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LEADER CONCLUDES
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DEEPIKA PADUKONE RETURNS TO HOLLYWOOD | P17



NEWS WEEKLY OF THE STATE OF THE

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Y MEDIA GROUP & ICCC HONOUR CANADIAN & INDIAN OLYMPIC ATHLETES AT LUXE CONVENTION CENTRE, HYATT PLACE, MISSISSAUGA

FROM EXTREME LEFT: TAUSEEF SHEIKH (ICCC PRESIDENT), ARJUN (ANDY) JASUJA (FOUNDER, CHAIRMAN- SIGMA GROUP), APOORVA SRIVASTAVA (INDIA'S CONSUL GENERAL TO TORONTO), YUDHVIR JASWAL (Y MEDIA GROUP EDITOR), JAKE DHEER (SENIOR MANAGER, ROGERS SPORTS AND MEDIA INC.)

I SPECIAL COVERAGE FROM PAGE 25 - 36

Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE: TRUDEAU PROMISES AFFORDABLE HOUSING, BETTER CHILDCARE & STRONGER ECONOMY

POOJA LUTHRA

In an exclusive interview with Y Media's Group Editor, Yudhvir Jaswal, the Prime Minister of Canada, Justin Trudeau, discussed his decision to hold Federal elections on September 20. He also outlined his three main priorities to build a better Canada and how the Liberals distinguish from the Conservatives and the NDP. Read more.

Yudhvir Jaswal: What was the need to hold an election during this pandemic crisis?

PM Justin Trudeau: I understand that people are wondering why now- it's because right now, we're making huge decisions for the future. We did an awful lot during the pandemic to have your backs. But now we have to decide how to end the pandemic, invest for the future, and build a stronger future. These decisions don't get taken two years or one year from now. They should be taken right now



YUDHVIR JASWAL

Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE

ERIN O'TOOLE IS NOT GOING TO ALLOW ECONOMY TO RECOVER QUICKLY

PROBLEM WITH JAGMEET SINGH IS HIS PLANS AREN'T CONCRETE



JUSTIN TRUDEAU
PRIME MINISTER OF CANADA

in the coming months. And that's why Canadians have the right to be heard. Canadians need to choose what kind of future they want, and the choice in

this election is very clear. **Yudhvir Jaswal:** What is the Liberal government planning to do on housing affordability in Canada?

PM Justin Trudeau: Over the past five-six years, we have invested massively in housing. Unfortunately,

the Conservative government felt that the federal government shouldn't be involved in housing. We have faced many challenges in housing affordability in the past. However, the federals have invested 10s of billions of dollars in helping end homelessness and ensuring housing affordability. Our plan gives billions of dollars to municipalities to build more supply. It helps people save up more money quicker so they

can buy their first home. It brings in a homebuyers' bill of rights to ensure whether it's blind-bidding or flipping of foreign owners. These are protections so people can buy their own homes safely. According to many experts, this is the most complete and ambitious plan to help Canadians purchase their homes. And that's precisely what

we're going to do.

I CONTD. ON PAGE 9



PARALYMPICS: SHOOTER AVANI BECOMES FIRST INDIAN WOMAN TO WIN GOLD 10M AIR RIFLE SH1.



PARALYMPICS: INDIA'S SUMIT ANTIL WINS GOLD, CREATES NEW WORLD RECORD IN F64 JAVELIN THROW.

CANADA INDIA FOUNDATION CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES OVER \$100,000 IN AID OF FAMILIES OF FALLEN HEROES

HORNBY, ON: The 6th Annual CIF Charity Golf tournament was held at the Royal Ontario Golf Club in Hornby, ON, on August 25, 2021. The event drew record attendance and raised funds toward the welfare of the fallen heroes' families in Canada and India. Held under the aegis of the CIF Charitable Foundation, the golf tournaments have been one of the most successful fundraising events specifically targeted at the military families that need support.

UNSC RESOLUTION AGAINST TERRORISM IN AFGHANISTAN APPLIES TO LASHKAR AND THE JAISH: INDIA

The Security Council has demanded that the Taliban should not allow terrorists to use its territory for attacks against other countries and this would apply to the Lashkar-e-Toiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad, according to India's Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla.



Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE

WITH ANDRE DE GRASSE, CANADA'S FASTEST MAN & 6-TIME OLYMPIC MEDALLIST



POOJA LUTHRA

Andre De Grasse, Canada's fastest sprinter and most decorated male Olympian, in an exclusive interview with Y Media's Group Editor, Yudhvir Jaswal, appreciated Y Media and the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce's initiative to honour the Olympic athletes and promoting sports.

20 YEARS, \$2.3 TRILLION SPENT, 2,400 US TROOPS KILLED: AMERICA'S LONGEST WAR, IN NUMBERS



NEW YORK, (IANS) As the last of America's C-17s flew into the night from Kabul's Hamid Karzai International Airport just before the clock struck midnight in Afghanistan Monday, the costs of America's longest war began sinking in at home. Thirteen fallen US service members, mostly in their 20s and born just around the time of the 9/11 attacks in 2001, returned 24 hours ago in the last of the caskets from Afghanistan, draped in the US flag.

Y MEDIA COVID & VACCINE REPORT

- Canada approves Moderna vaccine for children aged 12-17.
- Effective Sept. 7, Ontario makes Covid-19 vaccination policies mandatory for high-risk settings.
- On September 7, Canada's borders reopen to any fully vaccinated travellers.
- Over 83.5% Ontarians 12+ inoculated with first dose of Covid-19 vaccine, 75.5% fully vaccinated.
- Over 84% of Canadians have received one dose of Covid-19, 75% fully vaccinated.







MEGA COVERAGE ON ALL Y MEDIA PLATFORMS

CHANNEL Y

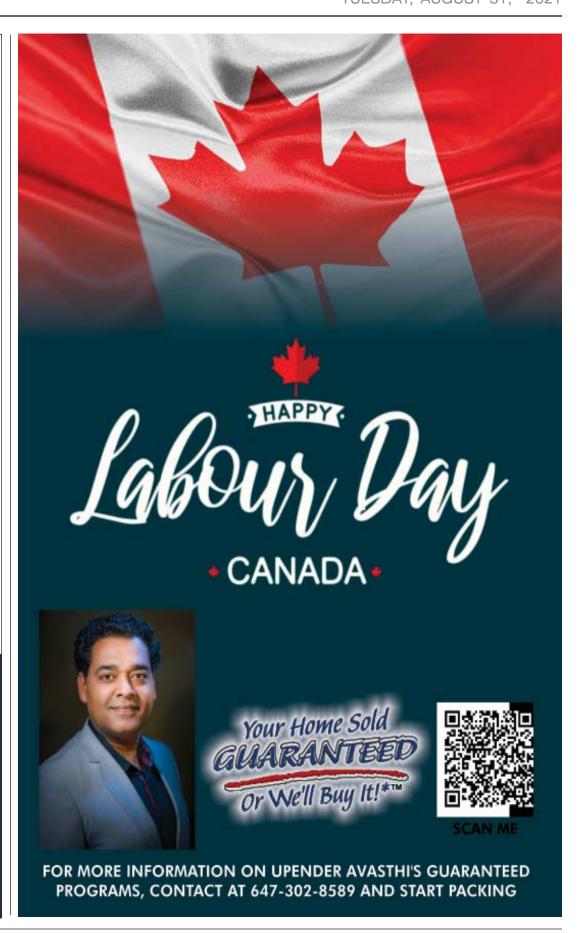
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DIO Y MIDWEEK

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A RE-ELECTED LIBERAL GOVERNMENT WILL:

- Implement \$10 a day child care for families
- · Provide more support for hard-hit businesses
- Make homes more affordable with new housing plan
- Support Canada's Seniors by increasing GIS, OAS
- 10 days of paid sick leave
- · Hire 7,500 new family doctors and nurses
- Finish the fight against COVID-19 and get the job done on vaccines
- · Strong Climate Plan for a Cleaner, Greener Future

Canadian's can't afford Conservative cuts while recovering from COVID-19.

Move Forward. For Everyone. With Sonia Sidhu in Brampton South.

BYOTE SONIA SIDHU

FOR BRAMPTON SOUTH





Y MEDIA POLITICAL SENSEX- FEDERAL ELECTION, 2021

LIBERALMP FOR BRAMPTON SOUTH, SONIA SIDHU MOVES FORWARD AFTER LAUNCHING HER OFFICIAL COVID-19 SAFE CAMPAIGN OFFICE





AFGHAN SITUATION FORCED EVERY COUNTRY TO RETHINK STRATEGIES: RAJNATH

WELLINGTON (TAMIL NADU), (IANS) The ongoing situation in Afghanistan has forced the entire world to rethink their strategies, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Sunday.

With the fundamentalist Islamist group Taliban taking over Kabul on August 15, Afghanistan has plunged into a humanitarian crisis. Pakistan is seen as having played a major role in bringing Taliban back to power.

In an address at the Defence Service Staff College, Rajnath Singh said: "With the change in the global order and national security paradigm, we have not only made immediate change in our policies but also taken decision on our futuristic reforms."

He noted that looking at the ongoing situation in Afghanistan, every country is forced to rethink its strategy. "Quad was established keeping in mind these situations," he said. Quad, or officially the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, brings together the US, Australia, India, and

Citing the threats from China and Pakistan, he said that India has got challenges in legacy since Independence.

About Pakistan, without naming it, he said: "The foreign enemies have tried to destabilise the country since it got Independence. If we look at 75 years of history, it seems like we have got challenges in legacy. One of our neighbouring countries initiated proxy war and made terrorism as an integral part of state policy. The country started providing arms, money and training to the terrorists to target India."

About China, he said that that in the northern sector, there was an effort to change the status quo unilaterally, but India changed its previous response and faced the adversary with new dynamism.

"Even after lots of challenges on our borders, the common man has faith in the government that it would never compromise on national security issue. They know that India will counter terror activities on its land and if needed, it can also cross the boundary," he said. Amid change in the global order necessitating futuristic reforms, Rajnath



Singh said that the objective is to enhance the Army's teeth to tail ratio, bring decentralisation in decision-making process, and make a future-oriented leaner force.

About Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs), he said that his ministry is seriously considering it. "You all are aware, quick decision-making is an important factor during wartime. There would be more lethal, brigade-size and self-reliant fighters formation."

He also lauded 'Tour of Duty' proposal and termed it as a gamechanging reform. "With this, the average age could be reduced and be made more agile."

On theatre commands, the Defence Minister said the discussions on its implementation have been fast tracked.

The Department of Military Affairs under Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat is working towards the creation of Joint Military Commands for better synergy and utilisation of resources.

The minister also talked about increasing women's role in the defence forces. "History tells us that our women warriors have always played an important role when faced with any challenges," he said.

India officially talks to Taliban, discusses safe evacuation, terrorism

In the first official contact with Taliban, Indian envoy to Qatar Deepak Mittal met Taliban leader Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanekzai at the Indian Embassy in Doha on Tuesday. A statement by the MEA said, "Today, Ambassador of India to Qatar, Deepak Mittal, met Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanekzai, the Head of Taliban's Political Office in Doha. The meeting took place at the Embassy of India, Doha, on the request of the Taliban side." It said that the discussions focused on safety, security and early return of Indian nationals stranded in Afghanistan. The travel of Afghan nationals, especially minorities who wish to visit India, also came up. Ambassador Mittal raised India's concern that Afghanistan's soil should not be used for anti-Indian activities and terrorism in any manner, it said. The Taliban Representative assured the Ambassador that these issues would be positively addressed, it said. This came at a time when in view of the evolving situation in Afghanistan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had recently directed that a high-level group comprising External affairs minister S Jaishankar, NSA Ajit Doval and senior officials focus on the immediate priorities of India. This group has been meeting regularly over the past few days. It is seized of issues pertaining to the safe return of stranded Indians, the travel of Afghan



nationals (especially minorities) to India, and ensuring that Afghanistan territory is not used for terrorism directed against India. The group has also been monitoring the ground situation in Afghanistan and international reactions, including the Resolution passed by the UN Security Council.

CANADA REACHES AGREEMENT WITH U.S. TO SUPPORT REFUGEES' TRAVEL TO SAFETY



The Government of Canada continues to exhaust every option to get as many Afghans to safety as possible, in partnership with our allies around the world. In the first phase of our operation, Canada evacuated roughly 3,700 people from Afghanistan—the majority of whom are refugees who supported Canada's mission and will soon begin new lives in this country. As we begin the second phase of our operation, Canada's solidarity with the people of Afghanistan remains strong. This phase will center on welcoming Afghan refugees who have been forced to flee Afghanistan to another country. As part of this work, the Government of Canada has reached an agreement with the United States to closely cooperate on the safe passage and departure from Afghanistan of our nationals, Afghan nationals who have served both countries, as well as their families. As part of this agreement, Canada will welcome up to 5,000 refugees whose evacuations were facilitated by the United States. These refugees will be accepted as part of Canada's recently announced program for some 20,000 refugees, which includes persecuted Afghan minorities, women human rights advocates, LGBTI individuals, and journalists. This collaboration will also help to reduce current pressures in the global resettlement system, facilitating wider international efforts to support Afghan refugees and accelerating efforts to welcome more refugees to safety in Canada. Refugees must meet all eligibility and admissibility requirements. They will come to Canada via countries where they have been temporarily located after fleeing Afghanistan. Canada and the U.S. have a long and proud history of shared values and strong cooperation, and the Government of Canada is grateful for the U.S.'s efforts to protect the Hamid Karzai International Airport and evacuate as many people as possible.

TALIBAN TAKES TO CELEBRATORY FIRING KABUL AS US COMPLETES WITHDRAWAL



KABUL/NEW DELHI, (IANS) Aerial firing using different types of weapons, including machine guns, dominated the sky in Kabul after midnight, which frightened and awoke residents of the Afghan capital. It was later clarified that the firings, which lasted about an hour, were part of the Taliban's celebrations for what its called the end of the occupation after the US announced that the withdrawal of troops was completed, Khaama News reported.

Taking to Twitter, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said that "the gunshots heard in Kabul are as a result of celebratory firing, the Kabul residents should not worry, we are trying to control it". Regarding the completion of the withdrawal, Mujahid added that "in this way, our country became completely free and independent". Addressing a news conference in Washington, which was held by the Department of Defence, on Monday midnight, Kenneth McKenzie, commander of US Central Command, said: "I'm here to announce the completion of our withdrawal from Afghanistan and the end of the mission to evacuate American citizens, third-country nationals and vulnerable Afghans. "The last C-17 lifted off from Hamid Karzai International Airport on August 30, this afternoon, at 3.29 p.m. East Coast time, and the last manned aircraft is now clearing the space above Afghanistan." McKenzie said while the completion of withdrawal drew an end to US military presence in the war-torn nation after 20 years, "the diplomatic mission to ensure additional US citizens and eligible Afghans, who want to leave, continues", reports Xinhua news agency

AFTER BILL CLINTON, HILLARY TURNS THRILLER WRITER, AND AN INDIAN AMERICAN IS CENTRAL TO THE PLOT

WASHINGTON D.C., (IANS) Former United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, following in the footsteps of her husband, has embarked on her journey as a thriller writer.

'State of Terror' is Hillary Clinton's upcoming international political thriller, set in the "Byzantine" world of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. It takes off with a "baffling text from an anonymous source" received by an Indian American Foreign Service Officer (FSO), Anahita Dahir.

Hillary, who was trumped in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, has co-authored the book with the 'New York Times' best-seller Canadian novelist, Louise Penny.

The uncannily timed book, published by Simon & Schuster, is set to release on October 12.

According to a preview of the novel available on the Simon & Schuster website, the story begins with the election of a new U.S. President, who appoints his political rival, Ellen Adams, as his Secretary of State (Hillary, remember, had contested in the Democratic Party primaries against Barack Obama in the run-up to the 2008 elections).

And then comes the text message to Anahaita (who could be modelled after one of Hillary's closest aides, Pakistani American Huma Abedin), which was actually a coded warning.

What follows is a series of terrorist attacks on American targets and the start of "an international chess game involving the ... Byzantine politics of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran; the race to develop nuclear weapons in the region; the Russian mob; a burgeoning terrorist organisation; and an American government set back on its heels in the international arena."

The last bit sounds too much like the present state of the Biden

administration.

Peel Public Health strongly recommends businesses include employee vaccination policies in their COVID-19 workplace safety plan



Peel Public Health has issued a strong recommendation that all employers in Peel review and update their COVID-19 workplace safety plans. which are required under the Reopening Ontario Act, to:

Consider the promotion of COVID-19 vaccination to workers,

Outline actions for unvaccinated workers, as necessary and Speak to identifying workers' vaccination status for outbreak prevention and control.

Workplace safety policies should also include:

An assessment of the risk of COVID-19 exposure in the workplace and whether vaccination may be necessary based on identified risk.

Measures that workers must take, where the need for vaccination is identified, including requiring:

Proof of a complete vaccination series approved by Health Canada or the World Health Organization; or

If unvaccinated, written proof of a medical reason, from either a physician or nurse practitioner, that also includes whether the reason is permanent or time-limited.

Measures that the business will employ to protect the privacy of employees if using employee vaccination status to take actions to mitigate vaccination is one of the best ways to do that."

Specific measures that the business may implement during an outbreak in the workplace, which may depend on vaccination status.

Specific plans for additional infection prevention and control measures to prevent COVID-19 transmission for unvaccinated workers. These may include COVID-19 testing, strict adherence to and enforcement of masks/ personal protective equipment, physical distancing and appropriate ventilation.

These recommendations are not intended to replace or conflict with provincial or federal legislation or directives, including Directive 6. Occupational health and safety in Ontario are within the scope of the Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development. Other statutes and considerations may also apply.

Dr. Lawrence Loh, Medical Officer of Health, Peel Region, said "Vaccination is currently our best defence against severe illness or death from COVID-19 and may also support short and long-term business continuity, and a safer workplace environment. It's important that employers help to protect their employees as best as possible and encouraging

COVID VAX 'DISEASE-MODIFYING'; MASKS MUST EVEN AFTER 2ND DOSE: INDIAN COUNCIL OF MEDICAL RESEARCH (ICMR)

NEW DELHI, (IANS) Balram Bhargava, Director, Indian Council of Medical past 24 hours, India logged 46,000 fresh Covid cases, of which 58 per cent

Research (ICMR), said on Thursday that Covid vaccines are not 'disease-preventing' but 'disease-modifying', so it is important to continue wearing masks even after the second dose of vaccination. Bhargava was addressing a press conference of the Union Health Ministry on the Covid situation in the country. "Vaccines reduce disease severity, possibility of hospitalization and also avert deaths to the tune of 98-99 per cent. Full vaccination offers protection against severe disease and death and should be a

Bhushan said that India is still under the grip of the second Covid wave. In the of India's active cases at present, followed by Maharashtra at 16 per cent.

were reported from Kerala alone, Bhushan said. Stressing that India has shown a declining trend in its daily Covid trajectory, Bhushan said the country has around 3.33 lakh active cases while the recovery rate continues to be over 97 per cent. He added that India's weekly positivity rate has remained below 3 per cent for eight consecutive weeks now. However, a total of 41 districts are reporting over 10 per cent positivity rate currently, he said, adding that 31 states have less than 10,000 active Covid cases, four states have 10,000 to 1 lakh active cases, while

pre-requisite if attending a gathering," Bhargav said. Health Secretary Rajesh the active caseload of Kerala is over 1 lakh. Kerala accounts for 51 per cent

ICU NEARS CAPACITY, MORE MANDATES IMPOSED IN US AMID COVID SURGE



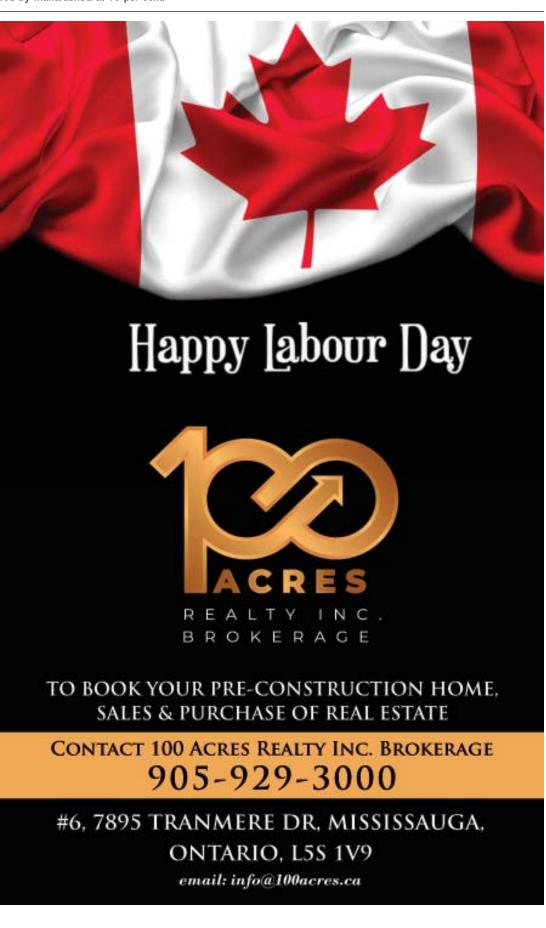
WASHINGTON, (IANS) Intensive care units (ICU) at hospitals across the US are reaching their capacity, and more vaccine and mask mandates as the country is witnessing a resurgence of record Covid-19 cases and fatalities. On August 27, the country reported 155,365 new cases of daily coronavirus, with the 14-day change seeing a 21 per cent rise, Xinhua news agency quoted The New York Times as saying in an update on Saturday. The daily hospitalisations stood at 98,337, with the 14-day change a 28 per cent increase, while the daily death toll was 1,266, with the 14-day change a starling 95 per cent hike, newspaper added. Due to the resurgence, New York State has ordered all students, staff and visitors inside school buildings to wear masks, a mandate that will not just apply to public school districts but also to private, charter and religious schools. The policy was filed in an emergency regulation, out of the government's fear that the highly contagious Delta variant might spread as students head back to school. New York City already had a mask mandate in place for city schools in advance of the first day on September 13.

EXPLAINED: WHY DELTA COVID VARIANT SPREADS LIKE WILDFIRE

NEW YORK, (IANS) A key amino-acid mutation in the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein might explain why the Delta variant of Covid-19 has spread so swiftly across the world, say researchers. SARS-CoV-2 Delta variant has rapidly replaced the Alpha variant around the world. According to epidemiological studies, the Delta variant, first identified in India in late 2020, is at least 40 per cent more transmissible than the Alpha variant, first identified in the UK, last year.

However, the mechanism that drives this global replacement has not been defined yet. The study, yet to be peer-reviewed and posted on pre-print server bioRxiv, showed how P681R mutation in the Delta spike plays a key role in the replacement of Alpha-to-Delta variant. "Delta SARS-CoV-2 efficiently outcompeted the Alpha variant in human lung epithelial cells and primary human airway tissues," wrote researchers from the University of Texas and others in the abstract. The P681R mutation falls within an intensely studied region of the spike protein called the furin cleavage site, Nature reported. The short string of amino acids P681R is associated with heightened infectivity in other viruses such as influenza. However, it has not previously been found in sarbecoviruses -- the family of coronaviruses to which SARS-CoV-2 belongs. "The key hallmark of Delta is that transmissibility seems to be ramping up to the next notch," Pei-Yong Shi, a virologist at the University of Texas's Medical Branch in Galveston was quoted as saying.





MidWeek





Y MEDIA TEAM ARRIVED AT CAMPAIGN OFFICE LAUNCH OF NAVAL BAJAJ CONSERVATIVEPARTY'S MP CANDIDATE FOR BRAMPTON EAST.

Referendum of Khalsa panth, says Sukhbir on Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) win

CHANDIGARH, (IANS) Shiromani Akali Dal President Sukhbir Singh Badal on Wednesday hailed the victory of his party in the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee (DSGMC) elections as "a forceful referendum of the Khalsa Panth in favour of the panthic identity and

religious commitment of the party". Addressing the media here, Badal said the Sikh community totally rejected the Congress-backed and BJP-sponsored groups, including

Sukhdev Dhindsa and Paramjit Singh Sarna. "The BJP, via Dhindsa and Manjit Singh G.K., won two out of 46 seats while Congress, via Paramjit Singh Sarna, won 14 out of 46. This is just the beginning of the storm which will sweep aside both the Congress and AAP in Punjab in the 2022 Assembly elections."

"I am deeply grateful to Sikh Sangat all over the world for the blessings and support we continue to receive from them. I wish to reiterate my total commitment to the promotion of Panthic ideals," he added. Badal thanked the "entire Delhi SAD team led by Manjinder Singh Sirsa for living up to the expectations of the Sikh Sangat and the entire Khalsa Panth throughout the world".

"The tireless zeal with which Sirsa stood by the Sangat, including (SGPC). Referendum on Khalsa pant, says Sukhbir on DSGMC win.



Covid victims, farmers and Sikh refugees from Afghanistan, has won the hearts of devout Sikh masses," he said.

He announced that Sirsa would be nominated as a member of the DSGMC on behalf of the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee

HAPPY LABOUR DAY! Desjardins Financial Security* Independent Network Raman Vasudev Life & Health Insurance Advisor 93 Skyway Avenue, Suite 205 Etobicoke ON M98W 6N6 Fax - 416 213 1235 Email - raman.vasudev@dfsin.ca www.DFSIN.ca

Female TV anchor who interviewed first Taliban spokesman has left

Afghanistan

NEW DELHI, (IANS) Afghan TV anchor, Beheshta Arghand, who made history by interviewing a Taliban spokesman on air has left the country. CNN reported that Arghand, a female anchor at TOLO, an Afghan news network, interviewed a senior Taliban representative on the air. The interview garnered headlines around the world. Two days later, Arghand did it again, interviewing Malala Yousafzai, the activist who survived a Taliban assassination attempt, in what TOLO described as the first time Yousafzai had ever been interviewed on Afghan TV. Arghand was blazing a trail, but her work has been put on hold. She decided to leave Afghanistan, citing the dangers that so many journalists and ordinary Afghans are facing, CNN reported. Arghand corresponded with CNN and recounted the experience of the past two weeks.

2 MEN ARRESTED, 1 WOMAN WANTED IN DEATH OF VARSHA GAJULIA, 41, WHOSE BODY WAS FOUND IN SUITCASE IN TORONTO

Two men have been arrested as part of a homicide investigation and a third person is wanted for Second Degree Murder.

On Wednesday, August 25, 2021, at 10:43 a.m., police responded to a radio call for a Suspicious Incident in the Keele Street and Hillary Avenue area. It is reported that:

- the body of a deceased woman was found in the area - officers attended the area and located the woman inside a suitcase

The Homicide Squad took carriage of the investigation.



As of Sunday, August 29, 2021, a number of search warrants were executed as part of the investigation. As a result, two men

Andre Bartley, 35, of Toronto, and Christopher Daley, 57, of Toronto, were both charged with:

- 1. Accessory After the Fact Homicide
- 2. Indignity to Human Remains.

They appeared virtually at Old City Hall on Saturday, August 28, 2021, and Sunday, August 29, 2021, respectively.

As a result of extensive inquiries, Carita Jackson, 37, of Toronto, has been identified as a suspect and is wanted on a warrant for: 1. Second Degree Murder

Anyone with information is asked to contact police at 416-808-7400, Crime Stoppers anonymously at 416-222-TIPS (8477), online at www.222tips.com, online on our Facebook Leave a Tip page, or text TOR and your message to CRIMES (274637).

ACCELERATED RECOVERY: INDIA'S Q1FY22 GDP GROWTH ZOOMS 20.1% YOY

NEW DELHI, (IANS) Low base, along with pent-up demand as well as easier Covid restrictions, lifted India's first quarter FY22 GDP growth rate to 20.1 per cent.

In 2020, the pandemic had battered the country's GDP which

had contracted by 24.4 per cent during Q1FY21. India's GDP at constant of 2011-12 prices has been estimated at Rs 32.38 lakh crore, as against Rs 26.95 lakh crore in Q1FY21. Last



year, the pandemic-triggered national lockdown during Q1FY21 had a massive impact on the economy. It was only on June 1, 2020 that the partial unlock measures were implemented. Unlike last year, the lockdown in 2021 was more regional in nature, and production and manufacturing by several industries were allowed this time.

In a poll of economists, IANS had, on August 27, predicted that based on the recovery, India's GDP Q1FY22 is expected to grow by anywhere between 14 and 24 per cent. The RBI, after the recent Monetary Policy Committee meeting, had projected country's Q1 GDP to grow at 21.4 per cent.

"GDP at Constant (2011-12) Prices in Q1 of 2021-22 is estimated at Rs 32.38 lakh crore, as against Rs 26.95 lakh crore in Q1 of 2020-21, showing a growth of 20.1 per cent as compared to contraction of 24.4 per cent in Q1 2020-21," said NSO, in the Q1FY22 GDP estimates.

"Quarterly GVA at Basic Price at Constant (2011-12) Prices for Q1 of 2021-22 is estimated at Rs 30.48 lakh crore, as against Rs 25.66 lakh crore in Q1 of 2020-21, showing a growth of 18.8

The GVA includes taxes but excludes subsidies.

On a YoY basis, Q1 GVA for 2021-22 from the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector showed a growth of 4.5 per cent, against 3.5 per cent in the same quarter of 2020-21. Nevertheless, the GVA in Q1 2020-21 from the manufacturing sector grew 49.6 per cent, as compared to a de-growth of (-) 36 per cent in the corresponding quarter of the previous fiscal. Similarly, the mining and quarrying sector declined by 18.6 per cent against previous year's contraction of (-) 17.2 per cent.

SCRAP POWER PURCHASE PACTS. SIDHU ASKS PUNJAB CM

CHANDIGARH, (IANS) Time and again rapping his party's government in Punjab on the knuckles for its failure to provide free power up to 300 units to the domestic consumers, state Congress President Navjot Sidhu on Monday demanded to extend the one-day Assembly session to terminate the power purchase agreements (PPAs) signed with private companies.

"Punjab government must immediately issue directions to PSERC (Punjab State Electricity Regulatory Commission) in public interest to revise tariff being paid to private power plants making the faulty PPAs null and void. Further calling a fiveseven day Vidhan Sabha Session to bring a new legislation for termination of faulty PPAs," Sidhu tweeted.

"This will help Punjab government give 300 units of free power to all domestic consumers, including general category, decrease domestic tariff to Rs 3 per unit and Rs 5 per unit for

industry, along with redressal of all outstanding bills, waiving-off the unjustifiable and exorbitant bills," he added. The government has decided to call a special session of the Vidhan Sabha for one day on September 3 to commemorate the historic 400th Prakash Purb of Guru Tegh Bahadur.



CANADA INDIA FOUNDATION CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES OVER \$100, 000 IN AID OF FAMILIES OF FALLEN HEROES

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

This year, the organizers announced an expansion of the fund to create more opportunities for the children of the fallen heroes. The latter may want to pursue higher education in Canada.

Speaking on the initiative, Satish Thakkar, Chair, CIF, said, "Canada India Foundation started its Annual Charity Golf tournament six years ago to raise funds to help the families of fallen soldiers in India and Canada. The tournament has received spectacular support from the community and mainstream Canadians and raised over \$100,000.00. This year, CIF created a permanent fund to help the children of fallen soldiers through scholarships for higher education in Canada and India."

Many dignitaries were present at the event, including the High Commissioner of India to Canada, H.E. Ajay Bisaria, Ms. Nina Tangri, Associate Minister of Small Businesses and Red Tape Reduction, Ontario, Mr. Deepak Anand, Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development and Consul General of India, Toronto Ms. Apoorva Srivastava. Bisaria noted, "CIF's initiative to help the families of the fallen soldiers is commendable." The High Commissioner also praised the work done by Canada India Foundation in the past and complimented the ongoing efforts by CIF to strengthen the bond between the two countries.

One hundred and forty-four avid golfers, representing members of the Indo-Canadian community and supporters from the mainstream, teed off at the picture-perfect course. After a hard-fought 18 holes, the foursome of AmrinderKooner, Maninder Mahindru, A J Bajwa and Jagteshwar Chahal won the tournament. The winners were awarded prizes, given away by Anil Shah, Chair of CIF Golf Committee and the driving force behind the charity tournament. While thanking the players and donors on occasion, Shah said, "This is CIP's sixth successful Annual Charity Golf Tournament, and we are delighted that it is helping us in generating funds to help the families of our real heroes in Canada and India."

A highlight of the evening came during the raffle draw. The first prize of a Ford Mustang Coupe worth \$40,000 was won by long-time CIF member Dr. Indira Khurana, who donated it to the CIF. The car was auctioned on the spot and

In an exclusive interview with Y Media, Dr. Indira Khurana said, "before I purchased the ticket, I had promised them that if I win the car, I'll be donating it back to the charity. The money can go to the kids who can come here to study." Dr. Khurana also told Y Media she was surprised when she learned about her triumph and believed god planned it to help the children.





















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For more information regarding your Specific Advance Poll Location -Contact Naval Bajaj Campaign Office







India supplies Covid relief materials to Vietnam

NEW DELHI, (IANS) With Covid-19 cases on the rise in Vietnam, Indian Naval Ship Airavat arrived at Ho Chi Minh City port with Covid-19 relief material on Monday.

"The ship is carrying 100 MT of Liquid Medical Oxygen in five ISO containers and 300 oxygen concentrators of 10 LPM capacity each, based on the requirement projected by the Government of Vietnam in its fight against the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic," an Indian Navy statement said. INS Airavat, an indigenously-built Landing Ship Tank (Large) under the Eastern Naval Command based at Visakhapatnam, is on a deployment to Southeast Asia for trans-shipment of Covid relief aid. The ship had earlier visited TanjungPriok Port in Jakarta on August 24 and disembarked 10 Liquid Medical Oxygen containers requested by the Indonesian government.

As part of India's vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region

(SAGAR), the Indian Navy has been proactively engaging with countries in the region and has been at the forefront of numerous humanitarian missions spanning the entire extent of the Indian Ocean including from southeast Asia to east Africa.

India and Vietnam enjoy a strong traditional bond of friendship and have been working together towards a safer maritime domain. The two navies cooperate in various areas including a composite training programme in the fields of submarine, aviation and technical training, and regularly carry out joint naval exercises in the form of bilateral exercises. The current deployment of the ship aims to further strengthen the strategic relationship. The ship will depart Ho Chi Minh City post disembarkation of the medical supplies and as part of the ongoing Mission SAGAR, continue onwards to deliver medical sup-

plies to other friendly nations in the region.

10MN AFGHAN KIDS IN DESPERATE NEED OF HUMANITARIAN AID: UN

UNITED NATIONS, (IANS) Nearly 10 million children in Afghanistan are in desperate need of humanitarian aid, and the Unicef is appealing for about \$200 million to respond to their needs, a UN official announced.

The appeal covers a variety of sectors, including water and sanitation, child protection, nutrition, health, and education, Herve De Lys, the Unicef representative in Afghanistan, told reporters at the UN headquarters in New York.

De Lys added that those least responsible for this crisis, are paying the highest price, including the children killed and injured in a series of atrocities in Kabul since August 26, reports Xinhua news agency.

This year alone, more than 550 children have been killed and more than 1,400 others injured, he noted.

"This is clearly a child-protection crisis in a country that

is already one of the worst places on earth to be a child. Against the backdrop of conflict and insecurity, children are living in communities that are running out of water because of the drought,

he said, adding they're missing life-saving vaccines, including against polio, a disease that can paralyze children for life.

Many are so malnourished they lie in hospital beds too weak to grasp an outstretched finger, said De Lys.

"These children are deprived of their right to a healthy and protected childhood." Unicef is concerned about reports that international donors are cutting or pausing aid to the country not just for the agency but for other

aid groups as well at this difficult time. The agency is also concerned about ensuring the safety and security needed to deliver programs nationwide, especially for its female

national staff and female social workers, he said.

The Representative urged all partners to support Unicef as it starts implementing its scale-up plan, which includes providing mobile health clinics; vaccinating babies against polio and other vaccine-preventable diseases, and vaccinating people against Covid-19; treating children who are severely acutely malnourished; delivering water to areas affected by the drought, and distributing hygiene kits; getting children ready for school, and school ready for children for the new school term next month.

REGION OF PEEL WILL ESTABLISH **EMPLOYEE VACCINATION POLICY**



The Region of Peel announced it will require all Regional employees to disclose and provide documentation of their COVID-19 vaccination status. An Employee Vaccination policy, expected to be in effect by the end of October, will ensure that Regional staff can continue to serve the Peel community in a way that protects them and those around them from COVID-19.

Employees who are not fully vaccinated will be required to complete educational programming about the benefits of the COVID-19 vaccination. They will also need to provide regular negative COVID tests.

Further details, including the Region's full Employee Vaccination policy and activation date, will be available later this fall,

Janice Baker, CAO, Region of Peel said, "Thanks to the commitment and vigilance of our staff, we have been able to maintain most of our services throughout the pandemic. This policy is meant to encourage our staff to get vaccinated to help our community find a path back to normal."

2 DEAD AS POWERFUL HURRICANE **WREAKS HAVOC ACROSS LOUISIANA**

NEW ORLEANS, (IANS) At least two people have been confirmed dead, about two days after the powerful category-4 Hurricane Ida made landfall in the US state of Louisiana. Ida was downgraded to a tropical depression on Monday afternoon and moved inland with torrential rain, leaving extensive damage across the coastal state, reports Xinhua news agency.

Of the two victims, a man drowned in his car after trying to drive through floodwaters in Louisiana's biggest city New Orleans and a 60-year-old person was hit by a tree falling on his home near Baton Rouge, the state's capital city.

Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards said earlier that he "fully expects" the death toll would jump as search and rescue efforts get underway. At least 671 stranded people in Ida-hit areas had been rescued, Edwards said on Mon-

Four Louisiana hospitals were damaged and 39 medical facilities were operating on generator power, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency. More than 1 million customers in Louisiana and over 67,000 more in Mississippi were without power on Monday night, including residents in the whole city of New Orleans, according to PowerOutage.US, a project which tracks power outrages across the United States. The Jefferson Parish emergency management director Joe Valiente told National Public Radio on Monday it will take at least six weeks to restore electricity to a large section of Louisiana's coast. "Damage is incredible," Valiente said. "There are about 10 parishes that the electrical grids are completely collapsed and damaged, smashed, out -- however you want to put it." Power company Entergy, Louisiana's biggest electricity provider, said that more than 2,000 miles of transmission lines were out of service, along with 216 substations.



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Y MEDIA TEAM REACHED AT GRANDOPENING OF SAVE MAX GLOBAL REALTY'S NEW OFFICE WHICH IS LOCATED AT 5 MONTPELIER ST UNIT 202 AND & 203, BRAMPTON.

MILLION UNDER-FIVES IN AFGHANISTAN WILL **FACE SEVERE MALNUTRITION: UNICEF**





NEW DELHI, (IANS) UNICEF has predicted that if the current trend continues, one million under-fives in Afghanistan will face severe, acute malnutrition, a life-threatening condition.

George Laryea-Adjei, Regional Director for UNICEF South Asia, said that more than four million children, including 2.2 million girls, are out of school now.

Around 300,000 youngsters have been forced to flee their homes, some of whom were in bed sleeping, "and too many of them have witnessed scenes that no child should ever see", he said.

"Children and adolescents are struggling with anxieties and fear, in des-

perate need of mental health support," he added. Laryea-Adjei said that children have paid the heaviest price of increased

conflict and insecurity in recent weeks. Not only have some been forced from their homes, and cut off from their

schools and friends, they have also been deprived of basic healthcare that can protect them against polio, tetanus and other diseases.

"Now, with a security crisis, skyrocketing food prices, a severe drought, the spread of Covid-19, and another harsh winter just around the corner, children are at greater risk than ever," he warned.

With the needs of Afghan children greater than ever before, the world

"cannot abandon them now", a senior official with the UN Children's Fund said on Sunday after concluding a visit to the country.

With some humanitarian partners considering cutting aid to Afghanistan, Laryea-Adjei voiced concern over having enough resources to keep health centres up and running, schools open, and services available to treat severely malnourished children.

UNICEF, which has been in Afghanistan for more than six decades, continues to maintain a field presence across the country and is engaging with the interlocutors to scale up the response.

The agency is currently supporting mobile health and nutrition teams at camps for displaced people, and setting up child-friendly spaces, nutrition hubs and vaccination sites, while also prepositioning additional lifesaving supplies and supporting thousands of students in communitybased education classes.

However, Laryea-Adjei stressed that more resources are direly needed. UNICEF recently launched a \$192 million appeal to address the escalating humanitarian crisis and urged donors to step up support.

"Young people and children have been telling us they are in desperate need of the most basic items and services – needs which, given support, the humanitarian community can easily respond to," he said.

PLANS TO BAN SINGLE-USE PLASTICS IN ENGLAND

LONDON, (IANS) The UK government announced plans to ban a range of single-use plastics including plates, knives, forks, spoons and

cups, in England as part of what it calls "war on plastic waste".

Public consultation on this policy will be launched in the autumn, said the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in a statement on Saturday. "It is estimated that each person uses a staggering 18 single-use plastic plates and 37 single-use plastic items of cutlery each year in England. The durability of plastic means litter from items used for a few minutes can last for centuries in landfill or as litter in the countryside or ocean," Xinhua news agency quoted the Department as saying.

"Around the world, more than 1 million birds and over 100,000 sea mammals and turtles die every year from eating or getting tangled in plastic waste," it added. Defra expects the ban to force businesses to use more sustainable alternatives.

Environment campaigners generally welcomed the announcement, but some said the measures did not go far enough.

"Banning throwaway plastic items like plates and cutlery is a welcome move, but the UK government is simply playing catch up with the European Union. This snail-paced, piecemeal approach isn't leadership," said Will McCallum, head of Oceans at Greenpeace UK.

27 Fast and Easy Fix Ups to Get the **Best Price for Your GTA Home**

TORONTO - Because your home may well be your largest asset, selling it is probably one of the most important decisions you will make in your life. And once you have made that decision, you'll want to sell your home for the highest price in the shortest time possible without compromising your sanity. Before you place your home on the market, here's a way to help you to be as prepared as possible.

To assist homesellers, a new industry report has just been released called "27 Valuable Tips That You Should Know to Get Your Home Sold Fast and for Top Dollar." It tackles the important issues you need to know to make your home competitive in today's tough, aggressive marketplace.

Through these 27 tips you will discover how to protect and capitalize on your most important investment, reduce stress, be in control of your situation, and make the best profit possible.

In this report you'll discover how to avoid financial disappointment or worse, a financial disaster when selling your home. Using a common-sense approach, you will get the straight facts about what can make or break the sale of your home.

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NEW 4 IN 1 BP PILL SAFE, MORE EFFECTIVE THAN USUAL TREATMENT



SYDNEY, (IANS) A new strategy where patients are started on a pill containing four medicines, each at a quarter of their usual doses, has been shown to be much more effective in getting blood pressure under control, compared to the common practice of monotherapy, where treatment commences with just one drug, according to a study.

The multi-centre, Australian clinical trial of a potential future 'quadpill' dose of four medications, termed Quadruple UltrA-lowdose tReatment for hypErTension (QUARTET), has demonstrated that a single pill containing ultra-low quadruple combination is much more effective than the traditional approach of starting with monotherapy (single drug).

This novel combination of blood pressure medication brought blood pressure under control in 80 per cent of participants in 12 weeks, compared to 60 per cent in the control group who nonetheless had access to the best patient care.

The results of the study were published in journal The Lancet and are being presented at the world-leading European Society of Cardiology conference, ESC Congress 2021.

"Statistics on the global burden of high blood pressure this week show that there's been a doubling in the past 30 years of hypertension cases -- the leading cause of the world's top killer: heart attack and stroke," said lead author Clara Chow, Professor and Director of the University of Sydney's Westmead Applied Research Center. "The improved reduction in blood pressure with this strategy would be expected to reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes by about 20 per cent. In settings with little or no existing hypertension treatment, the benefits would be much greater," added Emily Atkins from The George Institute for Global Health, University of New South Wales. The study enrolled 591 participants with high BP either in no treatment or single therapy across 10 centres in Australia. The primary outcome was the significantly reduced BP, in the group starting on the quadpill, at 12 weeks. These differences were sustained, with blood pressure control still better with the quadpill approach compared to the standard approach at 12 months, and no differences in side effects. Chow said a simple and effective combination quadpill strategy had potential to impact people's lives worldwide. High BP is the world's leading killer cause of preventable deaths globally -- but poor rates of blood pressure control remain common.

UK ENDS CIVILIAN EVACUATION MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN: MINISTRY OF DEFENSE



LONDON, (IANS) The final evacuation flight purely for civilians under Britain's Operation Pitting has left the Kabul airport, the British Ministry of Defense said on Saturday.

Any further flights leaving Kabul under Britain's evacuation operation "will have UK diplomatic and military personnel on board," the ministry added.

General Nick Carter, Britain's chief of defense staff, said: "(The withdrawal) is not how we hoped it would end", the Xinhua news agency reported. "I think we have done an extraordinary job to evacuate as many as we can, but I'm afraid it's absolutely heartbreaking we can't get everybody out," Carter said. He warned that Britain is "not out of the woods yet" as this final phase gets under way. "The operation will carry on for a little bit longer. But it's been a huge enterprise," he said, noting that troops are working in the face of a "very demanding threat" in Afghanistan. Two suicide bomb attacks rocked the Kabul airport in the Afghan capital on Thursday, killing at least 103 people, including 13 US service members, two British nationals and a child of another British national. The Islamic State has claimed responsibility for the deadly attack, saying it was targeting "translators and collaborators with the American army." Britain had airlifted 14,543 Afghans and British nationals from Kabul since its Operation Pitting began on August 13, the ministry of defense said on Friday night. Only three days remain for US-led forces to evacuate from the Taliban-held Afghanistan, after US allies failed to persuade US President Joe Biden to extend the August 31 evacuation deadline during a Group of Seven virtual summit earlier this week.

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Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE: TRUDEAU PROMISES AFFORDABLE HOUSING, BETTER CHILDCARE & STRONGER ECONOMY

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

Yudhvir Jaswal: If Liberals are elected again, what will they do for people concerned about their jobs and small businesses?

PM Justin Trudeau: First of all, I don't think I've been to a single restaurant or visited a small shop without the owners appreciating the federal government for the supports we provided during this pandemic. But I want people to understand that it wasn't just about being nice to support each other. The federal



YUDHVIR JASWAL Group Editor - Y MEDIA

Y MEDIA **EXCLUSIVE**

ERIN O'TOOLE IS NOT GOING TO ALLOW ECONOMY TO RECOVER QUICKLY

PROBLEM WITH JAGMEET SINGH IS HIS PLANS AREN'T CONCRETE



government knew supporting these businesses during this pandemic would guarantee a more robust economic recovery. That's what we see that the recovery in Canada is faster than in many other parts of the world because we were there for each other. This is because Canadians stepped up for each other. So we're going to continue to be there to support businesses that need it. At the same time, we are making sure we grow the economy, put money in people's pockets, and ensure a growing workforce as well. We've done it in the past, as in our first years in office, we created a million jobs and lifted many people out of poverty. And now we're on our way to make another million jobs as we recover from this pandemic.

Yudhvir Jaswal: Prime Minister, you have called the Taliban a 'terrorist organization,' which was a courageous stance. Canadians are still concerned about the current situation in Afghanistan. What would you like to say about this?

PM Justin Trudeau: Canada has sacrificed enormously over the past 20 years to build a better future for Afghanistan. Many people in Afghanistan, like women and LGBTQ activists, human rights advocates, journalists, and interpreters, work directly with Canadian NGOs and companies. We need to step up and give them a better future because we know the Taliban is, unfortunately, going to aim at them. So we are stepping on getting requests and letters from Canadians who want to welcome Afghan families into their communities to give them a better life. Canadians understand that when you provide better opportunities to families fleeing violence, they build a better country for everyone. So it is something that we will continue to do. The airbridge was successful in getting 3700 people out, but it's over now. We are working with partners in the region. We have put pressure on the Taliban to allow 10s of 1000s of other people to come here. Canada always stands for a welcoming place that builds a better future forever.

Yudhvir Jaswal: In what aspects are the Liberals different from the Conservatives?

PM Justin Trudeau: First of all, Liberals know getting out of this pandemic means being the first job. That is why we are stepping up and recognizing that most Canadians did their part, made sacrifices and got vaccinated. So if people want to get on a plane or a train, or if they work for the public service, they should ensure that they're vaccinated because that's the way we keep our kids under 12 safe. Unfortunately, Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole is not unequivocal about vaccinations. He's not saying we need vaccine passports or we need people on planes and trains to be vaccinated. That's one reason he's not going to allow the economy to recover quickly because we won't get through the pandemic.

The Liberals know that this pandemic hit women harder than anyone else, and that's where we decided it was time to invest massively. In childcare, we have signed eight childcare agreements across the country for \$10 a day. Ontario hasn't signed one yet, but we're hopeful that they will. But Erin O'Toole has said he'll rip up the agreements we have signed and not move forward with creating childcare spaces. This isn't just bad for families, but the growth of our economy and women in the workforce.

Finally, we know that health care matters a whole lot. O'Toole has defended his private health care so that the wealthiest people can pay to jump ahead of the line in healthcare and get better health care because they have the money to pay for it. Those who cannot afford to pay for health care will be at the back of the line with less quality of services. That's something that flies in the face of everything that Canada stands for.

So on the values and practical elements, Conservatives and Erin O'Toole want to take Canada back, including the environment. Conservatives want to take us back to Stephen Harper's targets of protecting the planet, which didn't work for ten years. Canada needs to continue fighting against climate change, providing better options for families, and ending this pandemic through vaccinations. The conservatives aren't there on any of that.

Yudhvir Jaswal: NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh claims that his party was the one that made sure the Liberals provide support to Canadians during this pandemic. What do you have to say about this?

PM Justin Trudeau: There are many things I agree with Jagmeet Singh. We have similar approaches and similar values on a lot of significant issues. The problem with Jagmeet Singh is that his plans aren't concrete. He hasn't been able to deliver any of the things he's talked about. We have been the ones who made a promise to have Canadians backs, and it was us who provided the service, whether it is the wage subsidies to support small businesses or protecting the seniors. Liberals are ensuring that we fight climate change and have stepped up on reconciliation with indigenous peoples. Unfortunately, even though Singh and I agree on many things, he doesn't deliver the change and progress that Canada needs. The Liberals have demonstrated that we can and will do even more to help people build a better future for the past six years.

Yudhvir Jaswal: If you are re-elected as prime minister of Canada, what are your three main priorities?

PM Justin Trudeau: The first one is finishing the fight against Covid-19. That's why we have strong positions on vaccines. Secondly, affordability-people can afford to buy a first home or afford the rent, childcare, or the things that matter in life. That's where we have always stepped up to create an opportunity for them and the economy to grow. My third priority is fighting climate change, doing even more, to protect the planet and create jobs and careers. We have invested in changing two of Canada's most giant steel plants to generate electricity that secures workers' jobs and reduces our emissions for generations to come. These are the kinds of things that we're doing and, these are the things that will make a difference. We need to do even more for the economy and the environment, and that's our priority.

Yudhvir Jaswal: Anything else you would like to say?

PM Justin Trudeau: First of all, thank you, Y Media, as yours is a critical voice for the community to get the messages out. I will always be there to talk with you and reach to the community directly. This is a significant time for Canadians to choose the kind of future they want. It's a time of crisis, and we need to step up. I hope Canadians decide to keep moving forward for everyone.

Ontario Opening More Temporary Road Test Centres

ADDITIONAL LOCATIONS WILL HELP REDUCE THE ROAD TEST BACKLOG RESULTING FROM COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS

In the coming weeks, the Ontario government will open additional temporary road test centres in Burlington, Markham, and East Gwillimbury to increase the number of passenger road tests (class G2/ G) available in areas where demand is highest. These temporary road test centres will help increase testing capacity across the DriveTest

network and help people who need a road test book sooner. "Our government is making tremendous progress to clear the road test backlog at Ontario DriveTest centres," said Caroline Mulroney, Minister of Transportation. "We're getting Ontario back on track with our aggressive plan to open additional temporary centres, hire additional temporary driver examiners, and offer road tests with extended weekday operating hours for passenger road testing, including weekends." Throughout efforts to clear the backlog, the health and safety of DriveTest customers and staff will be of utmost concern. Customers will be required to wear face masks inside centres and during road tests, sanitize their hands, complete the Patron/customer screening developed by the province and share their "passed" results prior to the road test or admittance to the centre.

Starting Tuesday, September 7, 2021, DriveTest will offer class G2 and G road tests seven days a week between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., at temporary locations at Burlington GO Station and Mount Joy GO Station in Markham.

Paul Calandra, MPP for Markham-Stouffville said, "Minister Mulroney's initiative to open temporary road test centres in high demand areas will help tackle the road test backlog caused by COVID-19 restrictions. The new temporary road test centre at Mount Joy GO Station in Markham will serve to enhance testing capacity and allow individuals to schedule their road tests faster."

And, on Monday, September 20, 2021, DriveTest will open a temporary road test centre at East Gwillimbury GO Station to offer class G2 and G road tests seven days a week between 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Additionally, four more temporary road test centres will be opened in the coming weeks to serve Mississauga, southwestern Ontario, Niagara Region and the Ottawa area. More information on locations and hours will be available in the near future.

I'm pleased that Burlington GO Station was selected to host a temporary road test centre. This temporary centre will help clear up the demand for class G2 and G road tests here in Burlington and in Halton Region seven days a week starting September 7th," said Jane

McKenna, MPP for Burlington. These sites are in addition to the temporary road test centres that

New DriveTest centres opening



opened in August 2021.

To book your road test, please visit DriveTest.ca – the only official channel for booking a road test. You should never give your driver's licence to a third party or an unknown website. DriveTest will never charge you an additional fee to book or reschedule a road test. **Quick Facts**

In addition to opening temporary centres, Ontario is hiring an additional 251 temporary driver examiners, extending weekday operating hours for passenger road testing and offering passenger road tests on Saturdays and Sundays at select locations to clear the backlog of road

Because of the high demand for road test appointments, we are unable to prioritize customers with cancelled appointments. As measures to address capacity are implemented, additional road test appointments will be made available. Please continue to check DriveTest.ca for new blocks of road test appointments.

If your road test was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions, you will have a credit on the system to rebook your test.

Road test applicants may be required to provide a contact phone number should contact tracing be required. Applicants may be required to keep vehicle windows open to ensure proper airflow.

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.

For inside services and road testing for other licence classes, customers will need to visit a permanent DriveTest location.

ONTARIO INVESTS IN PPE TESTING **SERVICES IN TORONTO**

TORONTO - Kinectrics Inc. is investing over \$841,000 to expand and implement industry-standard testing techniques for PPE, with support of more than \$252,000 provided through the Ontario Together Fund. The investment will help the company scale up testing resources for surgical masks and N95 respirators and introduce new PPE testing services for surgical gowns and medical drapes.

Supporting innovative projects like Kinectrics' is why Ontario has invested an additional \$50 million in the renewed Ontario Together Fund in 2021-22. The fund will continue to support local innovators and businesses to further enhance Ontario's domestic supply chain capacity, promote Ontario's MedTech ecosystem and build up our manufacturing sector to ensure the province is well-prepared for future challenges.

The renewed Ontario Together Fund is focused on supporting homegrown manufacturing and innovation to combat COVID-19 and providing other goods critical to the health, safety, and security of Ontarians beyond this pandemic.

- It is doing so under the following strategic pillars:
- * Strengthening Ontario's domestic manufacturing capacity
- * Supporting homegrown technologies and innovative solutions
- * Strengthening Ontario's MedTech ecosystem.

"Through the Ontario Together Fund, our government is making targeted investments in Ontario-based businesses with the ideas and solutions to help us through this pandemic," said Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. "Kinectrics' ability to adapt their testing capabilities for PPE used in the nuclear industry to the medical industry is another example of Ontario innovation at its very best. Ontario manufacturers continue to enhance our resilience to respond to any challenge while strengthening our economy." Kinectrics provides life cycle management services for the electricity and nuclear industry, with expertise in engineering, testing, inspection, and certification. Kinectrics collaborates closely with customers to ensure that utility assets perform safely, reliably and efficiently throughout their entire life cycle - from initial design and type testing to operational deployment and maintenance services. The company's testing resources support nuclear utilities with world class expertise in design engineering, nuclear safety and licensing, major components analysis, nuclear equipment solutions, inspection and maintenance systems, and radioactive material and chemistry services. "The support from OTF has helped Kinectrics expand leading test capabilities including medical PPE, allowing us to offer long-term testing based in Ontario. Kinectrics is proud to support the establishment and maintenance of critical supply chains for personal and medical PPE," said David Harris, President and CEO of Kinectrics. "Having tested over 30,000 surgical and procedure masks and over 2,000 respirators, the accredited laboratories at Kinectrics ensure through high capacity and fast turnaround that PPE testing is available for all future needs."

"Ontarians deserve to know that the PPE used to combat the pandemic are both provincially-sourced and of the highest reliability," said Etobicoke-Lakeshore MPP Christine Hogarth. "This investment by Kinectrics Inc. and the Ontario Together Fund is a real confidence booster - and great news for safeguarding good Ontario jobs."

Healthy people are essential for a healthy economy. With vaccine distribution continuing to increase, hope is on the horizon. Ontario's Action Plan: Protecting People's Health and Our Economy provides the resources necessary to finish the battle with COVID-19, building on the government's record investments to protect health and jobs during the global pandemic.

STATISTICS CANADA SAYS ECONOMY **CONTRACTED AT AN ANNUALIZED RATE** OF 1.1% IN THE SECOND QUARTER

Substantial declines in home resale activities and exports pushed real gross domestic product (GDP) down 0.3% in the second guarter of 2021. This contrasted with three consecutive quarterly increases that followed the sharp decline (-11.3%) caused by pandemic-related business shutdowns and travel restrictions in the second quarter of 2020.

Increases in investment in business inventories, government final consumption expenditures, business investment in machinery and equipment, and investment in new home construction and renovation were not sufficient to offset the declines in exports (-4.0%) and home ownership transfer costs (-17.7%), which include all costs associated with the transfer of a residential asset from one owner to another. Imports were flat in the second quarter.

Real gross national income rose 1.5%, reflecting gains from higher prices of exported crude oil and crude bitumen. Final domestic demand edged up 0.2%, following the 1.6% rise in the first quarter. Businesses accumulated \$9.7 billion in inventories, compared with a \$6.2 billion withdrawal in the first quarter. The inventory accumulation, which was the major contributor to GDP during the guarter, was led by durable retail goods. Housing investment reshapes the economy

Since the third quarter of 2020, housing investment has emerged as the predominant contributor to economic activities and to capital stockwith residential capital stock surpassing non-residential capital stock. Moreover, the average housing investment for the previous four quarters was 17% higher than the average over the last five years.

Both new construction and renovations-the components of residential capital stock-have shown sustained growth since the third quarter of 2020. Because of the ability to work from home, savings from less travel and reduced participation in other activities, low mortgage rates and increases in home equity lines of credit, spending has continued to increase on new houses (+3.2%) and home renovations (+2.4%). After taking on \$62.3 billion of residential mortgage debt in the last half of 2020, households added \$84.2 billion more residential housing debt in the first half of 2021.

Household spending flat

Household spending, which rose 0.7% in the first quarter, edged up 0.1% in the second quarter. This reflected a drop in spending on goods-32 out of 48 categories of goods experienced decreases.

Outlays for durable goods declined in the quarter, as higher prices for many products constrained demand. With the easing of pandemic restrictions, outlays for services increased (+1.8%), led by food and beverage services (+4.3%).

Business investment in machinery and equipment rebounds

Business investment in machinery and equipment rose 5.7%, reflecting a sharp increase in investment in aircraft and other transportation equipment. This followed a sharp decline in the first quarter owing to a large disinvestment of used aircraft. Industrial machinery and equipment investment rose 4.8%, stemming from substantial imports.

Supply chain disruptions continue to impact motor vehicles

Shortages of microchips and other inputs curtailed trade in motor vehicles and domestic consumption. Household purchases of new passenger cars (-7.2%) and trucks, vans and sport utility vehicles (-1.6%) decreased, while business investment in medium and heavy trucks, buses and other motor vehicles fell 34.2%. Longer plant shutdowns because of international supply chain disruptions have constrained imports of parts and led to significant decreases in exports.

REMEMBERING A MILITARY QUAGMIRE: EXIT OF US FROM AFGHANISTAN AND THE IMPACT ON SMALL STATES

BY ASANGAABEYAGOONASEKERA

R.W. Apple Jr. wrote back in 2001 that "like an unwelcome specter from an unhappy past, the ominous word 'quagmire' has begun to haunt conversations among government officials and students of foreign policy, both here and abroad. Could Afghanistan become another Vietnam?"

It took 20 years for the entire world to witness the US exit from Afghanistan. Shocking pictures of Afghan civilians clinging onto a US C17 military aircraft appeared in the media. Some of them shockingly perished in midair at the Kabul airport.

The US had to live another Saigon moment. Pictures of US withdrawal in Saigon circulated in the media -- the famous image of a man with a white shirt reaching down to grab a person at the top of a staircase to board the helicopter.

On the afternoon of April 29, 1975, CIA officer Oren Bartholomew Harnage was assisting the fleeing refugees and this was in 22 Gia Long Street and not the US Embassy, photographed by Dutch journalist Van Es.

Back then, President Nixon's exit from Vietnam had 130,000 South Vietnamese evacuated to the US bases in Guam and the Philippines. Then the evacuees were resettled in the US.

Just like refugees who fled Communist rule, today, the same obligation to protect Afghan refugees fleeing the Taliban clutches has fallen on the United States. According to ORF scholar Harsh Pant, 'the hard-won rights for women and minorities and democracy have already been sacrificed at the altar, reaching a modus vivendi with the Taliban'.

The US withdrawal was depicted as a humiliation and a loss, falling short of not capturing the accurate strategic dimensions and how the exit would impact India and the regional security of South Asia, especially to smaller South Asian neighbours like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Maldives.

The failure of non-military instruments of power

Robert M Gates, in his book 'Exercise of Power', admits that "it is probably true that Brent Scowcroft and I as National Security Advisor and deputy should have at least devoted some time to focus on how the US and others might help Afghanistan after a decade of war... we certainly sent the wrong signal when we closed our embassy after the Soviets left. After helping the Afghans defeat the Soviets, we presumably had the foundation of at least some goodwill". The lost opportunity in 1989 was due to the US focus on Eastern Europe than Afghanistan.

With the absence of the US between 1996 and 2001, Osama Bin Laden established camps in Afghanistan that trained an estimated ten thousand terrorist fighters. Afghanistan became a state sponsor of terror, and a state sponsored by terror writes President George W. Bush in his memoir Deci-

Twenty-six days after the 9/11 attack, US military began its airstrikes in Afghanistan. Taliban and al-Qaeda were ousted from Afghanistan by early 2002, with 27 American lives lost and \$20 billion spent. After 20 years, the nation building cost was nearly \$2 trillion.

Gates observed, "We and Afghans would have been better served had our military departed in 2002 and had we thereafter relieved on our non-military instruments of national power and patience", believing that lasting change would come within a more realistic projection.

George Town Scholar Christine C Fair rightly assessed that "After clearing Afghanistan of Al Qaeda, which happened in 2004, the United States should have withdrawn. When the United States decided to declare war on the Taliban and enter into a highly ill-devised state-building fiasco, it should have realised that this would be a disaster absent any policy to stop Pakistan from supporting the Taliban".

According to Sarah Chaves, while Pakistan was a key factor for the Taliban tentacles to grow in Afghanistan, the Afghan government's corruption is another apparent factor.

Taliban and China

The US has faced multiple exits and several cycles of proxy wars since the end of the cold war when the hammer and the sickle flag fell in Kremlin. US exit from Afghanistan was a decision taken by the previous Trump administration, taken forward by President Biden. The withdrawal strategy leaves China, the emerging Asia power, with more responsibility to balance the Taliban occupation, making China's western frontier of Xinjiang open for multiple security threats.

A month ago, Taliban leaders assured China that they will not allow anyone to use Afghan soil against China and support China to maintain security in their border areas in the Wakhan corridor.

However, China's BRI still remains vulnerable when the US leaves Afghanistan, a geographical pivot state wedged between Central and South Asian regions. The calculated exit of the unending war in Afghanistan is a strategy that was in the making for many years in Washington.

It was wholly executed by Biden. The danger for the US exit is not the Taliban's hold, but their tentacles and extremist agenda will expand through its proxies to multiple geographies in the region, threatening the regional security bal-

Taliban and smaller South Asian nations

There is a clear and present danger for India from Taliban. India which focused on its security concerns in the recent past towards north (China) and West (Pakistan) would need a broader spectrum of focus towards the South (Sri Lanka and the Maldives) and east (Bangladesh).

Taliban's proxies in Bangladesh - Jund al-Tawheed Khalifa, Harkat-ul-Jihadal-Islami (HuJI-B), AQIS, and Jamaat-ul-Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) will have a new lease of life with the Taliban grip in Afghanistan. The Maldives, with its highest per capita contribution to foreign terrorist fighters, will be another nation that will be vulnerable and radicalised extremist in the country who has contact will see an opportunity with the Taliban's emergence to

In Sri Lanka, the burga ban, madrasa regulation, and force cremation of Muslims are clear optics towards further radicalisation, which the Taliban will exploit. Jihadist movements such as National TohweedJamath (NTJ) with contacts with South Indian cells, will find their energy back with Taliban return. Smaller South Asian nations with weak security structures will be fertile grounds for the Taliban to push the extremist agenda and suppress the secular movements.

Sri Lanka, which faced the most significant terror attack in April 2019, is vulnerable to future security threats with the weak political environment. Media does not assume any responsibility or liability for the same.



Pakistan will be a breeding ground due to its support towards Taliban insurgents to spread their activity.

Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan views the Taliban capture as a moment of freedom, saying, 'Afghanistan has broken the shackles of slavery. The Taliban's grip and expanse will directly threaten India and many other smaller South Asian nations. Anti-India groups such as LeT and JeM have already found sanctuary in Afghanistan due to the Taliban and ISI.

The re-Talibanisation of Afghanistan will have severe consequences to Indian national security. The radical Islamic elements will flow across borders easily due to a lack of infrastructure to counter the threat within the region. The multi jurisdictional structures for intelligence sharing and counter-terrorism within South Asia are underfunded and underdeveloped.

The Sri Lankan Easter Sunday attacks proves this very argument.

Taliban 2.0 and the Indo Pacific Greater Pakistan-China and Sri Lanka-China collaboration and Chinese projects such as CPEC of Hambantota/Port City are development projects to accelerate economic growth. In reality, the security challenges from the Taliban can have a destabilising effect on these projects and cause severe delays. China's inroads n South Asia are wellestablished in pro-China centric nations within the BRI.

Many of these nations did not view the U.S. presence in the region as a positive trend, depicting it as a potential threat to national security projects from miscalculated policy decisions. The U.S. withdrawal is a direct message to the regional powers to look after their own regional security concerns than depending on Washington. The Western allies will draw another strategy in Taliban 2.0, perhaps more towards Indo-Pacific.

Thus filling the gap after the withdrawal of the United States will be a challenging task for India, China and Russia. Maintaining the regional security of Central Asia and South Asia is going to be highly contested. China is far from filling the gap and perhaps will not focus on wider security concerns. Russia is monitoring the situation, leaving the burden to India that will face a clear, direct security threat from all directions including smaller south Asian nations.

Disclaimer: AsangaAbeyagoonasekera is a geopolitical analyst and author of 'Conundrum of an Island [2021]'. The opinions expressed within this article are the personal ideas of the author. The facts and conclusions appearing in the article do not reflect the views of Y Media and Midweek Newspaper, and Y

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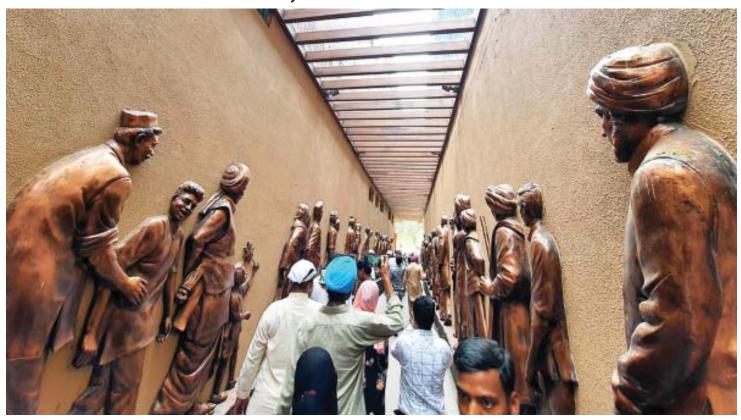
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JALLIANWALA BAGH: AFTER RAHUL GANDHI CALLS RENOVATION 'INSULT', AMARINDER SAYS IT 'LOOKS NICE'



THE PASSAGE LEADING TO THE JALLIANWALA BAGH IN AMRITSAR AFTER RENOVATION.

Hours after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi termed the renovated Jallianwala Bagh an "insult to martyrs", Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh took a different line, saying the revamped memorial looked "nice" to him. Talking to the media on the sidelines of an event organised to distribute pensions across the state, Amarinder said, "I was a part of the inauguration function of the renovated Jallianwala Bagh when Prime Minister Narendra Modi threw it open for the public. A laser show was also organised. I feel they needed to repair the walls, which had developed cracks. The renovation looks nice to me." Gandhi had on Tuesday morning joined in on the growing criticism of the memorial, saying 'only those who do not understand the sacrifice of martyrs would insult them like this'. He said he was the that Amarinder had a "quid pro quo" with Opposition Akalis.

son of a martyr and and would not tolerate the insult to martyrs. "We are against this indecent barbarity," Gandhi tweeted in Hindi. In another tweet, Rahul Gandhi said, "Those who didn't struggle for freedom can't understand those who did."

Amarinder's statement came later, when he was asked by mediapersons to react on the renovation.

The Punjab CM's reaction has raised eyebrows within the Congress, coming at a time when he is facing a revolt from many of his colleagues. Last month, the Congress high command appointed Amarinder's bete-noire Navjot Singh Sidhu the party's state unit chief. Recently, Cabinet minister Tript Rajinder Singh Bajwa publicly said

PUNJAB CM AMARINDER SLAMS HARYANA CM KHATTAR FOR DEFENDING ASSAULT ON FARMERS



CHANDIGARH, (IANS) Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh on Monday slammed his Haryana counterpart Manohar Lal Khattar for defending the "criminal assault on peacefully protesting farmers" by putting the onus of their agitation on his state, saying Khattar's remarks had completely exposed his government's "anti-farmer agenda".

The Punjab Chief Minister reminded Khattar and his deputy Dushyant Chautala that the farmers who were protesting against the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) meeting in Karnal when the police baton-charged them belonged to Haryana and not Punjab.

He was reacting to Khattar's and Chautala's allegations of Punjab being behind the farmers' agitation against the farm laws.

Blaming the BJP squarely for the farmers' wrath, Amarinder Singh said the crisis would not have assumed "such grave proportions" had the BJP, including the Haryana CM and Deputy CM, heeded the farmers' concerns and empathized with their pain, instead of "taking refuge in shameful lies for the horrendous attacks on the peaceful farmers".

He trashed Khattar's claim that the Haryana Police used force only after the farmers disturbed the state's law and order, citing the viral video of an official purportedly giving explicit instructions to the cops to bash up the farmers "nailed the CM's lies".

"How did the SDM know that the farmers intended to resort to stone pelting, etc, as claimed by Khattar?" Amarinder Singh asked.

"Can't you see that the farmers of your own state are angry with you for your apathetic attitude towards them and your party's stubborn refusal to repeal the farm laws?" he asked the Haryana leaders, adding the farmers were fighting for their survival and did not need provocation from Punjab or any other state to protect themselves and their families.

"The sentiment of the entire country was with the farmers in the matter of the draconian and blatantly undemocratic farm laws, imposed by the BJP-led central government in the midst of the Covid pandemic," said Amarinder Singh, adding that the BJP's adamant refusal to revoke the legislation reflected the "vested interests" of the party and its leadership. "Repeal the farm laws instead of blaming Punjab for the mess your party has put the farming sector in," said Amarinder Singh, warning that the BJP would have to pay for their sins in the upcoming Assembly elections in various states, and in every poll thereafter. "The Khattar government's repeated attempts to forcibly end the farmers' agitation, and the derogatory and obnoxious terms used against farmers by various BJP leaders, will only backfire on their party," he added.

Russia, China, Pak in new regional structure, India calibrates stand

CALIBRATING its response to overtures Sunday by Taliban leader Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai, New Delhi is keenly aware of the power structure emerging in the region.

Officials told The Indian Express that much before the Taliban takeover, India was being reminded by Russia of the need to come to terms

with the shifting sands in Afghanistan. China made its stand public when Foreign Minister Wang Yi met a Taliban delegation led by Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar in Tianjin on July 28. "The Afghan Taliban," Wang said, "is an important political and military force... expected to play an important role in the country's

peace, reconciliation and reconstruction process." On August 11, four days before the fall of Kabul, the Extended Troika on Afghanistan, comprising Russia, China, Pakistan and the US, met in Qatar's capital Doha. That India would not find a place at this table was made amply clear by Zamir Kabulov, Russian President Vladimir Putin's special envoy on Afghanistan. Officials point to an online discussion, reported by Russian news agency Tass on July 20, in which Kabulov suggested that India could not participate in these talks because it lacked "influence" over the Taliban – and that only countries with "unequivocal

Russia, China and Pakistan, all eyeing stakes in a Taliban-controlled Afghanistan. He reminded India that it could play a role once the US exited the country - "post-conflict" was the term he used. "India's future efforts, in a more expanded format will only be welcomed. This expanded format will involve Afghanistan's post-conflict development. Here, India's clout and its role are rather significant," Kabulov said.

influence on both sides" could participate. According to officials, Kabulov was pointing to the new regional structure taking shape -

Kabulov's history with Afghanistan — from the Russian occupation in the 1980s when he was with the mission in Kabul to Ambassador

in 2004 — makes him a significant factor in the new calculus.

Officials point to statements issued by the Russians in the last one week following Putin's calls to leaders of countries who will be shaping the new structure. These highlight, they said, the nuances that distinguish each relationship.On August 24, the day the G7 Foreign Affairs Committee Chairs issued a statement calling for a framework on dealing with the Taliban and said "we would like to see India invited to this G7 meeting", Putin was on the line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. New Delhi's statement on the conversation emphasised "it was important for the two strategic partners to work together and instructed their senior officials to remain in touch." But the Russian President's statement pointed to "their determination to increase cooperation" and the need to "establish a two-way channel for permanent consultations". Now consider the Russian statements on Putin's conversations with Chinese President Xi Jinping and Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan. And these exchanges took place a day later — on August 25.

HARYANA FARMERS BUSY IN FIELDS, 85% PROTESTERS FROM PUNJAB: KHATTAR



Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar Monday said that 85 per cent of those who are protesting as part of the farmers' agitation are from Punjab, while Haryana's farmers are "happily working in their fields". He also issued a "warning" to those who had chosen Haryana as the land for disrupting law and order and accused the Punjab government of instigating farmers.

Khattar made these remarks while addressing a press conference marking completion his government's 2,500 days in Haryana.

Responding to media's queries regarding the Karnal lathicharge incident, Khattar said, "Those agitating and taking law and order in their hands are not farmers, they are politically motivated people. Haryana farmers are happily working in their fields, those are Punjab farmers who are actually sitting at Tikri and Singhu borders".

Responding to a guestion on Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's statement that he should apologise to farmers, Khattar said, "In what authority he (Amarinder Singh) is asking me to resign or apologise? Who is he to ask me to apologise or resign? Rather, he should resign for instigating farmers. About 85 per cent of those sitting on Delhi's borders are from Punjab."

Talking about the farmers' ongoing protests in Haryana, Khattar blamed Punjab government backing the protestors and said, "I want to warn them that they have chosen a wrong place — Haryana". "Punjab government has a hand in this ongoing protest in Haryana. This is bitter truth, otherwise (farmer leader) Rajewal would not have been seen serving laddoos to Punjab CM. I am warning them (farmers) that they have wrongly chosen Haryana to carry on with their protest". Launching a scathing attack on Congress and Communist party leaders, Khattar said, "They mislead innocent farmers and provoke them to create chaos. Through such agitations, if these leaders think that they can achieve their vested interests, and then they are highly mistaken. A positive dialogue was held between these protestors and district administration wherein they had given written consent that they would only protest in a symbolic manner and will not violate law and order situation. However, it is really unfortunate to see that how at the behest of some politically motivated leaders, they had broken their promise." Further talking about farmers, Khattar said that "about Rs 11,000 crore has so far been disbursed as direct benefit in the bank accounts of nearly 50 lakh farmers in the last 2500 days".

SELECTION OF DISTRICT PARTY CHIEF EXPOSES RIFT WITHIN KERALA CONGRESS

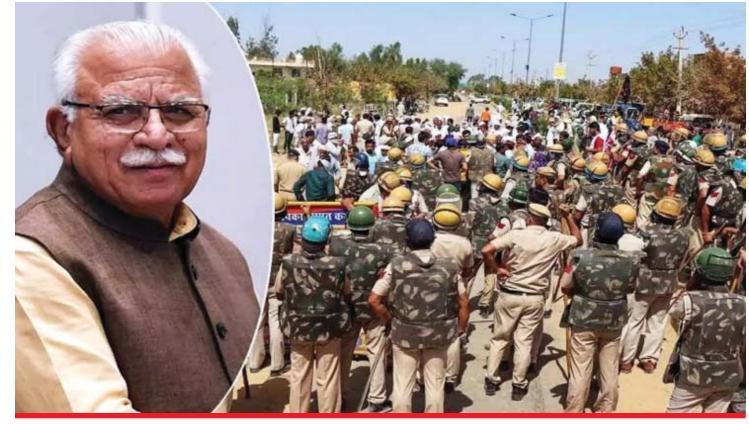
Disquiet is brewing in the Kerala unit of the Congress over the appointment of party chiefs in 14 districts in the state. The selection of a new crop of leaders has demonstrated the declining sway of senior leaders Oommen Chandy and Ramesh Chennithala, who would share the party slots at all rungs between them for nearly two decades. A day after Chandy and Chennithala openly expressed their displeasure over their nominees not being considered as DCC presidents, senior Congress leader A V Gopinath, who lost in the race for the Palakkad district, quit the party on Monday. Former party legislator K Sivadasan Nair and KPCC general secretary K P Anil Kumar were suspended from the party after they openly criticised the new list, while KPCC secretary P S Prasanth was expelled on Monday after he wrote to senior party leader Rahul Gandhi, raising allegations against AICC general secretary K C Venugopal. Prasanth, who had contested in the recent assembly elections, had come out against the appointment of Palod Ravi as DCC president in Thiruvananthapuram and had claimed that Venugopal is a Congress 'terminator' in Kerala. Realising that the Congress in the state is emerging out of their shadows, Chandy and Chennithala said neither was consulted before the list of DCC chiefs was finalised. "A far better list could have been brought out if consultations were held," Chandy said. Upset over the party rejecting his nominees, Chennithala said group is a reality in the Congress. Apparently referring to KPCC president K Sudhakaran and Opposition leader V D Satheesan, Chennithala said, "the present leaders have been part of groups and acted as the group managers.

RAJASTHAN: 11 KILLED IN ROAD **ACCIDENT IN NAGAUR; PM MODI, CM GEHLOT EXPRESS CONDOLENCES**



At least eleven pilgrims were killed and seven others injured after the van they were travelling in collided with a truck in Rajasthan's Nagaur district on Tuesday.

The accident occurred near Shri Balaji temple on the Bikaner-Jodhpur Highway. The victims, who hailed from Madhya Pradesh's Ujjain district, were returning home after offering prayers at Ramdevra and Karni Mata temples. Prime Minister took to Twitter to express his condolences over the incident and wished the injured a speedy recovery. "The horrific road accident in Nagaur, Rajasthan is very painful. I express my condolences to the families of all those who have lost their lives in this accident and wish the injured a speedy recovery," the PMO tweeted. The Prime Minister has approved an ex-gratia of Rs 2 lakhs each from PMNRF for the next of kin of those who lost their lives in the accident. The injured would be given Rs 50,000, the PMO said. Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot also expressed his grief over the accident. "The death of 11 pilgrims returning to MP in a horrific road accident in Shribalaji area of Nagaur is extremely sad. My condolences to the bereaved family, may God give them strength in this difficult time and may the soul of the departed rest in peace. Praying for speedy recovery of the injured," Gehlot tweeted.



KISAN MORCHA EXPRESSES SHOCK OVER HARYANA CM'S STATEMENT

NEW DELHI, (IANS) Expressing deep shock and objection over Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar's defence of a "murderous official" in the state, the Samyukt Kisan Morcha (SKM) on Monday gave a deadline of September 6 to the Haryana government to lodge a murder case against the SDM allegedly involved in the lathi charge incident. "After facing serious injuries during the brutal lathi charge in Karnal district on August 28 during the protest against a Chief Minister's event there, Sushil Kajal succumbed to the same. The SKM reiterates the demand that the state government should immediately slap murder charges and file a case against SDM Ayush Sinha, in addition to dismissing him and all other officials involved in the unacceptable violence unleashed on peaceful protesters on Saturday," the SKM

said in a release. "It is utterly shocking that the Chief Minister of the state is choosing to brush aside the barbaric and illegal instructions as only a wrong choice of words. It once again clearly reiterates what we have been saying, which is that the Khattar-Chautala government is at war with its own people," the release said.

A video had gone viral of the SDM shouting out instructions to policemen to use force to stop the protesting farmers. Khattar had told a press conference that the officer's "choice of words was not correct" but said, "if any action has to be taken (against the officer), it would first have to be assessed by the district administration." Mobilisation efforts continue in various states and districts for the Kisan Mahapanchayat on September 5 in Muzaffarnagar in Uttar Pradesh.

SC REJECTS ASARAM'S PLEA SEEKING SUSPENSION OF SENTENCE TO UNDERGO AYURVEDIC TREATMENT

The Supreme Court Tuesday dismissed the plea of self-styled godman Asaram Bapu, facing varying jail terms including life sentence in sexual assault cases, that his sentence be suspended for few months for undergoing ayurvedic treatment, saying the offence was not an "ordinary crime at all".

A bench comprising justices Indira Banerjee, V Ramasubramanian, and Bela M Trivedi took note of the response of the Rajasthan government that the convict has been provided requisite treatment and dismissed the plea. "Sorry. It is not an ordinary crime at all. You will get all your ayurvedic treatment in jail," the bench observed orally while dismissing the plea. Senior advocate R Basant, appearing for the convict, said that an interim bail for a period of two months can be considered for allowing him to get the holistic treatment of his ailments. Senior Advocate Manish Singhvi, representing the state, said the convict has been getting the best possible treatment in jail and urged dismissal of the plea.

A vacation bench, on June 4, had sought the response of the state government on Asaram's plea that his sentence be suspended for two months for undergoing treatment at Prakash Deep Institute of Ayurved near Haridwar in Uttarakhand.

In its response, the state government had said that Asaram was hospitalised and in the intensive care unit for the treatment and his plea for transferring him had become infructuous.

Prior to this, the state government had told the top court that Asaram was fit and stable but trying to change the venue of his custody on the pretext of medical treatment. Asaram is serving varying jail terms including life sentences in two sexual assault cases.

"The accused/petitioner with ulterior motives has been attempting to change the venue of his custody, under the guise of medical treat- August 15, 2013.



ment. Such change, with due respect, is an abuse of the process of law," the state government had said in its affidavit.

"The accused is also deliberately delaying the pending trial at Gandhi Nagar as well as Jodhpur, raising such pleas with mala fides whereas he is stable and fit," it had said.

The state government had said Jodhpur is one of the rare centres, where both the allopathic and ayurvedic treatments are available. It had also said Asaram was tested positive for COVID-19 on May 6 and was having mild symptoms, with low-grade fever and was treated properly. A Jodhpur court, on April 25, 2018, had sentenced Asaram to life in prison after finding him guilty of raping a teenage girl in his

His accomplices Sharad and Shilpi were sentenced to 20 years in jail by the court in the same case for their roles.

The teenager had said in her complaint that Asaram had called her to his ashram in Manai area near Jodhpur and raped her on the night of

TIRANGA YATRA: SISODIA, SANJAY SINGH AMONG AAP LEADERS **BOOKED BY UP POLICE FOR VIOLATING COVID NORMS**

ashram in 2013.



Police have registered a case against 17 AAP leaders, including Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Singh, for violating Covid protocols during the party's Tiranga Yatra here. The FIR also mentions 500 unidentified persons who were part of the yatra on Sunday from the GIC ground till the Shaheed Smarak in Sanjay Place, police said. Permission had been granted to organise the Tiranga Yatra while following COVID-19 protocols with a limit of 50 people, they said. But the number of people, who attended the march on Sunday, exceeded the permitted number and COVID-19 protocols were not followed, police said. Ahead of the Uttar Pradesh assembly polls, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) plans to take out Tiranga Yatras in Ayodhya, Lucknow and Noida to mark the 75th year of India's Independence. The AAP party will carry out this yatra in Ayodhya on September 14 and later in 403 assembly segments of Uttar Pradesh, Sisodia had said on Sunday, as he attacked the BJP government in the

state over law-and-order, education, healthcare and employment situations. Superintendent of Police (City) Vikas Kumar said that the case has been registered against 17 AAP leaders, including Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and Rajya Sabha MP, and another 500 unidentified persons. They were part of the Tiranga Yatra carried out by the party's leaders on Sunday evening from GIC ground till Shaheed Smarak in Sanjay Place in Agra, he said. "For not following the COVID-19 protocol the FIR was registered at the Lohamandi Police station on Monday morning," the SP said. They have been booked under Indian Penal Code sections 188, 269 and 270, and under provisions the Epidemic Diseases Act for violation of COVID-19 protocols, police said. Section 188 pertains to disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant, while 269 and 270 pertain to whoever unlawfully, malignantly or negligently does any act which is, and which he knows or has reason to believe to be, likely to spread the infection of any disease dangerous to life.

CAPT CLAPS BACK: 'REPEAL FARM LAWS INSTEAD OF BLAMING PUNJAB FOR MESS YOUR PARTY HAS PUT FARMING SECTOR IN'



PUNJAB CHIEF Minister Capt Amarinder Singh on Monday slammed his Haryana counterpart Manohar Lal Khattar over his remarks on the Karnal lathicharge and blaming the Punjab government for backing the protesters, saying that Khattar's remarks "had completely exposed his government's anti-farmer agenda".

Talking about the farmers' agitation in Haryana, Khattar had Monday put the onus on the Punjab government and said, "I want to warn them that they have chosen a wrong place - Haryana". Amarinder said he would like to remind Khattar and his deputy Dushyant Chautala that the farmers who were protesting against the BJP meeting in Karnal when police rained lathis on them belonged to Haryana and not Punjab. laming the BJP squarely for the farmers' wrath, Amarinder in a statement said the crisis would not have assumed such grave proportions had the BJP, including the Haryana CM and deputy CM, "heeded the farmers' concerns and empathised with their pain instead of taking refuge in shameful lies for the horrendous attacks on the peaceful farmers". He slammed Khattar's claim that the Haryana police used force only after the farmers disturbed the state's law and order, stating that the viral video of the SDM giving explicit instructions to police personnel to bash up the farmers had nailed the CM's lies. "How did the SDM know that the farmers intended to resort to stone pelting etc, as claimed by Khattar?" asked the Punjab CM. "Can't you see that the farmers of your own state are angry with you for your apathetic attitude towards them and your party's stubborn refusal to repeal the farm laws?" he asked the Haryana leaders, adding that "the farmers were fighting for their survival and did not need provocation from Punjab or any other state to protect themselves and their families".

SIDHU VS CAPTAIN TENSION ESCALATES

NEW DELHI, (IANS) Ahead of Congress General Secretary Harish Rawat's visit to Punjab to de-escalate tension between the two factions, the Navjot Singh Sidhu's camp has opened a front against Rawat and challenged his statement on Amarinder. In a statement, Punjab Congress General Secretary Pargat Singh had posed a challenge that Harish Rawat should tell when



it was decided that Punjab elections will be fought under the leadership of Chief Minister Amarinder Singh.

"Election will be fought under the leadership of Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi," Pargat Singh said.

Harish Rawat had met Rahul Gandhi on Saturday and briefed him about the situation there which has arisen after the statement of Navjot Singh Sidhu. Rawat is scheduled to visit Punjab in a day or two and will talk to Chief Minister Amarinder Singh and state president Navjot Singh Sidhu and sort out the issues arising out of the differences between the two leaders. Rawat had on Friday met interim President Sonia Gandhi and apprised her of the situation in the state. "Punjab situation is under control... I have apprised her about the situation in the state," he told reporters after the meeting.

Sidhu speaking at a party function in Amritsar last week had said, "If he is allowed to work according to his own poAlicy of hope and faith, he will ensure the Congress rule in the state for 20 years.

"But if you won't let me take decisions, eintnaaleint bi kharkaonga (it will be disastrous for the party). There's no point in becoming a showpiece," Sidhu had said without mincing words.

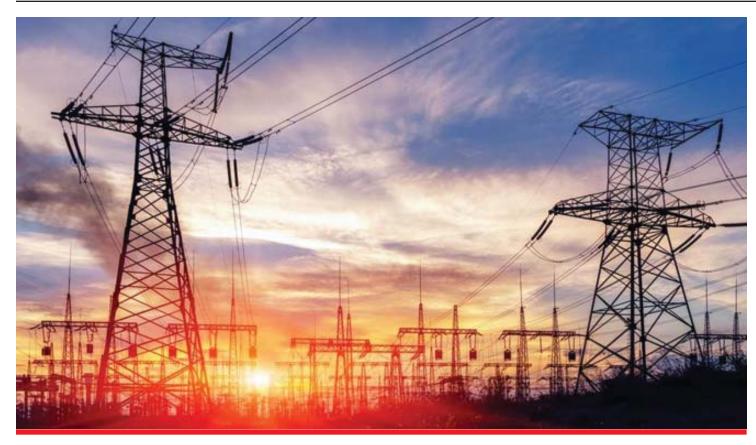
Speaking about the Punjab model, Sidhu said, "Punjab model means people make policies for trade, industry and power. Giving power back to the people." The meeting happened in wake of some "rebel" MLAs seeking time from Sonia Gandhi to press for the removal of Chief Minister Amarinder Singh. Rawat has been facing a tough task to balance both sides in Punjab as Sidhu and Amarinder Singh are at loggerheads.

Meanwhile, Amarinder Singh's confidante and Cabinet minister Rana Gurmit Singh Sodhi hosted a dinner at his residence on Thursday. A total of 58 MLAs and eight MPs attended the dinner and expressed confidence that the party would win the 2022 polls under the leadership of Amarinder Singh. "The journey has started today," Sodhi informed in a tweet.

AFGHAN SITUATION SHOULDN'T BE ALLOWED TO PROMOTE CROSS-BORDER TERROR: RAJNATH



The situation in Afghanistan has brought up new issues from the national security perspective, and India is monitoring the developments there, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said on Monday. He said India is also concerned that "anti-national" forces should not take advantage of the changed scenario and promote cross-border terrorism. "What is happening in neighbouring Afghanistan is raising new questions from the security point of view. Our government is constantly monitoring the situation there. Along with the security of Indians, our government also wants that by taking advantage of the situation being created there, anti-national forces should not encourage cross-border terrorism," Singh said. "At the same time, there are some other concerns as well, which can become a challenge from the point of view of national security but our government is alert, and is capable of facing any kind of situation. We are always prepared to deal with the threat arising from anywhere, whether sky, water or land." Delivering the third Balramji Dass Tandon memorial lecture virtually, the Defence Minister also spoke about the security challenges posed by China.



INDIA'S FY22 POWER DEMAND EXPECTED TO RISE 12% YOY: REPORT

FY22 power demand by 12 per cent on a year-on-year basis, HDFC Securities said in a report.

According to the report, revival in economic activity and low YoY base triggered an increase in power generation by 10 per cent YoY in July 2021.

"Power generation also increased in most of the states, mirroring the growth in demand. However, power generation declined in Delhi, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Gujarat. Fall in demand and generation until August 15.

NEW DELHI, (IANS) Improved economic activity is expected to raise generation in Gujarat is largely due to a fall in the Mundra plant generation, which is attributable to a steep rise in imported coal prices, making the plant unviable to operate at the current level," it said. The report also said that the power generation increase was led by strong growth across the coal and renewables (RES) segments. The plant load factor (PLF) improved for the coal, hydro, nuclear and RES segments, while it fell for the gas segment.

Besides, the month of August witnessed 15 per cent YoY growth in

COVID-19 THIRD WAVE PEAK LIKELY BETWEEN OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, SAYS SCIENTIST



IIT-Kanpur scientist Manindra Agrawal has claimed that COVID-19 third wave is expected to peak between October and November but the intensity of the third wave would be lower than the second wave. It is to be noted that Agrawal is a member of the three-member team of experts that have been tasked to predict any surge in coronavirus infections. According to Agrawal.

It is expected that the country may see only 1 lakh daily cases during the peak of third wave. It may be recalled that over 4 lakh cases were recorded daily when the deadly second wave was at its peak in May. The second wave killed thousands across India.

"Status Quo is when no new mutant comes and New Variant is when 50% more infectious mutant comes by September. As one can see, the only scenario with some semblance of the third wave is New Variant one for epsilon = 1/33. In this scenario, new cases rise to ~ 1 lakh per day," Agrawal tweeted. Recently, the National Institute of

Disaster Management (NIDM) has said in its latest report that pace of COVID-19 vaccination is very slow in India and had warned that daily new case numbers could cross 6 lakh per day during third wave if pace is not accelerated. It is to be noted that NIDM functions under the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). "The emergence of a third wave could be significantly challenged by expanding vaccination but only around 7.6 per cent (10.4 crore) are fully vaccinated... According to a recent study done by professors and alumni from Pandit Deendayal Energy University (PDEU) in collaboration with Nirma University, the vaccination rate of India is currently 3.2 per cent which if does not improve, India can witness 6 lakh cases per day in the next (third) wave," the NIDM report stated. "But if the government's proposal to increase this rate by five times (1 crore doses per day) comes to fruition, India will see only 25 per cent of the cases (seen in the second wave) during the third wave peak," it added.

AMIT SHAH: IN A DEMOCRACY, EMPOWERING THE WEAK, WOMEN, KIDS MOST IMPORTANT

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said empowerment of women from the poor, backward communities and ensuring that the rights of children are protected is the most important part of any democracy.

While speaking at an event in Nidhrad village in Sanand Assembly, which is a part of the Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency, he added that that individuals are the smallest and foremost units of any democracy, and all infrastructure projects are meaningless if people remain malnourished and poor. Only when this is ensured can one say that elected representatives are doing their duty, Shah said.

Shah, who is also the Gandhinagar MP, was speaking at an event which marked the launch of an initiative to provide nutritional laddoos to pregnant women. On the occasion, Shah handed over laddoos to some pregnant women of the region to formally launch the initiative which has been started by the Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency in collaboration with voluntary organisations.

"Work on infrastructure (projects) will continue to be done. But the most important work in democracy is the empowerment of the weak, poor and backward women, and to give children their rights. Only when this is done successfully can we say that elected representatives are discharging their duties cent percent," Shah said.

"We have to plant trees. Roads have to reach each and every village. Village ponds have to be developed, and water has to be collected in them. But these facilities have no meaning if an individual remains weak, malnourished, or becomes a victim of poverty. Because in a democracy, a person is the foremost and smallest unit," Shah added.

Launching the initiative on Janmashtami, Shah congratulated people on the occasion while adding that Bal Krishna is the "ideal model of a healthy child". Under the initiative, pregnant women of the Lok Sabha constituency will get 15 nutritional laddoos every month for one year. Shah said that the laddoos — full of ghee, protein and vitamins — have been prepared in such a way that they can be stored for one month. Shah also said that no government money will be used in the initiative and voluntary organisations have taken up the responsibility to run it. "This will be a nirantar (continuous) campaign... I want to assure you that this campaign is not going to be stopped. Every pregnant mother who is poor will get these laddoos from the Gandhinagar Lok Sabha constituency," Shah said. He added that even when the country is celebrating the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav', the Centre is giving lots of importance to a campaign to provide nutritious food to people under the vision of 'Sahi Poshan, Desh Roshan'.

UNSC RESOLUTION AGAINST TERRORISM IN AFGHANISTAN APPLIES TO LASHKAR AND THE JAISH: INDIA

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The resolution was adopted on Monday under India's presidency by a divided Council where China and Russia were the outliers who abstained on the vote on the resolution, but refraining from vetoing it in view of the overwhelming global support for the sentiments behind it. All the other 13 members voted for it.

India played a "constructive and bridging" role at the Council and worked to the "extent possible for consensus-based" outcomes. Shringla said and this diplomacy was evident in saving the resolution proposed by the US, Britain and France from a veto by China and Russia, even as they expressed their opposition.

"Today's UN Security Council Resolution, therefore, is a very important and timely pronouncement coming as it does during India's Presidency of the UN Security Council," Shringla told reporters outside the Security Council after presiding over the meeting on Afghanistan.

The resolution also demanded that the Taliban uphold human rights, provide safe passage to those who want to leave Afghanistan and allow humanitarian aid.

Shringla said that India was "extremely happy" with the resolution as it "highlights the will of the Council to take necessary steps that are very important for the international community in its engagement with Afghanistan." The Council action came while the clocks 10,000 kilometres away in Afghanistan rolled past midnight into August 31, the deadline President Joe Biden had set for his country's withdrawal from there, and the last C-17 aircraft took off from Kabul International Airport.

"Tonight's withdrawal signifies both the end of the military component of the evacuation but also the end of the nearly 20-year mission that began in Afghanistan shortly after Sept. 11, 2001," declared General Kenneth McKenzie, the commander of the US Central Command.

At UN, Shringla said, "I want to highlight the fact that the resolution makes it very clear that Afghan territory should not be used to threaten or attack any other country. In particular, it also underlines the importance of combating terrorism."

"It also refers to those individuals and entities been designated under Security Council resolution 1267 (as terrorists)", he said, adding, "And in that context I may mention that the Lashkar-e-Toiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad, the L-e-T and the J-e-M, are UN Security Council proscribed entities, terror entities that need to be called out, and condemned in the strongest possible terms." The Council is "unequivocal" on terrorism, he said. The resolution said that Afghanistan "not be used to threaten or attack any country or to shelter or train terrorists, or to plan or to finance terrorist acts." "And I think that also reflects the views of council members, as we understand it from the discussions," Shringla said.

Although they had differences with other aspects of the resolution, Russia's Permanent RespresentativeVassilyNenenzia and China's Deputy Permanent Representative Geng Shuang joined in demanding in very strong terms in their speeches after their vote that the Taliban not allow terrorists to operate from its territory.

UTTAR PRADESH CM YOGI ADITYANATH BANS LIQUOR AND MEAT TRADE IN MATHURA



Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath imposed a complete ban on the sale of liquor and meat in Mathura on Monday, saying, "The officers concerned are directed to make plans for the ban as well as for the engagement of people involved in such activities in some other trade." The BJP leader made the announcement while speaking at the Krishnotsava 2021 programme in Lucknow. For the people, who livelihood depend on trading liquor and meat, CM Adityanath suggested that they should take up selling milk in order to revive the glory of Mathura, that was known for producing a huge quantity of animal milk, news agency PTI reported. The UP CM also prayed to Lord Krishna on the occasion of Janmashtami to eliminate the coronavirus. "Every effort will be made to develop Brij Bhumi and there will be no dearth of funds for this. We are looking at a blend of modern technology and the cultural and spiritual heritage for the development of the region," he said, news agency PTI quoted. CM Adityanath also complimented Prime Minister Narendra Modi for giving a new direction to India, as he added that places of faith, which were neglected for long, are being revived now. Cabinet ministers Laxmi Narain Chaudhary and Shrikant Sharma were also present on the occasion, reported PTI.

CONCERNED OVER GAZA ESCALATION, NEED TO ADDRESS CAUSES: INDIA

India on Monday expressed concern over the escalation at the Gaza Strip and called for restraint on the part of all parties saying they should refrain from acts that could worsen the security situation of the region. Speaking at the UN Security Council meeting in New York on the Middle East Peace Process, including the Palestine Question, Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla also expressed hope for early commencement of high-level negotiations between Israel and Palestine that can "provide the best opportunity" to resolve all final status issues and achieve a two-state solution.

"We are concerned by the recent escalation in the Gaza Strip, which once again underscores the fragility of the ceasefire and the urgent need for addressing the underlying causes that have triggered the escalation," said Shringla, who chaired the UNSC meeting as president of the Security Council for the month of August.

Addressing the council in his national capacity, Shringla said India calls on "all parties to the conflict to respect the ceasefire and refrain from acts that could exacerbate tensions and worsen the security situation. We recognise the efforts made by the UN and regional countries to prevent the hostilities from escalating into another military conflict." Shringla stressed that "high-level interaction" between Israel and Palestine contributes to a better environment for the resumption of direct peace negotiations. "We hope to see early commencement of these negotiations between the two sides, as they provide the best opportunity to resolve all final status issues and achieve a two-state solution. The international community, the Middle East Quartet in particular, has an important role to play in reviving these negotiations," he said.



TALIBAN SUPREME LEADER CONCLUDES TALKS ON GOVT FORMATION

KABUL/NEW DELHI, (IANS) The Taliban leaders have said that the person of the Taliban Zabiullah Mujahid had said that the new governnegotiations over the future set-up of government in Kabul have ended and will announce the new government soon.

led by Mullah Hibatullah Akhundzada -- the supreme leader of IEA -ended on Monday, August 30, Khaama News reported.

Mullah Hibatullah has recently come to the Afghan capital from Kandahar province where he had held a series of talks with tribal elders. The exact date of announcing the new government is not disclosed though, acting minister of information and culture and spokes-

ment set-up is to be announced in two-weeks time, the report said. He has also said that figures from the previous governments will not Officials in the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan said that negotiations be part of their new government because they have failed and people do not want them to be in power anymore.

In the meantime, the deputy head of the Taliban's political office based in Doha Sher Muhammad Abbas Stanikzai has been busy negotiating with the representatives of regional countries. Spokesperson of the office, Naeem Wardak said that Abbas has been discussing with the countries to assure them of no threat from Afghanistan.

'BEST DECISION FOR AMERICANS': US PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN DEFENDS TROOPS WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN

A day after completing the troops' withdrawal process from Afghanistan, US President Joe Biden said ending the 20-year war was the best and the 'right' decision for America. He said that there was no reason to continue in a war that was no longer in the service of the 'vital national interest of the US. Addressing from the White House, Biden on Tuesday said, "I give you my word: With all of my heart, I believe this is the right decision, a wise decision, and the best decision for America." He added, "We've been a nation too long at war. If you're 20 years old today, you have never known an America at peace. So, when I hear that we could've, should've continued the so-called low-grade effort in Afghanistan, at low risk to our service members, at low cost, I don't think enough people understand how much we have asked of the 1 percent of this country who put that uniform on, who are willing to put their lives on the line in defense of our nation." Biden said that he is the fourth US President who has faced the dilemma of whether or not to end this war. He said, "After 20 years of war in Afghanistan, I refused to send another generation of America's sons and daughters to fight a war that should have ended long ago." "As Commander-in-Chief, I firmly believe the best path to guard our safety and our security lies in a tough, unforgiving, targeted, precise strategy that goes after terror where it is today, not where it was two decades ago. That's what's in our national interest," the US President said. Biden added, "The fundamental obligation of a President, in my opinion, is to defend and protect America -- not against threats of 2001, but against the threats of 2021 and tomorrow. That is the guiding principle behind my decisions about Afghanistan. I simply do not believe that the safety and security of America are enhanced by continuing to deploy thousands of American troops and spending billions of dollars a year in Afghanistan." The US will maintain the fight against terrorism in Afghanistan and other nations, Biden added.

20 YEARS, \$2.3 TRILLION SPENT, 2,400 US TROOPS KILLED: AMERICA'S LONGEST WAR, IN NUMBERS



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US President Joe Biden became the fourth commander in chief to stand in reverence, his head bowed, as the heroes came home. Over the last 20 years, more than 2,400 US service members have been killed in Afghanistan alone.

Here are some numbers from America's longest war. The data on casualties and costs (approximations) are sourced from the Costs of War Project at Brown University and covers the time period between October 2001 to April 2021. Other data are sourced from a combination of Pentagon, White House and US State Department briefings.

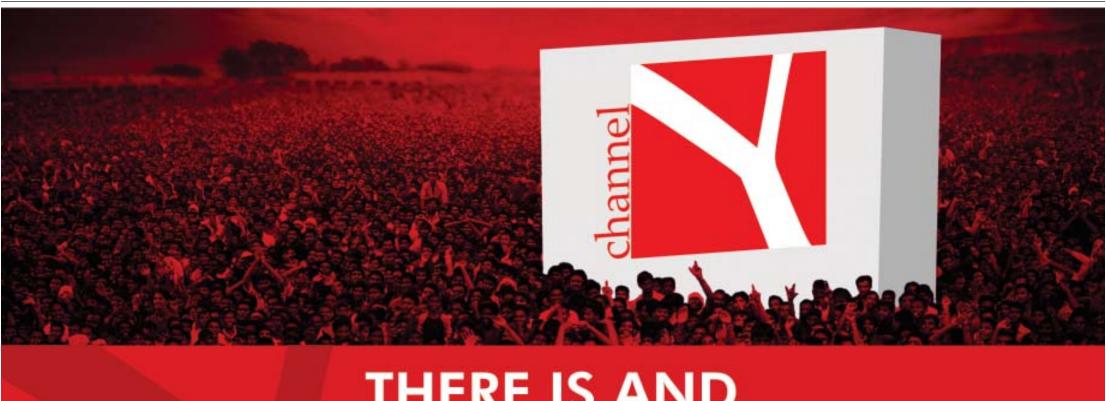
Number of people killed in the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York City, Washington, DC and Pennsylvania: Nearly 3,000.

Date on which US Congress authorized use of US Armed Forces against those responsible for the September 11 attacks: September 18, 2001. Time at which the last US planes took off from Kabul airport on August 30, 2021: 3:29 pm in Washington, DC.

Number of days between Taliban takeover and total US withdrawal: 15. Number of people killed in a suicide attack three days before the US left Afghanistan: 13 US service members and 169 Afghans. Total number killed in Afghanistan alone, last 20 years: 171,000-174,000 America's total expenditure on operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan: \$2.313 trillion.

TALIBAN ADMIT WOMEN NOT SAFE IN THE PRESENCE OF THEIR MILITANTS

KABUL, (IANS) The Taliban leadership is warning the employed women in Afghanistan to stay indoors until it trains its security forces on "how to deal with women". "Our security forces are not trained [in] how to deal with women or how to speak with women," Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid told reporters at a press conference, Fox News reported. "Until we have full security in place ... we ask women to stay home," he said. Mujahid added that the guidance is a "very temporary procedure", and women will be allowed to return to work once a system is in place to protect their safety. Fear is mounting among women and girls in Afghanistan after the Taliban told working women to stay at home, admitting that they are not safe in the presence of the militant group's soldiers. The Taliban spokesperson said that women should not go to work for their own safety, undermining the group's efforts to convince international observers that the group would be more tolerant towards women than they were when they were last in power, CNN reported. The instruction came the same day that the World Bank halted funding in Afghanistan, citing concerns about the safety of women, and within hours of the UN calling for a "transparent and prompt investigation" into reports of human rights abuses since the Taliban takeover.























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AUSTRALIAN TRAVEL BANS LOWERED COVID CASES BY 88%: STUDY



CANBERRA, (IANS) Australia's national science agency has developed a tool capable of forecasting the number of coronavirus infections on each international flight to the country.

The model, which was developed by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO), uses the number of incoming travellers and the rate of Covid-19 infection in their country of origin to estimate case numbers aboard a flight, reports Xinhua news agency.

Jess Liebig, a CSIRO research scientist, said it would act as another tool to aid government decisions on travel restrictions and opening borders. "The model is a flexible framework that can be used to quantify the effects of travel restrictions and to evaluate proposed relaxations," she said in a statement on Wednesday. "It also enables us to pinpoint the groups of travellers most likely to be carrying the virus, so authorities can more efficiently direct healthcare and bio-security control strategies."

In a study published on Wednesday, Liebig's team applied the model to two different scenarios; one with open international borders and one with actual travel restrictions imposed by the federal government between January and June 2020. They found that the restrictions reduced the number of Covid-19 cases brought into Australia by 88 per cent. "Our modelling shows that without travel restrictions, over 48,000 Covid-19 cases were likely to have been imported to Australia from January to May 2020," Liebig said.

AUS ECONOMY WILL SUFFER IF LEADERS DON'T STICK TO REOPENING PLAN: TREASURER

CANBERRA, (IANS) Australian Treasurer Josh Frydenberg on Sunday warned that the country's country economy will suffer if leaders do not stick to the national plan to reopen from coronavirus lockdowns. Federal, state and territory governments in July signed off on a roadmap out of the pandemic that will start when 70 pe rcent of the adult population is fully vaccinated against Covid, Xinhua news agency reported. However, some state premiers have since cast doubts over the plan amid recent outbreaks and lockdowns in the nation's major cities, Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne. In response, Frydenberg said it could lead to a "ridiculous" situation where Australians could travel freely overseas but not interstate. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) will on Wednesday release the national accounts figures for the second quarter of 2021, which are expected by some economists to show the economy shrink. Australia registered a new record number of Covid-19 cases, as 1.323 new locally-acquired infections on Sunday. Of the news cases, 1,218 were from New South Wales (NSW), Australia's most populous state with Sydney as the capital city. Victoria, the second-most populous state with Melbourne as the capital city, reported a further 92 new local cases, and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) recorded another 13, which takes the number of total cases associated with this outbreak in Canberra to 250. Since the onset of the pandemic early last year, Australia has reported 49,937 confirmed coronavirus cases and 993 deaths.

Tesla now aims to sell electricity directly to consumers in US

SAN FRANCISCO, (IANS) After electric vehicles (EVs), solar panels and energy storage systems, Elon Musk-run Tesla is now planning to sell electricity directly to consumers in the US. In an application filed with the Public Utilities Commission of Texas, the EV maker has requested to become a "retail electric provider" (REP) under its subsidiary Tesla Energy Ventures, reports Energy Choice Matters. "The applicant will rely on the Tesla mobile application and the Tesla website to execute on its customer acquisition strategy. Specifically, the applicant will target its existing customers that own Tesla products and market the retail offer to customers through the mobile application and Tesla website," the company said in the application. "In addition to the Tesla mobile application and Tesla website, the

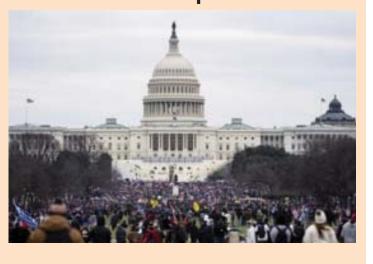


applicant's existing 'Tesla Energy Customer Support' organisation will be trained to provide support and guidance to customers in customer acquisition efforts," it added. Ana Stewart is listed as President of Tesla Energy Ventures. She has been with Tesla since 2017 as the director of regulatory credit trading and had earlier worked at the Tesla-acquired SolarCity. Tesla currently offers a retail electric plan in Australia and the UK, focused on integrating home energy storage. Earlier this month, reports surfaced that Tesla is going to supply its full energy ecosystem with solar, batteries and EV chargers, to new homes in a new luxury community being built in Florida. According to the auto-tech website Electrek, the automaker recently started to provide its full energy ecosystem with solar panels, Powerwall home battery packs and electric vehicle chargers to third-party installers to offer the "full Tesla Energy ecosystem".

7 US Capitol police officers sue Trump over Jan 6 riot

WASHINGTON, (IANS) Seven US Capitol police officers have filed a civil rights lawsuit against former President Donald Trump and his ally Roger Stone, as well as a number of members of right-wing extremist groups over the deadly January 6 riot.

Filed in a Washington, D.C. federal court on Thursday, the officers accused Trump of acting in concert with right-wing extremist groups like the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers engaged



in acts of domestic terrorism during the riot, Xinhua news agency reported.

They alleged that Trump and the other defendants violated both state law and provisions of the Ku Klux Klan Act, an 1871 federal statute that makes it illegal to use force or threats to prevent federal officers from carrying out their official duties.

The plaintiffs, five of whom are African-Americans, claimed that the defendants' move was fuelled by their promotion of white supremacist-laden conspiracy theories and lies about the election being swayed by widespread voter fraud, particularly in areas with significant Black populations.

"The January 6 insurrection was a blatant attempt to stifle the votes and voices of millions of Americans, particularly Black voters," said Damon Hewitt, president of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, which is representing the officers.

The complaint is thought to be the first to accuse Trump of conspiring with far-right groups to use "force, intimidation and threats" to block Congress from certifying Joe Biden's presidential election. The lawsuit came amid an ongoing investigation led by a House select committee into the riot, during which a mob of Trump's supporters breached the Capitol Complex.



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PINEPINK THIS OCTOBER.



Can your business lend a hand?

October is breast cancer awareness month and the Breast Cancer Society of Canada is asking businesses to help support life-saving breast cancer research by displaying a Pin Your Pink donation box with pink ribbons in your office or store.



Order your Pin Your Pink kit before September 10th at DressForTheCause.ca



