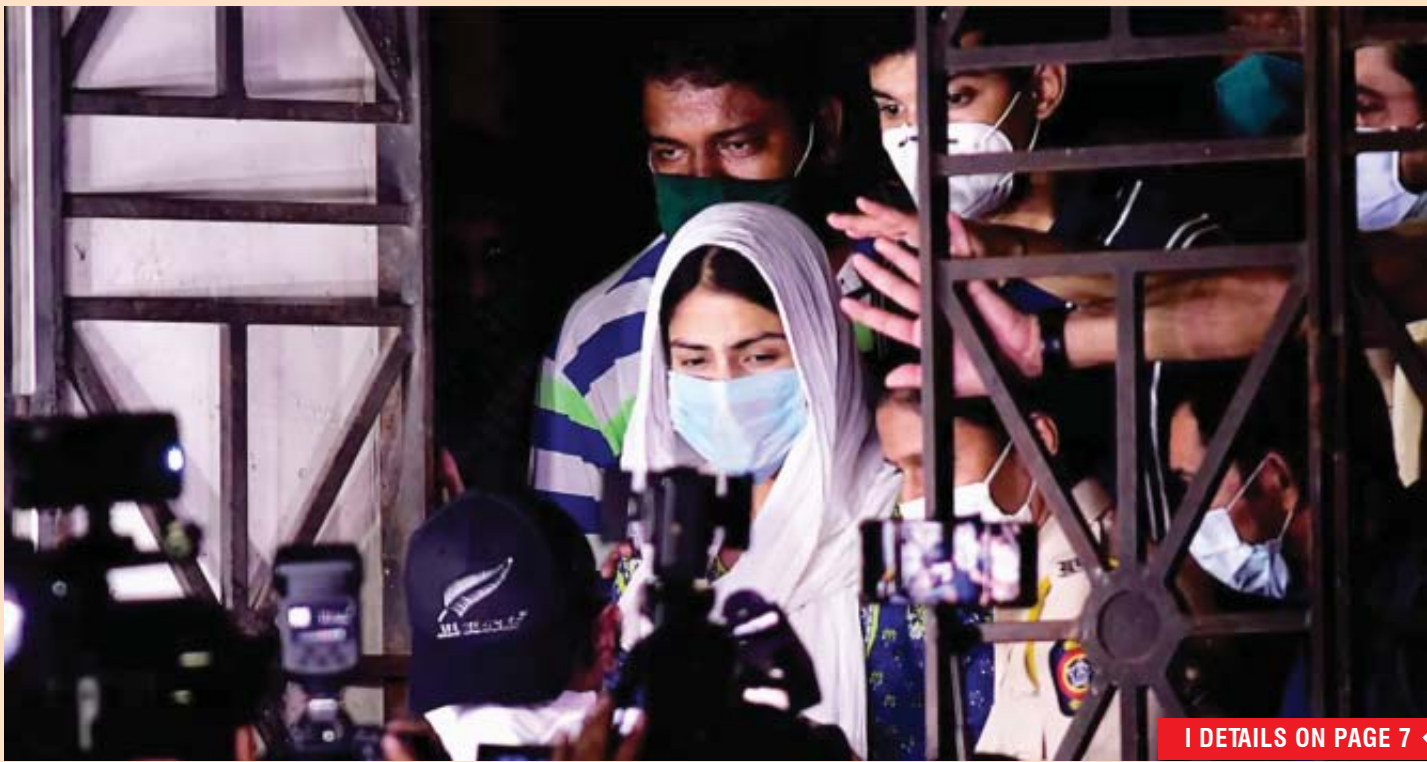


SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT SUICIDE CASE: MEDIA TRIAL OF RHEA CHAKRABORTY COMES IN BAD TASTE, SAYS GROUP EDITOR YUDHVIR JASWAL



| DETAILS ON PAGE 7

TORONTO POLICE ROLL OUT BODY-WORN CAMERAS



Toronto Police department finally launched new body-worn cameras on Monday. Deputy Shawna Coxon, Superintendent Michael Barsky, and members of 23 Division held a show and tell on Monday to demonstrate the technology. The program that began in 2014, was approved by the Toronto Police Services Board earlier in August.

| CONTD. ON PAGE 5

CANADA SIGNS DEAL WITH US COMPANY NOVAVAX TO ACQUIRE UP TO 76 MILLION DOSES OF POTENTIAL COVID-19 VACCINE



Canada's federal government has signed an agreement with American biotechnology company Novavax to acquire up to 76 million doses of a potential COVID-19 vaccine.

| CONTD. ON PAGE 5

CANADIAN PRIVATE TELEVISION AND RADIO IN "CRISIS", SAYS CAB

A new study released by a media advocacy group reveals around 40 local television outlets and 200 Canadian radio stations could be pushed to shut down in the coming couple of years as the industry continues to remain severely hit by media companies. The Canadian Association of Broadcasters (CAB) issued a report warning of widespread job cuts as local TV and radio broadcasters face massive revenue shortfall in the next two years.

| CONTD. ON PAGE 5

CANADIAN ECONOMY SHRANK BY 11.5 PER CENT BETWEEN APRIL-JUNE, GDP CONTRACTS AT ANNUALISED RATE OF 38.7 PER CENT



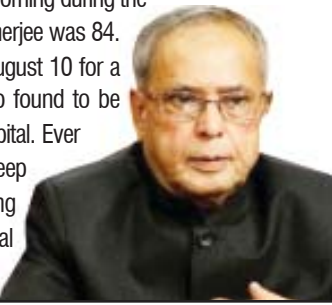
New data revealed by Statistics Canada says national economy has plunged its deepest on record in the second quarter as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic brings businesses to a slowdown. The national gross domestic product contracted at an annualized rate of 38.7 per cent for the three-month period – worst showing since the global financial crisis of 2009. The agency says economic output rebounded in May by 4.8 per cent, while June posted an increase of 6.5 per cent.

| CONTD. ON PAGE 5

PEOPLE'S PRESIDENT PRANAB MUKHERJEE IS NO MORE

Former President and distinguished parliamentarian Pranab Mukherjee passed away at the Army Research and Referral Hospital on Monday evening after suffering septic shock this morning during the course of his lung infection treatment. Mukherjee was 84. He had been admitted to the hospital on August 10 for a surgery of a large brain clot. He was also found to be COVID-19 positive at admission to the hospital. Ever since the surgery, Mukherjee had been in deep coma and on ventilator support with lung infection that was soon followed by renal complications.

| CONTD. ON PAGE 5



ELECTIONS IN CANADA THIS FALL?

"THE BALL IS IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S COURT", SAYS GROUP EDITOR YUDHVIR JASWAL

All eyes remain glued to Ottawa as the possibility of a Fall election looms over Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's administration. The Liberal government's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic capped along with the WE Charity controversy has placed the federal government in a corner. A recent poll conducted by Leger and the Association of Canadian Studies revealed Liberal support dropped by three points, to 35 per cent. It however, continues to lead the pack, as support for Conservatives remains at 29 per cent, NDP up by three points to 21 per cent, the Bloc party stands at 8 per cent, and the Green Party down one point to 5 per cent. Group Editor Yudhvir Jaswal, along with panellists Rupinder Hayer, Taji Oberoi, Amandeep Virk, and Bobby Sidhu gave an in-depth analysis on Channel Y.

Oberoi leaned towards the possibility of an election. He said, "If the Liberals have a lead in points, they would want to capitalize on this reach. I don't think once the Parliament sets in after September 23, and a Vote of Confidence is called for, the controversy is not going to die down. This is the one weapon with the Opposition which they would want to use against the ruling minority. From a political perspective, the sooner the Liberals mend their tarnished image, the better for them."

When asked about his opinion, Hayer said, "Of all the parties involved, the most advantage from a Fall election would be derived by the Liberal Party. Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole is not that popular and not much is known about him. The Liberals obviously would want to cash in on this as well. I believe there is a big chance the Liberals will be re-elected, maybe as a minority government once again."

Political commentator Bobby Sidhu said, "I used to believe early elec-

tions were impossible. However, now I am only 50 per cent convinced. The Liberals are in a great position when you think about it. The Tories just elected themselves a new leader, and as great as the NDP's standing point is, their performance in the elections is usually a setback. While we do see support for Jagmeet Singh's party, 'anti-Liberal' support as we would call it, would these people vote for the NDP? That is the question."

"If elections are to be held today, the Liberal Party will win all seats in Atlantic Canada. The only party that will lose seats is the Conservative Party. The Bloc will win in Quebec, the NDP will maintain the status quo, and the Liberals will definitely win," he said.

Amandeep Virk, meanwhile, said elections are inevitable this year. "The way the government has supported its citizens during the COVID-19 crisis, obviously they are going to benefit from it. Tory leader Erin O'Toole has the entire party's weight to pull on his back through the way he campaigns, he convinces voters. The Liberal Party is going to highlight its favouring points in the impending Throne Speech."

Sidhu said the ball is in Singh's court. "The Bloc has already said they will vote against the Liberals, Conservative will vote against the Liberals. The real question is, Does Jagmeet Singh want an election?" For Yudhvir Jaswal, Trudeau matters the most. He said, "The reason being, if Trudeau wants early elections, the Liberals won't give the NDP any room and he could engineer his own defeat. And if Trudeau does not want elections, Singh is going to make a handful of demands, and the Liberals will arrive on a compromise with them. So I feel, everything depends on Justin Trudeau. Not only Singh, even the Bloc could be a major game changer."

| CONTD. ON PAGE 6



Y MEDIA EXTENDS ITS CONDOLENCES TO COMMUNITY MEMBER AMIT AIRI, AND SANGEETA VAINU AIRI FOR THE LOSS OF THEIR SON LAKSHY IN AN UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT. THEY REMAIN IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS.

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Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE DIXIE GURDWARA LAUNCHES KIRATPUR PARK PROJECT



Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE VIGIL HELD TO REMEMBER BRAMPTON MURDER VICTIM SANGEETA SHARMA



ONTARIO'S TEACHERS UNIONS TO FILE APPEAL AGAINST PROVINCE'S BACK TO SCHOOL PLAN



As schools across Ontario step into the final stage of their Fall reopening of classrooms, four teacher unions across the province are filing formal appeals with the labour relations board over the Doug Ford-led government's back-to-school plans. The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO), the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA), the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESCO), and The Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO) have officially announced their intention to file the appeals on Monday.

According to the release, union representatives met with Ontario's Minister of Labour, and Chief Prevention Officer on August 24, "and raised a number of concerns regarding the Ministry of Education's failure to put in place all reasonable precautions for a safe return to school. Following the meeting, the unions issued a request to the Minister of Labour that orders be made requiring the Ministry of Education to set standards around physical distancing, cohorting, ventilation, and transportation."

OECTA President Liz Stuart said in the release, "The anxiety Ontarians are feeling around reopening schools is directly related to the government's lack of leadership and their haphazard, incomplete planning. The Premier and the Minister of Education say they will do everything possible to make sure schools are safe. All we are asking is that they make an honest, exhaustive effort to follow through on this promise." The unions, which represent 190,000 education workers across Ontario, state they are seeking specific standards "around physical distancing, cohorting, ventilation, and transportation." The update comes just days after Ford said his "patience was running thin" with the unions. Responding to the news, Ford said the unions "just like to fight" at a press conference.

He was quoted as saying, "They just want to fight with everyone but I don't want to fight with you. I want your cooperation like every single person in this country has been cooperating, except the teacher unions." He added that his government has done "everything" it can to create "the safest environment possible" in schools.

ENGINEERING DEGREES PAY THE MOST, FIND STATS CANADA STUDY

A brand new study by Statistics Canada reveals which bachelor's degrees pay the most, and the least. In a report titled 'Which Bachelor's Degree Programs Were Associated with the Highest Pay Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic? A Focus on Very Detailed Fields of Study' that came out earlier this week, engineering degrees were found to be the most paying, while humanities ranked the least. Most top-earning graduates came from various engineering specialties. 6 of the top 10 disciplines among men, and 7 of the top 10 disciplines among women consisted of multiple engineering specialties. Among them, Mining and Mineral Engineering graduates ranked first among men with \$111,533 in adjusted median earnings five years after graduation, and second among women with \$89,680.12. The top five among men included pharmacy, pharmaceutical sciences and administration, petroleum engineering, nuclear engineering, and chemical engineering. For women, after pharmacy, pharmaceutical sciences and administration graduates, came those with degrees in mining and mineral engineering, chemical engineering, mechanical engineering, and industrial engineering. Meanwhile, the bottom 10 slots were filled by people in arts and humanities. Music graduates earned the third least for men, while second least for women.

SECOND WAVE OF COVID-19 INEVITABLE, CITY OF TORONTO ANNOUNCES RESURGENCE PLAN

While Canada struggles to reel from the ongoing COVID-19 onslaught, Toronto officials warn of second wave bigger than the one that peaked in April. City's medical officer of health, Dr Eileen de Villa, who spoke at a press conference from city hall, said, "We know that most of us are not immune to COVID-19 and the virus is still very much circulating out there." She added that the intensity of the second wave depends on people and their following of the new norms : Wear masks, wash hands, and practise social distancing.

Toronto's COVID-19 Resurgence Plan announced on Monday, outlines how the city will fight the potential second wave. De Villa informed that only one per cent of Ontarians have the antibodies that would make them less likely to become ill with the disease. When asked how the resurgence would look like, she said it is not yet known – it could be far larger than the one experienced a couple months back, or it could come in smaller waves.

The five priority areas of the City's response include : implement public health measures, support vulnerable populations, support City employees, mitigate the impact to Toronto's economy, and ensure the resiliency of City services and a coordinated response. The City conducted a review of its COVID-19 response during the first wave to identify what worked well, challenges and practical actions to improve preparedness for future resurgences of the virus.

Also, Toronto Public Health has increased staffing to enhance the capacity to trace and contact people with COVID-19 and those with whom they have had contact. Speaking at the conference, Mayor John Tory said, "Today, we outlined the plans we have in place and the work being done to prepare for a resurgence of COVID-19. This means strengthening the case, contact and outbreak management at public health, creating multilingual Community Outreach Rapid Response teams, making sure we have focused health plans on key areas like schools and long-term care homes, and continuing to build up our supply of personal protective equipment." He added, "These plans are based on the same clear and fearless public health advice we have had throughout this pandemic, advice which we have always accepted and acted on. And all of these plans are focused on making sure we minimize the resurgence as much as possible. We've said many times that COVID-19 is a marathon not a sprint." Dr de Villa said, "My team is working hard to support reopening while protecting the health of Torontonians in the face of COVID-19. Virus resurgence is inevitable because most of us do not have immunity. Our success in living with the virus depends greatly on the choices we all make to minimize risk to ourselves and others in the coming months. We will continue to vigorously champion the effective protections that have served Toronto well since the pandemic began here: frequent hand washing, physical distancing and mask wearing. Making the right choices as individuals will strengthen the work by Toronto Public Health and our partners to limit the impact of COVID-19 on our city."



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SOUTHASIAN PULSE

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(MON TO FRI)

SOUTHASIAN PULSE

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SOUTHASIAN PULSE

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SOUTHASIAN PULSE

MIDNIGHT

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PEOPLE’S PRESIDENT PRANAB MUKHERJEE IS NO MORE

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

The death of Mukherjee was announced by his son and former MP Abhijit Mukherjee who tweeted, “With a Heavy Heart , this is to inform you that my father Shri #PranabMukherjee has just passed away inspite of the best efforts of Doctors of RR Hospital & prayers ,duas & prarthanas from people throughout India ! I thank all of You.”

The central government has announced seven-day state mourning. Only last year Mukherjee was conferred the highest civilian honour of the country, the Bharat Ratna, in recognition for his service as a long-term parliamentarian who served in the Congress in various capacities including as the party’s chief crisis manager.

Mukherjee served in the Cabinets of late Indira Gandhi, PV Narasimha Rao and most recently Manmohan Singh.

Under the UPA, Mukherjee was minister of defence, external affairs and finance starting 2004 and the Congress’ strategist in parliament until his journey as a parliamentarian ended in July 2012 when he became the 13th President of the Indian Republic.

On July 25, 2017, Mukherjee’s association with Parliament also ended after he demitted the highest office followed 48 action packed years.

Mukherjee began his career in politics in 1969 as an independent member representing Bangla Congress — a regional party in Parliament from 1969 to 1971.

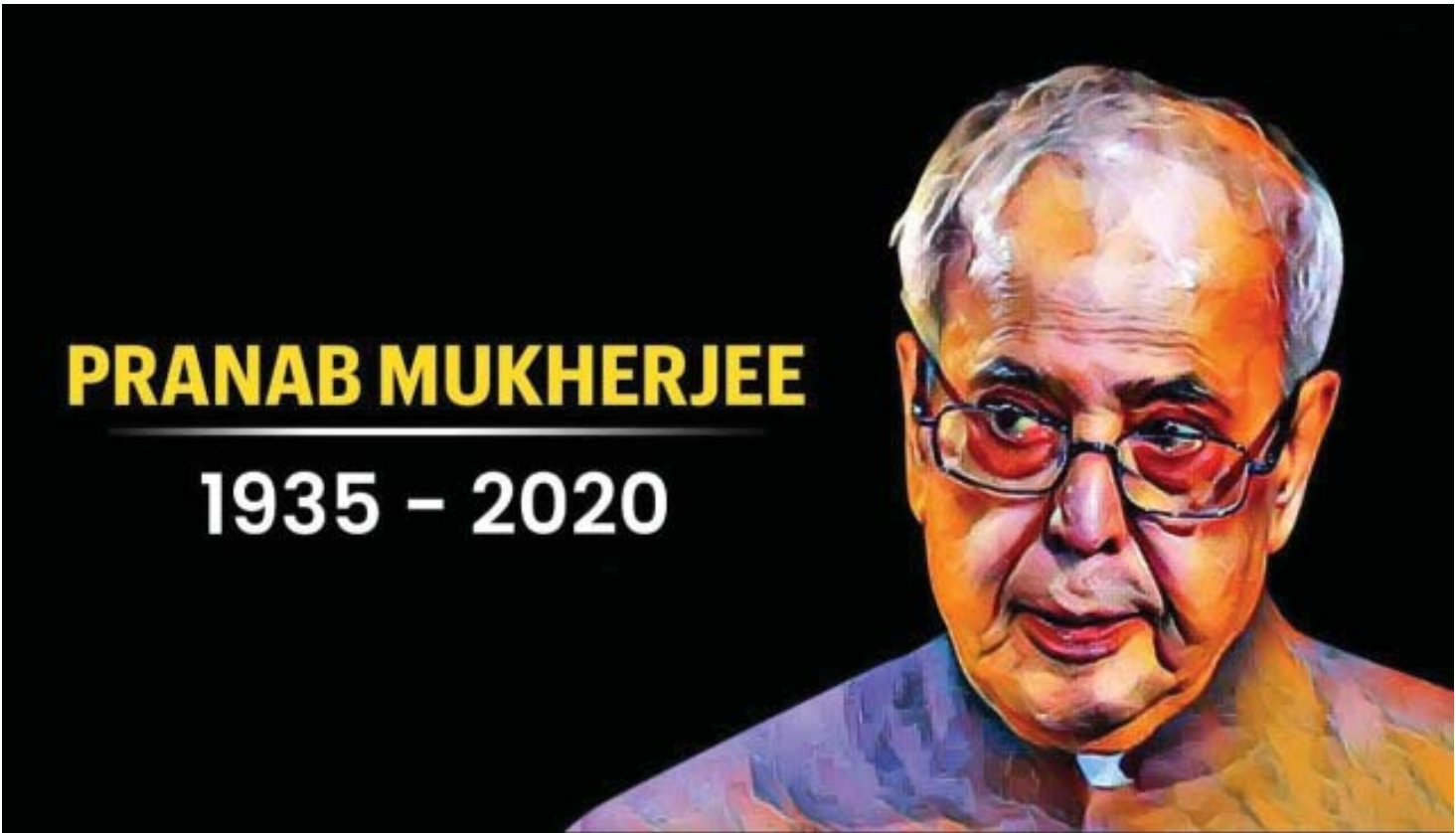
Pranab’s relationship with the Congress began with the merger of Bangla Congress into the Congress Parliamentary Party in 1971.

There was no looking back since. Mukherjee was a member of Rajya Sabha for five terms

till 2004 when he was elected to the Lok Sabha for the first time ever from Jangipur after having lost two previous LS polls from Malda in 1977 and Bolpur in 1980. At that time he resigned as Congress Treasurer to contest. The only time when Mukherjee was out of Parliament was from 1987 to 1993. During this period he was out of Congress too for a year from 1987 to 1988.

Groomed in early politics by late Indira Gandhi who he always considered his mentor, Mukherjee repaid his mentor by never giving any evidence to the Shah commission the Janata government set up to look into the excesses of the emergency declared by Indira Gandhi.

After serving in the Cabinet of Narasimha Rao, Mukherjee went on to grow close to Sitaram Kesri who succeeded Rao as Congress president in 1996.



“I shared an excellent working relationship with Sitaram Kesri,” Mukherjee said in his memoirs adding that Kesri immediately appointed him the head of party’s foreign affairs cell.

Mukherjee’s indispensability to the Congress and his knowledge of party constitution later came in handy when the Congress Working Committee stalwarts came to him asking how to dislodge Kesri to install Sonia Gandhi as party president.

And Mukerjee showed the way forward that led to Kesri’s ouster from the party and Sonia’s installation in 1998.

During UPA years, Mukerjee grew closer to Sonia Gandhi who refused to spare him to contest for President in 2007 saying “you are needed in the government”.

It was only later in 2012 that Mukherjee contested for the office of President and won. In his memoirs Mukherjee recalled how everyone had hoped

that after Sonia Gandhi declined to be prime minister in 2004 after Congress staked claim to form government he had anticipated that she would name him for the post.

“The prevalent expectation was that I would be the best choice for prime minister after Sonia Gandhi declined....There was later speculation in the media that I wouldn’t join the government because I couldn’t work under Manmohan Singh who had been my junior. The fact was I was reluctant to join the government and told Sonia Gandhi accordingly. She insisted I should join and that I would be vital to its functioning. As it turned out Dr Singh would talk to me on all important issues and seemed to depend on me. We shared a good working relationship,” he wrote in his last book “The Coalition Years: 1996-2002”.

Mukerjee who could never be PM rose to be President, the highest constitutional office, which he made accessible for the people.

TORONTO POLICE ROLL OUT BODY-WORN CAMERAS

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

In a press note released by Toronto Police Services, Deputy Chief Coxon said, “We are excited about this program because we believe it will allow for increased transparency, accountability and a digital program that will allow for better efficiencies in terms of both officers time and the release of digital evidence.” She added, “The cameras allow for increased accountability because they are objective, they record what is happening in the moment on both sides and this allows us to see what an officer is going through... At the end of the day, it’s an objective measure to show what happens.” One of the frontline officers at 23 Division who have been using the cams since the program rolled out last week, Const. Michael Thomas explained how the gear works. He said in the release, “Before we get to a call, we turn it on and it runs for the entire interaction that we have until the investigation is completed. It’s comfortable and easy to use. You tap it twice and you hear a beep which means it is activated. Every minute or two, you hear a beep telling you the camera is still running.” The body-worn camera will be in plain view. It has lights and notices indicating it has been activated. A police officer will turn on the body-worn camera prior to arriving at a call for service, when they start investigating an individual or when they are asking a person questions for the purpose of collecting their information.

The camera will turn off when the call for service or investigation is complete or when the officer determines the continuous recording is no longer serving its intended purpose. The release said, “At the end of every shift, a police officer will take their body-worn camera and dock it at one the porting stations in their unit/division. Once docked, the data will automatically be uploaded and stored in a Canadian-based cloud system.” The cameras will be deployed to 12 Division in October and it’s anticipated that all Divisions will be equipped with the cameras by October 2021, with a total of 2,350 across the city.

CANADA SIGNS DEAL WITH US COMPANY NOVAVAX TO ACQUIRE UP TO 76 MILLION DOSES OF POTENTIAL COVID-19 VACCINE

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

The Maryland-based company announced in a press release on Monday that it has struck a deal to produce a vaccine candidate it is working on for the Canadian government. Both sides expect to finalize an advance purchase agreement, under which Novavax will supply doses of the candidate beginning as early as the second quarter of 2021. The purchase agreement will be subject to licensure by Health Canada. The company’s vaccine candidate is currently in multiple Phase 2 clinical trials. The initial trial tested 106 subjects aged 18 to 59 with the vaccine, along with 25 people who received a placebo.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau made the announcement through a press release on Monday. He said that the government has arrived on agreements in principle with Johnson & Johnson and Novavax to procure millions of doses of experimental COVID-19 vaccines. These agreements add to those already reached with Pfizer and Moderna, which were made following the recommendations of the COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force. With these agreements, Canada has now secured access to four of the leading vaccine candidates. “As we continue to work together to limit the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the health of Canadians, as well as its social and economic effects, we must also maximize our chances of defeating the virus. To do this, we need to invest in the development of several promising vaccines and ensure that we can manufacture and distribute the vaccine to as many Canadians as possible, as quickly as possible. That is how we will move forward on a sustainable path to a full recovery,” he said. Canada’s Minister of Public Services and Procurement, Anita Anand said in a press release, “We are pleased to announce this agreement with Novavax, which will give Canadians access to a promising COVID-19 vaccine candidate. This is an important step in our government’s efforts to secure a vaccine to keep Canadians safe and healthy, as the global pandemic evolves.” CEO Stanley C Erck said in a release, “We are pleased to work with the Canadian government on supply of our COVID-19 vaccine, an essential step to ensure broad access of our vaccine candidate.” Novavax has similar deals with the United Kingdom, India, the Czech Republic, South Africa, and Japan.

CANADIAN PRIVATE TELEVISION AND RADIO IN “CRISIS”, SAYS CAB

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

The study titled ‘The Crisis in Canadian Media and the Future of Local Broadcasting’, projects the possible closure of 50 radio stations within four to six months and a further 150 radio stations in the following 18 months, along with the closure of 40 or more of Canada’s 94 private local TV stations in the next 12 to 36 months. It said, “The most vulnerable operations are AM stations as well as independent and other private radio and TV stations in smaller markets across Canada.” According to the study, Chair of the CAB Board of Directors, Lenore Gibson says, “Canadian private television and radio is in crisis. Without immediate action, Canada will see a wave of local television and radio closures over the next three years. This will deny many communities a daily local media voice, and significantly reduce the diversity of news choices and voices in almost every community in Canada.” The report goes on to project a revenue shortfall totalling over \$1 billion in the three years from 2020 to 2022. In addition to this, continued reduction of resources for local news also means more job losses including local journalists and newsgatherers. “In private radio, these closures could lead to an estimated 2000 job losses, or 24 per cent 2019 employment levels.” The CAB has filed an application with the CRTC for emergency regulatory relief for the broadcast year ending August 31, 2020. Canadian private broadcasters call for short term regulatory relief and new government measures to create a more fair and sustainable future for local broadcasting.

CANADIAN ECONOMY SHRANK BY 11.5 PER CENT BETWEEN APRIL-JUNE, GDP CONTRACTS AT ANNUALISED RATE OF 38.7 PER CENT

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

The agency’s preliminary estimate for July indicates a three per cent increase in real GDP. In a release outed on Friday, Stats Canada said, “Real gross domestic product fell 11.5 per cent in the second quarter, following a 2.1 per cent decline in the first quarter. The second quarter decline – the steepest since quarterly data were first recorded in 1961 – reflected sharp decreases in household spending, business investment, and international trade owing to widespread shutdowns of non-essential businesses, border closures, and restrictions on travel and tourism in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.” It added, “Final domestic demand fell 11.1 per cent continuing the 1.9 per cent drop in the first quarter. Expressed at an annualized rate, real GDP fell 38.7% in the second quarter. In contrast, real GDP in the United States fell 31.7%.” Business investment fell 16.2 per cent, reflecting limited construction activities, plant closures, low oil prices and heightened uncertainty. Export volumes declined 18.4 per cent and import volumes dropped 22.6 per cent, as major trading partners’ economies shrank owing to their adoption of measures to contain the pandemic. The report also revealed declines in household spending affecting goods and services. Outlays for durable goods fell 15.8 per cent, the steepest drop ever recorded. Substantial declines occurred in purchases of new passenger cars, new trucks, vans, and sport utility vehicles, and used motor vehicles, reflecting closures of car dealerships, income uncertainty, and reduced transportation needs as working remotely became more widespread for some professions, Outlays for semi-durable goods fell 13 per cent led by garments, clothing materials, and footwear. Outlays for non-durable goods fell 3.6 per cent, after rising 2.9 per cent in the first quarter. The decline in outlays for services was attributable to food, beverage, and accommodation services and transportation services.

NIKKI HALEY SAYS CHINA TOOK ‘NAIVE’ US FOR A RIDE, CALLS INDIA REAL FRIEND

China has taken a “naive” US and its leaders for a ride over the past several decades, according to former top Indian-American diplomat Nikki Haley, who said the Trump administration through its robust Indo-Pacific strategy is now learning who its real friends are.



Speaking at the third India-US Leadership Summit organised virtually by the US India Strategic and Partnership Forum (USISPF), former US ambassador to the UN Haley on Tuesday said Americans know that Indians are not a threat to them and as such, it is time for Indians to share their success story. The US has been pushing for a greater role for India in the strategic Indo-Pacific which is seen by many countries as an effort to contain China’s growing clout in the region.

“Let’s acknowledge how China did it. China was very strategic. This was very planned out and America was very naive. The thought leaders in America thought that if we were nice to China, if we open doors to China, it would become more like the West, that China would become more democratic,” Haley said. Responding to a question from Mastercard CEO and president Ajay Banga, she said this was from both sides of the aisle -- Republican and Democrat leaders, all of whom thought that if the US was nice to China, there would be an alliance.

India reeling under Modi-made disasters: Rahul Gandhi

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Wednesday stepped up his attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the steepest decline in the GDP since independence, Chinese transgressions in Ladakh, rising unemployment and job losses, GST dues to states and a significant increase in Covid-19 cases across the country. “India is reeling under Modi-made disasters: 1. Historic GDP reduction -23.9% 2. Highest Unemployment in 45 yrs 3. 12 Crs job loss 4. Centre not paying states their GST dues 5. Globally highest COVID-19 daily cases and deaths 6. External aggression at our borders,” he tweeted.



India’s GDP shrank by the steepest percentage ever—23.9%—in the April-June period as the coronavirus pandemic-induced nationwide lockdown battered an already slowing economy, according to data released by the National Statistical Office (NSO). Gandhi has been attacking the government over the present state of economy, alleging that its “ruining” started with demonetisation, which was followed by a series of “erroneous” policies of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government at the Centre. On Tuesday, former finance minister P Chidambaram had said the GDP estimates should be a matter of “surprise and shame” to the government that was seeing ‘green shoots’ on several days during the first quarter and did nothing to cushion the fall by taking suitable fiscal and welfare measures. “But we know that the Modi government has no shame and will not acknowledge its mistakes. All these had been anticipated,” Chidambaram had said, addressing a joint virtual press conference with party colleague Supriya Shrinete after the provisional estimates of GDP were released for the quarter April-June 2020.

Elections Canada draws a map for potential polls during the ongoing pandemic

Not just the ruling, and Opposition parties, but even Elections Canada seems to be bracing itself for a potential Fall general election. The federal elections agency, in an update on their ongoing elections-readiness planning said the Canada Elections Act could use some amendments. The agency is suggesting a weekend election with a two-day polling period on a Saturday and Sunday, instead of the traditional one-day vote normally held on a Monday.

The release cites recommendations to Parliament for a limited number of legislative measures that would vary provisions of the Canada Elections Act. They recommend mail-in ballots sent before the deadline could continue to be accepted until the day following the two-day week-end polling period. Elections Canada is also looking to have the Parliament change the law to increase the number of voting days for electors in care homes, preventing poll workers from having to enter multiple facilities in a day.

Formal recommendations will be made to Parliament in September following consultations with stakeholders. The update reads, "Given the current minority government, an election could take place at any time. If an election were to take place before all the measures outlined above are fully implemented or in the absence of legislative



changes, Elections Canada would focus on implementing physical distancing and other public health guidelines at polling places and local Elections Canada offices, including providing protective equipment for poll workers and office workers."

Ontario Liberal Party Launches Whistleblower Website For Parents, Students And Education Workers As Schools Prepare To Reopen



The Ontario Liberal Party has launched a new anonymous whistleblowing website to help highlight potential issues as schools in the province begin to open classrooms. Provincial party leader Steven Del Duca has called upon students, parents, and front line workers in education to come forward and document their experiences on the website – www.KeepOurSchoolsSafe.ca.

Del Duca is quoted in a release as saying, "Across Ontario, Moms and Dads are anxious about the safety of their children and are still

looking for answers a week away from Labour Day. They still don't know what will happen if a student in their child's class is sick – they don't even know if they will be informed." He adds, "We need everyone's help to share local stories and concerns about back to school. We want to hear about how teachers, caretakers and support staff have stepped up to help make the transition back to school better because Doug Ford has been missing in action. Because when we are talking about the safety of our students, parents and education workers, we have to get it right."

ELECTIONS IN CANADA THIS FALL?

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

"It is very important. Singh has not laid out anything specific as of now. He does not have a long bucket list. Meanwhile, all the Bloc needs is for the Prime Minister to step aside. So there could be a deal with the NDP tomorrow, or the Bloc. So I think the ball is in the Prime Minister's court," Jaswal added.

A province-wise data shows 35 per cent support to the Liberals in British Columbia, followed by the NDP with 28 per cent, while Conservatives have 25 per cent. In Alberta, there is a 53 per cent support to the Tories, followed by the NDP with 21 per cent, and the Liberals at 18 per cent. The Liberals lead in the Atlantic with 57 per cent, and 30 per cent in Quebec.

Jaswal said, "If we talk about vote-rich Ontario, more important than the province's 124 seats, is the GTA's 70 seats. Toronto itself holds 25 seats. Whoever wins these 70 seats, will undoubtedly win the elections. This will be a very important position."

FEDERAL, PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS EXTEND CHILD CARE FUNDING IN ONTARIO



Minister of Education, Stephen Lecce, and Federal Minister of Families, Children and Social Development, Ahmed Hussen announced an additional investment through the one-year Canada-Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Agreement (ELCC) of nearly \$147 million to Ontario for 2020-21. This funding will help licensed child care providers and EarlyON child and family centres.

In 2020-21, ELCC funding supported measures to minimize the impacts of COVID-19. It will also continue to support initiatives outlined in the initial three-year agreement, including increased access for families and professional learning for staff. Funding provided through the ELCC is in addition to \$234.6 million being provided through the Safe Restart Agreement to keep children and staff safe in child care and early years settings.

"We are investing more in child care to ensure it is safe, accessible and affordable for working moms and dads," said Minister Lecce. "This agreement will ensure funding continues to flow so that child care remains available to parents as they return to work today and into the future."

During the closure and reopening periods, provincial funding was available to all child care operators to help them remain financially sustainable following the COVID-19 outbreak. Ontario also fully funded emergency child care for health care and other frontline workers during the closure period, and protected parents by preventing child care fees from being charged where care was not provided.

"Child care is not a convenience, it is a necessity. High-quality early learning experiences are essential to the intellectual, emotional and physical development of our children," said Minister Hussen. "The Government of Canada is pleased to continue working with the Government of Ontario to ensure that all children and families in Ontario have equal access to the quality early learning and child care they need to succeed."

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Driver Testing services reintroduced in province

The Ontario government is expanding driver testing services across the province with strict protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Beginning Tuesday, September 8, Ontarians will be able to book class G road tests and access all classes of driver testing services at DriveTest centres across Ontario.

"Our government has taken great care to ensure the health and safety of staff and customers as DriveTest centres have gradually reintroduced services," said Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation. "The resumption of full driver testing services at DriveTest centres will help more people to get back to work as our province continues to reopen."

All full-time DriveTest centres will be offering 100 per cent of their services with restrictions removed, such as knowledge tests being accessible only by birth month. Some examples of resumed services include:

First come, first served:

Class G1 and M1 knowledge tests

Driver's licence exchanges and upgrades

By Appointment only:

Class G2 and class G road tests

Class M2 and class M motorcycle road tests; and,

Commercial driver road tests for all classes of commercial driver's licences.

Part-time Travel Point locations will continue to reopen for driver examination services as the shared facilities they are located in become available for public use. People can visit DriveTest.ca to receive the most up to date information.

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.

The government continues to ask the public to be patient when visiting DriveTest centres and is encouraging people who can wait to get a driver's licence to delay visiting DriveTest centres in an effort to reduce crowding. Ontario has temporarily extended the validity of all driver licences so that no one will lose their licence as a result of COVID-19.

"Throughout this outbreak, Ontarians have made many sacrifices to stop the spread of COVID-19," said Minister Mulroney. "We appreciate the public's continued patience and understanding with the health and safety requirements as we are trying to protect you, other customers and DriveTest staff."

Doug Ford announces \$9.3 million investment to help over 2000 students and job seekers



The Ontario government is investing \$9.3 million in 11 training projects to help approximately 2,000 students and job seekers prepare for auto and advanced manufacturing careers. The funding will support projects from a range of organizations, including auto manufacturers, industry associations, training providers and public universities and colleges. Details were provided Monday by Premier Doug Ford, Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development, Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, and members of the Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association. "Ontario's auto and manufacturing employers have made game-changing contributions in the fight against COVID-19 by re-tooling their production lines to make personal protective equipment and medical supplies," said Premier Ford. "As we gradually reopen the province, we are making strategic investments to train and re-train people to ensure all businesses get the talent they need, and everyone can get back to work and put food on the table to support Ontario's economic recovery."

The following funding recipients were selected through calls for proposals: The Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, George Brown College, Skills for Change of Metro Toronto, Ford Motor Company of Canada, Humber College, the Canadian Skills Training and Employment Coalition, Seneca College Newnham Campus, Sheridan College, and Centennial College.

"Our government is committed to helping businesses find skilled workers and to providing everyone with an opportunity to land those in-demand jobs," said Minister McNaughton. "Training and retraining are an important part of our economic recovery efforts. By investing in new training programs, we help laid-off workers and young jobseekers get the skills upgrades they need to establish new, fulfilling careers."

The training projects range from hands-on learning opportunities for students in co-op or internship settings to short-duration, high quality college courses that help laid-off workers learn to operate high-tech machinery or gain credentials for good jobs in the auto or advanced manufacturing sector.

"Ontario's talented and innovative workers are the greatest asset of our world-class automotive and advanced manufacturing sectors," said Minister Fedeli. "Today's announcement further strengthens our talent pipeline and provides exciting training opportunities for rewarding careers in Ontario's dynamic manufacturing industry."

"Everything in the globally competitive automotive sector comes down to the people you can recruit, train and retain," said Flavio Volpe, President of the Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association. "Thanks to the support from the Ontario government, our program can help Ontario companies ensure they find home-grown talent and that the future of this sector outshines its great past."

Ontario Premier Ford announces \$25M to build and update 78 Dental projects

The Ontario government is providing \$25 million to expand access to the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program. The funding will be used to support 78 infrastructure projects across the province, including building new dental clinics and renovating existing facilities. The province is also adding eight new mobile dental clinics that will bring services directly to clients, making it easier for vulnerable seniors to access the dental care they need. The announcement was made on Tuesday by Premier Doug Ford, Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, and Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility. "Our government made a promise to Ontario's low-income seniors that we would provide them with free, routine dental care and we are keeping that promise," said Premier Ford. "As part of the next phase of the program, we are enhancing our commitment, which includes more mobile dental clinics. We are bringing critical dental care right to the doorstep of our seniors and allowing for better treatment in underserved areas." The funding will be used to build new dental clinics and make upgrades and expansions to existing clinics at public health units, participating community health centres and Aboriginal Health Access Centres. These projects are expected to be completed by March 31, 2021.

The distribution is as follows:

50 projects will receive \$11.6 million to support existing clinics with upgrades and expansions; 28 projects will receive \$13.3 million to build new clinics that will help provide dental services in underserved areas, which includes eight new mobile dental clinics. "Our government is investing in dental infrastructure projects across Ontario to ensure low-income seniors will have better and faster access to the services they need, no matter where they live," said Minister Elliott. "The Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program is a key part of our plan to end hallway health care by providing seniors with access to quality dental care and keeping them out of hospitals."

The Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program will reduce unnecessary trips to the hospital and help to eliminate hallway health care, prevent chronic disease and improve the quality of life and overall well-being for eligible seniors.

"Our government is committed to making sure our seniors stay safe and healthy," said Minister Cho. "Expanding the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program and offering mobile services will make it easier for those who have difficulty getting out of their home, or for those living in rural or remote parts of the province, to access the care they need."

SUSHANT SINGH RAJPUT SUICIDE CASE: MEDIA TRIAL OF RHEA CHAKRABORTY COMES IN BAD TASTE, SAYS GROUP EDITOR YUDHVIR JASWAL



The ongoing investigation into the death of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput has remained in the spotlight since June. A case that has opened up multiple avenues into the Indian film industry, it is however, the unapologetic vilification of the actor's former girlfriend Rhea Chakraborty, that takes the cake.

Sushant Singh Rajput was found dead in his Mumbai apartment on June 14. It was followed by an intense drama involving the Mumbai Police, Bihar Police, Rajput's family, Rhea, and the Indian media. Well-touted Indian media and their journalists resorted to slam Chakraborty, blaming her for Sushant's "murder". While the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has launched an investigation, foul play into his death is yet to be proven in court.

Y Media Group Editor Yudhvir Jaswal said it cannot be declared as a "murder" yet. "Say tomorrow, after a post mortem, and a CBI analysis, any kind of foul play comes to light, then, you could call it a murder. It is sad, the way Rhea Chakraborty has been vilified. Bollywood actors, actresses, celebrities have a particular lifestyle. Everyone is aware of it. But just because someone takes drugs, or someone has an affair, doesn't necessarily make them the culprit," Jaswal said.

He added, "Media should not jump the gun, creating a controversy of its own. Media's job is to report the news, give analysis. Not to create news. We report updates on the case every day too. But that is where we limit our involvement as a media source. Concocting a story of our own and presenting, feeding it to the people is utterly wrong and in complete bad taste."

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TRUDEAU CONDEMNS VANDALISM OF SIR JOHN A MACDONALD STATUE IN MONTREAL



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has condemned vandalism of a Sir John A MacDonald statue in Montreal over the weekend. Talking to reporters on Monday, Trudeau said that while the

country's past leaders have engaged in questionable things, destruction is not advancing the path towards justice and equality. Trudeau said, "We are a country of laws and we are a

country that needs to respect those laws, even as we seek to improve and change them, and those kind of acts of vandalism are not advancing the path towards greater justice and

equality in this country. Actions such as that have no place in a society that abides by the rule of law." Speaking in French, he said, "He was our first prime minister and I think it's important to recognise the role he played in the creation of this country compared to world we live in now." Activists targeted the statue of Sir John last weekend, because of his association with the Indian residential school system. He is also known to oppose Chinese immigration, levying a \$50 "head tax" on Chinese immigrants. They say glorification of the leader comes in sharp contrast to the current fight for justice. The statue was brought down and decapitated during a protest calling to defund police services.

PCO hires firm to conduct "thorough" review into Governor General's office allegations

The Privy Council Office (PCO) has engaged a third party consulting firm to conduct a thorough review into harassment allegations within the office of Governor General Julie Payette. The Office released multiple details about the probe in a statement, announcing that Quintet Consulting Corporation will undertake the review. It said that the firm "has been mandated to act independently" to draft a report about the nature of the concerns. The PCO, on July 23, had initiated a "thorough, independent, and impartial review" to examine the concerns raised by previous and current employees of the Governor General. The Terms of Reference for the review have since been finalized. Employees of the Office, both past and current, will be invited to voluntarily and confidentially share their perspectives with Quintet. President of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada and Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs Dominic LeBlanc has also been asked to oversee the review. GG Payette's office has come under the scanner in recent weeks after staffers alleged she created a toxic atmosphere in the office, and yelled at employees prompting many to quit.



DOUG FORD ANNOUNCES \$9.3 MILLION INVESTMENT TO HELP OVER 2000 STUDENTS AND JOB SEEKERS

The Ontario government is investing \$9.3 million in 11 training projects to help approximately 2,000 students and job seekers prepare for auto and advanced manufacturing careers. The funding will support projects from a range of organizations, including auto manufacturers, industry associations, training providers and public universities and colleges. Details were provided Monday by Premier Doug Ford, Monte McNaughton, Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development, Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade, and members of the Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association. "Ontario's auto and manufacturing employers have made game-changing contributions in the fight against COVID-19 by re-tooling their production lines to make personal protective equipment and medical supplies," said Premier Ford. "As we gradually reopen the province, we are making strategic investments to train and re-train people to ensure all businesses get the talent they need, and everyone can get back to work and put food on the table to support Ontario's economic recovery." The following funding recipients were selected through calls for proposals: The Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association, Fiat Chrysler Automobiles, George Brown College, Skills for Change of Metro Toronto, Ford Motor Company of Canada, Humber College, the Canadian Skills Training and Employment Coalition, Seneca College Newnham Campus, Sheridan College, and Centennial College. "Our government is committed to helping businesses find skilled workers and to providing everyone with an opportunity to land those in-demand jobs," said Minister McNaughton. "Training and retraining are an important part of our economic recovery efforts. By investing in new training programs, we help laid-off workers and young jobseekers get the skills upgrades they need to establish new, fulfilling careers." The training projects range from hands-on learning opportunities for students in co-op or internship settings to short-duration, high quality college courses that help laid-off workers learn to operate high-tech machinery or gain credentials for good jobs in the auto or advanced manufacturing sector. "Ontario's talented and innovative workers are the greatest asset of our world-class automotive and advanced manufacturing sectors," said Minister Fedeli. "Today's announcement further strengthens our talent pipeline and provides exciting training opportunities for rewarding careers in Ontario's dynamic manufacturing industry." "Everything in the globally competitive automotive sector comes down to the people you can recruit, train and retain," said Flavio Volpe, President of the Automotive Parts Manufacturers Association.



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Nation bids tearful adieu to Pranab Mukherjee



Former President and Bharat Ratna Pranab Mukherjee’s last rites were performed with full military honour at the Lodhi Road crematorium in south Delhi on Tuesday amid strict adherence to social distancing norms because of the raging coronavirus disease (Covid-19) outbreak that forced a limited presence of family and his friends. The former President (84) died on Monday evening, 22 days after has admitted to the Army Hospital (Research and Referral) in south Delhi to undergo a surgical procedure to remove a brain clot from which he never recovered. He had also tested Covid-19 positive during his treatment in the hospital. Mukherjee’s mortal remains were brought to his residence at 10, Rajaji Marg earlier on Tuesday morning, where President Ram Nath Kovind, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Vice-president M Venkaiah Naidu, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, former PM Manmohan Singh, BJP president JP Nadda, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad, chiefs of the three services and a host of dignitaries paid their tribute. Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal also paid his homage. “Paid tributes to respected Shri Pranab Mukherjee. He would be remembered by generations for his efforts towards India’s progress,”

PM Modi tweeted after paying a floral tribute to the leader, who he considered to be his mentor and a father-figure. The Union Cabinet observed a two-minute silence in memory of Mukherjee, who had served as the Union minister for finance, defence and external affairs during the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance’s (UPA) rule between 2004 and 2014, among his other portfolios and roles in his long and distinguished career in public life. “The cabinet expresses profound sorrow at the sad demise of Pranab Mukherjee, former President of India. In his passing away, the country has lost a distinguished leader and an outstanding parliamentarian,” the Cabinet said in a resolution. The former President was taken for the last rites in a hearse van instead of the gun carriage with the pall-bearers wearing personal protect equipment (PPE) kits as per the Covid-19 protocol. He was cremated in an electric crematorium and his son Abhijit performed the last rites. “His presence was a support for our family, we’ll miss him. I feel Covid-19 was not the main factor for his death rather it was the brain operation. I had plans to take him to West Bengal but due to current restrictions we couldn’t do so,” Abhijit told news agency ANI shortly after the cremation.

Despite Chinese cameras and sensors, Indian troops managed to beat PLA in occupying height



Despite the presence of cameras and surveillance equipment deployed by the Chinese Army near the height close to Pangong lake southern bank, the Indian Army troops managed to occupy it before the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) troops.”The Chinese Army has deployed advanced cameras and surveillance equipment to monitor Indian activities near the dormant height but despite that, the Indian troops managed to occupy height there,” sources told ANI. The Chinese Army has installed such equipment all along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and use them effectively to monitor Indian activities and respond quickly whenever they find Indian patrols on the areas claimed by them. Sources said the cameras and surveillance equipment has been removed after the Indian side occupied the dormant height within its territory. China has been claiming that the height belongs to them and wanted to capture it to get into an advantageous position all along the southern bank of Pangong lake area and the nearby Spangur Gap, an open

territory where Chinese armoured regiments were deployed. Sources said the Indian side has prepared very well for responding to the Chinese reaction in view of the action by own troops including a Special Operations unit and Sikh Light Infantry troops there. One of the Indian Army jawans also lost his life in an anti-personnel mine explosion while patrolling in the area.The Indian side has done heavy deployment of armoured regiments including the BMP Infantry Combat Vehicles and different types of tanks flown in from armoured divisions from the plains. The preparation for the action had been done by the Indian Army recently as the heavy movement of logistics and equipment was done by the force. The Indian Army has preempted the Chinese action to occupy the strategic height on the intervening night of August 29-30 and thwarted a Chinese action to do so after an intense face-off there.The Chinese and Indian troops are engaged in a standoff for over three months after the PLA troops marched into Indian areas in Finger area and other parts of the Ladakh sector.

COVID-19: HEALTH MINISTRY TO RUSH CENTRAL TEAMS TO UP, JHARKHAND, CHHATTISGARH, ODISHA

As the four states witnessing a sudden surge in the number of COVID-19 cases and recording high mortalities over the last few days, the Union Health Ministry has decided to rush central teams to Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Odisha. As per the government’s statement on Monday, these central teams will assist the state government to strengthen containment, surveillance, testing and efficient clinical management to combat the coronavirus pandemic. The central team will get a first-hand understanding of the challenges and issues being faced by states in their ongoing coronavirus disease containment strategy. According to the data provided by the Health Ministry, among these four states, Uttar Pradesh has the maximum number of active cases pegged at 54,666, followed by Odisha (27,219), Chhattisgarh (13,520) and Jharkhand (11,577).In terms of total COVID-19 cases to date, Uttar Pradesh is at the top with 2,25,632 cases, followed by Odisha (1,00,934), Jharkhand (38,435) and Chhattisgarh (30,092). Uttar Pradesh has also reported the highest number of deaths at 3,423, while Odisha, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh have 482, 410 and 269 deaths respectively, as per the Health Ministry. “The teams will support the state efforts towards strengthening containment, surveillance, testing and efficient clinical management of the positive cases. They shall also guide the state government in effectively managing the challenges related to timely diagnosis and follow up,” it said. Each of the multi-sectoral teams will comprise an epidemiologist and a public health expert, the Ministry added. India added 78,512 new cases to its COVID-19 tally in the last 24 hours, taking the national caseload past 36-lakh mark, according to the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MOHFW) on Monday. With 971 new deaths, the cumulative toll reached 64,469.The coronavirus cases in the country mounted to 36,21,246 including 7,81,975 active cases, 27,74,802 cured/discharged/migrated.

‘Pranab Mukherjee will be remembered by generations for his efforts towards India’s progress’: PM Modi pays tributes

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid tributes former president Pranab Mukherjee in New Delhi on Tuesday. PM Modi shared pictures paying tributes to Mukherjee on Twitter and said that the former President will be remembered by generations for his efforts towards India’s progress. The former president, who passed away on Monday evening after fighting a 21-day battle with multiple ailments at the Army’s Research and Referral Hospital in Delhi cantonment , was cremated with full state honours at the Lodhi Road electric crematorium on Tuesday afternoon. The former president was also given a guard of honour by an Indian Army contingent and a gun salute. His son Abhijit Mukherjee performed the last rites. Mukherjee’s family and relatives paid their last respects clad in PPE kits while conforming to Covid-19 norms.

J&K GOVT SET TO CONSERVE HERITAGE VALUE OF 6 MUGHAL GARDENS OF KASHMIR

The Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) administration is all set to conserve the six Mughal gardens in a bid to empanel them as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) mandated world heritage sites. A meeting was held recently to formulate a plan for renovation and restoration of the Mughal gardens. The restoration work of these culturally significant landmarks needs continuous attention because of their fragile nature, said Sheikh Fayaz Ahmad, commissioner secretary, floriculture, gardens and parks, J&K. “The originality of the structures needs to be maintained in a bid to ensure recognition of these gardens as world heritage sites,” he added. All critical interventions that are necessary for restoration of these cultural monuments should be sent to the archives department for their suggestions and guidance, said Zubair Ahmad, commissioner secretary, tourism and culture, J&K. “The restoration work should be in line with the UNESCO standards. The archives department has been asked to provide their expertise and guidance while keeping the Mughal gardens’ cultural and historic ethos intact,” he said. The authorities have decided to form a committee of officers from all the departments concerned and consultants would also be roped in for the restoration project. At present, the six Mughal gardens --- Nishat, Shalimar, Cheshmashahi, Pari Mahal, Achabal and Veerinag -- are under UNESCO’s tentative list of heritage sites. Baseer Ahmad Khan, advisor to Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) of J&K, recently directed the floriculture, gardens and parks department to prepare a white paper for the preservation of the six Mughal gardens in the Kashmir valley. The J&K officials said a consultant has been hired to prepare a dossier for submission to UNESCO. Officials exuded confidence that the UNESCO honour would attract international tourists to the Kashmir valley and put these historic places on the global tourism map.

CAMERAS INSTALLED AT BADRINATH DHAM FOR ‘ONLINE DARSHAN’ AMID PANDEMIC

The Char Dham Devasthanam Management Board (CDMB) authorities in Uttarakhand have started work for online darshan of the Char Dham shrines for pilgrims in a bid to avoid overcrowding at the sacred temples because of the raging coronavirus disease (Covid-19) outbreak, state government officials said. CDMB authorities will allow online darshan in the revered shrines of Kedarnath, Badrinath, Gangotri and Yamunotri in a bid to keep the viral infection at bay. Ravinath Raman, chief executive officer (CEO), CDMB, said, “Initially, online darshan will be available for the Badrinath shrine, where cameras are being installed.” Raman said the cameras and other equipment are being installed by a telecom company for free of cost. “The equipment is being installed by the company as per a CSR (corporate social responsibility) initiative, but they will be owned by the board. Work has started in Badrinath and it will be followed by the Kedarnath shrine. However, the process may take a while, as the heavy equipment needed to be lugged to a higher altitude at the height of the monsoon season,” said Raman. The CEO, an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) official, said that after the work is completed, images and videos of the four shrines would be live-streamed on several websites. “The live streaming will be done on the board’s or the chief minister’s website and also via social media platforms,” he said. Raman said the online darshan initiative would be reviewed after the viral outbreak subsides. “This is not a permanent arrangement. We will stop the online initiative after normalcy returns in a post Covid-19 world,” he added. The CDMB data showed that 21,670 pilgrims visited the Char Dham portals until August 30. The CDMB authorities said 10,899 and 6,491 devotees visited Badrinath and Kedarnath shrines, respectively, until August 30. Badrinath and Kedarnath portals were opened for the public on May 15 and April 29, respectively. While the Gangotri and Yamunotri shrines have reported 3,837 and 533 pilgrims, respectively, after their portals were opened on April 26. The authorities maintained that the virtual inflow of pilgrims is much less this year because of the contagion.

‘Ruining’ of economy began with demonetisation, govt introduced erroneous policies: Rahul Gandhi



The Congress on Tuesday attacked the Centre over the GDP slump, with former party chief Rahul Gandhi alleging that the “ruining” of the economy began with demonetisation and the government thereafter introduced one “erroneous” policy after another. The country’s economy suffered its worst slump on record in April-June, with the gross domestic product (GDP) contracting by 23.9 per cent as the coronavirus-related lockdown weighed on the already declining consumer demand and investment. “GDP -23.9. The ruining of the country’s economy began with demonetisation. Since then, the government introduced one erroneous policy after another,” Rahul Gandhi said in a tweet. Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also alleged that the government was responsible for the slump in the

economy. Rahul Gandhi had spoken of an “economic tsunami” six months ago, while the government announced a package just for “show” and look at the condition now, Priyanka Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi. The BJP government has caused the slump in the economy, she alleged. Congress’ chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said in a tweet in Hindi, “Modi ji, at least now accept that what you hailed as masterstrokes were actually ‘disaster strokes’ -- demonetisation, faulty GST and lockdown.” The GDP contraction is the sharpest contraction since quarterly figures started being published in 1996 and worse than what was expected by most analysts. Chief economic adviser K V Subramanian, however, has said the economy is “experiencing a V-shaped recovery” after the lockdown eased.

MAHARASHTRA’S COVID-19 TALLY SET TO RISE BY ANOTHER LAKH IN ONLY SEVEN DAYS



Maharashtra’s Covid-19 tally is likely to cross 8-lakh Covid-19 cases mark on Tuesday after the count reached 7,92,541 on Monday. The state is likely to reach another grim milestone in just seven days after it crossed the 7-lakh mark on August 25. The state continues to face a surge of fresh cases which is reducing the number of days before another lakh cases are added to the tally. Maharashtra recorded one lakh cases in 96 days. Since then the pace of infection has gathered speed with the state touching the 2-lakh mark in 22 days, the 3-lakh mark in 14 days, the 4-lakh mark in 11 days and the 5-lakh mark in 10 days. It crossed the 6-lakh mark in nine days and while it took only eight days to cross the 7-lakh mark. It had crossed 7-lakh cases mark on August 25 while the tally of 6 lakh was crossed on August 17. In August alone, the state reported 3,71,328 cases, highest ever in a month with an average of 11,975 cases daily.

Maharashtra recorded 2,47,392 cases in July, 1,02,172 cases in June, 57,157 cases in May, 10,196 cases in April and 302 cases in March. Dr Subhash Salunkhe, public health expert, who is also heading the communicable diseases prevention control and technical committee of the state said that the state may take months to reduce daily infections. “Going by the current scenario, it may take months to bring down daily cases until a vaccine arrives in the market. People are not ready to protect themselves. In that case, the state will have to make its surveillance more aggressive. This can be achieved by making Covid testing accessible to all. Like Mumbai, the mandatory condition of having prescription from a doctor for testing need to be removed from across the state,” he said. The death toll of the state also reached 24,583 after 184 deaths were reported on Monday. In August, the state reported 9,589 deaths, which is also the highest in a month so far.

INDIA-CHINA BRIGADIER LEVEL TALKS BEGIN IN CHUSHUL, NSA AJIT DOVAL MONITORING SITUATION CLOSELY

National Security Advisor Ajit Doval is keeping a close and continuous monitoring of India-China brigade commander level talks in Chushul. The Chinese Army attempted to transgress into Indian territory near the southern Pangong Tso bank in Ladakh. The incident took place on the intervening night of August 29 and August 30. These talks aim to resolve all contentious issues between China’s Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) and the Indian Army. NSA Doval had already had a meeting with top intelligence officials yesterday. These included both internal and external intelligence agency bosses along with top officers of the Indian Army. NSA was briefed potential threats from the dragon and what to expect from it in the coming future. Union home secretary Ajay Bhalla was also present in the meeting. According to highly placed Indian Army sources, there are two to three contentious areas to discuss in the south bank of Pangong Lake. India has raised objections about Chinese deployment in the areas like Helmet Top and Black Top. It is said that India is in a more advantageous position, which China is objecting to. China is demanding Indian troops to leave some places that allege that have been held by the Indian Army. After Indian and Chinese troops got engaged in a fresh skirmish in the south bank of Pangong Lake, a brigade commander level flag meeting was held on Mon-

day, August 31 as well. Meanwhile, India also has raised concerns about Chinese deployment in areas like Black Top and Helmet Top. Army Spokesperson Col Aman Anand reiterated that the Indian Army is committed to maintaining peace and tranquility through dialogue, but is also equally determined to protect India’s territorial integrity. China accused the Indian Army of crossing the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and purposely violating the consensus reached “multi-level talks” between the two nations. China’s mouthpiece Global Times had threatened that the border dispute will go ahead, predicting a Sino-India war. It also wrote that China will have to take a tough stand against India or else the difficulties will increase for China. PLA’s infiltration bid in Pangong Lake took place on the night of August 29/30 when Chinese troops tried to make incursions near Pangong Lake in eastern Ladakh. This area is in India’s possession, therefore, China is striving hard to have control over it to gain strategic advantage. The Indian Army, however, was already alert and took strong action against the Chinese PLA the moment an alert was sounded. Indian soldiers reached a higher position and forced the Chinese army to retreat without firing a single shot. India and China have held several rounds of military and diplomatic talks in the last two-and-half months but no significant headway has been made for a resolution to the border row in eastern Ladakh.

‘ECONOMY IS STRESSED’: CENTRE TO SC ON INTEREST ON LOANS DURING MORATORIUM



Indian economy is “stressed”, the Central government told the Supreme Court on Tuesday, stating that issues relating to levy of interest on loans in moratorium and interest on such interest requires detailed consideration by the Centre, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Bankers Association. Solicitor general Tushar Mehta told the court that the Centre, the RBI and the Bankers Association should be allowed to “put their heads together” and come up with a solution. “There are issues. The economy is stressed. This requires some discussion. What I am suggesting is to allow the Centre, RBI and Bankers Association to put our heads together. We will have to identify the class of borrowers, sectors, etc which will take a hit,” Mehta said. The court was hearing a plea for waiver on interest charged by banks, citing the relief earlier announced by the RBI on the payment of equated monthly instalments (EMIs) between March and August 31 due to the pandemic. The plea by Agra resident Gajendra Sharma specifically cited the RBI’s March 27 notification announcing a moratorium on loan repayments while permitting banks to levy interest. The notification to the extent of allowing levy of interest was challenged by Sharma. Mehta told the court on Monday that the moratorium period is extendable by two years as per the RBI circular. The moratorium announced by the RBI had expired on August 31. During the last hearing, the Court had asked the Centre to file an affidavit in the matter instead of relying on the RBI’s affidavit and “hiding behind RBI”. The court was informed by Mehta that the Union government filed its affidavit on Monday. The matter was adjourned for detailed hearing tomorrow.

THESE STATES REPORT MAXIMUM NEW COVID-19 CASES IN LAST 24 HOURS



The Union Health Ministry on Tuesday said that five states have recorded the highest number of COVID-19 cases in the country in the last 24 hours. These are Maharashtra (11,852), Andhra Pradesh (10,004), Karnataka (6,495), Tamil Nadu (5,956) and Uttar Pradesh (4,782). Together, these states account for 56% of the confirmed cases added in the last 24 hours. In the last 24 hours, these five states also reported 536 deaths which accounts for 65.4% of the deaths added to the national total mortality (819). Maharashtra has reported 184 deaths, Karnataka has added 113, followed by Tamil Nadu (91), Andhra Pradesh (85), and Uttar Pradesh (63). These five states have also reported the maximum number of patients that were cured and discharged in the last 24 hours, cumulatively accounting for 58.04% of the national figure of 65,081 persons. “While Maharashtra reported recoveries of 11,158 patients, the corresponding figures for Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka stand at 8,772 and 7,238 respectively. Tamil Nadu follows with 6,008, while Uttar Pradesh posted recovery of 4,597 COVID-19 patients.” The Union health ministry said that India has reported at least 65,081 people who recovered from COVID-19 in the last 24 hours while the country registered 69,921 new active coronavirus cases and 819 deaths. The cumulative number of recovered patients has grown to 28,39,882, taking the recovery rate among COVID-19 patients to a further high of 77%. The number of recovered patients has overtaken active cases by 3.61 times. India has more than 20.53 lakh recovered people than the active cases that stand at 7,85,996 at present. Meanwhile, India’s per day testing capacity has crossed 10 lakhs tests. 10,16,920 tests were conducted in the last 24 hours. States/UTs are rapidly increasing their testing capacity. The states contributing maximum to the overall number of tests include Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra among others. These three states account for nearly 34% of the total testing. So far, India has reported 36,91,167 cases and 65,288 deaths due to the virus pandemic.

The curious link behind China’s Ladakh moves and a looming food crisis | Analysis



President Xi Jinping launched ‘Operation Clean Plate’ last fortnight to prepare China for a potential food crisis, contributed in part by the diplomatic muscle-flexing he has pursued abroad to bolster his standing at home. But Beijing’s aggressive manoeuvres in Ladakh, the South China Sea and beyond - seen to have been prompted by a design to divert attention from domestic troubles - have cratered China’s relations with its neighbours and soured relations with its three important food suppliers - the United States, Canada and Australia. As it is, China’s ultra-nationalistic wolf warrior diplomacy and the aggressive military posture by People’s Liberation Army in Ladakh is a throw-back to 1962 when the then paramount leader Mao Zedong used the border skirmish with India to mask the failed Great Leap Forward movement that killed millions of Chinese of hunger. Xi Jinping’s renewed focus on the crash diet last month had immediately set off speculation that his government expects its food supply to get worse. China had seen it coming. Back in May, Premier Li Keqiang had promised to draw up a food security plan amid the coronavirus pandemic, assuring parliament that China could ensure food for its 1.4 billion people ‘through our own efforts’, reward higher yield of grains and promote the recovery of pig production. Agriculture minister Han Changfu had added that the African swine fever that led to the killing or culling of 100 million pigs was a threat but there won’t be a big increase in price of pork, a staple food for many families that makes China its world’s biggest consumer. Official statistics, however, indicate food prices went up by 13 per cent in July compared with a year ago and the price of pork, by about 85 per cent. The surge of crippling floods in the Yangtze River basin, the source of most of China’s rice, had affected production and transpor-

tation, disrupted lives of millions and left behind large swaths of farmland under water. The Qingyi river, an upper Yangtze tributary, saw its worst flooding in a century. Already, according to data from the China General Administration of Customs, China’s grain imports had risen by 22.7 per cent (to 74.51 million tonnes) in between January and July as compared to the same period last year. Wheat imports saw a 197 per cent year-on-year increase with import of 910,000 tonnes. During the month, corn imports also went up, year-on-year, by 23 per cent to 880,000 tonnes. To be sure, China and its state-funded institutes have denied that a shortage of domestic food was round the corner. China’s state media said the summer grain output had reached a record high of 142.8 billion kg this year. “There is no need to worry,” said a report released by the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences on August 17. But the report cautioned, according to news agency AFP, that China’s “food shortfall” will increase in coming years unless major agricultural reforms are undertaken. China’s state media has linked Xi Jinping’s campaign to the global food crisis predicted by the United Nations, a warning that was repeated by the world body two months back when it asked governments to act swiftly to avoid disaster. The underlying theme of the narrative has been that for China, the real threat to food security comes from food wastage rather than epidemic or floods. China does waste an awful amount of food. Ordering or serving more food than is needed is seen as a measure of the host’s hospitality. The state-run Chinese Academy of Sciences estimated that 17 million to 18 million tons of food served in big cities in 2015 was wasted, enough to feed a country the size of South Korea.

‘TRUE FRIEND’: SHEIKH HASINA CONDOLES PRANAB MUKHERJEE’S DEATH IN LETTER TO PM MODI

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina condoled the death of India’s former president Pranab Mukherjee on Monday. In a letter written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Sheikh Hasina called the Congress veteran “a highly esteemed leader of South Asia” who “commanded the respect and admiration of all”. “As a renowned scholar and statesman of India, and a highly esteemed leader of South Asia, Pranab Mukherjee commanded the respect and admiration of all. The tireless work of ‘Bharat Ratna’ Pranab

Mukherjee for the welfare of the people of India will inspire the future generation of leaders not only in India but across the countries in the region,” the Bangladesh prime minister wrote in the letter. She called Mukherjee a “true friend” and said that “he was always been highly revered and loved by the people of Bangladesh.” In the letter, she also wrote about Mukherjee’s support and contribution in strengthening relations between the two countries and said that he will always be “remembered with the deepest respect” in Bangladesh.

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China in 70 years has not occupied an inch of foreign land: Beijing

Beijing on Tuesday again blamed India for the latest bout of tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh, saying China has never occupied an inch of territory belonging to another country and New Delhi should take its concerns seriously and contribute to peace and tranquillity at the border. “Seventy-odd years since the founding of new China, China never provoked any war or conflict and never occupied an inch of other country’s territory. China border troops always strictly abide by the LAC and never crossed the line,” said Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson, Hua Chunying. India on Monday said that it had pre-empted “provocative military movements” by China to change the status quo along the LAC on the southern bank of the Pangong Lake. The Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA) troops violated the consensus reached during military and diplomatic engagements and “carried out provocative military movements to change the status quo” on the night of August 29-30, Indian Army spokesperson Col Aman Anand said in a statement on Monday.

Iran’s Khamenei says Israel deal ‘betrayal’ of Islamic world by UAE



The United Arab Emirates has betrayed the Islamic world and the Palestinians by reaching a deal toward normalising ties with Israel, Iran’s top authority Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said in a speech on Tuesday. “Of course, the UAE’s betrayal will not last long, but this stigma will always be remembered. They allowed the Zionist regime to enter the region and forgot Palestine,” Khamenei said. “The Emiratis will be disgraced forever ... I hope they wake up and compensate for what they did.” Iranian authorities have harshly criticised the US- brokered deal between the UAE and Tehran’s longtime foe Israel, with some officials warning that the UAE and Israel cosying up to one another risks conflagration in the Middle East. Israel and the UAE expect economic benefits from the deal, the first such accommodation between an Arab country and Israel in more than 20 years, which was forged largely through shared fears of Iran. It has dismayed Palestinian leaders, however, who believe it further erodes their struggle for an independent state.

Trump to meet law enforcement in Kenosha, no plans to see Jacob Blake’s family: White House



President Donald Trump does not have plans to meet with the family of Jacob Blake, a Black man who was shot by police in Kenosha, Wisconsin when he visits the city on Tuesday but will visit law enforcement officials, the White House said on Monday. White House spokeswoman Kayleigh McEnany said Trump planned to survey the damage resulting from protests in the aftermath of the shooting and meet with business owners, making the trip despite encouragement from state and local leaders to forgo travel there while the city seeks to heal. Another White House spokesman, Ben Williamson, said in a tweet that Trump’s chief of staff Mark Meadows had reached out on the president’s behalf to Blake’s family and left “multiple” messages since last week.

The president has made “law and order” a main theme of his re-election campaign against Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden. McEnany dismissed a suggestion the he was going to Wisconsin because it is a politically important battleground state. The president has not visited Portland, Oregon, which has seen weeks of protests and the deployment of federal officers. “The president’s showing up to see hurting Americans,” McEnany said of the Wisconsin trip.

‘Donald Trump a toxic presence in our nation for 4 years’: Joe Biden



Joe Biden, the Democratic presidential nominee, on Monday called president Donald Trump a “toxic presence” who has exploited violence linked to anti-racism riots as a “political lifeline” to save his campaign for a second term doomed by his handling of the Covid-19 epidemic. Biden attacked Trump’s central re-election thesis that the Democratic challenger supports the violent protests, benefits from it and will unleash more of it on the country if elected. And the president had already caused the chaos he was seeking to warn of, Biden said, adding, in fact he was stoking it for political mileage. “Donald Trump has been a toxic presence in our nation for four years,” Biden said in a speech in Pittsburgh, in battleground state Pennsylvania. “Poisoning how we talk to one another. Poisoning how we treat one another. Poisoning the values this nation has always held dear. Poisoning to our democracy.” He added, as a rhetorical follow-up question: “Will we rid ourselves of this toxin? Or will we make it a permanent part of our national character?” Biden also sought to clarify his own stand on the protests, which Trump and his surrogates have sought to wrongly characterise as sympathetic to “thugs” and the “radical left”. “I want to be clear about this: Rioting is not protesting,” he said. “Looting is not protesting. Setting fires is not protesting.” “None of this is protesting – it’s lawlessness – plain and simple,” he added.

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