

ASIAN JOURNAL

Volume: 18, Issue: 08 | Ph: 604-312-5678 | Email: connect@asianjournal.ca, www.asianjournal.ca

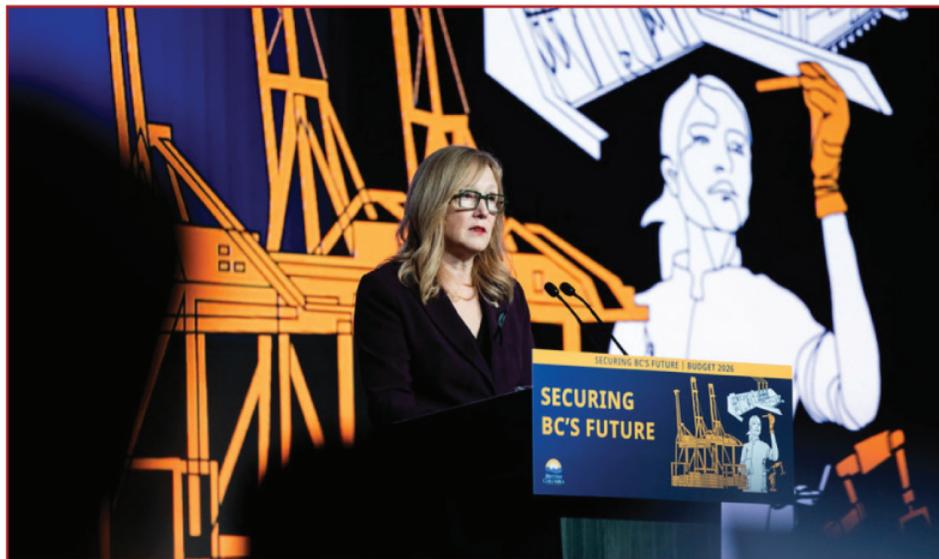


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BUDGET SECURES B.C.'S FUTURE, PROTECTS CRITICAL SERVICES

In a world of ongoing and heightened economic uncertainty, Budget 2026 makes careful choices to protect what matters most to British Columbians through investments to protect services, such as health care, education and social supports, while securing B.C.'s future through skills training and targeted investments to spur economic growth. "Over the past eight years, we have built schools, hospitals and invested in the services British Columbians rely on every day," said Brenda Bailey, Minister of Finance. "Our investments have allowed us to enter these uncertain times from a position of strength, but we need to be realistic about the difficult financial situation we face as a province. We are choosing to safeguard what we've built, while growing our economy to secure good jobs and economic prosperity for people and families." Budget 2026 opens the door further for people to train for good-paying careers in the skilled trades through \$283 million in new



funding over three years. This will expand spaces for in-demand trades training programs, increase per-seat funding to training centres, and enhance the B.C. Employer Training Grant to double apprenticeship seats by 2028-29. A new \$400-million British Columbia strategic investment fund will help B.C. invest quickly in collaborative opportunities and major projects as the federal government invests in Canada's sovereignty. Budget 2026 supports businesses to leverage new opportunities through a new temporary Manufacturing and Processing Invest-

ment Tax Credit for investing in new buildings, machinery and equipment. To support B.C.'s maritime sector, which is the largest in Canada, Budget 2026 extends the Shipbuilding and Ship Repair Industry Tax Credit until the end of 2027. Budget 2026 protects the most critical services that people rely on every day through \$5.1 billion in funding to strengthen health care, K-12 education and supports for people who need care and assistance. This includes funding to recruit and train more health-care professionals, such as doctors, nurses,

and long-term care support workers in communities across B.C. Budget 2026 includes \$634 million in new funding for K-12 education over three years, including a \$167-million investment in the Classroom Enhancement Fund, which will result in more teachers for everyone, as well as special-education teachers and teacher psychologists and counsellors. New investments of \$131 million will support intensive, specialized mental-health and addictions treatment for people with concurrent challenges of complex mental illness, addictions and

acquired brain injuries. It will also fund involuntary treatment beds in Prince George, Maple Ridge and Surrey. A new \$330-million lift to ChildCareBC will protect the child care services families rely on by maintaining lower fees, and the spaces and support for operators and educators achieved over the past eight years. Budget 2026 also provides \$25 million in new funding to support the expansion of child care options on school grounds. With \$475 million in new funding for children and youth with disabilities, families will get direct funding for support services and better access to more service providers in their communities. Budget 2026 provides \$139 million in funding over three years to reduce repeat, violent offending and chronic property crime, and support timely access to justice. Government has exceeded initial targets set in Budget 2025 for expenditure management through operational and program savings. Budget 2026

continues that work by introducing targets to reduce the size of the public sector, and generates new revenue over the three-year fiscal plan. "We are making careful choices to secure B.C.'s future," Bailey said. "We are updating the tax system to raise revenue and prevent cuts to critical services, while keeping B.C. one of the lowest-taxed provinces for working and middle-class families. At the same time, we are reducing government spending and carefully repacing our capital plan to deliver services and infrastructure more efficiently." To improve B.C.'s fiscal outlook and raise revenues to protect critical services, Budget 2026 increases the tax rate of the first income-tax bracket by less than 0.6 percentage points. The average increase will be \$76 in 2026, and more than 40% of taxpayers will see savings when combined with an increase to the B.C. Tax Reduction Credit. The credit offsets the tax change for British Columbians with lower incomes.



Chal Chaliye
SABZI MANDI
Chal Chaliye ...

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'Everyone knows somebody affected' - small Canadian town united in grief after mass shooting

By Nadine Yousif

In the small town of Tumbler Ridge, British Columbia, residents are reeling after a mass shooting left nine people dead, including six children.

"We've been insulated," Tracy Krauss, a local pastor, told the BBC. "A newcomer comes to town and they're locking up, and everyone laughs, because why are you doing that? Nothing happens here."

Krauss said that sense of security now feels painfully naïve.

On Thursday, police released the identities of the victims. They include 12-year-old Zoey Benoit, who was described by loved ones as "the strongest little girl you could meet".

Another 12-year-old victim, Kylie Smith, was "the light" of her family who had dreams of attending art school in the big city, her family said in a statement.

The tragedy has shaken the tight-knit town of about 2,400 people, which is set along a few winding rural roads in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains.

A memorial beside the school grew on Thursday, as people left flowers, teddy bears and handwritten notes in honour of the victims. Tuesday's incident is one of the deadliest mass shootings in Canada, where such attacks have historically been rare.

Support has poured in from across the country, including from Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, who is scheduled to visit the town on Friday.

Many questions remain about the shooting, with investigators still trying to determine



why 18-year-old suspect Jesse Van Rootselaar carried out the attack. Van Rootselaar was found dead from a self-inflicted gunshot wound at the school. Police say Van Rootselaar was born a biological male and began transitioning to being female approximately six years ago.

The suspect's mother and step-brother were among the victims. Both were found dead at a local residence, police said.

Krauss said Van Rootselaar's family were well-known in the community. "That family is victimised, too," she added, noting that surviving relatives would also be grieving.

The father of the suspect issued a statement on Wednesday night to CBC News in which he offered sympathy to the bereaved and said he

was estranged from the suspect.

"To the families who have lost loved ones, and to every person who has been affected by this senseless and unforgivable act of violence, I offer my most heartfelt condolences," said Justin Van Rootselaar.

Police have said the suspect's mother and step-brother were shot and killed at the family home first.

The suspect then headed to Tumbler Ridge Secondary School, where police responded to reports of a shooting at around 13:30 local time (21:30 GMT) on Tuesday.

Inside the school of 160 students, dozens sheltered in classrooms with their teachers as the attack unfolded. Among them was 17-year-old Darian Quist.

Quist said he and 15 others hid in their mechanics class, barricading the door with metal tables. At first, they were unsure why they needed to hide, he said. They later learned that there was an active shooter through an alert on their phones.

They hid for over two hours before Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and SWAT officers safely escorted them out.

Quist said the shooting had left him and his classmates angry, saddened and shocked. "That it happened in a place like this, it doesn't seem real," he said.

"But I know that it is," he added, "that the people who lost their lives are real." Outside the school, parents gathered at a nearby community centre as they anxiously wait-

ed to be reunited with their children. Krauss, the pastor, said she went over to support a close friend whose son was at the school.

Krauss said her friend later learned that their child was among those who were killed.

"It was devastating, I don't know what else to say," she said through tears. "They are gutted. To lose a child is the worst thing in the world."

Krauss added that everyone in the town had been touched by the shooting in some way. "Everybody knows somebody," she said.

"Even for those who haven't lost a loved one, they are still affected." Tumbler Ridge's history is rooted in mining, with the industry still employing many of the town's residents. It is also known for its picturesque scenery,

with tourists drawn to its Unesco-recognised geopark - one of only five in Canada.

That natural beauty is how Bob Zimmer, the federal Conservative member of parliament representing the region, hopes Tumbler Ridge will be remembered, rather than for the tragedy that struck it this week.

"They want to be defined as a beautiful community with beautiful people," Zimmer told the BBC. "But for now, there's a dark cloud. It's just going to take some time to mourn."

Police said they had responded to multiple mental health calls involving Van Rootselaar over the years and had seized firearms from the suspect's home before, though they were later returned after a successful petition by the owner.

Authorities did not say who had owned the previously seized guns, nor how the suspect procured the weapons used in the shooting. They said Van Rootselaar had a gun licence that had expired in 2024.

Zimmer acknowledged that there will be difficult conversations in the aftermath of the shooting, including on whether there is an "obvious need for more substantial mental health support".

But for now, he said the community was focused on grieving.

"We're just here to give some hugs and tell [residents] that they are appreciated, and that there's hope," Zimmer said.

"But I think there are some serious questions that need to be answered after this."

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Volume: 18, Issue: 08 | Ph: 604-312-5678 | Friday, February 20, 2026

Third Conservative Canadian MP defects to Carney's Liberals

A Conservative member of parliament from Alberta has defected to the Liberal Party, bringing Prime Minister Mark Carney closer to a majority in the House of Commons.

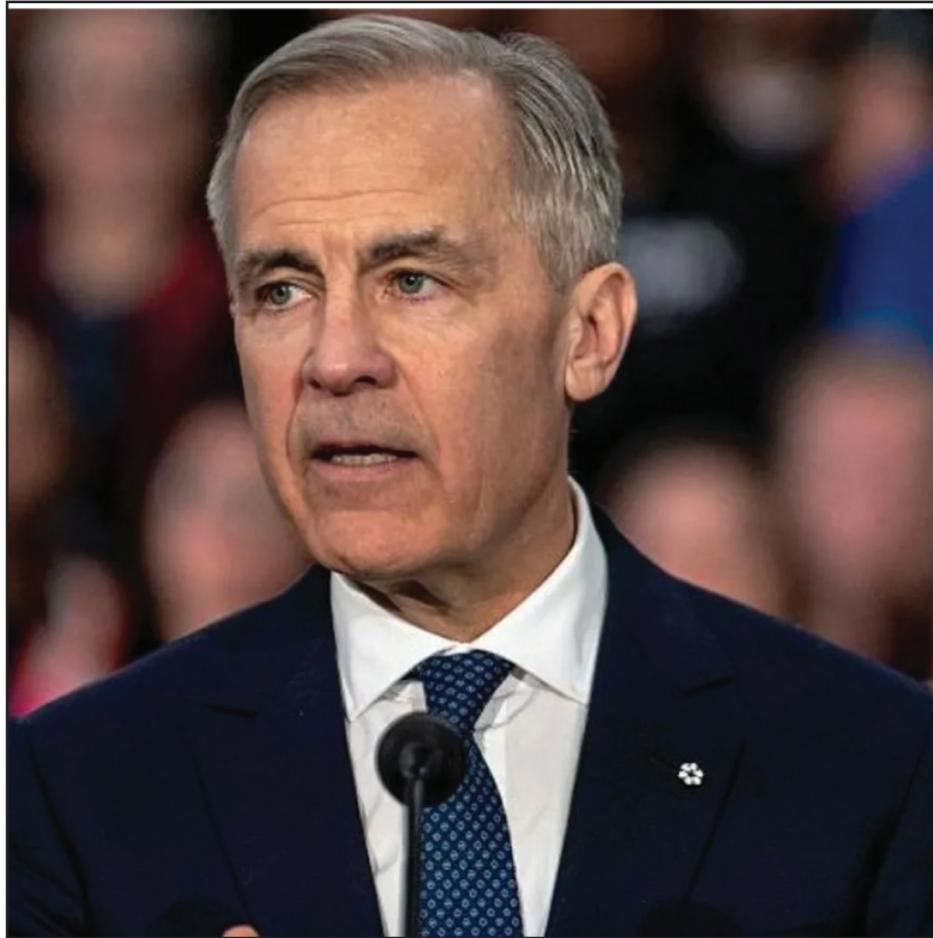
In a post on social media, Carney announced that Matt Jeneroux, who represents a constituency in Edmonton, has joined the Liberal caucus — the third Conservative to do so in recent months.

With the addition of Jeneroux, the Liberals now have 169 seats, putting them just three shy of the required 172 for majority.

Conservative Party leader Pierre Poilievre accused the prime minister of trying to seize a majority “through dirty backroom deals”.

Two other Conservative MPs, Chris d’Entremont of Nova Scotia and Michael Ma of Ontario, had crossed the floor late last year to join Carney’s government.

There are currently three vacant seats in Canada’s parliament: two Toronto-area seats, following the resignations of Liberal MPs Chrystia Freeland and Bill Blair, and one Montreal-area seat that was closely contested by one vote, forcing a



pending by-election. Jeneroux had been representing the Conservatives in Edmonton since 2015 and was elected to the House of Commons in three consecutive elections, making his defection a noteworthy loss for the opposition party. On Wednesday, he

said he made the decision to cross the floor “after further reflection” with his family over the holidays, and “conversations with colleagues and constituents”. After meeting Carney in Edmonton on Monday morning, Jeneroux told reporters that the prime

minister’s speech at the World Economic Forum last month is what ultimately swayed his decision to join the Liberals. “It opened a lot of eyes for Canadians, Albertans and Edmontonians,” he said. In that speech, Carney had urged middle powers

to come together and reject economic coercion by “great powers”.

The speech did not mention US President Donald Trump by name, but was widely interpreted as being aimed at policies of the current Trump administration.

Jeneroux had previously announced his intention to resign from the Conservative caucus in November, saying that he wanted to spend more time with family. At the time he did not mention defecting to the Liberals. In a statement then, he said he ran in the 2025 federal election with hopes the Conservatives would form government, and that he “wanted desperately to play a role in that vision”.

Carney hailed Jeneroux as a “strong voice in international engagement and parliamentary diplomacy” and said he will serve as a “new special advisor on economic and security partnerships”.

“Building a stronger, more resilient, and more independent country will require ambition, collaboration, and occasionally, sacrifice,” Carney wrote. “I am

grateful to Matt and his family that he will continue his service as a strong voice for Edmonton Riverbend in Parliament.”

The latest defection comes a few weeks after the Conservative party voted overwhelmingly to keep Poilievre on as leader, despite his personal unpopularity in the polls.

Both Ma and d’Entremont had cited Poilievre’s leadership as a reason why they chose to leave the party. Late last year, d’Entremont claimed that others in his party “are in the same boat”.

In a post on social media on Wednesday, Poilievre said Conservatives would “continue our fight for a Canada that’s affordable, safe, and self-reliant”.

“Mark Carney is trying to seize a costly Liberal majority government that Canadians voted against in the last election through dirty backroom deals,” he wrote. “Matt Jeneroux has betrayed the people of Edmonton Riverbend who voted for affordable food and homes, safe streets, and a strong resource sector.”

Overnight traffic-pattern changes planned for Highway 1 at Highway 11

As part of work to widen Highway 1 through the Fraser Valley, drivers are advised to expect overnight traffic-pattern changes on Highway 1 at Highway 11 starting as early as Monday, Feb. 9, 2026.

The on-ramp from Highway 11 southbound to Highway 1 westbound will be closed

just before midnight until 4:30 a.m., starting Monday, Feb. 9, until Thursday, Feb. 19. Traffic will be diverted south. Drivers can anticipate a short detour to return to westbound travel, with minor delays.

These closures will allow for the safe clearing of

trees. Some of the work is weather-dependent, so exact timing of the closures is subject to change.

On Highway 11, the speed limit will be reduced to 50 km/h. Drivers are reminded to slow down and use caution, allow extra travel time, obey signs and traffic-control personnel,

and watch for roadside workers.

Motorists should also be aware of intermittent lane closures at the following times, throughout the duration of construction: eastbound: from 9 p.m. until 4:30 a.m. (7 a.m. on weekends)

westbound: from 8:30

p.m. (9 p.m. on weekends) until 4:30 a.m. (7 a.m. on weekends)

Patience from travellers is appreciated during these traffic-pattern changes that allow work to progress safely on this phase of widening Highway 1 through the Fraser Valley.

New legislation will allow people to renew, replace driver's licence online

Proposed amendments to the Motor Vehicle Act will enable ICBC to renew or replace driver's licences, BC Identification (BCID), and photo BC Service Cards online, saving people time. It will also help reduce waiting time for other in-person appointments.

"Too many people have to take time off work or travel long distances just to renew or replace their ID," said Niki Sharma, Attorney General. "By allowing these straightforward transactions online, we're making life more convenient for people, especially those in rural and remote communities. This is part of our work to modernize government services so they're easier, faster and more accessible for everyone in British Columbia."

How it will work
If passed, the proposed amendments will allow eligible drivers to apply through ICBC's website and digital portal for select services, in-



cluding: applications to replace a valid driver's licence that has been lost, destroyed, or damaged; simple renewals for the majority of driver's licence classes, when no changes are required other than extending the expiry date; Eligible drivers with full B.C. licences (classes 1 through 8) will be able to apply to renew or replace their existing licence. ICBC will also be able to offer renewal and replacement of the

stand-alone BCID, stand-alone photo BC Service Card, and the combination Driver's Licence/BC Services Card. Drivers with Class 7 learner's licences can replace a lost or damaged licence, but online renewals will not be available for learner class licences. People with learner's licences will still require an in-person appointment for re-testing to renew their licence. Renewals involving a change in a driver's

information, such as their name or address, will still require an in-person visit. More details on the online renewal process and eligibility criteria will be outlined through regulation. If the amendments are passed and regulations are completed, the online service is expected to begin operating in 2027. Modernizing ICBC services These changes will bring B.C. in line with eight other provinc-

es, including Ontario and Alberta, which already offer some form of online driver's licence renewal. "Being able to renew your driver licence online is an important step forward in the ongoing modernization of ICBC's services," said Jason McDaniel, president and CEO, ICBC. "By expanding our digital options, we're making it more convenient for customers to access the services they need, when and where it works best for them. This enhancement improves accessibility, particularly for those in rural or remote communities, and reflects our commitment to delivering a modern, customer-focused experience for everyone we serve." In addition to saving drivers' time, the service will free ICBC employees to accommodate and reduce wait times for other types of in-person appointments, such as road tests. The online driver's licence service is

part of ICBC's multi-phase, 10-year modernization program designed to expand online services, streamline business processes and upgrade technology. It is anticipated that more driver licensing services will be offered online in the future. These amendments are part of government's commitment to make day-to-day services more accessible and affordable for families throughout British Columbia.

Quick Facts:
In-person appointments will remain available for people who prefer them. Eligibility criteria for online renewals and replacements are still under development, but current conditions that come with a driver's licence renewal will still apply. For example, people with outstanding fines, tickets, other violations and remedial program requirements will not be able to renew online.

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Reinforcing B.C.'s leadership in interprovincial trade

Government is introducing new legislation that, if passed, will make B.C.'s current, time-bound interprovincial recognition framework, the Economic Stabilization (Tariff Response) Act, Part 1, permanent. The proposed Bill 5: Trade Recognition Act would further reinforce B.C.'s leadership in eliminating interprovincial trade barriers. This would ensure that goods and services lawfully sold, used or supplied in any other Canadian province can also be sold, used or supplied in B.C., unless an exception applies. This comprehensive coverage would complement legislation other provinces have passed to remove barriers for the sale of B.C. goods and services. "This legislation would strengthen B.C.'s leadership in reducing barriers and creating opportunities for busi-



nesses of all sizes," said Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Jobs and Economic Growth. "By moving to make mutual recognition permanent, we're helping businesses save time and money, while increasing choice and affordability for people throughout the province. It's a key part of our Look West strategy to diversify trade, be less reliant on the U.S. market and position

B.C. to lead Canada's economic future."

What the legislation does

The new bill would bring British Columbia's commitments under the Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement (CMRA) into force under B.C. law, while offering broader coverage than the CMRA. Under Bill 5, businesses

would no longer need to redo testing, approvals or certification for goods and services that may be sold, used or provided in another province. This will lower compliance costs for businesses, improve time to market, lower prices and increase choice.

The new bill would also give businesses and people assurances that if any B.C. regulatory

measures create barriers to trade, those measures can be removed or overruled. Through regulations, it would provide a concise and complete list of the regulatory exceptions that B.C. will be retaining.

Exceptions

The bill would preserve B.C.'s ability to protect, environmental, consumer, health, safety and other standards. It would not apply to certified occupations under the Labour Mobility Act, which already establishes mutual recognition. General exceptions would also apply to measures relating to Indigenous people, monopolies, taxation and incorporation requirements. Supporting a barrier free Canadian economy B.C. brought together Canada's 10 provinces, three territories and the federal government in unprecedented collaboration to

approve the Canadian Mutual Recognition Agreement (CMRA) on Nov. 19, 2025, making it easier for businesses to sell Canadian-made goods across Canada.

B.C. has also signed economic co-operation arrangements with Ontario, Manitoba and the Yukon on labour mobility, sales of alcoholic beverages and the potential of connecting electrical grids with the Yukon.

The Province remains committed to working with partners to support the free movement of labour, alcohol, and financial and other services to make it easier to trade within Canada.

This work aligns with the Province's Look West strategy, and its goals of diversifying trade, expanding market access, and ensuring B.C. remains a leader in Canada's economic future.

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- S**peech is it slurred or jumbled?
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ਸਟ੍ਰੋਕ ਦੇ ਸੰਕੇਤਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਜਾਣੋ

- F**ace ਚਿਹਰਾ: ਕੀ ਚਿਹਰਾ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਢਿਲਕ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ?
- A**rms ਬਾਹਵਾਂ: ਕੀ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਬਾਹਵਾਂ ਉੱਪਰ ਨੂੰ ਚੁੱਕ ਸਕਦੇ ਹੋ?
- S**peech ਗੱਲ-ਬਾਤ: ਕੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਗੱਲ-ਬਾਤ ਅਸਪਸ਼ਟ ਹੋ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ?
- T**ime ਸਮੇਂ: ਸਮੇਂ ਦੀ ਅਹਿਮੀਅਤ ਸਮਝੋ - ਝਟਪਟ 9-1-1 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ।

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Fast-tracking homes across B.C. with federal support

British Columbia is strengthening its work to build more homes for people through a new partnership with the federal government, through Build Canada Homes.

The combined investments will help accelerate a range of construction-ready projects in B.C., ensuring more homes get built and opened for people sooner.

“This new funding marks a meaningful collaboration with Canada that shows confidence in the work we’re doing here in B.C. to deliver homes for people,” said Christine Boyle, B.C.’s Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs. “With many B.C. projects already prepared to move into construction, this additional support means we can break ground faster and deliver more homes sooner for the people who need them most.”

B.C. will receive \$170 million in capital funding from the federal government through Build Canada Homes. In turn, B.C. will commit as much as \$200 million in capital funding, along with as much as \$27 million per year in operating subsidies for at least 10 years.

While details are being finalized, the Province has proposed a range of projects



that can advance quickly once funding is in place. These are projects that can start construction within the next 12 months. In addition, the federal investment unlocks \$170 million of provincial funding, enabling the Province to explore a future funding partnership to advance at least 400 more homes using innovative tools and modern methods of construction.

“Every Canadian deserves a safe, affordable place to call home and partnerships like this are how we turn our ambition into a reality,” said Gregor Robertson, federal Minister of Housing and Infrastructure and Minister responsible for Pacific Economic Development Canada. “Working together with the Province of British Columbia, your government

is moving projects from plans to shovels in the ground. Through Build Canada Homes, we’re accelerating construction, strengthening communities and delivering real housing solutions that will make life more affordable for families across B.C. and Canada.”

Building more homes faster, supporting tangible results for communities

Since construction-ready projects are being prioritized, people across communities will see the impact of this partnership quickly. Construction of these homes will begin sooner and will be open for residents faster, delivering tangible results in communities.

The partnership is expected to help advance more than 700

supportive and transitional homes. The priority projects are focused on:

helping people transition from homelessness into stable homes

supporting people who need affordable and permanent housing

advancing work in communities with some of the most urgent housing needs.

Accelerating housing development through innovation

This partnership marks the first phase of an ongoing collaboration between the federal government, through Build Canada Homes, and the Province, through BC Housing, with an aim to accelerate the delivery of thousands of affordable homes throughout the province. Through this joint effort, the federal contribution

unlocks additional provincial resources, helping the Province move forward on more homes for people, using innovative tools to speed up delivery, such as the made-in-B.C. Digitally Accelerated Standardized Housing (DASH) program and Canada’s Modern Methods of Construction.

The DASH program streamlines permitting and construction processes that help shorten the time between planning and completion. By using digital review, standardized designs and prefabricated building parts made in Canada, DASH is expected to cut the development process from three years to one. This means more homes can quickly advance to construction-ready stage and eventually open to

people at a much quicker pace.

Quotes:

Vincent Tong, CEO, BC Housing -

“This partnership means that people in communities across B.C. will have homes faster, with hundreds of homes starting construction in the next 12 months. This shows how collaboration across multiple levels of government can make a significant difference in people’s lives.”

Ana Bailão, CEO, Build Canada Homes -

“Build Canada Homes was created to accelerate the delivery of affordable and supportive housing across the country, and this partnership with British Columbia puts that mission into action. By aligning federal investment with construction-ready projects, we can move new homes into communities quickly while laying the groundwork for future phases that will deliver even more impact. This collaboration is about scaling up over time - turning early momentum into sustained results and helping more people across British Columbia access the safe, stable housing they deserve.”

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GINEMA SCENE
By Alan Samuel

Dial M for Murder

(PG)****

Mixed Blessing!

In the aftermath of the tragic Rumbler Ridge school shootings healing is the order of the day. Coming together is paramount for everyone in the community and across British Columbia. On a local smaller level the arts can bring that sense of community together. That was the takeaway presented by the artistic director of the Arts Club Theatre on the opening night of their latest offering Dial M for Murder. Somehow those words resonated as does the presentation. Of this drama now unfolding at the Stanley Alliance Theatre in Vancouver.

Way back when cinephiles may remember British thrill master Alfred Hitchcock achieved more international acclaim and notoriety with his similarly named movie. Now the Arts Club does one better as they team up with a Calgary troupe to pull off a stunning Modern day rendering of this classic whodunnit all done with considerable finesse. None of the cast miss a beat and along with some smart writing this show will keep you fully immersed from start to finish as this fiendish fantasy unfolds. Why even Lieutenant Columbo would have a hard time figuring out who did that dastardly act. Murder most foul indeed. Affairs of the heart can be vexing. With Valentines Day now in our rear view mirror timing is every-

thing. So are romantic liaisons. And indiscretions. Enter the world of Tony and Margot Wendice. Let's just say their marriage may be a bit on the rocks as Tyrell Crews and Emily Dallas so ably demonstrates. Most people know that many marital break-up revolve around extra curricular affairs or money. Both these vices and indiscretions figure oh so prominently as the two lovebirds fight it out. And when a surprise murder occurs there's no telling who did the dirty deed or why.

Catch me if you can is part of the fun in this truly expertly acted fantasy where voyeurism reigns supreme as others enter into the fray. Will justice be served as the countdown to the hangman looms large? Stay tuned. Crimes of passion never seemed so appealing. Director Jillian Kieley delivers a knock-out punch as its gut check time for one of Scotland Yard's finest attempts to get at the truth.

With great support from acting heavyweights Olivia Hutt, Shekhar Paleja and Stafford Perry Dial M for Murder is dangerous fun and top notch entertainment definitely worth seeing.



HARRDY SANDHU TO HEADLINE NEW PUNJABI FILM; GADAR 2

If sources are to be believed, the Pop sensation and actor Harrdy Sandhu is back to his roots as a lead. After last successful stint in Bollywood, Sandhu is set to lead an upcoming Punjabi feature film. The female lead considered opposite Harrdy is Simrat Kaur. As per the sources, the film marks for a fresh pairing and story like never before making this one of the most

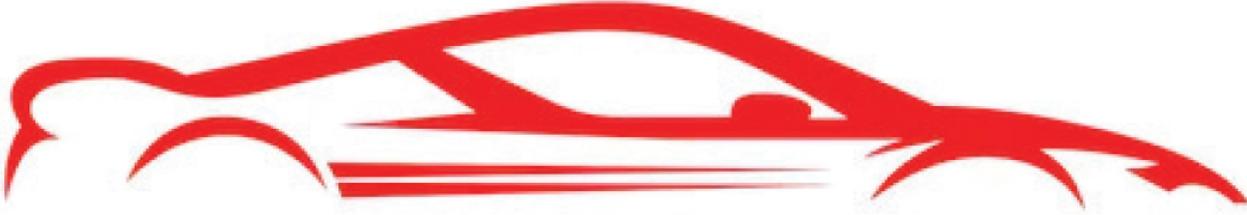
anticipated film in the Punjabi industry this year. While Harrdy has dominated the global music charts, his return to Punjabi cinema marks a significant milestone. His journey in film has been a blend of high-octane drama and sports biopics and now will be seen in her soft boy Era and the fans can't be more excited.



NEW TOXIC TEASER TO DROP ON FEBRUARY 20 AHEAD OF MARCH 19 RELEASE

The film, headlined by Yash, is among the most anticipated releases of 2026, largely because it marks the actor's return to the big screen four years after KGF: Chapter 2. The makers are expected to use the teaser to set the tone for the film's promotional run in the weeks leading up to release. The teaser launch also comes weeks after the film drew controversy over an earlier promotional glimpse unveiled in January. That video, released on Yash's birthday, sparked criticism for depicting an intimate

scene inside a car parked outside a cemetery, followed by a violent shootout within the premises. The location featured religious iconography, including a statue of Archangel Michael, prompting objections from certain groups. The National Christian Federation lodged a formal complaint with the Film Chamber of Commerce and submitted representations to the state government's Chief Secretary and Home Secretary, as well as the Central Board of Film Certification.



AUTO TRENDS

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2026 Lexus LX 700h – Full size luxury Hybrid SUV Excels!

By Veeno Dewan

The Lexus LX Series is the top model in the luxury makers premium full-size SUV range. It shares some DNA from the latest generation Toyota Landcruiser as well as its tough body on frame construction. It is big, bold and delivers true off-road capability combined with an opulent luxury interior.

The 2026 LX carries over largely unchanged from 2025. For Canada, the LX Series arrives in two models - the LX600 and the hybrid LX 700h. The LX600 is powered by a twin-turbocharged 3.4-liter V-6 engine that makes 409 horsepower and 479 pound-feet of torque. A 10-speed automatic transmission and Four-Wheel Drive are both standard. The 2026 Lexus LX 700h model (As tested.) offers a powerful hybrid powertrain with 457 hp and 583 lb-ft torque. The Lexus LX700h is available in distinct trims, including the rugged Overtrail version with enhanced Off-Road capability and 8,000 lb towing capacity.

Canadian pricing starts around \$124,050 for the LX 600 and over \$138,000 for the LX 700h. There is also a super luxury swanky four-seat version called the LX 700h Executive VIP model available from around \$173,255.

The Overtrail+ version (\$116,685 - \$138,191) provides more off-road equipment such as updated suspension and beefy all-terrain tires. It also adds underbody skid plates to help protect



the engine and transmission, a hill-descent crawl-control function, and exterior cameras to create a view beneath the truck. We tested a LX700h with the optional (\$11,644) Luxury Package comprising of: Head-Up Display, 25 Speaker Mark Levinson Premium Audio System, Semi-Aniline Leather Seats, Heated Leather Wrapped Wood Steering Wheel, Digital Display Rear View Mirror Front and Massage Seats (Driver & Passenger). Also added was: 2 Row, 4-Zone Independent Automatic Climate Control, Dual Rear Seat Entertainment System, and Blind Spot Monitoring. Pricing for our tester was \$138,191 and boost-

ed to \$162,622 with the option packages, Federal Luxury tax, (\$10,437) destination and delivery (\$2,205.).

Cabin interiors are ultra high-quality, with comfortable seating, plenty of leg, head and elbow room. The plethora of standard luxury equipment includes: multiple digital interfaces, a power-folding third row, ambient lighting, and a center console cool box and much more.

The dual-touchscreen arrangement is unusual with an upper 12.3-inch touchscreen for infotainment and includes wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Connectivity. The lower 7.0-inch touchscreen is used for climate and drive mode

settings. The driver also gains a dedicated 8.0-inch gauge display. Six USB ports and a wireless charging pad are also provided up front. The LX 700h, has only a small luggage compartment behind the third row seats offering 343 Litres of trunk space behind the rear seats and that opens up to 1,322 Liters with the rear seats folded down.

On the road - The hybrid powertrain offers decent enough performance, from the 3.4 L twin-turbo V6, and the small electric motor fitted between the engine and its 10-speed transmission. Combined with power from a large battery pack beneath the floor there is an impressive 457 hp

and an excellent 583 lb-ft of torque. Acceleration is quick off the line for such a large heavy vehicle. On highway ride is impeccable with a silky smooth sensation and ultimate comfort. There is standard four-wheel-drive system, low-range gearing, and a locking center differential as bonus off-road equipment. Off-road capability is excellent.

Downsides are few - the sheer bulk of the LX700h makes for so-so handling on the highway and it is cumbersome in urban areas. And of course it is expensive. Natural Resources Canada (NRCAN) rate the 2026 Lexus LX 700h hybrid estimated fuel consumption at City: 12.5 L/100

km, highway: 10.7 L/100 km and Combined: 11.7 L/100 km.

Plus points are the sheer luxury quotient of the LX 700h - the imposing presence, the cossetting truly opulent interior, outfitted with sumptuous in leather, wood, and with every comfort and convenience option imaginable is also a draw. It is expensive - but the price of entry guarantees a ownership experience beyond compare.

2026 Lexus LX 700h. Price as tested - \$162,622 with option packages, Federal Luxury tax, destination and delivery. More information at www.lexus.ca



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