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Call To Stop Flow Of Illegal Asylum Seekers

Trudeau Has Failed To Take Steps, Charge Conservatives; Real Refugees, Family Reunification Hit

OTTAWA: As an influx of illegal border crossings by asylum seekers continues to cause pressures in Quebec, the issue is creating mounting tensions between the Liberals and Conservatives in the House of Commons.

The Trudeau Liberals and the Opposition Conservatives blamed each other Tuesday for problems caused by a spike in refugee claimants entering Canada illegally from the U.S.

an influx that does not appear to be slowing down.

"This has been an issue for well over a year, but this prime minister has failed to take any concrete steps to address the situation," Conservative Leader Andrew Scheer said.

"Meanwhile, families here in Canada who are waiting to be reunited with a loved one or refugees facing real danger have to wait longer because of the gov-

ernment's inaction. Why?"

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau countered that lengthy delays for processing refugee claims were caused by a cut in funding to the Canada Border Services Agency by the former Conservative administration of Stephen Harper.

"I think people will be forgiven for rolling their eyes when the Conservatives talk about supporting refugees or accelerating process for family reunification.



Their cuts left us with significant backlogs," Trudeau said. "They tried to get rid of back-

logs by using the delete button." The issue dominated Tuesday's

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Flowers, notes and candles are piled high at a vigil on Yonge Street in Toronto. Ten people were killed and 14 were injured in Monday's deadly attack in northern Toronto. The Canadian Press/Galit Rodan

Families Mourn Victims Of Toronto Van Attack

10 Killed, 16 Hurt; First Degree Murder Charges

TORONTO: The families shattered by a deadly rampage through the streets of Toronto include a seven-year-old boy now left without a mother and a son forced to bury the father who travelled overseas to visit him, community members said Wednesday.

While officials still stayed mum on the identities of the 10 people killed after a van mounted a sidewalk along bustling Yonge street, some who knew the victims released details of the individuals who lost their lives Monday afternoon. Fourteen people were also injured in the incident.

The latest identified victims include Renuka Amarasingha, a school board employee who was the sole caregiver for her seven-year-old child, and Jordanian citizen Munir Alnajjar who had recently travelled to the city to visit his adult son.

Other victims include two unnamed Korean nationals, an unidentified female Seneca College student, an investment company worker with a love of volunteering and an 80-year-old grandmother who was passionate about local sports.

Police have charged 25-year-old Alek Minassian in connection with the incident, laying 10 first-degree murder charges and 13 attempted murder charges. An additional attempted murder charge was expected to be laid soon, investigators said.

A monk at the temple Amarasingha frequented said she was an active member of Toronto's Sri Lankan community and noted that the brutality of her death left many questioning the safety of the country they now call home.

"We think that Canada was a peaceful country, (but) that is a doubt we have if people do

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Wynne Liberals Dealt Massive Deficit Blow

Auditor-General's Report Scathing About Understating Billions

TORONTO: Ontario's governing Liberals were dealt a blow Wednesday as the province's auditor general said their financial statements "dramatically understate" their deficit by billions of dollars.

The finding from Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk was part of a report released just weeks before a spring election and built on past criticism of accounting principles applied by the Liberals, which Lysyk says make Ontario's deficits appear smaller than they are.

The government has not accurately reflected the true cost of its borrowing plan to cut hydro rates by 25 per cent, Lysyk said, while also raising questions about how the province accounts for revenues related to two teacher pension plans it includes on the books as assets.

"The consequences of these

major differences between the governments projections and the likely actual deficits are significant," Lysyk said. "They create the perception that the government has more money available to it than it actually does."

Lysyk said the government's deficit projections are off by 75 per cent for 2018-2019, with that jumping to 92 per cent for 2020-2021.

That means the \$6.7 billion deficit projected by the government for 2018-2019 will instead be \$11.7 billion, Lysyk said, and the projected \$6.5 billion for 2020-2021 will actually be \$12.5 billion. "It dramatically understates the expense estimates for two major items," Lysyk said of the government's financial statements.

Under its Fair Hydro Plan, the government will borrow money over the long-term to cut rates

immediately. Lysyk said the government has not included the cost of compensating power generators or interest on the money borrowed for the plan.

"The plan gives ratepayers a discount on their hydro bills but someone else still has to compensate power generators for their reduced revenues resulting from the discount," she said. "That someone is the government. And it must borrow to pay this compensation."

Lysyk also raised the issues with the accounting of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union Pension Plan and the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, which are jointly sponsored with the government.

In 2016, the auditor general told the government it did not have a legally enforceable right

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Ottawa Shortfall Will Balloon To \$22.1 Billion

OTTAWA: The Trudeau government is on track to run deficits nearly \$8 billion deeper than expected over the next two years, the federal budget watchdog said Monday in a new report.

The parliamentary budget officer estimated the Liberals will post a \$22.1-billion shortfall this fiscal year, which would be \$4 billion more than the projection of \$18.1 billion in the federal government's February budget.

For 2019-20, Jean-Denis Frechette's team predicted a \$21.4-billion deficit, \$3.9 billion



higher than the government's forecast of \$17.5 billion.

"We believe that the deficit is

going to rise somewhat above what the government was assuming in the budget," Mostafa Askari (on left), the deputy parliamentary budget officer, said in an interview.

The report's release comes two months after the Liberal government introduced a budget that predicted deficits across the planning horizon, until 2022-23, with no timetable to return to balance. During the 2015 campaign, the Liberals had vowed to keep annual deficits at no more than \$10 billion and to balance the books

by 2019. Finance Minister Bill Morneau has argued the shortfalls will help Canada make investments to raise long-term economic growth.

Any hope of returning to the black any time soon is remote, the budget office said Monday. It predicted there's approximately a five per cent chance the federal budget will be balanced or will show a surplus in 2020-21. The blow to the federal bottom line will come from several sources, the budget office said.

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