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Canada announces it will donate 200 armoured vehicles to Ukraine

Canada is donating 200 Canadian-made armoured personnel carriers to Ukraine, Defence Minister Anita Anand announced on Wednesday while visiting Kyiv, Ukraine.

"Today, I am glad to confirm our next package of military aid," Anand said while sitting alongside Ukraine's Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov.

"The vehicles offer state-of-the-art, best-in-class technology and weapons can easily be mounted on them," she said. "These vehicles also allow for the safe transportation of personnel and equipment."

Anand said the Senator APCs are being purchased from Roshek, a Canadian company based in Mississauga, Ont., at a cost of \$90 million.

In May of last year, Canada delivered eight commercial pattern armoured vehicles and Senator APCs purchased from Roshek to Ukraine.

"I have heard repeatedly that Ukrainian troops appreciate their manoeuvrability and their adaptability," Anand said.

"They are equipped with smart tech and that helps soldiers to detect threats early. The armour will also help shield troops when they're unable to avoid danger."

Last week, Canada announced it would spend \$406 million to purchase a National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System from the United States to donate to Ukraine. Wednesday's armoured vehicle announcement combined with the promised air defences make up the \$500 million in military aid Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced in the fall.



Reznikov said the combined military aid package will be crucial in helping defend soldiers and civilians in his war-torn country.

"I would like to express the biggest gratitude to the people of Canada, to the government of Canada and directly to Ms. Anand because this package of assistance, which was already proclaimed, is extremely important for us," Reznikov said Wednesday in Kyiv.

318 in military aid.

Anand made the announcement after meeting with Reznikov ahead of their attendance at the meeting of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group on Friday at Ramstein Air Base in Germany.

At the meeting, countries providing military support to Ukraine will hear directly from Ukrainian officials about the country's long-term military plans and what support it needs to carry them out.

Ukraine has said it needs several hundred NATO-standard heavy tanks to counter invading Russian forces.

Anand would not say if Reznikov asked her specifically during their meeting to send Ukraine Canada's German-made battle tanks. She said the issue would be brought up in meetings at Ramstein Air Base.

Trudeau has not ruled out sending Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine if Germany drops its objections to the donation of military vehicles that is sold to Canada.

"When I visited Ukraine almost one year ago, I saw a country full of talented, ambitious people who simply want to live in peace and security," Anand said in a separate statement. "Their love of freedom inspired me then, and today, it inspires the whole world."

"During today's productive visit to Kyiv, I met with Ukrainian officials, including my friend and colleague Minister Reznikov, to learn about Ukraine's most pressing security needs, and to reaffirm Canada's steadfast support," she said.

"Since the beginning of 2022, Canada has provided more than \$5 billion in direct assistance to Ukraine, including \$1 billion in military aid.

Anand's visit to Ukraine came as officials there said the country's interior minister had died in a helicopter crash near the capital that killed at least 14 other people, including other officials and three children.

A year ago, Melissa Walsh says police assured her family it only happened to them. Fraudsters nearly sold her great uncle's east end Toronto home without the family's knowledge.

"We were told to move on, get over it," she said.

But earlier this month a Toronto police press release revealed another case where scammers successfully sold a house before the real homeowners found out what happened.

And now it turns out those two cases are likely just the tip of the iceberg.

CBC Toronto has learned that a handful of organized crime groups are behind these real-estate frauds - in which at least 30 homes in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) have either been sold or mortgaged without the real owners' knowledge. Those revelations come from a private investigation firm working for a title insurance company to try and get to the bottom of the scams, which are costing insurers millions in claims.

"It's a very painstaking process to try and understand who's behind it," said Brian King, president and CEO of King International Advisory Group.

"We're sort of aware of four or five loosely organized groups that are working in the GTA."

The firm is currently investigating four title transfer frauds across the GTA where the ownership of a home was stolen using identity theft to cash in on the sale of the property. And at least another 26 mortgage frauds where mortgages have been registered on a home without the owner's consent to obtain the cash value of the mortgage.

"Hearing that this has happened to potentially over 30 other families is hard to wrap your head around," said Walsh. "I don't understand why this hasn't been discussed before this

How organized crime has mortgaged or sold at least 30 GTA homes without owners' knowledge



moved out of the fraudulent bank accounts usually within seven days," said King.

"I'll get changed fairly quickly either into cryptocurrency and moved about, or into gold bullion, and quite often it'll be shipped overseas immediately out of reach of the authorities here."

CBC Toronto reached out to Toronto police multiple times for comment, but no one was available to speak on its title fraud cases.

King says these cases pose a challenge for police because the organized crime groups can have several properties on the go at once across multiple jurisdictions.

"In an ideal world, we would have some way of co-ordinating these efforts amongst the various regional and municipal police departments so that they get visibility and the links can be made," he said.

King's firm tries to trace where the fraudulent mortgage or home sale funds go for clients, and says they've been successful in getting money back in some cases. But frequently title insurance companies don't find out about the fraud until it's too late.

"Future of title insurance could be at risk.

In most of these cases, the real owner and the buyer are protected from most of the losses incurred through the fraud by having title insurance.

The insurance protects homeowners

from fraudulent claims on their property and pays for legal expenses to re-establish the homeowner's title rights. If a buyer unwittingly buys a home that's been fraudulently listed, the insurance should also protect them. In cases like that, the true owner will likely get their home back and the unwitting buyer will get their money back.

But with title transfer and mortgage fraud claims skyrocketing, title insurer John Rider worries about the sustainability of providing this coverage in the long-term.

"We went from zero to those claims to now many dozens," said Rider, senior vice president of Chicago Title Insurance Company in Canada.

"There's four title companies in the business in Canada and we estimate that industry wide, it's easily \$200 million, probably more, in fraud claims in the last two-and-a-half years."

Chicago Title Insurance Company has received more than 80 mortgage fraud claims since late 2019 - largely from the GTA and Greater Vancouver Area. The other three title insurers shared similar concerns with CBC Toronto - about a growing number of mortgage and title transfer frauds in recent years.

"We're seeing a level of sophistication in that area that we've never seen before," said Daniela De Tommaso, president of title insurance company FCT. "It's very organized."

Rider wants to see the government step up and lead the way on bolstering ID verification standards for professionals - so they don't just rely on IDs - in these kinds of transactions.

"Otherwise [the government]'s unable to find that they're going to have a lot of consumers at their doorstep begging for help because they've lost title to their homes," he said.

Happy Republic Day

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Nothing to announce today': Trudeau on whether Canada will send Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine

As Poland readies to provide Ukraine with German-made battle tanks amid signals Germany wouldn't stand in the way, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says the Canadian government has "nothing to announce" at this time.

Canada is among the countries that would need to sign off on the German government to re-export the German-made Leopard 2 battle tanks that Ukraine is asking for.

Over the weekend, Germany's foreign minister indicated that the German government would not object if Poland decided to send some of its tanks to Ukraine.

On the heels of this development, Poland said Monday that it plans to ask for permission to send these military vehicles, and is looking to build a coalition of countries ready to do the same, according to The Associated Press.

Canada has 82 German-made



Leopard 2 tanks in various states of serviceability, but so far the federal government has not said whether it would be willing to send any to Ukraine, should Germany greenlight their export.

Asked on Monday whether the latest developments change Canada's position, Trudeau wouldn't say.

"We will continue to be there for Ukraine. We have regular

conversations with Ukrainian leadership and Ukrainian military to make sure that we're sending them exactly what they need as quickly as possible, and we're going to continue to do that," Trudeau said. "We have nothing to announce today, but we'll continue to look at how best Canada can help Ukraine."

Ukraine has been asking allies to offer up these military vehicles to

assist its nearly year-long defence against Russian attacks, though the call has prompted concerns around escalating the conflict.

The issue was discussed without resolution at a meeting with members of the Ukraine Defense Contact Group at the Ramstein Air Base in Germany last week, which Defence Minister Anita Anand attended.

Both Anand and Trudeau continue to point to the more than \$1 billion in military assistance Canada has provided Ukraine since February 2022.

Most recently, the Canadian government announced it'll be donating a \$406 million U.S.-made air defence system and 200 unarmoured personnel carriers valued at \$90 million to Ukraine.

"Canada has been one of the countries around the world that has been the most steadfast friend and supporter of Ukraine. We've sent humanitarian aid, we've sent financial economic aid, and we've sent significant military aid to Ukraine in defending its territory against the illegal and illegitimate Russian invasion," Trudeau said on Monday.

"We will continue to be there for Ukraine."

Why immigrant-loving Canada is suddenly worried about immigration

Even as the world grows more suspicious of migrants, Canada has retained a place where most people like immigrants in their neighbourhoods, aren't worried about immigrants integrating into Canadian society, and see immigration as critical to the country's future. When the Angus Reid Institute recently asked Canadians whether they thought immigrants were taking their jobs, 71 per cent said "no."

Canadian politics reflect this: the country stands virtually alone among peers in having no anti-immigration sentiment among its political mainstream. Even the country's Conservative Party - which just elected Pierre Poilievre as its leader - is an open booster of high immigration.

"It doesn't matter if your name is Poilievre or Patel, Martin or Mohamed... you can achieve your dreams in this country," Poilievre, whose wife immigrated to Canada from Venezuela, told a mostly immigrant crowd in October.

And yet, in recent months Canadians are starting to entertain the uncomfortable thought that all of this might be too much too quickly.

Starting five years ago, the Trudeau government first made public its plans to pursue "the most ambitious immigration levels in recent history." Annual immigrant arrivals soon surged more than 40 per cent, rising from 286,480 in 2017 to 405,330 in 2021.

Canada is now bringing in more immigrants than at any other time in its history. Last year, a record-breaking 431,645 permanent residents entered Canada - an influx almost exactly equivalent to the entire metro population of Halifax. It's a level of immigration higher even than the brief period before the First World War when Canada was frantically hustling in steamships full of Eastern European immigrants to settle the prairies.

It's also well beyond the totals of another historically high immigration country, the United States. On a per capita basis, Canada is now bringing in four times more immigrants than the Americans.

And Ottawa is looking to push it higher still. By 2025, Canada is set to receive up to 500,000 newcomers per year. In just the next three years, Canada is planning to bring in enough new Canadians (1.45 million) to equal the entire population of



Manitoba.

While Canadians haven't abandoned their national love of immigration, there are clear signs that people are nervous about the tempo and crunches in the health system, housing and other infrastructure.

As far back as 2019, when the Angus Reid Institute asked Canadians to name their ideal number of annual immigrants, a mere 13 per cent named anything higher than 331,000 - the immigration rate at the time of the survey. On the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic, a Lager poll found that 63 per cent of respondents wanted Ottawa to slow the immigrant influx before it overwhelmed Canada's ability to integrate them.

In November, a poll commissioned by the Association of Canadian Studies found that half of respondents believed that Canada was bringing in "too many" immigrants. Even the Canadians who welcomed the newcomers were skeptical: 79 per cent of all respondents expressed "concern" about what the immigration surge might mean for the country's immediate future.

Countries will often turn against immigration due to worries about cultural integration. But in Canada, most of the recent skepticism on immigration is stemming from a fear that an avalanche of newcomers will only exacerbate two of the country's most defining current crises: housing affordability and health-care shortages.

And given the numbers, there's no reason to think this is wrong. Canada has the most acute housing shortage of any other country in the G7. It's why, since 2000, Canadian home prices have become completely divorced from the ability of regular people to pay for them. Last year, Canada was dead last in the OECD's ranking of housing prices as compared to average incomes.

immigrants by 2025.

Before the pandemic, meteoric immigration levels were pitched as essential to propping up the tax base in order to support swelling numbers of Canadian seniors. After the pandemic, they've been framed as a secret weapon to supercharge the country's economic recovery.

Meanwhile, federal planners seem to be oddly insulated from any suggestion that this quickened pace might be a bad idea.

"When the feds conduct public consultations on immigration levels, they don't poll the general public, they ask a hand-selected list of academics, business owners, non-profit and other 'stakeholders.'"

And the stakeholders are widely supportive of rising immigration. In the last federally conducted survey on immigration levels, an incredible 87 per cent of respondents said that Canadian immigration levels were either "about right" or "too low."

"Government talks about immigrants as if they're going to the immigrant store and picking up a few," said Stephen Punwasi, co-founder of the data journalism website Better Dwelling.

Punwasi has been a vocal opponent of Canada's current immigration scheme on the grounds that it's a "snow job"; immigrants are brought to Canada in a naked bid to shore up the tax base, only to find themselves being hit hardest of anyone by housing prices and other shortages.

"Even people born within a privileged situation in Canada are finding it hard to move beyond renting and working," he said. "Immigrants are coming and they're even less privileged."

As a result, Canada may be incrementally boosting GDP with each newcomer, but Punwasi said much of it is occurring on the backs of newcomers who are paying \$900 a month to share a basement apartment 90 minutes away from their place of work.

"That doesn't seem to be a concern that's registering with the government," he said. "It's a very predatory situation."

It's why Canada is already starting to see the return of a phenomenon that was actually quite common in the housing-adding era: regret.

In March, a poll by the Institute for Canadian Citizenship found that among recent university-educated immigrants to Canada, nearly a quarter were already laying plans to leave.

Said ICC CEO Daniel Bernhard at the time, "many new Canadians are having a crisis of confidence in Canada - and that should be ringing alarm bells all over Ottawa."

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Sasural Simar Ka stars Dipika Kakar and Shoab Ibrahim finally announce their first pregnancy

After a few months of speculations and rumours about whether ITV actress Dipika Kakar is pregnant, the couple has finally announced their new beginnings. Shoab Ibrahim took to his social media handle and shared a joint post to make the announcement in a unique way.

On Sunday afternoon, Shoab shared a post and tagged Dipika's verified social media handle as well. In the photo, the couple can be seen sitting outdoors with their backs to the camera. They are wearing white as Dipika wears a white dress, while Shoab opted for a white shirt and dark trousers.

Interestingly, both of them wore their caps backwards. Dipika's cap has the words 'room-to-be' written on it, while Shoab's cap says 'back-to-be'. In the Instagram post, Ibrahim wrote, "Sharing this news with you all with our hearts full of gratitude, happiness, excitement and also nervousness. Hooray! It's a yes! A beautiful phase of our lives... Yes we are expecting our first child! Going to embrace parenthood soon... Aapki dheer saari duniya aur pyaar ki zameerat hai (We need a lot of your prayers and love) for our little one." He also added a couple of hashtags including '#shaika', '#parents to be', and '#allah ka shukar'.

As soon as the couple made the announcement, fans and peers from the industry flooded the comments section with love. Ganesh Khanna commented, "May Allah bless you both on this new journey. Amen." Meanwhile, Chitra Asopa said, "Congratulations!"

For the unversed, Dipika and Shoab met on the sets of their TV show, Sasural Simar Ka and became close friends. Later, they tied the knot in 2018 after dating for several years. The duo was last seen in a music video, titled 'Muskurana Teri'.

Producer Vashu Bhagnani wrote on Instagram, "After 25 years, we go up to return with our most successful franchise 'Bade Miyan Chote Miyan'! It was special then and it is even more special now with two exceptional SuperStars leading the title @akshaykumar and @tigerjackiehoff and now with @theresapritivi also on board. Directed by @alibabasaifur together we will recapture a brand new Avatar of BMC! Need or blessings and good wishes as we begin to Shoot." Jackie Bhagnani, who also looks after Pooja Entertainment, wrote on the same social media platform, "After months of toiling, dreaming and strategizing, we are ready to begin this massive ambitious journey. Truly humbled and honoured to stand alongside my 'Bade' and 'Chote' without their need my dream to achieve this would have become true. @akshaykumar @tigerjackiehoff I'm overwhelmed and it's a moment of immense pride and joy for us at Pooja Entertainment. Love, adore and respect these two and I can't wait for the audience to see what we have in store. So thankful to my Dad @vashubhagnani for believing and backing us up and to my entire team and everybody associated with this film. Can't wait to roll on this one."



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Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff kick off Bade Miyan Chote Miyan

There has been a lot of buzz about Pooja Entertainment's upcoming action entertainer Bade Miyan Chote Miyan as it brings together two of the biggest action heroes of Bollywood, Akshay Kumar and Tiger Shroff for the first time. The film, which was announced some time back, went on floors today in Mumbai.

Bade Miyan Chote Miyan also stars Prithviraaj Sukumaran as he is being on board his acting prowess as the powerful antagonist. The film to be directed by Ali Abbas Zafar is set upon an assive scale.

After months of extensive prep BMC kicked off with a big auspicious Mahurat today with producers, the entire cast and crew and well-wishers from the film world. The film is the second in the franchise after the 1998 hit Bade Miyan Chote Miyan, starring Amitabh Bachchan and Govinda. Sharing a note on the occasion, producer Vashu Bhagnani wrote on Instagram, "After 25 years, we go up to return with our most successful franchise 'Bade Miyan Chote Miyan'! It was special then and it is even more special now with two exceptional SuperStars leading the title @akshaykumar and @tigerjackiehoff and now with @theresapritivi also on board. Directed by @alibabasaifur together we will recapture a brand new Avatar of BMC! Need or blessings and good wishes as we begin to Shoot."

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Pakistan cricket needs to shape up in World Cup year

THE Year of the World Cup hasn't started the way Pakistan would've liked. The home One-day International (ODI) series lost to New Zealand means Pakistan have virtually no room to give excuses and are instead better advised to look inward for genuine progress.

Besides winning the ODI series, New Zealand also kept Pakistan on the backfoot in the preceding drawn two-Test rubber too. Just like the ODI, both Tests were played at Karachi's National Stadium and the hosts were saved by a whisker in the end. Had Sarfaraz Ahmed not struck a superb last-day century in the final Test, Babar Azeem and company would have suffered their third consecutive Test series defeat at home.

Playing at home definitively puts the host in a relatively more advantageous position. But it is a double-edged sword, sometimes a slight gaffe, or a flurry of them, can prove stifling for a side in their own backyard.

And this is what denied Pakistan in their bumper home season, during which they lost the Test series to Australia and England, and capitulated in a T20 rubber against a

second-string England. The action ended on a disturbing note with the ODI series defaulting to New Zealand. Talking specifically of ODIs, one can safely say that Babar-led Pakistan, before the last two New Zealand ODIs, had fared pretty well with nine wins and one loss over the past year or so. The series troubling, in the end, ruined all the good work.

"New Zealand played better cricket than Pakistan; the visitors adapted to the playing conditions, which were alien to them, more effectively than the host team," former Pakistan captain Aftab Iqbal told Dawn.

"Teams winning away series against good opponents means they are better than the home side," Iqbal, who is based in England, added. "Overall, Pakistan have played well in recent limited-overs cricket, including the 2022 T20 World Cup in Australia where they reached the final but losing the series on home turf is worrying."

If Pakistan cannot adjust to the conditions in their own territory to overcome the opponents, then surely it is not a good omen for the country that will be hosting the series on home turf in 2023.

When former Test batter Ijaz Ahmed was sought to underline the

reasons behind the national team's below-par showing in key international games and that too at home, he pinpointed a dearth of quality cricket conditions in the country.

"Most of the pitches used (for domestic and international matches) are slow and dead which (indirectly) hinder our batters' endeavours to improve their skills. And when they play on fast, bouncy and seaming surfaces in countries like Australia, South Africa and England they badly struggle."

"In the UAE also, Pakistan (after the 2009 terror attack on the Sri Lankan team in Lahore) kept on playing their home series on sluggish tracks for several years. Again, it is just survival, it did no good to equip Pakistani cricketers with the skills required to win cut-throat international contests elsewhere around the world," reckoned Ahmed.

"You can look at the scoreboard and see what the team demands from you. Basically for me, my cricket idly is AB De Villiers and I look at him very closely and his performances in T20 cricket and T20 as well and that's why I also try to play according to the demand of the team."

"In T20 cricket, sometimes you can go with a slow strike rate because sometimes in T20 you are in a position where they (opposition) are looking to take wickets. You can go slow (when you've lost a couple of wickets) but when the team needs you to hit the long ball, you can go with the momentum. For me, assessing the time is important (when to break free) and thankfully, most of the time, I am successful."

Like some other leading T20 batters in the world who can get going from the play-off, Rizwan holds back from playing over-the-top shots.

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Rajkumar Santoshi and Sunny Deol to team up after 27 years for Lahore: 1947, film expected to go on floors soon

Rajkumar Santoshi and Sunny Deol were a formidable director-actor pair in the 1990s with films like Ghayal, Dillagi and Ghatak gaining the status of iconic films. Following this, the two did try coming together again but things never fell in place. But now, after about 27 years, the two have joined hands for a film titled Lahore 1947.

Santoshi shared the news during a conversation with PinkVilla. He also revealed that the film will go on floors soon and it will be "bigger" than his earlier films with Sunny. "Yes, my next film is called Lahore: 1947. It's an action film backdrop of partition with Sunny Deol in lead. Sunny and I were trying to make a film for a long time but nothing worked out. But now, I am confident that this film will be bigger than



and a large chunk of film will be shot on this set. It's a very ambitious film. This is my dream. I have been planning to make it for the last 10 years and things have finally fallen into place. I plan to wrap up Lahore: 1947 by May and then proceed to its post-production."

Mooney ton helps Australia whitewash Pakistan

Rawalpindi Express is in the books no more. Former cricketer Shoab Akhtar announced that he has distanced himself from the "dream project" and legally revoked all rights to his life's story. He attributed the cutting of ties to "failure to resolve disagreements amicably" and "constant contractual violations."

On Sunday, he released his official statement on his Twitter account. "Very sadly, I would like to inform all of you that after careful consideration of months, I have decided to disassociate myself from the film Rawalpindi Express and its makers by terminating the agreement through my management and legal team," he wrote.

He said that though he tried to stay afloat, his biopic just didn't work out as he had hoped. "Definitely, it was a dream project and I tried a lot to prevent [this] and my-in-the-end but unfortunately, things were not going well," he said, explaining the reasons. "Failure to resolve disagreements amicably and constant contractual violations finally resulted in us



cutting ties with them." Akhtar said he has formally and legally left the project and will reallocate the film makers' decision to go through with it. "I have left the project after complying [with] all legal protocols of revoking the rights to the story of my life. Severe legal action will be taken if the makers continue to make a biography film and use my name or life story events in any way," he added.

Scheduled to release in November this year, the "first foreign film about



a Pakistani sportsman" was announced in July last year. The director, Muhammad Paraz Qaiser, said he was actualising an idea he had in 2016 and it felt like a dream come true for him.

In November, singer-actor Umair Jaswal confirmed rumours, saying that he will be playing Akhtar but soon after, he changed his decision. This month, he took to Instagram to share that he will not be playing the ex-cricketer's role due to "creative and personal reasons."

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کلاسیفائیڈ اشتہارات

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**I wish everyone a Happy
Republic Day of India!**



Amanda Yeung Collucci
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