



INDIA'S EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER (EAM) S. JAISHANKAR HOLDS 'PRODUCTIVE TALKS' WITH ISRAELI COUNTERPART, AGREES TO RENEW NEGOTIATIONS ON FTA AGREEMENT.

COVERAGE ON PAGE 10

Y MEDIA EXCLUSIVE

NDP COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING ETHNIC MEDIA

In an exclusive interview with Y Media's Group Editor and CEO, Yudhvir Jaswal, MPP for Brampton Centre & Deputy Leader of Ontario's NDP, Sara Singh, said the Ford government did not consider supporting ethnic media. She said there could have been a strategy to support the ethnic media community members who are providing service in keeping people connected during these pandemic times. She tells Y Media that the NDP government has proposed a national, ethnic media strategy to provide a stabilization fund to ensure ad dollars would help these independent producers sustain themselves. She said the ethnic media weren't getting access to some of the advertising dollars they needed as the Ford government chose to ignore them. NDP's Sara Singh believes the current government could have partnered with ethnic media teams not only in helping them stay afloat but using them as a resource in the community. She said many ethnic communities rely on their local ethnic media for information as they may not be watching mainstream media. Therefore, NDP is committed to providing all necessary support to the ethnic press they deserve for their services.



TORONTO STAR HIGHLIGHTS ETHNIC MEDIA NEEDS MORE SUPPORT FROM THE GOVERNMENT

Toronto Star recently published an article called 'Governments ignore ethnic media at their own peril' in which the ethnic media owners raised their concerns about being ignored by the government. Y Media's Group Editor and CEO, Yudhvir Jaswal, mentioned how the support from the government was minimal and not provided at the appropriate time. "There's no denying the fact that the government did provide the support, but it came too little and was too late," Yudhvir Singh Jaswal, CEO of Y-media in Brampton, Ontario, said in a separate interview following the conference.



Jaswal said he appreciated the support as a wage subsidy, rent subsidy, loans and federal government funding for print and television. In contrast, however, support for radio production was negligible, and he had to pay a significant amount to the stations for airtime. "It's the municipal government that has put advertisements with us, producers, directly," he said, whereas the federal and provincial governments placed ads with the stations, who are already charging airtime to producers. "Governments should support both the producer and the station, but they are not supporting the producer," Jaswal lamented.

CAPTAIN AMARINDER TO ANNOUNCE NEW PARTY SOON; HINTS AT PACT WITH BJP FOR PUNJAB POLLS

CHANDIGARH, (IANS) Formally saying goodbye to the Congress which made him the Chief Minister of Punjab twice and the state party president thrice, an 'up-set' Amarinder Singh on Tuesday said that he would soon announce the launch of his own political party to serve the interests of the people, including the farmers who've been fighting for their rights for over a year now.



DALWINDER SINGH FROM BRAMPTON SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON AFTER STABBING WIFE, MOTHER-IN-LAW DURING ARGUMENT

Investigators from the Homicide and Missing Persons Bureau would like to advise the public that a decision has been reached in a 2018 homicide trial. On Friday, January 12, 2018, at 10:45 p.m., officers responded to a call at a residence on Starhill Crescent in the City of Brampton.



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2 PUNJABI GIRLS DEAD AFTER GOODS TRAIN HIT CAR NEAR BRAMPTON

Two Punjab-origin girls identified as Jashanpreet Kaur (18) of Muktsar and Prabhdeep Kaur (24) of Faridkot died while three other persons suffered multiple injuries after a car collided with a goods train at a railway crossing near Brampton.



CONTD. ON PAGE 8

RIPUDAMAN SINGH DHILLON ELECTED 34TH PRESIDENT OF THE INDO-CANADA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



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2 PUNJABIS ELECTED AS MAYORS OF CALGARY, EDMONTON



JYOTI GONDEK WILL BE FIRST WOMAN TO SERVE AS CALGARY MAYOR



FORMER FEDERAL CABINET MINISTER AMARJEET SOHI BECOMES MAYOR OF EDMONTON.

Y MEDIA COVID & VACCINE REPORT

- Fully Vaccinated Foreign Visitors Will Be Allowed To Enter The US Starting November 8.
- The U.S. To Accept Fully Vaccinated Canadian Travellers With Mixed Vaccines, CDC Says.
- Enhanced Covid-19 Vaccine Certificate With QR Code & Verify Ontario App Available For Download Now.



NIHANG BABA AMAN SINGH SECRETLY MEETS UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER TOMAR, CLAIMS 'OFFERED RS 10 LAKH' TO VACATE DHARNA SITE.



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2 PUNJABIS ELECTED AS MAYORS OF CALGARY, EDMONTON



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FORMER FEDERAL CABINET MINISTER AMARJEET SOHI BECOMES MAYOR OF EDMONTON.

ONTARIO PREMIER DOUG FORD DENIES APOLOGIZING FOR REMARKS ABOUT IMMIGRATION

Ontario Premier Doug Ford declined to apologize for his comments about immigrants coming to the province "to collect the dole" instead of saying he is "pro-immigration."

Speaking to reporters in Tecumseh, Ont. on Monday, Ford started telling about Ontario's most significant problem being a shortage of workers, particularly in the trades and construction.

"We're in such desperate need of people from around the world," he said. "You come here like every other new Canadian. You work your tail off," Ford said. "If you think you're coming to collect the dole and sit around, it's not going to happen. Go somewhere else."

'Collecting the dole' is a term used in some countries to refer to receiving unemployment benefits. Soon after the comments were made, some Ontario politicians spoke out and demanded Ford apologize for the "divisive" remarks, however, the premier decided not to.



Pakistan expected to remain on FATF grey list till April 2022

ISLAMABAD, (IANS) Pakistan is expected to remain on the grey list of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) till April 2022, as the country works towards completing an action plan to counter money laundering and terrorism financing.

As per sources, the upcoming three-day meeting of the FATF in Paris, scheduled to start on Wednesday, will be assessing and discussing Pakistan's progress and compliance with the 27-point action plan to curb money laundering and terrorist financing.

Pakistan's name is expected to remain on the grey list till the next session of the FATF in April 2022, because of its failure to ensure complete compliance with the action plan, which was presented by the watchdog's regional partner, the Asia Pacific Group (APG).

Pakistan failed in completing at least six out of the 27-point action plan in its previous assessment at the FATF, which included enhancing international cooperation and demonstrating that assistance is being sought from foreign countries in implementing UN Security Council designations.

FATF assessments hold great importance for Pakistan as financial donors including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), UN and the Egmost Group of Financial Intelligence Units are also going to be part of the FATF meeting as observer organizations.

The FATF said in a statement that it "will finalize key reports, including the revised guidance on virtual assets and their service providers and discuss the next steps to strengthen its standards on transparency of beneficial ownership".

ONTARIO LIBERALS PROPOSE FOUR-DAY WORK-WEEK PILOT PROJECT IF ELECTED IN 2022

During a keynote address at Ontario Liberals's Annual General Meeting, the party says they will launch a pilot project to "analyze the potential for a four-day work-week" if elected in June 2022.

Ontario Liberal Leader Steven Del Duca announced the proposal by citing research being done in other countries such as New Zealand, Japan and Spain.

"I want us to understand if it has merit here," Del Duca told the party in the public address. "We're a party that believes in science, expertise and evidence-based decision-making and so I want us to gather the facts in an open and transparent way." "Let me be clear, improving the way we work does not mean that people don't want to work hard."

A four-day work week would allow employees to work the same number of hours over four days instead of five, resulting in a longer break period between shifts.

He added, "If elected, the Party will build a strong economy by putting our workers first, and making sure their safety, opportunity and quality



of life drives policy decisions. We will pilot a four-day work-week to make responsible decisions based on facts and evidence."

Pakistan, India need a cricketing bond: PCB Chairman Ramiz Raja

ISLAMABAD, (IANS) Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Ramiz Raja has emphasised the need for the revival of sporting ties between archrivals India and Pakistan, who have been fighting it out against each other at their borders and the sporting arena.

He said it was high time that cricket, the most loved sport of all in both countries, should be the first to mend ways of revival and showcase the contest between two cricketing giants.

Raja said that the PCB and the Board of Control of Cricket in India (BCCI) should "create a cricketing bond", keeping politics away from the sport.

"I met BCCI President Sourav Ganguly and Secretary Jay Shah on the sidelines of the ACC (Asia Cricket Council) meetings. We need to create a cricketing bond, while I also believe that politics should stay away from the sport as much as possible and this has always been our stance," he said.

"A lot of work needs to be done to revitalise Pakistan-India cricket but there needs to be some comfort level between the two boards and then we can see how far we can go," he added.

Raja said that the ACC's formation was on the basis to create a unified approach and collective stance so that all had one voice and if there was a situation, all parties would stand together, adding that the ACC can be beneficial in reviving India-Pakistan cricketing relations.

His comments hold importance as both sides are fixed to take on each other in the upcoming T20 World Cup, which is expected to be one of the biggest cricketing competition of the tournament.

Pakistan-India matches are actively anticipated with temperatures running high among fans from both sides of the border.

Pakistan has been struggling to bring back international cricket on its fields due to the security situation of the country. Most recently, New Zealand and England cancelled their tours to Pakistan citing the same security reasons.

About the unfortunate withdrawal of New Zealand and England, Raja said: "I want strong relations with other boards and the ACC, so that if there is an issue, like we had with the withdrawal of a couple of sides, a strong and joint statement could come out from the ACC platform."

SL TO OBTAIN \$500MN LOAN FROM INDIA TO KEEP FUEL SUPPLY CONTINUE



COLOMBO, (IANS) Sri Lanka will obtain \$500 million loan facility from India amidst a warning by the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation (CPC), the government's cash-strapped fuel supplier, that the supply could only be guaranteed till January 2022.

The entire loan amount will be used to import necessary fuel supplies specially petrol and diesel.

"We are planning to get this loan urgently so that we could keep the supply of fuel to the country," CPC Chairman Sumith Wijesinghe told the media, adding that the Indian High Commission in Colombo has made a special intervention to get the loan expedited.

The agreement on this is to be signed between the Energy Ministry secretaries of the two countries.

The loan facility was agreed in the backdrop of Energy Minister Udaya Gammanpila has cautioned the Finance Ministry about the CPC's dire financial crisis. The Minister who has said that the importation could be hampered if a quick solution was not given and has suggested tax slashes for imports and price revision as immediate solution to the crisis.

He also has warned that if India-run Lanka Indian Oil Company (LIOC) increase prices there would be high demand for CPC to supply fuel increasing the losses and aggravating the crisis.

So far, the CPC has suffered over \$410 million losses this year and it is predicted that the loss could be over \$590 million by the end of 2021.

COLIN POWELL, WHO BROKE US RACIAL BARRIERS IN POLITICS, MILITARY, DIES AT 84



NEW YORK, (IANS) Colin Powell, who blasted through racial barriers to become the US' first African American Secretary of State, National Security Adviser, and the top military officer and was a one-time favourite for President, died at the age of 84 on Monday from COVID-19-related complications despite being vaccinated, according to his family.

The son of Jamaican immigrants, he showcased America's opportunities for immigrant families.

Growing up in the impoverished Harlem section of New York City, he attended a local college where he excelled in the Reserve Officers Training Corps -- the equivalent of the NCC -- leading to a distinguished army career that led him to the military's highest position of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

He served two tours of duty as a young military officer in Vietnam winning several military honours.

Powell made several visits to India as the National Security Adviser, when he conferred with his then-counterpart Brajesh Mishra, and as Secretary of State when he met then Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee many times. In a trip in 2003 to both India and Pakistan, he sought to keep the situation in the subcontinent spinning out of control after a massive suicide attack in Srinagar by the Islamabad-backed Jaish-e-Mohammad.

George W Bush, who appointed his Secretary of State, said in his tribute: "Many Presidents relied on General Powell's counsel and experience."

The African American leader's career reached its heights during the terms of Presidents belonging to the Republican Party.

He did a stint as a White House Fellow when Richard Nixon was President. Ronald Reagan appointed him National Security Adviser in 1987 as the Cold War was winding down and had him help negotiate the transition as the Soviet Union disintegrated.

George H.W. Bush appointed him to the top Pentagon position.

As the Joint Chiefs Chairman, he developed what came to be known as the "Powell Doctrine" learning from the US debacle in Vietnam, the makings of which he had witnessed first hand.

ARMED FORCES, SCIENTISTS MOST TRUSTWORTHY; POLITICIANS LEAST: SURVEY



NEW DELHI, (IANS) Armed Forces and scientists have emerged as the most trustworthy citizens in India, while as politicians and advertising executives are the least, as work around sacrifice and service before self is revered by the Indians.

According to the Ipsos Global Trustworthiness Index 2021, Urban Indians trust the Armed forces (64 per cent) and scientists (64 per cent) the most followed by teachers (61 per cent) and doctors (58 per cent). Interestingly, two years ago as well the survey brought the Armed Forces on the top with the only change now is that Corona period has uplifted the sentiments for scientists for their relentless work to find vaccines for the deadly virus.

When we look at the most trustworthy list of global citizens, doctors (64 per cent) emerged at the top on the Global Trustworthiness Index 2021, followed by scientists (61 per cent) and teachers (55 per cent), the survey said. "The armed forces are trusted and revered by Indians as their whole aura and work is around sacrifice and service before self; defined by discipline and dedication in their contribution to the nation as they protect our frontiers. Likewise, scientists too have been corona warriors, working overtime to find appropriate vaccines to offset the resilient coronavirus; their contribution is being silently hailed by Indians, putting scientists at par with armed forces. Teachers and doctors, who too stepped up during the pandemic are placed 3rd and 4th in the trustworthiness index," says Amit Adarkar, CEO, Ipsos India.

Ipsos has unveiled findings of its Global Trustworthiness Index 2021, a 28-country survey among 19,570 respondents, globally. With regard to most untrustworthy professions, India's list on the Untrustworthiness Index 2021 mirrors the global list on Untrustworthiness Index 2021.

Y MEDIA COVID & VACCINE REPORT

Making your outings more convenient with the enhanced vaccine certificate with official QR code.

Save your enhanced vaccine certificate with official QR code on your phone or print it out.



ONTARIO LAUNCHES ENHANCED COVID-19 VACCINE CERTIFICATE WITH QR CODE

In advance of October 22, the Ontario government is making the enhanced vaccine certificate with official QR code and the free, made-in Ontario verification app, Verify Ontario, available for download. Together, these tools will make it easier, more secure and convenient for individuals to provide proof of vaccination where required to do so, and for businesses and organizations to verify vaccine certificates while protecting people's privacy.

"I want to thank every Ontarian for their patience and cooperation as we've implemented our proof of vaccination policy," said Premier Doug Ford. "The enhanced vaccine certificates and Verify Ontario app will give our businesses further comfort in their ability to operate safely as we take further steps to protect people's privacy. These certificates remain a key element of our plan to protect the gains we have made while avoiding future lockdowns."

Starting October 18 at 6:00 a.m., the portal will open for any individual to download their enhanced vaccine certificate, regardless of their birth month. Individuals can also call the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900 to have their enhanced vaccine certificate emailed or mailed to them.

People can save the electronic version of their vaccine certificate with a QR code to their phone or print a paper copy. Businesses must accept both electronic and paper versions. In addition, while the current vaccine receipt without a QR code remains valid and will continue to be accepted, the province is encouraging individuals to download their enhanced vaccine certificate with a QR code as an easier, more secure and convenient way to have their proof of vaccination verified. Ontarians will need to continue to show a piece of identification with their name and date of birth along with their proof of vaccination when visiting select businesses and organizations.

Ontario's enhanced vaccine certificate with QR code is built to the SMART Health Card standard adopted by the federal government in collaboration with provinces and territories. To support Ontarians who are travelling internationally, Ontario is also including the Government of Canada logo on the enhanced vaccine certificate.

In addition, businesses and organizations can now download the free Verify Ontario app from the Apple App and Google Play stores. The

app has been made available in advance of October 22 to ensure businesses and organizations download the app and have sufficient time to become familiar with it. The made-in-Ontario app has been designed to help businesses by making it quicker and easier to confirm if a person is fully vaccinated against COVID-19, while protecting their privacy. The Verify Ontario app for businesses can be used without an internet connection, but like any app it will need to connect to the internet periodically to keep it up to date. The app never stores personal information and only shows the minimum amount of information necessary to confirm vaccination.

Verify Ontario will only scan and read official, government issued QR codes, such as Ontario's vaccine certificate and those SMART Health Codes from other provinces including Quebec, British Columbia and Yukon Territory.

The Ontario Digital Service at the Associate Ministry of Digital Government collaborated with the Ministry of Health to deliver the Verify Ontario app. Extensive user research and stakeholder consultations were conducted with businesses to ensure the app would be easy to use.

"The Verify Ontario app will support Ontario businesses, protect our hard-fought progress by making it quicker and easier to confirm if a person is fully vaccinated, while protecting their privacy," said Kaleed Rasheed, Associate Minister of Digital Government. "I encourage all Ontarians to get an official enhanced vaccine certificate with an official QR code, and businesses to download and use our Verify Ontario app."

Since the proof of vaccination requirement went into effect, the province has reached two key milestones in its COVID-19 response with more than 87 per cent of individuals aged 12 and over vaccinated with at least a first dose and more than 82 per cent with two doses.

"Getting vaccinated is the most important thing we can all do to protect ourselves, our families and our communities from COVID-19," said Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health. "Proof of vaccination using the new vaccine certificate with QR code and Verify Ontario app are important tools to help stop the spread of the virus while keeping businesses and organizations open safely."

Air Canada launches Delhi-Montreal non-stop flights from October 31

TORONTO, (IANS) Air Canada is launching a new thrice weekly, non-stop flight between Delhi and Montreal from October 31.

The airline is also increasing its daily non-stop flights from Toronto to Delhi to 10 per week from October 15.

Announcing this on Wednesday, Air Canada said: "Starting October 31, just in time for Diwali celebrations, Air Canada will offer three flights per week to the growing Indian community in Montreal. Additionally, the airline is increasing frequency to Delhi from Toronto to ten flights per week beginning October 15."

The thrice weekly flight will operate on Tuesday, Thursday, and Sunday, leaving Delhi at 1.55 a.m. and Montreal at 8.10 p.m. It will be served by a 298-seat Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner, offering three cabins of service - Air Canada Signature Class, Premium Economy and Economy class. Mark Galardo, Senior Vice President, Network Planning and Revenue Management at Air Canada, said: "Air Canada is the only carrier offering a direct service to Delhi out of Montreal, allowing for easy connections through our extensive network. We continue to focus on the growing visiting friends and relatives market and this capacity expansion is a response to increasing demand."

He said the Canada-India market is "an important and strategic one for Air Canada". "These additional flights and new route demonstrate



Air Canada's anticipation about the promise and growth of the Indian subcontinent - and we also look forward to further strengthening the cultural and business ties between our two countries," he said.

Air Canada also offers daily flights from Vancouver.

STATINS MAY REDUCE RISK OF DEATH FROM COVID: STUDY

LONDON, (IANS) Statin treatment -- generally used to lower the cholesterol level -- slightly lowered Covid-19 mortality, finds a study. Statins are a recommended and common intervention for preventing cardiovascular events by reducing levels of lipoprotein cholesterol in the blood.

To understand the link, researchers at Karolinska Institutet in Sweden followed 9,63,876 residents of Stockholm above the age of 45 between March and November 2020.

The results published in PLOS Medicine showed that statin treatment was associated with a slightly lower risk of dying from Covid-19, a correlation that did not vary significantly among risk groups.

"Our results suggest that statin treatment can have a moderate prophylactic effect on Covid-19 mortality," said Rita Bergqvist, Medical student at Karolinska Institutet.

"All in all, our findings support the continued use of statins for conditions such as cardiovascular disease and high levels of blood lipids in line with current recommendations during the Covid-19 pandemic," Viktor Ahlqvist added, Doctoral student at the Department of Global Public Health, Karolinska Institutet.

However, this finding needs confirmation from randomised clinical trials, the researchers said.

Hyperinflammation and hypercoagulability have been identified as central to the development of severe Covid-19 disease and complications. Hence, drugs that modulate the host immune response and inhibit thrombosis and vascular dysfunction have received widespread attention.

Hyperinflammation is uncontrolled, self-perpetuating and tissue-damaging inflammatory activity while Hypercoagulability can be defined as the tendency to have thrombosis as a result of certain inherited and/or acquired molecular defects.

One limitation of the study concerns the use of prescription data without the possibility of checking individual drug use. The researchers were also not able to control for risk factors such as smoking and high Body Mass Index, only diagnosed health status.

PEEL EXPANDING VACCINE CLINIC NETWORK TO PROVIDE 200,000 DOSES A MONTH AS ELIGIBILITY INCREASES



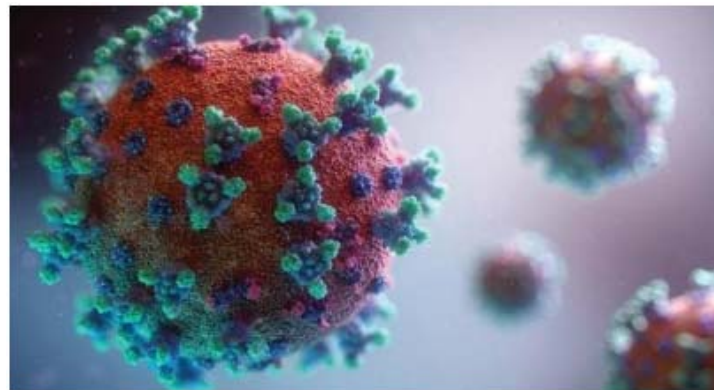
As vaccine eligibility continues to expand, Peel is growing its vaccine system to deliver at least 200,000 doses to residents every month by this December. Priority work continues to focus on reaching the provincially defined target of 90% two-dose coverage by supporting those who need first and second doses.

Peel's expansion plan also includes offering vaccines for children aged 5-11 as early as the beginning of November, pending approval and supply from provincial and federal partners. Booster and third doses continue to be offered by referral, in line with provincial direction. Peel's plan builds on the success of its existing community-based approach. Between Sept 20 and Oct 4, this approach helped deliver 20,000 first doses among those 12+ across Peel. Through the fall and into winter, residents will have hundreds of locations to get the vaccination they need. Vaccinations will be delivered through:

- * Large public health clinics in Brampton, Caledon, and Mississauga
- * Mobile clinics and "vax vans" in accessible and convenient locations, such as malls and parks (weather permitting)
- * Community clinics in trusted locations, such as schools and places of worship, co-designed with community partners
- * Primary care and pharmacy clinics
- * In-home vaccinations for those living in long term care, retirement homes or cannot get out of their homes

Residents can get their first or second dose at any of Peel clinics. New locations are added regularly as community needs are identified. "Peel's vaccination approach, which delivers vaccines across multiple channels and includes clinics co-designed with community partners, makes vaccine available in hundreds of locations across the community."

WHAT MADE DELTA, DELTA PLUS VARIANTS OF COVID MORE VIRULENT



LONDON, (IANS) The Delta and Delta Plus Covid-19 variants were less well neutralised by antibodies from infected and vaccinated individuals as compared to the original virus, making them more dangerous and contributing to its rapid global spread, according to a study. The Delta variant (B.1.617.2) first emerged in India during 2020 and subsequently spread globally within a short time period. In addition to Delta, Delta Plus sub-variants have been observed which carry additional mutations that may make them more dangerous. In the study published in the journal 'Cell Reports', the researchers showed that both Delta and Delta Plus infect lung cells with higher efficiency than the original virus (the virus that circulated during the early phase of the pandemic). The Delta Covid variant was found to be better at entering lung cells compared to the original virus and also at fusing infected lung cells with uninfected cells. This enabled the variant to spread widely and infect more people. "It is conceivable that by fusing cells in the respiratory tract, the Delta variant may spread more efficiently and induce more damage. This could contribute to a more severe course of Covid-19," said Arora Prerna, Scientist at the German Primate Center -- Leibniz Institute for Primate Research in Göttingen, Germany. Moreover, one of four antibodies (bamlanivimab) used to treat Covid-19 was not effective against Delta, and Delta Plus was even resistant against two therapeutic antibodies (bamlanivimab and etesevimab). Similarly, antibodies generated upon vaccination with the BioNTech-Pfizer and Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccines were also less effective against Delta and Delta Plus compared to the original virus. "Our results are consistent with the observation that vaccination efficiently protects against development of severe disease after infection with the Delta variant, but frequently fails to completely suppress infection."

FULLY VACCINATED FOREIGN VISITORS CAN ENTER US FROM NOV 8



WASHINGTON, (IANS) Fully vaccinated foreign visitors will be allowed to enter the US starting from November 8, the White House has announced.

"The US' new travel policy that requires vaccination for foreign national travellers to the US will begin on November 8," Kevin Munoz, White House Assistant Press Secretary, said in a tweet on Friday.

"This announcement and date applies to both international air travel and land travel. This policy is guided by public health, stringent, and consistent," Munoz added. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has already informed airlines that all the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved and authorised vaccines, as well as all jabs that have an Emergency Use Listing from the World Health Organization (WHO) will be accepted for US-bound air travel. Xinhua news agency quoted another White House official as saying to CNN. "We anticipate the same will be true at the land border," the official said. Non-American citizens will have to provide proof that they are fully vaccinated and have a negative test result taken within three days before they board a flight to the US. Jeff Zients, the White House Covid-19 response coordinator, said last month.



NIHANG BABA AMAN SINGH SECRETLY MEETS UNION AGRICULTURE MINISTER TOMAR, CLAIMS 'OFFERED RS 10 LAKH' TO VACATE DHARNA SITE

The recent disclosures about one of the Nihang leaders having been in touch with Union Minister for Agriculture N. S. Tomar, the killing has taken an entirely different turn.

Nihang Baba Aman Singh has also claimed that he was allegedly offered Rs 10 lakh cash and horses for vacating the Singhu border dharna site. "We made four demands, withdrawal of farm laws, MSP guarantee, justice in sacrilege cases occurring in Punjab since 2015 and withdrawal of cases against us. We told them we will lift the dharna only when our demands are met. We rejected the money offer. We even wrote letters to the President and the Prime Minister regarding our demands," he said.

Punjab Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Randhawa on Tuesday said there appeared to be a deep-rooted conspiracy to defame the farmers' stir on the Singhu border dividing Haryana and Delhi.

Referring to the killing on October 15 of a Dalit labourer from Tarn Taran in Punjab, and latest disclosures in the media, the Deputy Chief Minister, who also holds the Home portfolio, promised complete justice, saying the government will reach to the bottom of the case and expose the conspirators behind the incident.

"Lakhbir Singh, the Dalit victim, belonged to village Cheema Kalan and was poor. We need to find out who lured him to the Singhu border and who paid for his travel as he could not even afford his meals," the Deputy Chief Minister said, while adding that he had instructed the local administration to find out under what circumstances he was taken from his home to the Singhu border.

He said in view of the recent photographic evidence, the Nihang leader will also need to explain in what capacity he had met the Union Agriculture Minister and whether he was mandated to do so by the farmers' organisations spearheading the campaign against the three new farm laws. Randhawa said given the place the Nihang leader was camping at and staging the 'dharna' at the Singhu border, it was mandatory on his part to keep the farmers' unions informed about his meetings with the Union minister.

"This has raised genuine doubts and suspicion in the minds of people which will need to be cleared and the Punjab government will do everything to reach to the root of the conspiracy and expose and punish the culprits," he said in a statement.

Four Nihangs namely Narayan Singh, Bhagwant Singh, Govind Preet Singh and Sarvajeet Singh have been arrested in connection with the lynching of a Tarn Taran man at a farmers' protest site in Singhu border. "The horrendous killing of a man at the farmers' protest site on the Singhu border has sent chills down the spines of several people with many equating the gruesome incident to a Taliban-style killing. "The incident began in the wee hours of Friday on the Singhu border dividing Haryana and Delhi when Lakhbir Singh (30), a resident of Tarn Taran district in Punjab, was seen carrying the Sarbloh Granth -- a Sikh religious scripture -- by a Nihang Sikh man. "IANS has learnt from several sources that Lakhbir was staying with a group of Nihang Sikhs on the Singhu border for the past 3 to 4 days. "When confronted, Lakhbir was unable to answer a barrage of questions. This led to an argument, drawing the attention of other Nihangs present there. The fracas occurred at around 3 am in the morning. "Lakhbir was then accused of desecrating the holy Sarbloh Granth. The arguments soon turned violent and the man's hand was allegedly chopped off amid the chaos. "Since then, several gruesome videos surfaced on social media that depicted the brutal act of the crime. "The cops received the first information about the incident at around 5 am, but they refrained from divulging any details about the suspects. "The farmers' umbrella body -- Samyukt Kisan Morcha -- said in a statement that a Nihang group at the scene has claimed responsibility for the act, and the SKM has disassociated themselves from the group. "The body was found at the same place where the farmers have been protesting against the three contentious farm laws for the past one year. "The atmosphere on the Singhu border, which has remained an active podium for the farmers to register their protest against the three farm laws, was tense on Friday.

'GODMAN' RAM RAHIM GETS LIFE SENTENCE IN MANAGER MURDER CASE TOO

CHANDIGARH, (IANS) Self-styled godman and Dera Sacha Sauda chief Gurmeet Ram Rahim Singh, who is already serving a 20-year jail sentence for raping two of his disciples and a life term for a journalist's killing, was on Monday sentenced to life imprisonment for murder of a former sect manager nearly two decades back.

Special CBI court judge Sushil Garg in Haryana's Panchkula pronounced the verdict in a jam-packed court, sentencing him and four others for murdering Ranjit Singh, in 2002.

The CBI had sought the death penalty under Section 302 of the Indian Penal Code for Ram Rahim, while the dera chief pleaded for mercy, appearing via video conference from Rohtak jail, where he is serving sentence in two cases of rape and for the murder of a journalist.

The others convicted for the crime were Krishan Lal, Jasbir Singh, Avtar Singh, and Sabdil. One more accused in the murder case had passed away in October last year.

The court also imposed a penalty of Rs 31 lakh on the godman, half of the amount will be given to the victim's family as compensation.

Victim's son Jagseer said the family finally got the justice, though after much delay. "My grandfather who fought the battle for justice of his son died in 2016. I was just eight years old when my father was murdered in a cold-blooded manner," he told the media.

"Today, after 19 years, my family can sleep in peace," he said.

Prime prosecution witness, Khatta Singh, a former driver of the sect chief, played a crucial role in the case by unfolding a conspiracy behind killing the sect manager.

Earlier, the CBI court had deferred the pronouncement of the quantum of sentence on October 12. They were convicted on October 8.

The self-styled godman has been undergoing a 20-year sentence at the high-security Sunaria jail in Rohtak, 250 kms from state capital Chandigarh, for raping his two disciples, and was sentenced to life for the murder of a journalist in 2002.

Ram Rahim, 52, attended hearings relating to the pronouncement of sentence virtually. He pleaded for mercy on the plea of the charitable works that



the sect carried out when he was heading it.

Ranjit Singh, a former follower of Ram Rahim, was shot dead by four assailants on July 10, 2002, at his native Khanpur Kolian village in Kurukshetra district.

The CBI argument was that Ranjit Singh was murdered as Ram Rahim suspected that he was behind the circulation of an anonymous letter that revealed the sexual exploitation of woman followers at the dera.

The investigating agency opposed the dera chief's plea, saying the victim treated him as "god" and the accused committed offences against him. It said Ram Rahim had criminal antecedents and committed the offence in a cold-blooded manner.

The Punjab and Haryana HC had recently dismissed a plea seeking the case's transfer to another judge. Ahead of the verdict pronouncement, local authorities imposed prohibitory orders in the town and in Sirsa, the headquarters of Dera Sacha Sauda, in view of the violence reported after his conviction in rape cases in 2017. Ram Rahim's conviction on August 25, 2017, in raping his two disciples had led to violence in Panchkula and Sirsa, leaving 41 people dead and over 260 injured. On January 17, 2019, a special CBI court in Panchkula also sentenced him and three others to life imprisonment for the murder of a journalist over 16 years ago. Ram Rahim was patronised by political leaders and parties in Punjab and Haryana for nearly two decades due to his ability to influence the votes of his followers.

TRUMP SUES TO BLOCK CONGRESS FROM OBTAINING DOCUMENTS RELATED TO CAPITOL RIOT

WASHINGTON, (IANS) Former US President Donald Trump has filed a lawsuit against the National Archives and a House special committee investigating the January 6 Capitol riot in a bid to block Congress from obtaining certain documents related to the insurrection. "The Committee's request amounts to nothing less than a vexatious, illegal fishing expedition openly endorsed by Biden and designed to unconstitutionally investigate President Trump and his administration," the lawsuit, filed on Monday, read.

"Our laws do not permit such an impulsive, egregious action against a former President and his close advisors."

In August, the committee had requested that the National Archives, which is the custodian of the Trump White House's records, submit a long list of records from the former President's time in office and the aftermath of the Capitol riot, reports Xinhua news agency.

The request is part of the panel's ongoing and intensifying investigation into how a mob of Trump's supporters breached the Capitol on January 6 trying to stop a Congressional joint session from certifying the 2020 presidential election result.

Trump has said he would assert executive privilege to shield the documents requested by the committee, but Biden, who legal experts said has the ultimate say over whether the information sought by the panel is covered by the executive privilege, determined that Trump's effort to conceal the documents was neither in the best interest of the US nor justified. In an October 8 letter to Archivist of the US David Ferriero, White House Counsel Dana Remus demanded that he turn over a subset of the required documents that Trump identified as privileged to Congress. Remus added that those documents should be submitted 30 days after Ferriero notified the former president.

CHORUS GROWS FOR RAHUL GANDHI TO BECOME CONGRESS PRESIDENT



NEW DELHI, (IANS) Congress Working committee members on Saturday appealed to Rahul Gandhi to take over as the president of the party. A proposal in this regard was mooted by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and vetted by other Chief Ministers and leaders.

Senior Congress leader Ambika Soni said, "all the members were unanimous that Rahul Gandhi should take over as president of the Congress party." The Congress Working committee, the highest decision making body of the party, has given go ahead to the internal elections of the party. Earlier the CWC met for more than five hours and deliberated upon the issues of organisational elections, upcoming assembly polls and issues faced by common man.

Addressing the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting, interim President Sonia Gandhi on Saturday slammed party leaders for speaking to the media. In her opening remarks, she said: "I have always appreciated frankness. There is no need to speak to me through the media. So let us all have a free and honest discussion. But what should get communicated outside the four walls of this room is the collective decision of the CWC."

MALALA YOUSAFZAI ASKS AFGHAN TALIBAN TO REOPEN GIRL SCHOOLS



ISLAMABAD, (IANS) Pakistani Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai has called on the Taliban leadership in Afghanistan to re-open secondary schools for girls with immediate affect. She put forward this demand in an open letter addressed to the new rulers of the war-torn nation.

"To the Taliban authorities.. reverse the de factor ban on girls' education and re-open girls' secondary schools immediately," Yousafzai and other Afghan women rights activists wrote in the open letter.

The Pakistani activist was shot in the head by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) militants in her hometown of Swat Valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in 2012 for being the promoter and supporter of female education.

Her open letter comes after a month since the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan. Since then, the Taliban leaders have maintained that they will be allowing girl education in the country.

However, the Taliban have allowed only boys education institutions to open and have ignored re-opening of girls' schools.

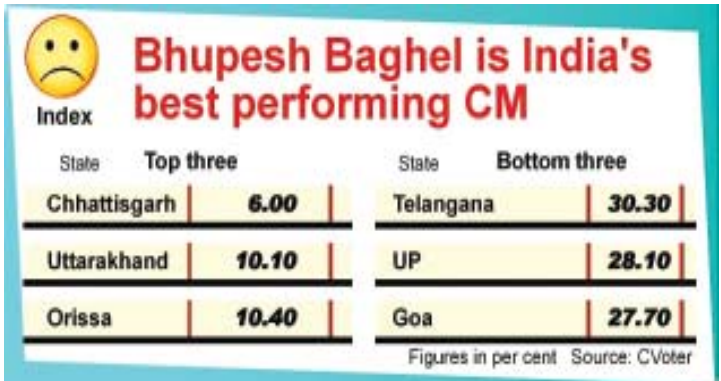
HOME PRICES RISING IN CANADA, NEW ZEALAND; PRICES ON DOWNWARD IN INDIA: IMF SURVEY OF 60 COUNTRIES

While most economic indicators deteriorated last year, house prices largely shrugged off the effects of the pandemic. Of the over 60 countries that enter into the IMF's Global House Price Index, threequarters saw increases in house prices during 2020, and this trend has largely continued in countries with more recent data.

Statistics released today by the Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) show Canadian home prices continue to re-accelerate in September. Ontario saw year-over-year price growth pushing 25% in September; however, as with B.C. big, medium and smaller city trends, gains are notably lower in the GTA and Ottawa, around the provincial average in Oakville-Milton, Hamilton-Burlington and Guelph, and considerably higher in many of the smaller markets around the province.

Greater Montreal's year-over-year price growth remains at a little over 20%, while Quebec City is now at 13%. Price growth is running a little above 30% in New Brunswick (higher in Greater Moncton, a little lower in Fredericton and Saint John), while Newfoundland and Labrador is now at 12% year-over-year (a bit lower in St. John's).

BHUPESH BAGHEL EMERGES ON TOP IN RACE FOR BEST CHIEF MINISTER



NEW DELHI, (IANS) Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel is the best performing Chief Minister in the country, facing the least anger of the electorate, as per the IANS-CVoter Governance Index.

Only 6 per cent of the respondents are angry with Baghel and want a change. Conversely, Baghel enjoys highest popularity ratings among all Chief Ministers, as per the tracker.

In case of Chhattisgarh, anger is directed against the Central government and even state MLAs, but there is hardly any anger towards Baghel. As many as 44.7 per cent respondents in Chhattisgarh are angry with the Central government, while 36.6 per cent are angry with the state government. Baghel has introduced a slew of welfare schemes in Chhattisgarh, including providing free education to children studying in private schools, who have lost parents/guardians to Covid-19. Under the MahtariDular Yojana, the Chhattisgarh government would bear the expenses of education of such children.

Chhattisgarh was the top-performing state in India on the gender equality parameter of the Sustainable Development Goals, according to the NITI Aayog's SDG India Index report 2020-21.

POLITICS ON HYDEL PROJECTS OVER; J&K ON WAY TO BECOME POWER SURPLUS

SRINAGAR/NEW DELHI, (IANS) In January this year, the Jammu and Kashmir government opened up the water resources of the erstwhile Himalayan state and signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) to make J&K power surplus and to attract the investment of Rs 35,000 crore into the newly carved out Union Territory.

The MoUs were signed for implementation of much awaited mega hydro power projects, including 850 MW Ratle HEP and 930 MW Kirthai-II HEP besides execution of long pending Sawalkot HEP (1856 MW), Uri-I (Stage-II) (240 MW) and Dulhasti (Stage-II) (258 MW).

Besides signing the MOUs nineteen important projects of Jammu and Kashmir Power Department aimed at greater generation, efficient transmission and better distribution of power supply in J&K were also inaugurated. Since then there has been no looking back and efforts are on to make J&K self reliant vis-a-vis power generation. The Jammu and Kashmir has numerous hydro resources and is capable of generating 14,867 MW power but during the past 70-years the erstwhile State was only able to generate 3,504 MW electricity. But after the MOUs were signed, the administration claimed that the power generation in the Union Territory would double up in the next three to four years.

Union Minister for Power and New and Renewable Energy, R.K. Singh who visited Jammu and Kashmir recently assured the people that the Government of India is committed to provide all possible support to J&K across generation, transmission and distribution sectors in order to make J&K power surplus, remove all supply constraints and provide 24x7 quality power to all citizens of J&K.

During his visit to the UT, Singh along with J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, inaugurated six transmission and distribution projects worth Rs 118 crore.

The projects that were dedicated to people included 100 MVA,132/33 KV GSS Nowbugh Chadura with 18 Kms D/C 132 kV Transmission Line; Distribution Strengthening works in Circle Bijbehara, Sumbal, Kupwara and Shopian towns; 33/11kV 10MVA Sub Stations at Industrial Estate Khonmoh, Super Speciality SMHS Srinagar completed under the various UT and Central schemes.

According to the officials in the recent past Jammu and Kashmir has attained remarkable progress in the power sector. It has enhanced its transformation capacity by 150 per cent and revenue generation has gone up by over 23 per cent.

POWER POLITICS

Prior to August 5, 2019 -- when the Centre announced its decision to abrogate J&K's special status and bifurcated it into two Union Territories -- politicians in the erstwhile state left no opportunity to play politics over hydel power resources of the Himalayan region. In August 2014, the then Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah, in a meeting with the Union Power Ministry had demanded that NHPC should return the power projects to the state.



He had claimed that the Indus Water Treaty between India and Pakistan was "a cause of enormous losses to Jammu and Kashmir". "While both India and Pakistan benefited from the treaty, J&K was put to a disadvantageous position," Omar Abdullah had stated. He had termed the treaty as "a hurdle for the launch of a huge water supply project for Greater Jammu to utilise Chenab water to meet the requirements of the people for next 25 years. Three power projects that the Jammu and Kashmir government wanted the NHPC to return were 690-MW Salal, 480-MW Uri and 390-MW Dulhasti.

Interestingly, Omar had raised the issue just a few months before the assembly elections were to be held in Jammu and Kashmir. He had upped the ante as his bete-noire Peoples Democratic Party at that point of time had promised people that if it wins the polls it would get all the power projects under NHPC in J&K back.

After the National Conference and PDP turned the return of power projects from NHPC into an election plank, the business chambers of both Jammu and Kashmir and civil society members too joined the chorus and sought return of all power projects run by NHPC in J&K. They claimed that there was no justification in its reluctance to handover them to the J&K Government.

In March 2015, the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) ruled out the return of power projects to J&K. The then Director, Finance NHPC, ABL Srivastava said the Central Government and Union Power Ministry have made it clear in unambiguous words that there is no question of returning these projects to the J&K Government.

J&K'S POWER SECTOR REVAMPED

After Jammu and Kashmir's complete merger with the Union of India on August 5, 2019, politics that was played over the hydel resources of Jammu and Kashmir has taken a back seat. No one wants these power projects back now as the Union Territory has witnessed a complete change in the power scenario during the past two years. The urban areas are getting electricity 24x7 and the situation in the rural areas has also improved. Recently, the Administrative Council headed by J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha authorised the Jammu Power Distribution Corporation Limited (JPDCL) and Kashmir Distribution Corporation Limited (KPDCL) to implement smart metering project in J&K. These corporations aim to install 6 lakh smart/prepaid meters across J&K through a wholly owned subsidiary of Rural Electrification

Corporation under the Ministry of Power, Government of India. Currently, 2 lakh smart meters are being installed in Jammu and Srinagar under the Prime Minister's Development Programme(PMDP). The new distribution system will improve the quality and reliability of power supply to consumers. The Smart meters will bring about transparency in metering, billing and collection which will eventually reduce power losses and ensure quality and reliable power supply to consumers. The power distribution sector of J&K has a total consumer base of nearly 21 lakhs, out of which metered consumers are only about 50 per cent.

A strong power sector in J&K means ease of living, industrialisation and employment generation. The government is putting in all the efforts to strengthen J&K's power infrastructure which has remained dilapidated for the last several decades.

Past practices of delays have become a history and power projects are being executed at an accelerated pace. During the past two years, upgradation of power infrastructure, and languishing projects have been completed in record times.

The J&K Lieutenant Governor recently stated: "We have presented an investment plan of Rs 12,000 crore by 2025 in transmission and distribution sectors in order to strengthen infrastructure as well prepare a future-ready power infrastructure. It would not just provide power on demand to all citizens but would also cater to the industrial demand in line with the proposed investment of Rs 28,400 crore under J&K's new Industrial Policy."

The revamping of the power sector in Jammu and Kashmir has brought the Union Territory at par with the other states across the country. The bold steps taken by the Central and UT Governments have driven home a point that there is a huge difference between offering lip service and transforming words into action.

In January this year, Kashmir witnessed a heavy snowfall but the Power Department ensured that people do not face cuts and kept the Valley illuminated in the dark winter nights. The change surprised the people as in the past snowfall meant no electricity for many days. People of J&K have realized that the ground situation is changing and it is changing for the good.

Disclaimer: 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 Media does not assume any responsibility or liability for the same.

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Ripudaman Singh Dhillon elected 34th President of the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce



TORONTO: Ripudaman Singh Dhillon, a serial entrepreneur with business interests in immigration consulting, broadcasting, education and realty, was elected the 34th President of the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce on 18 October 2021. Virender Rathie, a lawyer, was elected the Corporate Secretary of the 44-year-old institution. These two were elected following the Chamber's annual general meeting held on 14 October 2021. A new board of directors was elected for a two-year term at the meeting which includes Rakesh Joshi, Murarilal Thapliyal, Arvind Bhardwaj, Chirag Shah, Vikas Sharma and Sanjay Kulkarni. Virender Rathie and Bhavik Parikh were elected in 2020 for a two-year term. Upon being elected the President, Ripudaman said, "I am honoured and humbled to be elected the 34th President of the Indo-Canada Chamber of Commerce. I will strive to work together with the newly elected board to focus on the 44-year-old institution's core mandate of creating business and professional opportunities for Indo-Canadians and to foster bilateral trade and investments between Canada and India. My priorities will be enhancing membership and sponsorship, by giving tangible value to our members and sponsors, and broadening stakeholder relations. The ICCC has a special place in the hearts and minds of the Indo-Canadian business community. I appeal to everyone to join hands with the new board in making the ICCC great again."

Ripudaman established ICC Canada Immigration Solutions Inc. to help new immigrants to easily settle into a better life in Canada. His entrepreneurial zeal led him to launch Guru restaurant in 2013 in Heartland. His affinity for public service inspired him to start Radio Dhun, Ontario's first multicultural and multilingual radio station, and in 2017 he acquired Radio 1220AM that reaches audiences from Ottawa to St. Catharines. The International Fashion Festival Toronto he launched in 2014 promotes local designers. Ripudaman is an active philanthropist and was the Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario's candidate in 2018 and a candidate of record for Brampton North. Virender Rathie is the President of Xcent Lawyers LLP. He is a versatile lawyer who specializes in immigration and real estate. Virender graduated from Osgood Hall Law School. He is a member of the Law society of Ontario, Canadian Bar Association, Ontario Bar Association and CASAL. A strong votary of community service, he dedicates time and resources to Indo-Canadian community in Greater Toronto Area. He is strongly committed to the community and is actively involved in many NFPs including the ICCC. For the second year, the ICCC's members meeting was conducted virtually keeping in view the prevailing restrictions over the pandemic. For the first time since 2018, the ICCC conducted free and fair elections where in 10 candidates contested for seven board positions.

PM TRUDEAU TO UNVEIL NEW CABINET OCTOBER 26, PARLIAMENT TO RETURN NOV. 22

The Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, announced the swearing-in ceremony of the Cabinet will take place on October 26, 2021, and that Parliament will return on November 22, 2021. The new Cabinet will remain gender balanced, and will continue to deliver for Canadians and find real solutions to the real challenges of today and tomorrow. As announced last month, Chrystia Freeland will continue to serve as Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance. With the reconvening of Parliament, the Government of Canada will also deliver a new Throne Speech, which will lay out the government's progressive plan to finish the fight against COVID-19 and build a better future for everyone. PM Justin Trudeau said, "From finishing the fight against COVID-19 to getting the job done on \$10-a-day child care for families across the country, Canadians chose to move forward in September. Together, we will keep working hard to beat this virus and get Canadians vaccinated, create jobs and grow the middle class, put home ownership back in reach, accelerate climate action, and take important steps forward on the path of reconciliation. Our government will continue to be there for Canadians in this crisis, and we will work to move Canada forward - for everyone." Over 82 per cent of eligible Canadians are now fully vaccinated, but our fight against COVID-19 is not over. That is why the government has outlined five vaccination commitments for the first 100 days following the swearing-in of the new Cabinet. This month, as part of these commitments, the Prime Minister provided details on the government's plan to ensure everyone 12 or older travelling within Canada on a plane or train is fully vaccinated. He also outlined a plan to ensure all federal employees and people in federally regulated workplaces are fully vaccinated. The government will also deliver on its commitments to establish a standardized proof of vaccination for Canadians travelling internationally while supporting provincial and territorial proof of vaccination programs, and introduce legislation to make it a criminal offence to harass or threaten health care workers. The Prime Minister and the new Cabinet will also continue their work to build a better and fairer Canada, including by engaging with the remaining provinces and territories who have not yet signed \$10-a-day child care agreements, so we can make life more affordable for parents and create more child care spaces for our children. Early priorities include re-introducing legislation to ban harmful conversion therapy, moving ahead with 10-day paid sick leave for all federally regulated workers, and bringing the provinces and territories together to work on better sick leave for Canadians across the country. The new Cabinet will also get to work on putting home ownership back in reach for Canadians, accelerate climate action to build a cleaner country and create new middle class jobs, and continue to work with Indigenous partners and communities to walk the shared path of reconciliation. With the announcement of Parliament's return, the Prime Minister has reached out to the opposition leaders to discuss the priorities of Canadians in phone calls to take place early next week.

FREE FLU SHOT AVAILABLE TO ALL ONTARIANS IN NOVEMBER



TORONTO: To keep Ontarians healthy this flu season and prevent unnecessary visits to the hospital during the fourth wave of COVID-19, the Ontario government is launching one of the largest flu immunization campaigns in the province's history, with the flu shot available to all Ontarians starting in November.

"Our government is prepared for flu season and is launching an even larger flu shot program this year to keep Ontarians healthy as we continue to respond to COVID-19," said Christine Elliott, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "It is safe to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and the flu shot at the same time, so if you're receiving your flu shot and still have yet to receive a first or second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, now is the time." Last year, uptake of the flu vaccine by Ontarians was the highest in recent history. Building on this success, Ontario is investing over \$89 million this year to purchase over 7.6 million flu vaccine doses, which is 1.4 million more doses than last year. This includes a total of 1.8 million doses specifically for seniors.

Rod Phillips, Minister of Long-Term Care, said, "Prioritizing flu shots for long-term care residents is one way we're ensuring Ontario's seniors get the quality of care they need and deserve. The flu shot is a simple and important way to protect our loved ones, and it provides peace of mind for residents and their families."

To protect the most vulnerable, Ontario's initial supply of flu vaccine was prioritized for long-term care home residents and hospital patients beginning in September, and flu shots are now available for seniors and others most at risk for complications from the flu. Starting in November, the flu shot will be available for all Ontarians through doctor and nurse practitioner offices, participating pharmacies, and public health units. To further improve access and convenience to the flu shot and based on demand in recent years, pharmacies will receive approximately 40 per cent of the allocated doses, up from 36 per cent last year.

"The annual flu shot is the best defence against the flu this season," said Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health. "As we head into the fall and begin gathering indoors more often with family and friends, it is even more important to get your flu shot, in addition to following public health measures, to protect yourself and those around you." Each flu season, Ontario receives its supply of flu vaccine in multiple shipments from manufacturers over several months starting in mid-to-late September based on the schedule negotiated between the federal government and manufacturers. Distribution and the ability for locations in Ontario to re-order additional supplies of flu vaccine are based on the timing of shipments from manufacturers and the replenishment of the provincial supply. Ontarians are encouraged to be patient as it may take time for shipments to arrive at their local flu shot locations.

Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility said, "Ensuring that our seniors are safe and healthy is a priority for our government. It is important that we work to make sure that all Ontario seniors get the flu shot to protect their health and wellbeing - especially given the compounding threat of COVID-19."

"As the health system continues to cope with the serious challenges of COVID-19, The Ontario Hospital Association encourages all Ontarians to receive their annual flu vaccine. It is one important way we can each do our part to protect ourselves and reduce the pressure on hospitals," Anthony Dale, President and CEO of Ontario Hospital Association said. To help stop the spread this fall, Ontarians should continue to follow COVID-19 public health measures and advice in public settings, including wearing a face-covering indoors, frequent handwashing, and maintaining physical distance from those outside their household.

"As our economy reopens, and we continue to follow public health measures in our fight to end the pandemic, it is even more important to get the flu shot to stay healthy. Contact your family doctor to book your flu shot," Dr. Adam Kassam, President of Ontario Medical Association said. Justin Bates, CEO of Ontario Pharmacists Association said, "The importance of vaccination has never been more clear."

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Experience Ontario’s award-winning Halloween event, Pumpkins After Dark, where Jack-O-Lanterns come alive. Enjoy a scenic 2.5 km driving tour featuring thousands of hand-carved jack-o-lanterns, pumpkin sculptures and live carving demonstrations, all illuminated after dark.

Located at Country Heritage Park in Milton, Ontario, the event is fun for the whole family. The event runs from September 17 to November 8, 2021. Tickets will sell out again this year. All tickets must be pre-purchased. Don’t miss out! Book your tickets today!

This year’s sculptures include the awe-inspiring headless horseman, King Kong meets Godzilla and 40-foot long fire breathing dragon plus brand new scenes including a Carnival theme, Egyptian theme and Fairytale theme. Pumpkins After Dark employs 3 full-time carvers to bring 8,000 pumpkins to life. For the larger sculptures, it can take up to 200 hours to carve. Pumpkins After Dark uses a combination of craft (foam) pumpkins and real fresh pumpkins sourced from local Ontario farms to produce the show.

This year’s live carving demonstrations will feature, Kara, the ‘Pumpkin Queen of Cambridge’.

A portion of this year’s proceeds will go to Joseph Brant Hospital in support of our frontline healthcare workers and Starlight Children’s Foundation Canada. Last year the event raised over \$25,000 (\$20,000 to Country Heritage Park,

including \$5,000 to CHP food bank), as well as \$3,000 to Starlight Children’s Foundation Canada.

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DALWINDER SINGH FROM BRAMPTON SENTENCED TO LIFE IN PRISON AFTER STABBING WIFE, MOTHER-IN-LAW DURING ARGUMENT

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

Two victims, Baljit Thandi and her mother Avtar Kaur, were located inside the residence suffering from stab wounds. They died as a result of their injuries. Dalwinder Singh, the husband of Baljit Thandi, was charged with two counts of First Degree Murder. At the conclusion of the trial, Dalwinder Singh was sentenced to two concurrent life sentences, with no chance of parole for 25 years.

"While a conviction brings the court process to a close, the loss of Baljit and Avtar will forever leave a void in the lives of their family and friends," said Nick Milinovich, Deputy Chief of Investigative and Emergency Services. "Preventing violent crime and intimate partner violence is a focus for Peel Regional Police. We will be steadfast in our commitment to help victims of crime".



2 PUNJABI GIRLS DEAD AFTER GOODS TRAIN HIT CAR NEAR BRAMPTON

CONTD. FROM PAGE 1

Ontario Provincial Police say the deadly collision happened shortly after 11 p.m. in New Tecumseth in Simcoe County - west of Newmarket. "The OPP Technical Traffic Collision Investigators attended the scene and commenced their investigation," OPP said in a release. "No charges have been laid at this time as the investigation is ongoing to determine the cause."

Any witnesses should contact the Nottawasaga OPP Detachment at 1-888-310-1122.



PEEL POLICE ARRESTED & CHARGED HARPREET BHULLAR, 29, WITH ONE COUNT OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

REGION OF PEEL – Investigators from the 22 Division Criminal Investigation Bureau have arrested and charged a 29-year-old man from Brampton.

On Thursday, October 7, 2021, at 10:44 p.m., the victim was in front of her residence located in the area of Williams Parkway and White-wash Way in Brampton when she was approached from behind by an unknown male suspect and sexually assaulted. The suspect then fled the area on foot. The victim suffered minor injuries.

Investigators have identified the suspect as Harpreet Bhullar. On Saturday, October 9, 2021, Harpreet Bhullar was arrested and charged with one count of sexual assault and one count of Mischief Under \$5000. He was held for a bail hearing and attended the Ontario Court of Justice in Brampton the same day.

Investigators believe there may be more victims and are appealing to anyone who may recognize or may have had a similar encounter with the accused to contact the police.

Anyone with any information on this incident is asked to contact the 22 Division Criminal Investigation Bureau at 905-453-2121 ext. 2233. Information may also be left anonymously by calling Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477) or by visiting www.peelcrimestoppers.ca



28-YEAR-OLD JASDEEP DHINDSA FROM MISSISSAUGA CHARGED WITH FIREARM & DRUG RELATED OFFENCES

REGION OF PEEL – Investigators from the 12 Division Criminal Investigation Bureau have laid charges against a man in regards to firearm and drug-related offences.

On Tuesday, October 12, 2021, at 11:10 p.m., officers investigated a suspicious vehicle parked in a parking lot in the area of Derry Road East and Maxwell Road in the City of Mississauga.

As a result of the investigation, officers located a number of drugs along with a loaded firearm.

Jasdeep Dhindsa, a 28-year-old man from the City of Mississauga, is charged with the following offences:

- 1) Knowledge of Unauthorized Possession of a Firearm
- 2) Possession of a Loaded Prohibited or Restricted Firearm
- 3) Occupant of Motor Vehicle Knowing There was a Firearm
- 4) Breach of Release Order (X2)
- 5) Possession for the Purpose of Trafficking (X2)

Jasdeep Dhindsa was held for a bail hearing and attended the Ontario Court of Justice in Brampton on Wednesday, October 13, 2021.

Anyone with additional information is asked to call investigators at the 12 Division Criminal Investigation Bureau at 905-453-2121, extension 1233. Information may also be left anonymously by calling Peel Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-TIPS (8477).



OSLER TO RE-OPEN PEEL MEMORIAL URGENT CARE CENTRE

BRAMPTON/ETOBICOKE – Effective December 6, 2021, William Osler Health System (Osler) will re-open the Urgent Care Centre (UCC) at Peel Memorial Centre for Integrated Health and Wellness (Peel Memorial). The re-opening of the UCC will increase access to quality health care for residents with non-life-threatening conditions.

Osler and the communities it serves have been among the hardest hit throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. As a result of this unprecedented impact and pressure on our health care system, Osler implemented a number of initiatives to support capacity relief, including temporarily closing the UCC at Peel Memorial in early 2020 so that resources could be redirected to the areas of most need during the pandemic.

With COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and ICU admissions declining at Osler and across the province, and vaccinations rates continuing to increase, Osler has resumed most of its regular operations. As part of Osler’s safe and gradual recovery plan, the UCC is re-opening with modified hours of operation (1:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., seven days a week). Osler’s Virtual Urgent Care is also available to provide a convenient alternative to visiting Osler’s Emergency Departments or the UCC. Virtual Urgent Care is suitable for any condition where a patient can safely wait a few hours for an appointment. Patients can book a Virtual Urgent Care appointment and find more detail on Osler’s website at www.williamoslerhs.ca/virtual-urgent-care

"At Osler, our top priority continues to be the health and well-being of the communities we serve," said Kiki Ferrari, Chief Operating Officer, William Osler Health System. "Re-opening the Urgent Care Centre is one of the last key milestones in returning to regular operations and ensuring our community receives the right care in the right place. I would like to thank the community for their understanding and thank the great team at Osler for their adaptability and unwavering efforts to care for our community during these exceptional times." The UCC at Peel Memorial is resourced with emergency-trained staff and physicians ready to provide care to patients in need of immediate but non-life-threatening care and enables ready access to Diagnostic Services. For more information on the UCC’s modified hours of operation, when to visit the UCC versus the ED and other important information on emergent care, please visit www.williamoslerhs.ca/emergency-and-urgent-care.

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PUNJAB CM LAUNCHES SCHEME TO CONFER PROPRIETARY RIGHTS

CHANDIGARH, (IANS) Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Channi on Sunday launched 'MeraGhar Mere Naam' scheme to confer proprietary rights on the people living in the houses within the 'Lal Lakir' of villages and the cities. Addressing a gathering at the state-level function in Dinanagar in Gurdaspur district, the Chief Minister, accompanied by Deputy Chief Minister Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa and Revenue Minister Aruna Chaudhary, envisioned that the scheme would give much needed succour to people, especially the needy and underprivileged. He said earlier this scheme was launched only for the residents of villages, but now it is being extended to the eligible residents of the cities within the 'Lal Lakir'.

Channi said the Revenue Department has been mandated to undertake a drone survey of residential properties, both in rural and urban areas for digital mapping, and subsequently, all eligible residents after proper identification or verification would be given the property cards to confer proprietary rights upon them in a time-bound manner. He said prior to this, the beneficiaries will be given time of 15 days to file their objections and in case no reply is received from them, the property card will be issued which will serve the purpose of registry against which they can avail loans from the banks or even sell their properties. Channi said the people residing in the houses in old localities for generations would also be covered under the scheme.

Nitish Kumar plays Muslim card ahead of Bihar by-elections

PATNA, (IANS) Ahead of the crucial October 30 Assembly bypolls, Bihar's ruling Janata Dal-United (JD-U) on Sunday sought to woo the Muslim community as both the Tarapur and KusheshwarAsthana constituencies have sizable numbers of Muslim voters. "No one would dare to look up askance at the Muslim community until Nitish Kumar is in the power. After Independence, whatever development works have been done for the Muslim community, the contribution of Nitish Kumar is maximum. That is the reason why the popularity of Nitish Kumar has increased in the country," party national President Lalan Singh said at an event here to induct Salim Parvez into the party. Parvez, is former Vice President of the Rashtriya Janata Dal and a close associate of former RJD MP, late Mohammad Shahabuddin. "During every Muslim festival like Eid-al-Zuha, Eid-al-Fitr, or Muharram, Nitish Kumar used to sit near the telephone and personally direct district officials to maintain law and order so that no one could do violence against the minority community," Lalan Singh said. He also noted that madrasas in the state were in a stage of disrepair under earlier governments, and even teachers were not getting salaries. Now, the situation has changed with not only teachers receiving timely payment but also the infrastructure has also been enhanced, he said. With only 13 days left till polling, the JD-U, as well as the RJD



and the Congress are also doing their best to woo voters. RJD's Tejashwi Yadav, along with more than 10 top leaders, started a campaign from Tarapur on Sunday. Congress state President Madan Mohan Jha and MLC Prem Chand Mishra were involved in door-to-door campaigns in KusheshwarAsthana.

OCT 30 BYPOLLS IN ASSAM ACID TEST FOR BJP

GUWAHATI, (IANS) After returning to power in Assam for the second straight term six months ago, the ruling BJP will face its first acid test when five Assembly seats in the state go to the bypolls on October 30. In the March-April polls to the 126-member Assam Assembly, the BJP had secured 60 seats, similar to what it managed when it first came to power in Assam in 2016. Political pundits are saying that the October 30 by-elections to five Assembly seats will be a litmus test for both the ruling party and the state government led by Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma. The BJP has fielded candidates in three out of the five seats going to the bypolls, and all three are deserters of opposition parties -- the Congress and the Muslim dominated All India United Democratic Front (AIUDF). The BJP has fielded Phanidhar Talukdar in Bhabanipur, Rupjiyoti Kurmi in Mariani and Sushanta Borgohain in Thowra, while its ally United People's Party Liberal (UPPL) has nominated Jiron Basumatary and Jolen Daimary in Gossaigaon and Tamulpur, respectively. The by-elections were necessitated due to the Covid-related deaths of two sitting MLAs belonging to UPPL and Bodoland Peoples Front (BPF), while two Congress (Kurmi and Borgohain) and one AIUDF legislator (Talukdar) joined the BJP after quitting their Assembly membership. The main opposition Congress, which bagged 29 seats in the recent Assembly polls, has been trying hard to retain their seats -- Thowra and Mariani -- where the party won in the March-April Assembly polls. While campaigning for the party candidates, Chief Minister Sarma has expressed confidence that the BJP and UPPL will win all the five seats. Assam Assembly Deputy Speaker Numal Momin, also a BJP MLA, said on Tuesday that his party and the UPPL would win all the five seats to further increase their tally in the House.

AAP leaders depicted as 'snakes' in Delhi BJP's 'Snakes & Ladder' game

NEW DELHI, (IANS) The Delhi unit of the BJP on Sunday distributed a Snake and Ladder game, to the children of KusumpurPahadi, Jai Hind camp and JJ Bandhu camp in the national capital, that depicted Aam Aadmi Party leaders as snakes. In this specially printed snake and ladder game, the alleged scams and 'misleading' announcements of the Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal-led government have been depicted as 'Snakes' biting the poor people while the Centre's policies are shown as ladders for the upliftment of the downtrodden. Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta, while addressing a 'Jhuggi Samman Yatra', said the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is a government dedicated to the poor, which is evident by schemes like Ayushman Bharat and Jan Dhan Yojana. Notably, the saffron party has printed over 1 lakh copies of this controversial chart. Gupta said he has asked all the BJP councillors to encourage indoor games like carrom board and chess etc in the slum areas as most of them are without any playground. "It will play a vital role in the mental development of the youth," he said. As the MC polls are slated for next year, the saffron party seems already rolling up their sleeves to counter the present dispensation in Delhi. This time they have chosen to promote the Modi government's developmental works -- first to the poorest of poor that are living in the slum areas.

Govt bound to fulfil all promises despite limited time, says Punjab CM

CHANDIGARH, (IANS) Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi on Sunday said despite less time, all-out efforts would be made to realise the dreams of people by fulfilling the remaining poll promises. Reiterating his government's firm commitment to ensure holistic development and welfare of all sections of society, he said judicious utilisation of time would be done to achieve the goal for betterment of the state. In his address in Hoshiarpur town, the Chief Minister said the state was working round the clock to ensure overall development and timely completion of ongoing infrastructure works as urban development is a crucial component of holistic growth. All basic amenities will be provided to the people in the urban areas keeping in view their future needs, said Channi, adding there was no dearth of funds for the same. Announcing Rs 10 crore for Hoshiarpur to be given within next few days, he said that the government was already making best use of available time so as to touch new heights of success and glory as per peoples' aspirations. The Chief Minister also announced Hoshiarpur would get state-of-the-art biodiversity and sports park at a cost of Rs 5 crore. He said that the foundation stone of the park and the upcoming medical college would be laid shortly. The classes of the medical college would commence from the next session. All necessary directions have already been issued to expedite the process for tender floating so that its construction could be started at the earliest, he added. He also announced a fund of Rs 1 crore for the District Bar Association for construction of advocates' chambers. Citing that the government has announced a major relief to waive off arrears of electricity bills to more than 52 lakh consumers up to 2KW of all sections of society, Channi said Rs 1,200 crore had been set aside, of which Rs 11 crore was of only for Hoshiarpur consumers.

KALAM'S VISION HELPED INDIA CHARTER ITS COURSE TO 21ST CENTURY: PURI

NEW DELHI, (IANS) Union Minister for Housing and Urban Affairs Hardeep Singh Puri on Saturday said that former President of India Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam's vision helped India charter its course to 21st century. Speaking at the 3rd memorial lecture on Bharat Ratna Dr Abdul Kalam, he said that he laid out this vision in his 'India 2020' roadmap which identified five areas where India had to build core competencies -- Agriculture and Food Processing; Education and Healthcare; Information and Communication Technology; Infrastructure, reliable and quality electric power; and surface transport. The Minister further said that Kalam personified the ideals of diversity and cooperation, apart from having been one of India's leading defence scientists and spearheading our nation's missile programme, among many other achievements. "He was a visionary scientist who developed cutting-edge satellite technology but also advocated for development in rural areas; he was India's 'Missile Man' who enhanced India's space and defence capabilities, but also dedicated his life towards furthering peace", Puri said, adding that he was the 'People's President' who left an indelible mark on our citizens through his endearing passion and commitment for a better world, and India first. Puri also said, "we have come a long way on the roadmap that Dr Kalam had laid out for India."



CONGRESS ANNOUNCES INTERNAL ELECTION SCHEDULE

NEW DELHI, (IANS) The Congress Working Committee (CWC) on Saturday gave a go ahead to the internal elections in the party. The party will elect a new president by October 2022. Briefing about the CWC, K.C. Venugopal, General Secretary organisation, said, "We passed three resolutions, one on the political situation, one on inflation and one on acute agrarian distress & diabolical attack on India's farmers. Following this, the CWC also discussed the proposed significant and revolutionary training programme for the party workers and leaders." Venugopal said, CWC also discussed the organisational election schedule in detail. The CWC has approved to conduct the organisational elections and the schedule has been decided. The enrolment of members for organisational election on payment of Rs 5 each, will start from November 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022. It will be a massive membership campaign, he said. DCCs shall publish preliminary list of members together with the list of eligible contestants for participation in the election enrolled up to March 31. This list will be published before April 15, 2022.



IMF COMMENDS INDIA'S 'SWIFT, SUBSTANTIAL' RESPONSE TO PANDEMIC



UNITED NATIONS, (IANS) The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has commended Indian authorities' "swift and substantial" response to the Covid-19 pandemic and noted that there is the possibility of "a faster than expected recovery". "Directors commended the authorities' response to the pandemic which includes scaled-up support to vulnerable groups, monetary policy easing and liquidity provision, accommodative financial sector and regulatory policies, and continued structural reforms," the IMF said on Friday reporting on its executive board's consultations held with India to assess the state of its economy and finances. "The authorities' economic response, which was swift and substantial, has included fiscal support, including scaled-up support to vulnerable groups, monetary policy easing, liquidity provision, and accommodative financial sector and regulatory policies. "Despite the pandemic, the authorities have continued to introduce structural reforms, including labour reforms and a privatisation plan," it added. The report of what is known as "Article IV Consultations" in reference to the article in the IMF agreement requiring the periodic assessment, however, warned of the risks from the Covid-19 pandemic lurking ahead especially due to its deleterious effect on people's development.

NAVJOT SIDHU WITHDRAWS RESIGNATION AS PUNJAB CONGRESS PRESIDENT

Congress leader Navjot Singh Sidhu who resigned as the chief of party's Punjab unit last month has met former party president Rahul Gandhi at his residence here following which he withdrew his resignation. Congress' Punjab in-charge Harish Rawat was also present in the meeting. After the meeting that took place on Friday evening, it is believed that the political situation in Punjab will become normal now. Punjab Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi is expected to arrive in the national capital on Saturday morning to attend the Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting. During the meeting that lasted for about an hour, Rahul Gandhi took feedback from Sidhu. After the meeting, Harish Rawat said: "Sidhu has assured Rahul Gandhi that he will discharge his responsibilities properly... and he will continue as the Punjab state president. He told Rahul Gandhi that he has withdrawn his resignation." "He (Sidhu) shared his concerns with Rahul Gandhi. We have told him that his concerns will be taken care of here," Rawat said. Sidhu had reached Delhi on Thursday and met organization general secretary KC Venugopal and Punjab in-charge Harish Rawat at the Congress headquarters. On the instructions of the Congress High Command, Sidhu arrived here on Thursday evening and held a meeting with both the leaders. This was the first meeting held in Delhi after Sidhu's resignation. The Gandhi family is said to be angry with the manner in which Sidhu had resigned, and therefore, he was called to Delhi. It is expected that now after Sidhu's meeting with Rahul Gandhi, the impasse in the Punjab Congress has been resolved. "Whatever my issues were... I have told the party high command, I am sure that Priyanka Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi will understand my point and I have faith in their decision."



INDIA, ISRAEL TO RENEW NEGOTIATIONS ON FTA AGREEMENT & MUTUALLY RECOGNIZE COVID VAX CERTIFICATION

NEW DELHI, (IANS) External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar and his Israeli counterpart Yair Lapid on Monday decided to renew negotiations on a free trade area agreement between the two countries in November, with the aspiration that the agreement will be ready for signature by the middle of 2022.

Jaishankar, who is on a three-day visit to Israel, met Lapid and the two also agreed on mutual recognition of vaccination certificates as well as to expand cooperation in the areas of water and agriculture, which in recent years have become a central anchor of bilateral relations. "I thank my friend, Dr. Jaishankar, for his visit to Israel, a visit which is a precursor of events which will take place next year to mark thirty years of bilateral relations between India and Israel," Lapid said after the meeting.

"We are continuing with our policy of connections, and we have seen in India a very important ally for many years. India also brings with her new opportunities for cooperation.

"In the last year, we have dealt, India and Israel, with the Covid-19 pandemic, and we have helped one another during this crisis. This is how friends and partners behave," he added.

Following the meeting, a signing ceremony was held marking Israel's accession to the the International Solar Alliance, founded in 2015 on the initiative of India and France, which will allow Israel to contribute its knowledge and experience to the organisation.

Israeli Energy Minister Karine Elharrar participated in the meeting and signed the agreement on behalf of her country.

"Membership in the ISA, alongside more than 80 countries blessed with sun and promoting solar energy, will enable the State of Israel to contribute to the global struggle against climate change and to advance together solutions for a greener future," she said.

Thanking India for the support, Elharrar said that she is hopeful that membership in this organisation which has engraved on its flag investment in research and development in the field of solar energy will encourage Israeli entrepreneurs to bring forth developments in the field and to bring her country to the global forefront in this field as well. "Last year, India and Israel have dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic, and we have helped one another amidst this crisis. This is how friends and partners behave", Lapid said.

He also thanked Jaishankar for his visit to Israel, saying a visit preceding events that will take place next year will mark 30 years of bilateral relations between the two countries.

After the meeting, Minister of Energy Karine Elharrar signed the agreement on the accession of Israel to the International Solar Alliance, a global initiative of India. Earlier in the day, Jaishankar unveiled a plaque commemorating the Bhoodan Grove planted by Sarvodaya workers in 1960. India and Israel elevated bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership level during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Israel in July 2017. Since then, the relationship between the two countries has focused on expanding knowledge-based partnership, which includes collaboration in innovation and research, including boosting the 'Make in India' initiative.

4 ARRESTED IN BANGLADESH OVER VANDALISING HINDU TEMPLE

DHAKA, (IANS) Four people, including an Imam, were arrested in Bangladesh's Kishoreganj district in association with the vandalism and looting of a Hindu temple.

According to the police, the arrested persons -- Mamunur Rashid, 22, two teenagers aged 15 and 16 and Kafil Uddin, a 50-year-old village doctor -- admitted to their crimes on Saturday.

The violent incident took place on Friday at the Kali Mandir in Kadim Majhi area.

The miscreants entered the temple, vandalised five idols and fled. The attack took place just as the worshipers were preparing to immerse the idol.

According to the police, Rashid, who is an Imam, led the attack. Police Officer-in-Charge (OC) Shamsul Alam Siddiqui told IANS that Birendra Chandra Bormon, the vice president of the temple, lodged a case naming eight persons and some 35 unidentified others on Friday night. At least four persons have been killed and 70 others injured in the incidents of violence including attacks on Hindu temples across the country in the last three days. The radical attackers vandalised, torched, and looted more than 70 puja venues, 30 homes, and 50 shops of the minorities, according to Rana Dasgupta, General Secretary of Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council (BHCUC).



INITIATE ACTION AGAINST THOSE WHO INCITED VIOLENCE USING RELIGION: HASINA



Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Tuesday instructed her home minister to initiate immediate action against those who incited violence using religion as she asked the people not to trust anything on social media without fact-checking. Attacks on Hindu temples have intensified in Bangladesh since last Wednesday after an alleged blasphemous post surfaced on social media during the Durga Puja celebrations. On late Sunday night, a mob damaged 66 houses and set on fire at least 20 homes of Hindus in Bangladesh. During the weekly Cabinet meeting on Tuesday, Prime Minister Hasina instructed Home Minister Asaduzzaman Khan to initiate immediate action against those who incited violence using religion, Cabinet Secretary Khandker Anwarul Islam was quoted as saying by the Dhaka Tribune newspaper.



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