

# concerns of hidden domestic violence in South Asian community

Discussing different cases where women have become the victim in abusive relationships due to various reasons, Baljinder says the most common reason is our cultural upbringing. Financial dependence coupled with inherent beliefs that once a girl is married, she needs to stay in the marriage life long even if it is abusive. "The women most of the time do not get support from their parents and families due to the stigma attached to separation. Our community does not speak up, women get scared - Baljinder Kaur, Hope Sewa Society

By Surbhi Gogia

SURREY: Harpreet Kaur Gill, a 40-year-old mother of three kids, was brutally killed in her Surrey residence allegedly by her husband Navinder Gill in December 2022. The police laid second-degree murder charges on the husband and the case is before the court.

The reason for the murder has not yet been made official, but according to community organizations and media reports, it was a case of domestic violence. A GoFundMe Page was created to raise funds to arrange for Harpreet's parents' to travel cost from India to Canada and pay for her funeral. Baljinder Kaur, a community volunteer, who is part of Hope Seva Society, arranged the fundraiser. Baljinder has also organized a Candle light vigil in memory of Harpreet this week at the corner of 72 avenue and Scott Road in Surrey to raise awareness about the prevalent issue of domestic violence.

Continued on page 08

Harpreet Kaur Gill

# **BC To Have One Stop Shop For Housing Permits**



VANCOUVER: British Columbia is adopting a "one-stop-shop" approach to housing-related permits to help speed up the approach to build more

homes, officials announced.

Currently, authorizations related to homebuilding in B.C. can require multiple different ministries like Environment and Climate Change Strategy, Forests, Transportation and Infrastructure, and Water, Land and Resource Stewardship, with different processes.

This includes permits related to riparian area approvals, water licences, transportation approvals, road rezonings, contaminated sites, and requirements for heritage inspections.

But under the new strategy government will create a single, co-ordinated approach to housing-related permits and authorization. This will speed up the process and eliminate the need for multiple applications across ministries.

The Permitting Strategy for Housing is supported by an initial investment of 42 new full-time positions. It will prioritize the housing that most urgently needs to be built, such as Indigenous-led projects, BC Housing applications and multiple-unit applications.



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## **27 Million Doses of Potentially Lethal Fentanyl Held From Hitting the Streets**

I following the dismantling of a drug super lab by the BC RCMP Federal Policing Clandestine Laboratories Enforcement and Response team (CLEAR).

On January 14, 2022, the BC RCMP Federal Serious and Organized Crime (FSOC) program's CLEAR team executed two search warrants

on properties located in the cities of Abbotsford, and Surrey, BC, and arrested three men for their alleged involvement in the operation of a sophisticated clandestine drug lab.

The search of the sites uncovered a drug super lab

at the Abbotsford location, with evidence of a synthetic drug operation that was producing fentanyl, MDMA (ecstasy), and cannabis extracts. The location also contained a mobile fentanyl lab, and two boxed drug labs. Given the structure and significant operational capacity of the clandestine drug lab, it was deemed a super lab; a term used to describe largescale, sophisticated clandestine drug labs with the capability of producing sizable quantities of illicit drugs, that are also often tied to organized crime. The complex, multijurisdictional investigation by the BC RCMP CLEAR team that was launched in August of 2021 has resulted in the seizure of approximately 36 pounds of crystal methamphetamine, 4 kg of pure fentanyl, more than 700 pounds of marihuana bud, approximately \$20,000.00 in cash, and a

Three BC men have been charged cache of precursor chemicals for the production of fentanyl. In assessing the seized bulk chemicals, Health Canada concluded that the precursor chemicals at this location could have produced an additional 50 kg of pure fentanyl.

The suspects, Kevin Gonzales, Jemroi Ibarra, and Duc Phung have also been charged with multiple drug re-

lated offences under the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (CDSA). Based on a report by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), 2 milligrams of fentanyl can be lethal depending on a person's body size, tolerance and past usage. Therefore, the pure fentanyl seized during this investigation could have amounted to over 27 million potentially lethal doses of fentanyl.

The Government of Canada's estimated opioid toxicity deaths amount to approximately 20 deaths per day, with over 76% of cases involving toxic fentanyl.

Access and availability to toxic drugs is a primary factor in many deaths. These drugs come from unsanctioned, uncontrolled, and profit driven facilities. Out of the thousands of loved ones lost to the toxic drug supply, it seems especially tragic that



many of the perished have been young Canadians who would have otherwise had their entire lives ahead of them. This is why we are unequivocally committed to preventing toxic opioids from destroying more

lives, causing more grief, and threatening the future of our nation. said Superintendent Bert Ferreira, Officer in Charge of the BC RCMP Federal Serious & Organized Crime Border Integrity Program.

The BC RCMP Federal Policing CLEAR team targets organized crime groups involved in the production of illicit drugs, and works towards dismantling clandestine labs, while bringing the individuals responsible to justice.

If you know anyone who may be struggling with addiction, you can seek assistance through the BC Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service Line at 1-800-663-1441. And if you have information about a crime and wish to report it, you may contact your local police agency, or report it anonymously by calling BC Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477.

# **51-Year-Old Barinder** Singh Dies of Shooting at his Edmonton Residence, **Family Seeks Justice**

EDMONTON, AB: A 51 year old Punjabi origin man died of gunshots at his residence in Edmonton on the morning of January 1, according to Edmonton Police Service.

The police have confirmed the identity of the deceased after the autopsy as Barinder Singh. According to the police, Singh was located injured at his residence along with a 21 year old female.

EMS responded, treated and transported Singh to hospital, however, he succumbed to injuries. The 21-year-old woman was also taken to hospital with serious but non-life-threatening injuries. She remains in hospital at this time.

Homicide detectives took over the investigation. Investigators have since located a burned-out vehicle in the area of 24 Street and 14 Avenue that they believe may be connected to this incident.

Although police have not vet identified or discussed anything about the reason for shooting, a GoFundMe fundraiser was organised on



Victim Barinder Singh

behalf of Singh's wife Jasjeet Kaur and his daughters to support with the funeral cost.

According to the page Singh moved to Edmonton in 2019 from India in "the hope of better opportunities.'

"Despite difficulties such as Covid-19 etc., we persisted and continued to take baby steps towards settling down. However, on the night of 1st January 2023, everything changed. A few intruders broke into our residence and started firing at will. In this instance, Dad was fatally injured due to gunshots and my sister aged 21, was also seriously injured," the family said.

Singh's daughters Prabhleen and Tavneet describe him as an "honest, Continued on page 06



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## Punjabi Become Fastest-Growing Language in Various Countries of the World Punjabi language will be added to the curriculum of public schools in Western Australia



#### By Balwant Sanghera

Punjabi Language Education Association (PLEA) has been promoting Punjabi language in BC's public schools, colleges, universities and community for almost 30 years. PLEA strongly believes that getting our children interested in their mother tongue Punjabi at an early age is extremely beneficial to them.

It not only helps the children and youth with their communication skills but also in staying connected with their heritage. Our efforts have been very successful. However, still a lot more needs to be done in this regard. PLEA was very pleased to see some positive developments in the Punjab and in some other countries about their interest and initiatives in promoting Punjabi in their schools and communities. According to the latest media reports, in a western state of Australia, Punjabi has been recognized as one of ten languages that can be taught in schools. The last day of the week has been designated for teaching Punjabi to interested students. The government believes that this move will help connect students to their roots. A large number of organizations and individuals have been working hard in promoting

Punjabi at every level. For example, Punjabi Vikas Manch has been promoting Punjabi not only in the U.K. but also in Punjab. This organization's secretary Shinderpal Singh Mahal, on a recent trip to Canada, shared his passion for Punjabi language with this writer and PLEA officials. We are very proud of the well-wishers of Punjabi like him.

According to a recent report dated January 2, 2023 by reporter Jaspal Singh in the Jalandhar based daily Ajit, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Singh Mann has strongly urged people of Punjab to give preference to Punjabi language on the boards outside their businesses.

Mann has started this campaign in connection with the upcoming International Mother Language Day on February 21. Punjab's Minister of Higher Education and Languages, Gurmit (Meet) Singh Hayer was in Jalandhar recently pro-

moting the c a m p a i g n for Punjabi language on



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display boards. The Punjab government is pursuing this initiative with vigour.

PLEA would like to thank Bhagwant Singh Mann, Meet Hayer and the Punjab government for this commendable initiative. Similar efforts are under way in many other countries.

Here in Canada, PLEA and well- wishers of Punjabi have been working tirelessly in promoting Punjabi at every level. A few months ago, PLEA's representatives met with federal NDP leader Jagmit Singh and urged him to get some recognition for Punjabi language at the national level.

We continue to work with federal and provincial elected officials in this regard. It is a matter of great pride for the well-wishers of Punjabi that according to the census held in May 2021, Punjabi, with almost one million speakers, was the third most spoken language in Canada after English and French. Punjabi is now being taught in a number of schools, colleges and universities in Canada .Moreover, it is a source of employment for thousands of people all across Canada. On behalf of PLEA I would like to urge every well-wisher of Punjabi to act as its ambassador and do whatever they can to create more pride in our mother tongue.

TOP NEWS

Balwant Sanghera is President, Punjabi Language Education Association (PLEA)

#### Homeowners Encouraged to Prepare for Speculation and Vacancy Tax Declarations

VICTORIA - People with residential properties in some areas with the highest demand in the province will soon receive their 2023 speculation and vacancy tax (SVT) declaration letter.

Homeowners in the Metro Vancouver Regional District, the Capital Regional District, Abbotsford, the District of Mission, Chilliwack, Kelowna, West Kelowna, Nanaimo and the District of Lantzville will receive their letters by the end of February and have until March 31, 2023, to file.

The tax was introduced in B.C. in 2018 to curb speculation that drives up prices and to encourage people to rent out their vacant homes.

Next year's SVT communities will include

residential property owners in North Cowichan, Lake Cowichan, Duncan, Ladysmith, Lions Bay and Squamish. People in those communities will receive their first letter in 2024 when they will need to declare for the first time. This will offer owners with vacant residential properties in the expansion areas time to change the use of their property to help ensure they are eligible for an exemption.

Exemption eligibility is based on how owners use their property during the year. For example, if a property owner uses their unit as a principal home, rents it out for more than six months of the year or meets other rental exemption criteria, they are exempt from paying the tax.

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## **Jagmeet Singh** calls on federal government to reject the American style, for-profit health care

Singh says the Liberals spent \$100 million on consultants but refuse to deliver on promise to hire 7,100 nurses to help address staffing shortages

TTAWA, ON: Canada's NDP Leader Jagmeet O Singh called out the Trudeau government for failing to defend the public health care system against Conservative premiers pushing for-profit care that makes wait times longer, costs patients money and makes staffing shortages even worse.

# **Canada Doubles Immigration Program For Out-Of-Status Construction Workers In Toronto**

MISSISSAUGA, ON: Canada an-nounced that it is extending and expanding the pilot program that offers PR to out-of-status construction workers in the Greater Toronto Area.

In 2019, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), in partnership with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), launched a permanent residence pilot program for 500 out-of-status workers in the construction industry in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

Building on the success of this initiative, Peter Fonseca, Member of Parliament for Mississauga East-Cooksville and Julie Dzerowicz, Member of Parliament for Davenport, on behalf of the Honourable Sean Fraser, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, announced that IRCC is doubling its scope to 1,000 out-of-status construction workers in the GTA.

Since the launch of the out-of-status construction workers in the GTA pilot in July 2019, 452 individuals have been accepted as permanent residents (190 principal applicants and 262 dependants).

Eligible individuals have until January 2, 2024, to apply for permanent residence and can include their spouses, partners and dependent children in their application. Potential applicants will continue to submit their names to the CLC, who will determine their eligibility before referring them to IRCC. Under the pilot, applicants who have signif-

icant work experience in construction occupations in the GTA, family members in Canada, a referral letter from the CLC and no reason for being inadmissible other than overstaying their visa and working without authorization may be able to apply for permanent residence in Canada.

"This pilot program is a significant step

forward in addressing critical labour shortages for the Sean Fraser, Minister of Immigration Insurance).

Greater Toronto Area by supporting stability in the construction industry and bringing workers out of the underground economy," said Sean Fraser, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship.

This program acknowledges the critical role that construction workers play in building and growing cities, and offers them and their families a path to permanent residency so that they can stay long-term.

The program promotes greater stability in the construction industry and ensures that skilled workers in Canada continue to address critical housing development needs. Just as important, this initiative will help bring a larger number of workers out of the underground economy, which benefits

Canada's world-renowned programs and services (like the Canada Child Benefit, Old Age Security and Employment



Yesterday, the president of the Ontario Hospital Association added his voice to those opposing Ontario Premier Doug Ford's plan to deliver vital health care services through private facilities that will pull doctors and nurses away from the public system.

"Doug Ford's plan cannibalizes the health care system, and Justin Trudeau is letting it happen," said Singh. "We already have a shortage of health care workers and Ford's answer to this is to take people out of operating rooms and ERs in the public system and send them to private facilities. How does that make sense?"

"Canadians need the prime minister to help get more doctors, nurses and other health care workers into our public system-not less. The prime minister doesn't mind handing out \$100 million to private consultants but he won't keep his promise to hire thousands of nurses." The Ontario Nurses Association and the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario have spoken out against privatizing health care, yet the Liberal government is refusing to make protecting the public, not-forprofit, universal health care a condition on provincial funding.

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# Man Pleads Guilty in Killing of Prabhjot Singh Katri

Nova Scotia man has pleaded guilty Ato fatally stabbing Prabhjot Singh Katri, the 23-year-old man who came to the province from India five years ago.

Cameron James Prosper of the Pictou Landing First Nation was originally charged with second-degree murder in the September 2021 death of Katri, a member of the Sikh community in Truro, N.S.

On Dec. 19, the 21-year-old accused pleaded guilty to manslaughter in Nova Scotia Supreme Court in Truro.

Prosper stabbed Katri in the neck at 2:04 a.m. on Sept. 5, 2021, according to an outline of the facts read aloud at the hearing by prosecutor Thomas Kavter. Katri was leaving a friend's apartment at 494 Robie St. in Truro when he was killed.

Katri came to Canada from India in 2017 to study, and was 23 when he died. At the time of his death. his friends told CBC News that Katri had completed his studies and was working as a taxi driver on a work visa while applying for permanent residency in Canada.

According to the preliminary agreed state-

ment of facts. Prosper was drinking in the parking lot of a Robie Street apartment building with Dylan Robert MacDonald,. Katri was inside the building visiting some friends at about 2:30 a.m.

When Katri left the building and was walking to his car, Prosper stabbed Katri

in the neck, with a folding hunting knife. He then fled in a white car with MacDonald driving. Police located the car at one point later in the morning, but it fled at speeds approaching 200 km/h and the officers lost sight of the vehicle.

Katri ran back to his friends' apartment

for help. When police arrived, his friends had a cloth over the wound to try to stop the bleeding, and he was lying on the floor in a pool of blood.

Katri was pronounced dead at the Colchester Regional Hospital shortly after 3 a.m. He had bled heavily from a 4-cm wound

Kayter said with only one wound, "it's very hard to prove the intent to kill absent other factors, which were utterly absent in this case."

He said there was no history of animosity between the two men, or even any indication they knew each other.

He said it was a "spontaneous event ... there is absolutely nothing between these two parties before the moment they came in contact. Nothing."

While there was community speculation at the time, there was no evidence that the incident was motivated by hate or ethnic animosity, Kayter said.

Prosper, who had originally pleaded not guilty to second-degree murder, is scheduled to be sentenced May 12.



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#### Continued from Page 03 51-Year Old Barinder Singh Dies...

hard-working family man who worked hard to provide for his family. A devoted son, a good brother and a caring father he kept us going through good times and tough times. Through his work, he supported my grandparents in Punjab, while providing for us in Delhi. India. We eventually moved to Canada in 2019."

"It's all like a nightmare for us," a shattered Jasjeet Kaur, wife of Singh, told a media channel.

"We need justice. I just want to know who did this. I need to know. Why my family

was the target? And it was not just him -- it was the whole family," Jasjeet Kaur told the news channel. "I want the culprits. I want to know the reason why it happened." Police said it is still working to establish a motive for this violent crime. So far, the homicide unit has found a burnt-out white Dodge Ram truck in the nearby Laurel neighbourhood, which they think is connected to the crime.

They are looking for home security and dashcam footage in the area where the burned-out truck was located.



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## **Respiratory Virus Remains High In BC, Expected To Continue Till March**

ANCOUVER - Influenza continues to decline in British Columbia, following an earlier-than- usual peak in late November and early December 2022

Meanwhile, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) remains high, while COVID-19 has remained relatively stable. On Jan. 13, 2023, there were 10,106 people hospitalized for all causes throughout the province. On Jan. 6, 10,226 people were hospitalized. British Columbia traditionally experiences an increase in hospitalizations in January as people access care after the holiday period. This coincides with increases in respiratory illnesses and surgeries ramping back up after the holiday slowdown.

Public-health officials look at various data sources daily and weekly to understand how the province is doing. These include wastewater surveillance; COVID-19, RSV and influenza testing; hospitalizations; respiratory outbreaks in health-care facilities (including acute and long-term care); and visits to providers in the community. Whole genome sequencing is also done to determine the variants of virus circulating.

To date, data indicates that influenza cases in all age groups have declined from a peak test positivity rate of 27% in late November 2022 to 5% in the week of Jan. 1-7, 2023. However, while influenza A cases are decreasing, historically there has been an increase in influenza B later in the season, and public-health officials continue to closely monitor the situation. RSV activity remains high, although it has also levelled off in recent weeks. The RSV test positivity rate continues to exceed that of influenza (14% compared with 5%). COVID-19 cases have remained relatively stable since October 2022, with hospitalization levels decreasing.

Continued on page 30



**Delta Police Requesting Public** 

**Assistance to Help Locate** 

n the evening of January 13th, 2023, the Delta Police Department (DPD) received a report of a missing person. A 54-year-old woman,

#### Nev Bains, was last seen at her North Delta home that morning. Nev's car has been located in the Bridgeview area of Surrey. Nev is described as 5'3" tall, approximately 140 lbs, with medium-length black hair. CCTV from the Bridgeview area confirmed Nev is wearing blue jeans, a black hooded sweater and black running shoes with white sole edges.

The DPD is asking for the public's assistance to help locate Nev. Should you see her, please contact the DPD at (604)946-4411 or the police of jurisdiction.

An officer will immediately attend.



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#### Continued from Page 01 Murder of Harpreet Gill raises serious concerns of hidden

Baljinder's society works to help new immigrants settle in Canada. She says Harpreet's parents, who have already arrived in Canada from Uttarakhand, want justice for their daughter. "A second-degree murder charge was laid on the husband which means he will be out in a few years. The parents are not satisfied. They want a first-degree charge. They will never get their daughter back. Harpreet's parents are also concerned about the future of their grandchildren and want to seek legal advice regarding their custody.'

Baljinder, who interacts with the community women every day, says, Harpreet's tragic story is just a small part of the larger problem of domestic violence. "I

meet women suffering and cry- local resources and support availing in our community every day. Some women suffer in silence." Discussing different cases where women have become the victim in abusive relationships due to various reasons, she says the most common reason is our cultural upbringing. Financial dependence coupled with inherent beliefs that once a girl is married. she needs to stay in the marriage life long even if it is abusive. "The women most of the time do not get support from their parents and families due to the stigma attached to separation. Our community does not speak up, women get scared."

She says that there is a need to organize more seminars and workshops to spread awareness about

able to them.

Baljinder informed that her organization is preparing an online petition to demand more stringent actions on the government and police's part if they come across a case of domestic violence. "Currently if there is a case of domestic violence, when not taken seriously, the culprit roams free just with a warning. It needs to be taken more seriously," she says. While talking to The Link newspaper, Surrey RCMP media relations officer Constable Sarbjit Sangha did not agree with Baljinder's statement. Officer Sangha said. "Yes domestic violence also called intimate partner violence is an issue in the South Asian community. But I would disagree that

we do not take serious actions." We have a unit assigned to deal with intimate partner violence files. "Depending on the evidence available at the time of scene we will do an investigation. If an arrest needs to be made, an arrest is made. Our focus goes beyond arrests and we work at various levels with both the victims and the offenders. We work with various organizations like women's rights and advocacy groups, women's shelters etc to support the victim."

She said the police also work with the offenders to see if they were following the conditions. "We also educate the offender to be positive in the relationship if both the partners want to continue the relation."

Sangha feels sometimes lack of support from the families forces women in the South Asian community to stay in an abusive relationship. "Our daughters are told to stay with their husbands for the rest of their life once they get married." This, Sangha feels, puts pressure on girls to stay silent and not to reach out for help. Her message to those suffering is, "Suffer no more, raise your voice if you are in an abusive relationship. It is not a life sentence. Please reach out for help."

TOP NEWS

She also informs that there are options available if the victims do not want to involve the police. "You can reach out to women's shelters. Call our non-emergency line and speak to our victim services line."

#### Continued from Page 01 BC to have one stop.

Priority will also be given to authorizations and permit approvals for housing projects in municipalities that are subject to the speculation and vacancy tax, because they have the greatest housing shortages, lowest vacancy rates and most demand for housing.

While the single application window is being established over the coming months. permit and authorization decisions will be expedited through a cross-ministry team focused solely on processing housing permits. "The Housing Action Task Force includes decision-makers, information technology systems, project managers and policy support teams working together to speed up processing," informed BC's premier David Eby A co-ordinated provincial approach is also expected

to make application reviews more streamlined for First Nations, which are consulted on each provincial authorization.

"Housing is a top priority for British Columbians and our government," said Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing. "We are working with municipalities to get more housing built faster. At the same time, we recognize that as a Province we have work to do to speed up our approvals. This new permitting approach is an important step in providing the homes people need."



t is with profound sadness that we announce that Pritpal S. Narwal, who practiced as a Notary Public for over 30 years. has passed away after a long illness in Vancouver, BC.

Born in India in the village of Daria, in the district Hoshiarpur, Pritpal was the eldest son of Subedar Jarnail S. Narwal, a veteran of the Second World War and Mohinder Kaur Narwal. Pritpal spent much of his young life tilling fields, wres-

## Obituary: Pritpal S. Narwa

tling and playing kabaddi. Pritpal's talent in kabaddi earned him a scholarship to Pubjab University, where he graduated with a B.A. degree. He then went on to study law at Kurukshetra University. He practiced as a lawyer in Hoshiarpur and was appointed an Oath Commissioner, before moving to Canada in 1976. That same year he married Jasbier Kaur Narwal and they welcomed their only child Joven, in 1982. Pritpal and Jasbier worked together until her passing in 2004.

Pritpal made extraordinary contributions to his community. He was well-known and respected and served in numerous leadership positions, including the general secretary of the Khalsa Diwan Society at the Ross Street Gurdwara and Director of the

Pubjabi Market Association. Pritpal's long illness began at the end of December 2015 and as a result he was sadly no longer able to practice as a Notary Public. Pritpal is survived by his son Joven, his daughter-in-law Cheryl and his grandson Logan. He was proud of his son and daughter-in-law's accomplishments in the legal profession.

In his Last will and testament. Pritpal asked for his funeral to be simple and wanted his son to share the following message when he passed away: "Please give my thanks to all my clients and friends and family members for support and time I spend with them."

A service in his honour will be held at Ross Street Gurudwara on Saturday, January 28, 2023 at 12 PM.

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# IHIT Appeal to Public on Two-Year Anniversary of Trina Hunt Investigation

The Integrated Homicide Investigation Team (IHIT) continue to investigate the murder of 48-year-old Trina Hunt.

Hunt was reported missing to the Port Moody Police Department. An extensive search was conducted by police, Trina's family and members of the community. On March 29, 2021, investigators located a body near Hope, south of Silver Creek. A few weeks later, IHIT confirmed the remains were that of Trina Hunt.

IHIT continue to investigate this homicide in pursuit of justice for Trina, Trina's family and the entire community. Hunt's brother, Brad Ibbott has released the following statement, on this, the two-year anniversary of the onset of the investigation:

"Sadly, it has been two years since our dear Trina was first re-



ported missing and was later found murdered in Hope, BC. This journey has been incredibly difficult, with never-ending waves of grief, anguish and trauma repeatedly engulfing us. Nothing about our path has been simple," says Brad Ibbott. "We so wish Trina knew of all the support that has embraced her these past two years. Trina would be humbled, a little bashful (truthfully, a lot!) but would also be ever so appreciative of all the love. We continue to thank-you for the ongoing positive comments and support. Your kindness has truly helped us cope." The family of Trina Hunt continues to offer a reward of up to \$50,000 for new information leading to the laying of criminal charges.

IHIT is asking anyone with information, who has yet to speak to police, to contact the IHIT Information Line at 1-877-551-IHIT (4448) or by email at ihitinfo@rcmp-grc.gc.ca.

# **Ex-Uber Driver Convicted of Sex Assault**

VANCOUVER, BC: A former Uber driver has been convicted and sentenced for sexual assault following a Vancouver Police investigation that began in 2021, after a then-21-year-old woman came forward to police.

Mohammed Abu Sayed, 69, was given a six-month conditional sen-

tence that includes two months g house arrest, followed by 18 months m of probation. c

During that time, he is banned from operating any ride-share vehicle, taxi, limousine or any other mode of transportation for remuneration. He is also banned from liquor stores, bars, pubs, nightclubs, beer gardens, and any other place where minors are prohibited by liquor license.

Abu Sayed was convicted in October and sentenced on January 11 for sexually assaulting a female passenger during a trip from Vancouver to Coquitlam. The offence occurred in August 2021.

# Cost-of-Living Help On The Way For B.C. Families

VICTORIA - Many B.C. families will see more money in their bank accounts starting Jan. 20, 2023, with the first of three enhanced BC Family Benefit payments. The enhanced BC Family Benefit will provide families with moderate and low incomes, and children under 18, with more money in the first three months of 2023. The credit will provide as much as an additional \$350 from January to March for a family with two children.

"With the rising cost of living due to global inflation and the day-to-day expenses that come with raising children, we know times are stressful," said Katrine Conroy, Minister of Finance. "We're here to help the parents who need it most with a little extra money to hopefully help take a bit of pressure off the family budget." Approximately 75% of B.C. families will receive the enhanced BC Family Benefit credit and approximately 84%

of those families will receive at least an additional \$50 per month, per child. Eligibility is based on income and number of children. It is automatically determined when someone registers for the Canada Child Benefit, usually through their income tax return. Most families will receive the benefit as a direct deposit from the Canada Revenue Agency, alongside the federal Canada Child Benefit program.

The BC Family Benefit may take as long as 10 days to be deposited by the Canada Revenue Agency alongside the Canada Child Benefit. The BC Family Benefit was formerly known as the Child Opportunity Benefit.

Learn about the enhanced BC Family Benefit:

https://www2.gov.bc.ca/ gov/content/family-social-supports/affordability/family-benefit#:~:text=For%20the%20 July%202022%20 to,month%20for%20 each%20addition



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# FAQ's about Jury Trials in BC Personal Injury Cases



By Mel Chaudhary, Partner mchaudhary@simpsonthomas.com Phone: 604 697 3251 Simpson, Thomas & Associates

wrongful or harmful incident such as Aa motor vehicle accident, slip and fall, assault, or defective product has caused you serious injuries. You have started a lawsuit to recover damages. Should your trial be with or without a jury? Read on for answers to FAQs about personal injury jury trials in BC.

What is a Jury Trial?

Many lawsuits are held before a judge alone. In those cases, the judge is the "trier of fact" who weighs all the evidence, considers the law, and decides the outcome of the case. Issues in personal injury cases typically include determining who was at fault for the wrongful or harmful incident and the amount of damages for pain and suffering, past and future wage loss, and the cost of future care.

In BC, the parties to most types of personal injury lawsuits have the right to choose to have their trial held before a judge and jury. In those cases, the jurors are the triers of fact. The members of the jury hear and weigh the evidence and decide the outcome of the case after receiving instructions from the judge presiding at trial.

In What Situations Are Jury Trials Allowed?

In BC, the default is that a trial is heard by a judge without a jury. However, both the plaintiff and the defendant in a personal injury lawsuit can request a jury trial by filing a notice in accordance with BC Supreme Court Rule 12-6. There are certain timelines and notice requirements that must be met for a jury trial to be allowed. There are also certain types of cases where jury trials are not allowed. For example, it is not possible to have trial by jury in Fast

Track Litigation under Rule 15. Fast track litigation is mandatory where damages sought are less than \$100,000 and the trial can be completed within three days.

Why or Why Not Choose a Jury Trial? Jury trials require more preparation and increase the work and risk for both parties, but the risk can pay off. Each personal injury is unique, and there are many considerations that factor into the decision to request a jury trial. Here are some of the considerations:

The issues in personal injury cases can be complex with a lot of technical expert evidence and legal concepts. It may be inappropriate to leave a particularly complex case to a jury in such cases.

A jury trial typically takes a few days longer than a non-jury trial because of the additional steps such as the jury selection process and the judge's charge to the jury. There are also jury fees to be paid. For that reason, jury trials in BC tend to be more expensive.

Jury verdicts tend to be difficult to explain. Unlike judges, juries don't provide writ-



ten reasons for judgment, which can make jury awards difficult to appeal. Jurors can't be contacted after the trial to get insight into their deliberations.

Damage awards can be highly unpredictable. A BC case called Mazur v. Lucas is a great example of the unpredictability of jury awards. Mazur was a personal injury case involving a woman seriously injured in a car accident. She was awarded \$528,400 following a jury trial. ICBC appealed on a technical ground unrelated to damages, and a new trial was ordered. At the second trial, the jury awarded her just \$84,000.

How Are Jurors Picked?



Jurors are chosen from the general public, randomly selected from the BC voters list. A document called a summons is mailed to prospective jurors, who must attend court on a specific date and time to participate in the jury selection process. Only the people selected at that hearing are empanelled as jury members. Jury trials in BC require a panel of eight jurors to hear the case. The jury members do not have to be unanimous, but at least 75% (six out of the eight jurors) must agree on the verdict after at least three hours of deliberation.

Are You Allowed to Say no to Serving on a Jury?

BC residents have the duty to serve as a juror unless they are disqualified or exempted under the Jury Act. The BC Jury Act lists certain people who are automatically disqualified from sitting on a jury. For example, a person is disqualified from serving as a juror if they are not a Canadian citizen, not resident in BC, under the age of majority, or employed in certain professions, including, lawyers, judges, and peace officers. Beyond automatic disqualifications, the Jury Act also allows potential jurors to request an exemption from jury service in certain circumstances. Potential reasons for exemption include being over age 65, hardship, religion, and language barriers. Do You Have More Questions About Jury Trials in BC? If you have been hurt in a wrongful or harmful incident caused by someone else's fault, consider getting legal advice from an experienced personal injury lawyer. The team at Simpson Thomas and Associates can advise you on whether a jury trial is in your best interests. We welcome you to call us on 604 229 6448.

# Tune into 1110 AM www.radioindia.ca 604 592 9191 604 592 9091 info@radioindia.ca

# **Manpreet Badal** Quits Congress, Joins BJP



ormer Punjab finance minister Manpreet Badal joined the BJP in New Delhi this week.

Owing to differences with the current state party leaders, he announced his resignation from the Congress on his Twitter handle

In the resignation letter addressed to Rahul Gandhi, he said that seven years ago, he merged the People's Party of Punjab with the Congress. He said, "I did so with immense hope, and an expectation of being integrated into an organisation with a rich history, that would allow me to serve both the people of Punjab and its interests to the best of my ability. Initial enthusiasm gradually gave way to disillusionment."

In the letter, he also recounted the efforts he had made to "bring Punjab out of the financial mess" but said that far from being acknowledged for his efforts, he was vilified in the Punjab Congress for failing to display "what can only be described as fiscal recklessness"

"I do not see the point in elaborating extensively on all the proceedings that led to my ultimate and irrevocable disaffection. Suffice it to say that the manner in which the Congress party has conducted its affairs and taken decisions, especially with regard to Punjab, has been disheartening, to say the least," he added.

Manpreet said the coterie of men entrusted with the authority to dictate Delhi's writ to the Punjab unit of the Congress is far from sound. Instead of striving to reduce internal disagreement in an already-divided house, these men acted to further increase factionalism, and strengthened the worst elements in the party, he added.



ANY HOT WATER TANK INSTALLATION

## **New BBC Documentary on Gujrat Riots Creates a Stir, India Calls it a 'Propaganda'**

ndia's foreign ministry dismissed a BBC documentary on Prime Minister Narendra Modi which questioned his leadership during the 2002 Gujarat riots as a "propaganda piece designed to push a discredited narrative" that shouldn't be "dignified" with a response.

Modi was the chief minister of the western state of Gujarat when it was gripped by communal riots.

Soon after the riots, the British foreign office had undertaken an investigation. The UK government report was never made public until it was revealed in the documentary

The report of a United Kingdom inquiry showcased in the documentary refers to the events as a "systematic campaign of violence" which has "all the hallmarks of ethnic cleansing", and places direct responsibility on Modi.

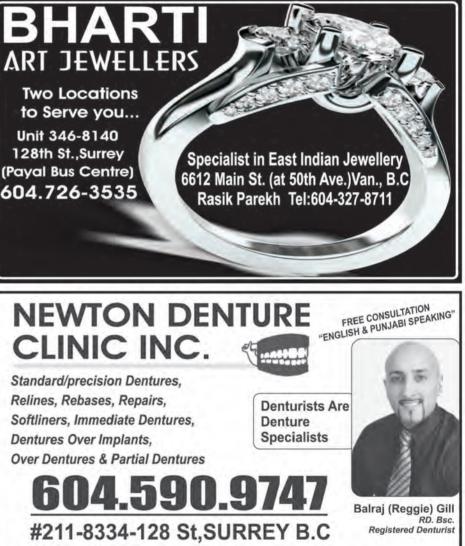
According to the documentary, released this week, the inquiry team claimed that Modi had prevented the police from acting to stop violence targeted at Muslims and cited sources as saying Modi had specifically ordered authorities not to intervene, Al Jazeera reported.

Modi denied the accusations and was exonerated in 2012 following an inquiry by India's top court. Another petition questioning his exoneration was dismissed last year.

The BBC's two-part series called "India: The Modi Question" provoked sharp reactions.

Terming the BBC documentary a "propaganda piece" meant to push a "discredited narrative", India's foreign ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said "bias", "lack of objectivity" and "continuing colonial mindset" is "blatantly visible" in it. UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, responding to a Pakistan-origin MP's question in the British parliament on the series, said he "doesn't agree with the characterization" of PM Modi.

'The UK government's position on this has been clear and long-standing and hasn't changed, of course, we don't tolerate persecution where it appears anywhere but I am not sure I agree at all with the characterisation that the honourable gentleman has put forward to," Sunak said.





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TOP NEWS

# Consulate **General of India** Celebrates Pravasi **Bhartiya Divas** in Burnaby















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The Consulate General of India celebrated Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on 15 January in presence of over 150 prominent members of Indian diaspora. A panel discussion based on themes of the five plenary sessions of PBD Convention this year, was organized where panellists made insightful presentation.

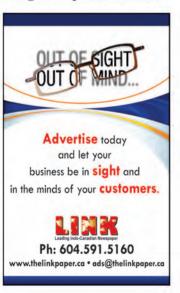
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# BC Construction to Face Labour Shortages, Higher Wages, and Discontent with Red Tape in 2023 - Survey

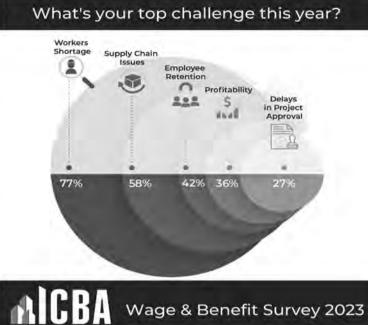
SURREY: BC construction companies expect a year of labour shortages and historically high wage increases – all while growing in their discontent with government, according to the results of a new survey of Independent Contractors and Businesses Association (ICBA) member companies.

According to the survey, four out of every five BC construction companies (80%) say they don't have enough workers – up from last year. And 77 per cent of employers say this is their company's single biggest challenge in 2023.

"The shortage of people is intensifying as Canada continues to go over a demographic cliff," said ICBA President Chris Gardner, who released ICBA's annual Wage and Benefits Survey of its member companies across B.C. today. "BC construction companies are increasing pay and benefits, adopting new technology faster than ever, and recruiting everywhere they can – but they're still falling short of filling positions."

Construction in B.C. now employs nearly 250,000 people and accounts for almost 10 per cent of the provincial GDP. The acute shortage of people is driving record increases in wages – ICBA members report the average trade wage (excluding benefits, bonuses and overtime) is expected to increase by 6% this year.

"For construction professionals, there has never been more opportunities or higher compensation," said Gardner. "More than 90% of





our members expect 2023 to be as busy – or busier – than 2022. There has been no better time to pursue a career in construction than today."

The labour shortage, supply chain issues, and growing burden of red tape has resulted in record discontent with government. Only 2% of ICBA members said, "when dealing with a business like mine, government is on the right track." More than half (55%) said government is on the wrong track.

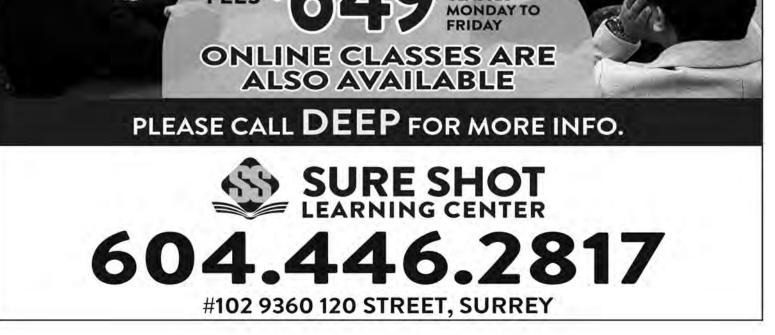
"Rules, regulations, red tape – and the seeming inability to get projects approved and permitted quickly – are impacting affordability and driving a record-level of frustration with government," said Gardner. "The World Bank reports that Canada ranks 64th in the world in how long it takes to get a construction project approved and permitted – a reality that frustrates the construction industry every day and is a real threat to investment in BC and Canada."

The ICBA Wage and Benefits Survey also noted:

Interior: 33% of contractors expect more work in 2023 than last year; 85% say they are short of workers, up from 72% in 2022. North: 75% of contractors expect more work in 2023 than last year; 92% say they are short of workers, up from 71% in 2022.

Vancouver Island: 48% of contractors expect more work in 2023 than last year; 83% say they are short of workers, steady from 84% in 2022.

Lower Mainland: 50% of contractors expect more work in 2023 than last year; 80% say they are short of workers, up from 76% in 2022.





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## Surrey Council Approves Establishment of 7 Select Committees

 $S_{\text{establishment}}$  of 7 Select Committees during its Regular Council Meeting this week.

Select Committees are established by Council and are typically comprised of Council members (acting as a Member or Chair) and residents. Their mandate is to provide information and make recommendations to Council on issues of concern to the public and the City.

"The establishment of the Select Committees will ensure our

residents have a voice and input into city decisions," said Mayor Brenda Locke. "I am especially pleased that we brought back the Public Safety Committee, which was dissolved by the previous Council. Together with the other Select Committees established, there will now be more transparency and public engagement that will help the City enhance the overall well-being of our residents."

Council supported the establishment of the following Select Committees of Council on Monday:

Agricultural and Food Policy Committee

Environment and Climate **Change** Committee

Investment, Innovation and Business Committee

Livability and Social Equity Committee

Public Safety Committee Arts and Culture Advisory Committee Parks, Recreation and Tourism

Advisory Committee

In late 2022, staff initiated a solicitation process to recruit volunteers interested in participating as Members of one or more of the above Select Committees. Interested persons are required to submit applications by Jan. 20, 2023. Following the deadline, staff will present a list of volunteer candidates to Council to consider for subsequent appointments.

Subsequent Council appointments to these committees at a future Council meeting will en-



Mayor Brenda Locke

hance Council's ability to support the current and future eco-



townhouse in prestigious West White Rock. On a private park-like complex on 4.5 acres only a couple of blocks from the sea. Lots of updates: kitchen, bathrooms, plumbing, electrical. Walls have been removed to make open layout on main floor. Large renovated kitchen with stainless appliances and island. Beautiful teak features in living room with built in shelves & beams. 2 full updated bathrooms, plus roughed in for powder room on main. Two large bedrooms up, master with peek-a-boo ocean view and spacious balcony.

appliances, gas stove. Formal dining room is currently home office and music room. Bright open family-friendly layout: kitchen, living room & casual dining area open onto lovely landscaped private patio and backyard. Upstairs: luxurious primary bedroom w walk in closet & spacious ensuite, 2 more bedrooms & large flex space for hobbies or office. Fully finished basement w 4th bedroom, full bathroom, huge rec room, media area, flex room & storage. The perfect family home.

lane access at rear. Beautiful sunny back yard for gardening & children to play, w large stamped concrete patio area & spacious shed. Huge kitchen w eating area overlooking garden. King-sized master bedroom w walk in closet & ensuite. Sunroom makes perfect office or flex space. Soaring vaulted ceiling in family room w gas fireplace. Lots of skylights. First time ever on the market. www.cotala.com/67357



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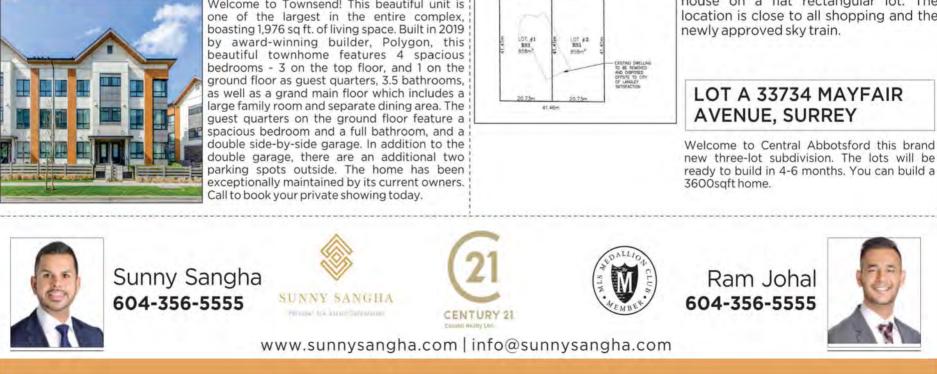


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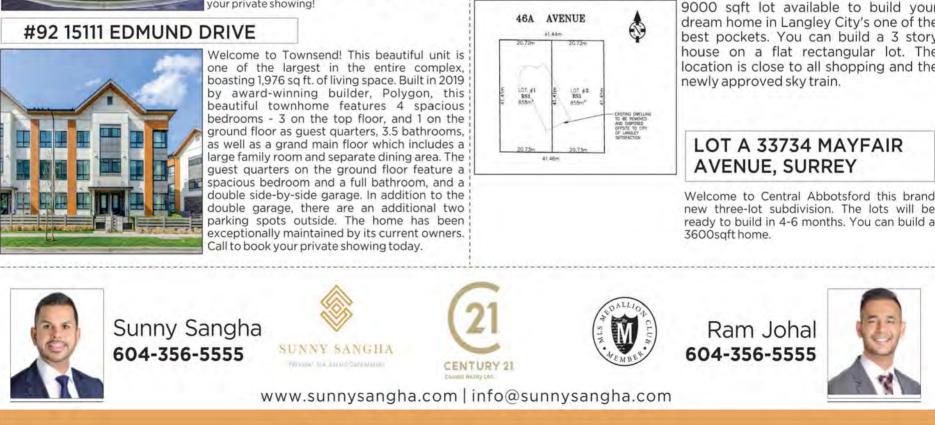
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#### 103 19835 64 AVE, LANGLEY



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3 BED • 1 BATH • 2,316 SF

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\$1,199,000



\$599,000

3 BED • 1 BATH • 1,155 SF

Investor's Alert! Updated Home on a 7280 Sq. Feet Lot with a 70 feet wide front with 3 Bedrooms & 1 Washroom in Boliver Heights. Good condition for Living now & Build later. Roof was done in 2016. Full exposure for lot of natural light with a huge backyard. Very close to Guildford Mall, T&T Super Market & Walmart. Easy Access to Highway 1. The Best thing is that this property comes with a Back Lane Access.

\$1,399,000

# 103 6299 144 ST, SURREY

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Welcome to Your Future dream Home in the most desired neighbourhood Sullivan Station! This Beautiful & Well kept 3 Bedroom 3 Washroom Townhome features with a good size Living Room & dining Room with 9' High Ceiling. Living Room directly walks in to fenced backyard. Open Concept Kitchen with Granite Countertops. Generous sized Bedrooms on top floor with Master ensuite. Double tandem Garage with lot of cabinets for storage. Lots of Visitor Parkings Nearby. Amenities include a 7800 sqft club house with OUTDOOR POOL, sauna/hot tub, yoga studio, 2 guest suites & much more. Very Close to shopping, transit, Highway 10, Bell Center.

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SATURDAY JAN 21, 2023 A23



## Dr. J.Das's Death is a Huge Loss to Interfaith and Spiritual Community

#### Acharya S.P.Dwivedi

Dr J. Das's enormous contribution to interfaith and spirituality is well known. His death on December 30,2022 is a huge loss to his family members but more to interfaith and spiritual community.

I have known Dr. Das for about forty years. I met him first at the INCA conference in 1985 in Winnipeg, and when moved from Calgary to Surrey in 1995, came in close contact with him. Together we organized and participated in many interfaith, peace conferences, seminars, workshops, and group -prayers. We were the founding members of the first Interfaith Clergy Association in the world in year 1998.

His life journey started from the remote village Coghlan Bush in British Guiana. He was born in 1931 and brought up in a farmer's family. His ancestors came from eastern Utter Pradesh, India. He worked in planting paddy seedlings, harvesting, and threshing. We should not forget that Dr Das was a true boy of village and son of sadhu/sage. He carried with him, all along his life, the village trademarks of hard work, simplicity, truthfulness, and respect for labour.

His father Sri Rambali Dass taught him the lessons of spirituality, oneness of human race, vegetarianism, non-violence, and Kabir philosophy which were later mastered by him. Undoubtedly, he has expanded and strengthened them to new heights.

He joined the MD degree programme of UBC in 1955 and completed it in 1963. He started his general medical practice in Delta in 1963 and continued his practice till retirement in the year 2000. During his medical practice, he carried sincerely the



four attributes of doctor- ability, affability, availability, and adaptability.

Dr. Das was a passionate seeker of knowledge. He has had thorough understanding and grasp of religions, spirituality, mysticism, global social and political issues. He promoted Kabir's philosophy extensively. According to him that philosophy is still relevant to the modern world, which is trapped in violence, religious cynicism, greed, racial biases, and gender prejudices.

He wrote comprehensive commentaries on Kabir's Bijak, and got it published in volume1(1998), vol.2 (2005), vol.3 (2014) and "The complete Bijak" in 2015. Dr. Das published his memoir "Doctor by Chance and Mystic by Choice" in 2020, and I participated fortunately in the launch of these books.

He wrote regularly for the "The Linkpaper". Dr. Das denounced decadence of traditional vocabulary and enriched the treasury of diction by using ordinary and common words thus came closer to readers. He prepared a series of documentary film on interfaith of Metro Vancouver.

Dr. Das gave speeches, radiotelevision interviews, wrote in news papers and journals on Kabir's philosophy widely. He was held as a Dharmadhikari of Kabir's order for his precious contribution for furthering globally Kabir's philosophy. He published a journal named "Kabir's Voice" and established "Kabir Center" in Surrey to cultivate the spirituality of Sant Kabir and helped financially Torontonians of Kabir Center. He was recognized and honoured by various religious, cultural, and literary organizations for his scholarly contributions around the world.

Generally, it can be said that a spiritual crisis happens when person finds himself or herself trapped in an outmoded -suffocating network of values, and conceptions. World is surprisingly overloaded with religions. Here comes Dr. Das with his unique offer of spirituality, oneness of all, Sahaj yoga, meditation, and peace.

Dr Das did not only preach philosophy of Kabir but also practiced it. He will be remembered for his exemplary simple life tyle, humbleness and spirituality. We celebrate his great contribution to humanity.

## **Warning Against Home Title Fraud**

The Better Business Bureau (BBB) serving Mainland BC is warning the public about home title fraud, which happens when someone obtains the title to your property and changes ownership from your information to theirs by using fake identification and forged signatures.

The scary part is, you may not even realize it has happened until it's too late. In fact, it has already occurred twice in Ontario this month.

Scammers Strike in Toronto

In early January, two homeowners returned from working outside of Canada for several months only to discover that their property had been sold without their knowledge by people using fake identities, according to Toronto Police.

Last week, CBC News report-

ed on a similar close call. Luckily, a Toronto family was able to stop an attempted scam where someone used a fake identity to rent the home in the first place, and subsequently posed as the 95-year-old homeowner to convince real estate agents to list the home for sale. The scammers received offers as high as \$1.9 million before the owners found out and stopped the sale. "Title fraud has been a threat to the Canadian real estate industry and is a potential risk for every property," says President and CEO Simone Lis, for BBB serving Mainland BC.

"The best thing you can do is take proper precautions to avoid falling into this scam, and know what to do if it happens to you."

Here are five tips on how to protect yourself: Consider getting title insurance. Most title insurance policies protect the homeowner from risks their property could carry, including fraud. In a situation where a potential buyer purchases a property owned by fraudsters, title insurance could be the original homeowners only saving grace. The fraudulent title is not legally binding,

Continued on page 30









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#### **NEWS**

## **Surrey Board of Trade Urges Businesses to Participate in 2023 City Budget Survey**

The City of Surrey for the first time has launched a series of in-person engagements to seek feedback ahead of the 2023 budget process to hear the community's priorities and what's important to them. Feedback collected from open houses and an online survey will be used to help them prepare a draft budget for review by the Finance Committee prior to Council's adoption of the budget. "I attended the city budget open house on January 18 at the South Surrey Recreation Centre, and my key message was that the burden of taxation on business needs to stop," said Anita Huberman, President & CEO, Surrey Board of Trade.

"Businesses are exhausted with increasing taxation, rising costs and labour shortages. The City of Surrey, with ideas from the business community, needs to look at ways to generate revenue to build the needed infrastructure to be ready to be BC's largest city."

"We look forward to seeing this engagement begin earlier later this year for the 2024 budget so that it is ready for the new year. Further we would like to see the engagement grow to be easily accessible to all areas of Surrey, including Fleetwood and Cloverdale."

The Surrey Board of Trade urges businesses and their staff to participate in the online survey and in the final city budget consultations taking place on:

Thursday, January 19 at Newton Recreation Centre from 4pm 7pm



Saturday, January 21 at North Surrey Sport & Ice Complex from 10am-3pm

The engagement sessions and survey input focus on the general operating and capital program component of the 2023 Five-Year (2023-2027) Financial Plan. The third budget component, which addresses utilities and other self-funded programs, proceeds directly to the Finance Committee for review and subsequent public hearing, and ultimately, Council consideration and adoption.

The Surrey Board of Trade monitors public sector spending to maximize productivity in the economy and encourage growth in the private sector. The City Budget is important as we evaluate whether Surrey's tax rates are conducive for business growth, retention, and infrastructure investments. We need to ensure that businesses will not face a significant hit on their property tax bills in 2023, as they have experienced in the past four years.

# **SFU's Newest Innovation Space Opens In Downtown Surrey**

Simon Fraser Universi-ty (SFU) officially opened their Innovation Plaza, home to the Quantum Algorithms Institute (QAI) in Surrey.

Funded by the Federal Government's Pacific Economic Development Agency, SFU and QAI, this newly-renovated, state-ofthe-art, physical hub will facilitate engagement activities between industry and academia promoting collaboration, research, and training to prepare students for sought-after careers in emerging technologies.

Innovation Plaza will also include the BC Centre for Agritech Innovation (BC CAI), and Coast Capital Venture Connection, part of the Charles Chang Institute for Entrepreneurship.

"The space will facilitate collaborations between academia. government and industry, accelerate innovation and benefit students preparing for sought-after careers in these burgeoning fields," said SFU President Joy Johnson.

The SFU Innovation Plaza, a newly-renovated space that is part of SFU's Surrey campus, is home to the Quantum Algorithms Institute and the B.C. Centre for Agritech Innovation which are now open and operating.

The plaza is a state-of-the-art physical hub that consists of a mix of offices and open seating, meeting rooms and classroom space that overlook the downtown core and the adjacent main campus.

The space is also home to Coast



Capital Venture Connection, part of SFU's Charles Chang Institute for Entrepreneurship, SFU's longest-running entrepreneurship program, and hosts an office of the National Research Council (NRC) Industrial Research Assistance program.

Renovations of the space were part of more than \$2 million from the federal government's Pacific Economic Development Canada (PacifiCan), \$1.5 million from SFU and \$500,000 from the B.C. Government's Quantum Algorithms Institute funding.

"The organizations that will fill the quantum computing and agritech clusters at SFU are critical to ensuring B.C. has a leading-edge advantage in agriculture, technology, entrepreneurship and so much more. The knowledge concentrated here will help us all as we move forward with the adoption of new industry innovations that improve lives for British Columbians, and contribute to clean and inclusive growth in a sustainable economy." Said B.C. Minister of Forests, Bruce Ralston.



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Priyanka Chopra glitters in gold on London night out, fans call her 'Desi Cleopatra'

ne of the most successful actors of her generation, Priyanka Chopra has achieved unparalleled fame and adulation, not just in the country, but all across the world. The 40-year-old, who spends most of her time in Los Angeles with husband Nick Jonas and daughter Malti, was recently seen on a work trip to London.

The actor, who definitely believes in the dictum, work hard, party harder, was seen having a ball on her work cum leisure trip as she shared multiple pics of her night out. In one of the pics, the diva was seen wearing a short purple dress, along with an overcoat, stockings and heels. She also carried a small bag, as she posted a mirror selfie of her look on her IG stories.

Now, some fan pages have shared some other pics of the Don actor, as she was seen stepping out in a strapless golden dress with a high slit. The actor also went all out wearing big, chunky earrings and stilettos, while also donning a shimmery bracelet. She stuck to the classic red lips and left her hair loose for the occasion. Considering how cold the UK capital is this time of

the year, the actor also carried a white overcoat that she draped casually over her shoulders. Priyanka Chopra was seen visiting India last year after a long time. On the work front, she will soon be seen in Farhan Akhtar's Le Jee

Zaraa with Alia Bhatt and Katrina Kaif.

# **Arjun Kapoor** calls Malaika Arora "My biggest cheerleader"

 $\mathbf{B}^{\mathrm{ollywood}}_{\mathrm{social}}$  diva Malaika Arora, on Thursday, took to her social media and praised her boyfriend Arjun Kapoor's upcoming film 'Kuttey'. Taking to Instagram, Malaika shared a picture on her story which she captioned, "Wat a cracker of a film N fab performances. Watch it in a cinema near you." Her boyfriend, Arjun shared the picture on his Instagram story and wrote, "My biggest cheerleader."

Malaika and Arjun have been dating for quite some time now. However, it was not until a couple of years ago that both decided to make their relationship public.

Even after all the social media trolling because of the 12year age gap between them, Malaika and Arjun never fail to shower on each other on social media.

'Kuttey' marks the directorial debut of Vishal Bhardwaj's son Aasman Bhardwaj. It stars Arjun Kapoor, Tabu, Radhika Madan, Konkona Sensharma, and Naseeruddin Shah and is all set to hit the theatres on

January 13, 2023. On receiving overwhelming responses over the trailer, Arjun earlier said, "It is really encouraging to see that people, media and the industry has loved the trailer of Kuttey and is excited to see me in this film. I have realised that people want to see me push myself to deliver a credible performance. It happened with me in Sandeep Aur Pinky Faraar and I can see the same love coming back to

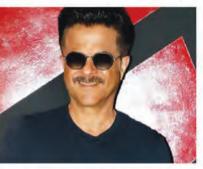
me again with Kuttey trailer." Meanwhile, Arjun will also be seen in an upcoming thriller film 'The Ladykiller' alongside Bhumi Pednekar and an untitled romantic comedy film opposite Bhumi Pednekar and Rakul Preet Singh in his

#### Anil Kapoor says it's become 'tougher' to impress audience after decades in films

performances. Watch it

kitty.

 ${f B}^{
m ollywood}$  diva Malaika Arora, on Thursday, took to her social media and praised her boyfriend Arjun Kapoor's upcoming film 'Kuttey'.Taking to Instagram, Malaika shared a picture on her story which she captioned, "Wat a cracker of a film N fab



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## Sushant Singh Rajput's sister **Priyanka Singh recalls fond** memories of him



Actor Sushant Singh Rajput's sister, Priyanka Singh, took to her Twitter handle and shared a throwback picture from her wedding day. On the occasion of her wedding anniversary, she fondly revisited her memories with the late actor. Her post arrived two days prior to Sushant's birth

anniversary. The photo featured Sushant Singh Rajput in an all-black kurta-pyjama look during a ritual at the wedding ceremony. Next to him stood his sister Priyanka and her husband. Sharing the photo, Priyanka wrote,

"This date 11 years back you graced Sid's n mine Union. Always beside us... still feel You that much around even today, each day, my Eternal Sunshine Sushant but our Trident as you called us, is broken!"

Soon after she shared the post, fans extended support to her. One of them commented, "Stay Blessed always.

Sushant bhai will always be around you and everyone who loves him." "He is with you always di in your heart, through your thoughts, by footsteps. Don't leave dat smile, d dimple on your cheeks is our Sushant loads of love n strength." Someone also

said, "Thank you for sharing another gem of our Eternal Sunshine Sushant. He is forever with us like a guiding star. Many kids have chosen him to be their role model and that itself should have far fetching impact on society."

# **Academy Member And Oscar Winner Jessica Chastain On RRR**

Mumbai: SS Rajamouli's magnum his third appearance as the host of the prestigious event. in the West. After garnering several US awards and nominations, and being short-

RRR also featured in the Letterboxd review of 2022. The film's team wrote on



listed in the Best Original Song category for Oscars 2023, the movie on Friday made it to the BAFTA 2023 longlist in the Film Not in the English Language category. Also, Oscar winner Jessica

Chastain has shared her views about the movie. Jessica is also an Academy member who can vote for the Oscars.

Taking to Twitter, Jessica wrote, "Watching this film was such a party ." She reposted a video of the song "Naatu Naatu" from the movie.

The 95th Oscars will be held live in Los Angeles' Dolby Theatre on March 12. Popular talk show host Jimmy Kimmel will make Twitter, "It's amazing to see #RRR featured in one of the biggest and most genuine audience feedback websites @Letterboxd in their 2022 year-end review. Winning fans across the globe is pure bliss. "RRR-Movie."

SS Rajamouli was also recently honoured with the Best Director award for RRR at the New York Film Critics Circle Awards 2022. After accepting the award, Rajamouli thanked the jury and the audience for supporting his film. "You have made a lot of people take notice of a small film in South of India."

Rajamouli, Ram Charan and Jr NTR will also be attending the 2023 Golden Globe Awards in Los Angeles on January 11. While RR has been nominated in the Best Foreign Film category, its song "Naatu Naatu" has been nominated in the Best Original Song category.

**Pakistani Actress** Sadia Khan denies rumours of dating Aryan Khan after their photo goes viral,

#### calls them 'baseless

few days back, a picture of Aryan Khan with Pakistani actor Sadia Khan went viral on the internet as the two were spotted at new year celebrations in Dubai. Soon after the picture went viral, rumours spread like fire that Aryan and Sadia are dating.

But now, Sadia has come clean on these rumours and absolutely denied them. The actress spoke to a UAE publication, City Times and said that, it's strange that people are making up stories about Aryan and her without knowing the full picture. She further added that there needs to be a limit to all that goes

#### around in the name of news.

She further added that just because they were clicked in a picture together, doesn't mean they're dating. They spoke to each other and there were many others in the picture who uploaded them but somehow only her picture is floating around. The actress called these rumours 'baseless' and said she denies all of them. Sadia expressed that Aryan is a very sweet and extremely well-mannered boy hence these rumours should stop.

While Aryan was seen partying with friends in Dubai, ringing in the new year, he's set to begin his directorial debut this year. He had announced a while ago that he has finished scripting for his debut directorial. The project is produced by Shah Rukh Khan's production company.

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# **BTS' J-Hope Announces First Solo Documentary**

 $B^{\rm TS}$  member J-Hope becomes the first member of the k-pop group to have his solo documentary. On Friday, he announced the news of his documentary, titled J-Hope In the Box, inspired by first solo debut album. It will stream globally on fan community Weverse and Disney+ Hotstar on February 17.

The documentary will give fans a glimpse of behind-the-scenes from J-Hope's Jack In The Box during its making. It will also include the star-studded listening party for the album alongside J-Hope's performance at Lollapalooza last year. He is the first Korean artist to ever headline the popular music festival of the US.

Sharing the news on Twitter, BTS' official account unveiled teaser poster image. It featured J-Hope jumping in the air in a funky avatar. Phrases such as 'Let's Hope,' 'Let's Jump' and 'Let's Burn' were written on the poster image. The documentary will be available

for pre-order on February 10, one week before the release. Reacting to the news, a fan wrote on Twitter, "Just when I am

about to give up my subscription for Disney plus, BTS makes me stay Yeayyyyy!!!

Super super excited for this one!" "Releasing a day before his birthday I'm so excited for this documentary!," added another one. Someone else also tweeted, "Just in time for Hobi day!"

BTS consists of RM, Jin, SUGA, J-hope, Jimin, V and Jung Kook. J-Hope, also known as Jung Ho Seok, was the third member to join BTS. He will be next seen attending the Paris Fashion Week. Earlier this week. he was snapped arriving at Incheon airport with Jimin who will be attending the fest for the first time. While Jimin is the global



ambassador of Dior, Hobi has been invited to Louis Vuitton's show once again.

Last year J-Hope made his debut with his solo album, Jack In The Box, which was a huge success. It released in July 2022 and topped the iTunes Top Album chart over 49 countries. Besides this, he also collaborated with rapper Crush for single, Rush Hour.

J-Hope also made news in the past with his energetic performance at MAMA Awards 2022 and Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve hosted by Ryan Seacrest.

## **Alec Baldwin To Face Charges Of Involuntary Manslaughter For Rust Shooting Case, Could Face 5 Years of Prison Sentence**

Hollywood actor Alec Baldwin will be facing criminal charges in the fatal on-set shooting of cinematographer Halyna Hutchins. He will be charged with the involuntary manslaughter in her death. The incident took place during a rehearsal of the western film Rust, in October 2021.

Alec Baldwin had fired the shot that killed Halyna Hutchins during the preparation of a scene inside the

church building of the Bonanza Creek Ranch near Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA. The armourer, Hannah Gutierrez Reed, had loaded the weapon, who will also be charged with the involuntary manslaughter over the shooting. The charges carry a mandatory minimum sentence of five years. Meanwhile, David Halls, who worked as the production's assistant director, has also agreed to plead guilty to a misdemean-



or charge of negligent use of a deadly weapon and will spend six months serving the period of probation.

Mary Carmack-Altwies, who serves as the First Judicial District Attorney in Santa Fe, announced the charges in a statement on Thursday. "After a thorough review of the evidence and the laws of the state of New Mexico, I have determined that there is sufficient evidence to file criminal charges against

Alec Baldwin and other members of the 'Rust' film crew. On my watch, no one is above the law, and everyone deserves justice." Mary said as she mentioned the charges in her statement and on social media.

As reported by Variety, the special prosecutor appointed by Mary Carmack-Altwies, Andrea Reeb, to oversee the case, said "If any one of these three people - Alec Baldwin, Hannah Gutierrez Reed or David Halls - had done their

job, Halyna Hutchins would be alive today." Meanwhile, Alec Baldwin has earlier said that he was told by the crew that the gun was not loaded. His attorney Luke Nikas, said in a statement his client "had no reason to believe there was a live bullet in the gun" on the day the cinematographer was killed, and went on to condemn the charges pressed against the actor as "a terrible miscarriage of justice."

# **BTS' Suga recalls** 'scary' rumours of disbandment: 'Why is the world telling us to take a permanent break?"

**B**TS member Suga welcomed Big Bang's Taeyang in the new episode of his drinking show, Suchwita. During the conversation, Suga talked about his fellow group member Park Jimin who recently collaborated with Taeyang in their music video, Vibe. He also revealed how he felt when rumours of BTS' disbandment spread after they announced their break. Suga aka Min Yoon Gi went on to talk about Jimin and Taeyang's Vibe on the show and said, "Jimin



practised really hard. I was really surprised. He was at the practice studio, I would come and watch. He gets muscle cramps easily, but he said that he would practice no matter what." "Jimin works so hard until he gets it right. Even I couldn't keep up with him," added Taeyang. During the discussion, Suga also lauded Jungkook and called him a 'genius. "I am not saying he doesn't work hard but he has a lot of natural talent," said Suga.

Last year, BTS announced their hiatus to focus on solo careers. Their sudden announcement left many wondering if the team had broken up for good. Recalling the time, Suga said in his show, "We look coolest as a team...I really love them so much. Since I'm a part of it, I love BTS as a fan as well. We're brothers. I think it was in June, some content of us just drinking together was aired. People said the team was breaking up and going on hiatus. It wasn't like that at all, we were just going on a break, due to unavoidable reasons. But when people were saying those things, the whole situation felt so scary. Why is the world telling us to take a permanent break? We are still active."

BTS consist of RM, Jin, SUGA, J-hope, Jimin, V and Jung Kook. With members now focusing on solo projects, Jimin will soon release his full solo album after the success of Vibe. Member Jin is currently serving in the South Korean army and others will follow soon, as per their respective timelines. They are estimated to be back as a whole group some times around 2025.

#### Continued from Page 07 **Respiratory Virus**

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**Continued from Page 24** 

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card statements regularly. Know when your bills are due. One hint to sense potential identity theft is when you stop receiving certain bills. This can happen because scammers have changed the address you have associated with your bank account or credit card. If bills don't arrive on time, follow up with your creditors. Another red flag is debt collectors contacting you about debts that are not yours.

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From Jan. 1-7, 2023, there were 661 new cases of COVID-19 reported. To date, there have been 24 confirmed cases of the XBB 1.5 variant detected.

The respiratory illness season is expected to continue until March 2023. In addition to following the public health guidance below, people are urged to get vaccinated against influenza and COVID-19:

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· Follow proper respiratory etiquette, such as covering coughs.

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