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Daily National News

Police watchdog review to include two recent cases of Indigenous youth

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A red ribbon hangs near the spot on the McIntyre River where the body of 14-year-old Josiah Begg was discovered/ Chronicle-Journal Sandi Krasowski photo

THUNDER BAY, Ont.-A police watchdog will include the recent cases of two teens in its systemic review of how the Thunder Bay Police Service investigates the deaths and disappearances of Indigenous people.

The body of 17-year-old Tammy Keeash from North Caribou Lake First Nation was discovered, drowned, in the Neebing McIntyre floodway on May 8. She was in care in a group home in Thunder Bay.

And 14-year-old Josiah Begg of Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation disappeared two days earlier.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler says a body discovered in the McIntyre River is believed to be that of Begg, but police have not yet confirmed that account and could not immediately be reached for comment.

In an email, a representative for the Office of the Independent Police Review Director confirmed that the agency is asking the Thunder Bay police for Keeash's and Begg's case files as part of its review of the force's practices in policing Indigenous people.

When the review was launched last year, the agency's director said that alarming questions were raised about the way Thunder Bay police have investigated the disappearances and deaths of indigenous people in the community.



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"Indigenous leaders and community members say that these investigations, and other interactions with police, devalue Indigenous lives, reflect differential treatment and are based on racist attitudes and/or stereotypical preconceptions about the Indigenous community," Gerry McNeilly said in a news release at the time.

"It is critical that these issues be independently examined through a systemic review, which would enable me to effectively address the issues and make meaningful recommendations for improvement."

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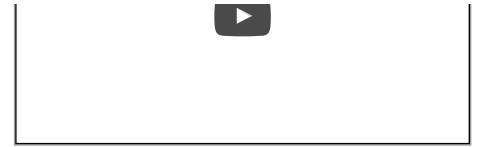
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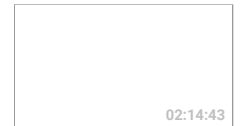
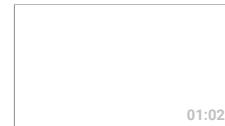
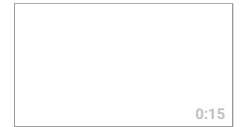
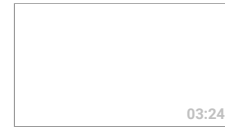
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