THE WEEKLY VOICE

Leader in South Asian News - Tel: 905-795-0639

Friday, January 5, 2018 **www.WeeklyVoice.com** **Vol 24, No. 01 PM: 40025701**

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Trump Denounces Pakistan; Cuts All Aid

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump began the New Year on Monday with a stinging attack on long-standing ally Pakistan, saying it will get no more US aid as it was giving "safe haven to terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan".

"The US has foolishly given Pakistan more than $33 billion in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies and deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools," Trump tweeted in his strongest denunciation of Islamabad.

"They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!" he added. Trump's announcement follows an increasingly tense back-and-forth between Washington and Islamabad after the US President unveiled his administration's National Security Strategy.

He had then reminded Pakistan about its obligation towards helping the US because it got "massive payments" from Washington every year. "We have made it clear to Pakistan that while we desire continued partnership, we must see decisive action against terrorist groups operating on their territory," Trump had said. "They have to help."

Pakistan is also accused by Afghanistan and India of harbouring terrorists ranged against the two countries. Islamabad routinely denies such charges.

US Press Secretary Sarah Sanders said Islamabad should do more to fight terrorism.

Sanders said the actions being taken against Islamabad were a follow-up to Trump's South Asia policy announced last year.

"The President outlined a new strategy for Afghanistan and South Asia in August. At that time, he laid out (a policy) and said Pakistan is not fulfilling its obligations," she said. "The President is simply following through on a commitment that he made (...) we know Paki-

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Captain Rakesh Kumar, of the Ottawa Express container ship, toasts with Montreal Mayor Valerie Plante, left, and Port of Montreal chief executive Sylvie Vachon, right, after recieving the 179th gold cane award for the first ship to arrive in the new year at a ceremony Wednesday, January 3, 2018 in Montreal.THE CANADIAN PRESS/Ryan.

14 Ontario Gurdwaras Ban Entry Of Indian Government Officials

TORONTO: Fourteen gurdwara management committees, mainly in the GTA, have banned the entry of Indian government officials to gurdwaras under their control in Ontario.

The restriction on Indian government representatives was imposed citing a local law against 'trespassing'. The decision was taken at a meeting at Jot Parkash Gurdwara in Brampton on December 30. However, Indian officials will be allowed to pay personal visits to any gurdwara run by these committees, Indian newspapers reported.

The order reads: "Pursuant to the Trespass to Property Act (1990), the management of these gurdwaras reserves the right to bar entry to officials of the Indian Government, including but not limited to Indian elected officials, Indian consular officials and members of organisations who seek to undermine the Sikh nation and Sikh institutions." A press note alleged that there was interference by Indian government officials in the gurdwaras' functioning.

"Keeping in mind the interference of Indian Consular and Indian Government officials in the lives of Canadian Sikhs, gurdwara management committees have jointly taken the decision to bar the entry of these officials and members from gurdwaras across Canada. The presence of these officials makes members of the Sikh community uncomfortable due to their agenda of undermining the autonomy of Sikh institutions and organisations. It is our obligation to ensure the safety of the Sangat, and accordingly, we have arrived at this decision," the press note said.

Amarjit Singh Mann, a spokesperson for a gurdwara committee, was quoted as saying the

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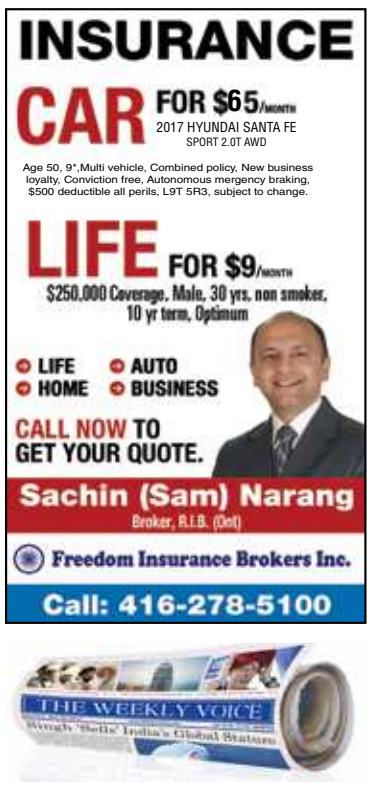

60,000 Fewer Jobs Due To Minimum Wage Increases

Prices Expected To Rise, Businesses To Cut Staff Strengths

OTTAWA: The Bank of Canada estimates there will be about 60,000 fewer jobs by 2019 due to the increases in minimum wages across the country, but that labour income will be higher due to the increases.

In examining the impact of the wage increases, the report estimated that the consumer price index could be boosted by about 0.1 percentage points on average and real gross domestic product could be cut by 0.1 per cent by early 2019.

The number of jobs lost was based on a 0.3 per cent decline in the number of hours worked, while aggregate real wages were estimated to increase 0.7 per cent.

The research paper by the staff at the central bank noted that if the average working hours declined following the increase in the minimum wage, the number of jobs lost would also be lower.

The Bank of Canada estimated that about eight per cent of all employees work at minimum wage, a proportion that increases to 11 per cent if a threshold of five per cent above minimum wage is used.

Ontario raised its minimum wage to $14 per hour on Jan. 1 from $11.60 and plans to increase it to $15 in 2019, while Alberta is expected to raise its minimum wage to $15 later this year.

TORONTO: Ontario's new $14 per hour minimum wage does not take effect until Jan. 1, but Chris Stevens has already taken steps to ensure his restaurant can afford the added expense.

The co-owner of Kaboom Chicken in Toronto's Leslieville neighbourhood has raised menu prices in anticipation of the wage hike. He and his business partner also plan to reduce their staff's hours in the new year and take on more of the work themselves in order to save money.

The Ontario government says the change will bring greater purchasing power for working families and a stronger economy overall, but many small business owners across the province are wondering how they will maintain profits in the face of increasing payroll costs.

"It's hard to see a way that you can lose that much of your rev-

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Triple Talaq Bill Scuttled In Rajya Sabha

Congress-Led Opposition Creates Ruckus; Demands Committee Scrutiny

NEW DELHI: The deadlock on the triple talaq bill in the Rajya Sabha continued on Thursday with the opposition insisting on its reference to a Select Committee for detailed scrutiny and the government rejecting the demand.

With no agreement, the government placed the bill in the bottom of priority in the list of business, which the opposition strongly objected to and demanded that its motions for referring the bill to a Select Committee be taken up immediately. As Deputy Chairman P.J. Kurien pleaded helplessness on the ground that the listing of business was the government's priority and decided to go ahead with a bill on GST, opposition members created an uproar, forcing him to adjourn the House for the day.

It now remains to be seen whether the government lists the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2017, which seeks to criminalise instant divorce by uttering talaq thrice, for consideration on Friday -- the last day of the winter session.

Earlier, the opposition wanted the Chair to put the motions moved by Congress leader Anand Sharma and Trinamool Congress member Sukhendu Shekar Roy for reference of the legislation to a proposed Select Committee be put to vote immediately.

They contended that before the House adjourned on Wednesday, a division was to be taken and so the Rajya Sabha should pick up the thread from where it was left.

After some discussion, the two sides agreed to conduct a short-duration discussion on the economy and take up the matter regarding triple talaq bill after that.

After Finance Minister Arun Jaitley's reply to the discussion, the opposition returned to its demand for a vote on the two motions. Jaitley, who is also Leader of the House, raised questions over the validity of the two motions saying the statutory requirement of 24 hours advance notice

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