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BUSINESS | P6

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SCIENCE & ENVIRO | P12

PERSONAL RULES FOR BEING A WELL DRESSED GUY

STYLE | P15



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HST could push more business into underground economy

By **OMID GHOREISHI**
Epoch Times Staff

Fears that the Harmonized Sales Tax will boost the underground economy are already being borne out even though the new tax has not yet come into effect, says one of Ontario's largest roofing contractors.

"We're getting reports that certain contractors are offering cash deals in many cases to avoid the taxes, and I'm hearing this enough times to realize that it could indeed represent some impact on what I call legitimate businesses that are trying to operate above board," says Craig Bennet, deputy director of Avenue Road Roofing.

The HST, which combines provincial sales tax with the 5 percent GST, will come into effect on July 1 in both Ontario and British Columbia. The new tax structure will raise the tax rate on some items that are not currently subject to PST, including home renovations. In trying to "beat the HST,"

Bennet says many people have a misconception that if they book their projects prior to the implementation date, they would be exempt from paying the tax.

"In fact, consumers actually need to purchase their product or service prior to June 30 and have it completed, delivered, what have you, otherwise they are going to

be subject to the HST."

He adds that many customers have expressed concern to the company's estimators about the increased costs and have asked them to absorb the additional tax costs.

The home renovation industry enjoyed a boom thanks to the federal government's Home Renovation Tax Credit initiative that came

into effect last year and ended in February this year.

While the program was beneficial to legitimate businesses as consumers needed receipts to apply for the rebate, Bennet is concerned that the HST could have an opposite effect and encourage people to use black market contractors.

PLEASE SEE HST ON P3

Group opposes Monsanto aid in Haiti

By **KRISTINA SKORBACH**
Epoch Times Staff

Monsanto sent over 60 tons of hybrid GMO corn and vegetable seeds to help with relief efforts in Haiti in May, but one of the country's leading agricultural advocates sees the gift as a Trojan horse.

Ten thousand members of the Mouman Peyizan Papay (Peasant Movement of Papay, MPP) led by Chavannes Jean-Baptiste took to the streets to protest the planting of the Monsanto crops that were accepted by the Haitian Ministry of Agriculture.

American agri-giant Monsanto has a reputation for producing hazardous pollution and dispersing branded herbicides, such as Roundup, around the world to make resource-poor countries dependant on Monsanto's supply of the chemical.

Hybrid seeds donated by Monsanto lets farmers to grow crops for only one year, as the company does not allow its seed purchasers to save seed for future crops, thus making the farmers dependent on buying seed the following year.

PLEASE SEE HAITI ON P5

Inside

NEWS & COMMENTARY

P2 & P3 Nation
P4 & P5 World
P6 Business
P7 Opinion
P8 Sports

LIFE & LEISURE

P9 Entertainment
P10 Arts & Culture
P11 Travel
P12 Science & Environment
P13 Home & Marketplace
P14 Health
P15 Style
P16 Food

US HAILS NEW IRAN SANCTIONS



U.S. President Barack Obama speaks about the UN Security Council vote to impose sanctions against Iran from the Diplomatic Room of the White House in Washington June 9. While the U.S. hailed the decision, Iran maintains the sanctions will do little. See *UN Security Council imposes new sanctions on Iran on A5*. REUTERS/KEVIN LAMARQUE

Are the Conservatives softening on human rights in China?

ANALYSIS

By **MATTHEW LITTLE**
Epoch Times Staff

PARLIAMENT HILL, Ottawa—As the government sends more and more officials to China on high level visits, the Chinese dissident community in Canada is growing concerned the government's position on human rights in China has weakened.

That concern grew in recent days as those officials visits started to land on controversial dates.

When the Liberals ruled Canada, the Conservatives were a loud and indignant voice proclaiming that human rights must not be pushed aside in efforts to strengthen economic ties with China.

Now that the Conservatives are in power, the clamour is gone. The liberals have usually placed more emphasis on the trade aspect of that relationship, even criticizing conservative MPs that raised human rights issues. But in recent months, some of the conservatives strongest China rights advocates seem to have fallen silent.

TIANANMEN ANNIVERSARY

On June 4 this year, the anniversary of the day that tanks rolled into Tiananmen Square and soldiers of the People's Liberation Army killed hundreds of student democracy supporters, the government was sending out photos of Finance Minister Jim Flaherty smiling with Chinese officials at the Beijing airport.

Back in Canada, Flaherty told reporters he'd not raised human rights or the rule of law over his two days in China.

"I was focusing on economic issues in all my discussions with my Chinese counterparts. Our discussions were limited to

those subjects."

Flaherty was leaving Beijing to join a meeting of G20 finance ministers and central bank governors in Korea, but the timing was not lost on activists back home.

Gloria Fung, a China political analyst and a prominent democracy advocate who was in Tiananmen Square that fateful day 21 years ago, said she was stung.

"Everyone knows that June 4 is the day we mourn for those people who sacrificed their life for democracy in China... Canadian officials should be more considerate than paying an official visit to China on these days that carry a totally different meaning to the Chinese people."

For Su Ming, the vice-chair of the Canadian branch of the Federation for a Democratic China, Flaherty's failure to speak out on the anniversary sent a message.

"Human rights in China is getting worse and worse, and right now the Chinese people try to protect their rights and are being cracked down on, pressed by the government all the time."

"If the international society does not speak out, I think human rights in China will be getting worse."

CHANGING TUNE

While Canada remains a strong advocate for human rights in China at the United Nations, and the prime minister did raise the issue during his visit to Shanghai last year, top ministers seem to be changing their positions.

Last July, Transport Minister John Baird returned from an official visit gushing about the development in China.

"My past viewpoint and past understanding of China has completely changed," he told reporters.

PLEASE SEE CHINA ON P2

Russian soldiers stole credit cards from Polish crash victim

By **ANDREY VOLKOV**
Epoch Times Staff

Russian officials confirmed on Tuesday that four soldiers have been detained and charged

with stealing and using credit cards belonging to one of the victims of the fatal plane crash that killed Polish President Lech Kaczynski.

The Russian soldiers stole the

cards while working at the crash site at the military airport near Smolensk, Russia.

The stolen credit card belonged to Andrzej Przewoznik, who headed Poland's national war

memorial committee. About 6,000 Polish zlotych (approximately C\$1,800) was withdrawn from Przewoznik's bank account, Polish officials said.

Monika Lewandowski, a

spokeswoman for Warsaw's public prosecutor's office, stated that the first withdrawal using the credit card was made two hours after the crash.

PLEASE SEE SOLDIERS ON P4



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