submit all required documentation due to pandemic-related closures. While the COVID-19 pandemic has presented a number of challenges worldwide, Canada's whole-of-government approach is aimed at protecting the health of Canadians while minimizing the economic and social impact of restrictions. With these changes, it is expected that international students will continue contributing to the health and vitality of Canada and the local communities where they study from coast to coast to coast. It is important for prospective students to note that commencing their studies online from abroad following approval-in-principle of a study permit application is not a guarantee that they will receive a full approval of their study permit application, or be authorized to pursue their studies in Canada. It is still possible that an applicant could receive a negative final decision on their study permit based on factors such as inadmissibility for criminality or security reasons, and the inability to predict how the COVID-19 situation and any associated travel restrictions will evolve. Mendicino said, "The pandemic has had a significant impact on international students and the Canadian institutions and communities that host them. This is why we have implemented a series of measures to support them. We value the contribution of young people seeking a high-quality education in Canada, and we're making every effort to minimize how current challenges affect their plans and dreams for the future."

Ontario govt partners with North York General Hospital to launch Long-Term Care Pilot Project



Ontario government announced it is launching a pilot project with North York General Hospital that would give alternate level of care (ALC) hospital patients direct priority access to a long-term care bed to help reduce waitlists and end hallway health care. "One of the challenges facing our health care system is the length of time hospital patients wait to be discharged to long-term care homes," said Dr. Merrilee Fullerton, Minister of Long-Term Care. "The pilot project is an example of how our government, together with our long-term care partners, is using innovative ideas and modern solutions to help end hallway health care and reduce the long-term care waitlist." ALC patients at North York General Hospital who have been waiting for at least 60 days for a long-term care home placement will be eligible for direct access to one of 18 long-term care beds at the hospital's long-term care facility, Seniors' Health Centre. This 18-month pilot project addresses the wait times for a growing number of ALC patients — people who no longer require hospital services, but who are still in hospital because their health status prevents them from going home and there is no space in long-term care for them. "Innovative models like North York General Hospital's pilot project with Seniors' Health Centre will directly help reduce wait times by getting more patients in the right care setting faster," said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "Supporting collaborative, solution-based projects is part of our government's comprehensive plan to end hallway health care and build a connected and sustainable health care system centred around the needs of the patient." For the pilot, North York General Hospital patients will be eligible for up to 10 per cent of long-stay beds at Seniors' Health Centre, provided they meet specific criteria: they are occupying a bed at the hospital, they have been designated as an alternate level of care patient, they require immediate admission into a long-term care home, and they have been waiting for placement for at least 60 days as an alternate level of care patient. "The future of health care rests on developing innovative solutions while working together to provide an integrated system of care," said Dr. Joshua Tepper, President and CEO, North York General Hospital. "Through our long-term care home, Seniors' Health Centre, North York General is uniquely poised to help patients return to the community as quickly as possible while also improving the efficiency of the health care system. We are very pleased to be leading this pilot and see direct benefits for our patients and their families, as well as the entire community." If the pilot success is seen early, the government will consider expanding this approach to other hospitals and long-term care homes in the province.

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A DECISION ON THE FUTURE COURSE OF ACTION REGARDING THE STATUS OF PILOT IS EXPECTED TO BE TAKEN AFTER TODAY'S CLP MEETING.

With senior leaders repeatedly reaching out, is Congress growing desperate to bring Sachin Pilot 'back to party fold'?

Senior Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, Ahmed Patel, P Chidambaram, and KC Venugopal have spoken to Sachin Pilot several times, but Pilot still did not attend the Congress Legislature Party meeting today. It is clear, however, that Congress is getting desperate in its attempts to send a message to the Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister that there is still time to return to the party fold. "By repeatedly calling the meeting of the Congress legislature party, a message is being sent to Pilot that there is still time for him to come and join the CLP," sources added. Congress sources further said that the Gandhi family has been very accommodative towards the Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister unlike their stance with other rebelling leaders. It can also be seen as a strategy by the Congress that the party should not be blamed for giving an inadequate opportunity to Pilot to make amends. A decision on the future course of action regarding the status of Pilot is expected to be taken after today's CLP meeting.

Rajasthan is witnessing a magnifying political crisis as Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot has rebelled against the Ashok Gehlot-led government over 'being sidelined'. Currently, the Congress government in the state is staring at a crisis as Pilot is most likely to quit the party along with some of his loyalist MLAs. On late Monday night, the camp belonging to the state's Deputy Chief Minister, Sachin Pilot, released a video of around 15 loyalist MLAs sitting together at a hotel in Haryana's Manesar. Although Sachin Pilot is not seen in the video, some of the legislators in the clip have their faces turned towards the camera. Congress MLAs such as Inder Raj Gurjar, PR Meena, GR Khatana, and Harish Meena can be seen in the video. The 10-second video clip presumably sends a direct and strong message to the Congress leadership that Sachin Pilot is not in a mood to relent and that Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot will have to face some harsh days ahead in order to safeguard his government. In the Congress Legislative Party (CLP) meeting held earlier on Monday morning at Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's residence,

around 12 Congress MLAs were missing. After the meeting, Congress estimated that Gehlot's government has the support of 106 MLAs. Following that, the grand old party moved its MLAs to a resort to keep out of the reach of the BJP, claiming that the saffron camp is trying to bribe legislators in order to 'destabilize' the Gehlot-led government in the state. So far, the Gehlot government had the support of 123 MLAs, including 107 Congress MLAs, 2 MLAs of Bharatiya Tribal Party, one RLD MLA, and 13 Independents, but of these 123 MLAs, he is now left with only 101 MLAs. Out of the 22 rebel MLAs, Sachin Pilot has claimed the support of 19 Congress MLAs and 3 Independents. In Rajasthan's total 200 assembly seats, 101 MLAs are needed to save the government, but two MLAs of the Indian Tribal Party have also pulled out of the Gehlot government, which currently has the support of merely 99 legislators. But what is more worrying for Ashok Gehlot is that among the remaining 99 MLAs, several are claimed to be of Sachin Pilot's camp.

Delhi: Days after 6-day-old baby dies due to lack of plasma, Kejriwal says plasma brought down COVID-19 death rate

A six-day-old baby, suffering from low haemoglobin, died at the hospital after the child did not receive timely plasma. The baby could not receive plasma as three members of the family carrying blood plasma for the child were injured after the car they were travelling in was hit by a speeding vehicle on July 11. The child died at the Lal Bahadur hospital on July 11. According to the police, the accident happened on July 11 around 3 am, when the baby's uncle with his wife and sister were going to Lal Bahadur hospital after taking plasma. "At Bhagwan Das road, a BMW car rammed into their car. The three persons got injured in the accident. Around 9:00 am the baby with low haemoglobin level died," the Delhi Police said. On the other hand, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday said that plasma has been beneficial in bringing down Delhi's death rate due to COVID-19. "Delhi was the first to inaugurate the country's first plasma bank and within days another plasma bank has been set

up. Till the time there is no vaccine available for COVID-19, plasma works as an aid to save people's lives," Kejriwal said while inaugurating the second plasma bank in the national capital at the Lok Nayak Hospital. "We are not saying that it would save 100 per cent lives but many lives have been saved because of this. Plasma therapy has played a major role in lowering the death rate due to COVID-19 in the national capital," Delhi CM told reporters here. "In the last few days everyone has come forward -- the people of Delhi, doctors, paramedics, governments (the centre and state) and religious institutions -- have done a commendable job, due to which Delhi's situation is slowly coming under control. The recovery rate has also increased," he added. Delhi has a total of 113,740 COVID-19 cases, of which there are 19,017 active cases, 91,312 patients have been cured or discharged and 3,411 persons have succumbed to the virus, as per the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

'A powerful Congress leader called': Hardeep Puri triggers row after Priyanka Gandhi debunks reports on Lutyens bungalow



Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri has said that a "powerful Congress leader" had requested him to allot the Lodhi Estate government accommodation to another Congress MP so that Priyanka Gandhi Vadra can stay on. "A powerful Congress leader with much clout in the Party called me on 4 July 2020 at 12:05 pm to request that 35, Lodhi Estate be allotted to another INC MP so that Priyanka Vadra can stay on", tweeted Hardeep Singh Puri when Priyanka Gandhi Vadra dismissed rumours of asking the Central government to extend her stay in the Lutyens Delhi bungalow calling the news 'fake.' Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has been asked to evict the residence by August 1 and news of her 'request to stay on in Lutyens' bungalow for some time was going around. In a tweet, Priyanka Gandhi said, "This is FAKE NEWS. I have not made any such request to the government." As per the eviction letter handed to me on the 1st of July, I will be vacating the government accommodation at 35 Lodhi Estate by the 1st of August." Reacting to Priyanka Gandhi's tweet and Hardeep Puri said a "powerful" congress leader did call him about it without revealing who from the Congress had made the call. "Facts speak for themselves! A powerful Congress leader with much clout in the Party called me on 4 July 2020 at 12:05 pm to request that 35, Lodhi Estate be allotted to another INC MP so that Priyanka Vadra can stay on," he said, adding, "Let's not sensationalize everything please." "The leader who called me, & many others, is at the very top of the Congress hierarchy..the same political advisor who speaks and acts on your family's behalf. It was when he requested that we decided to give a two month extension in good faith", Puri added.

LADAKH, DELHI WITH HIGHEST COVID-19 RECOVERY RATE AS NATIONAL AVERAGE CROSSES 63%

The total number of recovered COVID-19 patients in the country has risen to 5,53,470 with the recovery rate further improving to 63%, the government data showed on Monday. Nineteen states and Union Territories have a recovery rate higher than the national average with Ladakh and Delhi occupying the top spots. "The series of pro-active, pre-emptive and coordinated steps taken by the Centre and the State governments for containment and prevention of COVID-19 has contributed to a gradual surge in COVID-19 recovery," the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare said. "Aggressive testing coupled with timely diagnosis has led to identifying COVID affected patients before they progress into an advanced stage of the disease; effective implementation of containment zones, surveillance activities ensured that the rate of infection stays under control," it said. The norms and standards for the care of Home Isolation along with use of oxymeters have helped to keep a check on the asymptomatic or mildly symptomatic patients without burdening the hospital infrastructure, the ministry said. Such graded policy and holistic approach has led to the recovery of 18,850 people in the last 24 hours, taking the total cumulative number of recovered cases among COVID-19 patients to 5,53,470, it added. The recovery rate has thus improved to 63.02%. According to the data shared by the ministry, 19 states have a recovery rate higher than the national average. Here is the list of states that have a higher recovery rate than the national average: According to the Health Ministry data, total number of cases reached 8,78,254 on Monday while the death toll touched 23,174. There are 3,01,609 active cases and they are all under medical supervision either in hospitals, COVID care centres or in home isolation. There are 2,51,861 more recovered cases than active cases. India's fatality rate has also dropped to 2.64% owing to the enhanced stress on clinical management of critical cases, the ministry said. During the last 24 hours, 2,19,103 samples were tested, it said, adding that the cumulative number of samples tested, as of now is 1,18,06,256. The testing per million is growing and has reached 8,555.25. Currently, there are 1200 labs, out of which 852 are in the government sector and 348 private labs.



THE MINISTRY SAID THAT THE HIGH COMMISSION OF INDIA IN ISLAMABAD WAS IN REGULAR TOUCH WITH THE INDIAN NATIONALS STRANDED IN THE NEIGHBOURING, AS WELL AS WITH THE CONCERNED AUTHORITIES IN PAKISTAN, OVER THE REPATRIATION MATTER.

FIVE INDIANS STRANDED IN PAK DUE TO COVID-19 LOCKDOWN REPATRIATED: MEA TELLS NHRC

NEW DELHI: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has informed the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) that five Indian citizens, who were stranded in Pakistan due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown, have returned to India. The MEA's submission in the NHRC comes on a complaint filed by advocate Vishnu Kumar Gupta seeking repatriation of one Satbir Singh and four others, who were stranded in Pakistan due to coronavirus lockdown. "Subsequent to Pakistan conveying its concurrence for repatriation of the stranded Indian nationals, the five Indians, referred by the complainant, have returned to India on

June 27, 2020, through Attari-Wagah border crossing," the MEA said in its reply filed on Monday. The Ministry said that the High Commission of India in Islamabad was in regular touch with the Indian nationals stranded in the neighbouring, as well as with the concerned authorities in Pakistan, over the repatriation matter. Gupta had filed a complaint in the NHRC, wherein, he requested the urgent intervention of the commission and requested to direct the MEA to take immediate steps for the safe and secure return of Indian nationals stranded in Pakistan.

CONGRESS SACKS SACHIN PILOT AS RAJASTHAN DEPUTY CM, PCC CHIEF

Sachin Pilot has been removed as Deputy Chief Minister and Rajasthan PCC Chief, announced Congress leader Randeep Singh Surjewala on Tuesday. "Sachin Pilot, Vishvendra Singh and Ramesh Meena have been removed from the posts of Deputy Chief Minister and Ministerial posts respectively. Sachin Pilot has also been removed as the Rajasthan PCC Chief," said Surjewala. Govind Singh Dotsra has been appointed as the new PCC chief, he added. "Sachin Pilot, few Congress Ministers and MLAs got involved in the conspiracy to topple the Con-

gress government by getting entangled within the trap of BJP," he added. The decision was taken after a Congress Legislature Party (CLP) meeting at the Fairmont Hotel in Jaipur, Rajasthan earlier today. The Rajasthan Congress is in turmoil over the past few days. While Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot has blamed the BJP for attempting to destabilise the State government by poaching MLAs, Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot has been camping in Delhi. A controversy broke out in Rajasthan after Special Operation Group (SOG) sent a notice to Pilot to record his statement in the case registered by SOG in the alleged poaching of Congress MLAs in the State.

DEFENCE MINISTER RAJNATH SINGH IN LEH
AMID INDIA-CHINA LAC STAND-OFF

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh arrived in Leh on Friday on a day-long visit to carry out a comprehensive review of the security scenario in the region amid the ongoing tension with China. Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Bipin Rawat and Army chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane are accompanying Singh on the visit. The defence minister visited Stakna forward areas after landing in Ladakh where the troops showed him parachuting skills of the armed forces. The defence minister is on a two-day visit to Ladakh and Jammu and Kashmir. While he is in Ladakh on the first day of his visit today, the defence minister will go to Jammu and Kashmir on Saturday. Singh's visit comes at a time when there is military tension between India and China in the sensitive sector. Both the sides recently held the fourth round of talks on disengagement in eastern Ladakh. In the talks between corps commanders of the Indian and Chinese armies, that started on Tuesday and stretched into the early hours of Wednesday, both sides discussed the roadmap for further reducing tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The focus of the latest round of military talks was to hammer out a consensus on easing tensions in the Finger Area near Pangong Tso and Dapsang plains as well as pulling back weapons and equipment from friction points in other sectors, said people aware of the developments. The previous attempts to reduce tensions along the contested border were made on June 6, June 22 and June 30. Singh was expected to visit Ladakh in early July but his tour was deferred. The defence minister will be visiting Ladakh two weeks after Prime Minister Narendra Modi made an unscheduled visit to the sector on July 3. The PM then declared that the "era of expansionism" is over, sending a strong signal to China about India's determination to defend its borders.

RAHUL GANDHI ISSUES ANOTHER WARNING, SAYS INDIA'S
NEXT MILLION COVID-19 CASES COULD COME IN WEEKS

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday once again warned India would record two million cases of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) by the second week of August, a day after the country reported a million infections. India has now become only the third country in the world after the United States and Brazil with more than a million cases of the coronavirus disease. The country crossed the million-mark in 137 days and half of these were in a hard nationwide lockdown announced in the early days of the pandemic. "10,00,000 figures exceeded. If #COVID19 spreads at the same speed, more than 20,00,000 will be infected in the country by August 10," Rahul Gandhi tweeted. "The government must take concrete, planned steps to stop the epidemic," he added. Rahul Gandhi also attached his tweet from July 14 in which he had talked about the country's infection tally crossing the million-mark during that week. "This week the figure will cross 10,00,000 in our country," he had tweeted in Hindi. Gandhi had also tagged a news report quoting the World Health Organization (WHO) chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, who had said that if concrete steps were not taken, the coronavirus pandemic would turn from bad to worse and that "there will be no return to the old normal for the foreseeable future." The WHO director general said that while numerous countries have now brought their previously explosive outbreaks under control, namely those in Europe and Asia, "too many countries are headed in the wrong direction."

'WHO SHOULD WE REWARD FOR CATCHING
VIKAS DUBEY?' UP POLICE ASK MP POLICE

Uttar Pradesh Police have written a letter to the Madhya Pradesh Police department, seeking to know who should be given the reward of Rs 5 lakh announced for gangster Vikas Dubey. The reward was announced by UP Police to get information about the whereabouts of Dubey, who belonged to Kanpur. He was killed in an encounter on July 10. Since Dubey was detained in Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain, the UP Police have sought to know who should get the reward. "We have received a letter from Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Kanpur, who has given the information about the reward announced on Vikas Dubey and wishes to know whose role among the police personnel was to detain Vikas Dubey in Ujjain," Ujjain SP Manoj Kumar Singh said on Thursday. He said, "I have constituted a team comprising of additional SPs Amrendra Singh, Rupesh Dwivedi and Akash Bhuria who will study the entire episode and submit a report for the reward to me. Based on the report I will send a proposal (to SSP, Kanpur)." Dubey, who was accused in more than 60 crime cases including murder, attempt to murder and other heinous crimes, fled his village Bikru near Kanpur after the killing of eight policemen on July 3 who had gone there to arrest him. He had planned the killing; more than a dozen men were on the rooftops of the houses in the area and started firing at the police team as soon as it reached there.

France, US establish 'air bubbles' for flights to India

Air France and United Airlines of the US will operate a limited number of international flights under so-called "air bubble" arrangements with India, and negotiations are underway with Germany and the UK to reach similar agreements, civil aviation minister Hardeep Puri said on Thursday. Later, a statement by the government said the arrangement with Germany has been "established" and Lufthansa will be operating the flights. A bilateral air bubble refers to a travel corridor between two countries that wish to reopen their borders and re-establish connections with each other. International flights to and from India have been suspended since March 23 as the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic spread across the world. Limited domestic flights have since resumed. Air France will operate 28 flights between Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Paris from July 18 to August 1; and United Airlines will operate 18 flights between Delhi, Mumbai, Newark and San Francisco until July 31. Puri said India planned to establish a similar arrangement with the UK soon, and under that, two flights a day will operate between Delhi and London. "We have got a request from Germans also. I think the arrangement with Lufthansa is almost done. We are processing that request. Lufthansa will also be operating soon," he said, adding that a similar arrangement is also in place with the United Arab Emirates starting July 12 and till August 26. "Till international civil aviation can reclaim its pre-Covid numbers, I think the answer will lie in bilateral air bubbles, which will carry a number of people but under defined conditions as countries, including India are still imposing entry restrictions," Puri said. "We welcome what the aviation minister is doing in terms of trying to bring some normalcy back to international flight operations; however, it will depend largely on the countries that accept Indian passengers. What will happen if a person who lands there tests positive, he or she will be sent back. While it is a progressive move, I don't think will see any holiday-makers taking flights for tourism given the restrictions on hotels, restaurants etc.," said Mark Martin, founder and CEO of aviation consulting firm Martin consulting. The Centre has extended the suspension of international flights until July 31. Domestic flights were allowed to resume from May 25, two months after a blanket suspension since the first lockdown was announced. Only international repatriation flights and cargo flights have been allowed by the government.



THE UK HAS ALREADY FACED ONE OF EUROPE'S WORST OUTBREAKS OF SARS-COV-2, WITH PRIME MINISTER BORIS JOHNSON FALLING SERIOUSLY ILL AT ONE POINT.

Second wave of Covid-19 in UK could lead to 120,000 deaths

A potential new wave of coronavirus infections this winter poses a serious risk to the U.K. and could lead to as many as 120,000 hospital deaths from September to June, according to a report. A second wave of Covid-19 could be more serious than the first as the National Health Service deals with a backlog of patients needing assessment and treatment and a potential outbreak of annual seasonal flu, researchers from the country's Academy of Medical Sciences said in the report. The UK has already faced one of Europe's worst outbreaks of SARS-CoV-2, with Prime Minister Boris Johnson falling seriously ill at one point. The country is one of many striving to ease restrictions on social contact while trying to revive failing economies and businesses.

Hospitals in the U.K. face an increased burden in winter when other respiratory diseases and common conditions such as heart disease tend to worsen. Covid-19 is also more likely to spread in cold weather as people spend more time indoors where the virus thrives, according to the report. Flu Shots Scientists and academics who wrote the report called for expansion of programs to test, track and trace those who have been exposed and are infected. Control measures and adequate stocks of personal protective equipment also need to be assured for hospitals and nursing homes, they said. Flu vaccinations will also be important to prevent hospitals from becoming overwhelmed, the report said. Seasonal flu is regularly

responsible in part for the NHS's "winter crisis" when some hospitals fill up with sick patients. The average number of people that one infected person transmits the coronavirus to, often called the reproduction rate or R-naught, could rise to 1.7 beginning in September, according to the report. That would lead to a peak of hospital admissions and deaths in January and February which could be worse than the first wave. The current reproduction rate in the U.K. is about 0.7-0.9, which means the epidemic is diminishing overall. Ministers have previously warned the U.K. could go back into lockdown if the R rate rises above one. The report is not a prediction but a "reasonable worst-case scenario," and calls for intense preparation, the authors said.

GLOBAL CORONAVIRUS VACCINE PLAN MAY ALLOW RICH COUNTRIES TO BUY MORE

Politicians and public health leaders have publicly committed to equitably sharing any coronavirus vaccine that works, but the top global initiative to make that happen may allow rich countries to reinforce their own stockpiles while making fewer doses available for poor ones. Activists warn that without stronger attempts to hold political, pharmaceutical and health leaders accountable, vaccines will be hoarded by rich countries in an unseemly race to inoculate their populations first. After the recent uproar over the United States purchasing a large amount of a new Covid-19 drug, some predict an even more disturbing scenario if a successful vaccine is developed. Dozens of vaccines are being researched, and some countries — including Britain, France, Germany and the US — already have ordered hundreds of millions of doses before the vaccines are even proven to work. While no country can afford to buy doses of every potential vaccine candidate, many poor ones can't afford to place such speculative bets at all. The key initiative to help them is led by Gavi, a public-private partnership started by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

that buys vaccines for about 60% of the world's children. In a document sent to potential donors last month, Gavi said those giving money to its new "Covax Facility" would have "the opportunity to benefit from a larger portfolio of Covid-19 vaccines." Gavi told donor governments that when an effective vaccine is found within its pool of experimental shots, those countries would receive doses for 20% of their population. Those shots could be used as each nation wished. That means rich countries can sign deals on their own with drugmakers and then also get no-strings-attached allocations from Gavi. The donor countries are "encouraged (but not required) to donate vaccines if they have more than they need," the document says. "By giving rich countries this backup plan, they're getting their cake and eating it too," said Anna Marriott of Oxfam International. "They may end up buying up all the supply in advance, which then limits what Gavi can distribute to the rest of the world." Dr. Seth Berkley, Gavi's CEO, said such criticisms were unhelpful. Right now there's no vaccine for anyone, he said, and "we're trying to solve that problem."

China denies burial to its soldiers killed in Galwan clash: Report

It seems China is not willing to recognise the ultimate sacrifice made by its soldiers for the country as the government is pressuring the families of soldiers who died in Galwan face off to not conduct burials and in-person funeral ceremonies, according to a US intelligence assessment. The bloody brawl between Chinese and Indian troops took place on June 15 in which both sides suffered casualties. India, without any hesitation, accepted that 20 of its soldiers have been martyred in the clash. They are being hailed as heroes. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his monthly radio programme Mann ki Baat on June 28, conveyed condolences to the kin of Army personnel who lost their lives in the Galwan valley clash and said that the sacrifice of these families is "worth worshipping". Even after the one month of the incident, China has still not disclosed how many of its soldiers were killed in the incident. The grieving Chinese families who have lost their loved ones in the clash are being mistreated by the Chinese government. First, the Chinese government refused to accept the casualties on its side following the incident and now it has denied burial of the fallen soldiers. According to the US intelligence assessment, China is not accepting that its soldiers have been killed in the showdown in order to cover up an episode that Beijing appears to consider a blunder, reported the U.S. News. The violent face-off occurred after China attempted to unilaterally change the status quo during de-escalation in eastern Ladakh. India has said that the situation could have been avoided if the agreement at the higher level been scrupulously followed by the Chinese side. The Chinese government has acknowledged the deaths of only a few officers so far. Indian intercepts have revealed that the Chinese side suffered 43 casualties including the dead and seriously injured. American intelligence believes that 35 of the Chinese soldiers were killed in the showdown. The Chinese Ministry of Civil Affairs has told families of those who died in the Galwan Valley clash that they must forgo traditional burial ceremonies and cremate the soldiers' remains and that any funeral services should be conducted remotely, not in person, a source familiar with the assessment told U.S. News. Though the government has used the threat posed by the spread of the coronavirus as a pretext, the assessment concludes that the new rules are a part of a deliberate effort by Beijing to undermine public awareness and erase any enduring reminders of the violent clash. This decision of the Chinese Communist Party has upset Chinese families who lost their loved ones in the incident, US-based Breitbart News had reported. According to Breitbart, the Chinese government is struggling to silence the families of soldiers who are using Weibo and other platforms to vent their anger and frustration. China reportedly fears that images of gravestones for its fallen soldiers of the People's Liberation Army, or PLA, could further stoke those sentiments if spread on Chinese or international social media.

UAE POSTPONES MARS MISSION DUE TO WEATHER AT JAPAN LAUNCH SITE



The United Arab Emirates has postponed to July 17 the launch of its mission to Mars due to weather conditions at the launch site in Japan, the UAE government communications office said on Tuesday. The UAE's Hope Probe was due to set off from Japan's Tanegashima Space Center at 12:51am UAE time on Wednesday (2051 GMT Tuesday) for a seven-month journey to the red planet where it was due to orbit and send back data about the atmosphere. "The UAE's space mission, the Arab world's first interplanetary mission, will launch on Friday July 17, 2020 at 12:43am UAE time (July 16, 2020 at 8:43pm GMT) from Tanegashima Space Center," the government communications office tweeted. There are currently eight active missions exploring Mars; some orbit the planet and some land on its surface. China and the United States will send another two this year. The UAE, an oil-exporting nation, first announced plans for the mission in 2014 as part of efforts to diversify away from hydrocarbons and develop a knowledge economy, aiming to reach the planet by 2021. With a population of 9.4 million, most of whom are foreign workers, the UAE lacks the scientific and industrial base of the big space-faring nations. It launched a National Space Programme in 2017 to develop expertise in space science among Emiratis. Hazza al-Mansouri became the first Emirati in space in September 2019 in a flight to the International Space Station. To develop and build the Hope Probe, Emiratis and Dubai's Mohammed Bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) worked with U.S. educational institutions with space science expertise. The UAE government has announced an ambitious goal of a Mars settlement by 2117.

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