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Trucker convoy: Cities across Canada mobilize as anti-mandate protests spread

While police in Ottawa and Coutts, Alberta, attempt to manage ongoing blockades, protests are also planned for the weekend in Toronto, Winnipeg and Quebec City



National Post Staff

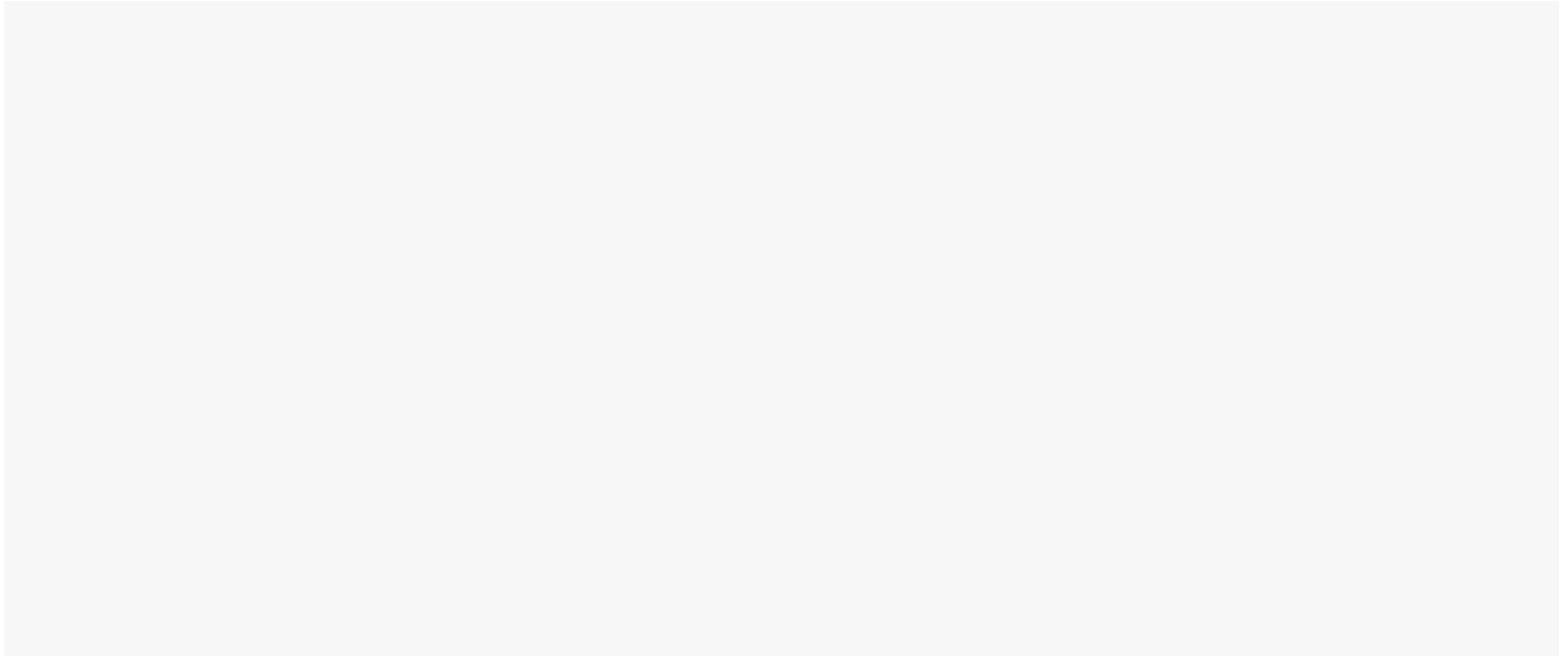
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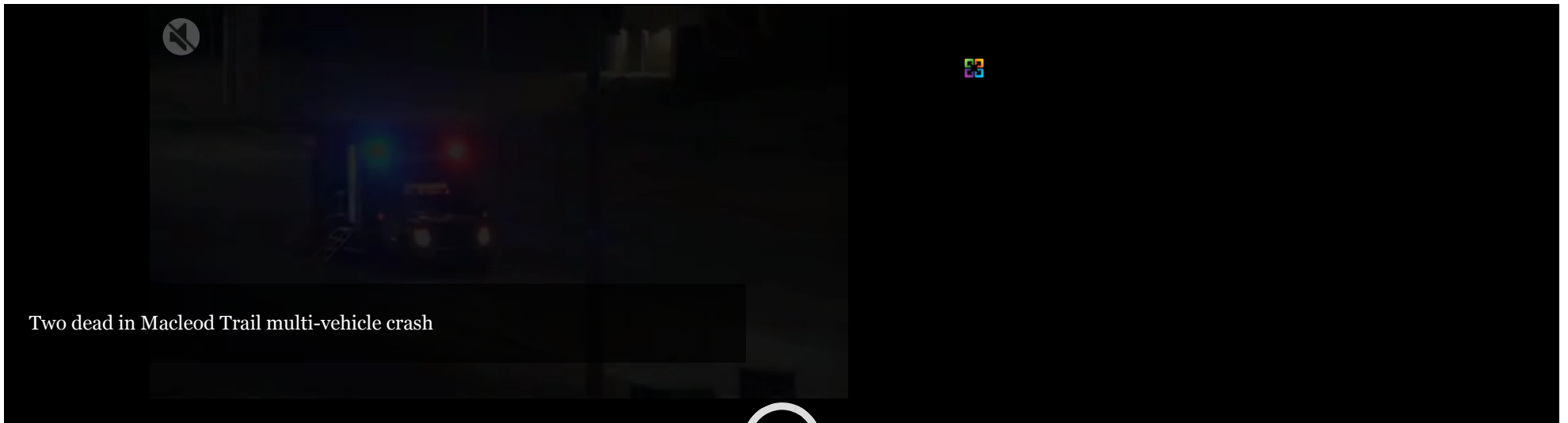
Trucks parked in downtown Ottawa continue to protest Covid-19 vaccine mandates and restrictions, on February 4, 2022 in Ottawa, Canada. PHOTO BY DAVE CHAN / AFP

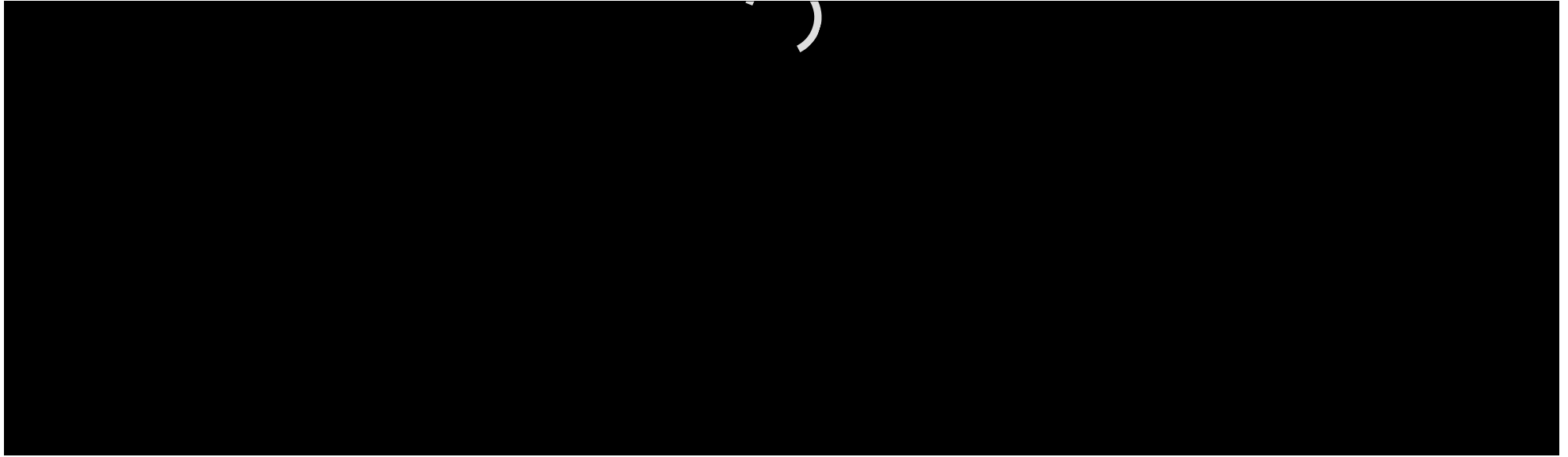
The protest against pandemic measures, which has immobilized Ottawa’s downtown with scores of large trucks, is an “increasingly volatile and increasingly dangerous demonstration,” the capital city’s police chief said on Friday.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW



“We’re absolutely committed to bringing this demonstration to an end,” said Ottawa Police Chief Peter Sloly.





As Ottawa residents grow increasingly frustrated with the protest that is entering its second week on Saturday, solidarity protests are fanning out across the country, threatening to disrupt other major cities this weekend.

OTTAWA





Trucks parked in downtown Ottawa continue to protest Covid-19 vaccine mandates and restrictions, on February 4, 2022 in Ottawa, Canada. PHOTO BY DAVE CHAN / AFP

Ottawa police are deploying a “surge” of about 150 extra police officers to central areas of the city paralyzed by the protest against COVID-19 mandates.

Sloly says the patrolling officers will focus on mischief, hate, harassment, threats and other intimidating behaviour to send a clear message: “The lawlessness must end.”

However, Sloly warned that demonstrators near Parliament Hill remain highly organized, well-funded and extremely committed to resisting attempts to end the demonstration safely.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

Sloly, who said he and other top officials had received death threats, likened the protest to the Jan. 6, 2021, riot in Washington when thousands of supporters of former president Donald Trump stormed the U.S. Capitol in a bid to overturn Joe Biden’s election victory.

Trump said in a statement that the truckers were “peacefully protesting the harsh policies of far left lunatic Justin Trudeau who has destroyed Canada with insane Covid mandates.”

Police plan to contain the demonstration in the area immediately south of the Hill through concrete barriers and large machinery to control roadways throughout the downtown core.

They are also looking at closing bridges and highway off-ramps, while incoming protest trucks will be directed to designated parking zones outside the downtown core. Illegal parking by demonstrators could result in bylaw enforcement, removal and impound. Teams are gathering details including vehicle registration, driver identification, insurance status and other related evidence that will be used in prosecutions.

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