

India Declares 'Cease Fire' in Kashmir For Ramadan

SRINAGAR: New Delhi announced on Wednesday that its troops will halt counterinsurgency operations in Kashmir during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

There was no immediate comment from rebel groups that are fighting against Indian rule in the region.

The last cease-fire in counterinsurgency operations declared by India for Ramadan was in 2000. India and Pakistan signed a cease-fire between their forces in 2003, but India has continued to battle Pakistani-backed rebels and armed infiltrators seeking an end to Indian control or to merge Kashmir with Pakistan.

India's home ministry said in a series of tweets that the decision was made so Muslims could observe the holy month "in a peaceful environment."

Another tweet said Indian troops "reserve the right to retaliate if attacked or if essential to protect the lives of innocent peo-



Kashmiri Muslims pray on a road on the first day of the holy month of Ramadan in Srinagar on Thursday, May 17, 2018. (AP Photo/Mukhtar Khan)

ple." The announcement came a week after all pro-India political parties in Kashmir, including the ruling People's Democratic

Party which vaulted to power by forming an alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party, urged the Indian government to cease

counterinsurgency operations during Ramadan.

The Bharatiya Janata Party opposed the move in the meeting.

This year, fasting begins Thursday or Friday in Kashmir.

In recent years, there have been renewed rebel attacks and public protests as a new generation of Kashmiri rebels, especially in the southern parts of the region, aided by the Pakistani government, revive the militancy and challenge New Delhi.

Indian authorities have been increasingly frustrated by the resistance shown by some residents. Many Kashmiris, in open solidarity with militants, have attempted to help trapped rebels escape during military operations by throwing stones at troops, who often retaliate with gunfire, causing civilian fatalities. Last year, at least 29 civilians were killed and hundreds wounded during such clashes.

India accuses Pakistan of arming and training the rebels. Nearly 70,000 people have been killed in the uprising and the ensuing Indian military crackdown.

Study Calls For Fixing Low Incomes Among Family Class Immigrants To Help Canada's Economy

OTTAWA _ Chronic low income among so-called "family-class" immigrants is a concern that needs to be addressed not just for humanitarian reasons, but also to help sustain the Canadian economy, a new report from the Conference Board of Canada suggests.

As the country becomes more dependent on newcomers to fill labour needs, Canada should be looking to improve the labour market barriers and quality of life for newcomers, says the report released Tuesday.

"Low earnings and the prevalence of chronic low income among the family class are is-

suces of concern that need to be addressed to help boost the living standards of immigrant families," it says.

Doing so, it continues, would "help Canada benefit from their human capital in the labour market as it becomes more dependent on immigrant support for its economic growth."

The study measures how the three classes of immigrants contribute to the economy and shows that while Canada has prioritized economic-class immigrants since the mid-1990s, family-class immigrants do more to boost retention rates and improve outcomes for immigrant families.

Newcomers to Canada through family reunification and private sponsorship programs earn significantly less on average than the average Canadian wage, but having family on hand to help with child care allows them to boost their household income by working longer hours.

Family reunification also promotes settlement and integration of immigrants into communities, which encourages better retention rates.

"This underscores the utility of family reunification to economic development policy, as it helps to stimulate demand within the economy and add workers to the

labour supply," says the report _ especially key for Atlantic Canada, where family-class immigrants have been staying in larger numbers than their economic counterparts.

The findings emphasize the importance of viewing family-class immigrants through an economic policy lens, the board notes, given the fact Canada will continue to be dependent on a steady stream of new arrivals to maintain a sustainable level of economic growth.

Statistics Canada data shows the number of deaths in Canada is forecast to overcome the rate of births by 2034, meaning a shrink-

ing workforce that not even the rapid advancement of automation will be able to absorb.

Shutting the doors to immigrants completely would likely lead to a smaller workforce, higher taxes and dwindling social services, the study found, while boosting immigration rates to one per cent of the population would result in modest growth.

"Immigration has been vital to Canada's prosperity throughout the country's history and is poised to play an even bigger role moving forward. Canada needs to remain proactive in its efforts to benefit from immigration," the report concludes.

A Look At The Latest Canada Immigration Numbers

OTTAWA _ At look at the latest Conference Board of Canada report on immigration, by the numbers:

_ As part of its 2018-20 immigration levels plan, Canada will welcome 310,000 new permanent residents in 2018, 330,000 in 2019 and 340,000 in 2020.

_ Economic-class immigrants have typically made up the majority of newcomers to Canada at around 60 per cent of total admissions.

_ Family-class immigrants have accounted for about 27 per cent of the annual im-

migration admissions, while refugees comprise about 12 per cent.

_ Employment rates for family class immigrants are at about 52 per cent.

_ Even after a decade of living in Canada, family class immigrants earn only 61 per cent of the average Canadian wage. After 23 years, they earn about 81 per cent of the average wage.

_ Refugees have the lowest earnings among immigrants. They reach only 50 per cent of the average Canadian wage 10 years after arriving in Canada.

Trudeau Pushes Trade Ties With Top Executives In New York

NEW YORK: Prime Minister Justin Trudeau will work the room at a business luncheon in Manhattan today on the merits of free trade and global economic cooperation, just as word starts to sink in that efforts to conclude NAFTA talks before the end of this week are likely to fail.

Trudeau will spend the second morning of his three-day U.S. tour _ his 16th visit to the United States as prime minister _ participating in what is billed as an "armchair discussion" on economics and international trade at the Economic Club of New York.

The trip is mainly focused on trade and drumming up investment for Canada, although Trudeau veered off that course Wednesday morning. During a speech at the New York University commencement at Yankee Stadium, the prime minister spoke at length on the merits of diversity and the risks of aggressive nationalism.

Looming over everything is the North American Free Trade Agreement and the expected failure of Canada, the U.S. and Mexico to meet an artificial deadline today, set to try and seal a new deal before the Mexican federal elections this summer or U.S. congressional elections in the fall throw new curveballs at the process.

Coupled with ongoing struggles to get the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion built, Canada's ability to compete on the world stage and confidence in its ability to attract investment are currently flagged as

questionable.

In a series of meetings with a lengthy list of international investment executives and U.S. CEOs Wednesday, Trudeau time and again tried to counter those fears, pushing Canada as a great place to do business. Most of those he met with publicly agreed.

None more so than Adam Neumann, the Israeli-born American billionaire who founded WeWork, which provides shared workspaces that include physical and virtual office space, health plans, and shared social networks to entrepreneurs, including start-ups.

"Amazing leader," Neumann said, after spending about 20 minutes in a private meeting with Trudeau. WeWork has five locations in Canada, with plans to expand to 11 by the end of this year and 45 by the end of 2020, Neumann said.

PepsiCo. Chair and CEO Indra Nooyi was also quite enthusiastic about Canada as a place to do business, noting her company _ the second-largest food and beverage corporation in the world _ does \$4 billion worth of business in Canada each year.

"We are in Canada, for Canada, with Canada and from Canada, and the reason is because the government of Canada is an excellent partner for business," she said.

Trudeau also met with the heads of manufacturing giant Honeywell, online advertising software expert AppNexus, and Etsy board chair Fred Wilson.

Election Day is June 7, 2018.

Polls are open from 9:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M. ET / 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. CT.

To vote in this election, you must be:

- 18 years of age or older on June 7, 2018; and
- a Canadian citizen; and
- a resident of Ontario.

To find out where you vote, visit elections.on.ca, check your Voter Information Card or call us at 1.888.668.8683 (TTY: 1.888.292.2312).

Each voting location will have magnifiers, Braille ballot templates and other tools to help you vote.

Don't forget to bring your ID and Voter Information Card when you go to vote.

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