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Tories To Overhaul All Welfare Programs

Basic Income Pilot To Be Scrapped; Support Rates Reduced 'To Restore Dignity To Ontarians'

TORONTO: Ontario's new Progressive Conservative government ushered in the first of what it promised would be major reforms to social assistance on Tuesday, reducing a planned increase in support rates and cancelling a pilot program that provided payments to low-income people in certain communities.

In an afternoon news conference, Social Services Minister Lisa MacLeod said the government would come up with a plan within 100 days to overhaul the

"disjointed patchwork system" left by the previous Liberal regime.

The Liberals, she said, spent money the province didn't have on "handouts that actually do little if anything to break the cycle of poverty."

The province's first steps will be to cancel the previous government's plan to raise Ontario Disability Support Program and Ontario Works rates by three per cent and raise them by 1.5 per cent instead, said MacLeod, add-

ing the decision was made "on compassionate grounds."

"What I'm announcing today is about restoring dignity to Ontarians," she said.

"But let me be clear: the best social program is a job, for those who can get one," she said. "So I'll be working with my colleagues... in making sure that we have an ability to integrate people back into the workforce where they can and making sure that they keep more money in their

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Lisa MacLeod, Children, Community and Social Services Minister, speaks in the Legislature. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Chris Young



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, centre, pays his respects and places flowers at the fountain at the Alexander the Great Parkette, near where people were gunned down and injured from the recent Danforth shootings in Toronto. THE CANADIAN PRESS/Nathan Denette

Imran Gets MQM-P Support To Govern

ISLAMABAD: The Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) has decided to join Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to form the federal government, the media reported.

MQM-P convener Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui confirmed the

He also said that the MQM-P will not be attending the All Parties' Conference on Thursday. It will be a meeting of opposition

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news on a Geo TV programme on Wednesday. "Yes, we have agreed to cooperate with them (the PTI) for the formation of (a coalition) government at the Centre," he said.

On Thursday, the PTI also sought the support of Balochistan National Party-Mengal (BNP-M). MQM-P's Siddiqui added that after a series of past experiences, the party does not want to side with the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP). "The PPP does not need anyone in Sindh. The MQM-P will sit alongside the PTI on government benches."

"We have decided to sit on treasury benches instead of the opposition. Sitting with the opposition would have created doubts about our stance and because of this, the MQM-P has arrived at a consensus on this move."

"We respect everyone's mandate and want everyone to respect ours," said the MQM-P convener.

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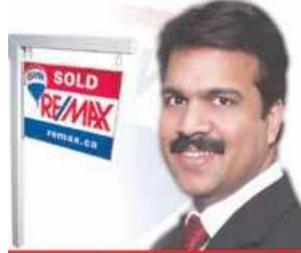
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Ottawa Stalls On New Citizenship Guide

Female Genital Mutilation Issue; Rempel Wants Transparency

OTTAWA: It's been more than two years since work began on revising the controversial study guide for Canada's citizenship test, but the federal government says it needs more time to work on the publication and has no set timeline for release.

Internal emails from the Immigration department dating back to 2016 show officials were hoping the launch of the new guide could coincide with Canada 150 celebrations and the 70th anniversary of the Citizenship Act _ events that took place over a year ago.

But so far, no official guide has materialized.

Conservative immigration critic Michelle Rempel says she be-

lieves bureaucrats were sent back to the drawing board after a draft copy of the revised guide, obtained last year by The Canadian Press, revealed the department had removed references to barbaric cultural practices, including female genital mutilation, as being against Canadian law _ references that were added by the Stephen Harper government in 2011.

"The immigration minister's response to the issue around removing the language about female genital mutilation being a very intolerable practice from the citizenship guide, his delay and his response, I would surmise, didn't go well within the prime minister's office," Rempel said.

"I think probably he mishandled that so badly they're delaying any sort of output."

Rempel notes that public money has been spent on the ongoing work done to revise this document and that Canadians have a right to transparency on its contents.

Indeed, the internal emails from 2016, obtained through access to information law, show bureaucrats were working on developing a "full refresh" of the official citizenship study guide, entitled Discover Canada.

The emails show that departmental directors and communications staff working on the file

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Canada Expands Biometrics Screening Program

OTTAWA: Effective July 31, 2018, all nationals from countries in Europe, Africa and the Middle East are required to provide biometrics (fingerprints and a photo) if they are applying for a Canadian visitor visa, a work or study permit, or permanent residence.

Accurately establishing identity is an important part of immigration decisions and helps keep Canadians safe. For more than 20 years, biometrics (fingerprints and a photo) have played a role in supporting immigration screening and decision-making in Can-



ada, a statement from the Ministry of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship said.

Canada currently collects biometrics from in-Canada refugee claimants and overseas refugee resettlement applicants, individuals ordered removed from Canada and individuals from 30 foreign nationalities applying for a temporary resident visa, work permit, or study permit.

Biometric screening has proven effective in protecting the safety and security of Canadians and the integrity of the immigration system. Systematic fingerprint verification allows border service officers to confirm a trav-

eller's identity and better manage traffic flow at the border. This will in turn make international travel a convenient, predictable and secure process for travellers with genuine identities.

The Government of Canada has taken several steps to make giving biometrics easier for travellers, including only requiring that temporary residents provide their biometrics once every 10 years (those applying for a visa, or a study or work permit). Canada is also increasing its Visa Appli

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