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Mark Carney Takes Helm as Canada's Prime Minister, Signals Cooperation with Trump



Mark Carney, a former central banker with no prior political tenure, was sworn in as Canada's prime minister on Friday, stepping into the role vacated by Justin Trudeau. In his first remarks, Carney struck a conciliatory tone toward U.S. President Donald Trump, whose tariff threats loom large over Canada's economy, signaling a stark departure from Trudeau's frosty dealings with the American leader.

"We respect President Trump and the priorities he's championing," Carney, 59, told reporters shortly after his swearing-in. Drawing on past interactions with Trump at global summits, he added, "We share a commitment to our nations' interests, and I'm confident we can craft solutions that benefit both sides." However, he dismissed Trump's talk of annexing Canada as "absurd" and reaffirmed Canada's sovereignty: "We will never be part of the United States—full stop."



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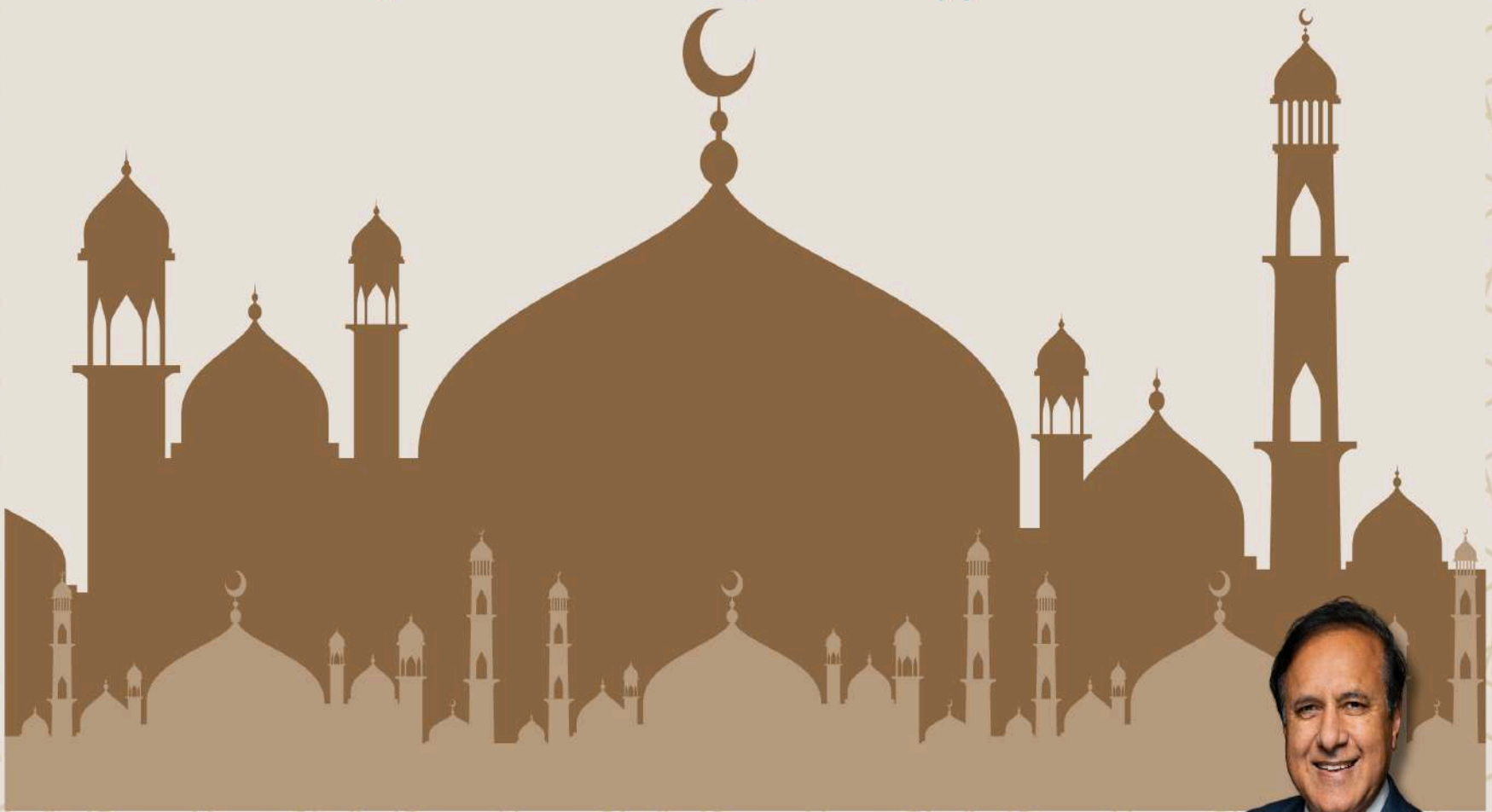
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City of Brampton Intensifies Efforts to Ensure Safety Through Residential Rental Licensing and Parking Enforcement

The City of Brampton is doubling down on its commitment to community safety by addressing noncompliance with its Residential Rental Licensing (RRL) pilot program and cracking down on illegal parking and property standards violations. During a February 20 news conference at City Hall, Mayor Patrick Brown and Wards 1 and 5 Councillor Rowena Santos outlined significant updates to these initiatives, emphasizing that public safety—not revenue—is the driving force behind these efforts.

Launched as a two-year pilot, the RRL program mandates that landlords with four or fewer rental units in Wards 1, 3, 4, 5, and 7 obtain a special license and submit to inspections to ensure compliance with municipal bylaws, fire codes, and safety standards. To date, nearly 9,000 residential rental units have been registered across these wards, with over 3,200 licenses issued.

To encourage further participation, the City announced it will waive the \$300 RRL registration fee for the remainder of 2025 and provide a complimentary smoke alarm to newly registered landlords. “We’ve heard concerns that this is about revenue generation—it’s not,” Mayor Brown stated. “It’s always been about safety. Every call I receive from the fire chief about a basement fire fatality is one too many. We’re doing everything possible to keep secondary suites safe.”

Brown underscored the program’s role in tackling Brampton’s persistent illegal rental and rooming house issues, which have led to overcrowding, unsafe living conditions, and related challenges like illegal parking and noise violations. He warned non-compliant landlords that enforcement is now in full swing, bolstered by a fully expanded bylaw department. “Brampton will not turn a blind eye,” he said. “Significant fines await those who don’t comply, but we’re offering a no-fee registration and a free smoke alarm to those who work with us.”



Councillor Rowena Santos highlighted the City’s bolstered enforcement capacity, noting the addition of 40 new staff—including 38 bylaw officers and two support positions—completed following a staffing model implemented in June 2024. This expansion addresses a critical gap identified in April 2024, when staff reported that over 50% of approximately 75,000 annual illegal parking complaints went unanswered due to insufficient resources.

The RRL pilot and enhanced enforcement measures reflect Brampton’s proactive response to long-standing challenges. “This is about creating a safer, more livable city,” Santos concluded. “By addressing rental safety and parking violations head-on, we’re meeting the urgent needs of our residents.”

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End of an Era: Hudson's Bay Announces Immediate Liquidation Amid Financial Crisis

Hudson's Bay, Canada's oldest company, has announced plans for an immediate liquidation of its entire business, marking the end of an era for the 354-year-old retail giant. Despite last-minute efforts to secure additional capital, the company has been unable to obtain the necessary funding to continue operations.

The liquidation process is set to begin next week and is expected to conclude by June 15, 2025, pending a court hearing scheduled for Monday. If finalized, the closure will result in the loss of 9,364 jobs across Hudson's Bay locations in Canada, including its Saks Fifth Avenue and Saks Off 5th stores.

In a statement released late Friday, Hudson's Bay President and CEO Liz Rodbell expressed disappointment over the situation but remains hopeful that a resolution may still be found.

"Our team has worked tirelessly to explore every possible avenue to keep Hudson's Bay afloat," Rodbell said. "The overwhelming support from our customers and employees underscores the importance of our legacy, and we are doing everything in our power to find a solution with key stakeholders, particularly our landlords."



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Sonia Sidhu's Fundraising Gala in Brampton South Draws Over 450 Supporters, Liberal Leaders, and Community Organizations

The Liberal Riding Association of Brampton South, under the leadership of President Gurpreet Bath, successfully hosted a grand fundraising gala in support of Sonia Sidhu, Member of Parliament for Brampton South. The event, attended by over 450 guests, included prominent social and religious organizations from all communities and several Liberal MPs and candidates, showcasing strong party unity and support for Sonia Sidhu and the Liberal Party's vision under Mark Carney.

The event commenced with a welcome speech by Gurpreet Bath, who praised Sonia Sidhu's leadership and the Liberal Party's achievements.

"Sonia Sidhu has been a dedicated representative for Brampton South, championing initiatives that directly improve the lives of residents. Her unwavering commitment to healthcare, economic development, and seniors' well-being is commendable. Tonight's overwhelming support from the community shows the trust and confidence people have in her leadership," said Bath.

Among the distinguished guests were The Honourable Nate Erskine-Smith, Minister of Housing, Shafqat Ali, Member of Parliament for Brampton Centre, Maninder Sidhu, Member of Parliament for Brampton North, and Amandeep Sodhi, Liberal candidate for Brampton Centre.

Shafqat Ali MP (Brampton Centre) praised Sonia Sidhu's contributions to healthcare and community development:



"Sonia Sidhu has been a strong voice in Parliament, advocating for better healthcare policies, including diabetes awareness and support for seniors. Her hard work has brought meaningful changes to Brampton, and I am proud to stand by her as she continues to fight for our community."

Maninder Sidhu MP (Brampton North) highlighted the importance of Liberal leadership under Mark Carney:

"Under Mark Carney's leadership, the Liberal Party is focused on building a stronger economy and supporting Canadian families. Leaders like Sonia Sidhu are at the heart of this vision, working tirelessly to ensure that Brampton continues to grow and prosper. I am honored to support her in this journey."



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From Page 10 Sonia Sidhu Fundraising

Amandeep Sodhi, Liberal candidate for Brampton Centre, emphasized the need for continued Liberal representation in Brampton:

"This election is crucial for Brampton's future. With dedicated leaders like Sonia Sidhu, we have a team that understands the needs of our communities and is committed to making a real difference. I look forward to working alongside her to keep delivering results for Brampton residents."

Hardam Mangat, Director of the National Liberal Party of Canada, spoke about the party's new leadership under Mark Carney and its policies for economic stability and affordability:

"The Liberal Party, guided by Mark Carney's economic expertise, is committed to making life more affordable, creating jobs, and ensuring a strong economy. With leaders like Sonia Sidhu, we will continue to make a positive impact on the lives of Canadians."

The Honourable Nate Erskine-Smith, Minister of Housing, Infrastructure, and Communities, served as the Chief Guest and highlighted the Liberal government's priorities on housing affordability and infrastructure:

"Housing affordability remains one of our government's top priorities. We are investing in real solutions to make homeownership more accessible and support communities. Sonia Sidhu has been a key advocate in these efforts, and I know that under Mark Carney's leadership, our work will continue to deliver for Canadians."

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Representing senior citizens and community welfare groups, Gian Paul, President of Flower City Friends Club (FCFC) and Mukti Foundation, emphasized the importance of government policies that support seniors:

"The Liberal Party has always prioritized seniors' well-being, and Sonia Sidhu has been at the forefront of these efforts. From advocating for better healthcare services to ensuring seniors have access to social programs, she has been a strong voice for our community. I fully support her leadership and the vision she brings for a more inclusive society."

In her keynote address, Sonia Sidhu expressed gratitude for the overwhelming support and outlined her commitment to Brampton South, the Liberal Party's achievements, and the future under Mark Carney.

"Brampton South is my home, and my commitment to this community remains unwavering. We have made tremendous progress in healthcare, senior support, and economic development, but there is still work to be done. Former Prime Minister Justin Trudeau laid a strong foundation, and under Mark Carney's leadership, we will continue to build a Canada that is inclusive, prosperous, and fair for all."

She also addressed economic challenges, Trump's policies that could impact Canada, and the importance of diversity and inclusion in shaping the nation's future.

Islamophobia's Toll: Canada's Leaders Demand Action, Not Just Words

On International Day to Combat Islamophobia, federal officials and Muslim leaders united in a call to confront surging anti-Muslim hate, spotlighting systemic barriers and violence faced by Canada's Muslim communities. Yet, as voices like the Canadian Muslim Forum push for bolder steps, the gap between rhetoric and action remains a flashpoint.

Amira Elghawaby, Canada's Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia, marked the day with a sobering statement: "Muslims endure racism, stereotypes, and hostility—too often seen as security threats at institutional levels." She pointed to Ottawa's bolstered Canada Community Security Program and Anti-Racism Strategy as progress, but stressed the need for more. Governor General Mary Simon joined the chorus, decrying a "recent rise in hostility" that undermines Canada's strength and urging citizens to reject bigotry online and off.

Shafqat Ali, Liberal MP for Brampton Centre—a riding with a vibrant Muslim population—added his voice, drawing from personal and community experience. "In Brampton, we've felt the pain of Islamophobia deeply," Ali said Saturday. "After the London attack, I couldn't let my daughter walk to school alone—it's a fear no parent should face. We need stronger laws and real support for our mosques and families, not just promises." Ali, who endorsed Mark Carney in the 2025 Liberal leadership race, called for education and security funding to match the urgency of the moment.

The Canadian Muslim Forum's president, Samer Majzoub, echoed Ali's urgency, slamming federal efforts as insufficient. "Words won't stop hate—we need tougher hate speech laws and systemic change," he said, citing Quebec's Bill 21 as a glaring example of enshrined discrimination. The secularism law, banning religious symbols for public workers, heads to the Supreme Court this year, with Ottawa intervening to defend religious freedom.

The push comes against a backdrop of global and domestic alarm—Canada's grim record of targeted Muslim killings, from Quebec City in 2017 to London in 2021, looms large. Online, reactions range from solidarity to skepticism, with some questioning if new measures will bridge the divide. As leaders pledge unity, the pressure mounts to turn commemoration into concrete change.



No Fly Zone? Carney Questions U.S. Jet Pact



Prime Minister Mark Carney has ordered a review of Canada's \$7.5 billion commitment to buy 88 F-35 fighter jets from U.S.-based Lockheed Martin, signaling a cautious rethink just a day after taking office. The move comes as Canada grapples with a trade war and provocative annexation threats from U.S. President Donald Trump.

Sworn in Friday at Rideau Hall, Carney tapped Defence Minister Bill Blair to assess whether the F-35 contract—priced at roughly US\$85 million per jet—remains the best fit for Canada's needs. "We need to do our homework given the changing environment," said Blair's press secretary, Laurent de Casanove, stressing the deal's alignment with Canadian interests and the armed forces' priorities. While the contract stands, with the first 16 jets legally secured, alternatives are now on the table.

The F-35s are slated to replace the Royal Canadian Air Force's aging CF-18 fleet, with deliveries starting in 2026 and wrapping up by 2032. But in a CBC interview Friday, Blair hinted at a broader scope, exploring whether all 88 jets must be F-35s or if other options—potentially assembled or maintained in Canada—could better serve the country. "The prime minister's direction is clear: examine every possibility to ensure the right decision for Canada," Blair said, pledging consultations with the air force, defence officials, and international allies.

Carney's review lands amid heightened U.S.-Canada friction, with Trump's tariffs and "51st state" rhetoric stoking uncertainty. Analysts suggest it could also reflect a push to diversify defence partnerships or boost domestic jobs, especially as allied nations like Portugal reconsider their own F-35 commitments citing U.S. unpredictability. Lockheed Martin, meanwhile, reaffirmed its "strong partnership" with the Royal Canadian Air Force, deferring contract questions to Ottawa and Washington.



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Carney's Clean Sweep: Miller, Duclos Booted in Cabinet Overhaul

Mark Carney's first act as prime minister-designate? A cabinet gutting. When he steps up Friday at Rideau Hall, Immigration Minister Marc Miller—Trudeau's close ally—and Procurement Minister Jean-Yves Duclos won't be there, CTV News has learned. The Quebec duo, despite cheering Carney's rise, are sidelined but plan to rerun, with Duclos touting "gratitude" for the new boss.

More are packing it in: Health's Mark Holland ("time to go home"), Trade's Mary Ng (her "last hurrah"), plus Justice's Arif Virani, Heritage's Pascale St-Onge, Emergency's Harjit Sajjan, Agriculture's Lawrence MacAulay, Women's Marci Ien, and Rural's Gudie Hutchings—all skipping re-election. Environment's Steven Guilbeault shifts gigs, thrilled with his climate run, while Natural Resources' Jonathan Wilkinson teases, "Maybe I'll see you—or not."



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