TA Tomorrow's Affairs

Analysis of today
Assessment of tomorrow

By: TA | AP Brief

UK will open new sponsorship routes for eligible refugees

Britain's government said it will open safe, legal routes for eligible refugees, while also changing human rights laws to make it easier to deport people who are in the country illegally.

The new routes will allow community groups, universities and employers to sponsor refugees to come to the U.K. Authorities said the plan was inspired by a similar "community sponsorship" program in Canada that has settled some 400,000 people in the country since 1979.

"I will open new legal routes for genuine refugees, while closing loopholes that have been too often abused," Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood said.

At the same time, Mahmood said, a new immigration law will seek to prevent "abuse" of human rights laws and crack down on "vexatious claims."

It will tighten the definition of family so that it is restricted to immediate family members only.

Critics have said the European Convention on Human Rights is often cited to prevent the deportation of people who have no right to stay in the U.K.

Britain's next prime minister

The announcement came as Mahmood faces questions about whether she will remain in her post once Prime Minister Keir Starmer leaves office.

Starmer announced his plan to resign on Monday after two years in office marked by missteps and judgment errors that eroded his standing with his party and the public.

He will be out of office within weeks once the governing Labour Party picks a new leader.

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The former Greater Manchester mayor, Andy Burnham, is widely expected to become Britain's next prime minister without a contest within the party.

Immigration has become a political flashpoint in Britain and other Western countries coping with an influx of migrants seeking a better life as they flee war-torn countries, poverty, regions wracked by climate change or political persecution.

The debate in the U.K. has focused on migrants crossing the English Channel in overloaded boats run by smugglers, as well as escalating tensions over housing tens of thousands of asylum seekers at public expense.