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Paul Martin to attend *Kanishka* service in Ireland

Prime Minister meets victims' families, announces day of national mourning

AJIT JAIN
in Toronto

Prime Minister Paul Martin will travel to Cork in Ireland, June 23, to mark the 20th anniversary of the *Kanishka* tragedy.

On June 23, 1985 — which will be designated a day of national mourning in Canada — 329 passengers abroad the Air-India Boeing 747 *Kanishka* perished in a mid-air explosion over the Atlantic off the coast of Ireland. The worst act of aerial terrorism in history until 9/11 was attributed to Sikh terrorists then battling the Indian government.

Martin's initiative came after 100 members of the *Kanishka* victims' families met for over two hours with the prime minister and former Ontario premier Bob Rae, the special adviser named by the government to make recommendations on the next step with regard to the Air-India tragedy.

It was the first time in 20 years that a Canadian prime minister had ever met the *Kanishka* victims' families. It came after Martin's response to *India Abroad's* observations at a roundtable April 25.

When this correspondent pointed out that members of the victims' families were unhappy that no prime minister had ever met them, Martin responded, "If members of the victims' families want to meet with the prime minister, the prime minister of Canada will meet with them."

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MARCEL ANTONISSE/AP/GETTY IMAGES

Grewal goes on 'stress leave'

AJIT JAIN
in Toronto

Conservative Member of Parliament Gurmant Grewal has gone on 'stress leave.'

The move came after a controversy over his surreptitiously taping telephone and face-to-face conversations with Health Minister Ujjal Dosanjh and the prime minister's Chief of Staff Tim Murphy last month when the ruling Liberals were on the verge of being defeated in the House of Commons on the Budget vote.

After his meeting with Conservative leader Stephen Harper June 6, Harper's office said that Grewal would continue to be part of the Conservative Party caucus but he would not sit in the House of Commons or attend meetings of parliamentary committees until the investigation involving him ended.

According to the two-hour tapes he released, Grewal claims he was being lured by the Liberals to cross the floor along with his wife Nina, also a Conservative MP, so that he abstained from voting May 19 when two Budget bills were to come up for second readings.

In return he was implicitly and in a roundabout way told there could be a diplomatic appointment for him and a Senate appointment

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