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Canada

Liberals win poll support after budget deal

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TORONTO (Reuters) - A budget deal with a left-wing party has lifted support for Canada's ruling Liberals, according to a poll released late on Thursday, but pollsters SES said the outcome of any election held now would remain uncertain.

The survey of 1,000 Canadian voters, conducted from April 30 to May 4, showed 36 percent support for the Liberals, who have a minority government that looks increasingly vulnerable.

That's up from 32 percent in the previous SES poll, conducted April 14-18.

The opposition Conservatives have the backing of 30 percent of voters, down from 38 percent in the previous poll, while support for the left-wing New Democratic Party rose to 18 percent from 15 percent.

The Liberals last month added extra spending to the federal budget and delayed promised corporate tax cuts in a deal that won them NDP backing for the plan.

But the two parties combined have just under half the seats in the Canadian parliament of the NDP, so there are no assurances that the budget will actually pass.

If it does not, or if other parties win a vote of non-confidence, the government will fall and there will be a new election, perhaps as early as June.

Support for the Liberals fell steeply after a commission headed by Judge John Gomery heard allegations about government kickbacks and corruption during a sponsorship program to win federal support in French-speaking Quebec.

"We are clearly entering turbulent times," SES Research President Nik Nanos said. "Although the Liberals trailed on April 18th, as of May 4th they have regained the lead.

"The Tories may have won the battle on Gomery, but the outcome of the war remains uncertain."

The poll has a margin of error of 3.1 percent, 19 times out of 20.

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