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1 dead, 3 others seriously wounded in west-end Toronto shooting

TORONTO — A 24-year-old man is dead, and three other men are in hospital after a shooting in Etobicoke Sunday afternoon.

Toronto police were called to an apartment complex in the area of Willowridge Road and Eglington Avenue West, west of Martin Grove Road, just before 2:30 p.m. for reports of shots fired.

Insp. Michael Williams said unknown individuals driving a dark sedan entered the complex's residential, approached two vehicles — a Toyota Camry and a Mercedes Benz — parked in front of 22 Willowridge Road, and opened fire at the occupants inside those vehicles.

He said approximately 100 shots were fired. The suspects then fled the scene in an unknown direction.

"From the sounds of things, it was very confusing even for anybody that would have seen what took place as vehicles and people running in all directions, quite chaotic," Williams said.

When officers arrived, they located one of the victims in the roadblock near the Mercedes while two others were fired collapsed down the street near Ridgegrove Drive.

Williams said they found a total of four male victims in their late 20s and early 30s suffering from gunshot wounds. Police initially said three were the victims.

All four were transported to the



hospital. Williams said one of the victims was later pronounced dead.

Of the three victims who remain in hospital, one is in life-threatening condition, Williams said. The other two men have serious but non-life-threatening injuries.

The homicide unit is taking over the investigation.

When asked if the incident was targeted, Williams said it is too early in the investigation to determine that, but homicide detectives will look into it.

"It doesn't appear to be random. But again, we can't jump to any kind of conclusion at this point," he said.

"Things that we're open to and looking at is how many shooters were involved. Was there an exchange of gunfire?"

Williams said the shooting was concerning and unacceptable, given that it was a busy afternoon.

"It's a sunny day. And as much as it's the pandemic and we're on lockdown, I'm sure it was a busy area with lots of people walking around," he said.

Williams noted that officers will be at the scene for approximately 24 to 48 hours as they canvass for witnesses, cellphone and dashcam videos that could help in the investigation.

No suspect information has been released.

"Please help us piece together what took place today," he said, appealing to anyone with information to contact 23 Division, homicide investigators, or Crime Stoppers anonymously.

Ontario could reopen outdoor recreational amenities before stay-at-home order expires, health minister says

TORONTO — Health Minister Christine Elliott says that her government will reopen recreational amenities "on or before June 2" when the current stay-at-home order is set to expire.

The Ford government decided to close all recreational amenities back on April 16 amid a devastating third wave of COVID-19 pandemic.

The decision upset a number of epidemiologists and public experts who have consistently argued that the closures have done more harm than good.

Elliott's comments on Monday come in the wake of a new report from a group of researchers that calls on the Ford government to immediately "prioritize outdoor activities for children and youth" in order to help mitigate some of the "devastating" impacts that pandemic-related restrictions have had on their health and well-being.

The report, prepared by researchers at The Hospital for Sick Children, the Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work at the University of Toronto and Native Child and Family Services Toronto, argues that the pandemic has had a "traumatic effect" on the physical and mental health of children as it has deprived them of "important social, emotional and physical interactions."

The report says that while "structured physical activity" in schools and other organized settings would be ideal, there is also value in allowing children to participate in unstructured recreational activities in small groups so long as they are able to practice physical distancing.

"The science is clear that the risk of outdoor transmission of COVID-19 is

substantially lower than indoor transmission, especially with appropriate distancing and personal protective equipment (PPE). Therefore, there is an urgent need to prioritize outdoor activities for children and youth to begin to mitigate the devastating and inequitable effects of pandemic-related restrictions on their health and well-being, and to support an active recovery for children, youth and their families," the researchers say.

The researchers say that their report should serve as a "call to action" with the goal being to "facilitate increased activity levels among children and youth during and after the pandemic, with a focus on outdoor activity."

They make dozens of recommendations in total but the key ones include "restarting and expanding organized sports and activities and outdoor community camps" and reopening recreational amenities, including sports fields, pools and camping spaces.

"Ontario cannot afford to ignore the increasing consequences of pandemic restrictions on the health and well-being of children and youth," the researchers say.

Premier Doug Ford did indicate to reporters over the weekend that summer camps would be permitted to open this year, though he did not provide any additional details.

Ontario not ready to lift stay-at-home order and should extend lockdown, OMA says



Ontario is not ready to lift the stay-at-home order and should extend the current lockdown measures past May 20, the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) says.

The OMA said the number of new COVID-19 cases daily, along with the current number of people in hospital, makes it unsafe to lift restrictions at this time.

The organization does believe though that some restrictions on outdoor recreational activities, like golf, tennis and basketball, should be lifted to improve people's mental and physical health.

"We all want the third wave to be the last wave," OMA President Dr. Samantha Hill said in a statement on Wednesday. "No one wants to start lifting restrictions too soon, only to find the virus spreading again and we have to go back into lockdown."

Hill said that extending the stay-at-home order past May 20 will increase the likelihood that Ontarians can enjoy a summer with less restrictions in place.

She also said it would lead to a "seasonal" fall in Ontario.

The OMA said the length the lockdown needs to be extended depends on a variety of factors, including how many people are vaccinated and when.

The organization said even when Ontario does start to reopen safely, it will take "weeks, and in some cases, months" before case counts start to fall significantly.

"The OMA believes that extending lockdown measures will ensure Ontario can reopen without having to re-impose them."

"People are tired of restrictions being lifted only to be put in place again a few weeks later," OMA CEO Allan O'Dette said. "It is hard on the economy and hard on people's livelihoods and mental health."

Earlier this week, Health Minister Christine Elliott hinted the stay-at-home order would be extended past May 20.

"The province did not say when that announcement will be made. Chief Medical Officer of Health Dr. David Williams said this week that Ontario would need to see daily COVID-19 case counts below 1,000 in order to significantly loosen restrictions.

"We do not want a fourth wave," Williams said at the time. "Slow and steady and stay open. That's our goal."

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Canada to get 4.5M vaccine doses as questions swirl around immunization effort

OTTAWA — Canada is set to receive a large infusion of COVID-19 vaccine this week, even as questions swirl around how the immunization drive will be affected by the sudden departure of the man tasked with overseeing it.

The federal government says it expects around 4.5 million doses to arrive this week thanks to planned deliveries from Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna.

Pfizer and BioNTech had been scheduled to deliver around 2 million doses this week as their vaccines continue to flow into Canada on a regular basis after early shipments in February and March.

But the federal government says the two companies will ship the additional 1.4 million shots, which were originally slated to land next week but are now expected to arrive before the upcoming holiday



weekend.

Moderna is also expected to deliver 1.1 million doses this week.

The large influx comes as the Liberal government faces questions about who will now lead the vaccination campaign after Maj.-Gen. Dany Fortin was sidelined suddenly on Friday and resigned from his

about the government's plan for the Oxford-AstraZeneca or Johnson and Johnson vaccines.

More than 655,000 shots of AstraZeneca arrived through the global vaccine-sharing initiative known as COVAX on Thursday, but most provinces have hesitantly passed their use for first doses amid supply issues and the potential risk of new blood clots.

As a result, the federal government has yet to distribute those shots to the provinces, though Ottawa says it expects to still receive another 1 million doses by the end of June.

About 2.16 million Canadians had received one or two AstraZeneca shots by May 8, and those additional doses could be used to give those people a second jab.

Health Canada also continues to review the quality of 300,000 Johnson and Johnson shots that were delivered last month, but has yet to be distributed.

The doses have been held back over concerns of possible tailoring at a Baltimore production facility.

Health Canada chief medical adviser Dr. Stephen Sharma told CTV on Sunday that it could be weeks before the review is complete.

Why Canada's big bets on delaying, mixing doses of COVID-19 vaccines could pay off

While the typical approach for COVID-19 vaccinations is using the same brand for each dose, given at specific intervals, Canada has been exploring mixing doses on top of delaying second shots up to four weeks — two big bets that could pay off.

Before vaccine shipments started ramping up, Canada's National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) issued a bold recommendation to delay second doses well beyond manufacturing guidelines to a maximum of four months.

The move sparked criticism that Canada was engaged in a "population level experiment," with concerns ranging from a lack of data, to a growing body of research suggesting it's not the safest approach for immunocompromised and older adults.

Layover on that controversial move are more recent shifts toward staling doses — including offering up an mRNA-based option, from Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna, to some Canadians who have already gotten a first shot of AstraZeneca-Oxford.

According to multiple vaccine experts, these moves may seem overcautious on the surface, but are rooted in decades of science, backed up by emerging research, and could be preventing COVID-19 deaths at a time when Canada has been struggling to bring in enough vaccines from abroad.

"I think having the single dose strategy, which was put forth by our Canadian public health agencies, has really saved a lot of lives and has been really instrumental and will be important for us getting back to a more normal life," said Alyson Kelvin, a vaccinologist with the University of Saskatchewan's Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO).

Mixing doses could also wind up being a useful approach in the months ahead, according to Dr. Christopher Labos, a Montreal-based cardiologist and epidemiologist.

"Especially because we want people to get their second doses," he said. "And if supply issues continue to be a problem, we don't want to be pushing second doses back waiting for vaccine supply to coalesce again."



Delaying doses can lead to 'better' immune response.

When it comes to Canada's unique approach to delaying doses, vaccine experts stressed that while it stayed significantly from the shorter schedule of the clinical trials, it falls in line with the broader body of vaccine science.

Typically giving a bit more time between a first vaccine dose and the second vaccine dose "really leads to a better overall immune response, and protection from whatever pathogen the vaccine was made against," noted Kelvin.

The exact guidelines for various COVID-19 vaccines vary, but one thing is common: the manufacturer's dosing schedules specify tight timelines, including two shots just 21 days apart for Pfizer, and two shots a minimum of four weeks apart and no longer than 12 weeks for AstraZeneca.

While the manufacturers recommend sticking with the dosing intervals from clinical trials, those schedules were based on quickly developing safe and effective vaccines during a global health crisis, not to figure out the best possible time frame between doses, Kelvin said.

On Friday, news broke that a U.K. study showed the Pfizer vaccine generates antibody responses 3.5 times larger in older people when a second dose was delayed to 12 weeks after the first — offering an early hint that a delay may actually offer more protection. More research is still needed.

Dr. Danuta Skowronski of the BC Centre for Disease Control, whose research helped guide Canada's decision to extend the interval between COVID-19 vaccine shots,

Several experts stressed a mixing-doses approach could be helpful given Canada's situation, and isn't that unusual for other vaccines.

"Certainly mixing and matching vaccine types is not unprecedented," noted Matthew Miller, an associate professor of infectious diseases and immunology at McMaster University in Hamilton, who is also affiliated with NACI but not speaking on the advisory body's behalf.

"It's just that the nature of the situation here is that we're having to make these decisions based on evolving evidence in the context of an unprecedented public health emergency."

Azraad D. Shah, for instance, can come from a variety of sources, meaning people could be getting a different brand or form of vaccine technology each year. Same with the shingles vaccine, Miller said, which had one formulation in its first generation while a different formulation was used for a later, more effective dose.

"Prior to this, nobody would actually ask, 'who made my vaccine,' you would just go for a flu vaccine," said Labos. "And nobody seemed to realize that there were multiple organizations making different types of flu vaccines, and they were being used in different segments of the population — people were relatively oblivious to this entire issue."

He also noted that preliminary results from a U.K. study suggest using different vaccines for different doses could even offer a "better immune response."

"Four months is probably the outside limit; I don't think anybody's going to suggest that we push it much beyond that," he said.

"The sweet spot probably is somewhere between three weeks to three months interval."

Different vaccines for different doses aren't unprecedented.

For Canadians already wary of a potential months-long delay between doses, the notion of mixing brands — again, an approach not studied in the initial clinical trials — might also raise questions.

Even so, various provinces are already going that route, or exploring mixed dosing strategies for the future, given the varying levels of supply coming from different manufacturers and ongoing concern over rare-but-serious blood clot risks tied to the AstraZeneca vaccine.

The condition, known as vaccine-induced immune thrombotic thrombocytopenia (VITT), has been reported 28 times across Canada out of more than 2.5 million AstraZeneca doses administered, according to federal public health data, including four deaths.

Housing market slowed down in April, but average price still rising at record pace

Canada's red-hot housing market showed small signs of cooling down in April, even as the average selling price is up by nearly half from the lows it hit in the early days of the pandemic.

The Canadian Real Estate Association said Monday the number of homes sold in April fell by 12.5 per cent compared to the previous month's level, which was the lowest month ever for Realtors.

The group that represents Canadian Realtors says sales were down in 85 per cent of all markets across the country, including just about everywhere in Ontario and British Columbia.

"While housing markets across Canada remain very active, there is growing evidence that some of the extreme inflation of the last year is beginning to unwind, which is what everyone wants to see happen," CREA chair Cliff Stevenson said.

Real estate has been on fire for the

past year as the COVID-19 pandemic has peaked interest rates to record lows. That, coupled with Canadians being cooped up for months on end, has had the effect of making some buyers willing to pay whatever it takes to get the home they want.

That's certainly been what prospective homebuyer Josh Klekovic has experienced. He and his wife have been looking for a home near where they live in Pitt Meadows, B.C., for months now, but despite a six-figure down payment, they're still waiting for the market to open up.

"They've offered above asking on a number of properties but they keep getting outbid. We were just shocked at just how much people are spending and buying and going into debt," he told CBC News in an interview.

Prime-time going up at a faster pace than they can add to their down payment, he said. "We thought things would go down or cool off

[but] it went the opposite way [in the pandemic]."

COVID-19 has indeed thrown the usual seasonal patterns of Canadian real estate out the window.

The housing market typically starts off the year slowly before heating up as the weather improves. By the end of the summer, sales tend to slow down as the school year begins, before cooling down to end the year again.

But COVID-19 shutdowns in the early days of the pandemic caused sales to plummet in March and April 2020 before exploding once things started reopening in May.

In any other year, sales would be higher in April compared to March, but March 2021 was the busiest month for real estate on record. So April's slowdown could mark a change in direction — or a big, TD Bank economist Rishi Sandhu said.

"More months of information are required to assess whether the market

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Emraan Hashmi opens up on Mukesh Bhatt and Mahesh Bhatt's professional split



Brothers Mukesh Bhatt and Mahesh Bhatt have made films over three decades together under the banner of Vishesh Films. However, earlier this year, the brothers went their separate ways professionally. Actor Emraan Hashmi who has worked with both the Bhatt brothers in multiple films recently opened up about the split.

Together to do a film. Talking further about the split he said that all good things come to an end and that equations change and nothing is permanent. However, Hashmi said that he has no knowledge of what went down between the Bhatt brothers.

Priyanka Chopra's husband Nick Jonas suffers injury during shoot

Priyanka Chopra's husband Nick Jonas was rushed to the hospital after he suffered an injury during a recent shoot. According to TMZ, Nick Jonas was shooting for a new show when he suffered an injury on the sets on late Saturday night. While the nature of the accident or its severity is not known, the popular singer was reportedly rushed to a nearby hospital in an ambulance. Details of Nick Jonas' shoot are being kept under wraps.

Missing her man, Priyanka Chopra had shared a happy memory with Nick Jonas last month. Sharing a wacky picture on Instagram, PC had captioned it, "Miss you so much my." Nick Jonas, who recently launched his Spotify album, is currently in Los Angeles where he was expected to begin shoot for his TV show from Monday. While Priyanka Chopra is in London, working on her next OTT venture. She has been in London since a long time now, where she wrapped the shoot of her next Hollywood biggie

West Indies to host Pakistan, South Africa, Australia

ST JOHN'S: West Indies will prepare for the defence of their Twenty20 World Cup crown with three home series between June and August against Pakistan, South Africa and Australia, Cricket West Indies (CWI) announced on Friday.

Over the course of three months, the West Indies will play four Tests and three One-Day Internationals but the main emphasis is on the 15 Twenty20 Internationals which form part of their preparation ahead of the World Cup which is scheduled to take place in India in October/November.

To host three international series back-to-back in five territories is unprecedented, and putting these fixtures together was an enormous Covid-related logistical challenge, said CWI chief executive officer Johnny Greig in a statement.

The Proteas, whose 2020 tour was also cancelled because of coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic, are due to arrive on June 1 and play two Tests in Curacao in St Lucia before travelling to St George's in Grenada for the five T20 Internationals. It is the first time that South Africa has played a bilateral series in the West Indies since 2010. Australia's white ball-only tour in July includes five Twenty20 Internationals in St Lucia and three day/night One-Day Internationals in Bridgetown, Barbados which will count towards the ICC ODI Super League and qualification for the 2023 ODI World Cup.

Pakistan play five Twenty20 Internationals in Bridgetown and Providence, Guyana and two Tests in Kingston, Jamaica in August.

Virat Kohli is the type of player you'd love to have on your team: Tim Paine

Virat Kohli seems to have left an indelible mark on Australian Test captain Tim Paine, who says he will always remember the Indian skipper for being the world's best batsman, capable of also getting under the opposition's skin with his competitiveness.

Kohli and Paine have had a fiery rivalry which goes back to India's 2018-19 tour of Australia. Their on-field spats were an interesting sub-plot during the historic showdown in which India became the first Asian country to win a Test series Down Under.

North Korea withdraw from World Cup qualification

SEOUL: The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) confirmed on Sunday that North Korea has pulled out of next month's qualifying tournament for the 2022 World Cup final in Qatar.

The Asian Football Confederation has today confirmed the withdrawal of the DPR Korea Football Association from the Asian Qualifiers for the 2022 World Cup Qatar 2022, the AFC said in a statement.

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Tensions flare at Israel and Palestinian demonstrations in Toronto, Montreal

Tensions ran high at competing demonstrations over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in both Montreal and Toronto this weekend. Police in Montreal confirmed they responded to a conflict that erupted between protesters and counter-protesters stalling in support of Israel near the city's downtown Sunday afternoon.



People were heard shouting "Free Palestine" and "no war from police, who are professional hitmen into the city." The pro-Israel rally comes one day after thousands attended a pro-Palestinian march in Montreal to demand an end to Israeli airstrikes over the Gaza Strip.

Meanwhile, police in Toronto say they've laid charges in connection with a pro-Palestinian demonstration that drew more than 5,000 people to Nathan Phillips Square outside City Hall on Sunday night. A 22-year-old man from an assault charge, while a 29-year-old man was charged with bringing a weapon to a public meeting.

Police say they're also investigating a separate alleged assault outside the square that was circulating on social media. A spokesperson confirmed it was connected to the demonstration but declined further details. The protests were sparked by five days of mayhem that left at least 145 Palestinians dead in Gaza and eight dead on the Israeli side. The violence, set off by Hamas firing a rocket into Israel on Monday, came after weeks of mounting tensions in contested Jerusalem.

Israel stepped up its assault and slammed the Gaza Strip with airstrikes Saturday, in a dramatic escalation that included bombing the home of a senior Hamas leader, killing a family of 10 in a refugee camp and destroying a building that housed the office of The Associated Press and others.

will not tolerate antisemitism, Islamophobia, or hate of any kind," he warned.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford called on police to investigate any acts of anti-Semitism, which he says have no place in the province.

"Discrimination or hatred of any kind against any community in our province should never be tolerated," he wrote on Twitter.

Toronto police have said that Jewish people were the group most frequently victimized by antisemitism in 2020.

The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs alleged both protests included aggressive acts of anti-Semitism, including "anti-Semitic death threats against Israeli representatives and one physical assault. Police forces declined to offer details of what happened."

The centre said it was "gravely concerned" with what it described as "a wave of violence and anti-Semitism impacting our community in Canada."

"There is absolutely no justification for political violence of any kind in our streets, whatever one's cause may be," it said in a statement. "Like all Canadians of goodwill, Canada's Jewish community seeks peace and a better future for Israelis and Palestinians alike. At the same time, we urge our neighbours of all backgrounds to join us in condemning these disturbing acts."

Trudeau government begins discussions on reopening U.S.-Canada border

The world's longest international border has been shuttered since March 2020 to most non-essential travel, drastically reducing land and air traffic between the two countries. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government has begun preliminary internal discussions about reopening the border with the U.S., even as Canada remains well behind its neighbours in vaccinations.

Senior officials have begun to formally talk about options for how to proceed, though people familiar with the matter said, speaking on the condition they not be identified. One question under consideration is whether to employ a two-track system in which quarantine and testing requirements would be relaxed for vaccinated travellers.

A separate official speaking on condition they not be named disputed there were any new developments or discussions on the border, saying there has been no discernible change in policy. "We brought forward significant

proposals at our borders over a year ago to limit the spread of Covid-19 in Canada," James Coulson, director of communications for Public Safety Minister Bill Blair, said in a statement. "Every month, the federal government consults with public health officials to understand which modifications are required to the existing measures at our borders to keep our communities safe from Covid-19."

"Minister Blair is in regular contact with his American counterparts about issues relating to our shared border. Until the conditions on both sides of the border change very substantively, the measures at our borders will remain intact," Coulson said.

In the end, it's a political decision, and at what point does the Canadian side decide that they're ready to receive and what categories of people that they'll open up to.

The world's longest international border has been shuttered since March 2020 to most non-essential travel, drastically reducing land and air

traffic between the two countries. The restrictions have hit the nation's tourism and airline sectors particularly hard - one estimate says the measures cost those industries about \$20 billion (\$16.5 billion in revenue lost).

"In the end, it's a political decision, and at what point does the Canadian side - and it's the Canadian side at this point that the slowpoke - decide that they're ready to receive and what categories of people that they'll open up to," Michael Kerrigan, a former Canadian ambassador to the U.S., said in a phone interview. "A staged reopening would be the logical approach."

Any reopening of the border would be gradual and contingent on dealing cases in both countries, the officials said.

The third wave of the pandemic has hit the northern nation border because of a vaccine rollout that's been slowed by supply issues and shipment delays. Many Canadian provinces remain in extended lockdown even

as the country has ramped up its vaccination campaign.

A reopening of the border probably isn't imminent, and the discussions in the government are just getting started, the officials said. According to the Bloomberg Vaccine Tracker, 34.1 per cent of Canadian residents have received one dose of a Covid-19 vaccine, and only 2.7 per cent are fully inoculated, compared with 46.6 per cent and 35.8 per cent, respectively, in the U.S.

One challenge is coming up with an approach, in coordination with the U.S., to verify vaccination documentation. Trudeau has said Canada is open to vaccine passports, which are electronic documents that would allow countries to verify whether travellers have been inoculated. U.S. President Joe Biden's administration, by contrast, has ruled them out. That will leave Canada in a bind as it tries to determine its own rules.

"It would make sense for us to align with partners around the world on a vaccine passport, but we can't speak for the United States and the choices they might make around who to welcome into their country."

Ontario expands COVID-19 vaccine eligibility to those 18+ a week ahead of schedule

Starting Tuesday, all Ontario residents over the age of 18 will be able to book a COVID-19 vaccine, a week ahead of the province's rollout schedule.

The government said the decision to widen eligibility was based on an increase in vaccine supply.

"With 2.2 million doses scheduled to arrive this week, the government is extending booking eligibility at mass immunization clinics to individuals aged 18 and over," the province said in a news release issued Monday.

Bookings open at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday and are accessible to anyone 18 years of age and over, including 17-year-old residents who will turn 18 in 2021. Before today's announcement, residents 18+ were able to book their jab, but only if they lived in one of the province's designated



114 hot spot communities.

The province says it will also open eligibility up to children ages 12 to 17 for the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine by May 31.

While Toronto Mayor John Tory welcomed today's announcement, he said the availability of vaccines in the

accommodate people and appointments," Tory said.

In response, Health Minister Christine Elliott told reporters at Queen's Park Monday that Toronto will be receiving a "large number" of vaccines, but did not provide the actual figure. "And if they run through them, we will be able to supply them with more because we want to make sure that everybody who wants a vaccine will be able to receive one," she said.

According to the government, more than 7 million needles have gone into arms throughout the course of the vaccine campaign.

Some 432,000 people have received two doses and are considered by the Ministry of Health to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Ontario is currently in the second phase of its COVID-19 vaccine rollout, which focused on older adults, people in high-risk settings, frontline essential workers and other populations that are at greater risk of illness.

Phase 3 is set to begin in July and will see needles go into the arms of anyone who wants to be immunized.

The Bank of Canada is charting a path toward a real estate crash

Whether you are a renter or you're looking to buy, there's no denying real estate is too expensive in Canada. But did anyone expect it would become more expensive during the COVID-19 pandemic? Only those with advanced understanding of the effects of quantitative easing - and the Bank of Canada. It seems very clear that the goal of the central bank's pandemic stimulus was to make real estate more expensive, and it has worked perfectly.

With real estate prices detached from local incomes in every major city now, especially Toronto and Vancouver, the latest surge has proven that economic fundamentals are not the root cause of housing prices. Unemployment goes up, so prices should go down, right? Not in Canada. Immigration goes down; there should be less demand, right? Not in Canada. Businesses are closing down



every day - that should equal less entrepreneurs making money, right? Not in Canada.

Not when the Bank of Canada is purchasing \$3 billion in mortgage bonds each week, with the intention of stimulating the real estate market. A gift to the banks, who can in turn lend it to the wealthy investor class to expand more properties, at the expense of the working and middle classes. Modern Canadian entrepreneurship is not about creating something of value, it's about hoarding real estate.

And now Parliamentary Secretary for Housing Adnan Vaughan has made a slip of the tongue, on a recent episode of "The Agenda with Steve Paikin."

Vaughan admitted that the market is designed for foreign investors, and doesn't meet the needs of Canadian income earners. With many asking how can prices be so far detached from incomes, the answer is simple: to afford more than a condo in many parts of Canada, you need to earn your income elsewhere. Houses and

townhouses are delegated to satellite families in need of a vacation property to store their money in, and earn their income elsewhere.

In Toronto, it would take static prices for 19 years - combined with incomes increasing five per cent a year - for prices to match income affordability. In Vancouver, there is an active public inquiry, where British Columbians are faced with the unfortunate reality that their government may have been facilitating criminal money laundering. And in Ottawa, the message is clear: if you own your income elsewhere and want to purchase a piece of Canada, we will stimulate the market to protect your asset.

So for the next generation, who are now faced with the task of picking up the pieces from the global pandemic, the Bank of Canada has a message for you: keep working hard, but don't expect to own a house, or even a townhouse. It's a life of renting for you, because we need to keep the investor class happy, whether foreign or domestic. If you're lucky, you'll create a market where we can all afford a condo.

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