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The Federal Landscape: What Looming Changes Mean for New Canadians

Canada's Prime Minister Mark Carney speaks about tariffs at a press conference on Parliament Hill, in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, on Thursday. (REUTERS)

Montreal, Sept. 24, 2026 Canada's immigration system is undergoing its most aggressive structural overhaul in decades, forcing prospective newcomers and temporary residents to navigate a dramatically narrowing path to permanent residency. Led by a strict federal mandate to realign population growth with infrastructure capacity, a series of rapid policy shifts has effectively ended the era of uncapped growth.Under the finalized 2026–2028 Immigration Levels Plan, the federal government has capped permanent resident (PR) admissions at a stabilized 380,000 annually through 2028—a steep decline from the record highs of previous years. Concurrently, Ottawa is enforcing a hard ceiling on non-permanent residents, aiming to

See Page 2 The Federal Landscape

Quebec's Election Horizon: Education, Integration, and the Language Debate

From left, Québec solidaire co-spokesperson Ruba Ghazal, Parti Québécois Leader Paul St-Pierre Plamondon, Coalition Avenir Québec Leader Christine Frechette, Quebec Conservative Leader Éric Duhaime and Quebec Liberal Leader Charles Milliard pose before the start of a leaders debate in Montreal on Wednesday, Sept. 23, 2026. Quebec votes in a provincial election on Oct. 5, 2026. Photo by: The Canadian Press/Graham Hughes

Montreal, Sept. 24, 2026 - Following yesterday's highly charged Radio-Canada leaders' debate, the race for the October 5 provincial election has entered its critical final stretch. With the five major party leaders facing off, the intersection of immigration caps, identity politics, and mandatory French integration emerged as the definitive battleground for Quebec's future.The studio encounter highlighted a sharp ideological divide over how strictly the

See Page 4 Quebec's election

From Girouard Avenue to the Future: Backing Gilmore Academy's Mission to End Immigrant Brain Waste

Montreal, September 24, 2026 — By Z.F. Kharroubi - Following last month's front-page coverage highlighting the historic visit of MNA Michelle Setlakwe, the high-stakes transition of our 37-year-old institution into the non-profit Académie des Arts et Sciences Sociales Gilmore (Gilmore Academy of Arts and Social Sciences) has encountered a major administrative hurdle.

An unyielding digital submission portal, Étape, prematurely locked out our permit application on September 1st due to an ambiguous daytime deadline that was never explicitly indicated. This technical eviction occurred despite emergency, time-stamped proof of our technical struggles sent at 12:35 AM. Because the platform abruptly froze, the system prevented us from finishing critical data entry fields, leaving an otherwise meticulously prepared application technically incomplete in the eyes of automated software.

A timeless memory of youthful hope: Founder Zenaida Ferry-Kharroubi (smiling, center), who arrived in Quebec in 1965, celebrates a festive Christmas party with about 30 all-female students at the original Gilmore Business Institute campus on Girouard Avenue circa 1991. Thirty-seven years later, as the Academy fights a rigid digital portal to secure its MEQ accreditation, this treasured photograph serves as a moving reminder of the school's deep community roots and its enduring mission to help immigrants achieve elite professional integration in Canada. (Photo: Gilmore Archives)

Without this vital Ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ) permit for the 2027–2028 school year, Gilmore Academy faces a devastating two-year delay in offering formal credit programs. This rigid gatekeeping prevents us from accessing government grants. It blocks us from providing immigrant students with the essential accredited bridging courses in French, Mathematics, and History required to enter CEGEPs or universities. Most critically, an unyielding delay threatens the very heart of our institution: our elite faculty. We have meticulously assembled an unmatched turn-key academic team—including university educators with dual Doctorates and active OIIQ-registered nursing instructors. If the Ministry's bureaucratic error causes a prolonged freeze, we risk losing these highly qualified, specialized educators who cannot afford to sit in financial

See Page 2 Gilmore Academy

From Page 1 Gilmore Academy

From Page 1 Gilmore Academy

limbo and will inevitably be forced to take their talents to other institutions.

This dilemma forces a critical question upon our province's leaders: Do we bow to rigid gatekeeping, where software errors dictate the fate of human lives, or do we champion a humanized system that evaluates institutions on their community impact, history, and intent? An educational institution is not a series of binary codes; it is a living ecosystem of teachers, students, and dreams. When we successfully combat immigrant brain waste, the entire mainstream Canadian society benefits from fully integrated, highly skilled professionals.

Backed by an official intervention and a signed procuration from the office of MNA Michelle Setlakwe, we are currently launching a formal administrative appeal. We are requesting a reasonable deadline extension to log back into the Étape portal and complete our data entry, bypassing the digital glitch that held our paperwork hostage.

This mission is deeply personal. As a founder who arrived in Quebec 61 years ago in 1965 at the age of 25, I spent decades contributing to major corporations and pursuing advanced industrial education at McGill University. When systemic provincial shifts in 1980 abruptly abolished business education profiles—forcing seasoned educators into years of unfulfilling substitute roles—I refused to let my professional integrity be compromised.

Instead of quietly retiring, I chose to practice my own philosophy of education. Inspired by the rigorous standards of the Harvard Business model, I established the Gilmore Business Institute on Girouard Avenue. We did not set out to just run a school; we set out to build an elite academy of excellence.

Today, that legacy has evolved into the non-profit Académie des Arts et Sciences Sociales Gilmore. We refuse to let an unyielding computer server halt a 37-year legacy built on over six decades of dedication to this province. We now call upon our community to join forces with us, and we urge the MEQ to look past the frozen portal screen, see the human faces behind our files, and grant the extension necessary to keep Gilmore Academy building futures.#

From Page 1 - The Parliament Landscape

slash the temporary population to less than 5% of Canada's total population by the end of next year.For the hundreds of thousands of international students and temporary workers currently in the country, the message from the federal landscape is clear: the safety nets of broad, flexible work authorizations are being dismantled in favour of highly selective, employer-linked, and economically targeted streams.

The Temporary Resident Squeeze: 1.4 Million Permits Set to Expire

The immediate crisis point for new Canadians lies in the massive volume of time-bound visas. An estimated 1.4 million temporary work permits are scheduled to expire across Canada. With the federal government scaling back transition paths like the Post-Graduation Work Permit (PGWP) and general spousal open work permits, thousands face an uncertain future if they cannot secure specialized provincial backing.This shift is reinforced by the implementation of Bill C-12 (the Strengthening Canada's Immigration System and Borders Act), which granted Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) sweeping powers to pause or cancel entire blocks of applications in the public interest.

Furthermore, IRCC has altered its day-to-day adminis-trative operations. The department is utilizing stricter officer discretion, heavier document scrutiny, and instant application rejections for minor inconsistencies. General "open" work visas are actively being phased out in favour of strictly vetted, employer-linked permits designed to address precise operational deficits rather than broad corporate hiring

Key Policy Metric	Previous Baseline (2024/2025)	New 2026 Federal Cap
Permanent Resident Admissions	483,640	380,000
International Student Visas	Uncapped / High Volumes	155,000
Temporary Worker Arrivals	Elevated Market Intakes	230,000
Temporary Resident Population Target	7.6% of population	< 5% by late 2027

Highly Selective Pipelines and the Housing Hurdle

To secure permanent status under the new framework, applicants must tightly align themselves with explicit federal high-skill categories. The Express Entry pipeline has shifted to prioritize highly localized economic needs, specifically rewarding applicants with verified experience in healthcare, skilled trades, transport occupations, and French-language proficiency. A newly introduced stream has even carved out PR allocations for foreign military recruits filling critical personnel shortages within the Canadian Armed Forces.

While these policy bottlenecks tighten, newcomers are simulta-neously confronting a brutal domestic real estate market. According to a newly published Royal LePage Market Survey, 80% of newcomers still view Canadian homeownership as an essential financial investment, yet severe affordability barriers mean an increasing number are forced to rely on alternative pathways like rent-to-own programs to secure their first primary residence.

As federal immigration targets shrink to address these exact housing and infra-structural deficits, the bar for entry has never been higher. Success for new Canadians in this evolving ecosystem completely depends on impeccable documentation, early strategic planning, and immediate integration into Canada's highest-priority labour sectors.

To enforce this, IRCC is aggressively increasing its economic intake share to 64%. This includes a dedicated "TR-to-PR" transition pipeline designed to fast-track up to 33,000 in-Canada temporary workers who are already locally integrated into critical, high-demand sectors like healthcare, construction, and agriculture.#

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

A Month of Reflection on Violence, Memory and the Quiet Cruelty of Bureaucracy

Zenaida Ferry-Kharroubi

The month of September has always carried an immense emotional weight, forcing us into a state of collective and deeply personal reflection. This year, as the world commemorates the somber 25th anniversary of the September 11 terrorist attacks, our minds naturally return to the unimaginable tragedies that have transpired in our shared human history. We remember the nearly 3,000 innocent lives lost on that clear morning in 2001, an overt, catastrophic act of violence against humanity that permanently altered the global landscape and shattered our collective sense of safety.

As an educator, and publisher, I look at the world today and feel heavily affected by the thoughts of these continuous global conflicts—cycles of overt violence that seemingly have no end. But as I sit at my desk this month, balancing the heavy legacy of global history against my own current reality, I am forced to confront a parallel truth: there is more than one way to inflict violence upon human dignity.

While history records the physical violence that shatters cities, we rarely document the quiet, structural violence of bureaucratic gatekeeping.

For the past ten years, I have been locked in an exhausting, uphill battle against the administrative machinery of the Ministry of Education of Quebec (MEQ). To conform to their rigid, ever-shifting regulatory demands, I took a massive leap of faith this year. I transitioned our 37-year-old historic institution into a federal non-profit corporation—the Académie des Arts et Sciences Sociales Gilmore—and moved our operations as a non-profit federally incorporated learning center on July 15, 2026. I have poured an enormous amount of capital, personal energy, and non-stop labor since May into this expansion: signing multi-year leases, purchasing surety bonds, and compiling mountains of compliance paperwork.

Yet, on September 1st, the entirety of that lifelong dedication was brought to a screeching halt by an unyielding digital portal, Étape. Because a system deadline closed earlier in the day rather than at midnight, a technical portal lockout effectively dismissed decades of proven educational service. Despite an emergency message time-stamped at 12:35 AM proving that I had successfully completed the initial pages of the application, the system closed its gates.

This is where the two ideas intersect. Overt violence destroys physical landscapes; but rigid, faceless bureaucracy quietly destroys human potential. It is a subtle, systemic violence that minimizes human lives into arbitrary digital timestamps.

As a woman who immigrated to Canada in 1965, dedicated 25 years to teaching in the public school board, and spent 36.5 years leveraging my own mortgage equity to build an independent school, I am forced to wonder: How many other immigrant leaders have been quietly victimized by this exact phenomenon?

Socio-economic research in Canada has long documented the tragedy of "immigrant brain waste"—the multi-billion-dollar systemic failure where elite doctors, scientists, and university-level educators are forced to sit on the sidelines of our economy due to opaque credential barriers. Academic studies show that highly educated immigrants are routinely pushed into self-employment and independent entrepreneurship not as a first choice, but as a necessary detour around institutions that refuse to recognize talent acquired elsewhere.

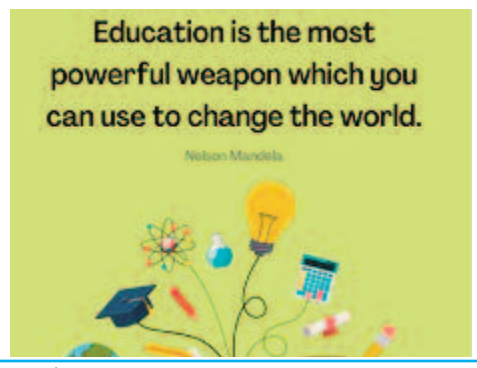
Our organizational structure is anchored by university-level faculty with dual Doctorates in Education and Humanities, complemented by licensed nurses who hold active membership with the Ordre des infirmières et infirmiers du Québec (OIIQ). We welcome the opportunity to work alongside regulatory authorities to ensure our turnkey institutional programs meet all established criteria for approval.

We have taken our fight to the National Assembly, securing an official intervention through the office of MNA Michelle Setlakwe. We are waiting to see if Quebec's administrative structures can be humanized, or if they will remain resolutely rigid. Only months ago, on July 16, the National Assembly formally presented me with official minutes recognizing my life's work as an educational pioneer, with MNA Sona Lakhoyan Olivier publicly naming me "une femme exceptionnelle."

As we navigate this current age of rapidly evolving Artificial Intelligence, our youth are facing an unprecedented technological landscape. To combat future workforce displacement and ongoing brain waste, Gilmore Academy is preparing to launch a new series of AI Tech Career Orientation Seminars in early November to mark our 37th year. We aim to rally our young people, giving them an orderly, structured roadmap to navigate these fast-developing technologies and secure the elite careers of tomorrow.

If an educational pioneer backed by the National Assembly can be locked out by a digital glitch, the system is broken. But if a community allows its own pioneering newspaper and its historic academy to struggle in isolation while spending lavishly on temporary galas, then our internal foundations are fractured as well.

Bureaucracy must learn to bend to human reality, but a diaspora must also learn the power of institutional solidarity. Gilmore Academy has the elite faculty, we have the 3,000-square-foot facility, and we have the students waiting at our door. We will continue our political appeal, we will push forward with non-profit partnerships, and we will continue to print the truth as it is our responsibility.



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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

September 15, 2026

WE SAY NO TO PETITION TARGETING CANADA'S HERITAGE MONTHS

Dear Editor,

Allow me to thank the North American Filipino Star for its robust efforts to aid the national campaign urging Parliament to enact a Canadian Chinese Heritage Month.

United Against Hate Canada was proud to have worked with the Montreal Chan Associations to launch this campaign. Our House of Commons petition garnered 2446 names and will be tabled by Member of Parliament Michal Ma (Markham - Unionville) at some point in the next month.

We have grown to 41 sponsoring organizations, including the Filipino Heritage Society of Montreal and the Federation of Filipino Canadian Associations of Quebec. Filipinos are immensely proud of their own heritage month celebrated every June. That came about via a motion adopted by Parliament in 2018 and now Filipinos are standing in solidarity with the Chinese community.

Canada currently has 69 recognized commemorative days and months and the Chinese community in Canada, which numbers 1.8 million persons, desires the same recognition that others enjoy.

We are pleased to advise you that to date 17 cities including Toronto, Burnaby, Brampton, Vaughan, Markham, Richmond Hill and Cape Breton Regional Municipality, have adopted formal motions to support a Canadian Chinese Heritage Month. We have urged Montreal to follow suit.

However, we write today to alert your readers and Canada's diverse communities that there are forces in the Conservative Party that are working to undermine the concept of heritage months.

A petition sponsored by Conservative Member of Parliament Jamal Jivani claims that there are too many heritage months. The petition argues that these officially recognized days and months are meaningless and asks Parliament to end heritage months and instead recognize a more homogeneous Canadian identity.

One might want to attribute this to the more fringe elements in the Conservative Party but recently during a Town Hall meeting in British Columbia, party leader Pierre Poilievre also added fuel to the fire by saying there were too many federally recognized heritage months.

Heritage months highlight our unique cultures while cherishing our shared values as Canadians. Heritage Months have permitted our diverse communities to celebrate their uniqueness and invite other Canadians to learn about their culture and origins. Heritage months allow all of us to savour the art, music and cuisine of Canada's

See Page 18 Letter to the Editor

From page 1 Quebec's Election

province should police language acquisition. While the opposition questioned the practical strain on adult education infrastructure, the prevailing consensus remains absolute: mastery of the French language is the non-negotiable currency of legal survival and permanent residency in Quebec.

The leaders of Quebec's five major parties took part in a two-hour French-language debate at the Nouvelle Maison de Radio-Canada in Montreal on Saturday evening (Sept. 23, 2026).

After the debate, they took questions from reporters on topics including a potential referendum and their outreach to the English-speaking community. They also elaborated on topics they wished they'd had more time for, such as immigration and elder care.

During the debate, leaders discussed Quebec's immigration policy. Their parties are proposing annual immigration caps ranging from 45,000 to 70,000.

Leaders discussed housing and economic insecurity, with each leader touching on their strategy for responding to the Trump administration's tariffs.

Key takeaways from the debate: What we heard — and what we didn't

Benjamin Shingler

Well, the third and final debate is over. Here are a few takeaways.

- Trump and the trade war, not surprisingly, featured prominently in the debate. We heard from the parties about how they would best manage the cost of living and Quebec's finances in tumultuous times.
- On health care, the parties proposed different solutions to improve frontline care. Fréchette was on the defensive after her party spent the last eight years in power, with Milliard listing off the lengthy wait times at multiple ERs earlier today.
- The possibility of a third referendum under a PQ government didn't dominate discussion, but at one point St-Pierre Plamondon was asked if he would hold a referendum after Trump leaves office — even if the polls suggest the "No" side will win again. Although he didn't answer directly, he didn't walk back his promise.
- The topic of immigration generated some fiery debate, with each party outlining their well-entrenched position. Three out of the five parties want to cut immigration levels compared to last year, and another (the Liberals) still won't give a clear answer on their target. Only QS wants to increase the level of newcomers.
- One thing we heard nothing about: Issues affecting Indigenous communities. The leaders also didn't say much on the environment.

PQ inches toward majority territory in new Quebec poll

CAQ support continues to retreat in a Léger-Québecor poll published Tuesday.

PQ inches toward majority territory in new Quebec poll

CAQ support continues to retreat in a Léger-Québecor poll published Tuesday.

Paul St-Pierre Plamondon's Parti Québécois remains in the best position to form a new government, a Léger-Québecor poll published Tuesday shows, with indicators showing the party a hair's breadth away from the votes required for a majority.

Conducted between Sept. 18 and 21, the online survey of 1,001 Quebec adults gives the PQ 29 per cent of voter intentions, similar to the party's performance throughout the campaign.

But it shows the Coalition Avenir Québec in retreat, at 20 per cent. The result is one point shy of the 21 per cent scored in last week's Léger-Québecor survey, but well behind the 24 per cent result in a Léger survey earlier in the campaign. (Other polling houses gave the CAQ better results, including a late-August Synopsis poll for La Presse that placed the party at 27 per cent

Source: By Jack Wilson

September 22, 2026, published in the Gazette online edition.

Key municipal, community, and safety developments are shaping the conversation across the Montreal area

Urban Development & Public Input

Opposition to Municipal "Superpowers":

- Urban planners and community organizations from boroughs like Ville-Marie, Côte-des-Neiges—Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, and Verdun are vocally opposing a province-granted fast-track authority. The regulation allows boroughs to bypass public referendums on zoning, which critics argue is being used by private developers to push market-priced housing projects over affordable housing.

Public Safety & Local Crime

- Tragic Downtown Homicide: The Montreal community is mourning Leïla Ben Salem, a 45-year-old federal employee who was murdered in her Ville-Marie apartment on Tuesday afternoon. The attack occurred while she was actively engaged in a live work-related video meeting. While police investigators have questioned a person of interest, no arrests have been made as the homicide investigation continues.
- Brawl in Villeray–Saint-Michel–Parc-Extension: A 50-year-old man remains in critical condition following an assault early Thursday morning. The victim was struck multiple times while attempting to break up a large street fight near Pie-IX Boulevard and 44th Street. No suspects have been arrested.

Environment & Neighborhood

- Nuisances Rivière-des-Prairies Air Quality Dispute: The City of Montreal has officially walked away from mediation with the animal rendering company Sanax. Residents have long complained about severe odors, and the city is now requesting that the provincial environment ministry intervene directly to force an upgrade to the facility's air filtration systems.

South Shore Safety Alert

- Longueuil Sexual Assault Investigation: Police on the South Shore are appealing to the public for information regarding 21-year-old Kevon John McAnuff, who faces multiple charges for separate sexual assaults on the South Shore. Authorities believe there may be additional victims in the broader metropolitan area and are urging anyone with information to contact investigators.

Infrastructure & Transit Disruptions

Major Overpass Reconstruction:

- Transport Quebec has announced a fresh round of overnight road closures slated to begin next week. Significant disruptions will hit Highway 13 (Chomedey) at the Highway 520 (Côte-de-Liesse) interchange. Running from September 28 through November 2, these closures are required for the next phase of the Highway 520 overpass reconstruction project.

Local commuters should brace for delays and watch for marked detour signs.Metro Access Closures: Adding to transit strain, commuters are reminded that a major downtown Montreal metro station's main entrance has begun a grueling 18-month closure to allow for extensive structural updates. This is part of a broader gridlock warning as the city manages 42 distinct major construction projects simultaneously this autumn.

Local Healthcare & Social Infrastructure

- St. Mary's Emergency Room Expansion: In a massive boost to local community healthcare, a $16.3-million renovation project is officially underway at St. Mary's Hospital. The funding is dedicated specifically to upgrading and modernizing the hospital's heavily congested Emergency Room, which serves a vast portion of the localized population.
- Daycare System Delays: Working parents are facing logistical friction as the Outaouais daycare sector and broader provincial child-care networks report that Quebec's newly rolled-out online registration portal is severely dragging down and slowing the admissions process for local toddlers.

Language Rights & Civic Debates

- The Fight for Municipal Bilingual Status: Language tension remains at the forefront of regional civic life. Godmanchester Mayor Judith Fouquet is actively pushing back against strict provincial restrictions introduced by Bill 96. The mayor is seeking an elusive official bilingual status for her town southwest of Montreal. Under the new laws, local municipalities are heavily restricted from communicating in English unless they hold a specific demographic status. Anglophone residents argue that the current government rules make them feel alienated and cut off from basic, localized administrative flyers and town hall documentation.

Community Events & Culture

- Free Photo Exhibition: For those looking to support international causes, Time Out Market Montréal is currently playing host to a powerful, free photo exhibition highlighting the lived experiences and educational journeys of young girls in Mali.
- 50th Anniversary of the 1976 Olympics: History buffs can head to the Bibliothèque Maisonneuve on Sunday, September 27. The library is hosting a community conference celebrating the 50th anniversary of the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games, detailing how the massive construction of the Olympic Stadium fundamentally changed the surrounding neighborhoods.#

Philippine Report: The Duterte Impeachment and Political Shifts

The ongoing power struggle within the highest echelons of the Philippine government has reached a critical bottleneck. The fracturing of the "UniTeam" alliance between President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and Vice President Sara Duterte has culminated in a high-stakes constitutional showdown.

The Impeachment Trial of VP Sara Duterte

On September 23, 2026, the Senate impeachment trial of Vice President Sara Duterte hit an unprecedented turning point on Day 29.

Photo from GMA News on line

- The Voting Threshold Rules Modified: The Senate impeachment court voted 13 to 1 to pass a motion that redefines the constitutional two-thirds requirement needed for a conviction. Initially, 16 votes (out of the full 24-member Senate) were required. The court has now ruled that the baseline will only count senator-judges who are capable of participating.
- The New Numbers: Because four senators are currently unable to participate due to ongoing legal battles or hiding from arrest warrants, the required votes to convict have effectively dropped from 16 to 14. Analysts note this drastically increases the likelihood of a conviction. If convicted, Duterte will be permanently barred from holding public office, dismantling her planned run for the 2028 presidential election.
- The Boycott and the Dissenter: Six pro-Duterte senators—including Imee Marcos, Bong Go, and Robin Padilla—boycotted the vote. Presiding Officer Francis "Chiz" Escudero cast the lone dissenting vote, arguing against altering the strict 16-vote standard.
- The Subpoenas Expand: The court issued a formal subpoena directing Davao City Mayor Sebastian "Baste" Duterte (the Vice President's brother) to testify regarding suspicious local government transactions with Gencorp Industries Inc., a company linked to the Vice President's asset disclosures.

Escalating Constitutional Warfare

The political battle has instantly spilt over from the Senate floor into the judiciary:

- Supreme Court Appeal: On September 24, 2026, a formal petition was filed before the Supreme Court demanding they declare the Senate's threshold reduction null and void. Defense lawyers are aggressively pushing for a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) to halt the trial entirely.
- The Defense Pivot: Despite the defense threatening to walk away from what they call an illegitimate process, Senate President Sherwin Gatchalian confirmed that the trial will legally proceed with or without the defense team present, provided the Senate maintains a quorum.
- The Prosecution Front: High-profile House prosecutor Rep. Leila de Lima led the oral arguments for the prosecution. Meanwhile, former Department of Education spokesperson Michael Poa has formally entered the arena as a co-counsel for Duterte's defense, a move lawmakers hope will finally force answers regarding the alleged misuse of confidential education funds.

Related Domestic Issues

Foreign Influence Operations:

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) issued an emergency warning noting that foreign actors are actively weaponizing online "fake news" surrounding the impeachment trial to stoke severe domestic polarization.

El Niño Realities:

Beyond Manila's political theater, the government is grappling with a severe El Niño cycle that meteorologists at PAGASA warn will suppress agricultural output until early 2027.

House Panel Tightens Grip on Contested Public Assets

The House Committee on Good Government has launched an expanded probe into what lawmakers are calling the systemic diversion of local development funds.The Focal Point: Legislative cross-examinations have turned toward a network of real estate holding firms registered in Davao City.Liquid Capital Under Review: Congressional investigators are tracing ₱450 million in unliquidated financial transfers distributed through regional state offices.The Legislative Objective: House leaders intend to introduce strict local escrow guidelines to prevent regional executive offices from accessing discretionary funds without clear central authorization.

Electoral Reform Bill Sparks Heated Session Split

A fierce debate has broken out on the Congress floor over a fast-tracked amendment targeting candidate eligibility criteria for national executive roles ahead of the 2028 election cycle.

- The Core Reform: The proposed bill blocks any individual actively undergoing legislative impeachment proceedings or criminal prosecution from organizing formal campaign structures.
- The Counter-Argument: Dissenting lawmakers have strongly criticized the legislation, branding it a direct weaponization of legal protocols designed to dismantle rival factions.
- The Path Forward: Floor leaders have scheduled a crucial mandatory vote for September 28, 2026, as legal coalitions brace for an immediate constitutional challenge in the courts.

Security personnel inspect the House of Representatives session hall in this file photo. Mark Demayo, ABS-CBN News/File

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ONTARIO COMMUNITY NEWS

Tony San Juan, OCT

Eight Ontario Fil-Cans Vie for Civic Posts in the Greater Toronto Area

"Walong magigiting at magagaling na ating kababayang Pinoy ay lalaban sa darating na eleksyon!" Ayan ang ating magandang balita! Truly, folks, eight Filipino Canadians are purposefully running for civic positions in the upcoming municipal elections on October 26, 2026, in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Three Pinoy would like to become councillors in 2 city wards in Toronto and Mississauga and one Pinay are working towards her reelection in Brampton. Two well-admired kababayan would like to serve for reelection, and another, for the first time, is running for the Toronto Catholic School Board trustee position and 2 more in Mississauga are candidates for Trustee in the Separate and public school boards.

Gerald Adad and Louroz Mercader are both seeking the same Ward 7 Councillor seat in the City of Mississauga, while in Toronto, Willie Reodica has registered for the City Council position of Ward 21-Scarborough Centre. Two-term Councillor Rowena Santos is running for reelection in the Brampton council. Santos is the first Filipino elected municipal councillor in the GTA. Dr. Marissa Largo and reelectionist Garry Tanuan are both candidates for School Trustee of Ward 7 and Ward 8, respectively, of the Toronto Catholic District School Board(TCDSB). In Mississauga, Miles Roque and Herman Viloria, a reelectionist, are Trustee candidates for the English Separate (DPCDSB) and Public School Board (PDSB), respectively. The "lucky eight" are well- qualified with their own experience, education & training, achievements, and commitment to good public service. Here they are.

GERALD ADAD (for Mississauga Councillor- Ward 7, Cooksville)

A community safety professional, Gerald Adad is running to become a Councillor for Ward 7 in the City of Mississauga. Ward 7 consists primarily of the Fairview and Cooksville neighbourhoods, as well as part of the Erindale neighbourhood. Born, raised and a lifelong resident of Mississauga, Adad completed his Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Criminology & History program at the University of Toronto in 2017. Licensed as an International Crime Prevention Specialist with CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) certification, Adad said: "Most candidates discover community safety at election time. I've done it for a living. It is not a promise; it's a track record! Crime prevention is my life's work. Let's make Ward 7 a safer and happier place - together."

Gerald Adad

LOROUZ MERCADER (for Mississauga Councillor - Ward 7, Cooksville)

Louroz Mercader, an experienced business improvement executive, public relations specialist and community leader, is running for City Councillor in Mississauga's Ward 7. Mercader says he is devoted to civic engagement and seeks the community's support to continue his work building a better city. A passionate city builder, Mercader bridges business, community and government. He graduated in Public Relations from Humber Polytechnic in 2018 and has developed expertise in public relations, community engagement, strategic planning, and internal and external communications through both professional and volunteer roles. Louroz said, 'Cooksville is a special place and the true heart of Mississauga...a place that changed my family's life. Now it's time I give something back to my home. "The next chapter of our neighbourhoods shouldn't be decided for us. It should be shaped by us, and focused on making everyday life better for everyone who calls this community home. "It's time to get things done for our families, for our neighbours, for Ward 7!

Louroz Mercader

WILLIE REODICA (for Toronto Councillor-Ward 21, Scarborough Centre)

Willie Reodica, a frequent candidate for a political position over two decades as a Filipino- Canadian, is seeking a city council seat for Ward 21-Scarborough Centre, Toronto. Willie has a Bachelor's degree in Commerce from the Polytechnic University (PUP) and is President of its alumni association in Ontario. He hails from Luisiana, Laguna and is a top-selling real estate representative for RJ/Max All-Stars Real Estate Brokerage. His community involvement includes serving as an officer of the Knights of Rizal-Eastern Canada Region and director of the Filipino Canadian Real Estate Association(FILCREA). An "Outstanding Filipino- Canadian Senior Awardee in 2023" by the Filipino Centre Toronto, Reodica pledged to serve the public with "Serbisyong Taos Puso"(Serving with the Heart) by "listening to our community, taking action that matters, building a better Scarborough, and serving with integrity and heart". "Laban lang ng laban" (try, try, and again try)...that's Willie's war cry, a sign of a persistent political persona.

Willie Reodica

MARISSA LARGO (for TCDSB Trustee-Ward 7, Agincourt/ Scarborough North)

Dr. Marissa Largo, PhD, a university professor, TCDSB teacher of 13 years (Mary Ward CSS), and a mother of two, is a candidate for Trustee for Ward 7 of the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB). Raised by her devout Catholic parents, Largo holds a PhD in Education from the University of Toronto's Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), a Master of Arts in Art Education from Concordia University, and B.Fine Arts and B. Education degrees from York University. She taught at Mary Ward CSS and gained a deep understanding of the challenges facing students, families, and teachers in Ontario's education system. She served in TCDSB advisory committees, like the Filipino Community Advisory Committee and the Special Committee for Race Relations. With over two decades of experience in education, community engagement, and leadership, she is committed to ensuring that students have access to a high-quality Catholic education that nurtures academic excellence, faith formation, well-being, and a strong sense of belonging. "As Trustee, I will be a strong advocate for students, families, educators, and parish communities, ensuring that every decision made at the board table reflects our shared commitment to educational excellence and Gospel values", Largo pledged.

Dr. Marissa Largo, Ph.D.

GARRY TANUAN (for TCDSB Trustee-Ward 8, Scarborough Rouge)

One of the longest-serving Catholic school trustees, Garry Tanuan was first elected to the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) in December 2012; then in 2014, 2018, and 2022, he has represented Ward 8 - Scarborough. Garry was raised in a devout Catholic family and educated by the Holy Cross Fathers. He served as a representative on the Catholic Parent Involvement Committee and the Toronto Association of Parents in Catholic Education. Garry has been an active member of local and international Catholic mission/prayer groups (Couples for Christ, Sword of the Spirit). With a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Silliman University and as Instructor of Computer Studies at Seneca @ York University, he has worked for over 20 years as a consultant and project manager in the financial, biotech, clinical research, energy and education industries. As a Trustee, he has collaborated with Ward 8 principals, pastors/chaplains, CSACs and Catholic parent organisations. Tanuan professed that "Understanding that Catholic education is an extension

Garry Tanuan

of our Church's teaching mission and a separate school system is essential in addressing the challenges we face today and tomorrow." Once reelected, Tanuan will continue encouraging the TCDSB to "tap into the multitudes of resources available, including the 53 organisations in the Archdiocese of Toronto Lay Association listing, which are all committed to helping Catholic families in enhancing their Faith."

MILES ROQUE (for PDSB Trustee-Wards 1 & 7, Mississauga)

Born and raised in the Ward 1 Applewood Acres neighbourhood, Miles Roque has a comprehensive understanding of the people and needs of the Wards 1 & 7 community. This was aptly reinforced when dealing firsthand in the general community and the public education system. A graduate of St. Edmund Separate School-Applewood and St. Paul Catholic Secondary School-Lakeview, Miles obtained an Honours Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Sciences from the University of Toronto-Mississauga, and a Master's degree in Environmental Applied Science and Management from Toronto Metropolitan University. He has extensive public sector experience in areas such as accessible services, policy implementation and programs at the City of Toronto. Roque's proven experience as a planning manager and business developer, both provincially and internationally, makes him a good candidate for the English public school board.

HERMAN VILORIA (for DPCDSB Trustee-Wards 2 & 8, Mississauga)

H.Viloria is running for re-election as Separate School Trustee for Wards 2 & 8, Mississauga. Before being elected Trustee in 2022, he was a long-serving Catholic high school administrator in several schools in Mississauga and Brampton. An educator by training and profession, Viloria has been in the classroom and educational leadership for 37 years and served in various positions as a teacher, department head, vice principal, and principal at DPCDSB. He has a Bachelor of Education degree from Brock University and also

Herman Viloria

obtained an Honours Bachelor of Science degree in Computer Science and Information Processing. Viloria also studied at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). As a Trustee, he has brought to the Catholic school board his perspective and experience in teaching and administration for 37 years, interacting with stakeholders, schools and communities.

ROWENA SANTOS(Councillor for Brampton-Wards 1 & 5)

Rowena Santos, first elected in 2018 as Councillor for Wards 1 & 5, is the first Filipina elected to Council in the City of Brampton. A proud Bramptonian of Filipino heritage, Rowena is "inspired by community and driven by a passion to change the culture of politics and build a more prosperous, livable and sustainable future." She holds an Honours BBA degree from the Schulich School of Business in Toronto and a Master's degree in Sustainable Development & Environmental Planning from the U.K. London School of Economics. Prior to being elected, she worked at the Ontario Legislative Assembly for over a decade and has mentored countless youth to become politically active across the GTA. Before entering politics, Rowena worked at Magna, RBC and General Mills. Councillor Santos, a single parent, is a supporter of Brampton Animal Services and has personally adopted/rescued two as

Rowena Santos

part of her family. She is a strong supporter of the arts and enjoys playing with her local band "Point of Order".

Let us all support and elect our Filipino Canadian political candidates. Get out the vote, and this time, with a unified aspiration and collective hope, together we will proudly claim that we have chosen our fellow kababayans to represent our community's "always-cited demographics", yet still considered an "invisible image", as well as the "always-quiet voice", but never " heard with clout" within the political landscape and democratic process. Let's prove otherwise and definitively deliver!

LET US VOTE WISELY

DEMOCRACY RENEWED? ONTARIO MUNICIPAL RACES SEE SURGE IN COMPETITION AHEAD OF OCTOBER BALLOTS

TORONTO — Local democracy across Ontario is showing signs of renewed vigor as newly released data points to a notable drop in uncontested races ahead of the province-wide municipal elections scheduled for October 26, 2026.

According to a comprehensive analysis released by the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the province is experiencing a modest but highly encouraging upward trend in political competition. Out of the 414 Ontario municipalities holding elections this cycle, the number of mayoral and council positions filled entirely by acclamation has significantly decreased compared to the previous two election cycles.

A Shift Away from Acclamations

For years, local governance experts have voiced concerns over a growing trend of apathy in municipal politics, where incumbent mayors and councillors routinely ran unopposed. In this election cycle, however, the AMO reports that nearly one in four heads of council have been acclaimed—a figure that, while still substantial, marks a clear decline from the stark numbers seen in 2022. "Strong municipal government depends entirely on people being willing to step up, put their names forward, and take on the distinct responsibility of representing their communities," the AMO noted in its report. Across Ontario's vast landscape, a total of 400 municipal candidates ran completely unopposed this year. #

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Values based realism: Carney confronts shattered global order at the United Nations

Prime Minister pitches pragmatic alliances to counter U.S. isolationism while revealing Canada's contingency plans for 'extreme tail risks' along the 49th parallel.

NEW YORK — Addressing a deeply fractured international community at the 81st Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), Prime Minister Mark Carney laid out a defiant, pragmatic new vision for Canadian foreign policy. Speaking from the UN headquarters in New York City, Carney rejected both blind faith in outdated multilateralism and the destructive forces of realpolitik. Instead, he introduced a doctrine he termed "values-based realism"—an approach designed to forge hard-nosed partnerships to safeguard Canadian economic and physical sovereignty.

The high-stakes diplomatic summit comes at a moment of acute strain for Ottawa. Trade negotiations between Canada and the United States collapsed over the summer, triggering a broadening trade war characterized by punitive tariffs and mounting cross-border rhetoric. The friction on the world stage was amplified further when U.S. President Donald Trump took to social media, criticizing Canadian border policies and claiming that immigration levels were "destroying" the country—assertions Carney quickly dismissed by pointing out that Canadian immigration numbers have steadily dropped during his administration's tenure.

Prime Minister Mark Carney delivers remarks to media during his participation in the 81st United Nations General Assembly.

The Shadow of the 'Tail Risk'

While the official theme of this year's General Assembly focused on restoring global trust, the media attention surrounding the Canadian delegation was dominated by explosive revelations from an interview Carney granted to The New York Times. In the discussion, Carney admitted that Ottawa has actively analyzed defense readiness and contingency plans over the past year to prepare for the "extreme tail risk" of potential U.S. military action or an outright invasion.

Using financial terminology from his previous career as a central banker for both the Bank of Canada and the Bank of England, Carney defended the stunning disclosure as an act of fundamental governance. "I think you have a responsibility in these roles to look at extreme tail risk," Carney told reporters. "That's just risk management. It would be irresponsible not to."

The Prime Minister clarified that a military clash with Canada's closest neighbor and largest trading partner is by no means the expected outcome. Defense Minister David McGuinty and senior military officials echoed this sentiment, emphasizing that evaluating defensive capabilities against all theoretical scenarios is standard operational protocol for the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). Security experts across Canada noted that a serious government cannot simply ignore low-probability, high-consequence threats when the White House routinely muses about annexing Canadian territory.

Moving Beyond the White House

Rather than expending diplomatic energy pursuing a face-to-face meeting with President Trump on the sidelines of the UN, Carney intentionally pivoted toward building secondary coalitions. When pressed by accredited Canadian media regarding his lack of direct interaction with the U.S. administration, Carney was matter-of-fact: "I find that when you have 160 leaders come to New York, it's most valuable to meet those who you don't normally see."

This strategy was put on vivid display as Carney rapidly moved through a series of high-level multilateral engagements designed to solidify ties with European, Middle Eastern, and Indo-Pacific partners. In an effort to counter Trump's recent public threats to halt purchases of Canadian agricultural exports in favor of buying cheaper potash from Belarus, Carney used his UN platform to pitch an alternative economic alliance. He advocated for a coordinated, Western approach to achieve complete "fertilizer independence," proposing deep cross-border supply chain integration with reliable allies across all ammonia and nitrogen-based agricultural sectors.

On environmental fronts, Carney joined forces with European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to co-host a major summit launching the Ocean Eye International Alliance. The initiative aims to establish a shared, highly sophisticated network for real-time ocean observation and climate data tracking. Canada pledged $82 million toward the project, which aligns with the European Commission's recent efforts to grant Canada "associate member" status within key European research networks.

Canada also used the UNGA stage to project an independent foreign policy stance, even when it directly conflicted with Washington's playbook. Carney co-hosted a pivotal ministerial meeting alongside representatives from France and the United Kingdom aimed at preserving the long-term viability of a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

During the session, Carney announced a fresh commitment of $100 million in Canadian international assistance for Palestine, earmarking $80 million for immediate humanitarian relief and directing the remaining $20 million to shore up local security governance capacities. The explicit push for a sovereign Palestinian state puts Canada at odds with its principal backer in the U.S. administration, signaling that Ottawa is prepared to navigate a solitary diplomatic path to uphold its core global principles.

GLOBAL BACKGROUND & AGENDATHE 81ST SESSION: A UNITED NATIONS UNDER SIEGE FROM WITHIN

Unilateral tariffs, collapsing treaties, and climate deadlines dominate the heaviest diplomatic agenda in decades.

UNITED NATIONS — The halls of the United Nations headquarters in New York are reverberating with an unmistakable sense of urgency this week as the 81st Session of the General Assembly opens under the official theme of "Restoring trust, managing transformation." Yet, for the delegates representing 193 member states, the lofty rhetoric of global unity stands in stark contrast to a grim undercurrent of institutional decay, escalating trade wars, and systemic vulnerability.

Longtime observers describe the atmosphere as an institutional battle for survival, as the very foundation of global multilateralism faces an assault from nationalist movements and unilateral economic policies championed by major global powers.

A Fragmented Global Agenda

The formal docket for the 2026 assembly reflects a world dealing with multiple, overlapping crises, each threatening to destabilize regional security and economic markets:

The Global Trade Fracture: Headlining the economic agenda is the systemic breakdown of international trade norms. The widespread imposition of unilateral tariffs, the collapse of supply-chain agreements, and the weaponization of critical resource exports—exemplified by recent disputes over essential agricultural commodities like potash—have thrown international markets into chaos.

The Middle East Impasse: The search for a sustainable peace framework remains a primary, highly contentious focal point. With several European nations and Canada breaking ranks with Washington over the past year to formally recognize a sovereign Palestinian state, the floor of the General Assembly has become an ideological battleground.

Oceanic and Ecological Collapse: On the environmental front, the UN is racing against a ticking clock. Discussions are centered on the rapid degradation of marine ecosystems, rising sea temperatures, and the economic security of coastal and island nations. Alliances like the newly minted OceanEye network are being pushed forward out of necessity.

AI Governance: For the first time, a significant portion of the high-level assembly agenda is dedicated to establishing international guardrails around artificial intelligence and autonomous systems to protect democratic infrastructure from foreign cyber interference.

EDITORIAL ANALYSIS

THE CENTRAL BANKER'S PLAYBOOK GOES TO WAR

By treating a U.S. military threat as an exercise in asset management, Carney has fundamentally altered the language of Canadian defense.

The historic rule of Canadian public relations has long been simple: never, under any circumstances, validate hypothetical friction with the United States. For generations, Canadian prime ministers faced with erratic behavior from the White House relied on a carefully curated vocabulary of diplomatic deflection, quiet diplomacy, and soothing platitudes about "the world's longest undefended border."This week in New York, Mark Carney permanently tore up that traditional playbook.By casually confirming to The New York Times that his government had spent the last year modeling defensive responses to a theoretical American military invasion, Carney did something far more radical than merely acknowledging a geopolitical nightmare. He re-framed the entire ethos of Canadian national

See Page 7 Editorial Analysis

Voices of the Filipino Community in Quebec: REMEMBERING THE PAST, BUILDING THE FUTURE

Fourth *article in the series edited by Kimberly Gultia and Kazue Takamura*

This essay is adapted by the author from a presentation delivered at ''Voices of the Filipino Community in Québec: Memorializing the Past, Building the Future''(April 10–11,2026). It has been prepared for publication with a brief introduction and light editing.

''Remembering the Past, Building the Future'' is a monthly series dedicated to preserving Filipino voices through autobiographical essays. Together, these first-person narratives create an enduring record of the people, journeys, and experiences that have shaped our shared history, connecting memories of the past with the lives and aspirations of the present.

This month, we feature Roy Lu, a Gatineau-based Filipino artist. Through his journey from Cebu to Québec, Roy offers the long-standing intimate cultural ties between Québec and the Philippines through making collaborations with Québec-based art spaces, the city of Gatineau, and performance artists and academics from the Philippines. Roy is known for his innovative expressions of socio-political critiques through performance art. Roy delivered his performance entitled, "So Then We Must Rise," at the Conference on "Voices of the Filipino Diaspora in Québec" at Université de Montréal on April 11, 2026.

By Roy Lu

In the fall of 2007 I immigrated to Ville de Gatineau, Québec, Canada from Cebu City, Philippines, after a short though extended visit through Québec in the summer of the previous year. That journey actually started some years earlier at a bookcafe-bar in front of a gallery-workshop that was established by myself and a group of artist friends. At this bar I met my kasama (partner) for life and this was also where conversations started and was decided on establishing our common life in Gatineau.

Filipino-Canadian art history professor Ming Tiampo of Carleton University introduced me to the Gatineau performance art group FaitMaison not long after my arrival. Prior to my departure, my art practice had been focused on performance art so this introduction was propitious.

The subsequent years turned out to be some of my most artistically fruitful, thriving through the events of Fait Maison as well as other local artist-run spaces and galleries. A highlight was in 2014 when I was invited to co-curate together with Eileen Mangubat, art history professor of University of the Philippines, the Philippine participation in the highly regarded art performance bienniale Rencontre International d'art performance (RIAP) based in the art space Le Lieu in Québec City.

Roy Lu., Gatineau-based Filipino performance artist performing, "Fire and Ice" at 2023 Val-David performance art event.

As part of this bienniale, together with Manila based artists Bogie Ruiz and Mideo Cruz, we did performances not only in Québec City but also in Trois-Rivieres, Sherbrooke and Chicoutimi. The long drives between these cities not only afforded us enjoyment of the verdant Québec countryside – this was in the late summer – but also allowed us to keep up with the Philippine cultural news and gossip. Then, of course, there were our individual performances that saw us still grappling with social and political issues as we had when we first met during Martial Law.

My art community has not migrated as much as enlarged. As mentioned, prior to migrating I had already concentrated my creative energies into performance art.The first tentative steps were taken by organizing events that were mostly self-funded but also supported by individuals and businesses who were interested in art in general and, in particular, for that place and time, this novel art form.

Landing in Gatineau, I found a more or less similar situation, with a lot of self-funded work flourishing but also, most importantly, more institutional funding and support, the backbone provided by artist run spaces, artist coops and the visual artists' union.

Roy Lu performs "So Then We Must Rise!" during the "Voices of the Filipino Community in Québec" conference at Université de Montréal (April 11, 2026). "The layering of cello music with news reports from Typhoon Haiyan created an immersive experience... His statement, 'it is no longer their typhoon, it is our typhoon,' captured the collapsing distance between global and local impacts of climate change." — Sophie Waller, McGill undergraduate student

Since two years ago I have expanded my artistic reach into creating more fixed works especially with the city of Gatineau. At the same time, I continue to maintain ties with the art community in Cebu, joining shows and generally keeping up with ongoing projects, exhibits, etc.

Remembering the past is useful, if we put it to use, otherwise it will just be wallowing in nostalgia. As William Faulkner once said, ". . . the past is not dead it is not even past". The present is just the continuing past. With that lesson I've learned the importance of community as community is the better repository for the lessons of the past. Supporting it, participating in it assures better that these lessons are put to good use.#

From Page 6 Editorial Analysis

security through the cold, calculated lens of global finance.To Carney, an existential threat from a volatile neighbor isn't an emotional crisis or an unmentionable diplomatic taboo—it is an "extreme tail risk." In the lexicon of central banking, a tail risk is a low-probability event that carries the potential to completely destroy the underlying asset. You do not panic over it, nor do you pretend it cannot happen. You hedge against it. You build contingencies. You perform stress tests on your military, your infrastructure, and your alliances.This calculated composure is precisely what makes the strategy so effective—and so incredibly dangerous. By stripping away the historical sentimentality of Canada-U.S. relations, Carney spoke to Donald Trump in the exact same transactional language that the American president utilizes. He signaled to Washington that Ottawa is no longer operating on the naive assumption of permanent American goodwill.Critics will naturally lambast Carney's candor as a reckless gamble that risks inflaming an already dangerous cross-border trade war. But in an era where traditional global norms are rapidly disintegrating, pretending the sky isn't bruising is no longer a viable defense strategy. Carney's "values-based realism" might sound detached, but it represents the most honest, clear-eyed assessment of Canadian sovereignty heard in decades.#

Mrs. Philippines 2026 Pageant held on Sept. 19, 2026 at the College Brebeuf, Salle Jacques Maurice. From left to right: Rowena Gamponia Pacla, Maggy Balucanag Laflamme, Anita Paduga Lauzon, Geraldin Zarasate and Sunshine Devera - photos by Bryan Davis and Sherwin Castillo

To our beautiful Mrs Philippines–Montreal 2026 candidates,

Now that the lights have dimmed and the pageant has come to an end, I want each of you to know how incredibly grateful I am that you became part of this journey.

You came into this pageant with different stories, dreams, challenges, and reasons for joining. Along the way, you showed us your courage, talent, confidence, grace, and, most importantly, your heart.

Remember, a crown does not define your worth. Whether you went home with a title or not, each of you accomplished something meaningful simply by having the courage to stand on that stage and share who you are.

I hope you leave this experience with more than beautiful photos and memories. I hope you leave with new friendships, greater confidence, and the realization that you are capable of so much more than you imagined.

Thank you for trusting us and for representing the beauty, strength, culture, and spirit of the Filipino woman.

To our winners, congratulations! Wear your crowns with humility, purpose, and responsibility. And to every candidate, continue to shine and carry everything you learned from this journey wherever life takes you.

The pageant may be over, but the sisterhood and memories we created will remain.

Svetlana Suarez. Pageant Director
2026 Mrs. Philippines Pageant

The Embrace of Sisterhood: In a deeply touching moment of solidarity, the newly crowned Mrs. Philippines–Montreal 2026, Anita Paduga Lauzon, is surrounded by the warm hugs of past queens—Melanie Lobchoy Polo, Mrs Philippines - Montreal 2019, and on the right is Jarreth Mae Manuel, Mrs Philippines - Montreal 2022

A souvenir photo 10 years ago of Gilmore's annual year end fellowship Christmas party with students, teachers, family and their friends. Atty Roman Gourdy, is a special guest seated at the center with Frank McInnis, CPA, who incorporated Ne-Ri-Fe Enterprises, Inc. that operated Gilmore Business Institute on its first location at 4246 Girouard Avenue, Montreal, when it started on Nov. 1, 1989.

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FALL DINNER RECIPES

Mapel Glazed Pork Chop
Ingredients:
4 pork chops,
2 sliced apples,
maple syrup,
cider vinegar,
rosemary,
salt, pepper.
Directions:
Season the pork chops with salt, pepper, and fresh rosemary.
Sear the meat in a hot skillet until a golden crust forms on both sides.
Add the sliced apples, a splash of cider vinegar, and pure maple syrup to the pan.
Roast in the oven until the chops are thoroughly cooked through.
Spoon the sweet pan glaze generously over the pork before serving.

2. Creamy Butternut Squash Soup
Ingredients:
1 cubed butternut squash,
1 diced onion,
2 minced garlic cloves,
vegetable broth, heavy cream,
nutmeg,
fresh thyme.
Directions:
Roast the squash cubes, onion, and garlic on a baking sheet until caramelized.Transfer to a pot and simmer gently with vegetable broth and thyme.
Purée the mixture using a blender until completely smooth.
Stir in a splash of heavy cream and a pinch of ground nutmeg.Garnish with remaining thyme and serve piping hot.

3. Autumn Harvest Salad with Wild Rice
Ingredients:
Cooked wild rice,
mixed baby greens,
roasted sweet potatoes,
dried cranberries,
pecans, feta cheese, maple vinaigrette.
Directions:
In a large serving bowl, combine the cooked, cooled wild rice with fresh mixed greens.
Toss in the roasted sweet potato cubes, dried cranberries, and pecans.
Gently crumble fresh feta cheese over the top of the mixture.
Drizzle evenly with maple vinaigrette right before serving.4. Harvest

4.Chicken Skillet with Vegetables
Ingredients:
Chicken thighs,
halved Brussels sprouts,
chopped carrots,
cubed potatoes,
garlic, olive oil, rustic herbs.
Directions:
Sear the chicken thighs in a large, oven-safe skillet until skin is crispy.
Remove chicken temporarily to toss vegetables and garlic into the pan with olive oil and herbs.
Place the chicken back on top of the seasoned vegetables.
Roast at 400°F until the chicken is tender and the root vegetables are soft.

5. Spiced Cranberry-Apple Crumble
Ingredients:
Sliced baking apples,
fresh whole cranberries,
white sugar, brown sugar,
cinnamon, oats, flour, butter.
Directions:Toss sliced apples and cranberries with white sugar and cinnamon; arrange in a baking dish.
Combine oats, flour, melted butter, and brown sugar to form a crumbly mixture.
Sprinkle the oat mixture evenly over the fruit base.
Bake at 375°F until the top is golden-brown and the fruit is bubbling

Maple Mustard Glazed Salmon
A quick sheet-pan dinner combining sweet autumn maple with rich, healthy fats.
Ingredients:
4 salmon fillets,
2 tbsp pure maple syrup,
1 tbsp Dijon mustard,
1 tbsp olive oil,
1 clove garlic (minced), salt, and pepper.
Instructions: Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
Whisk maple syrup, Dijon mustard, olive oil, and garlic in a small bowl.
Place salmon fillets on a parchment-lined baking sheet and season with salt and pepper.
Brush the maple-mustard glaze generously over each fillet.
Bake for 12 to 15 minutes until the fish flakes easily with a fork.

Cider Braised Beef Chunks

A rich, warming beef dish that infuses traditional fall apple flavors into tender meat.
Ingredients:
1 lb beef stew meat (cubed),
1 cup pure apple cider (not vinegar),
1/2 cup beef broth,
1 small onion (sliced),
1 sprig fresh thyme,
1 tbsp olive oil.
Instructions: Heat olive oil in a heavy pot over medium-high heat.
Season beef with salt and pepper, then brown on all sides (about 5 minutes).
Toss in the sliced onions and cook for 2 minutes.
Pour in the apple cider, beef broth, and thyme.
Bring to a boil, then cover, reduce heat to low, and simmer for 1.5 to 2 hours until the beef is melt-in-your-mouth tender.

Skillet Cod with Butternut Squash Broth
A lighter, aromatic autumn seafood bowl featuring comforting, seasonal squash.
Ingredients:
4 white fish fillets (like cod or halibut),
1 cup pureed butternut squash (or pumpkin),
1/2 cup vegetable broth,
1/2 tsp dried sage,
1 tbsp butter, salt.
Instructions: Melt butter in a large skillet over medium heat.
Season the fish fillets with salt and sear them for 3 minutes per side; transfer to a plate.
In the same skillet, whisk together the squash puree, vegetable broth, and sage.
Bring to a gentle simmer, return the fish to the pan, and spoon the warm autumn broth over the fillets for 2 inutes before serving.

Cozy Pumpkin Ale Beef Stew
An incredibly hearty, earthier take on classic beef stew using seasonal ale.
Ingredients: 1 lb beef stew meat (cubed), 1 cup pumpkin ale (or any amber beer), 1 cup beef broth, 1 cup cubed carrots, 1 bay leaf, 1 tbsp vegetable oil.Instructions: Heat oil in a large pot. Season beef with salt and pepper, then brown it well for 4 minutes. Stir in the carrots, pumpkin ale, beef broth, and the bay leaf. Bring the liquid to a boil, then tightly cover the pot and drop the heat to low. Simmer gently for 1 hour and 15 minutes until the vegetables are soft and the beef sauce has thickened.

Social Tidbits Montreal Community News

Fely Rosales Cariño

Greetings to my lovely and faithful Tidbits readers. Say goodbye to our fantastic summer and hello to the falling leaves in their splendid array of colors. We can still enjoy God's creation and be grateful that our Filipino community thrives in all seasons. Let's peek at some social events and let's 'marites' (what's happening lately).

Lions Club 72nd Anniversary

Can you imagine an organization running for 72 years? A hard act to follow, I'll say. Yet, none other than the Montreal Westward Lions Club which started November 2, 1953, fits the bill. An international nonprofit organization, they continue to serve different sections of the community. What an enduring and tireless commitment to their motto, "We Serve." Some of the recipients of this class act were "the Dragon Boat, the Hope Residence, the NDP Food Bank, and feeding program for the homeless in the St. Henri area." They have also sent financial aid to many countries in times of natural disasters.

They celebrated with a dinner dance at the Imperial Restaurant at 2315 Trans Canada Highway, Pointe Claire. Proceeds will go to the victims of the earthquake in Visayas, Philippines. Officers for 2025-2027session are: Estela Domingo (President), Ben Bade (Vice Pres,), Michelle Vargas-Lao (Secretary), Donna Gargallo (Asst. Sec.), Luz Ruvad (Treasurer), Hartley Barber (Welfare Chair), and Frank Zizak (Club Adviser). Various officers and members are Josephine Magbanua, Felipa Lim, Anthony Muje, Ana Datijan, and Carol Fajardo. and Carol Fajardo, You will be well advised to secure their services. In addition, if you are facing legal challenges, you may contact President Domingo's son, Atty. Isabelito Domingo at 514-589-8464. He is located at 6500 Trans Canada Service Road, 4th floor, Pointe Claire, Quebec.

LEADERS' FORUM

A Community Leaders' Forum (CLF) was held on September 12, 2026 at the FAMAS Center on 4708 Van Horne Avenue, Montreal with the theme "From Heritage to Progress: Strengthening Filipino Presence in Quebec". Lolita Sideris, the Officer in Charge (OIC), called the meeting to order. Chairman Al Abdon of the Filipino Heritage Society (FHSM), the great initiator, gave his welcome message. The special guest of the day, Mr. Alistair Price, CEO, President of INICIO, spoke of the company's vision to provide access without barriers to meaningful work for English speakers in Quebec. A Q&A session followed. A short break ensued where good food was served amid networking and photo ops. At this point, facilitator Kim Gultia took over and asked for an organizational report from various presidents, who then gave their goals, ongoing programs, and plans for the year. Issues and concerns were discussed while the audience gave suggestions and recommendations. Closing remarks was given by FHSM Vice Chairman Amelia Manon-og. Kudos also goes to the inimitable Jeannette Pérignon, the masterful emcee of the event.

Chairman Al, always astute in such gatherings, was glad that students from McGill attended the workshops. Others who participated were President Victor Mehiya (South Shore), Noel de Villa (Filipino Nurses Association of Quebec, FNAQ), President Dario Boco (Canadian Council of Filipino Association of Quebec, CCFAQ), President Gerry Danzil (United Pilipino Seniors Association of Quebec, UPSAQ), Rowland (Filipino Golden Agers of Montreal, FILGA), and President Ray Omictin (Kalikuhang Visaya). Also seen were Lolita Sideris, Fely Bisares, Minda Mazzone, Elma Bolatao and yours truly. It was a very informative gathering indeed.

42nd Annual Awards Night, PBSSQ.

Another organization that can boast of its longevity is the Philippine Benevolent and Scholarship Society of Quebec (PBSSQ). Proudly celebrating their 42nd Annual Awards Night for benevolence and scholarship, enthusiasts gathered on September 11,2026 at the Grand Salle of 6767 Côte-des-Neiges. You were greeted at the ticket table by Cora Abdon (PBSSQ Treasurer) and her crew. PBSSQ President Josefa Nicolas gave a warm welcome message to the honored guests, awardees, their families, and friends.

The 2026 PBSSQ Elementary Scholar, Miss Julia Montaleone, sang "Imagine," lovingly assisted by proud parents Karen Baquiran & Antonio Montaleone, family members and friends. Her achievements: Grade 6 Valedictorian, MVP Award in Cheerleading 2026, 1st Place in Reading Fair 2026, Perseverance Award in Cheerleading 2025, Empathy Award 2024, Citizenship Award 2023, and participated in the 2026 MUHC Raise Craze for Breast Cancer. She starts school at Laval Junior Academy, Grade 7. You can just imagine what's next for this talented, young lady.

The 2026 PBSSQ Community Service Award goes to Josefina (Sophie) Toledo. A retired nurse since 2005, it must be in her veins to help fellow citizens better their lives with her boundless time, energy, and patience. A steadfast volunteer in the Filipino community, she exhibits compassion and generosity where such traits are needed, touching many lives. Her patrons are plentiful and varied: newly arrived Filipino nurses, students at Gilmore College in Montreal, parishioners at St. Malachy Church, the elderly and the vulnerable under the Daughters of Isabella, Lady of Grace Circle of St. Malachy, and so many others; they can thank heaven above for Sophie's compassionate, helping hand. Embodying the true spirit of the community award, Sophie's real achievement rests in the people she helped. We owe her a vigorous applause in continuing to be an asset to the Filipino community and beyond. Thank you, Sophie!

The 2026 PBSSQ Benevolence Award goes to Ashley Mary Theresa Seguin. This exuberant, enduring, and endearing young lady simply refuses to be deterred by her disability, choosing instead to help others in need. We would do well to emulate her positive attitude, one that screams 'never give up.' She is easily the poster girl for resilience (she has my vote!). Her service to the community is rooted in her faith, beginning in 2017 in being involved with St. John Fisher Church, Notre-Dame-des-Sept-Douleurs, and St. Kevin Parish. She currently serves at St. Joseph Oratory and St. Malachy Church. Musically talented, she sings the Responsorial Psalm and is a church soloist, bringing joy to parishioners. She currently volunteers with the veterans at St. Anne's Hospital in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue. At present, she goes to Concordia University "pursuing her interests in music, arts, drama, and therapy." One thing is clear, Ashley "demonstrates that benevolence is not measured by physical ability but by the heart, courage, and willingness to help others." Her challenges do not define her; rising above them does.

Now we have come to the 2026 PBSSQ Promise Award, Adrian Christopher Mendoza, born to Joyce De Guzman and Harvey Wayne Mendoza. This young man has reaped accolades that spells promise and potential, indeed. His season highlights for 2024-2025 of 30 games played, 29 goals, 64 all-time assists, 111 total points (an all-time record at NYA) were a feature in New England Hockey Journal profile story. Furthermore, his numerous honors include North Yarmouth Cum Laude Society, New England Preparatory School Athletic Council, Single Season Points Record 2025, AATSP Mencion Honorifica, Maine Seal of Biliteracy in French, and Athletic Recognition Award Western Maine Conference. An outstanding athlete, he also excels academically with a 1200 SAT Score and a 4.17 GPA. He values education because he says it opens doors, among other things. In addition to all these, Adrian seems to have a good attitude as well. Due to his extraordinary skills, he has faced physical aggression and once landed in a hospital. Yet, in the words of a referee, he showed "an astonishing capacity for understanding and forgiveness" proving the "true breath of his character through how he navigated severe adversity." It's no wonder he earned a most coveted praise from his coach as the "best teammate, best player, best student, and hardest worker." And wait, it's not

PBBSQ officers with the top scholar of the year, Adrian Christopher Mendoza.

See Page 18 Social Tidbits

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FILIPINO STAR
SHOWBIZ GOSSIP

Ashtine Olviga looks back on humble beginnings, 15-year journey in showbiz

Actress Ashtine Olviga

Actress Ashtine Olviga opened up about her long and challenging journey in the entertainment industry, revealing that she started from small roles before becoming part of several girl groups and eventually finding success as a solo artist.

In an interview on “Oh My Gan!” released Wednesday, Olviga shared that she began working in show business at a young age, taking on "extra" or bit roles before joining Viva Entertainment in 2016 through a singing competition.

"I started from nothing, like doing extra-extra. Then I started on Viva in 2016 because I participated in a singing competition," she recalled.

Through the competition, Olviga was selected to undergo training for a girl group. She eventually became part of three different groups, a journey she admitted was difficult because singing and dancing were not initially among her strengths.

“It's a real struggle for me because that's one of my weaknesses, singing and dancing. My first love is really acting,” she said.

Ashtine Olviga in her 2026 music video “Love Like U”

Despite her doubts, Olviga credited her training and experience as a group performer for improving not only her singing and dancing skills but also her confidence.

The actress said she was naturally introverted and would often avoid holding the microphone during interviews with her former groupmates.

"When we have interviews, I won't take the mic because I don't want to talk. We'll give it to those we know are comfortable speaking," she shared.

Olviga said becoming more confident was a long process, and she continues to remind herself that she is capable whenever fear and self-doubt begin to take over.

he admitted that comparing herself with more experienced performers once made her lose confidence in her own abilities.

"I just didn't have any confidence in myself when it came to singing and dancing. I felt like I was comparing myself to the good ones," she explained.

The actress later realized that her greatest competition was not another artist but herself.

"You really have no competition here in showbiz. You're really just yourself," she said.

After spending around 15 years in the industry, Olviga said the biggest lesson she has learned is the importance of believing in oneself.

"You really have to believe in yourself because for all the time I've been in showbiz, it feels like I just applied for it now. The process is so long," she said.

Olviga — who shot to greater popularity through the 2025 teen romance series "Ang Mutya ng Section E" — also expressed gratitude to her growing fan base, whom she considers instrumental in helping her pursue her dreams.

She recalled a time when she and her groupmates had to work hard to promote themselves online, including posting daily TikTok videos and personally helping their names trend on social media.

"In the past, we were the ones who tweeted and tweeted to make noise. It was really our own effort," she said.

Now that more supporters are celebrating even her smallest achievements, Olviga said she remains overwhelmed by how far she has come.

"When I have mall shows or events, I see what was happening then and what is happening now. To this day, I am still overwhelmed," she said.

For Olviga, the hardships and setbacks she experienced ultimately prepared her for the opportunities she is now receiving.

"Challenges are okay because they really mold you so that when you arrive at your destination, you're ready," she added. ■

Lea Salonga becomes 1st Filipina to receive Hollywood Walk of Fame star

Lea Salonga attends a ceremony honoring her with a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame on Sept. 4, 2026, in Hollywood, Calif.

Lea Salonga added another milestone to her decades-long career, becoming the first Filipina to receive a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The Tony Award-winning actress and singer was honored Friday with the 2,855th star on the famed Los Angeles landmark. Salonga, 55, received the honor in the Live Performance category.

"The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce is proud to welcome Lea Salonga to the Hollywood Walk of Fame," Walk of Fame producer Ana Martinez said in a statement announcing the honor.

Martinez called Salonga a "true trailblazer" whose career has inspired audiences around the world, adding that the recognition marks a milestone for both the Filipino community and future generations of artists.

Salonga rose to international fame after originating the role of Kim in the musical "Miss Saigon," a performance that earned her the Tony Award for best actress in a musical in 1991. The win made Salonga the first Asian woman to receive a Tony Award.

Salonga is also known to generations of Disney fans as the singing voice of Princess Jasmine in the 1992 animated film "Aladdin." She later provided the singing voice of the title character in Disney's 1998 animated film "Mulan."

Salonga's Walk of Fame ceremony brought together several fellow performers to celebrate her career and its impact on Asian and Filipino representation in entertainment.

Brandy, Ming-Na Wen and Darren Criss delivered remarks during the ceremony, according to the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Grammy and Academy Award-winning musician H.E.R. was also in attendance.

The Hollywood Walk of Fame celebrated Salonga's achievement on Instagram, calling the ceremony a historic moment and highlighting the legacy she has created for Filipino and Asian artists in entertainment.. ■

Ogie Diaz gives daughter P1 million for staying single, childless at 25

Ogie Diaz handing his daughter Erin the P1 million check.

Seasoned talent manager Ogie Diaz gave his daughter Erin ₱1 million after she reached 25 without getting married or having a child.

In a recent YouTube vlog, Ogie said that he had just fulfilled a promise he made to his children.

He shared that he promised each of his children ₱1 million if they remained unmarried and childless until they turned 25, explaining that he wanted them to enjoy their younger years before taking on the responsibilities of raising a family.

“I promise them, 'When you're 25, you won't have a wife or children. I want them to enjoy their youth,'” he said.

Ogie added that he knows the challenges that can come with marrying or starting a family at a young age, particularly when parents are not yet ready for the responsibilities involved.

He said Erin plans to use the ₱1-million gift to build a coffee shop.

Erin thanked her father for keeping his promise and expressed her appreciation for the birthday celebration prepared by her mother, Georgette del Rosario.

The two have five children, including Erin.

The same ₱1-million offer applies to Diaz’s other children if they meet the condition when they reach 25. ■

Joseph Marco on why he keeps adopting stray cats

Joseph Marco continues to rescue stray animals, admitting that not helping them often leaves him feeling guilty afterward.

In an interview with ABS-CBN, Joseph shared that he recently took in another kitten after finding it dehydrated on top of a vending machine while coming from the gym.

"I just picked her up yesterday. Coming from the gym, I saw a kitten on top of the vending machine. I called the cat. She was so dehydrated. I had no choice but to take her in," he said.

Joseph named the rescued kitten Cosmo, bringing the number of animals currently under his care to 19.

“Right now I technically have 19. Thankfully I have a huge place. They move around and there are people who help me take care of them,” he added.

While taking in strays means having another animal to look after, the “My Husband is A Mafia Boss” star admitted that he has difficulty ignoring one that needs help.

"Sometimes when you tolerate it, when you let it go, there's no added responsibility, but based on my experience, it haunts me when I don't help those who should be helped," he explained.

For him, the thought of having been in a position to help but choosing not to is enough reason to continue taking in animals he encounters. ■

Showbiz Gossip Continued from p.15

Olivia Rodrigo surprises Lollapalooza crowd with Smashing Pumpkins duet

Billy Corgan & Olivia Rodrigo at Lollapalooza 2026

Olivia Rodrigo added another heavyweight name to her list of rock collaborations after joining American alternative rock band The Smashing Pumpkins on stage at Lollapalooza.

The Filipino-American singer-songwriter was the surprise guest of the band, known for hits such as "1979" and "Tonight, Tonight."

For the collaboration, The Smashing Pumpkins frontman Billy Corgan mostly played guitar and provided backup vocals as Rodrigo sang a stripped-down version of the band's melancholic hit "Thirty-Three."

It was a somber number, with the 23-year-old singer knowing the lyrics to the 1995 hit, a song that was already making waves on radio long before she was born.

Olivia has been collaborating with rock bands and artists over the years, establishing a reputation as more than just a pop star. ■

Nadine Lustre goes on warrior princess mode on 'Donuts' music video I

Nadine Lustre in her latest music video

Nadine Lustre opens a new chapter of bold assertiveness with the release of the official music video for "DONUTS," featuring global pop-hip-hop icon Apl.de.Ap of the Black Eyed Peas.

Getting inspiration from Filipino tradition and mythology, mysticism, and fashion, the music video presents the multi-hyphenate star as a warrior princess who takes control of her power and freedom in a chaotic, despotic world.

"The video connects to a bigger body of work, which explores transformation, stepping into your power, and becoming more comfortable with who you are," Nadine elaborates. "I wanted that world to feel rooted in being Filipino, with influences subtly woven in setting, style, and imagery." ■

Princess Aliyah says love can wait as she turns 18

Sparkle artist Princess Aliyah

Sparkle artist Princess Aliyah is set for another milestone as she turned 18 last month.

Beginning her career as singer, Princess Aliyah made her mark via "Pinoy Big Brother," where she was hailed as the Kapuso Fourth Big Placer.

Princess Aliyah shared how she hopes fans will perceive her as she enters adulthood.

"Now that I'm 18, I want to show the side that I showed at least in 'PBB,' the one that's actually very independent, the one that's very strong, the one that's a strong woman. But, at the same time, of course, you still want to keep my image sweet. I just don't want to be caged in a personality," she said.

In terms of her acting career, Princess Aliyah kept it simple saying she just wants to explore more genres.

"You want to try and be a villain, or maybe an action or thriller, something like that. Hopefully, now being 18, I can explore my craft more," she added.

Being that her name is Princess, we asked her in jest if she is willing to leave showbiz if she ever found her "prince charming."

She smiled and answered, "Well, of course for now, I can't really say what I'm going to do. But really, my promise to myself, and, of course, to my parents, is that no man will ever ruin the career that I've worked so hard for. And people will help me with that. So I hope that my future partner will be supportive of my career."

Despite her busy acting and singing career, Princess Aliyah still continues with her studies, dreaming to become a licensed pilot someday.

"I'm just a senior in high school, at AMA. Actually, I really want to be a pilot. Maybe aeronautical engineering, because on my dad's side, they're engineers, and on my mom's side, they're doctors," she explained.

Her debut comes at an exciting time. She currently stars in the GMA Afternoon Prime series "You're My Favorite Song." She has also just recently launched her debut single "Amba" under GMV Studios.. ■

Anne Curtis calls this 20-minute beauty treatment a 'game-changer'

Anne Curtis has built a career that keeps her in front of the camera, from her years on noontime television and movies to her brand commitments and role as a mother. Yet despite her busy schedule, the actress-host continues to be known for her fresh and polished appearance.

Often called "Dyosa" by her fans, Anne is now giving a glimpse into how she approaches beauty and staying refreshed as she takes on a role as the face of EMFACE by BTL Aesthetics Philippines, a non-invasive facial treatment that takes just 20 minutes and requires no needles or downtime.

For Anne, the partnership is less about changing her appearance and more about maintaining a look that still feels like her.

"This partnership is special for me because EMFACE aligns with how I approach beauty—feeling confident, looking refreshed, and all the while still looking like myself," she said in a statement.

She added: "Having a treatment that I can do for just 20 minutes is a game-changer!"

Making it possible to fit into her busy schedule, that 20-minute treatment is part of what drew Anne to the partnership

The treatment combines patented High-Intensity Facial Electrical Stimulation (HIFES™) with synchronized radiofrequency (RF), allowing it to work on both the facial muscles and skin in a single session.

Dermatologist Dr. Jonathan Nevin Yu explained: "Think of it as a facial workout and skin treatment happening at the same time."

According to a statement, the treatment focuses "on areas including the jaw, cheeks, chin and forehead, making it an option for those looking to maintain facial tone or address visible changes associated with aging and weight loss."

For Anne, however, the appeal is not about looking like someone else. Her approach centers on feeling confident while keeping her natural appearance.

That perspective also reflects how BTL Aesthetics Philippines sees Anne as a fitting ambassador for the treatment. General Manager Ludovico Perez Jr. said she embodies the kind of beauty philosophy behind EMFACE, "subtle, polished and designed to enhance rather than dramatically change."

EMFACE is now available at more than 28 certified clinics in the Philippines nationwide. ■

Yeng Constantino opens up on bad experience with 'idol'

Yeng Constantine

"Never meet your heroes" is an adage singer Yeng Constantino learned the hard way in the early years of her career in the 2000s.

Yeng opened up about an incident involving a famous personality in an interview with "Ang Walang Kwentang Podcast" hosted by directors Antoinette Jadaone and JP Habac.

The singer-songwriter was asked if she had an idol she wished she had never met in person because of a bad experience, and she recalled an instance when she approached one of the well-known names in the industry right after she won the first season of "Pinoy Dream Academy" in 2006.

"Yes, I met someone. I had just started, I had just graduated from 'Pinoy Dream Academy.' He was a guest on 'ASAP.' I was all alone backstage," Yeng said.

"When I saw him, I said, 'You're my idol. I hope I can collaborate with you one day.' Then he told me, 'If it comes, it comes. Don't force it.'

"I'll never forget that. I don't know if he meant something else. I was just so stunned. My face was like, 'Did I hear that right?' Then I kind of zoned out after. I kind of dissociated afterwards."

She said she didn't expect her idol to react like that, which is why she was really shocked.

"I didn't expect that answer. He didn't even give me a hint like 'I hope one day, hopefully.' He just confronted me, he really talked to me," she said.

Despite what happened, Yeng eventually worked with the unnamed celebrity.

"Even though he did that to me, we collaborated. But not in the way you think, like in a song, but in something else," she said.

In the final part of the interview, the award-winning singer-songwriter shared what she has learned in her 20 years in the showbiz industry.

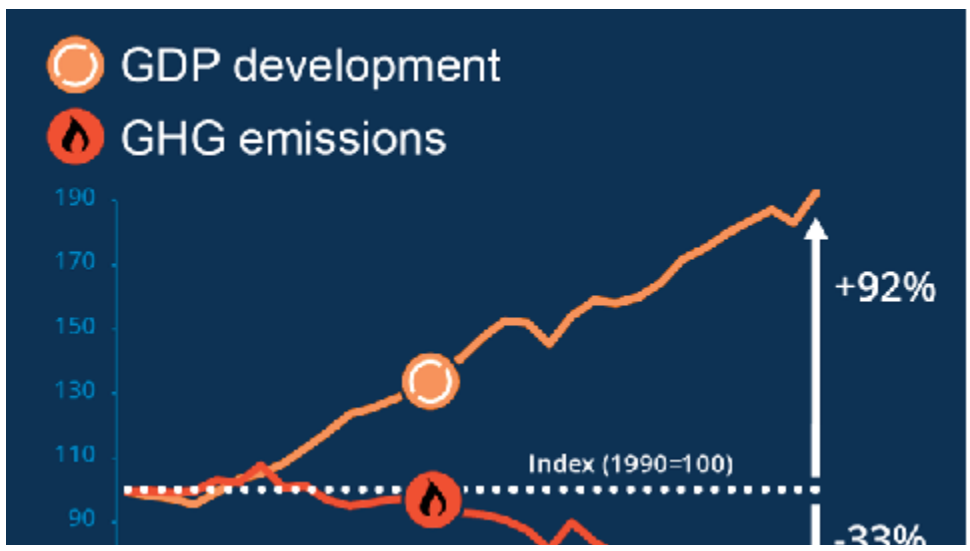
"The success you have, don't take it as if you are the only reason for all the good things that have happened. It's always God leading you to be with the right people, the right opportunities, even the songs. At times I feel like I didn't write the songs that seemed like they were really given and a blessing," she said.

"Even the songs that I released, a lot of those songs are gifts. The ones that stay in the industry are not the best. They have many elements. Some are good but hard to work with. Some are good but under the wrong management. So they have many work and elements around it. So don't go into your head but go into your heart as gratefulness," she added. ■

THE GLOBAL RISK MATRIX: TWO CRISES SHAPING EVERY HUMAN LIFE

THE FRAGILE THREADS OF WORLD TRADE

No matter where you live on the planet, your daily life is dictated by a massive, largely invisible web of global supply chains. In recent years, this intricate network has experienced a series of severe systemic shocks that have fundamentally changed how consumer goods, food, and medicine move across oceans.Geopolitical friction points in critical maritime corridors—such as the Red Sea and the South China Sea—have forced global shipping conglomerates to permanently reroute massive cargo vessels. Instead of utilizing efficient trade shortcuts, fleets are routinely forced into lengthy, expensive detours around entire continents.This spatial disruption has triggered a cascading economic effect. When shipping times increase, the global supply of available cargo containers drops, causing international freight rates to skyrocket. For ordinary citizens, this logistical bottleneck manifests directly at the local grocery store or electronics shop as chronic inflation and product scarcity. From microchips to life-saving pharmaceuticals, the globalized manufacturing model is proving to be incredibly vulnerable to international instability, forcing major world economies to aggressively reconsider localized production.



THE BILLION-DOLLAR CLIMATE TAX

Simultaneously, a more unpredictable threat is actively reshaping human geography and national balance sheets: the astronomical financial toll of extreme, erratic weather patterns. We are no longer discussing climate impacts in terms of future projections; rather, humanity is paying a literal, immediate "climate tax" on a weekly basis.A severe El Niño cycle has severely disrupted major agricultural zones across the globe, destroying vital crop yields and driving food prices to historic highs. At the same time, an unprecedented series of super-typhoons, intense heatwaves, and sudden flash flooding have crippled heavy industrial centers and municipal infrastructure from North America to Southeast Asia.Beyond the visible physical destruction, these volatile weather events are quietly dismantling global financial stability. The international insurance industry is facing a severe crisis, with major firms completely withdrawing coverage from high-risk, economically vital coastal and agricultural regions. When insurance becomes unattainable, local real estate markets stagnate, commercial investments freeze, and municipal governments are forced to divert vital public funds away from education and health care to pay for emergency infrastructure rebuilds.

These twin forces—disrupted global commerce and escalating climate volatility—are not isolated regional events. They are deeply interconnected global issues that directly impact your household budget, your job security, and the long-term stability of the community you call home.

From Page 3 Letter to the Editor

diverse communities while coming to know our neighbours' history and contributions to our country's success better.

One need look no further than the many events every June showcasing Filipino pride which attract tens of thousands of participants to events in every province.

Mr. Jivani's efforts unfortunately devalue our diversity and would scrap celebrations of each community's distinct culture and history in Canada.

Months like Filipino Heritage Month, Italian Heritage Month, Lebanese Heritage Month, Hindu Heritage Month, Canadian Jewish Heritage Months, Portuguese Heritage Month, Sikh Heritage Month, Tamil Heritage Month etc., recognize and celebrate the contributions of Canadians from these diverse origins. They are meaningful to the communities and promote our multiculturalism. Formal recognition of diversity is a fundamental Canadian value and we need to stand in support of that value when it is being attacked.

Mr. Jivani's petition would end all these as well as halting the work in Parliament to create an Ukrainian Heritage Month, a Caribbean Heritage Month and our Canadian Chinese Heritage Month.

United Against Hate Canada will alert Parliamentarians that we do not agree with Mr. Jivani who sponsored the petition. We will invite Mr. Poilievre to rethink his remarks.

We will be reaching out to groups in the coming days to create a united campaign to support the heritage months and days that Parliament has already adopted and advocate for others where communities are also appealing for legislation that would grant them a recognized heritage month.

The embrace of the various heritage months is exactly what Parliament initially hoped to achieve.The heritage months celebrate our shared values while rejoicing in our distinct cultural identities. Canada is about diversity. People of all origins rejoice in our fellow Canadians' distinct cultural heritage while working with them to build a country that is tolerant and welcoming. We believe that Canadians overwhelmingly support the various heritage months and back expanding them.

Mr. Jivani's petition targets all the heritage months and states the following:

We, the undersigned, residents and citizens of Canada, call upon the House of Commons to:

1. End the tokenism practice of recognizing a day or month in commemoration of any ethnic or heritage group; and

2. Celebrate Canadians for the sake of being Canadian not based on ethnicity or ancestry.

We invite readers of the North American Filipino Star to join us to express your profound disapproval of the effort to target the heritage months.

Best regards,

Marvin Rotrand
Director General
United Against Hate Canada

From Page 13 Social Tidbits

over yet. Guess who grabs the 2026 Top Scholar of the Year and the Revolving Trophy? None other than Adrian again. He receives the trophy from President Nicolas and Mackenzie-Mai Van Houtte-Cachero, 2025 PBSSQ Top Scholar of the Year. Are you still surprised? When it rains, it pours. Such was the evening for Adrian. Congratulations, Adrian!

A special announcement of the evening was the Alberto Abiera Scholarship Fund. The deserving awardee was Lilia Esguerra, owner of the Ahmon Institute of Montreal (AIM), a community school that partners with the English Montreal School Board and recognized by the Quebec Ministry of Education.

The crowd was also entertained by a stirring song by Astrid Torrico. They were also well nourished by the splendid catering of Bhaby Castillo. And the DJ of the night, Dennis Mayuga, proved his magic touch as his selection of tunes drew the audience to dance the night away. A few vigorous ladies proved their dancing stamina by remaining till the very end. DJ Dennis had to announce, "last dance" many times over to their delight. And let's not forget, the program went smoothly under the competent hands of the dynamic duo emcees, Tenne Rose Dayandante and Michael Davantes. They just have that special combination of humor and wit to keep us wanting for more.

And lastly, let's not forget our wonderful pioneer, founder, and raison d'etre of the PBSSQ, Natalie O. Pelausa. Her legacy lives on under the faithful and diligent eyes of her daughter, Dr. Hermie Pelausa. We always love you and remember you, Natalie! And Dr.Hermie, I know your gentle and steady hands are behind the scenes to make this awards night memorable, always! And see you at next year's awards.

Kam Shing Gathering

A drove descended on Kam Shing Restaurant on 4771 Avenue Van Horne, Montreal on September 17, 2026. This was on the generous invitation of the United Pilipino Seniors Association of Quebec (UPSAQ) President Gerry Danzil. Everyone feasted on chowmein, shrimps with lobster sauce, Cantonese fried rice, fried chicken, beef and broccoli and many more. Some must have brought some Filipino sweets as there was biko, etc going around. A business meeting followed; details will be coming soon.

As I come to a close, I want to continually thank God for His mercy and His grace. I thank Him for the North American Filipino Star, for you, my readers, and for His abundant favor on the Filipino community. Praise God from whom all blessings flow! There are now over 30 Filipino associations. I pray that we think of our kababayans (countrymen) and "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God" (Hebrews 13:16). I would also wish that we "encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing" (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

Until next issue. God Bless!

THE ALBERTA REFERENDUM: AN EMPIRE APART?

Bombshell University of Calgary Study Outlines Massive Fiscal Realities of Secession Ahead of October 19 Vote

EDMONTON — As Alberta barrels toward its high-stakes national referendum on October 19, 2026, the separation debate has fundamentally transformed from a theoretical grievance against Ottawa into an immediate, high-stakes fiscal conversation. A newly released, landmark independent report by the University of Calgary's School of Public Policy—commissioned directly by the provincial government—has delivered a stark wake-up call to voters on both sides of the independence aisle.

According to the comprehensive study, pulling Alberta out of the Canadian confederation could cost the province anywhere between $50 billion and $170 billion over the first five years alone. The vast discrepancy in numbers hinges entirely on whether separation negotiations with the federal government and international bodies proceed down a "smooth" diplomatic path or devolve into a "difficult," highly adversarial legal gridlock."

The short-term impacts of potential separation would result in significant economic disruption and costs for Albertans," the authors warn, noting that building a brand-new nation from scratch would require massive upfront capital. The province would be immediately forced to establish entirely new, duplicated public institutions. The report calculates that a standalone Republic of Alberta would need to hire at least 70,000 new civil servants to manage separate regulatory bodies, border security, international trade registries, and independent tax administration systems.

Furthermore, economic analysts point out a severe threat of capital flight. The report projects that the mere implementation of a separation transition could result in an individual earnings drop of nearly $12,000 per person across the province. A smaller overall economy combined with high transitional debt service and the astronomical price of infrastructure reproduction could trigger an aggregate $31-billion provincial deficit. Rebalancing the newly sovereign nation's ledger would necessitate severe spending reductions or immediate tax increases equivalent to roughly $6,600 per Albertan.

While separatist advocacy coalitions, such as the Alberta Transition Council, fiercely dispute these findings—releasing counter-reports claiming independence would leave Alberta with a multibillion-dollar annual surplus—independent economists suggest those optimistic platforms "depart heavily from current fiscal reality." Chief among the criticisms is that separatist budgets routinely omit Alberta's inevitable multi-billion-dollar share of Canada's existing federal debt.Ultimately, the provincial advisory panel reviewing the data summarized the reality clearly: "Separation results in heavy short-run economic costs for Alberta for highly uncertain net benefits in the longer run."

SMITH'S REFERENDUM TIGHTROPE

Premier Denies Muting Pro-Canada Campaigning as Internal Party Factions Fracture Over Sovereignty Ballot

CALGARY — Premier Danielle Smith finds herself walking a razor-thin political tightrope as the provincial government launches a sweeping $4-million advertising campaign ahead of the upcoming multi-question referendum. On September 21, 2026, Smith aggressively rejected internal accusations from United Conservative Party (UCP) President Rob Smith claiming that her administration was actively "watering down" its pro-confederation stance to appease hardline separatists.

The controversy erupted following a lengthy, public social media post by the UCP president. In it, he alleged that the premier had explicitly assured party leadership that promotional material regarding the central independence question would remain strictly neutral, while the vast majority of the $4-million ad fund would be aggressively funneled into pushing a "YES" vote on the ballot's other nine government-sponsored questions.

Alberta Premier Danielle Smith speaks during a news conference in Calgary, Friday, May 22, 2026.THE CANADIAN PRESS/Jeff McIntosh THE CANADIAN PRESS

Those non-independence questions target critical provincial overhauls, including independent Alberta immigration control, federal funding opt-outs, and sweeping constitutional reforms.

"I say the same thing to every audience," Premier Smith declared during a press conference in Airdrie, north of Calgary. "No one should be surprised that I support a sovereign Alberta within a united Canada.

"Despite her public unified-front rhetoric, political pressure is mounting from all sides. City councils in both Edmonton and Calgary have formally approved national unity statements, aggressively signaling their opposition to secession. Calgary council members warned that entering a protracted legal battle to exit Canada would trigger massive capital flight, jokingly adding that a landlocked Alberta would be far more likely to become the "51st state of the United States" than an independent global economic titan.

Simultaneously, grassroots pushback has grown loud. Edmonton's robust multi-ethnic communities have raised severe flags over Question #1 through Question #5 on the ballot, which seek to give the province unilateral control over immigration caps. Community forums express deep-seated anxiety that capping immigration or limiting provincially funded programs could strip temporary foreign workers of universal healthcare and basic public education access.

While citizen-led separatist petitions successfully amassed over 223,000 verified signatures earlier this year to demonstrate a hungry grassroots base, mainstream public sentiment remains largely unmoved. Recent tracking polls indicate that 67% of Albertans intend to vote against separation, leaving Premier Smith to manage a deeply fractured party base while the provincial clock ticks down to October 19.

THE OFFICIAL BALLOT BREAKDOWN: QUESTION

Mark the ballot by placing an X in the circular space indicating your choice opposite the question: Option 1: Alberta should remain a province of Canada. Option 2: The Government of Alberta should commence the legal process required under the Canadian Constitution to hold a binding provincial referendum on whether or not Alberta should separate from Canada.

THE INDEPENDENCE COUNTER-BUDGET

Separation Group Releases $5-Billion Transition Plan Predicting Massive Revenues

CALGARY — Seeking to aggressively counter the University of Calgary's grim financial projections, the pro-independence organization Let Alberta Decide released its own comprehensive, 214-page transition paper outlining a radically different economic future.Spearheaded by prominent lawyer Keith Wilson and backed by the Alberta Transition Council (ATC), the report argues that leaving Canada is not only entirely affordable but highly lucrative. The ATC prices the structural setup of a sovereign Alberta at a mere $5 billion in one-time setup expenses.By immediately halting Alberta's equalization payments to Ottawa, the group projects that a newly sovereign nation would inherit an instant annual budget surplus of between $22.2 billion and $32.1 billion.

"We are simply changing the top of the organization," Wilson stated at a launch event in Calgary. "Instead of having their ultimate boss be in Ottawa, their ultimate boss would be in Edmonton or Calgary."

However, the report has drawn swift condemnation from critics and economic watchdogs, including the Canada West Foundation. Analysts point out that the separatist group's math completely omits fundamental national costs, such as funding a sovereign military, establishing an independent central bank, maintaining Indigenous treaty supports, and absorbing Alberta's legal share of Canada's existing national debt.

THE $1,900 TEMPORARY RESIDENT HEALTH PREMIUM

Ballot Question Targeting Non-Permanent Workers Stirs Widespread Labor Anxiety

EDMONTON — Amidst the high-stakes separation questions, Premier Danielle Smith has ignited a separate firestorm regarding Question #3 on the October ballot, which asks voters if the province should charge non-permanent residents a "reasonable fee or premium" to access public services.Speaking to media pools, Smith floated a concrete figure of $1,900 per person annually, drawing a direct comparison to health-care surcharges currently imposed on temporary workers in the United Kingdom.

The revenue, Smith argues, would offset the severe operational strain on Alberta's deeply congested public health infrastructure.The proposal has drawn fierce condemnation from community organizations and labor unions. Alberta NDP Leader Naheed Nenshi called the premium completely "out of touch," emphasizing that temporary foreign workers are already subject to the exact same provincial and federal income taxes as ordinary Albertans.

Labor experts warned that slapping an additional $1,900 fee onto frontline workers would trigger immediate labor shortages across Alberta's critical agricultural, hospitality, and healthcare support sectors

Gilmore's Orientation Seminar on AI Intelligence - Nov. 21, 2026 13:00-16:00, Cocktail party to follow to celebrate Gilmore's 37th anniversary, 17:00-20:00h.

THE NORTH AMERICAN
FILIPINO STAR
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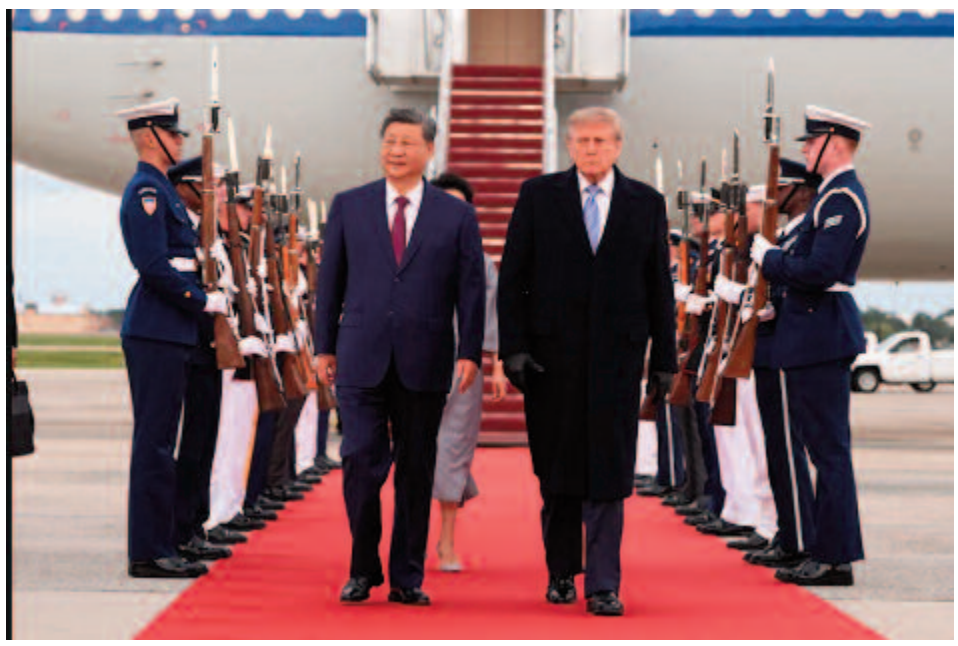
September 2026 Pictorial News



U.S. President Donald Trump and Melania Trump walk with China's President Xi Jinping and his wife Peng Liyuan at Joint Base Andrews, Md., Wednesday, September 23, 2026 - Photo by Alex Brandong/AP

Demonstrators gather to protest ahead of the address of Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, during the 81st session of the United Nations general assembly on 24 September 2026 in New York. Photograph: Madison Swart/AP