

BI-LINGUAL MONTHLY PUBLISHING FROM LONDON



December
2021

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A Magazine for Scholarly, Literary, Political, Economic and Religious Activities

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Mohiuddin Abbasi



EDITOR
Zakaria Virk

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Munazza Khan

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Dr. Busharat Elahi Jamil

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Amina Nuzhat

SUBSCRIPTION MANAGER

Syed Mubarak A. Shah
Ph. No. 0047-91698367

ADVERTISING MANAGER

M. Sultan Qureshi
Ph. No. +1(416)433-0112

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Issue: December, 2021

Price: UK Pound 3, per copy

Annual Subscription: 36 UK Pound

E-Mail: lahoreintlondon@gmail.com

Send your writeups at
m.abbasi.uk@gmail.com

Write to :

Monthly Lahore International
Phone: +44 794 007 7825

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Editorial

Dr. Busharat Elahi Jamil - Assistant Editor



TLP: The Next Agony

The lawful hanging of Mumtaz Qadari, the murderer of the Governor Salman Taseer tiled the way for organization of Tahrik Labak Pakistan (TLP) in 2016. Steadily, Khadim Rizvi the founder of the TLP used Brelvi school of thought in Islam to practise his radicalized ideology instigating the illiterate and lower middle class of Pakistan. After the demise of Khadim Rizvi his son Saad Rizvi took over the headship of TLP in November 2020.

TLP emerged as an Islamic-fascist pressure group with radicalised ideology using Islam as a tool is the reason that no educated or sensible persons ever join their protests and assemblies. Historically, in reference of their protests, they ever tried to get political mileage in the name of religion, which portrayed Islam in global scenario a fanatical religion. During the open public protests their agents incite the general protestors on violence and use them to damage the public and private properties to pressurize the Government. According to the Government reports from 2017 to till now totally TLP gave the losses around Rs. 35 billion and only in recent violence TLP gave a huge loss of Rs. 4 billion, which is unbearable and for a poor country like Pakistan. No doubt protest is their democratic right, but actually they are misusing the tolerance and the forgiving teachings of the Islam. If we politically analyse their protests, the point becomes evident that a religio-political assemblage, being totally ignorant of their civic responsibilities, is very likely to tear down the social fabric in a democratic environment to its last thread rather than playing their role in building of a stable

and peaceful Islamic state. Unfortunately, this pressure group is gaining political mileage by practising emotional politics particularly in the radicalized stratum. As a result, they secured 2.2 million votes in the last 2018's general elections. TLP is fostering a violent religio-political environment to live in the main stream and to multiply their vote bank by exploitation the religious slogans. Ch. Parvez Elalhi is also the beneficiary of this radicalized milieu, as he also got political benefits by passing his presented a profligate bill to include the column of Khatm-i-Nabuwat in the Nikah Nama in the provincial assembly of the Punjab. No doubt the immoderate ideology of the TLP is dragging Pakistan towards Islamic radicalization distorting the real image of Islam as a religion of peace, tolerance, equality and brotherhood. Unbelievably, PTI regime is enduring the environment and compromising over the situation, apparently for the political benefits in the upcoming general elections. A pact has been signed between Govt. and TLP according to this the cases against the TLP leadership and workers are being dismissed in two phases. Seemingly, now TLP is in a dominant position, by using religious card with street power they are practising politics of conflicts. There extremist way of protests is trending a horrible disruption in the society which is causing irreparable damage to the country's reputation and dignity. There is no such precedent in any other Islamic state. Govt. should sort out a permanent solution to contain the unlawful activities of TLP for peace in Country.

Pakistan: A Rich Country?

By: Syed Shabbar Zaidi

Pakistan owes over 100 billion USD in foreign debts. It has had over 375 billion in the current account deficit since 1947. Pakistan imports around 10 USD billion worth of food items annually. This is the state of affairs of the state of Pakistan. However it is also a fact that Pakistanis are the second largest investor in properties in Dubai. Around six daily flights to Dubai are all jam packed with first class and business seats occupied by Pakistanis. Lacs of very expensive animals are slaughtered during festivals. Almost all the mosques in the country are well equipped with airy space and large halls which remain unutilized except for prayers which in total consume one to two hours in a twenty four hours day. Prostitution and pornography is constantly increasing as society is choked. Pakistanis purchased a very large number of four wheel drive vehicles during 2020-2021 and such vehicles are all booked in advance for two to four years. In all the big cities of Pakistan middle and high end restaurants require at least an hour waiting time for dinner. Average attendance in a middle class wedding, which consists of at least two functions, is around 400 people with lavish food and excellent arrangements. All these facts and many others not mentioned reveal that there is a serious contradiction between the Pakistan we see in state numbers and the Pakistan we see if we move around in the upper middle class. Apparently there is a contradiction or disharmony. However my analysis of Pakistan's social, economic, and political structure reveals that this is all part of a well thought out scheme. This society has been established by design and it suits the people who matter whether they are bureaucrats, politicians, forces, and professionals. This is the product of a very long journey which Pakistan has travelled from 1947 to 2021. This is an elitist state made by elitists, ruled by elitists

for the elitist. Those who challenge are spectators outside the pavilion. This is the reason that no right wing person has ever been punished whereas leftists starting from Hasan Nasir to Dr Aizaz Nazir have records of butchery. Those who belong to the left are now living in Defence Societies like me writing articles like this and have become part of the system. The system which has been so designed in Pakistan requires legal and financial security to the people who are enjoying this state of affairs. Pakistan may be the only country in the world that has effectively legalized this disharmony and has installed sensitive trip wires which alarm the arrival of the intruder in the system. This article covers only some aspects of this extortionist system and is limited to the subject of finances and businesses. Pakistan is the only country in the world that has placed foreign exchange regulations against the documented and organized companies and has opened the free movement of currencies by individuals. Legally, prior to 2018 an individual was authorized to buy foreign currency without any limit in the open market without any practical documentation about the source of money from so called exchange companies. This is a unique animal created in Pakistan. This money can be deposited in the foreign currency account of the individual and sent anywhere in the world without any probe. 'No question asked' is an attribute propagated by court economists of the political elite. Availability of rupee without any source is guaranteed by the cash economy in the country which consists of around 40 percent of the GDP of the country. This roughly amounts to USD 150 billion per year. This means that around 20,000 billion rupees are injected in the economy every year which all remain unaccounted for. This sum is earned from trade, agricultural income, real estate, and all other sectors including some industrial

sectors which are undocumented. For example around 30% of the tobacco industry consists of undocumented economy. Whole sugar industry is undocumented after the production stage. This 20,000 billion rupee is used for the purposes identified in the first paragraph. The story would have been satisfactory if this money would have remained in Pakistan. It is not so, businessmen and bureaucrats want to enjoy their money in London and Dubai. Therefore Zia Ul Haque and Nawaz Sharif designed systems whereby such rupees are available in USD. Protection of Economic Reform Act, 1992 was promulgated to facilitate the same. It was a poison to an ailing patient. However, Nawaz Sharif is not the only person to be blamed. Afterwards Zardaris and PPP, Musharraf and his Chaudhries and Imran Khan's friends all enjoyed the system. Why should anybody change it? This suits all political parties and people who matter as they need money for their elections etc and their children do not want to spend life in Pakistan. All politicians when not in power live in Dubai, London or New York as people in Pakistan are dirty and life is insecure. This happens with the middle class party MQM also. It is a disease that is inflicted when political recognition is achieved. I hope the same may be cured.

There are very few people who have actually seen all aspects of this wild game. I am one of them. Since 1988 in all my annual speeches at the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan's budget seminars I have been saying that we are following the Dubai model of economy whereas the survival of the common man lies in adopting the Korean model. I was the person who coined the term 'Misaq-e-Maeshat'. I was the person who instituted the Foreign Asset Declaration Law after the revelation of the Panama Leaks. Nevertheless the lesson I have learnt is that stakes are so big in this country that there will be a strong resistance crossing this trip wire. A whole generation has been nurtured where no tax, no documentation, luxury life in Dubai and London is

the norm. This generation which is reasonably educated is confident that their future is guaranteed as their fathers have substantial assets and properties outside Pakistan. Pakistan is a second rural home for them for leisure and to promote corruption or play politics. In my view the Panama Leaks, Paradise Leaks and Pandora Leaks are all deliberate actions of the western governments. There is no effort by ICIJ. After the economic shocks which the western societies had due to Chinese economic tsunami and the event of 9/11 it has become difficult for the western governments' protected tax and regulatory heavens to distinguish between funds that can be used for terrorism and those accumulated there by corrupt rulers and bureaucrats of undeveloped or developing countries like us. So there is a deliberate attempt to unveil that system. This led to these leaks. The rich citizens of poor countries are being incentivized to park their declared and undeclared wealth in these tax haven jurisdictions from where these funds end up in New York and London capital markets. New York and London are happy as long as the funds are not related to terrorism. Markets in London and New York run on the capital transferred from old Soviet Countries, Oil rich Gulf family emirates and corrupt countries like us. Now the only attempt to distinguish funds related to terrorism out of that. This is what is called FATF. Nevertheless those Pakistanis who are parking their wealth in these jurisdictions including the Gulf Emirates are warned that I foresee a time in the near future when such assets would be frozen in these jurisdictions. This will be the ultimate cost of a second passport. Such freezing may take any name or mode including restrictions to move those out of a restricted place which will be west. I hope this time is late, however the speed of events reflect that such time is not very far. My support for asset declaration law was for this reason as I did not want my peoples' wealth to remain unnamed. However, those who want to keep funds outside Pakistan without proper records and documents

will regret in near future. This is the result of greediness and unfaithfulness with the society that has given every benefit to these people. Malta, Cyprus, Hungary etc are not places to keep assets that can be used for generations. One can earn real income only at the place where there is a natural network. Let people learn the lesson because it is very difficult to persuade those who have money without effort. As against that, there are a very large number of middle class youngsters who are very bright. They work day and night and obtain straight A's or over 80 marks in Cambridge and Matriculation examinations respectively. These youngsters do not see their future in the country for the reason that the initial gap is too large to be bridged. Some of them find suitable jobs in Pakistan and remaining try to live somewhere in Canada or USA if they find such an opportunity. The question which is to be answered is whether these Dubai style luxury mafias demonstrating their untaxed wealth in Pakistan can be taken to task. The apparent answer is negative. However the history of civilization reveals that there is always a time when ordinary civilized manners fail and anarchy prevails. The uncivilized manner is demonstrated by TTP, TLP and extremist elements of MQM and others. We consider that these organizations are products of establishment however we do forget that establishment can only initiate the idea. The public popularity can only be if there are organic and inherent reasons. There are many people who justify the trends adopted by these organizations. As an informed citizen I am seeing organic recognition for these elements. This will be suicidal for society. The immediate solutions from economic side lies in fundamentally correcting the foreign exchange system incentivizing companies against individuals, taxation of all Pakistanis on the basis of citizenship, prohibition of dual nationality like India and Singapore and compulsory declaration in CNIC record of all UAE Iqama holders to at least identify few Ex Ministers who are honored to as assistants

and accountants in UAE companies. This hypocrisy cannot continue. Let us get together to enlighten the society against intellectual corruption in addition to financial corruption.

In Malala, I found the most supportive friend, a beautiful and kind partner: Asser Malik

Human rights activist Malala Yousafzai took to social media on November 9 and announced her marriage to Asser Malik, a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) official. Soon, congratulations and good wishes started pouring in for the couple from all corners of the world. Now, a day later, the Nobel Peace Prize winner's husband also took to Twitter to thank everyone who wished them well. The groom shared a little snippet from their wedding ceremony, a picture, in which the couple can be seen cutting a cake – and also the significance of the “tradition”. “In Malala, I found the most supportive friend, a beautiful and kind partner – I’m so excited to spend the rest of our life together,” he wrote on Twitter. “Thank you all for the wishes on our nikkah. In following our cricket team’s tradition, we had to do a victory cake cutting,” said Malik, who is the general manager high performance at PCB. The couple got married as per Islamic tradition in a small ceremony in Birmingham, London. Going by the pictures, it seems the newlyweds have known each other for quite some time now, with their first picture together dating back to June 2019. The actual timeline of their relationship, however, is unclear as of now. Asser, who hails from Lahore, has studied at Aitchison College in Lahore and the Lahore University of Management Sciences.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/840702/in-malala-i-found-the-most-supportive-friend-a-beautiful-and-kind-partner-asser-malik/>

Pakistan Makes Arrangements For Sikh Pilgrims On Guru Nanak's Birth Anniversary: Fo

By: Web Desk



FO spokesperson says "we are ready to welcome Sikh pilgrims coming to Pakistan on Guru Nanak's 552nd birth anniversary"

Pakistan has made wide-ranging arrangements to facilitate the inward movement of Sikh pilgrims to celebrate Guru Nanak's birth anniversary, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, said Friday. While speaking at a weekly briefing, Ahmad said that Pakistan opened the Kartarpur Corridor in June 2020, adding that he hopes the Indian government will allow Sikh citizens to take advantage of the transit route to Kartarpur. "We are ready to welcome Sikh pilgrims coming to Pakistan on the occasion of Guru Nanak's 552nd birth anniversary," Ahmad said.

Pakistan issues 3,000 visas to Indian Sikh pilgrims

A statement issued by the Pakistan High Commission for India said that the commission has issued around 3,000 visas to Indian Sikh pilgrims to travel to Pakistan on the eve of the 552nd birth anniversary of Baba Guru Nanak. The celebrations will take place from November 17 to November 26, 2021, read the statement. During their stay in Pakistan, the Sikh pilgrims would pay obeisance at different gurdwaras, including Gurdwara Janam Asthan in Nankana Sahib and Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in Kartarpur. Visas to the Sikh pilgrims have been issued under the Pakistan-India Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines of 1974, which provides for the visit of 3,000 Sikh pilgrims from India for the birthday celebrations of Baba Guru Nanak. Thousands of Sikh pilgrims residing in countries other than India would also be visiting Pakistan to attend the event. Prime Minister Imran



Khan has taken several initiatives for the facilitation of Sikh pilgrims, including the historic opening of the visa-free Kartarpur Sahib Corridor in November 2019 on the occasion of the 550th birth anniversary of Baba Guru Nanak. The magnificent, newly built Gurdwara Kartarpur Sahib complex was a gift by the people of Pakistan and their leadership to the Sikh community from India and worldwide. Pakistan High Commission in India has also extended profound felicitations to the Sikh community in India and across the world on the 552nd Birth Anniversary of the founder of the Sikh religion. The High Commission also wishes a spiritually-rewarding yatra to the pilgrims visiting Pakistan on this occasion. The issuance of the maximum number of pilgrimage visas is in line with the Government of Pakistan's efforts for promoting visits to religious shrines in Pakistan.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/908219-pakistan-makes-arrangements-for-sikh-pilgrims-on-guru-nanaks-birth-anniversary-fo>

‘White Lies’: Ex-CJP Saqib Nisar Says Former GB Judge Sought Extension

Former GB judge Rana Muhammad Shamim says that he still stood by his affidavit

By: Web Desk

ISLAMABAD: Reacting to the startling revelations made by Gilgit-Baltistan apex court ex-chief justice Rana Shamim, former chief justice Saqib Nisar said the claims are "contrary to the facts" and "white lies". In a notarized affidavit, former GB chief justice has stated that he had been witness to then CJP Saqib Nisar's direc-



tion to a high court judge not to release Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz on bail at any cost before the 2018 general elections. "Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz Sharif must remain in jail until the general elections are over. On assurances from the other side, he (Saqib Nisar) became calm and happily demanded another cup of tea," read the affidavit. In response to the claims made by the former GB judge, Nisar levelled allegations against Rana Shamim, accusing him of asking for an extension as the chief justice of Gilgit-Baltistan. Nisar added that he had denied him the extension. "At one point in time, Rana Shamim also complained to me about not getting the extension," he said. "It is not wise to respond to every lie," he added. According to the document, Shamim's statement was given under oath before the Oath Commissioner on November 10, 2021. The affidavit, duly notarized, contains the signature of the ex-CJ of

Gilgit Baltistan as well as an image of his NIC card. The notary public stamped the affidavit and recorded that it was "sworn under oath Before me" on Nov 10, 2021. It is pertinent to mention here that both Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz were convicted by an accountability court in a graft case before the July 25, 2018 general elections. Their lawyers had moved court for suspension of the conviction but the case after initial hearings was postponed till last week of July.

‘I stand by my affidavit’

Endorsing all the contents of The News' story, Rana Muhammad Shamim said that he still stood by his affidavit. Reacting to Saqib Nisar's statement, Shamim told Geo News that the apex courts of Gilgit-Baltistan and AJK did not come under the control of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, adding that as per the constitution, Saqib Nisar did not have the authority to extend the tenure of his service. The prime minister has the authority to extend

the service of CJ in Gilgit-Baltistan and AJK, he clarified. Responding to a question, Shamim said that he did not want to reveal that when and to whom he had submitted his affidavit. He maintained that whatever the realities he knew, he brought forth it before the nation.

‘Allah has His own way of revealing the truth’

Meanwhile, commenting on the report, PML-N President Shahbaz Sharif said that "Allah has His own way of revealing the truth." Taking to Twitter, Shahbaz Sharif said, "Explosive news story by Ansar Abbasi peels off a thick layer of a grand scheme employed to target Nawaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz. "It's yet another vindication of Nawaz Sharif and Maryam in the court of public opinion. Alhumdulillah!" he added.

‘Some people are running campaigns to prove Nawaz Sharif innocent’

Federal Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry reacted to the report, describing it as a "shocking" one. He regretted how some people are "running campaigns to prove Nawaz Sharif innocent", adding that it was hard to believe how a judge would issue such sensitive instructions in front of another person, while having tea. "And even the prime minister is not an ordinary man' he is the prime minister," tweeted Chaudhry.

Without naming anyone, he directed people to refrain from "making up silly stories and conspiracy theories". He questioned how the former prime minister was able to buy the Avenfield Apartments flat. "Maryam said, 'I don't have any property neither in London nor in Pakistan. Now, property worth billions of rupees has come to light. How did that happen?'" he tweeted.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/908924-shahbaz-sharif-reacts-to-ex-cj-gb-revelations-says-allah-has-his-own-way-of-revealing-truth>

Gwadar to get fresh water treatment, supply system soon



ISLAMABAD: Under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor initiative, the Balochistan government has decided to initiate multiple projects of fresh water treatment, water supply, and distribution in the coastal town of Gwadar. According to an official source, the project worth Rs 130 million, would also catered future water demand and sewage disposal systems in Gwadar required for Deep Sea Port, its associated industry, and the city itself. Moreover, multiple projects including, the implementing water supply, distribution system, desalination plant, and sewage collection system and treatment plant has also planned in the Master Plan of Gwadar as a mega port city. The Central Development Working Party (CDWP) has approved PC-I for the establishment 5 MGD RO plant for Gwadar to purify or desalinate contaminated water of the deep sea. The laying of pipelines from Swad Dam to Gwadar is near completion. The Gwadar, Pasni, and surrounding areas would also supply the clean drinking water through Shadi Kor, Akra Kor dams through pipelines. The government would install a network of water pipeline from Akara Dam to Jiwani to ensure an uninterrupted supply of water to the residents of the area.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/842024/gwadar-to-get-fresh-water-treatment-supply-system-soon/>

SINDH CULTURE

“1 die again and again, but I shall never surrender Sindh.”

**By: Badaruddin Kalhoro - Bureau Chief Sindh
Lahore International London**



1. Sindhi Culture

The Culture of Sindh. Sindhi has its roots in the Indus Valley Civilization. Sindh has been shaped by the log of the largely desert region, the natural resources it had available and the continuous foreign influences. The Indus or Sindhu River that passes through the land, and the Arabian Sea (that defines its borders) also supported the seafaring traditions among the local people.

2. Sindhi Language.

سنڌي ٻولي قومي ٻولي آهي

Sindhi is an Indo-Aryan language of the historical Sindh region, spoken by the Sindhi people. It is the official language of the Pakistani province of Sindh. The Sindhi language and other native languages of Pakistan are struggling to be officially given the status of national language in Pakistan. Before the inception of Pakistan, Sindhi was the national language of Sindh. There are many Sindhi language television channels broadcasting in Pakistan such as KTN, Sindh TV, Awaz Television Network, Mehran TV and Dharti TV. Besides this, Indian television Doordarshan have been asked by the Indian court to start a news channel for Hindu Sindhis of India.

3. Cultural Speciality

Sindhis celebrate Sindh Cultural day worldwide every year on first Sunday of December, by wearing Ajrak & Sindhi Topi. On that occasion, the musical programmes and rallies are held in many cities to mark the day with zeal. Major hallmarks of cities and towns are decorated with Sindhi Ajrak to highlight the cultural values of Sindh. The people across Sindh exchange gifts of Ajrak and Topi at various ceremonies. Even, the children and women are dressed up in Ajrak, assembling at

the grand gathering, where famous Sindhi singers sing Sindhi songs, which depicts love and progress of Sindh.



4. Cultural Food?

Sindhi food refers to the food of the Sindhi people. The daily food in most Sindhi households consists of wheat-based flat-bread (phulka) and rice accompanied by two dishes, one gravy and one dry.

Meals

- Kutti (Mashed Roti [Bread] with sugar and butter)
- Sai Bhaji (a spinach based gravy, sai means green - the colour of spinach)
- Bugha Chawar (a browned rice)
- Bhugal Bheeha (lotus root in thick curry)
- Seyal Pallo (pomfret fish in garlic sauce)



5. Cultural Dress?

Sindhi women wear the Shalwar kameez or the Sari and the men wear the shalwar kameez or the Kurta with pyjama. However, before

the adoption of the Shalwar kameez, the Sari and the Kurta, Sindhi's had their own traditional costumes.



6. Cultural Sport?

Sports and games have been in the course of history a healthy pastime everywhere. So is true of Sindh. Malakhro a typical Sindhi wrestling style is one of the most popular games. Among other sports and games Kabadi, Bilharo, Gili Dakar, Akh Boot (Hide and Seek) are common. With the changing cultural patterns, changes in sports and games are also taking place. New games like Cricket, Hockey, Football, Volley Ball, Table Tennis and other games and sports have been added to the indigenous ones.

7. How Sindhi greet others?

Aadhar bhaau, kheekaran

8. What part of Sindh culture makes proud?

"I am proud to be a part of Sindhi culture" Sindhi culture and traditions. The main focus of the museum is on history and heritage of Indus valley civilization. The museum actually depicts the life style of people who lives in Sindh especially in rural areas. Sindh museum promotes Sindhi culture and give awareness to tourists about old civilization and cultures prevailing in Sindh

9. Name any three place that best symbolize Sindhi culture?

- Larkana (Moen Jo Daro)
- Hyderabad (Pakka Qila)
- Sukkur (Masoom shah jo Minaro)

10. Core values of your culture?

Sindhi culture have a great opportunity to

launch the different product Like, Sindhi Ajrak, sindhi topi, Foke Music. Sindhi dresses are very colorful and prominent and give attractive look during national fairs and festivals.

11. Three words to describe Sindhi culture?

- I am of the opinion, that Sindhi Culture's basic principles of love, co-existence, on-violence and equality economic and political will triumph.
- I have a feeling as strong as faith that Sindhis have a mission to accomplish.
- Once they decided to wake up, rise and walk again, a bright future is gestating in the womb of nature for them.

12. Sindhi cultural books/ traditions/ celebrations?

- Books: Shah Jo Risalo, Chach Nama,
- Traditions : Agricultural practices, traditional arts and crafts, customs and tradition and other parts of social life.

13. Any stereotype about your culture?

The history of Sindh seems to be filled with the name of warriors but it does not mean that Sindhis are war loving people. Sindhi are peaceful and hospitable people. Sindhi poet has written the poem of peace and love so one should not feel that Sindhis are the fighter or warrior type of people. Like other province of Pakistan, Sindh has its own cultural significance and Sindhis feel proud to be the part of a rich land of Sindh.



Power Between The Security Establishment And The Civilian Side

By: Badaruddin Kalhoro - Bureau Chief Sindh
Lahore International London



The idealize civil-military condition is finished with a military “strong adequate to do anything, the civilians ask them to do with a military subordinate adequate to do because it were what civilians authorize them to do.”³ The challenge that stands up to the civil-military chain of command indubitably is the accomplishment of an optimum-balance between the utilitarian fundamental of the military to ensure the society and its societal essential to secure its values, conviction frameworks, and the institution. The lopsidedness of control between the security establishment and the civilian side appear lead to a breakdown of the political structure. Most past civilian governments in Pakistan can be delineated as amalgams with certain approach ranges remaining totally underneath the establishment’s space. Civilian control may be a misnomer given the overpowering shadow cast by security workplaces over the country’s political scene. The ‘impasse’ over the course of action of unused chief common of the Inter-Services Experiences (ISI) shows up to

be heading towards a settlement as the Prime Serve Office on Monday gotten a rundown from the resistance benefit in this regard, official sources told The Express Tribune. In orchestrate to defuse the weight, Prime Minister Imran Khan and Equipped drive chief Common Qamar Javed Bajwa held a marathon session last week. After the get together, information serve Fawad Chaudhry said the Prime Minister told the outfitted constrain chief that the master to appoint the DG ISI rested with him. There were as well reports that the prime serve was sharp to meet potential candidates for the most excellent opening. Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Common Qamar Javed Bajwa gone to the Inter-Services Bits of knowledge (ISI) central station on Monday, where he was gotten by Chief Common ISI Lieutenant General Faiz Hameed, concurring to a clarification from the military's media wing. The COAS was briefed on "inward security and the advancing circumstance in Afghanistan", the clarification from the Interface Organizations Open

Relations (ISPR) said. Common Bajwa communicated his fulfillment over the availability of the affiliation, it included. The Outfitted constrain chief's visit to the ISI base camp comes within the middle of confirmed stand-off between the



military and the government over the course of action of the present day spymaster. The equipped drive had pronounced on October 6 that the officeholder ISI chief, Lt Gen Hameed, had been made the Peshawar corps commander, though Lt Gen Nadeem Ahmed Anjum was assigned in his putt. After days of theories, on Oct 12, Information Serve Fawad Chaudhry had said that the master to designate the ISI chief lay with the prime serve, which the set procedure would be taken after for the reason. "The legal technique will be taken after inside the course of action of the unused DG ISI, for which both Gen Bajwa and Prime Serve Imran] are in understanding," he had said. Chaudhry had said that PM Imran Khan and the outfitted drive chief had a "long sitting" the past night to look at the matter and the head had thus taken the cabinet into certainty over the issue. "Gen Bajwa and the prime Minister have near and cheerful relations. And it to boot basic from a irrefutable point of see that there are idealize relations between Pakistan's civilian and military organizations," he had included.

On Saturday, Internal parts Serve Sheik Rashied Ahmed claimed that the issue of the ISI chief's course of action had been pleasantly settled between the thoughtful and military organization. He said the spymaster would be named a few time as of late Friday. Dismissing reports of a split between the government and the military establishment, he said the winning environment inside the country was fine, and deplored that "some components are endeavoring to create significantly sensitive instruct controversial." Gujranwala corps Prior these days, the ISPR said in a press release that Lt Gen Muhammad Ameer had acknowledged command as the present day Gujranwala corps commander.

Lt Gen Aamer was given over the command of Gujranwala Corps by Lt Gen Syed Asim Munir – who has been named as the quarter ace common – at a change-of-command cere-

mony held at Gujranwala Cantonment, concurring to the release. Lt Gen Aamer's posting as the Gujranwala corps commander was among the six arrangements declared by the military in a reshuffle on October 6, which included that of the DG ISI. Before his modern task, Lt Gen Amir was serving as the assistant common. He has too served as the Common Officer Commanding Lahore. The creating complexities of security challenges in modern world continue posing present day challenges to conscious and military relations agents. The thought of civilian control in show disdain toward of the truth that acknowledged as the overpowering reasoning in most of the show day polities would be attempted to its limits especially inside the complex counterinsurgency fighting environment. Since the equipoise of the civilian and the military pioneers would be really strained underneath these conditions a Modus Vivendi got to be progressed to deal with these complexities without a smothering interfering on parcel of civilians and a avoiding neutrality on parcel of the military. A narrowing of the hole between the aware and military conviction systems is the ruddy string that guarantees to hold together the texture of thoughtful military support in future as inside the past.

Lahore International Magazine



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+447940077825



+447940077825



lahoreintlondon@gmail.com

PAKISTAN TO HOST ICC CHAMPIONS TROPHY IN 2025

Pakistan last staged an ICC event in 1996 when they co-hosted the 50-over World Cup with India and Sri Lanka



Pakistan will host the International Cricket Council's (ICC) Champions Trophy in 2025 — the first international event that the country will host on its home soil after more than two decades. Pakistan last staged an ICC event in 1996 when they co-hosted the 50-over World Cup with India and Sri Lanka, but the country has been largely starved of international cricket after the 2009 attack on the touring Sri Lanka team bus in Lahore. The development came as the ICC confirmed the 14 host countries of ICC men's white-ball events from 2024-2031, a statement from the cricket's governing body said. Eleven full members and three associate members have been selected to host two ICC Men's Cricket World Cups, four ICC Men's T20 World Cups, and two ICC Men's Champions Trophy events. The USA and Namibia will host an ICC World Cup event for the first time. Meanwhile, Australia, Bangladesh, England, Ireland, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, Scotland, South Africa, Sri Lanka, West Indies, and Zimbabwe have previously staged major events and will do so again over the next decade. The hosts were selected via a competitive bidding process overseen by a Board sub-committee chaired by Martin Snedden along with Sourav Ganguly and Ricky Skerritt. The ICC board accepted the recommendations of the committee who conducted a thorough review of each bid along with ICC management. A similar process to identify the hosts for ICC Women's and U19s events for the next cycle will be undertaken early next year.

T20 World Cup

United States and West Indies — 2024

India and Sri Lanka — 2026

Australia and New Zealand — 2028

England, Ireland, Scotland — 2030

Hosts of Champions Trophy

Pakistan — 2025, India — 2029,

Hosts of 50-over World Cup,

South Africa, Zimbabwe, Namibia — 2027, India and Bangladesh — 2031

PCB chairman thanks ICC In response, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Chairman Ramiz Raja thanked the ICC for awarding the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 to Pakistan, saying the event will showcase Pakistan's passion for the sport, a statement from the PCB said. The ICC Board's decision means Pakistan will defend the ICC Champions Trophy title in their backyard when the eight-team and 15-match tournament is held at three iconic venues in February 2025. Pakistan had defeated India by 180 runs in the 2017 tournament at The Oval. "I am pleased no-end with the ICC's decision to select Pakistan as a host nation for one of their elite tournaments. By allocating a major global event to Pakistan, the ICC has expressed complete confidence and faith in our management and operational capabilities and skills," he said. "We have continued to demonstrate how a great host we are and through the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, we will again showcase our passion and love for the sport as this event will be a boon to the millions of home fans, who will see world class teams and their favourite international players from close quarters," he added. "We not only endeavour to plan and deliver a world-class event, we will also prepare and field a strong and formidable side that can perform and entertain our home fans. We saw during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup campaign how the nation got united and the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 at home will be another opportunity to further strengthen that bond as we defend the title," Raja said.

[https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/909206-](https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/909206-pakistan-to-host-icc-champions-trophy-in-2025)

[pakistan-to-host-icc-champions-trophy-in-2025](https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/909206-pakistan-to-host-icc-champions-trophy-in-2025)

Jair Bolsonaro And Guns: A US Culture War Raging In Brazil

By: Katy Watson

Gun culture was a key part of Jair Bolsonaro's winning campaign to become Brazil's president. Three years later, what impact has he had on the nation's relationship with firearms and how much has US politics played a part? Rice and beans hold an important place in the heart of most Brazilians. In this deeply divided country, where almost everything is politicised, at least the famous "feijao" is a food loved by everyone. That is, until recently - when Jair Bolsonaro tried to put a political spin on the humble bean. "The left says that people don't eat guns, they eat beans," he joked. He had a few weeks earlier attacked his critics for saying that buying food was more important for Brazilians than buying firearms. "So when someone attacks your house, shoot beans at them," he said ironically. It is yet another example of Bolsonaro sticking two fingers up at his critics. And they're well-used fingers. Throughout his campaign trail in 2018, he used them in a pistol hand gesture as a clear message to his supporters - even in a country with one of the world's highest rates of gun deaths, easing firearms laws was a top priority. And on 15 January 2019, just two weeks after taking power, he made good on his promise. The Brazilian president signed a decree making it easier for Brazilians to keep weapons at home and at the same time, increasing the validity of gun licences from five years to 10. It was, according to Bolsonaro, a step that would enable "upstanding citizens to have peace inside their homes".

And he's not stopped since. The president has now made more than 32 changes to the country's gun laws - they include increasing the number of guns you're allowed to own, looser restrictions on ammunition and the ability to buy more powerful weapons. For Akira Ando, who owns a gun club in the town of Atibaia in Sao Paulo state, the past few years have seen

a boom in business. "The telephone just rang off the hook," says Akira of the response following the decree. "People who never even imagined they could have a firearm at home or for sport were calling up." He's had to triple the number of people he employs on the administrative side - and he's got more than 2,500 members now. Until four years ago, it was closer to a thousand. The profile of person who comes to the club has changed in the past few years, he adds. "Our strength is shooting as a sport but people come here to get the paperwork to own a gun, to be able to keep one at home or at work, to protect their family." Business owner Elias Paulo Kury is one such member. A relative newcomer to shooting, he enjoys the club's atmosphere but is clear about one of his main motivations to pick up a gun. "All the baddies are armed, why shouldn't we have the right to defend ourselves in our own homes? It doesn't make any sense," he says. "Nowadays, we're victims of everything that is happening around us," he says, adding that unemployment and poverty are propelling violence in the country. Times have changed in Brazil. In 2003, a Disarmament Statute was signed into law, tightening rules on weapons. The following year, there was a National Disarmament Campaign, which saw the handing in of more than half a million weapons.

• Why could Brazil's president face criminal charges? But in 2005, a referendum was held asking people's views on an outright ban on gun sales. Even with guns a leading cause of death, Brazil's gun lobby campaigned hard, importing the US concept of a right to bear arms - in the end, the public voted NO to such a ban. "We are seeing the NRA discourse being imported for Brazilian context and it's completely different," says Melina Risso, a public security expert and director at Igarapé

Institute in Rio de Janeiro. "Here in Brazil, it's not a right to carry a gun, it's a concession by the state and they have strict rules. But since 2005, the gun lobby has tried to change the mindset of Brazilians in general. It didn't start with Bolsonaro." But there's no doubt Bolsonaro has made the debate his own since taking power. In fact, according to the Brazilian Forum of Public Security, as of 2020, the number of guns registered with the Federal Police has doubled since 2017. And in 2020 alone, 186,071 new weapons were registered - an increase of 97% in a year. Samurai Caçador (Samurai Hunter in English) is a beneficiary of this new wave. A hunting fanatic and social media influencer, he regularly goes online to talk about guns, their merits and the challenges for regular gun-users. "I was never into arms," he says, explaining that he came from a family where weapons were thought to go against family safety and life. "I wanted to know more about this world, I took the initiative to question it." Samurai hunts wild boar - the only animal that can be legally hunted in Brazil and even then, only as a way to control numbers in the wild as opposed to a sport. But, like all aspects of guns here in Brazil, it's become increasingly popular. Between 2019 and 2020, there was a rise of nearly 30% in the number of hunting and collecting licences issued. "I was transformed by this world so I want to use my experience to explain that weapons aren't a seven-headed beast," he says. "It's about freedom. It's a choice to be armed or not. It's a right that we will defend. Our president has always defended it. It's sacred."

- America's gun culture in charts But this, say experts, doesn't truly represent Brazil - a poor country of more than 200 million that saw over 40,000 deaths from firearms last year. Indeed, recent polls suggest two-thirds of people disagree with gun ownership.

"There is a part of Brazil for whom this US style gun culture makes some sense, but not for the majority of Brazilians," says Brian

Winter, editor-in-chief of Americas Quarterly. "Where most of Brazilians live - in the south-east and north-east along the coasts, these are big cities where this kind of assault-rifle toting culture makes no sense at all." So why the US-style gun strategy then?

"I don't think there is a strategy, I think it's a reflection of the reality which is so much of Bolsonarismo being modelled after Trump," says Winter. "They clearly looked at the gun culture issue and said maybe we've got something here." Bolsonaro has always openly admired Trump and US culture and it's telling that several influential thinkers allied to the Bolsonaro government, such as Olavo de Carvalho and Rodrigo Constantino, live in the US. But as with the Trumps, it's very much a family affair with the Bolsonaros. Son Eduardo is an influential member of the dynasty, forging relationships with the likes of strategist Steve Bannon. And the parallels between Eduardo Bolsonaro and Don Trump Jr posing with guns is not lost on Brazil watchers either. "What you get is mostly the imagery and the macho posing with the AR15s," says Winter. "The visuals that are meant to project strength, I feel like [they are] often one or two degrees separated from Taliban imagery." But where now? Trump is no longer in power, and Jair Bolsonaro is yet to announce whether he will run for another term in next year's elections. The pandemic has certainly hit his popularity but a year is a long time in Brazilian politics. No matter what politics you believe in, he's made an impact. "When we look at the data, every serious study that has been conducted has shown if you have more guns, you have more violence especially in a country like Brazil," says Melina Risso. "The damage is really huge in Brazil in terms of all the regulation they made, the weakening of the laws and how many guns are already in the population's hands. We will have a lot of consequences for many years."

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-59246083>

British F35 jet CRASHES in the Mediterranean: RAF Pilot on £100m jet from UK's flagship aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth is forced to eject during routine operation

- A UK F-35B Lightning II has crashed into the Mediterranean sea earlier today
- The pilot of the £100m stealth jet was able to eject before the aircraft hit the sea
- The Ministry of Defence confirmed the pilot has been rescued from the sea
- It was one of eight UK fifth generation jets on patrol with HMS Queen Elizabeth

A UK F-35B Lightning II stealth jet has crashed into the Mediterranean sea while on patrol with the UK's flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth. The pilot ejected from the jet before it crashed into the ocean and has been safely returned to the aircraft carrier, as the MoD launches a full investigation. This is the first time the UK has lost one of the £100m fifth-generation stealth jets, which are on board the £3 billion warship HMS Queen Elizabeth. The next-generation RAF F35 jet is understood to still be in the sea and has yet to be recovered after the crash at 10am this morning. The aircraft was one of eight UK fast-jets onboard the Royal Navy's flagship, along with 10 US aircraft. HMS Queen Elizabeth is returning to the UK after leaving Britain on her maiden voyage seven months ago. Jets from the vessel previously participated in strikes against the remnants of ISIS in Iraq and Syria. According to the MoD: 'A British F35 pilot from HMS Queen Elizabeth ejected during routine flying operations in the Mediterranean this morning. 'The pilot has been safely returned to the ship and an investigation has begun, so it would be inappropriate to comment further at this time.' The attack jets are Big Lizzie's air wing flying missions over the past seven months in the Mediterranean, Pacific and Indian Oceans. The stealth jet's pilot will be debriefed, but investigators will want to test the aircraft's complicated computer systems and high-tech control surfaces to see if these contributed to the crash. Several



US F35s have been involved in crashes, with one Marine Corps jet clipping a refuelling aircraft. The 65,000-tonne Royal Navy flagship is returning to the UK from its maiden deployment, which included exercises with the Indian military. It was part of the carrier strike group's deployment to the Indo-Pacific amid heightened tensions with China in the region. The jets are operated by the renowned 617 Squadron, also known as the 'Dam-busters' squadron. Foreign Secretary Liz Truss spent time on board the vessel last month on the final day of her two-day visit to India.

F-35: How the planes serving HMS Elizabeth have been plagued with problems

The delivery of the RAF's new, US-built F-35B Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter in July 2021 marked a rare moment of celebration in what has been a troubled project. The 'fifth generation' fighter aircraft is the world's most expensive weapons system,



networks essential to the aircraft's operation needs to find savings of £400 million this year. The reports into the costs and other problems prompted the Defence Select Committee to launch an inquiry into the project. It reprimanded the Ministry of Defence for keeping parliament and the public in the dark about the costs. The MoD has

though costs have finally stabilised at an eye-watering \$406 billion. Manufacturer Lockheed-Martin agreed to cap costs after US President Donald Trump criticised the project and even tweeted support for a rival aircraft. Britain is currently embarked on a £9.1 billion programme to purchase 48 of the F-35s, from American aviation giant Lockheed Martin, by 2025. America enticed its Nato and other allies into sharing the cost of the aircraft by offering input into manufacture and 15 per cent of each one is comprised of parts from British companies while some of the jets will be made in Italy. But the planes have been plagued by a catalogue of problems which have sent costs soaring. There are fears about shortcomings in the technical systems underpinning the new generation of war planes will leave them unable to function properly. The true cost of the British planes delivered this year is estimated to be over £150 million each to cover 'extras' such as software upgrades and spare parts. There are also concerns plane's software system is vulnerable to cyber-attack and cannot be tested independently by the UK. The weak broadband on the Royal Navy's principal aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth is also hampering the jet's abilities. The problems are not helped by the department responsible for the computer

so far refused to provide the estimated cost to the UK of buying the F-35, beyond referring to a National Audit Office which used the £9.1 billion figure. MPs said 'it is simply not acceptable for the MoD to refuse to disclose to parliament and the public its estimates for the total cost of the programme'. Though the cost of the F-35 has been the focus of attention, there have also been embarrassing reports of operational shortcomings emerging from the United States. In a mock air battle in 2015, the cutting edge plane was defeated by an older generation F-16, a plane designed in the 1970s. In 2020 Pentagon tests found 276 different faults in jet's combat system. They included the 25mm cannon vibrating excessively and problems with the aircraft's 'virtual reality' helmet. Overheating, premature wear of components in the vertical tails and vulnerability to fire were also found to be issues. The US Air Force temporarily grounded dozens of its F-35 stealth fighters while it investigated an oxygen supply issue. The Marine Corps, who also operate the same F-35B model the UK has purchased, was forced to ground its planes after flaws were found in the computer system.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-10213049/British-F35-jet-HMS-Queen-Elizabeth-CRASHES.html>

Prince Charles Flies Out After Speaking To Queen Following Cenotaph Blow

By: Robert Jobson



The Prince of Wales on Monday jetted to Jordan for the first part of his Middle Eastern tour after checking on the Queen who was forced to miss the Remembrance Sunday service. Charles and the Duchess of Cornwall arrive in Amman on Tuesday and will later travel on to Egypt. It is the first royal overseas tour for two years after they were halted in the pandemic. It is understood the prince spoke to the Queen after she pulled out of the service at the Cenotaph on Sunday due to a sprained back. On Monday, she was carrying out light duties at Windsor. The tour to Jordan, in the kingdom's centenary year, will showcase its "strong bilateral relations" with the UK and will focus on addressing the climate crisis.

Sunday was only the sixth time the Queen has missed the Remembrance Sunday service and the first time in 22 years. Buckingham Palace said the monarch, 95, who has been advised to rest by her medical team in recent weeks, was disappointed not to attend. The palace previously said it was the Queen's "firm intention" to be there. She decided to pull out "with great regret" just prior to the service, they said on

Sunday. A wreath was laid on her behalf by the Prince of Wales. It is understood that the Queen will not need hospital treatment for the back sprain. The injury is unrelated to her doctor's recent advice to rest, sources say. She is understood to have watched the ceremony on television. She spent a night in hospital on 20 October for health checks. Charles's visit to Jordan will underpin security cooperation and the long-standing relations between the two royal families. On the first day of engagements, Charles and Camilla will be welcomed by King Abdullah and Queen Rania at Al Hussein Palace. During their visit, they will visit organisations working in areas they are committed to supporting. The prince will focus on environmental issues, heritage preservation and the creation of jobs for young people. Camilla will continue her commitment to supporting women, as well as girls' education.

<https://uk.news.yahoo.com/prince-charles-flies-speaking-queen-115715678.html?guccounter=1>

Opinion: Germany Has A QAnon Problem, And It's Not Going Away Anytime Soon

By: Katja Hoyer

Katja Hoyer, an Anglo-German historian and journalist, is the author of “Blood and Iron: The Rise and Fall of the German Empire 1871-1918.” The international court of public opinion seems to have a soft spot for Germany these days. Outside observers are hailing us for our stable democracy, our acceptance of female politicians and our economic success. In an age when much of the world seems to have gone crazy, I can understand why some commentators might see Germany as a bastion of reasonableness and good sense. Yet the reality is not quite as reassuring. Take conspiracy theories. In Germany, they are no longer the prerogative of a handful of unhinged individuals. According to a recent study, nearly a third of Germans give credibility to them. A hard core of 10 percent fully subscribes to at least one. The notorious American group QAnon, which claims to be fighting a pedophilic conspiracy among the U.S. power elite, has been growing rapidly; its German following may now be the largest outside the anglosphere. Their online channels on messaging apps such as Telegram boast tens of thousands of followers. You might think that the group’s focus on Donald Trump would give it less of a hold beyond U.S. borders. Yet its German followers, who see parallels to their own situation, have seized on the former president as a savior figure. German QAnon followers observed the U.S. elections last year with the same sense of outrage as their American counterparts. After the Capitol riot in January, one of their apparent leaders — who seems to work in Berlin-area real estate as his day job — called Joe Biden’s victory the “biggest electoral theft in the history of humanity” and expressed his hope that Donald Trump would lead a successful coup together with “other patriots” and the military. The ideological ground for conspiracy theories was already fertile in Germany long before QAnon came along. For years, the most prominent purveyor of mass paranoia was a distinctly local group known as the Reichsbürger (Citizens of the Reich). Domestic intelligence services estimate its membership at around 20,000. The Citizens of the Reich deny the legal existence of the current Federal Republic of Germany, arguing that it never signed a legally binding peace treaty to restore its sovereignty following postwar occupation by the Allies. In their eyes, their country is therefore still occupied by U.S. and Russian troops. They see in Trump and Russian President Vladimir Putin hero figures who are trying to help the German people break their supposed shackles and become an independent state. Despite the bizarre nature of these assertions, QAnon and the Reichsbürger have found influential celebrity supporters. Last year, the singer Xavier Naidoo published a video in which he claimed that the chemical adrenochrome was used as a rejuvenation serum sourced from the blood of children abducted by international pedophile rings — a belief straight out of the QAnon repertoire. The consequences of such thought experiments are very real. Tobias Rathjen, a far-right extremist who frequently spoke of secret U.S. bases in Germany where children were allegedly abused, murdered 11 people and injured another five near Frankfurt in February 2020. Similarly, protesters angry about Germany’s response to the coronavirus pandemic tried to storm the parliament building in late August 2020, just over four months before the attack on the U.S. Capitol. Many

conspiracy theorists indulge in their fantasies in private rather than in organized groups. I have friends in Germany who think that vaccines were designed to alter their DNA. My former neighbors now refer to their family doctors as “agents of government propaganda.” My own family is now confronting the problem. My uncle — until recently a perfectly normal middle-aged man with a wife, kids and a steady job in IT — has embraced Germany’s anti-vaccine scene. He has not only refused to get vaccinated—he has also started arguing that covid is a fiction, that statistics are fakes and that the government response is cover for an attempt to control people. It has become increasingly difficult for those of us who don’t share his views to have conversations with him. So what’s the solution? Ridicule and condemnation usually seem to confirm the views held by radicalized individuals. As families, friends and wider society distance themselves, the camaraderie offered by the groups becomes even more appealing. A 2016 study conducted by Princeton University found a clear link between social isolation and tendencies to believe in conspiracy theories. This explains why socially deprived areas in East Germany appear to be far more likely to become breeding grounds for conspiracy theories compared with places where people enjoy more stable social networks. Polls have found similar results for the United States, identifying White working-class people as feeling excluded by society, and therefore highly susceptible. It is high time that governments and the media in democracies worldwide engaged with the roots of conspiracy theories and addressed them constructively. We need discussion, not ridicule, if we want to tackle the problem effectively — especially if we want to live up to those democratic values we hold so dear.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/11/01/-germany-has-qanon-problem-its-not-going-away-any-time-soon/>

'Harry Potter' Tv Special Release Date Announced

The film franchise based on J.K. Rowling's stories about an orphaned boy with magical powers took in some \$7.8 billion at the global box office.



According to Reuters, "Harry Potter" stars Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson and Rupert Grint are reuniting with other cast members from the blockbuster film franchise for a special 20th anniversary TV retrospective. Robbie Coltrane, who played Hagrid, Tom Felton (Draco Malfoy), Helena Bonham Carter (Bellatrix Lestrage), Gary Oldman (Sirius Black), director Chris Columbus and other stars of the eight movies will join them, for "Harry Potter 20th Anniversary: Return to Hogwarts" on the movie set in London where the first film was made, movie studio Warner Bros said. The retrospective will see the cast return to the original Hogwarts boarding school sets that were featured in the first film "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" ("Philosopher's Stone" in the U.K.) released in November 2001. The film franchise based on J.K. Rowling's stories about an orphaned boy with magical powers took in some \$7.8 billion at the global box office.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/909226-harry-potter-tv-special-release-date-announced>

New children's Bibles rethink how Christians share old, old story with young readers

Parents are calling attention to whitewashed illustrations, almost exclusively male characters and an emphasis on memorizing morals over engaging with the divine in many existing children's story Bibles.

By: Emily McFarlan Miller



A child reads a sample of "The Book of Belonging."

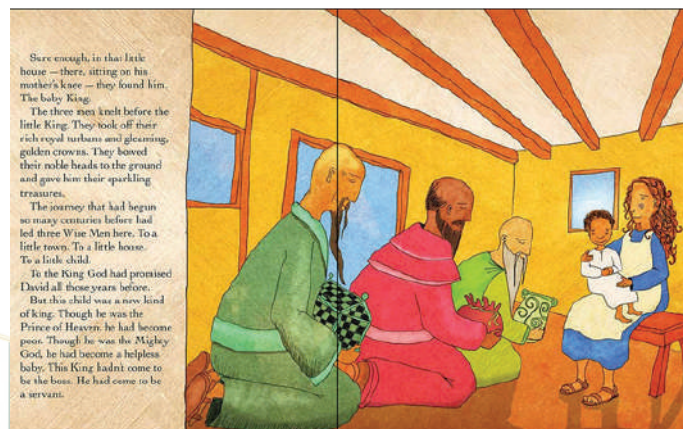
Photo by Daniel Ebersole

When her 6-year-old daughter, Aidah, asked Mariko Clark that question last summer, she was angry, because she knew where it was coming from: Only two stories in Aidah's children's story Bible focused on women. And most popular children's Bible adaptations, Clark realized, were much the same.

She apparently wasn't the only parent to notice. When Clark turned to crowdfunding site Kickstarter for support to publish a gender-balanced Bible storybook, she blew past her goal, raising nearly \$95,000 last week to print a first run of the book. "The Book of Belonging," which also features diverse illustrations by Rachel Eleanor, is expected to be released by June 2023. "If we want to raise followers of Jesus who wrestle with God and ask important questions and fight for justice and admit when they're wrong and love their neighbor, we need them to see themselves in these pages mirrored back," said Clark, a former editor of philosophy and religion books for National Geographic, in the video accompanying her Kickstarter campaign. Publishers have also answered that need with a string of new and upcoming children's story Bibles. ible by Glenys Nellist

that was published in September, not only retells 30 stories from both the Hebrew Bible and New Testament for children ages 4 to 8, but also it encourages them to engage with the stories by ending each one with a series of questions beginning "I wonder" "I wonder ... which part of creation God enjoyed the most," ends the story of creation. "I wonder... if Lydia ever imagined that her story would one day be told to others," ends a story about the early church featuring Lydia, the first convert to Christianity in Europe. "God's Colorful Kingdom Storybook Bible: The Story of God's Big Diverse Family," by Esau McCaulley, just announced for release in January 2023, will pull together stories showing God's desire for a multi-ethnic family that cares about those the author calls the "stepped-on." McCaulley, the author of the award-winning book "Reading While Black: African American Biblical Interpretation as an Exercise in Hope" who teaches New Testament at Wheaton College, said his book is the one he has wanted to read to his own four children, now ages 5 to 13. "I found myself often having to reinterpret stories or edit them, or I would say things like, 'The Bible has this vision for all of the different nations and peoples and colors of the world to be a part of God's family,' but then I would open up a gift book and everybody there was white," he said. It will be a while before his children are old enough to read "Reading While Black," he said. In the meantime, he wants them to hear the same stories that formed him growing up in the Black church. "God's Colorful Kingdom Storybook Bible"

will include the stories of familiar figures like David, but rather than focus on his battle with the giant Goliath, McCaulley said, his book will emphasize how God instructed Israel's greatest king to care for the poor and needy. It also will include the stories of less-known figures, such as the Hebrew midwives who saved Moses as an infant, Simon the Cyrene and the Ethiopian eunuch. "The question isn't, 'Which stories do you tell?' it's, 'What gets highlighted in the stories that you tell?' And when I was growing up, these are some of the things that were brought out," he said. A large push for new retellings of the Bible has come from Christian parents who are finding their faith evolving. Those who identify as progressive or "ex-vangelical" Christians have especially been clamoring for new materials, said Traci Smith, author of "Faithful Families: Creating Sacred Moments at Home" and a pastor in the mainline Presbyterian Church (USA). Looking for resources that encourage children to ask their own questions and that avoid theological ideas they view as harmful, these parents can't just pick any children's story Bible off the shelf, Smith said. She remembers being terrified by a Bible she was given as a little girl that featured sweet, sad-eyed Precious Moments characters — and also described hell as "hotter than your stove that you touch," she said. That experience still informs her ministry decades later. The pastor and author curates resources she recommends in a weekly email for parents and others involved in children's ministries. "This story has survived for 2,000 years. So it's not the stories that are problematic, it's the lenses through which we view them," Smith said. "People sense that there's something powerful about this story, there's something powerful about the creation, there's something powerful about resurrection — all these themes in the Bible. People still claim them. I think it's a subversive act sometimes to reclaim them in



new ways." But more conservative Christian publishers are also seeing the need for resources that emphasize diversity and curiosity — McCaulley's "God's Colorful Kingdom Storybook Bible: The Story of God's Big Diverse Family" is published by Tyndale Kids and Nellist's "I Wonder," by Zonderkidz, an imprint of Zondervan. Nellist, who now lives in Michigan, was raised in northern England, where her dad was a minister. In an email, she said she grew up knowing a God "of love and hope" and hopes children will encounter that same God in "I Wonder." The mom of four wanted her girls to be able to see themselves in the Bible and to make it their own by asking questions. "I believe that the mysterious and marvelous stories of the Bible are not meant to be simply read and put down. They are meant to be pondered, and puzzled over and thought about long after the page is turned," Nellist said. "Through the inclusion of open-ended 'I Wonder' questions following each story, this Bible invites children not only to wonder about what they just read, or about who God is, but also to ponder how they are part of God's grand story, too." Children's story Bibles "help set the foundation of faith for little ones," according to Megan Dobson, vice president and publisher for Zonderkidz. "It's their first experiences and interactions with the stories and with the faith." That's why they're so important to Christians across the spectrum of faith, Dobson said. Dobson pointed to "The Jesus Storybook Bible" by Sally Lloyd-Jones.

Since it was published in 2007 by Zondervan, it has sold more than 3 million copies and has been translated into more than 50 languages. A recently launched podcast based on the book has included guests like Presiding Bishop Michael Curry of the Episcopal Church and popular Christian singer-songwriter Amy Grant. What made “The Jesus Storybook Bible” different, Dobson said, was that it weaves a common thread through its stories, unlike previous children’s story Bibles that functioned more as anthologies or greatest hits of Bible stories. Each story, whether from the Hebrew Bible or New Testament, pointed to Jesus and emphasized God’s love. Its illustrations, by the artist Jago, also featured characters with more “historically accurate skin tones,” the publisher said. But what once made “The Jesus Storybook Bible” a rarity is becoming more common, she said. The proposed table of contents in Clark’s “Book of Belonging” includes the stories of prophetess Miriam, Queen Esther and the women in Jesus’ lineage. Asking where the women in her daughter’s Bible were led her to other questions: Why was God gendered? Why were so many of the angels blonde? Why was the Holy Spirit never mentioned? “Once you start asking questions and looking for change, it’s contagious. It’s intersectional. One issue grabs after the other,” Clark said. The author wrote on Kickstarter last week that she was “unbelievably grateful (and still a little bit in shock!)” to have surpassed her crowdfunding goal to launch “The Book of Belonging.” And she hopes it will help more children to see themselves in the stories of the Christian faith. “I want my daughter to be a disciple of Jesus, and it would be helpful for her to see herself as just that — a disciple of Jesus,” she said.

<https://religionnews.com/2021/11/22/new-childrens-bibles-rethink-how-christians-share-old-old-story-with-young-readers/>

Why millions of red crabs are causing chaos on Christmas Island in Australia



Millions of red crabs are causing disruption on Christmas Island in Australia. The crustacean invasion has led to road closures and traffic delays as wildlife teams clear them out the way. The crabs are making their yearly migration from the jungle to the beach on the island, 220 miles south of Indonesia. The red crawlers have appeared "everywhere" - including doorways, bridges, and even office blocks, according to Parks Australia. Parks Australia - the organisation that maintains the country's national parks and wildlife - has sent staff to clear crabs off roads and manage traffic. The first rainfall of the wet season, which falls in October or early November on the island, usually marks the start of the crabs' migration. Heavy rain at the start of November prompted the male crabs to leave their homes and march towards the beach, where they meet females along the route. A female crab releases about 100,000 eggs into the Indian Ocean over the course of about five or six nights during the migration. A month after this, the baby crabs that hatch from these eggs return to shore and head towards Christmas Island's jungle, before the process repeats itself.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2021-11-18/why-millions-of-red-crabs-are-causing-chaos-on-christmas-island>



F.W. de Klerk, South Africa President Who Ended Apartheid, Dies at 85

By: Marc Lacey

A prominent Afrikaner, he defended the separation of the races before helping to dismantle that system, leading to his sharing the Nobel Peace Prize with Nelson Mandela.

F.W. de Klerk, who as president of South Africa dismantled the apartheid system that he and his ancestors had helped put in place, died at his home near Cape Town on Thursday. He was 85. His death was confirmed by the F.W. de Klerk Foundation, which said in a statement that he had been receiving treatment for cancer. A member of a prominent Afrikaner family, Mr. de Klerk had vehemently defended the separation of the races during his long climb up the political ladder. But once he took over as president in 1989, he stunned his deeply divided nation, and the wider world, by reconsidering South Africa's racist ways, a step that led to his sharing the Nobel Peace Prize with Nelson Mandela, whom he had released from prison. South Africa had become such a pariah in the eyes of the world by the 1980s, its internal strife and tainted reputation so disruptive to the economy, that Mr. de Klerk argued that the country's future depended on a new course. Despite the peace prize, the degree to which Mr. de Klerk truly repudiated apartheid was questioned by many South Africans until his death, as he seemed to dance around just how repugnant the racial segregation had been. His role as a right-hand man to his predecessor, P.W. Botha, also made it difficult for many Black South Africans to see him as anything but one of a long line of repressive white leaders. "He didn't say apartheid was bad or immoral, but that he had decided it wasn't going to work," said Herman J. Cohen, who held talks with Mr. de Klerk during that tumultuous time as the State Department's top Africa adviser in the administration of President George H.W. Bush. With its web of insidious laws doling out rights, privileges and

even meal sizes in prisons based on skin color, apartheid was not easy to undo; ending it required years of legislative action and significant national angst. But when Mr. de Klerk in 1990 announced the lifting of the 30-year ban on the African National Congress and the release from prison of its most prominent leader, Mr. Mandela, he set in motion a transformation so powerful that it quickly pushed him to the margins. Mr. Mandela would trample Mr. de Klerk in presidential elections just four years after winning his freedom. Even as Mr. Mandela invited Mr. de Klerk into his transitional government as second deputy president, Mr. de Klerk struggled with his diminished role and eventually quit. He then sought to transform the National Party, which his grandfather had helped create, from a white-dominated organization into a multiracial one with the clout of the A.N.C., but those efforts fizzled. Frustrated by internal party tensions and criticism from the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which investigated the country's past, Mr. de Klerk announced his retirement from politics in 1997. He and Mr. Mandela shared the peace prize in 1993, cited for their joint efforts at remaking the country, although their relationship was less harmonious than it seemed. Mr. de Klerk complained in his autobiography, "The Last Trek — A New Beginning," that he felt underappreciated and at times was openly attacked by Mr. Mandela during celebrations surrounding the award. "I was seething," he wrote of a frank speech Mr. Mandela made in Norway after the prize ceremony. "It was only with the greatest self-control that I once again managed to bite my tongue and not shatter once and for all the

illusion that there was a cordial relationship between me and Mandela.” He added: “It was ironic that we had both traveled so far to be granted the world’s highest accolade for peace and reconciliation — while the relationship between us was characterized by so much vitriol and suspicion.” In his own autobiography, “Long Walk to Freedom,” Mr. Mandela characterized his relationship with Mr. de Klerk as one born of necessity. “To make peace with an enemy,” he wrote, “one must work with that enemy, and that enemy becomes one’s partner.” Although the two men would become symbols of racial harmony, their likenesses sold in South African shops on T-shirts and as salt and pepper shakers, Mr. Mandela was circumspect in his praise of Mr. de Klerk’s role in ending apartheid. “Despite his seemingly progressive actions,” Mr. Mandela wrote, “Mr. de Klerk was by no means the great emancipator. He was a gradualist, a careful pragmatist. He did not make any of his reforms with the intention of putting himself out of power. He made them for precisely the opposite reason: to ensure power for the Afrikaner in a new dispensation.” As a new generation of Black South Africans found their voice, Mr. de Klerk’s legacy faced increasing criticism. In a final message — a video released by his foundation hours after his death — he clarified his stance on apartheid. In particular, he spoke to those who he said did not believe his apology for the pain and indignity caused by racist policies, and apologized once again, “without qualification.” “Allow me in this last message to share with you the fact that since the early ’80s, my views changed completely,” Mr. de Klerk said, looking frail, his voice shaking. “It was as if I had a conversion and in my heart of hearts realized that apartheid was wrong.” He is survived by his wife, Elita, and his children Jan and Susan, his foundation said. Frederik Willem de Klerk was born in Johannesburg on March 18, 1936, to a family steeped in the politics of the Afrikaners, descendants of the Dutch and Huguenot

settlers who arrived in southern Africa in the 17th century. His father, Jan de Klerk, a headmaster, became a cabinet member under three prime ministers and president of the Senate. His uncle, Hans Strijdom, a fervent advocate of apartheid, was prime minister in the 1950s. His grandfather, also named Willem, was a proud Afrikaner, having been arrested on treason charges by the British before becoming a minister and a founding member of the National Party. “Politics,” Mr. de Klerk wrote in his autobiography, “was in my blood.” Trained as a lawyer at Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education, Mr. de Klerk became a member of Mr. Botha’s cabinet and of B.J. Vorster’s administration before that. He sometimes sided with racial hard-liners within his party, and he was one of the cabinet ministers who went to Mr. Botha in 1986 and demanded that Foreign Minister Roelof F. Botha be ordered to recant a prediction that South Africa might one day have a Black president. In his book “Move Your Shadow,” Joseph Lelyveld, a former executive editor of The New York Times who had reported from South Africa as a correspondent for the paper, recalled asking Mr. de Klerk, then a young cabinet member, about the death in police custody of a white man accused of sympathizing with the A.N.C. Mr. de Klerk told of being angry upon learning of the death. Why? “I knew how it would be used against us,” he said. Mr. de Klerk’s admirers portrayed those moves as an indication that he was a canny politician who knew that moving South Africa away from apartheid could only come from someone well respected by the country’s conservatives. Others viewed him as less visionary and more practical, cognizant that white people’s hold over the Black majority was slipping. It was not lost on Mr. de Klerk that in dismantling apartheid, he was undoing much of the work that his ancestors had struggled for decades to put in place.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/11/11/world/africa/fw-de-klerk-dead.html>

Neom To See World's Largest Floating Industrial Complex Oxagon

- OXAGON complements the same philosophy and principles of THE LINE
- The net-zero city will be powered by 100 percent clean energy

RIYADH: Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman announced on Tuesday the launch of NEOM's industrial city, known as OXAGON, which is set to be the largest floating industrial complex in the world. OXAGON complements the same philosophy and principles of THE LINE, which was announced in January, and will offer exceptional livability in harmony with nature, according to a statement carried by Saudi Press Agency. It's located on the Red Sea close to the Suez Canal, and south to THE LINE, and it will include the current port of Duba, which is now part of OXAGON.

Approximately 13 percent of the global trade passes through the Red Sea, and OXAGON is positioned to be one of the world's most technologically advanced logistics hubs with state-of-the-art integrated port and airport connectivity.

"OXAGON will be the catalyst for economic growth and diversity in NEOM and the Kingdom, further meeting our ambitions under Vision 2030. OXAGON will contribute to redefining the world's approach to industrial development in the future, protecting the environment while creating jobs and growth for NEOM. It will contribute to Saudi Arabia's regional trade and commerce, and support creating a new focal point for global trade flows. I am pleased to see that.

OXAGON will establish the world's first fully integrated port and supply chain ecosystem for NEOM. The port, logistics and rail delivery facility will be unified, providing world-class productivity levels with net-zero carbon emissions, setting global benchmarks in the adoption of technology and environmen-



tal sustainability. The net-zero city will be powered by 100 percent clean energy. "Seven sectors form the nucleus of OXAGON's industrial development, with innovation and new technology creating a vital base for these industries. These industries are sustainable energy; autonomous mobility; water innovation; sustainable food production; health and well-being; technology and digital manufacturing (including telecommunications, space technology and robotics); and modern methods of construction; all powered by 100% renewable energy," the statement added. "Many of the features of THE LINE that offer exceptional livability are reflected in the urban landscape of OXAGON. Communities will be walkable, or via hydrogen-powered mobility. Sustainable industry will be built around the communities, minimizing commute time and providing exceptional livability with nature seamlessly integrated into the urban environment," the statement said. According to previous report by MEED, US-based Parsons has been awarded the project management consultancy role for the NEOM Industrial City (NIC).

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1969241/business-economy>

Pope Urges Govts To Stop Sending Migrants Back To Libya



Pope Francis on Sunday urged governments to stop returning migrants to countries like Libya where they are sent to detention centres rife with abuse, and prioritise saving lives of those crossing the Mediterranean. The pontiff's message comes as Italy sees an increase in migrant arrivals from Libya, and the debate within a divided EU shifts to migrants entering the bloc's eastern borders with Belarus. "I express my closeness to the thousands of migrants, refugees and also others in need of protection in Libya," Francis said in a heartfelt message following his Sunday Angelus prayer on Saint Peter's Square in the Vatican.

"I don't forget you ever. I hear your cry and pray for you," he said.

"So many of these men, women and children are subject to an inhumane violence," the pope said.

"Yet again I exhort the international community to keep their promises and find common, concrete and lasting solutions, to manage the migrant flows in Libya and all the Mediterranean."

Governments must stop returning migrants to

"non-secure countries" like Libya, the 84 year old pontiff said. He urged them to prioritise saving lives in the Mediterranean, offer safe disembarkations at ports and guarantee migrants "alternatives to detention" and access to asylum. Italy and the European Union have for years financed, trained and equipped the Libyan coastguard to intercept migrants heading for Europe on makeshift boats. Those intercepted at sea and returned to Libya are placed in detention centres in deplorable conditions. Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi told Parliament Wednesday that arrivals to Italy from the Mediterranean had doubled thus far this year to 50,500 versus 26,000 in the same year-ago period. About 1,106 people died this year attempting the crossing, he said. On Sunday, migrant rescue hotline Alarm Phone said two inflatable boats in the Mediterranean carrying 60 and 68 people, respectively, needed urgent intervention.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/833110/pope-urges-govts-to-stop-sending-migrants-back-to-libya/>

US Consulate, University of Iowa & EFE to Train Saudi Women on Entrepreneurship



- The project will provide 50 young women with professional training and connections to local and international mentors that are necessary to start their businesses

The US Consulate General in Jeddah, the University of Iowa, and Education For Employment, a nonprofit in the MENA region linking unemployed youth to job opportunities, have launched a one-year project to train Saudi women from the western region on entrepreneurship skills in new emerging sectors like IT, real estate and e-commerce. This project will focus on fast-growing sectors in Saudi Arabia, in line with Vision 2030 goals to support economic growth in the Kingdom. The project will provide 50 young women with professional training and connections to local and international mentors that are necessary to start their businesses. The Western Saudi Arabia Venture School for Women project is designed to “put new entrepreneurial tools into the hands of Saudi women,” said Dimy Doresca, director of the Institute for International Business at the University of Iowa Tippie College of Business. “With the guidance of Iowa professionals, we will train aspiring innovators of business and social enterprise, through the startup process using methods that reduce risk and encourage ongoing innovation,” said Doresca. “We will nurture and empower women in Saudi Arabia to become examples of social and economic success in their communities.”

The women will participate in Venture School International, an entrepreneurial educational program that guides students through the startup process by teaching them how to identify a market need and build a business to meet it. The university is partnering with the nonprofit Education For Employment to teach the Ven-

IOWA



ture School International training, which will be complemented by contacts at local financing organizations, government officials, and business support services. Doresca said Iowa women entrepreneurs will also work with the Saudi women as mentors, providing support and encouragement while serving as role models. As part of the program, university faculty and Iowa entrepreneurs will travel to Saudi Arabia to provide training and help develop mentor relationships. “We are very pleased to partner with the University of Iowa and the US Consulate to enable young Saudi women reach their potential by empowering them with cutting-edge skills to compete in growing sectors, especially in the digital economy. The skills that these young women will acquire are based on a proven model that has enabled EFE in Saudi to connect over 5,000 people to the world of work, 52 percent of which are young Saudi women,” said EFE in Saudi CEO Abdullah Al-Ghamdi.

<https://www.arabnews.com/node/1969266/corporate-news>

Good news for Lahore International
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Hunger Forces Afghans To Sell Young Daughters Into Marriage

“These child marriages are due to economic problems, not any rule imposed by the Sharia,” says senior Taliban official.



Fahima has wept many times since her husband sold their two young daughters into marriage to survive the drought gripping western Afghanistan. Oblivious to the deal, six-year-old Faristeh and 18-month-old Shokriya sit by her side in a mud-brick and tarpaulin shelter for displaced people. “My husband said if we don't give away our daughters, we will all die because we don't have anything to eat,” Fahima said of the choice now facing thousands of Afghan families. “I feel bad giving away my daughters for money.” The oldest commanded a bride price of \$3,350 and the toddler \$2,800 — to be paid in instalments over several years until the time comes to join their new families, their future husbands still minors themselves. Child marriage has been practised in Afghanistan for centuries, but war and climate change-related poverty have driven many families to resort to striking deals earlier and earlier in girls' lives. Boys' parents can drive a harder bargain and secure younger girls, spacing out the repayments. The World Food Program warned on Monday that more than half the population of Afghanistan, around 22.8 million people, will face acute food insecurity from November. In Qala-i-Naw, capital of the western province of Badghis — one of the regions worst affected by the drought — there is shame and grief. Village and displaced people's camp leaders say the numbers of young girls getting betrothed started to rise during a 2018 famine and surged this year when the rains failed once more. Among farmers driven from their homes, AFP journalists quickly found more than a dozen families who felt forced to sell their daughters into marriage.

Grocery debt

Fahima's 25-year-old neighbour in the camp, Sabehreh, ran up a bill at a grocer's shop to feed her family. The business owner warned that they would be jailed if they could not repay him. To cover the debt, the family agreed that their three-year-old daughter, Zakereh, would be betrothed to the grocer's four-year-old son, Zabiullah. The infants are ignorant of their future fate, the shopkeeper having elected to wait until the pair are older before taking charge of the girl's upkeep. “I'm not happy to have done that, but we had nothing to eat or drink,” Sabehreh told AFP. “If this continues, we'll have to give up our three-month-old,” she said, sitting by the iron cradle holding the sleeping infant, as the first chills of winter penetrated the bleak camp.

Another neighbour, Gul Bibi, confirmed that many families in the camp had resorted to child marriage. Her own daughter Asho, aged eight or nine, is betrothed to a 23-year-old man to whose family Gul Bibi was indebted. The young man is away in nearby Iran, and she dreads the day of his return. “We know it's not right, but we don't have the choice,” commented Hayatullah, a passer-by who overheard the mother's sad tale.

'Never seen them since'

In another Qala-i-Naw camp, Mohammad Assan wiped back his tears as he showed AFP photos of his girls, Siana, nine, and Edi Gul, six, now living far away with their young grooms. “We've never seen them since,” he said. “We didn't want to do that, but we had to feed our other children.” Like many others, Assan and his family sought shelter in the temporary camp during the fierce fighting in recent years as the now victorious Taliban

clawed back control of the country from the US-backed government. "My daughters are surely better off over there, with food to eat," he reasoned, trying to console himself as he showed AFP the crusts of bread his neighbours spared for him. Assan's wife is sick and he has medical bills to pay, so he has already begun looking for a suitor for his remaining four-year-old daughter. "Some days I go crazy," his wife Dad Gul said, "I leave the tent and I don't really know where I'm going." The mothers' grief is long and open-ended: the hard decision to bargain away a child, the months or years waiting for her departure, then the pain of separation. Rabia, a 43-year-old widow, has done everything to push back the fateful day. Her daughter, Habibeh, has turned 12 and should have gone to join her future spouse's family a month ago, but she begged them for another year together. "I want to stay with my mother," whispered the skinny child. Rabia would refund the 550 dollars she received for Habibeh's hand if she could afford to feed the rest of her family.

'Save my sons'

Her 11-year-old boy earns 50 cents a day working for a baker, her nine-year-old picks up trash for 30. The children are black with filth, living in a ragged tent. It will be a hard winter. "As a mother, my heart is broken, but I have to save my sons," she explained.

Camp elder Abdul Rahim Akbar does what he can to save his neighbours from having to make the awful choice, distributing a small ration of bread to the poorest families. He has seen many fathers sell their daughters, including his own brother. He has even been to see the area's new Taliban authorities to seek their assistance. The Taliban's interim governor for Badghis province, Maulvi Abdul Sattar, told AFP: "These child marriages are due to economic problems, not to any rule imposed by the Islamic emirate, or the Sharia." Even in camps outside drought-hit Badghis, child marriage is growing. Outside Herat, the country's

third-biggest city, fathers have to harden their hearts. "I sold my 10-year-old girl. I never would have done it if I had the choice," said landless farmer Allahudin, admitting that if he could find a taker he'd also sell his five year old. But behind the blunt talk, there is grief and shame at their failure to provide for their families and keep them together. "I know it's not good," said Baz Mohammad, "But I thought we were all going to die. "

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1654162>

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Afghan Girls' Football Team Land In Uk On Flight Funded By Kim Kardashian

An Afghan girls youth football has landed safely in the UK, on an evacuation flight funded by US celebrity Kim Kardashian.

The girls - aged between 13 and 19 - feared persecution in Afghanistan following the Taliban takeover of the country, and some of the girls' families are reported to have received death threats. The youth development team members landed at Stansted airport on Thursday morning - along with some family members and coaches - after an evacuation operation that was led by the charity Football For Peace. Kashif Siddiqi, co-founder of Football For Peace, described the rescue effort as "a long 90 minutes, plus stoppage time". The former Pakistan football international said he is "so relieved" that the girls are safely in the UK, and described the successful evacuation as "scoring the winning goal". A variety of organisations were also involved in the evacuation, including former footballers, charity workers, and politicians. The chairman of Leeds United Football Club, Andrea Radrizzani, was also involved. In a Twitter post after the flight landed, he said he dreams the girls will one day play for his Yorkshire football club. The flight departed from Pakistan on Wednesday night, where the girls were originally evacuated to from Afghanistan. Pakistan's prime minister Imran Khan gave special permission for the girls to cross the border into his country, following a campaign for the team to be evacuated. However, they were only granted temporary visas in the country, which led to subsequent calls for the girls to be flown to safety and resettled in the UK. US celebrity Kim Kardashian funded the flight from Pakistan, it has been confirmed. The celebrity and philanthropist - who appears in the reality TV series Keeping Up with the Kardashians - sponsored the flight with her company SKIMS. The Tzedek Asso-

ciation - a Jewish charity based in New York - chartered the flight. Rabbi Moshe Margaretten, president and founder of the Tzedek Association told ITV News he is "so happy and excited" for the girls and their families. "They are finally now coming to a place of safety and security", he said. "Thank you Kim Kardashian West for your magnanimous assistance to fund this flight and make it a reality". Rabbi Moshe, who is the son and grandson of Holocaust survivors, told ITV News: "I know in my heart that we must be there for others in their time of need at a time when their very lives are at risk""We thank the UK for welcoming these girls and agreeing to be a haven for them." "I pray that other countries follow suit", he said. As well as Football For Peace, several other charities, including the ROKiT Foundation, and Play for Change, were key to getting the girls football team to safety. One of the first appeals to help the team came from former Afghanistan captain Khalida Popal. "The girls have been through a lot. They have had a very, very tough journey," she said. The girls' and women's rights campaigner added: "They have been through a lot of stress and risk - hiding them in a hostel in Kabul and being displaced from their homes." Leeds United chairman Andrea Radrizzani - who also chairs the football charity Play for Change - expressed his delight and relief at the evacuation. "Football is a powerful tool in building communities and bridging divides. "Unfortunately, we have seen the opposite of this unfold in Afghanistan where the Afghan Girls Development National Youth Football Team has had to flee persecution. "We have supported to give the girls a prosperous and peaceful future", he said.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2021-11-18/afghan-girls-football-team-land-in-uk-on-flight-funded-by-kim-kardashian>

Diabetes: The 21p Spice That Drives Blood Sugar Levels Down By '30 Percent' Within Days

By: Solen Le Net

IT IS well known that diet is the mainstay of diabetes prevention. And in the face of growing rates, health experts are urging cautious food intake to prevent blood sugar levels from skyrocketing. Thankfully, one spice could lower unruly blood sugar levels by 30 percent when incorporated into your diet. The relevance of diet in managing diabetes is indisputable. But unfortunately, no single food is able to offer the full range of nutritional and health benefits required for optimal health. Yet some scientific studies have linked specific foods to lower blood sugar levels. One spice, in particular, has risen to the task - lowering blood sugar levels by 30 percent in just 40 days. There is overwhelming evidence that the burden of diabetes is growing in conjunction with obesity rates. The condition is characterised by problems with making or using insulin - the hormone that takes up blood sugar. As the pancreas becomes hampered, blood sugar levels can be expected to skyrocket, which is when the damage begins. Certain foods, however, may help tame high glucose levels. In one 2013 study published in the Annals of Family Medicine and Diabetes Care, researchers found cinnamon to be beneficial for individuals with type 2 diabetes. The findings showed that individuals who ate one or more grams of cinnamon saw their blood sugar levels fall by 30 percent, compared to those who didn't. The results were observed in middle-aged diabetics who consumed just one, three, or six grams of cinnamon after just 40 days. The study also observed a significant reduction in triglyceride, LDL cholesterol and total cholesterol levels of more than 25 percent. The connection is believed to be partly due to cinnamon's chromium concentrations, a mineral that

enhances the effects of insulin. Its polyphenolic qualities may also deliver benefits, acting as a buffer against free radicals in the blood. This in turn helps lower inflammation in the body, which could protect against diabetes and heart disease. These findings were later confirmed in a study reported in the July 2000 edition of Agricultural Research magazine, which confirmed a daily intake of one gram may suffice to help increase insulin sensitivity. The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition highlighted that a large dose of six grams of cinnamon could significantly reduce post-meal sugar spikes without affecting satiety. However, current evidence pertaining to cinnamon's benefits for diabetes is not substantial enough to make it medically relevant as a treatment.

What are the symptoms of diabetes?

The lack of clinical symptoms linked to diabetes can make it difficult to detect in the initial stages. However, if blood sugar levels are left untreated, complications may arise swiftly. These may include blurry vision, intense thirst, increased need to urinate, fatigue, or numbness and titling in the hands and feet. There is a widely held belief that type 1 and type 2 diabetes, which takes longer to develop, are irreversible conditions, but these views have been challenged in recent years. Certain researchers argue that significant weight loss could improve the odds of remission. This is particularly true of prediabetes, a condition characterised by high blood sugar levels, but not yet high enough to qualify as type 2 diabetes. In all cases, diet coupled with regular exercise offers the best chances of reversing the condition.

<https://www.express.co.uk/life-style/health/1520291/diabetes-high-blood-sugar-lower-cinnamon>

Calls For A Pollution Lockdown In India As Toxic Smog Forces Schools To Close

Officials in India are considering locking down parts of the country in a bid to tackle high pollution levels. Trucks carrying non-essential goods have already been banned from entering New Delhi and surrounding areas until Sunday, in an effort to contain the smog. Some coal-burning power plants were also shut down by the government in New Delhi and neighbouring states, as India's highest court looks set to lock down parts of the country. An anti-pollution lockdown would be a first of its kind in the country, which implemented Covid lockdowns throughout 2020. As well as school closures, construction and demolition works have been halted for at least a week by India's Commission for Air Quality Management. State governments will encourage people to work from home, with guidance for half of private company employees to avoid travelling to the office. More industries and businesses could be forced to close in the Indian capital as part of restrictions, with pollution levels seven times higher than the United Nations safe limits. But some experts think an anti-pollution lockdown would be

ineffective. Anumita Roychowdhury, executive director at New Delhi's Center for Science and Environment, said a lockdown would do more harm than good. "This is not the solution that we are looking for, because this is hugely disruptive "We also have to keep in mind that the economy is already under pressure, poor people are at risk", he said. The air quality is expected to get even worse but meteorologists say the arrival of cold winds next week could blow away the smog. India's Supreme Court has called the pollution situation a "crisis", and ordered state and federal governments to take emergency measures earlier this month. Smog is often heavy during winter time in the region, when crop-burning coincides with cooler temperatures that trap deadly smoke. Pollutants from firecrackers during festivals also lead to emissions. New Delhi - which is home to over 20 million people - consistently ranks as one of the most polluted cities in the world. More than one million Indians die every year from air pollution-related diseases, and pollution is seen as a key issue for India's politicians. New

Delhi's government has experimented with anti pollution measures such as limiting the number of cars on the road, using large anti smog guns and halting construction activity but the steps have had little effect.

<https://www.itv.com/news/2021-11-17/calls-for-a-pollution-lockdown-in-india-as-toxic-smog-forces-schools-to-close>

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The Yamuna River is covered in a layer of toxic foam from industrial pollutants, as New Delhi's sky is clouded with a familiar fog this week.

Covid: First UK Case In Pet Dog Confirmed By Top Vet



A dog has tested positive for Covid - the first documented case of its kind in the UK - officials have confirmed.

They believe the pet, who is recovering at home, caught it from its owner.

The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) says cases like this are extremely rare and there is no strong evidence to suggest that dogs, cats or other pets are passing on the virus to humans. Owners and people who work with animals should wash their hands regularly though for good hygiene. Animal fur can act as a carrier for the Covid-19 virus for short periods of time, in the same way as other surfaces, such as door handles, says the advice. Do not share food, food bowls or utensils with your pet. The UK's Chief Veterinary Officer Christine Middlemiss said: "The infected dog was undergoing treatment for another unrelated condition and is now recovering. "It is very rare for dogs to be infected and they will usually only show mild clinical signs, and recover within a few days.

"There is no clear evidence to suggest that pets directly transmit the virus to humans. We will continue to monitor this situation closely and will update our guidance to pet owners should the situation change."

Covid and animals

Some coronaviruses that infect animals can be spread to people and then spread between people, but this is also very rare. It has been suggested that the Covid-19 virus probably originated in bats. There have been reports of other animals infected with Sars-CoV-2.

Denmark killed millions of mink in November 2020 amid concerns about a mutated form of coronavirus detected in this species. A few cases of Covid in pet cats, dogs and ferrets

have been recorded around the world too. And four lions, along with two keepers, tested positive at Barcelona Zoo.

The list of animals which have been infected includes:

- big cats in captivity
- domestic cats
- dogs
- ferrets
- fruit bats
- mink
- non-human primates
- pangolins
- pigs
- raccoon dogs
- rodents
- white-tailed deer

According to the UKHSA, there have been documented cases of humans catching Covid from mink and from ferrets.

If you're concerned about your pet because it has respiratory or digestive problems and a temperature, you should contact your vet who will decide if it needs a Covid test.

And if you are self-isolating because of Covid, do not kiss or cuddle your pet or let them sleep in your bed.

But do think about arranging for someone else who is not self-isolating to care for your animals. If there is no-one to help but you need assistance, you should contact your vet. Covid spreads from person to person through small droplets, aerosols and through direct contact. Surfaces and belongings can also be contaminated when people with the infection cough or sneeze or touch them.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/health-59246304>

My Journey To Hajj Through Stamps

(Hajj - the Fifth Pillar of Islam) Part - 2

By: Rashed Ahmed - Canada



MINA

Mina is desert location situated some 5 kilometers to the East of the Islamic holy city of Makkah. It stands on the road from Makka's city centre to the hill of Arafat, many travel there by foot through tunnels other uses different transports which includes recently introduced Metro trains. Mina is best known for the role it plays during the Hajj when it's Tent city provide temporary accommodation for millions of visiting pilgrims who gather around Kheef Mosque on 8 Dul-al-Hijja for gathering water in preparation for standing at the plains of Arafat normally offers five prayers there prior to their journey Fajr prayers.



main Hajj Sermon is delivered from Nimra'h Mosque by the representative of Custodian of Holy Mosques. After the sermon they continue to pray till the sunset and proceeds towards Muzdalifa'h.



SPENDING NIGHT AT MUZDALIFAH

As soon the sun sets on 9th Dhu al-Hijja, the pilgrims leave Plain of Arafat (approx 22 Km East of Makkah) after carrying out the main Hajj ritual for Muzdalifah (approx 16 Km East of Makkah) of from an open area which is located between Arafat and Mina.



WAQUF -E- ARAFAT

Mount Arafat is a rock hill with a white stone pillar. It is also known as Mount of Mercy (Jabal-ar-Rahmah). On this hill top near the white pillar is the palace where Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) delivered the Farewell Sermon to the Muslims in particular and to whole humanity, towards the end of his life. Pilgrims gather here to ask forgiveness from God. Pilgrims spend the whole day there on 9th Dul-al-Hijjah. Failure to be present in the plains of Arafat on the required day invalidates the pilgrimage. The level are surrounding the hill is called Plain of Arafat. The term Mount Arafat is sometimes applied to this entire area. It is an important place in Islam because during Hajj. Zhur and Asr prayers are combined and shorten to 2 Raka't of each, the

Upon arrival at Muzdalifah – the pilgrims performs the Maghrib (sunset) and the Isha'a (night) prayers Jam'ah (combined) and Kasr (shortened) only 2 Rakat of Farad (obligatory) instead of four Rakat of Isha'a. The Maghrib's Farad prayers are not shortened which is followed by Isha'a and Witr. It is not permissible to delay prayers until after midnight. After performing the prayers they gather 70 pebbles approx 1 – 1.5cm for the following day's ritual of the symbolic "stoning of devil (Satan)" Rami Al-Jamarat. They remains in the plains of Muzdalifah in open

air making supplications and remembering Allah and taking a short sleep to get up early and active just before the sunrise to perform the deeds of day of Nahr (Eid ul Azha), when time of Fajr (dawn) is due, they perform the Fajr prayers early with Azan (call for prayer) after saying their prayers they supplicate by chanting "Laa Ilaaha Illa Allah" and "Allahu Akbar" until almost sunrise. Once, the light of dawn appears the pilgrims head for their tents in Mina.

RAMI AL-JAMARA`T

Upon reaching their tents Pilgrims takes only takes 7 pebbles and store other for following two days stoning. They throw seven consecutive pebbles at Jamarat-al-Aqabah (the largest pillar to symbolize Satan) which is closest to Makkah, saying "Allahu Akbar" (Allah is the Greatest", as they throw each pebble. Throwing stones to the pillars (due to safety reasons Saudi authorities has now replaced the pillars with 26m walls) Throwing stones to the pillars signify their defiance of Devil. The stoning of the Jamara`ts also represents repudiation of man's self (literally the 'internal despot', an-nafs al-amara) or the casting aside



one's low desire and wishes. This symbolizes the trials experienced by Prophet Ibrahim (as) (Abraham) while he decided whether to sacrifice his son Ismail (as) Ishmael as commanded by God. Whilst he was proceeding the command of his Lord he was encountered the Devil who challenged him three times, and all times Abraham refused by throwing seven stones on at stone-heap of the defile called Aqaba upon that the devil disappeared, the again showed up at Wusta'h (Middle stone-heap) and then once again at Sugrah

(Small stone-heap) he pelted seven pebbles each time, with this action the devil withdrew from him. This ritual re-enacts of Abraham makes the determination of pilgrims attaining closeness to Allah by following His commands and to remain steadfast despite being distracted by Satan again and again. This ritual continues on all three days of Eidul ul Azha during which the pilgrims give scarifies a goat, lamb, cow or camel in the vicinity of Mina in remembrance of great sacrifice of Prophet Abraham and his son Ishmael as ordained by Allah. After slaughtering the sacrificial animal, they eat some of it, and give some to the poor. Slaughtering is obligatory on Mutamati and Qiran Hajjis. Now a day IDB makes arrangements to distribute this huge amount of sacrificial meat to people of less privileged countries by processing those in at slaughter houses, chilling them in cold stores and transporting these in Refrigerated containers by Air and Sea. Men shave or clip their hair; women clip their hairs the length of a finger-tip. With that, one is allowed to come out of the state of Ihram, They wear normal clothing's and do everything that were lawful before Ihram.

TAWAF AL-IFADAH

Pilgrims go to Makkah to perform Tawaf Al-Ifadah or Tawaf al-Hajj which is performed after casting stones on devils, sacrificing animals (Hadi) and shaving or clipping hairs. It is a Sunnah to wear perfume on or before going to Makkah. With the completion of this Tawaf and Sa'yi they return to Mina.



Pilgrims leaving the Tent City Pilgrims leave Mina before the sun set of 12th Dul al-Hijja towards Makkah or Madinah.

La burqa autorisée en France après la COVID-19 ?

French Desk

En 2010, afin d'empêcher les femmes musulmanes de porter la burqa en France, des politiques ont voté une loi pour interdire la dissimulation du visage dans l'espace public, sous prétexte que cela nuirait à l'ordre public. Quant est-il aujourd'hui avec des millions de femmes masquées ?

Par: Dr Idrissa KONE

Depuis presque deux ans, le monde vit une grave pandémie connue sous le nom de la COVID-19. Cette maladie mortelle a entraîné des conséquences terribles en termes de perte en vie humaine, de conjoncture économique et de désastre social. Malgré les avancées médicales pour contrer cette pandémie, notamment par la vaccination, les gestes barrières demeurent un outil incontournable pour briser la chaîne de contamination. Et une des mesures phares demeure le port du masque qui, par ricochet, entraîne la dissimulation du visage. La dissimulation du visage est désormais considérée comme un acte de civisme, de respect des autres, et comme moyen de protéger autrui et soi-même contre cette maladie. Il n'existe plus aucun espace clos ni ouvert où il est interdit de se dissimuler le visage. Or quelques années de cela, certains politiques en France se sont attaqués au mode vestimentaire de certaines femmes musulmanes appelé burqa ou niqab. Ils ont lancé un débat public si vif et important qu'il a poussé l'État français à voter une loi liberticide. Le meilleur argument qu'ils ont avancé afin d'éviter de citer une pratique religieuse, était que le fait de dissimuler son visage pourrait être source de trouble à l'ordre public. Ils ont utilisé des subterfuges et profité de l'islamophobie ambiante pour faire passer cette loi. Il s'agit de la loi n°2010-1192 du 11 octobre 2010 interdisant la dissimulation du visage dans l'espace public¹ ayant pour objet d'interdire le port d'une « tenue destinée à dissimuler son visage ». Entrée en vigueur le 11 avril 2011, elle a été adoptée lors du mandat présidentiel de Nicolas Sarkozy. Bien que la loi n'a nullement cité une religion ou une

pratique spécifique, les femmes musulmanes étaient clairement ciblées par cette loi. Aujourd'hui, fort est de constater que la pandémie de la COVID-19 a rendu caduc cette loi, car qui oserait dire en effet que cette loi est violée au quotidien par des millions de Français. Qui pourra dire si les femmes musulmanes portent un masque pour dissimuler leur visage au nom d'un principe religieux ou bien pour se préserver du virus ? Les politiques ont violé un principe fondamental en légiférant sur le droit de s'habiller des citoyens, ne leur laissant plus le choix de se vêtir comme bon leur semble tout en respectant le minimum de pudeur, et en s'immisçant ainsi dans la vie privée des gens. Les politiques ont été ridiculisés à cet égard par les contraintes liées à la pandémie de la COVID-19. Se dissimuler le visage est une pratique courante dans la vie quotidienne, que ce soit dans l'armée, dans le domaine de la sécurité physique comme alimentaire, chez les astronautes, dans le monde de la santé, dans la pratique sportive et j'en passe. Que demandaient ces femmes musulmanes ? Le droit de s'habiller en accord avec leur compréhension de la religion, tout en respectant le choix des autres de s'habiller comme bon leur semble ; le droit de protéger leur corps, ainsi que les autres, d'éventuelles maladies spirituelles susceptibles d'entraîner une mort spirituelle. Nos gouvernants imposent la dissimulation du visage à travers le port du masque afin que les gens se protègent d'éventuelles maladies physiques susceptibles de causer la mort physique. Pourquoi empêcher l'un et autoriser l'autre ? Lorsque cette loi fut votée en 2010, le cinquième Calife de la communauté musul-

mane Ahmadiyya, Hadhrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (qu'Allah soit son soutien) avait attiré l'attention des gouvernements et des parlementaires sur les dangers de cette loi et le caractère ridicule de ses dispositions. Il a dit en substance :

« Depuis quelques années, le hijab, ou voile islamique, est devenu l'objet d'une grande polémique en Europe. En France, un profond sentiment d'opposition s'est développé, et la classe politique considère sérieusement l'introduction d'une législation visant à une interdiction partielle du hijab ou de la burqa [...] et c'est là un autre moyen pour blesser les sentiments des musulmans. A bien y réfléchir, on a du mal à identifier le problème réel que pose le voile et comment il peut être une menace pour les États européens. Porter un manteau et un foulard qui couvre la tête et le menton est présenté comme un crime si grave, qu'il justifie une session extraordinaire du parlement pour voter une loi l'interdisant. Si les femmes n'ont pas le droit de porter de foulard sur la tête, pourquoi les hommes auraient-ils le droit de porter des casquettes et des bérets? Récemment un journal a publié une caricature dans laquelle une femme portant le voile se tenait à côté d'un homme portant un béret. L'homme disait à la femme « pas de burqa » et la femme lui répondait « pas de béret ». Cette situation tourne au ridicule. Toutefois, ceux qui détiennent les rênes du pouvoir exécutif et législatif ne devraient pas interférer dans ce genre de situations et doivent faire preuve de bon sens. Doit-on passer des lois contre les femmes juives ou chrétiennes parce qu'elles portent un vêtement religieux. Si des interdictions sont imposées aux musulmans, les pays musulmans pourraient imposer, à leur tour, des restrictions similaires sur certains vêtements occidentaux. Cette situation pourrait avoir un effet boule de neige et menacer la paix du monde. Bien entendu, si un vêtement dissimule l'identité d'une personne et qu'il est nécessaire de l'enlever pour s'identifier,

l'État ou les autorités ont tout à fait le droit de l'exiger. Mais doit-on pour autant interdire à une femme de voyager parce qu'elle porte un hijab, ou encore refuser de soigner dans un hôpital une personne mourante parce qu'elle porte un voile? Prenons l'exemple d'une jeune musulmane, intelligente, première de sa classe, loyale envers son pays et qui l'aime profondément. Même si elle souhaite contribuer au progrès national par son travail, elle n'aura pas le droit à l'éducation parce qu'elle a fait le choix de porter un foulard. Non seulement une telle loi est une atteinte à ses droits fondamentaux de citoyenne, mais c'est aussi un gaspillage de talent et une grande perte pour le pays. Le talent de la nation et l'avenir du pays sont compromis simplement parce qu'une fille musulmane veut servir son pays mais aussi pratiquer sa religion de son plein gré. On lui refuse ses droits simplement parce qu'elle porte un morceau de tissu sur la tête. Si c'est un crime, alors pendant l'hiver les Européennes qui se couvrent la tête avec des écharpes devraient aussi perdre leurs droits. Cela donne matière à réfléchir. Pourquoi devient-on un criminel si on porte un mètre d'étoffe sur la tête et comment le fait de le porter peut justifier de perdre ses droits fondamentaux. Les gouvernements démocratiques revendiquent dans leurs constitutions la défense des droits inaliénables des individus. Interdire le port du voile est-il un moyen pour unir les nations ou pour développer le respect et la compréhension entre les différents peuples ? Une personne juste et honnête ne pourra que s'opposer à une telle loi car elle élève des barrières encore plus hautes entre les peuples et sape la paix mondiale. »

Références

- 1- JUSX1011390L. JORF n°0237 du 12 octobre 2010
- 2- Interdiction du port du voile islamique et de la burqa en Europe – Islam et l'Ahmadiyya (islam-ahmadiyya.org)

Ist die Machtübernahme der Taliban noch im Interesse Pakistans?

Teile des pakistanischen Sicherheitsapparats unterhalten enge Beziehungen zu den Taliban. Was verspricht sich die pakistanische Führung vom Sieg der Fundamentalisten und wie wird er sich auf das Land auswirken?

In der vorletzten Woche überschlugen sich die Ereignisse fast stündlich: Die Taliban überrannten ungebremsst eine afghanische Provinz nach der anderen und konnten Kabul praktisch ohne Gegenwehr einnehmen - zur Überraschung der maßgeblichen Akteure. Die afghanischen Sicherheitskräfte hatten sich praktisch aufgelöst. Ein derartiges Versagen der afghanischen Armee, die in den letzten zwanzig Jahren mit Milliarden von Dollar aufgebaut und ausgerüstet worden war, schockierte alle Beobachter - am meisten aber die Afghanen selbst. Präsident Aschraf Ghani floh aus dem Land und machte den Weg frei für eine Machtübernahme der Radikalen.

Ogleich die Folgen dieser Entwicklung für die Region noch nicht absehbar sind, steht schon fest, dass Pakistan neben den Taliban der zweite Sieger in diesem Konflikt ist. Vorerst zumindest, denn Stand heute ist schwer einzuschätzen, wie sich die Machtübernahme der Taliban auf die pakistanische Gesellschaft auswirken wird. Genau das ist die Krux. Seit einigen Monaten schon werfen afghanische Regierungsmitglieder Pakistan vor, die Taliban aktiv bei ihrem Vormarsch zu unterstützen. Auf einer Regionalkonferenz in Usbekistan kam es zu einem ungewohnten öffentlichen Schlagabtausch zwischen dem afghanischen Präsidenten Ghani und dem pakistanischen Premierminister Imran Khan. Dieser reagierte sichtlich verärgert auf den Vorwurf Ghanis, Pakistan schleuse tausende Taliban-Kämpfer nach Afghanistan ein. Khan beteuerte, sein Land habe mit den Entwicklungen in Afghanistan nichts zu tun und sei an einer friedlichen Lösung des Konflikts interessiert. Schließlich



By: Muhammad Luqman Majoka

könne ein Bürgerkrieg im Nachbarland und ein neuer Zustrom afghanischer Flüchtlinge auch Pakistan destabilisieren. Zwar mag diese Einschätzung zum Teil stimmen und sicherlich hat Pakistan nicht tausende Taliban eingeschleust, aber es ist nicht abzustreiten, dass das pakistanische Establishment enge Beziehungen zu den Taliban pflegt, wenn auch mit abnehmendem Einfluss. Mit dem Einmarsch der Taliban in Kabul ergreift nach zwanzig Jahren wieder ein "pro-pakistanisches" Regime die Macht. Anders als früher wirken diesmal neben Pakistan auch andere Akteure aus der Region aktiv an der Gestaltung eines post-amerikanischen Afghanistans mit.

Die Taliban und die Anrainerstaaten

Spätestens seitdem die USA direkte Verhandlungen mit den Taliban aufnahmen und ihren Rückzug ankündigten, war selbst den größten Skeptikern klar, dass die Taliban ein wesentlicher Machtfaktor in Afghanistan sind und dass der Konflikt militärisch nicht lösbar ist. Um ein Übergreifen des Konflikts auf die Nachbarländer zu verhindern, ist eine gewisse Stabilität Afghanistans im Sinne aller Anrainerstaaten. Neben Pakistan versuchen daher Iran, China und Russland das Machtvakuum zu füllen. Die Taliban-Vertreter führten in den letzten Monaten mit diesen Ländern bilaterale

Verhandlungen und konnten anscheinend eine gewisse Übereinkunft über eine Anerkennung ihres Regimes erzielen. So möchte beispielsweise China seinen Nachbarn Afghanistan als wichtiges Transitland in seine "Belt and Road Initiative" integrieren. Mit einer stabilen Regierung, selbst wenn diese von den radikalen Taliban gestellt werden sollte, wäre für China die Umsetzung des Infrastrukturprojekts einfacher. China möchte zudem von den Taliban die Garantie, dass sich keine uigurischen Widerstandskämpfer aus dem chinesischen autonomen Gebiet Xinjiang, das unmittelbar an Afghanistan grenzt, auf afghanischem Boden festsetzen können

Angst vor Destabilisierung

Für Russland ist die Sicherheitslage in Zentralasien und die Eindämmung lokaler Terrorgruppen von zentraler Bedeutung. Moskau fürchtet eine Destabilisierung der zentralasiatischen Republiken und führte deshalb direkte Gespräche mit den Taliban, obwohl Moskau die Gruppe offiziell als Terroristen einstuft. Ähnlich verhält es sich mit dem Iran, der sunnitische Terrororganisationen im Osten des Landes bekämpft und ein Erstarken des IS in Afghanistan verhindern will. Der Iran betrachtet sich außerdem als Schutzmacht der afghanischen Schiiten und ist darum bemüht, deren Sicherheit zu gewährleisten. Für Pakistan sind gleichzeitig mehrere geopolitische Faktoren von Interesse: Islamabad will, dass die Taliban ihren pakistanischen Ableger TTP (Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan) in Schach halten und daran hindern, von Afghanistan aus Anschläge zu verüben. Schließlich konnte die pakistanische Armee die TTP erst nach mehreren verlustreichen Militäroperationen aus den Stammesgebieten an der Grenzregion vertreiben. Eine Rückkehr der TTP wäre für die Sicherheitslage im Land fatal.

Anschluss an den Welthandel

Auch Separatisten aus der pakistanischen Provinz Belutschistan fanden in Afghanistan Schutz und operierten von dort aus relativ

frei. Anschläge belutschistanischer Freischärler sind die größte Bedrohung für den China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), ein ambitioniertes Projekt, mit dem Islamabad und Peking ihre Zusammenarbeit über die Entwicklung von Transport- und Energieinfrastrukturen u. a. mit Transitrouten durch Afghanistan verbessern wollen. Über die Häfen von Gwadar und Karatschi hätte man direkten Anschluss an den Welthandel. Dies alles wäre unter den Taliban einfacher umzusetzen. Am wichtigsten aber ist für Pakistan der Umstand, dass mit der Machtergreifung der Taliban der Einfluss Indiens in Afghanistan weitgehend zurückgedrängt wird. Indien konnte in den letzten Jahren mit Investitionen und Projekten seinen Einfluss merklich ausbauen, was Islamabad stets misstrauisch beäugte. In der Sicherheitsdoktrin Pakistans spielt die Sicherung der Westgrenze eine zentrale Rolle. Ein Feind an der westlichen Flanke käme einer Umzingelung gleich. Das zu vermeiden, hat hohe Priorität auf den Machtkorridoren Islamabads.

Radikalisierung befürchtet

Den Taliban kam die pakistanische Unterstützung ebenfalls zugute, auch wenn viele ihrer Anführer nach 2001 in Pakistan festgesetzt worden waren. Geflohene Taliban-Kader und ihre Familien fanden im pakistanischen Quetta oder Karatschi Unterschlupf. Zwischen dem pakistanischen Establishment und der Talibanführung bestand stets ein reger Kontakt, wodurch Pakistan die Talibanführung dazu drängen konnte, sich mit den Amerikanern an einen gemeinsamen Verhandlungstisch zu setzen. Zwar ist Islamabads Einfluss auf die Gruppe gesunken, dennoch profitieren beide Seiten weiter voneinander. In Pakistan gibt es aber auch eine andere Sichtweise: Angesichts der Machtergreifung der Taliban befürchten viele eine fortschreitende Radikalisierung der eigenen Gesellschaft. Denn religiöse Parteien und Elemente des Establishments sympathisieren

in Pakistan offen mit den Taliban. Sie alle betrachten den Sieg der Bewegung als Bestätigung ihrer Politik. So beglückwünschte Fazal ur-Rahman, der Anführer der islamistischen Partei Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), den Anführer der Taliban, Hibatullah Achundsa-da, zu seinem Sieg.

Neue Spirale der Gewalt?

Ideologisch sind die Taliban und die JUI der puritanischen Deobandi-Denkschule zuzuschreiben. Die Deobandi-Bewegung wähnt sich jetzt im Aufwind und erhofft, wieder mehr Einfluss zu gewinnen - insbesondere im Wettlauf mit der orthodox-sunnitischen Barelwī-Bewegung. Spannungen zwischen den beiden sunnitischen Denkrichtungen werden in Zukunft vermutlich zunehmen. Religiöse Minderheiten und liberale Kräfte befürchten ohnehin zunehmende Repressalien, wenn die radikalen Kräfte gesamtgesellschaftlich an Bedeutung gewinnen. Pakistan könnte dann wieder von einer Spirale der Gewalt heimgesucht werden, wie zuletzt Anfang der 2000er Jahre. Erste Anzeichen dafür gibt es bereits: Der weitgehend als zerschlagen geltende Ableger der Taliban in Pakistan, die TTP, meldete sich Anfang 2021 mit mehreren spektakulären Anschlägen zurück. Im April verübte die Gruppe einen Anschlag auf das stark gesicherte Serena Hotel in Quetta, der dem chinesischen Botschafter galt. Ob die Taliban wirklich die TTP kontrollieren können, ist mehr als fraglich, wenn man sich die lose Organisationsstruktur der Gruppierung vor Augen führt. Noch ist es zu früh, die Auswirkungen verlässlich zu prognostizieren. Die nächsten Monate bleiben daher spannend. Fest steht jedoch, dass die Geister des Radikalismus wieder zurückgekehrt sind in eine Region, die ohnehin von Instabilität geplagt ist.

<https://www.dw.com/de/ist-die-macht%C3%BCBernahme-der-taliban-noch-im-interesse-pakistans/a-58980026>

Bangladesh needs to uphold religious harmony: UK minister

UK Minister Lord Tariq Ahmad today said religious and communal harmony and political stability are the preconditions of development and progress of a country. "Bangladesh needs to uphold its tradition of religious harmony in order to continue its progress," he said at a reception organised for him at the Ahmadiyya Mosque Al-Bait-ul Islam at Tejgaon today, according to a press release. The UK Minister for South Asia, UN and the Commonwealth at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, said religious freedom and freedom of expression are fundamental rights of a person and the British government is working on this issue. Ahmad, a member of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK, in his address said, during the past five decades Bangladesh have faced various challenges. "Despite all the ups and downs, this country has tremendously progressed in recent times and achieved a respectable position in the world," he said. Mentioning the long tradition of congenial relationship between UK and Bangladesh, Ahmad said that his government is committed to help Bangladesh in child education, health and other humanitarian and development areas. Presided by Abdul Awwal Khan Chowdhury, the national ameer of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at of Bangladesh, the meeting was addressed by British High Commissioner Robert Chatterton Dickson, President of Tejgaon Chapter of the Jama'at Mohammad Abdul Karim, and Ahmad Tabshir Choudhury, director of External Affairs, PR, Press and Media of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, Bangladesh.

<https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/diplomacy/news/uk-working-ensure-religious-freedom-lord-tariq-2232361>

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