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FRIDAY, JANUARY 16, 2025



Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney inspects an honour guard during an official welcoming at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, Thursday.

SEAN KILPATRICK / THE CANADIAN PRESS

Journalists told to expect movement on tariffs after Carney meeting in Beijing

## 'New era' relations with China

KYLE DUGGAN

**B**EIJING — Canada is entering a “new era of relations” with China and the stage is set for talks on ways the two countries can become “strategic partners,” Prime Minister Mark Carney said Thursday.

The prime minister made the comments as he was welcomed in Beijing by the second and third most powerful figures in China's political system: Premier Li Qiang and Zhao Leji, chairman of the standing committee of the National People's Congress.

As with most high-level meetings between foreign leaders, most of Thursday's talks took place in secret. Journalists were allowed into the room to hear opening remarks for some of the meetings, and to

observe a signing ceremony for a number of memorandums of understanding.

“From energy to agriculture to people-to-people ties to multilateralism to issues on security, we believe that the spirit and the substance of these discussions, and these agreements, will provide great benefit to each of our peoples,” Carney said at the start of one of his meetings.

Carney added Ottawa hopes this renewal will become an “example to the world of co-operation amidst a time globally of division and disorder.”

Premier Li hailed what he called a “turnaround” in bilateral ties with Canada, calling it a “new starting point” for the two countries.

Li also said Carney's meeting with President Xi Jinping today will pave the way for “upward growth” in the

relationship, said the live translation provided by the Chinese government.

Before the trip, Canadian officials told reporters to expect possible movement on — but not an end to — the tariff dispute. China imposed steep tariffs on Canadian agriculture products, including canola and peas, after Canada imposed a 100 per cent tariff on Chinese electric vehicles.

Industry Minister Mélanie Joly said Thursday Carney will have more to say about the state of those tariff negotiations after he meets with Xi.

“There's still negotiation happening and of course the prime minister will be able to answer your question tomorrow,” Joly said during a media scrum in Beijing when asked if she thinks a tariff breakthrough is

possible.

Asia Pacific Foundation vice-president Vina Nadjibulla said Thursday it is significant there is no tariff deal yet.

“It's unusual to have things go down to the wire like this,” she said.

“It shows how difficult these discussions have been because they're negotiating these documents until the last minute and they're still not telling us what to expect on the EVs and canola, and pointing out that discussions are ongoing.”

Carney said Thursday he is “heartened by the leadership of President Xi” and the “speed with which our relationship has progressed in recent months.”

● CARNEY, CONTINUED ON A2

Hotel inspected frequently in year before fire

## City was aiming to seize Manwin

JOYANNE PURSAGA

**I**N the year between an order to force tenants out of the dilapidated Manwin Hotel and the building's fiery demise this week, the City of Winnipeg says it regularly inspected the site and had begun a process to seize it.

“We've issued lots of orders for this property while it was under this ownership.... We have 53 onsite inspections from the time it was vacant over 33 different dates,” said Corey Burgess, acting administrative co-ordinator for bylaw enforcement for the city's community services department.

Nine licensing and bylaw enforcement orders were issued since the property became vacant. Burgess said they were linked to problems such as graffiti and garbage piling up, some of which were corrected.

The city ordered tenants to move out of the building at 655 Main St., last January, citing extensive safety concerns, including structural and fire-protection problems. Its owner lost an appeal of that decision in February.

Last year, one resident estimated 32 people lived in the building at the time of the vacate order.

A fire destroyed the building early Wednesday.

The city says it has also taken the first steps to seize the property. Through its tax sale process, the city can take over the title of a structure with unpaid property taxes.

“The taxes are owing.... (But) before the city would be in a position to apply to take title through tax sale, we're looking at probably in excess of another year or more,” said Kelly Happychuk, chief of permits and inspections for Winnipeg planning, property and development.

Traditionally, the city could start that process once someone fails to pay property taxes for three years, which city council recently reduced to two years. That change should shorten the overall process from five years to four.

Owners are legally responsible for maintaining their properties, and the city typically won't order a demolition unless there is an immediate danger, such as the risk of collapse, said Happychuk.

A city contractor will demolish and clean up the Manwin site, though work paused late Wednesday afternoon because the property appears to contain asbestos, said Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service Chief Christian Schmidt.

A provincially approved safety plan is needed before site remediation can resume, though Schmidt stressed the city plans to proceed as quickly as possible.

“Our department is going to do everything that we can to ensure that this work can be expedited,” he said.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

● CONTINUED ON A3

● MORE COVERAGE ON A3

## Businesses line up for security upgrade rebate

GABRIELLE PICHÉ

**N**EW security cameras were at the top of Michael Paille's wish list.

His shop — Cobra Collectibles — recently upgraded the interior cameras. The cameras outside are next.

The Sargent Avenue hub is the latest in a chain of enterprises to get a security refresh. Throughout Manitoba — over the course of a month — at least 650 businesses have applied for a provincial government rebate to cover security upgrades.

“I think every year it continues to grow,” said Tyler Slobogian, an analyst

with the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, when considering the number of companies installing security measures.

Nearly all of the CFIB's 5,000-plus Manitoba members have some form of security — cameras, locked doors, shields at the till, Slobogian said.

The CFIB was among the associations pushing for a security rebate program from the provincial government. The province announced such a program, with a \$300 rebate, in June 2024.

Following popular demand, the government unveiled a new rebate pro-

gram last month. Businesses can receive \$2,500 rebates; homeowners and tenants are eligible for \$300 cheques. The province slated \$10 million for the program, to cover expenses such as broken windows and new security cameras.

Businesses had claimed about \$698,000 as of Thursday.

An influx of restaurants is on the way, as the industry's busy season has ended, said Shaun Jeffrey, executive director of the Manitoba Restaurant and Foodservices Association.

“Businesses (are) able to support a safer... environment for their staff and

patrons,” Jeffrey said. “Overall, (I'm) very, very happy.”

The restaurant association is a collaborator on the rebate program. It tracked a spike in crime against eateries during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal was to create a “seamless” rebate application process, Jeffrey said.

“I'm hearing (of) very little hiccups,” he added.

● REBATE, CONTINUED ON A2



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