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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

HST removal, new homes, TMU elections, Caribbean culture, student engagement, voter turnout, student unions, diversity inclusion, World Cup preparations, entertainment news, Blue Jays, weather update, Ontario budget, municipal elections.

SPEAKERS

Rommel Waterman, Anish Dhupar, Justin Patrick, Maddie Cholette, Julie Sawicki, Johnny Prokos, Saba Iqbal, Rose Aveny, Mia Di Panfilo, Jason McDonald, Manroop Aulakh, John Sheriff Calliste, Gabriel Hilty, Miguel Mabalay, Vejayan Anthony, Semi Won

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Temporary removal of HST on new homes.
-  **Mia Di Panfilo 00:15**
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-  **Manroop Aulakh 00:18**
TMU celebrates Caribbean culture.
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Blue Jays give an opening day preview.
-  **Manroop Aulakh 00:34**
Good afternoon. Thanks for joining us today. I'm Manroop Aulakh.

M**Mia Di Panfilo 00:38**

and I'm Mia Di Panfilo.

M**Manroop Aulakh 00:41**

Government of Ontario is planning a major tax break aimed at boosting housing. The measure applies to homes valued up to \$1 million with buyers eligible for rebates of up to \$130,000. Premier Doug Ford announced the province will temporarily remove HST on new homes for one year. The plan is designed to make home ownership more affordable and kick start construction across the province. The government estimates the move could lead to 8,000 new units and support more than 20,000 jobs. The rebate will take effect April 1 and be included in the upcoming provincial budget.

M**Mia Di Panfilo 01:18**

Ten years after the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Calls to Action, TMU's reflecting on its progress while committing to continued change. The first 10, next 10 poster series highlights growth in Indigenous education, student support and campus spaces. Moving forward, the university aims to expand these efforts and strength reconciliation across campus,

M**Manroop Aulakh 01:43**

Students went to the polls last week in the Toronto Metropolitan Students' Union 2026 general election. 12 candidates ran for executive positions in the election that followed, two that were voided in 2025 due to the evidence of interference and a high number of complaints. Results from the election have not been released yet, as outstanding complaints are being reviewed. OTR reporter Gabrielle Hilty looks at student engagement.

G**Gabriel Hilty 02:10**

Undergraduate students at TMU were able to vote in person or online through the university portal, but verified data from recent elections shows that few actually voted. When OTR visited the private in person polling station two hours into voting on the first day, no students had signed in to vote, an OTR estimate found turnout in the fall 2025 by election was around 7.4%. Low participation is nothing new to TMU. Verified data from recent elections shows that few actually vote. Turnout has been below 10% since 2023.

J Justin Patrick 02:52

We have to understand how student unions, as we currently know them, came about. So a lot of them got their independence from the universities around the mid 20th century. But with that, I think there hasn't been a necessary update to account for how big universities have grown. So for instance, a lot of the universities like the campaign spending limits so how much each candidate can spend to reach the student population and pretty much let them know that the election is happening. Those amounts often aren't even adjusted to inflation.

G Gabriel Hilty 03:26

The TMSU elections Procedure Code has spending limits of \$500 for executive candidates. Patrick, who previously researched student leadership at U of T also said student journalism and an internal dispute system for students could help student unions.

J Justin Patrick 03:45

The other thing that student unions often forget is the need to have a good culture of participation, not just in student politics itself, but the extracurricular activities, the social events on campus, like, if the extracurricular activities that the student union regulates are suffering, then the students are just not going to have that sense of care for each other. They might just say, Okay, just a company that gives me health insurance. That's it. Whereas, you know, a democracy is a learned practice.

G Gabriel Hilty 04:20

While the elections procedures code says unofficial results should be announced within 48 hours of voting, the union said in an email that results are being held until complaints and appeals are resolved at a Monday board meeting. Union directors said an election report will come out before The April 9 annual general meeting. For OTR News, I'm Gabrielle Hilty.

M Mia Di Panfilo 04:45

A Toronto man who died rescuing a mother and child from a house fire in 2021 will be honored with the Star of Courage. Matthew Zdybal re-entered a burning home to save others, losing his life in the process. His family will receive the award in Ottawa today, recognizing his extraordinary bravery.

M

Manroop Aulakh 05:06

Toronto Metropolitan University celebrated Caribbean culture last week through Carnival Connect+ plus bringing epic vibes to campus. OTR reporter Saba Iqbal looks at how the celebration connects beyond campus.

S

Saba Iqbal 05:32

Music, dance and vibrant energy filled Toronto Metropolitan University as students came together for Carnival Connect+ Event - a celebration of Caribbean culture. The celebration was not only a learning opportunity.

R

Rommel Waterman 05:51

Today, we're trying to celebrate a day of Caribbean pride, a day of Caribbean celebration here at TMU. For TMU, this is a celebration of Caribbean culture. This is a day of inclusion. This is important when you look at all when you look at EDI, equity, diversity and inclusion in all respects. And we, we want to, you know, also, hold those 450 Caribbean students hand here on campus and tell them, we see you. We're happy for you. We're rooting for you. Push through your studies and know that all is well, and we want to share our culture with the entire campus.

S

Saba Iqbal 06:24

Community events like Carnival Connect+ are helping to build a more inclusive and connected campus where students can celebrate different cultures together.

V

Vejayan Anthony 06:32

Like we always know the Caribbean is filled with colors, filled with music, filled with vibe, so it's honestly just really like a connection with, like, all the different islands. So it's been very live. It's good to know that there's community. It's good to know that there's people just like you're not alone, because that can be something that we as students feel, especially moving from, like different islands, different countries. We want to feel like we have our people with us.

S

Saba Iqbal 06:53

Organizers say the goal is to celebrate diversity and bring students together through culture.

R

Rose Aveny 07:00

Because you got to represent and for people to feel heard and everything like it's a community. And once you're here with each other, you find people. You meet people.

S

Saba Iqbal 07:07

In a multicultural society, Caribbean culture extends far beyond campus.

J

Jason McDonald 07:14

You always feel a sense of solidarity when you're around your own people, your own culture, that is the greatest feeling when you're with your people. It's always mind you. I love diversity. I love every person, but it's just something special about being around your own. It's something that's organic and something that we always value here in Little Jamaica.

J

John Sheriff Calliste 07:43

Legacy of family is one thing that Caribbean and African strive on, is family connection, and so the culture, the food, the music, keeps us again, is important for our children who born here to understand the culture and the heritage and the ancestry from which they came.

S

Saba Iqbal 07:57

Voices here say culture is not just something you celebrate, it's something you live every day, from carnival connect plus at Tmu to little Jamaica, Caribbean culture is alive at Toronto, showing how Toronto is diverse, vibrant and multicultural is. Reporting for On The Record News, I'm Saba Iqbal.

M

Manroop Aulakh 08:23

It's been an exciting week in entertainment with more still to come. Let's hear a bit more about it from Julia, who's got all the information you need.

J

Julie Sawicki 08:32

Thanks, Manroop and Mia, here's what's new in entertainment this week in film, Project Hail Mary has dominated the global box office as the largest movie debut of the year and a record for Amazon MGM, with over \$140.9 million grossed globally. The big budget sci fi epic stars Canadian actor Ryan Gosling, who also worked as a producer on the film, directed by Phil Lord and Chris Miller, the film reportedly cost \$200 million to make Ryan Gosling plays a former molecular biologist who wakes up on a spaceship with no memory as to how he got there. He soon realizes he needs to figure out a solution to stop the sun from dying out in order to save the Earth from extinction. Both critics and audiences alike are coming out with rave reviews. The film is Certified Fresh on Rotten Tomatoes by critics with a 94% rating and a 4.2 out of five by users on letterboxed, the film continues to climb at the box office, and it doesn't look like it'll be slowing down anytime soon. In music, the 2026 Juno awards are set to take place this Sunday in Hamilton, Ontario, hosted by actor and comedian Mae Martin. This year's ceremony also brings some changes, setting it apart from previous years, the Junos have introduced a new category this year with Latin music recording of the year. The Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences have also announced a new role for rap album slash EP of the year and rap single of the year. Year requiring vocalists to be Canadian citizens or permanent residents. Tate McRae and Justin Bieber are leading nominees with six nominations each, including song, album and artist of the year. The weekend is also a competitor in these three categories, so it's sure to be a tight race and an even more exciting night. Be sure to tune in at 8pm eastern time to see all your Canadian favorites going head to head in pop culture, the long awaited Hannah Montana 20th Anniversary Special dropped on Disney plus and Hulu on March 24 fans got to revisit the iconic television show through line reads, cast reunions, original music like the climb and even some cameos from artists and actors like Selena Gomez, who played Hannah's on screen rival and Chapel Roan, bringing audiences back into a recreation of the Stewart's Malibu house. The special gave all the Disney Channel kids some heavy nostalgia, where we were reminded you can laugh and cry, but everyone knows you'll always find your way back home. That's all for entertainment this week, back to you in the studio.

M

Mia Di Panfilo 11:05

Toronto is one step closer to hosting the World Cup. The City of Toronto, alongside Maple Leaf sports and entertainment, has completed major upgrades to Toronto Stadium at exhibition place ahead of the FIFA World Cup 2026 the venue will host six matches, including group stage and knockout games. Upgrades include expanded seating for up to 45,000 fans, a new pitch, upgraded player facilities and improved broadcast infrastructure. The project cost nearly \$158 million from funding from both the city and the mlsc. The improvements will not only support the tournament, but leave a lasting legacy for future events in Toronto. There's a lot to get into in the world of sports right now, with plenty happening, both here at home and internationally. Miguel Mabalay joins us for the details.

M**Miguel Mabalay 11:59**

Leg one the UEFA women's Champions League quarterfinals kicked off Tuesday with Wolfsburg being Leon one nil and Arsenal taking down Chelsea three one on Wednesday, Real Madrid is up against Barcelona and Manchester United will face Bayern Munich. Those results set the stage for leg two, which begins on April 1, with aggregate scores deciding who moves on to the semifinals. Meanwhile, the UEFA men's Champions League finalized its quarter final matchups last week, following the conclusion of the regular season. Real Madrid will face Bayern, Munich Sporting CP takes on Arsenal, Barcelona. Kicks off against Athletic Madrid and Paris. Saint Germain faces Liverpool. The first leg of those matchups is scheduled for April, 7 and eighth over on the American College hardcourt March Madness continues with the sweet 16 tipping off Thursday in the West, 11 seeded Texas still remains in the tournament and is set to face second seeded Purdue on Thursday. Over in the east, top seeded Duke will take on St John's on Friday. 12 other teams will also be in the action across Thursday and Friday, all competing for a spot in the Elite Eight in the NHL, the Toronto Maple Leafs defeated the Boston Bruins Tuesday night, winning four to two out shooting the Bruins 34 to 20. Toronto is now into the final stretch of the regular season, currently sitting last in the Atlantic Division and 24th overall in the league standings. With only 10 games remaining last season, the Leafs acquired defenseman Brandon Carlo from Boston in exchange for prospect Fraser Minton, along with the 20/25 fourth round pick and a 2026 first round pick that's top five protected which, as it stands, would go to the Bruins police are back in action tonight as they take on the New York Rangers and in baseball. Exciting news, Blue Jays fans, the team returns to the Rogers Center this Friday. Here's OTR reporter Aisha Shabeese on what to expect for opening day and the new baseball season.

J**Jason McDonald 13:56**

After a heartbreaking game seven loss in the 2025 World Series, the Blue Jays are looking to bounce back and chase redemption on opening day.

M**Maddie Cholette 14:04**

I think we're going to see more of that this year. They're they've all proven themselves to be legitimate players, legitimate stars, legitimate worthy of like awards and attention. And I think we're going to see all those guys show up again this year. I think they're definitely gonna be competing for the division, competing for the American League and for the World Series.

J Jason McDonald 14:24

Again, while much of the team's core remains intact, the season won't look exactly the same. The loss of Boba shett and free agency leaves a major gap, as All eyes are now in star players like Vladimir Guerrero JR and George Springer to step up the ball game in Toronto. Opening Day at Rogers Center is expected to draw a packed crowd with fans bringing high energy, excitement and big expectations for a team that just came short of a championship,

J Johnny Prokos 14:48

Always looks like Barger. He was really good last year, obviously Springer, hopefully he's last year. But we got, obviously, vlad. We got a whole stack of team that's really good.

J Jason McDonald 14:57

On the Record reached out to Toronto Police, who say. Officers will be on site to support public safety and to manage traffic around the stadium to ensure the event runs safely. The Toronto Blue Jays open with a three game series against the athletics with Friday's home opener kicking off at 7pm for OTR, I'm Aisha Shabeese.

M Miguel Mabalay 15:16

And that's all for sports for OTR News, I'm Miguel Mabalay.

M Manroop Aulakh 15:22

Turning to the weather now, here's Anish Dhupar With what we can expect this week.

A

Anish Dhupar 15:28

Good afternoon Toronto. I'm Anish Duhpar, and here's what the weather will be looking like this week. It's shipping up to be a classic early spring day across Toronto and the GTA with a mix of rain and lingering winter conditions. We're expecting a high of around six degrees and a low near minus one, which is right around the seasonal for late March, the day will start cloudy, with the scattered rain expected throughout the morning commute. As temperatures hover just above freezing, some areas north of the city, such as Barrie, could see a brief rain snow mix before transitioning fully to rain. By the afternoon, conditions will improve slightly, with mostly cloudy skies and a few breaks, but it will remain cool. Winds will be light to moderate out of the Southwest, helping keep temperatures steady, but adding a bit of chill to the air across the GTA including Mississauga, Brampton and Oakville, expect similar conditions with slightly cooler temperatures north and west of the city, St Catharines and the surrounding area east of the city, should expect the same conditions, but with slightly cooler temperatures. Looking ahead at the week, more unsettled weather conditions continue with Thursday, with steady rain and a 90% chance of a thunderstorm, we're looking at a daytime high of 12 degrees with an overnight low of three while conditions may be favorable and sunny on Friday, expect a slight dip in temperature with a daytime high of five degrees and overnight lows of minus five. Looking into the weekend, we're looking at a cooler temperatures with a high of one and a low of six minus six on Saturday, while it warms up on Sunday, rise to nine degrees with a low of minus three. The weather is subject to change, but as of now, the weather is set. That's your weather update for Toronto and the surrounding GTA. I'm Anish Dhupar, back to you.

M

Mia Di Panfilo 17:48

Thanks, Anish. Now let's have a look at the other stories we're working on today and this week in our on the record newsroom, semi won is standing by LIVE. Sami, what do you have for us?

S

Semi Won 18:00

Thanks, Mia. Starting with an update on the TMSU election result, the poll closed last Wednesday, March 18. OTR reporter Jaden Whitelaw is on the watch for the election's outcome. As soon as the results are announced, he will deliver a story on who has won and what the results mean for the Student Union for next year in local news, Ontario's 2026 budget is expected to come out tomorrow. Wheelchair reporter Moyo la we is chasing a story on how students will be affected by the budget. Expect the story later this week, season eight of our podcast about the upcoming municipal elections is continuously running. Last week, Julia Sawicki and Miguel mabele discussed Toronto's Net Zero promises and whether the promises are being kept. Next week, our host, Anish dupar and Julia Petrucci will dive into the city's big thematic issues like transit, traffic, housing and police services. And what the voters should know before heading into the fall election. Make sure you listen to our past episodes in the upcoming one out next week on Friday. You can also check our website, on the record news.ca. For any news stories, and as we wrap up our semester, we will soon find out who from our masthead is taking home our beloved tktk Raccoon trophy for Best Story of the semester voted by the OTR team. Stay tuned for our next show to see who wins. Back to you in the studio,



Manroop Aulakh 19:17

thanks, Semi, that's all for On The Record this March 24 I'm Manroop Aulakh.



Mia Di Panfilo 19:21

and I'm Mia Di Panfilo. Join us for On The Record two weeks from now, for our final broadcast of the semester.



Manroop Aulakh 19:21

And for the latest 24/7 visit our website, on the record news.ca. Have a great day!