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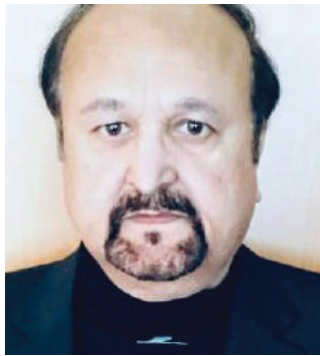


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EDITOR IN CHIEF
Mohiuddin Abbasi

EDITOR
Munazza Khan

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Dr. Busharat Elahi Jamil

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Amina Nuzhat
Attiya Wasee

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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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

Religious intolerance is an intensely prevailing agony in Pakistani society. Pakistani nation is an orthodox, rigid and religiously emotional at large. It has an historical perspective, unfortunately communal horrifying violence and bloodshed fertilised its creation. During the partition process in 1947 hundreds of thousands minority people were murdered, kidnapped and misplaced in the name of either faith or creed both in India and Pakistan.

By birth Pakistan is not an Islamic Republic but simply a Muslim majority state. However, March 12, 1949 Liaquat Ali Khan's Objective Resolution laid the first step towards religious interference in state matters. Later, particularly since 1953 religious stratum and defeated anti-Pakistani religious assemblages like Ihrar, Ji, JUI used religion as a tool to pave their way in the native society. Steadily the false interpretations of Islamic teachings nourished aggression, rigidity and extremism in Pakistani society.

State supported fanaticism ever strengthened the religious and communal extremist accumulations. Particularly Bhutto and Zia's bantering with the Islamic principles subjecting to strengthen the radicalism to more penetrate in the society. As a result Pakistani nation is now divided in various unconstrained Islamic ideologies at all level. Mullahs are not playing their role to organize the society according to the Islamic teachings but enjoying this bifurcation for their social, economic and political purposes. Common masses neither respect

nor tolerate each other's beliefs, propagation and teachings.

Consequently, in Pakistan now Muslims are killing Muslims for Muslims in the name of Islam. Misuse of blasphemy laws is one of the tools as under the guise of these laws, society has become religiously extremist. Illiterate people, religious and educated particularly academic stratum equally and vigorously share the misuse of blasphemy laws. Political and authoritarian regimes are severely failed to contain the frenzied mobs to commit the murders of the alleged persons under the umbrella of religious zeal and Islamic epithets. From Asia Bibi to Mishal Khan and Tahir Ahmad Naseem to Mushtaq Ahmad mobs and individuals have ever been found involved in lynching.

Pakistanis need to realize religion is someone's personal matter. If a citizen blasphemes, it is the job of the state to arrest and run the trial according to the law, but no individual or mob should dare to take the matter in their hands. The extremist activities particularly in the name of blasphemy are defaming Pakistan through civilian and political unrest and uncertainty in the Country. This horrifying situation shivers a sense of insecurity through the 7% minorities' spines despite the fact that they are true Pakistanis and since 1947 not even single non-Muslim found involved in any anti-state or extremist activity in Pakistan. No doubt religious tolerance is the need of the time for the national integration and a prosperous Pakistan.

Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates meets PM Imran on first-ever visit to Pakistan

By: Naveed Siddiqui



Microsoft co-founder and billionaire philanthropist Bill Gates met Prime Minister Imran Khan on Thursday during his first-ever visit to Pakistan. Sharing pictures of the meeting on Twitter, Senator Faisal Javed Khan said Gates "greatly appreciated steps [regarding polio eradication] in Pakistan, the National Command and Operation Centre's (NCOC) performance in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic and initiatives such as the Ehsaas programme". Later in the day, PM Imran hosted a luncheon in Gates' honour. The Prime Minister's Office, which shared pictures from the luncheon, added that the Microsoft co-founder was visiting the country on the premier's "special invitation".

The prime minister said that it was a pleasure to welcome Gates to Pakistan. "Apart from his many achievements, he is admired globally for his philanthropy. On behalf of our nation, I thank him for his immense contribution towards polio eradication and poverty alleviation initiatives," he said.

NCOC visit

Earlier in the day, Gates met Planning and Development Minister and NCOC head Asad

Umar and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Health Dr Faisal Sultan. In a statement, the NCOC said the philanthropist attended the forum's morning session. During his visit, Gates was informed about the NCOC's role and methodology, its achievements since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the coronavirus situation in Pakistan as well as the non-pharmaceutical interventions by the forum to control the spread of the disease. Gates and his delegation were also informed about genome sequencing and coronavirus variants detected in Pakistan, the statement added. "Gates took keen interest on various initiatives by NCOC, particularly smart lockdown and micro-smart lockdown strategy enforcement measures and Pakistan's vaccine administration regime which enabled NCOC to formulate and implement a comprehensive Covid response." During his visit to the NCOC, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation chairman also shared his views on the pandemic, especially the vaccination drive. "Gates appreciated Pakistan's success against Covid-19 despite resource constraints and introducing excellent initiatives and measures for public health safety," according to the statement. For his part, Planning Minister Umar credited "a true national response, executed through an effective communication campaign mechanism of the NCOC" for the success in dealing with the coronavirus. The minister thanked Gates for his foundation's support to Pakistan during the Covid-19 pandemic.



This image show President Dr. Arif Alvi conferring the award on Bill Gates.

Gates awarded Hilal-i-Pakistan

In addition, President Dr Arif Alvi conferred the Hilal-i-Pakistan award on Gates during a special investiture ceremony in Islamabad in "recognition of his support for poverty alleviation and healthcare", according to Radio Pakistan. The report added that the ceremony was attended by federal ministers, senior officials and members of the Diplomatic Corps. The famous philanthropist has held conversations with Prime Minister Imran in the past on various issues and their possible solutions. In October last year, the premier urged Gates to consider providing humanitarian assistance to poverty-stricken people in Afghanistan. The two had also discussed the polio situation in Afghanistan and Pakistan with the premier appreciating the assistance provided by Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in that regard. In turn, the Microsoft co-founder had praised the prime minister for the progress in eliminating the disease and pledged his foundation's continued support to the country's polio programme. Prior to that, in April 2021, the two had discussed matters relating to the Covid-19 response, polio eradication and climate change, and agreed to continue working together on the shared objectives.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1675569/microsoft-co-founder-bill-gates-meets-pm-imran-on-first-ever-visit-to-pakistan>

US counts Pakistan among lowest Covid-risk countries

WASHINGTON: The main US health agency continues to place Pakistan among the countries where the chances of catching Covid-19 are low. In its latest update on the pandemic, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) placed Pakistan in level-1, which is its lowest category for getting infected by a disease. The agency places India in level-3, which includes countries where the chances of catching Covid-19 are high. Another South Asian country, Bangladesh, is in level-2 with a moderate risk of infection. Countries like China, Brazil, Anguilla, Kosovo, Mexico and a dozen others are in level-4 where the chances of infections are very high. So far, the pandemic has killed more than 5.74 million people across the globe. With 901,000 deaths in the last two years, the United States is among the worst affected. The CDC directive also includes key information for those Americans who want to travel to Pakistan despite the pandemic. It advises Americans to "make sure you are vaccinated and up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines" before traveling to Pakistan. "Even if you are up to date with your COVID-19 vaccines, you may still be at risk for getting and spreading COVID-19," it adds. "Anyone 2 years or older should properly wear a well-fitting mask in indoor public spaces." It also advises visitors to follow all requirements and recommendations issued by the local authorities. Pakistan is among the top recipients of Covid-19 vaccines from the United States. With the 4.7M Pfizer vaccines that arrived last weekend, the United States has shipped 47.3M vaccines to Pakistan so far. Another big donor of vaccines to Pakistan is China. Pakistan has already vaccinated more than 180 million people. As the Omicron variant spreads, health authorities across the world are urging people to get vaccinated.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1673873>

Whither Anglo-Saxon nonsense?

By: Jawed Naqvi



THERE was this gangly gentleman, the sweet Mr Saleh, Egyptian translator at the Gulf News in Dubai who incessantly amused the morning meetings headed by the editor, Aziz Siddiqui, the late Pakistani scribe of leftist politics with an impish sense of humour. Turning over the pages of Al Bayan, Ittehad, Al Khaleej etc. to scour for Arabic news that the English-speaking journalists from Britain, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and other places could find useful, Mr Saleh would almost without exception dismiss each page with a suspicious grunt: “Nonsense!” One can imagine a similar reaction from President Putin, were he to scan the English media every morning, as he did the other day but with an added description. Responding to the UK’s accusation that Russia was plotting to replace the regime in Ukraine with a Moscow-friendly government, Mr Putin flicked off the question dismissively: “The Anglo-Saxon nonsense!” You turn to the Chinese spokespersons and they would be scoffing at persistent Anglo-Saxon ‘plots’, one apparently current-

ly on to disrupt the Winter Olympics in Beijing. The city is now unique in hosting both the Winter and Summer Olympics. Four miffed countries are diplomatically boycotting the Beijing show although their players are participating. Again, the churlish quartet baiting China comprises Anglo-Saxon nations — Australia, Britain, Canada and the US. What is their grouse? Human rights! One would take them seriously had they not been inflicting humanitarian catastrophes around the world. To cite just one, helping the daily dastardly bombings of a proud Yemeni people, killing, maiming, starving them callously, these sticklers for human rights. There’s a tendency one has noticed about the cultures, which Russia and China see as essentially Anglo-Saxon in nature. They love to turn a perfectly normal secular challenge to their authority into a communal, religious one. Behind all the fluff about Houthi religiosity that their media proclaim to give the conflict a religious colour, there’s the cold fact that Aden was the capital of the only

Marxist government in the Arab world ever. That memory needs to be crushed.

The Anglo-Saxon powers turn a secular challenge to their authority into a communal, religious one.

Likewise, the Anglo-Saxons have led the complete destruction of a secular Iraq to produce



clerical rule there. They destroyed the syncretic PLO to give the Palestinian struggle for self-determination a religious hue under Hamas. Gone are the fighting Christian Palestinians like George Habash and their supporters of other faiths, including the better-informed Jewish intellectuals. They turned a secular Libya into a religiously fractured wreck. And they raised and armed religious fanatics in Syria and Afghanistan to dismantle secular adversaries. Closer home, the Anglo-Saxon rulers used religion to divide and rule India, a ploy they had used to produce unending bad blood in Ireland. Their victims are still suffering the consequences of the perfidy. Should their unwitting allies, say, Germany or France oppose their reckless quests, the Anglo-Saxon club could resort to cheap tricks, not least spying on them with sophisticated devices, as recently happened with Angela Merkel and Emmanuel Macron. So the Anglo-Saxons belong to themselves, almost like a secret society. In fact, that is what they set out to be: The Five Eyes, a club of post-war snoops, exchanging notes and sharing them with each other, exclusively. If a British citizen has to be snooped on, as they did with Charlie Chaplin in the US, they would get the other to do the job so as not to break their own rules, keeping up the pretence of human rights. Let's step back. It's 1980. Moscow was planning to host the Olympics when a call went out from Margaret Thatcher and Jimmy Carter to boycott the Games. The Soviets had raided Afghanistan. And the British? Had they just recaptured the Falklands from the English Channel? And what were the Americans doing in 1980, ahead of the Lake Placid Winter Olympics they hosted? They were weighing their chances between two 'defenders of human rights', the Shah of Iran and the Shia clerics. The clerics sided with Ronald Reagan to extract revenge on Carter for daring to mount the ill-fated Dasht-i-Lut rescue operation to free American hostages in

Tehran. What followed was the Iran-Contra arms deal with Reagan, the mascot of human rights defenders! It was Sept 6, 1993. I was travelling to Beijing from the airport with a Chinese minder as part of Narasimha Rao's media convoy. I asked my interlocutor whether the impressive display of flags and bunting was to welcome Rao. He said: "Sorry. This is for our Olympics campaign." The Chinese were preparing to host the 2000 Olympics in 1993. Everyone was certain they would get it. The Chinese signed a deal with Rao apart from a landmark agreement on peace and tranquillity along their borders. They bought a bunch of buffaloes from India. The idea was to start a dairy programme, hitherto alien to Chinese culture, to welcome milk-guzzling foreign athletes. How did Sydney suddenly get that Olympic, leaving the Chinese delegates to clap politely at the decision? The Manchester votes were transferred at the last minute, in the third round of voting, to boost fellow Anglo-Saxon Australia. The world of sports was stumped. Human rights was the fronted issue to deprive Beijing of its due claim. Did China then tweak its human rights policy to get the Olympics eventually, hosted so impressively too, to the chagrin of its detractors? There's no answer to these questions. Now, President Macron appears to have seen through the "Anglo-Saxon nonsense" as he openly believes that Russia has a legitimate security concern in the Ukraine stand-off, and that it could be resolved peacefully. In the meantime, the US embassy is pressing its staff to leave Beijing citing rigorous anti-Covid measures, something the Chinese see as an attempt to disrupt the Winter Games. Like Mr Saleh, they too would be wondering when, if ever, the nonsense will stop.

The writer is Dawn's correspondent in Delhi.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1673955/whither-anglo-saxon-nonsense>

Pakistani American Woman Named Chief Investment Officer of \$1.2 Trillion Fund

Pakistani-American Saira Malik has been named chief investment officer of Nuveen which manages US\$1.2 trillion in equities, fixed income, real estate, private markets, natural resources, other alternatives and responsible investments, according to US media reports. She will maintain her portfolio management and leadership responsibilities for Nuveen's US\$450 billion global equity business, and remain lead portfolio manager for the US\$132.95 billion CREF Stock strategy and a listed portfolio manager for the US\$37.84 billion CREF Growth and US\$27.21 billion CREF Global Equities strategies. Saira has held a variety of positions since joining Nuveen in 2003. Prior to being named CIO, she was head of global equities portfolio management, and before that, head of global equities research. Previously, Saira was with JP Morgan Asset Management, where her roles included vice president/small cap growth portfolio manager and equity research analyst. Saira Malik's parents migrated to the United States from Pakistan. She grew up in Stockton, California where she attended Lincoln High School. "My parents are Pakistani immigrants. As a high-school senior, I was advised by a career counselor to skip university and go to community college", she is quoted as saying on a Nuveen website. "I didn't listen and went off to university instead, earning my series 7 and 63 registrations (investment broker licenses) by age 19. After graduating, every Wall Street firm to which I applied rejected me. Then I earned a master's in finance and finally a large firm hired me. It's important to be persistent and it's fine to reject bad advice. My grandmother was among the first class of women admitted to medical school in India,



graduating with an M.D. in 1934. Her diploma hangs on a wall in my house. It wasn't written for a woman; it was written for a man. On it, administrators crossed out the preprinted

words 'him' and 'his' and replaced them with handwritten 'her' and 'hers.' To this day, that diploma inspires the women in my family." She has a bachelor's degree in Economics from California Polytechnic State University (CalPoly), San Luis Obispo, and a Master's degree in Finance from University of Wisconsin in Madison. Her interest in finance was sparked by her father's habit of watching financial news channels. Last year, Malik was named among Barron's "100 Most Influential Women in U.S. Finance". Barron's recognized Malik as follows: "She (Malik) and her team improved performance last year and continued "to drive more deeply" into environmental, social, and governance (ESG) investing, she says. As of February, according to the company, Morningstar ranked at least 77% of Nuveen's U.S. equity assets above their peer-group median over the trailing three- and five-year periods..... A mother of two young daughters, Malik co-heads two industry affinity organizations—LEAD (Leadership, Education, Advocacy, and Development), which seeks to promote gender diversity in the asset-management industry, and Achieve, a resources group for female professionals".
<https://www.southasiainvestor.com/2022/02/pakistani-american-woman-named-chief.html>

Should the PM have gone to Moscow?



By: Fahd Husain



IT was a tough choice. But Prime Minister Imran Khan made the right one by going to Russia. Here's why:

1- The visit to Moscow and meeting with President Vladimir Putin was finalised in January after many months of back and forth by the two governments. It is true that the Russia-Ukraine tension had begun to build up late last year, and it is also true that by January Western governments were warning that Russian invasion could happen any moment, but it is also true that diplomatic efforts were underway to find a solution. There was really no way for Pakistan, and for any other country for that matter, to know when Putin would pull the trigger. The only option for Pakistan was to call off the visit two days before the scheduled meeting when Putin had delivered his address to the nation. But was this really an option?

2- Not if one takes into account the years of efforts — nearly two decades long — that Pakistan has put into realigning its relationship with Russia. This strategic move started after 9/11 and was sustained through the eras of all the governments that came and went during this period. The visits of the then prime minister Nawaz Sharif (pre-9/11) and presi-

dent Asif Zardari were equally significant in the broader context of re-tooling this important relationship, especially given the cold ties during the Cold War times.

3- At the heart of this logic is that in the age of global realignments, Pakistan should get a firmer grip on regional dynamics. Russia and China both have huge footprints in our region of relevance that includes Afghanistan, Central Asia, Iran, the Gulf region and the larger Middle East. India of course is central to our policy. Its traditionally strong ties with Russia have in the past remained a stumbling block for Islamabad to break the ice with Moscow. But post 9/11 the situation has changed to an extent and Pakistan's attempts to build deeper engagement with Russia have paid dividends.

4- New Delhi is not amused. In his last visit to the region, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov had visited India and was scheduled to visit Pakistan after that. According to officials in Islamabad, the Indians tried their best to persuade Lavrov to not go to Pakistan because that would, in their logic, bring about some equivalence in ties as far as optics was concerned. Lavrov not only shrugged off these Indian urgings but made sure to spend enough days in Islamabad to signify that he was not just flying in and out. If Islamabad has been making an effort to build a healthy relationship with Moscow, it is being reciprocated.

If Islamabad has been making an effort to build a healthy relationship with Moscow, it is being reciprocated.

5- In Islamabad senior officials have been mapping the power dynamics in the region



and how they are affecting, and can affect in the coming years, Pakistan's vital interests. Beyond Afghanistan, India and the Middle East, there is discussion on how trade, connectivity and investments across the Eurasian continent can benefit Pakistan in the coming years. These officials say Pakistan needs to deeply integrate itself in this developing matrix. Russia is the biggest player in terms of energy, including LNG, and now owns 26 per cent stake in the Pak Stream project that involves building a gas pipeline from Karachi to Kasur (Pakistan owns the other 74pc equity). "We are trying to build our relationship with Russia based on regional realities and our own interests," says an official.

6- The two governments had been trying to get a meeting of their leaders since 2019 when they met in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The planned meeting in September 2020 at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation could not take place as the event got cancelled due to Covid-19. Another one scheduled in 2021 at the SCO summit in Dushanbe, Tajikistan also fell through as Putin cancelled his trip at the last minute because an official in his delegation contracted Covid-19. In January this year Khan called Putin to thank him for his statement on Islamophobia and in that conversation, according to sources in the PM House, it was agreed that they would meet in Beijing during the inauguration of the Winter Olympics. Russian senior officials shortly thereafter informed their Pakistani counterparts that they could invite PM Khan to Moscow in

February and asked Pakistan to propose dates. Feb 24 was finally agreed upon.

7- By early February, the Ukraine crisis had started to build up. Pakistan was watching the developments closely. However, diplomatic traffic in Moscow was plying fairly regularly. French President Emmanuel Macron flew into Moscow to meet Putin in an attempt to de-escalate the brewing crisis. But there were other leaders who came to Russia on pre-scheduled visits. These included leaders of Brazil, Argentina, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan.

8- Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said in his press conference on Friday that he had consulted various relevant people, including former foreign secretaries and ambassadors who had served in Moscow, and based on this discussion has concluded that the visit should indeed proceed as planned. While this may be true, it does not mean that Western governments will not express their displeasure through various means. The cost-benefit analysis for Pakistan is a tricky one. But cancelling out a scheduled visit on the last day to a country that Pakistan has been engaging with so consistently and with such deliberate focus could have adversely impacted years of hard work. It was a risk. But it was worth it.

9- The optics in the Western context were not good, that is obvious. However, Pakistan now needs to engage with Western governments with urgency and focus to explain its side of the story. Not an easy task this, but an essential one.

10. The Foreign Office has done well to pull off this important visit. PM Imran Khan's three-and-a-half-hour one-on-one meeting with Putin — including lunch — should lead to better prospects ahead for the two countries even though the Ukraine crises will keep the global pot boiling for some time.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1677137/should-the-pm-have-gone-to-moscow>

Musharraf's 29 properties detected, IHC told

The petitioner said that Musharraf himself had admitted in his book that he 'sold citizens' for dollars



ISLAMABAD: The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) informed the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday that the graft buster had detected 29 properties belonging to former president Pervez Musharraf and had sent letters to the relevant countries under the Mutual Legal Assistance (MLA).

IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah heard a contempt of court case against the NAB chairman for not conducting inquiry against Musharraf. In its report submitted in the IHC, NAB said that after receiving the MLA response from the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom, it would be decided whether or not to proceed against the former military ruler. NAB said that inquiry against Musharraf was approved on March 15, 2018. Letters pertaining to Musharraf's two properties abroad and two foreign accounts had been sent under the MLAs, NAB said, adding that reminder letters had also been sent but a reply was still awaited. NAB further said that a questionnaire was also sent to Pervez Musharraf. The graft buster further said that no progress was made in the investigation because MLA reply was not received. It

added that after receiving the replies it would be decided whether to take action or not. During the hearing, Chief Justice Athar Minallah remarked that this was a test case for NAB. He said that it was the responsibility of NAB to remove the impression of accountability of only elected representatives. The chief justice remarked that Pervez Musharraf not only belonged to the armed forces but also served as the chief executive and was a public office-holder. He also said that Musharraf was the leader of a political party and a politician. The petitioner's lawyer told the court that he had given evidence that Musharraf had \$20 million in his one account. If the MLA reply did not come for 40 years, would they remain silent, he asked. He added that Musharraf himself had admitted in his book that he "sold citizens" for dollars. The lawyer, Col (retd) Inam-ur-Rehman, stressed that a reference should be filed on the basis of available evidence and added that supplementary references could also be filed after the MLA reply arrived.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2343405/musharrafs-29-properties-detected-ihc-told>

March in March

By: Shozab Ali Halepoti, CELL, MUET, Jamshoro



The notion of freedom varies from woman to woman, that is why feminism has various categories: Radical feminism, Liberal feminism, Ecofeminism, etc. All these types denote something meaningful in their agendas. However, none of existing categories is congruent with issues of women living miserable life in suffocated society of Pakistan where: 349102 women are divorced (according to census of 2017), 46.49 percent women fall under the index of illiteracy, 11 rape cases being reported every day. What Pseudo-concept of feminism has caused women to do in extremist society of Pakistan is that: few women marching on streets and roads, on 8th March, for equality are tagged with absurd words and expletives such as (Fahaash, bad kirdaar etc.) mean, characterless, immodest. It shows the attitude of people (in Pakistan) towards the concept of feminism, that is “intransigent” till now. Why it is so can be elucidated by a few examples mentioned in this article. Another pertinent argument put forth by common masses is; Feminism is portrayed more by appearances than by actions in Pakistan. However, this evokes another esoteric, controversial, and never-ending debate over human rights and grave injustice. Historically, women have been put to merciless unfathomable grave injustices. Women were thought to be a sign of foolishness and fragility. However, today the statistics about women professionals working and contributing to growing world are significant to falsify traditional stereotypes regarding works and wisdom of women. The condition of women has been much improved except the ones living in rural and backward areas. The woman with educated social circle does not fear speaking for her rights. But the unfortunate ones with illiterate and narrow-minded social circle or those residing in slums still struggle for their human

rights. Their demands for freedom are considered a sin. Taking a bird's eye view, the condition of women, particularly women of Rural Sindh, is beyond ordeal. One cannot find words to define misery and wretchedness brought on them by multiple factors. A woman expressing “will” to marry the person of her choice is regarded as characterless. In addition, a girl seen with a lover is brutally killed by one of the family members for the sake of honor: honor killings. Mostly, every girl after divorce is looked down and the tag is attached to a woman: “Divorced” is a sign of spinsterhood. Despite advanced technologies, women can be observed reaping crops in harsh weather. On extremely low wages, feudalists get women for hectic work. This situation of women's hopelessness in Sindh fits what Simon De Beauvoir said ‘One is not born woman, but rather, becomes a woman.’ This fact gets further evident when the number of women in high designations is compared with the number of men. Therefore, the number of women working on equivalent designations as men are similar to those birds which disappear due to excessive hunting. This hunting is confining women to four walls and deliberately making them dependent on others, particularly men. In fact, feminism is alien to the majority (including men and women) living in villages and remote areas which constitutes 63 percent of country's entire population, according to the census of 2017. Because, the people, especially women, have not escaped the issues of basic needs and necessities for survival. Unfortunately, women in rural areas of Sindh are treated as “free domestic workers” or animals, who work from dawn to dusk. Their mind is not capable of thinking about freedom unless they are facilitated with basic human rights and considered humans even. Thus, lack of human security has been the greatest

reason behind sufferings that women (also men) face in Pakistan on all platforms. Freedom from patriarchy is second mission for women in Pakistan while freedom from poverty remains first. Subsequently, independence of women against all social evils is only possible through education, which these marches are not going to provide at all. Many suggest this way of promoting universal equality will further create abhorrence among people with conservative mindset. While some believe it to be the best feasible way to be noticed by world that women are not as fragile as always considered by people. Elite class women go for march in March whereas destitute and poverty-stricken women march every day for their rights. They march in front of parents, in front of husbands, and sometimes in front of the entire society. Many parents do not send their girls for higher education, not because they do not want their girls to get education but because of the challenges girls face in academic journey and chose unacceptable ways to deceive themselves and parents. And this behavior of elites in "Aurat March" with charged slogans like "Mera jism meri Marzi" do nothing but paints a negative picture of girls getting higher education. Overall, marching on roads by few elites will not bring any good to miserable condition of women while educating women can serve the purpose. The money squandered on banners should be invested in bringing genuine reforms in policies of educational institutes to give more opportunities to women in dealing with issues they face in their academic journey. Freedom from issues of basic needs will allow girls to think about their rights of equality. Feminism should be introduced as human fight instead of women fight. Although many challenges stand between universal equality, the untiring efforts of youth in securing women against issues of basic needs will bring a lot of changes that will change the condition of women, undoubtedly!

In a first, Hindu army officer promoted to rank of lieutenant colonel



This image shows newly promoted Lieutenant Colonel Kelash Kumar. — Photo courtesy: PTV

A Hindu officer of the Pakistan Army, Dr Kailash Kumar, has been promoted to the rank of lieutenant colonel, it emerged on Friday.

State broadcaster Pakistan Television announced the development, adding that Kumar was the first Hindu officer to be promoted to the rank.

Extending his congratulations, Information Minister Fawad Chaudhry called the newly promoted lieutenant colonel "our pride".

Minister of State for Climate Change Zartaj Gul Wazir termed it a proud moment for the country.

Writer Shama Junejo said "history has been made" and expressed the hope to see the officer promoted to the rank of general.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1677016>

History of Noorpur Thal

By: Raja Noor Ilahi Atif, Representative Sargodha - Lahore International London



To some of us Noorpur Thal is just an area of deserts . But if we take the trouble to explorer we will discover a hidden Noorpur Thal that is steep in history and has some amazing stories to tell. One such treasure is a "well " located near main bazar known as " well of Noor Hasan Ghazai" . Similarly , a mosque naming " Munshian waali Masjid ", according to history , Syed Noor Hasan Ghazi along with his companion Hazrat Sheikh Jeevan Rajput Naroo stopped here. They dug out a well here and also built the foresaid mosque. Both the friends settled near the well. Then the " basti" had no proper name. Before, partition there were many engraved with images of the deity. However, soon after partition the monuments (Hindu deities) were torn down , This "Basti " with the passage of time was named Noorpur Thal. Today" Masjid Munshian Waali "stands in the city. Over the years the area around the "well" developed into a commercial hub run by Hindu merchants, after partition these merchants fled to India while immigrants from over there camped , nearby this well and the shrine of Hazrat Baba Sakhi Syedan Shah. Today there is no sign, of the historical "well " that records the historical legacy of this site , although there is government primary school No 2 Noorpur , at the place of that historical well. The area around the well is now home of many herbal medicine outlets and other shopkeepers, as you move further towards Eastside you come to the shrine of Hazrat Baba Sakhi Syedan Shah , this shrine was built a long time ago. Noorpur was a small town in 1971. It was notified as tehsil headquarter in 1982. The tehsil had a total of 148551 acres of state land in 22 Dehs (villages) called Rakhs: approximately



129436 acres have either been allotted/reserved in permanent schemes while 2015 acres stand reserved for "Abadi Deh " and 19115 acres of land remains as balancec state land with the following break up balance state land in 22 Rakhs, total balance state land 21130 acres. Noorpur Thal has lost most of its indigenous flora , comprising of various trees , shrubs, scrubs and grasses , to extensive

gram cultivation.

life of the people living in Thal is very simple. They rarely eat vegetables, beef, mutton or pluses. They also eat wheat. The life as we known in the metropolitan cities cannot even be imagined by the village people. Noorpur Thal features an arid climate with very hot Summer and mild Winter. Gram and wheat are main crops grown in Thal. Moreover, bajra and lentils (masoor) , mash and mong ,are also grown in minor quantities . Agricultural land also provides a platform for the livelihood of inhabitants of Thal to grow for their livestock which consequently opens other trade options such as dairy products units, animal and poultry fodder , cattle/Sheep/goat fattening plants and meat. Although the literacy rate is very low still in Thal but it is increasing speedily. Noorpur Thal has also entertainment farms and resorts on the suburbs which serve as a relaxing escape from fatigued daily working life. There are lots of local events in Thal like spring festival, Urs of Hazrat Baba Sakhi Sayden Shah, Hazrat Mehmood Shaheed , horse and cattle shows etc add attraction to the citizen of Noorpur Thal. The prime attraction of Noorpur city are its mausoleums of Hazrat Baba Sakhi Sayden Shah and Hazrat Baba Roshan Shah. Other the most famous mausoleums in Thal are of Hazrat Sheikh Jeevan Rajput Naroo, Hazrat Mehmood Shahee, Hazrat Nikroo Shaheed , Hazrat Musa Shaheed and Hazrat Mian Manjha. According to history, there were many Hindu temples in Thal . There was a Datti Rani temple, which was located near main bazar Noorpur. The temple was a beacon of activity during the Hindu festivals of Ram , Dussehra, Janmastami and especially during Holi and Diwali . Noorpur is thick populated area in Thal and interestingly it is at the junction of Khushab, Mianwali, Jhang, Bhakhar and Sargodh.



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SARMAD KHAN | ACA, FCCA

OFFICE 115 LONDON ROAD, MORDEN, SURREY SM4 5HP - UK

CELL +44 (0)7903 416 966

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EMAIL INFO@SARMADGLOBAL.COM WEB WWW.SARMADGLOBAL.COM

University of California to Pay \$243 Million to Settle Sexual Abuse Claims

The settlement is the second in a case in which a gynecologist at U.C.L.A. is accused of sexual misconduct



By: Vimal Patel

The University of California has agreed to pay \$243 million to settle the claims of 203 women who alleged sexual misconduct by a gynecologist at the Los Angeles campus, the latest among several nine-figure payouts that universities have announced in recent years in response to sexual abuse allegations. The payout in the case of Dr. James Heaps, who was affiliated with the University of California, Los Angeles, in various roles from 1983 to 2018, comes on top of a \$73 million settlement made public in November 2020 to resolve a class-action suit that involved more than 5,000 people who had been patients of Dr. Heaps since the 1980s. About 600 women opted out of that class-action suit, and the new agreement, announced on Tuesday, settles the claims of 203 of them. The civil settlements are separate from the criminal case against Dr. Heaps, who faces 21 felony counts of sexual abuse during medical examinations, according to an indictment. The allegations against Dr. Heaps, which span two decades, include that he used a painful vaginal examination technique, inappropriately touched women during exams, unnecessarily touched a patient's genital piercing, groped patients' breasts during breast exams, and made inappropriate sexual comments to patients and employees, according to a May 2020 U.C.L.A. special committee report that reviewed accusations of sexual misconduct in clinical settings. Dr. Heaps, who was initially charged in June 2019, has pleaded not guilty to all charges. A lawyer for Dr. Heaps, Leonard B. Levine, said his client was not part of the civil settlement and does not approve of it. "He has adamantly denied engaging in any of the conduct he has been accused of," Mr.

Levine said. "He remains confident that if the charges are litigated in a court of law, he will be totally exonerated." Lawyers for the plaintiffs said in a statement that they hope Tuesday's settlement will "cause a reckoning" at the university and force leaders to place student welfare above the desire to protect the "Bruin brand," referring to the U.C.L.A. mascot. "The sheer size of this settlement evidences the enormous harm that the depraved actions of James Heaps, which was enabled by U.C.L.A., caused our clients," the statement said. "It also speaks to the culpability of U.C.L.A. in employing Heaps for 35 years and ignoring volumes of complaints and evidence of Heaps violating his role as a physician." At a news conference, one of the lawyers, John Manly, of the law firm Manly, Stewart & Finaldi, said he hoped the size of the settlement would send a message to U.C.L.A. and leaders of other academic institutions that looking away from sexual misconduct could be costly. "If you do this, if you



Dr. James Heaps arriving in court in 2019. He was affiliated with the University of California, Los Angeles, in various roles from 1983 to 2018, Credit...Damian Dovarganes/Associated Press

don't stop systemic criminal conduct," he said, "be it by a doctor, the president of the university or anybody else at your school, you will be held accountable." Standing by Mr. Manly on Tuesday was Kara Cagle, a woman who said she wrote a three-page letter to U.C.L.A. officials shortly after she was abused by Dr. Heaps during a medical examination. Ms. Cagle said she had been undergoing treatment for a rare form of breast cancer. The experience with Dr. Heaps, she said, left her "violated, embarrassed and humiliated." "U.C.L.A.'s response was dismal," Ms. Cagle said. "No interview. No validation. Today, after eight long years, I received recognition of what happened to me. Although there is some consolation in that, my heart breaks for all the women who were not spared, all the women who suffered after me because U.C.L.A. refused to act." In a statement, U.C.L.A. officials said they admired the courage of the plaintiffs in coming forward. They also said that University of California leadership has taken "substantial action" to address issues brought up in litigation, including stronger policies and procedures to prevent and respond to allegations of sexual misconduct by a clinician. "The conduct alleged to have been committed by Heaps is reprehensible and contrary to the university's values," the statement said. "Our first and highest obligation will always be to the communities we serve, and we hope this settlement is one step toward providing healing and closure for the plaintiffs involved." Mr. Levine, Dr. Heaps's lawyer, said he has filed a motion to dismiss the indictment because exculpatory evidence was not presented to the grand jury, including medical records and statements from chaperones who were present during the medical examinations. Mr. Levine said he was struck that the civil payout came before the criminal case was litigated. University officials have "made a decision that they're better off settling the case than proceeding," Mr. Levine

said. "Dr. Heaps is not going to settle a case when he believes he is innocent of the charges, and he has not admitted any wrongdoing in the civil cases either." In recent years, the #MeToo movement has shined a spotlight on sexual harassment and abuse throughout American society. Universities have faced their own reckoning, as widespread abuses of students have been revealed in other high-profile cases. The payouts have often been costly. In May 2018, Michigan State University agreed to a \$500 million settlement with 332 women and girls who said they were abused by Dr. Lawrence G. Nassar. The university's president described the settlement as a step "important for the healing process, not only for the survivors, but also for the university community." The University of Southern California in March announced that it would pay more than \$1.1 billion to the former patients of a campus gynecologist accused of preying sexually on hundreds of patients in what university officials called "the end of a painful and ugly chapter in the history of our university." The staggering sum — a combination of three sets of settlements with hundreds of alleged victims of the gynecologist, Dr. George Tyndall — set a record for collegiate sex abuse payouts, compensating a generation of young U.S.C. women. And last month, less than a week after its board ousted its president for a relationship with a subordinate, the University of Michigan announced it would pay \$490 million to more than a thousand people who had accused a doctor who worked with football players and other students of sexual abuse. The doctor, Robert E. Anderson, who died in 2008, was accused by scores of students of molesting them during physical examinations, many of which were required to participate in athletic programs at Michigan.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/08/us/-james-heaps-ucla-abuse-settlement.html>

I wear a hijab when I do porn like Mia Khalifa did - Taliban men send me death threats'

EXCLUSIVE: Porn star Yasmeena Ali wears the hijab in porn like Mia Khalifa and says Taliban fighters have sent her vile death threats because of her sex work - but she says she has nothing to fear

By: Liam McInerney

A woman known as 'Afghanistan's only porn star' says she wears a hijab during adult movies like Mia Khalifa did in the past - despite receiving death threats. Yasmeena Ali has been a porn star since 2016 after fleeing an arranged marriage. She moved to the UK aged nine after the Taliban gained control of Afghanistan in the 1990s. And despite ditching Islam to become an atheist as a teenager, Yasmeena now wears the hijab while filming explicit adult content. The 28-year-old told the Daily Star: "I'm completely ok with wearing it for porn. "It makes a statement and when you see a woman having sex in a hijab it breaks a taboo. "It is something you are not supposed to do and it creates a dialogue and I'm all for this. "You saw in the 80s and 90s when there was a lot of porn with nuns in it and it creates a conversation and that's what I'm doing." Yasmeena was brought up as a Muslim - but aged 19 her family asked her to enter into an arranged marriage. At the time she was studying biomedical science and instead of becoming a bride, she left home and Islam behind. She has not spoken to her family since and after turning to porn, where she does hijab fetishes, she received a backlash online. She said: "I get a lot of hate from Afghan men. A lot of people would be affected by it but I'm not. "The messages are like 'How dare you shame Islam and Afghanistan you wh**e' and 'I hope you die' and they say I'm selling my body like a dog. "They say the craziest stuff and there are so many messages I can't deal with them all. "Sometimes I just write back saying 'I love you too' and they hate that. I find it very entertaining. "They don't like it because they expect me to say I'm scared but I have nothing to be afraid of. "I've



always been a fighter and I don't take from bull**** from anyone." And one troll even subscribed to her \$9.99 per month OnlyFans page where her

bio reads: "I am an erotic nude BDSM model." She said: "He signed up to preach to me on OnlyFans saying what I am doing is not right and he hopes I don't take it the wrong way. "I am like why sign up to come and preach, maybe go pray instead. He enjoyed the content and he is a hypocrite. It is bizarre and I feel sorry for them." Yasmeena has experienced what the Taliban rulers are like first hand after they embarked on victory laps in Kabul when she was a child. And she remembered seeing violence on the streets. She told the I Hate Porn podcast last month: "I saw people being beaten up for not being religious and not dressing appropriately in religious attire. "I'm not just talking about violence against women, it was violence against young men for not having a beard like you are meant to in Islam." And Yasmeena also explained how her first orgasm triggered her sexual awakening - leading to a career in porn. And the sex activist said she is proud of how far she's come from the frightened little girl who was forbidden from an education in Afghanistan.

https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/i-wear-hijab-porn-like-26116391?utm_source=daily_star_newsletter&utm_campaign=breaking_daily_newsletter2&utm_medium=email

Murad Ali Shah

By: Badaruddin Kalhoro, Bureau Chief Lahore International London



Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah inaugurated the tree planting campaign. The forest department will plant trees across Sindh during the tree planting campaign Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah starts talking to media 52 million trees to be planted across Sindh: CM Sindh

Twenty five types of trees will be planted including Shisham Neem, Sindh Chief Minister said

When it comes to politics, there is criticism, Chief Minister Sindh

The cabinet approved the consultation with the political parties

We will request the Speaker to form a Select Committee of the Assembly on Local Government Amendments, Chief Minister Sindh

The decision of the majority of the assembly will be the same, Chief Minister Sindh

It is a matter of concern that street crime will increase, Chief Minister Sindh said

An emergency meeting on law and order situation was called today

Police officials will brief the Sindh cabinet on the law and order situation

The situation is also deteriorating due to economic conditions, Sindh Chief Minister said Establishing law and order is the responsibility of the government, Chief Minister Sindh said

The Apex Committee was formed for the National Action Plan, Chief Minister Sindh Provinces have been excluded on National Action Plan, Sindh Chief Minister said I have a passion for hard work, Chief Minister Sindh

Our long march has already been announced, Chief minister Sindh

We will tell the problems of the people through this long march, Chief Minister Sindh There will be no consensus on Kalabagh Dam: Sindh Chief Minister

I am waiting for the reply of the Federal Minister of Finance, Chief Minister Sindh

The storm of inflation in the country is unemployment, Chief Minister Sindh

Bilawal Bhutto is leaving the country, Chief Minister Sindh

We do not want power, Chief Minister Sindh Imran Khan will have to step down: Sindh Chief Minister

Problems will not be solved with Imran Khan Niazi: Sindh Chief Minister

Some progress has been made in Athar Matin case: Sindh Chief Minister

Sindh government is not helpless: Chief Minister Sindh

Government and police are not innocent: Sindh Chief Minister

The solution to the problems is beyond the reach of Imran Khan, Chief Minister Sindh

We went to the people on the basis of our performance, Chief Minister Sindh We will get more than 218 votes and seats, Chief Minister Sindh

Our performance is better than Punjab Federation, Chief Minister Sindh An MNM

fugitive in Nazim Jokhio case is not in the country, Chief Minister Sindh A woman was killed in Qambar Shahdadt incident, Sindh

Chief Minister said Six people were killed in Nawabshah, Sindh Chief Minister said A policeman was killed, Sindh Chief Minister said The name of the person who was not present at the incident was asked to be given in the FIR, Sindh Chief Minister said An FIR was registered against Zardari, Sindh Chief Minister said Sindh government looks after justice: Chief Minister Sindh If there is a crime, the government will take action, Chief Minister Sindh said Punishment for violating constitution is Article 6: Sindh Chief Minister The federal government is behind the netric lamp, Sindh Chief Minister said. Karachi (February 22nd, 2022): PPP Parliamentary Party meeting is in progress at Banquet Hall of the CM House. Inset shows Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah and party president Nisar Khuhro jointly preside over the meeting. Minister Local Government Nasir Shah and MPA Sharjeel Memon are sitting beside them. Karachi (February 22nd, 2022): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah speaks at a ceremony organized to sign concession agreement between the Sindh government and a private partner for development Special Economic Zone, Dhabeji. Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah along with Minister Energy Imtiaz Shaikh, Advisor Law Murtaza Wahab, Special Assistant to CM Syed Qasim Naveed and Chairman SEZMC Mohammad Waseem witnesses signing of concession Agreement between Sindh government and ZKEB for development of Dhabeji Special Economic Zone here at CM House. Azeem Uqaili CEO SEZMC and CEOs of ZKB Wasim Asghar and Mohabat Khan sign the agreement. Karachi (February 22nd, 2022): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah along with Minister Information Saeed Ghani, Advisor law Murtaza Whahab offers condolence over the death of senior journalist Athar Mateen with his brother at their residence. Adl IG Karachi Ghulam Nabi Memon is also present on the occasion.

“Revitalizing Higher Education Institutions in Afghanistan and the Role of Pakistan”

**Press Release: Bureau Chief Sindh
Badaruddin Kalhoru Lahore
International London**



An ‘Expert Colloquium’ titled, “Revitalizing Higher Education Commissions in Afghanistan and the Part of Pakistan” was organized by the Middle for Worldwide Peace and Steadiness (CIPS), National College of Sciences and Innovation (NUST), on 19th January 2022. The foremost point of the session was to get it the part of higher instruction in post-conflict or transitional social orders towards guaranteeing a strong peace, given its affect on financial recovey/development and societal cohesion. Topics beneath dialog tended to the collective duty of Pakistan and the worldwide community towards supporting the higher instruction division in Afghanistan, where the current reaction to the Afghan emergency centers only on security and/or short-term helpThe session was graced with the presence of discussants, Ambassador Syed Abrar Hussain (Retd, PFS; Vice-Chairman, Institute for Policy Studies); Dr. Saima Hamid (Vice-Chancellor, Fatima Jinnah Women University); Dr. Masoom Yasinzai (Rector, International Islamic University Islamabad); Dr. Zahid Majeed (Director, International Collaboration and Exchange Office, Allama Iqbal Open University) and Ms. Scarlet, Director of the Chinese Studies Centre, National University of Sciences and Technology, among others.

Putin's Moves Toward War in Ukraine Show How Dangerous He Has Become

By: Simon Shuster



common claim among experts in Russian politics is that the Kremlin “has many towers.” It is meant to suggest a kind of pluralism in the chambers of power in Moscow, with rival camps of liberals and hawks, oligarchs and generals, pulling the President toward fringe positions, which his decisions balance out. As he marches ever closer toward a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Vladimir Putin has shattered that view of the Kremlin. He showed that he has no real advisers left—only sycophants—and that his own views are as extreme as any of theirs. The proof was repeatedly on display Monday, starting with a televised session of Russia’s Security Council. Each of its members—including both the supposed doves and the hardliners in Putin’s court—stood to address the President on the question of the day: Should Russia recognize the independence of two breakaway regions of eastern Ukraine?

Their assent was unanimous. No one raised any concerns over this blatant violation of Ukrainian sovereignty and international law, and no one questioned the danger for Russia if it took this step toward war. Even one of

Putin’s most hawkish advisers, the spy chief Sergei Naryshkin, came off like a nervous pupil mumbling at the chalkboard. “Speak plainly!” Putin scolded him. The spectacle made clear that no one speaks plainly to the Russian leader anymore. Fifteen years ago, at the start of my career as a journalist in Moscow, the nation’s politics still teemed with complexity. It was not hard to find sources among the rival officials, lobbyists and power brokers who met on a regular basis with Putin. They could discern his intentions and, on occasion, influence them. But that system has now shrunk into the space between Putin’s ears, a space inscrutable and often terrifying even for the people closest to him. As one longtime Kremlin insider describes Putin’s thinking in the recent TIME cover story about the crisis in Ukraine, “The world inside his head is only his own.” And that makes Putin far more dangerous for the world the rest of us inhabit. Shortly after his meeting with the Security Council, Putin gave a speech that laid out the rationale for an invasion of Ukraine. The Russian President claimed that Ukraine’s very existence was a

historical mistake; that it was only a matter of time before it would build nukes to threaten Russia; and that its allies in the West have been wielding Ukraine against Russia like a “knife to the throat.” Such claims, as well as the seething tone with which Putin delivered them, have come in the past from the most infamous paranoiac in his retinue, the security chief Nikolai Patrushev. Putin’s speech showed there is no longer any daylight between his own views and those of the KGB’s reactionary stalwarts. At the same time, the latest Russian move toward war also seemed in keeping with another familiar side of Putin’s character—the legalistic one. Trained as a lawyer and reared within the Soviet bureaucracy, the President has long exhibited two contradictory impulses: a blatant willingness to violate the rules, and a pedantic wish to do things by the book. Both were on display this week. Rather than simply ordering his forces into Kyiv—as the U.S. had warned he would do—Putin followed an arcane set of protocols that might have well have been titled, *How to invade your neighbor and make it look legal*. He began on Monday night by recognizing the two separatist regions of eastern Ukraine, known as the People’s Republics of Donetsk and Luhansk. This step had the feel of a formality. The Russian military carved off those regions of Ukraine in 2014, during its last invasion of the country. Since then, Donetsk and Luhansk have been home to puppet governments installed, armed, funded and operated by the Russian security services. Russia has even given out more than 700,000 Russian passports to the Ukrainian citizens who live in these regions. By recognizing them as independent, Putin gave Russia’s control over these regions a more official gloss, and shut down the peace process that has long sought to integrate them back into Ukraine.

In a day of Russian threats and escalations, one of the most alarming appeared in the fine

print of the documents defining Russia’s ties to these regions. Published Monday on the website of the Russian parliament, these “agreements of friendship, cooperation and mutual assistance” came with a hair-trigger clause. In their third and fourth articles, they stated that Russia would treat the security of both regions and their borders as its own, and use “every means” at Russia’s disposal to defend them. Any violation of those borders, whether real or staged, could thus provide a formal excuse for Putin to attack the rest of Ukraine. The wording of these documents omitted one crucial detail: what borders did Putin have in mind? Since Russia first tore these regions away from Ukraine in 2014, their borders have fluctuated along the front-line—a no man’s land of trenches, mines and booby traps that cuts through eastern Ukraine. The separatist leaders of these regions have claimed that their true territories are far bigger, encompassing much more of Ukraine than they actually control.

As of Tuesday afternoon in Moscow, it was still far from clear where exactly Putin wants to draw those borders. Even his closest confidantes don’t seem to know. As reporters posed this question again and again, the Kremlin replied with a series of contradictions. Putin’s spokesman said he could not provide the answer. His diplomats seemed to draw the borders in one place and his lawmakers in another. The ambiguity may have been intentional. It keeps Ukraine and its allies guessing as to Putin’s real intentions. But there is another explanation for why the answers offered by the President’s own entourage range so widely: none of them know what Putin is thinking. And even if a few of his advisers still understand the world inside Putin’s head, they no longer have the power to shape it.

<https://time.com/6150002/russia-ukraine-vladimir-putin-war/>

Retired Pope Asks Forgiveness Over Handling of Abuse Cases

But Benedict, responding to a report that accused him of mishandling at least four cases of sexual abuse by priests when he was an archbishop in Germany, denied any wrongdoing.

By: Gaia Pianigiani and Elisabetta Povoledo



Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI at the Vatican in 2015. Credit...Gregorio Borgia/Associated Press

ROME — Responding to a report that he mishandled four cases involving the sexual abuse of minors while he was an archbishop in Germany decades ago, retired Pope Benedict XVI acknowledged on Tuesday that “abuses and errors” had taken place under his watch and asked for forgiveness, although he denied any misconduct. “I have had great responsibilities in the Catholic Church,” Benedict said in a written response to the findings in the report commissioned by the Roman Catholic Church in Munich. “All the greater is my pain for the abuses and the errors that occurred in those different places during the time of my mandate,” he said in the response made public by the Vatican. “Each individual case of sexual abuse is appalling and irreparable.” The report, and the accusations by investigators that Benedict had misled them, sent shocks through a Roman Catholic Church that has for a quarter century been devastated by

revelations of sexual abuse of minors by clergy. The allegations related to Benedict’s time in Munich reached the very top of the church hierarchy, and they came not long after a separate report commissioned by the Vatican itself cast a shadow over Benedict’s predecessor, John Paul II, for failing to root out abusers in his church. Benedict, whose backers point out that as pope he did much to throw abusers out of the church, has sought to put himself in a better light. But critics have found his answers more legalistic than pastoral and short of what many victims of abuse and their advocates long to hear from the former head of the church. “He is repeating words of apology that have fallen on deaf ears for decades,” said Mike McDonnell, communications manager with Survivors Network of Those Abused by Priests, a global association known as SNAP. “True apologies are followed by true amends, and that is a concept

that the church doesn't seem able to grasp," he said, adding that the letter issued Tuesday followed a pattern of abuse, institutional acknowledgment and lack of action that victims have long complained about. On Tuesday, Benedict recalled again that he had met with dozens of abuse victims during his eight-year papacy and over many apostolic trips. He had, he said, "seen at first hand the effects of a most grievous fault." Benedict, 94, also expressed indignation that the Munich law firm that conducted the investigation had accused him of being less than honest in his initial answers, which he had provided in 82 written pages. The lawyers presented evidence in a news conference that the pontiff had participated in a meeting about the transfer of an abusive priest to his diocese for therapy, though he had claimed not to have attended. The discrepancy, Benedict insisted in the new response, was an honest mistake introduced when his answer was being edited. "To me it proved deeply hurtful that this oversight was used to cast doubt on my truthfulness, and even to label me a liar," Benedict said. That defensive tone also ran through an analysis accompanying the letter by four legal experts who had assisted the retired pope. They wrote that the report "contains no evidence for an allegation of misconduct or conspiracy in any cover-up" on the part of Benedict. Anne Barrett Doyle, co-director of BishopAccountability.org, an advocacy group for victims, said Benedict's response — which she described as "boilerplate" — was a "deep disappointment and missed opportunity." Instead, Benedict "conceded nothing," Ms. Doyle said in a statement, and did not take meaningful responsibility for the abuse and a cover-up. "The church is poorer for it," she added. The report was commissioned by the German archdiocese that investigated how the church had handled cases of sexual abuse between 1945 and 2019. Benedict, at the time Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, was archbishop of

Munich and Freising from 1977 to 1982. The report said at least 497 victims of abuse had been identified over the 74-year period it examined, and found that Benedict had mishandled four cases during his nearly five years as archbishop. Benedict's legal experts said in their analysis that the investigators had not shown that Benedict knew of the criminal history of any of the four priests in question. The investigators had previously expressed doubt about that assertion. Days after the report was issued, Archbishop Georg Gänswein, Benedict's personal secretary, admitted Benedict was at the meeting about moving the abusive priest. But Benedict has maintained he did not know why the priest was being transferred to his diocese, only that he needed therapy. It is still unclear whether the German report will have a significant impact on Benedict's legacy as pope. Last week, the Vatican issued a strong defense of Benedict, recalling that as pontiff he "promulgated very harsh norms against clerical abusers, special laws to combat pedophilia," and that he was the first pope to meet with and ask forgiveness of the victims of abuse. Some experts say that Benedict was already a polarizing figure and that both supporters and critics were unlikely to be swayed by the accusations of neglect. "Benedict has always been a lightning rod, and I am not sure this chapter will change much," said John L. Allen Jr., a Benedict biographer and editor of the Catholic website Crux. "Benedict's legacy is in the eye of his beholder," he added, "and those who are inclined to admire him will give him the benefit of the doubt," while those "inclined to be skeptical of Benedict" will find confirmation of their beliefs.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/02/08/world/europe/pope-benedict-abuse-germany.html>

Should Scotland Have Women-only Rail Carriages?

If you were a lone female travelling home at night, would you feel safer in a women-only train carriage? That's one of the ideas being suggested by campaigners to improve women's safety on public transport. Scotland's new transport minister Jenny Gilruth started the debate on safety last week when she gave a statement on the future of Scotland's railways after they become nationalised in April. In her statement at Holyrood, Ms Gilruth said she had personal experience of feeling unsafe on trains. The former teacher spoke about avoiding having to get on the last train back to Fife "because it's full of drunk men" who would "squeeze in beside you despite the fact that you're surrounded by empty seats". She said: "I want our railways to be safe places for women to travel. We need to identify as a government where it is that women feel unsafe on our public transport systems, and then identify how we're going to fix it." She will consult women and women's organisations across the country. Since the announcement, the controversial issue of women-only carriages has been mooted across the media as one potential solution. We took a look at what this could mean and how it might work.



Youtuber Luna Martin backs the idea of a female-only carriage as an option

Do we need women-only spaces?

Youtuber Luna Martin wants to feel safer on public transport. Speaking on BBC Radio Scotland's Mornings with Kaye Adams, she said that carriages for women could provide an option for women. She said: "I live in a rural area and there are only a few trains to where I live. A few times there have been very rowdy football fans that do make passing comments. "I have always got my phone in my hand ready to dial somebody, I've got my keys in the other hand - I think this is something many women in this situation are trained to do now. I think we have been taught to tolerate behaviour like this from a young age."

Why now?

From 1 April, ScotRail comes into public ownership. It will be under the control of a public sector body, managed by the Scottish government. Ms Gilruth wants ministers to use their control of the network to improve women's safety. She said there was a "system-



ic problem" of women feeling too scared to travel on public transport "because of men's behaviour". The Fife MSP will consult with women's groups about how to make train travel "safer and more enjoyable".

What do women think?

Women's rights activist Kelly Given, from the Young Women's Movement Scotland, said: "I know all too well the feeling of going home on a train at night, clenching your jaw and sitting tense and dreading getting on the train in the first place - it absolutely needs to be addressed." She said she is at a point where she "almost expects" to be harassed on a train and will not travel by rail at night. She added: "I agree with women-only carriages. Even if it helps a handful of women to feel safer on a train then I think it's worth it."

Does it make trains safer?

This is hard to judge. Women-only carriages have been trialled in several countries, including Mexico, Japan and India and it is difficult to tell if they make women's lives safer. While segregation can be in place for cultural reasons, most of the countries with female-only carriages have introduced them because sexual harassment was an issue in the first place. A 2014 Reuters poll questioned 6,300 women around the world and found 70% said they would certainly feel safer travelling in a separate carriage.

Who opposes it?

Some academics believe the move would be a step backwards and instead of addressing the behaviours that cause issues for women on public transport, they think it would "normalise" assaults on women. They say segregation puts the responsibility onto women to avoid harassment rather than making the perpetrators change their behaviour. An FIA Foundation report in 2016 concluded that gender separation "does not address the underlying issue that this is unacceptable

behaviour" and is "confirming that women should not be allowed to travel freely and need special attention".

How would it work?

Not well, according to the rail workers' union the RMT. Scotland organiser Mick Hogg said he would welcome more protection and more measures to keep women, and everyone else, safe on Scotland's trains. But he said the idea of women-only trains would be a "logistical nightmare". He told BBC Scotland: "The only way that would work would be if there was more train crew personnel and more of a presence of British Transport Police (BTP) on the trains. "As it stands now, it would not work. You have at best a driver and a guard on an average service, with six to eight carriages to look after. But 57% of Scotland's trains are driver-only trains." Mr Hogg agreed that anti-social behaviour on trains was "out of control".

When might women-only carriages become reality?

The idea is just that for the moment, but a consultation is expected to be launched. A Transport Scotland spokesman said: "While it is too early to comment on any specific measures in what we expect will be a wide-ranging national conversation, we will look at other examples of best practice and take a variety of views on such initiatives into consideration." In the meantime, British Transport Police (BTP) said it was committed to making sure victims and survivors of sexual harassment receive a consistent and supportive service regardless of where they are or when they report what has happened to them. The force said complaints would always be taken seriously.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-60350664>

Prince Andrew's money rows - £12m to sex accuser, Eugenie funding fallout and Charles intervention

There are growing calls for clarity on exactly how Prince Andrew will fund the rumoured £12million to settle his sex abuse case - in which he denies all the allegations against him - and it's not the first time he or his family have been involved in rows when it comes to funding



Prince Andrew, who has settled his civil sex case(DPA/PA Images)

After settling with his accuser in his civil sex case, questions are being asked about how Prince Andrew will fund the rumoured £12-million cost. It has been reported he receives around £249,000 from his mother the Queen as well as £20,000 annually from his naval pension. This has led to a Labour MP to lead calls saying wants assurances in Parliament that public money will not be used to pay for the Duke of York's settlement with Virginia Giuffre. Meanwhile, the scandal, which has left Andrew's reputation in tatters, risks further damaging the monarchy if the perception remains that he has escaped any financial obligations, lawyer Mark Stephens has said. Mr Stephens, an international reputation lawyer from the firm Howard Kennedy, said the duke will have to give details of where the settlement money is from or risk more "reputational damage" to the monarchy. Andrew denies all the charges against him. However, it's not the first time that there has been a row over public cash when it comes to Andrew

By: Jennifer Newton

and his family. In 2011, there was a row over taxpayer-funded police protection for his daughters Princess Beatrice and Princess Eugenie, which is said to have left Andrew furious. One royal expert said Prince Charles was even forced to intervene in the debate about funding for Beatrice and Eugenie's security after it caused a row behind palace walls. It is thought the heir to the throne stepped in after the younger of his nieces racked up huge security costs as she travelled the world on her gap year. A report published at the time suggested Eugenie spent more than £100,000 of taxpayers' money as she explored India, America, Thailand and South Africa. She paid for hotels and travel herself, but the massive security bill, including overtime money, was funded by the taxpayer. Speaking on Channel 5 documentary *Beatrice and Eugenie: Pampered Princesses?*, royal expert Richard Kay said: "She was sort of flitting from country to country as most middle-class young people do who take gap years. "But, of course, she was accompanied by police bodyguards. "That meant that we the taxpayers were paying for policemen to accompany her to the fleshpots of the world." Charles reportedly stepped in to control the spending, with royal author Angela Levin telling the programme he suggested Eugenie and Beatrice didn't need costly security as it's unlikely they will ever become working royals. But Charles's suggestion didn't go down well and is said to have left Andrew angry. Ms Levin added: "Prince Charles



Prince Andrew with his daughters Princess Beatrice and Princess Eugenie (Getty Images)

decided that as they were not likely to be very senior royals, that this was too much for the public to pay, so he stopped that. "Prince Andrew was so angry that he wrote a note to the Queen. "He said he wanted them to be considered as proper royals. He did not want the protection officers to leave them."

Meanwhile, seven years later in 2018, a row was also sparked about the cost to the taxpayer of Eugenie's wedding to Jack Brooksbank. Eugenie, who carries out no royal duties, chose to marry at St George's Chapel in Windsor Castle where Prince Harry wed Meghan Markle just months before. Dad Prince Andrew was said to have demanded a similarly glitzy event for his younger daughter with Sarah Ferguson. A royal source said at the time: "The Duke of York has insisted his daughter's wedding must be a huge occasion to be remembered and wants everyone to get on board to celebrate the happy couple." However, it was reported the taxpayers would have to pick up a bill of £2million for policing and security. It was also later reported that an extra £250,000 had to be added to the bill for the clean-up operation.

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/prince-andrews-money-rows-12m-26261315.amp>

Pakistan, Belgium agree to further optimize military-to-military ties



Pakistan and Belgium have agreed to further optimize military-to-military ties particularly in defence production, training, counter-terrorism and intelligence domains. According to the ISPR, an agreement to this effect came during a meeting between Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa and Belgium Minister of Defence Ludivine Dedonder, Chief of Defence Admiral Michel Hofman, and Chief of Staff of the Land Component Major General Pierre Gerard in Belgium. The Army Chief expressed that Pakistan values its bilateral relations with Belgium in all domains. During the meetings, bilateral matters pertaining of mutual interest and overall regional security situation came under discussed. In their remarks, Belgian dignitaries appreciated professionalism of Pakistan's armed forces and Islamabad's sincere efforts for regional peace and stability. They also reiterated earnest desire for enhancing bilateral cooperation with Pakistan in all domains.

<https://nation.com.pk/amp/2022/02/18/pakistan-belgium-agree-to-further-optimize-military-to-military-ties/>



Biden frees frozen Afghan billions for relief, 9/11 victims

By: Aamer Madhani and Kathy Gannon



President Joe Biden walks on the South Lawn of the White House after stepping off Marine One, Thursday, Feb. 10, 2022, in Washington. Biden is returning from Culpeper, Va., where he promoted his administration's efforts to lower health care costs. (AP Photo/Patrick Semansky)

WASHINGTON — President Joe Biden signed an order Friday to free \$7 billion in Afghan assets now frozen in the U.S., splitting the money between humanitarian aid for poverty-stricken Afghanistan and a fund for Sept. 11 victims still seeking relief for the terror attacks that killed thousands and shocked the world. No money would immediately be released. But Biden's order calls for banks to provide \$3.5 billion of the frozen amount to a trust fund for distribution through humanitarian groups for Afghan relief and basic needs. The other \$3.5 billion would stay in the U.S. to finance payments from lawsuits by U.S. victims of terrorism that are still working their way through the courts. International funding to Afghanistan was suspended and billions of dollars of the country's assets abroad, mostly in the United States, were frozen after the Taliban took control of the country in August as the U.S. military withdrew. The White House said in a statement

that the order "is designed to provide a path for the funds to reach the people of Afghanistan, while keeping them out of the hands of the Taliban and malicious actors." Biden's plan aims to resolve a complex situation in which the U.S. is sitting on billions owned by a country where there is no government it recognizes, with competing appeals for the money for the crying needs of the Afghan people and families still scarred by the 2001 attacks. Brett Eagleson, whose father, Bruce, died in the attack on the World Trade Center, said that though victims' families support the distribution of a large portion of the funds to the Afghan people, the remaining funds should be distributed fairly among the families. "Anything short of equitable treatment for and among the 9/11 families as it relates to these frozen assets is outrageous and will be seen as a betrayal" by the government, Eagleson said in a statement. The Justice Department had signaled months ago that the admin-

istration was poised to intervene in a federal lawsuit filed by 9/11 victims and families in New York City. The deadline for that filing had been pushed back until Friday. The families in that case won a U.S. court judgment in 2012 against the Taliban and some other entities. But other victims' relatives also have ongoing lawsuits over the attacks, and a New York-based lawyer for about 500 families urged Friday that all be on equal footing for the fund. "It's going to take a lot of funds to provide monetary compensation, but we'll never make these people whole. Never," said attorney Jerry S. Goldman. Afghanistan's long-troubled economy has been in a tailspin since the Taliban takeover. Nearly 80% of the previous government's budget came from the international community. That money, now cut off, financed hospitals, schools, factories and government ministries. Desperation for such basic necessities has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic as well as health care shortages, drought and malnutrition. Aid groups have warned of a looming humanitarian catastrophe. State employees, from doctors to teachers and administrative civil servants, haven't been paid in months. Banks have restricted how much money account holders can withdraw. U.S. courts where 9/11 victims have filed claims against the Taliban will have to take additional action for victims and families to be compensated from the \$3.5 billion, deciding if they have a claim, according to senior administration officials who brief reporters. The Biden administration is still working through details of setting up the trust fund, an effort the White House says will likely take months. Because victims have ongoing legal claims on the \$7 billion in the U.S. banking system, the courts would have to sign off before half the money for humanitarian assistance could be released to Afghanistan, the officials said. The U.S. launched the war in Afghanistan more than 20 years ago after then-Taliban leader Mullah Omar refused to hand over al-Qaida leader

Osama bin Laden following the 9/11 attacks on the United States. Bin Laden, who was born in Saudi Arabia but had his citizenship revoked, relocated to Afghanistan after being expelled from Sudan in 1996. Taliban political spokesman Mohammad Naeem criticized the Biden administration for not releasing all the funds to Afghanistan. "Stealing the blocked funds of Afghan nation by the United States of America and its seizure (of those funds) shows the lowest level of humanity . . . of a country and a nation," Naeem tweeted on Friday. The Taliban have called on the international community to release funds and help stave off a humanitarian disaster. The Biden administration pushed back against criticism that all \$7 billion — largely derived from donations by the U.S. and other nations to Afghanistan — should be released to Afghanistan, arguing that the 9/11 claimants under the U.S. legal system have a right to their day in court. Afghanistan has more than \$9 billion in reserves, including just over \$7 billion in reserves held in the United States. The rest is largely in Germany, the United Arab Emirates and Switzerland. As of January the Taliban had managed to pay salaries of their ministries but were struggling to keep employees at work. They have promised to open schools for girls after the Afghan new year at the end of March, but humanitarian organizations say money is needed to pay teachers. Universities for women have reopened in several provinces with the Taliban saying the staggered opening will be completed by the end of February when all universities for women and men will open, a major concession to international demands. In recent months, Afghans have been able to withdraw only \$200 weekly and that only in Afghani, not in U.S. currency. Afghanistan's economy has teetered on the verge of collapse. The United Nations last month issued an appeal for nearly \$5 billion, its largest ever appeal for one country, estimating that nearly 90% of the country's 38 million people were surviving below the

poverty level of \$1.90 a day. The U.N. also warned that upward of 1 million children risked starvation.

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said Friday night that it is “encouraged” by Biden’s executive order.

“It’s also important to reiterate that humanitarian assistance alone will be insufficient to meet the tremendous needs of Afghan women and men and children over the long term, and it is critical that the Afghan economy is able to restart in order for these needs of the Afghan people to be met with a sustainable and meaningful manner,” Dujarric said.

David Miliband, head of the International Rescue Committee, on Wednesday urged release of the funds to prevent famine.

“The humanitarian community did not choose the government, but that is no excuse to punish the people, and there is a middle course — to help the Afghan people without embracing the new government,” Miliband said at a Senate Judiciary subcommittee hearing on the matter.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/biden-to-split-frozen-afghan-funds-for-911-victims-relief/2022/02/11/081d183a-8b32-11ec-838f-0cfdf69cce3c_story.html

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Big Tech's Information Monopoly and Threats to Democracy.



By: Muhammad Suleman Meerani



Introduction

The Big Tech or popularly known as “Big Four” including Amazon, Apple, Facebook and Google have revolutionized the economy and affected the daily lives of billions of people worldwide over the past decade. Amazon is the major online market place, retailer, logistics network, television and film producer, cloud-storage host, and also the owner of Washington Post media network. Apple has popularized the Smartphone and made the devices widely ubiquitous that consumers have grown accustomed to carrying a sort of supercomputer. Facebook possesses 2.4 billion people monthly active users around the world. More people use Facebook daily than follow any single world religion. Furthermore, Google operates the search engine that helps to conduct over 3.5 billion searches a day. It runs the biggest video platform online “YouTube”, the largest seller of online advertising and also licenses the world's most popular mobile Android operating system. The Big Four generates revenue collectively larger than the annual gross domestic product (GDP) of most national economies.

Scrutiny of Big Tech

Big Tech is responsible for massive wealth creation and momentous technological breakthroughs, but these tech giants have also received scrutiny related to privacy concerns, sharing and selling users' personal information, alleged political bias, dissemination of detestable and harmful content and anticompetitive demeanor potentially. American newspaper the Wall Street Journal reported in 2019 that the state institutions of the United States responsible for enforcing antitrust laws includ-

ing the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Department of Justice (DOJ) have agreed to divide responsibility over investigation of the business practices of Big Tech. The DOJ has authority to investigate Apple and Google and FTC will investigate the Amazon and Facebook.

Benefits getting from tech giants

The assessment of humans' reliance on tech giants may give pause to the calls of breaking the monopolies of big companies. Facebook and Google have become integrated in our daily lives as data shows average person spends 35 minutes on Facebook and searches three to four searches on Google on daily basis. Despite of governments' uneasy relations with the power of tech companies, governments should analyze the facts that most of the users willingly sign away their rights to get a service from Facebook, Google and Amazon. Individuals agree to the terms and conditions of tech giants blindly to get a free service.

Control on personal information after breaking up Big Tech

Facebook's global average revenue hover around \$25 per user a year. So, the data of each user is actually worth \$25. This amount of money helps the Facebook to fund all of the free internet services enjoyed by users from this tech giant. According to some experts, the notion that we are being robbed of our high value personal data is overstated and exaggerated. The use of users' data may not be used always for bad purposes. The user data can be used by the Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) to track the record and identify interests of any individual having tendencies towards extremist outfits. However, on

the opposite side of the spectrum, the data can also be used to exploit individuals through reshaping their political tendencies and opinions. Facebook came under fire in 2017 when the Cambridge Analytica scandal emerged. Facebook sold the users' data to advertising campaign firm Cambridge Analytica that used it for the presidential campaign of Donald Trump. The data theft and these high dollar amounts have caused people to ponder that their data is a huge pot of gold stolen from them by big tech.

Governments and individuals are distrusting Big Tech because of the amount of their power on data and democracy. Big tech has established monopoly because the governments have allowed them despite of having antitrust laws in developed countries like the United States. Big tech has immense power and influence in the public discourse. Even the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that it cannot prohibit people from using Facebook as it would be unconstitutional and against the freedom of speech. Facebook has become like a modern public square in the twenty first century.

Saving democracy from technology

The technology companies cause new threats each day to democracy and public values. Social media platforms and search engines spread hate speech, manipulate voters, private firms sell intrusion system with similar capacities to the intelligence agencies and advertising companies own and oversee massive information ecosystems. It is the high time for democratic principles to be safeguarded more explicitly rather than just turning to market mechanisms to bolster the democratic accountability of technology companies.

Concerns of Pakistan regarding the Big Tech

34 Pakistani State has been demanding the tech giants to remove the deceitful and harmful information about Islam. The video sharing platform YouTube owned by one of the Big Four Google has received several applications

about the removal of Islamophobic content from the application. The government had also banned YouTube in the country due to lack of actions regarding the matters of concerns for Pakistan. Google has also failed to end the flooding of disinformation about Pakistan by the Indian networks operating from more than ninety countries around the world disclosed by European Disinfo Lab.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

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May Allah be with you - Amen

Lt Col Muhammad Shafiq (Retd)

Social media has taken the front seat in our everyday life in a big way. We see everyone glued to the screens of cell phones not only in the comforts of their homes but everywhere. You see people staring at their devices while sitting in a park or bus terminal, walking, travelling, driving or shopping. With this quantum leap into the social media arena, a popular trend of messaging also cropped up widely. Hence, you see a series of good-day messages, marriage and birthdays greetings, health updates, seasons greetings, pictures, clips, videos and everything possible to be transmitted through a wireless signal. Amongst these the most momentous are Quranic Ayyahs, Ahadees, anecdotes, angelic Islamic history, quotes and sayings of saints, scholars, poets and notables. Ostensibly, the purpose of sharing such material is the display of divine connection and exemplify the love for Islam. The flood of religious messages portrays a picture as if our nation is wafting in the ocean of Islam and probably the Muslims of Pakistan eat, drink, and sleep, Islam. They have little time to think over anything else but spend their days and nights extending love to their great religion. Unfortunately, to our utter dismay, things are quite opposite to what we portray and pledge. Hence, overtures primarily undertaken to promote goodwill and project the

bright face of Islam factually end up in a futile exercise. The recipients resort to a cursory reading of the message or a casual glance at it and forgetting all the next moment. Whereas this practice hardly does any significant service to Islam it only consumes a lot of productive time and money. It is highly painful to see that the moral values of our society are deteriorating with every passing day.

Had we been so religion-oriented and practising Muslims as we portray on social media we should have been a role model by now for the world to follow. All said and done we the ordinary Muslims already know what all is projected in these messages and posts made viral on social media. For decades and centuries, we all have been listening wa'az وعظ and sermons full of aayas and ahadees so we are not alien to these scripts. Hence, just copy-pasting those again and again neither tells anything new to us nor does it serve any good. Referring to the significance of sermons delivered and tall claims made in religious congregations, firebrand speeches, loud sloganeering, and enthusiastic rallies on various occasions. Generally, we resort to verbosity derived from rhetoric and sentiment but practically we hardly do anything substantial. The virtue in the real sense is demonstrated through action rather than pledging high sounding words and sharing religious or social quotes. Actions speak louder than words. Mere sermons and verbosity have zero impact on anyone. Every Muslim, well-read or illiterate, knows the fact that spending our life according to Quran and Sunnah is the only answer to our woes. If you ask for the solution to our predicament from a common man in the street he will reply to you the same. On average we listen to various



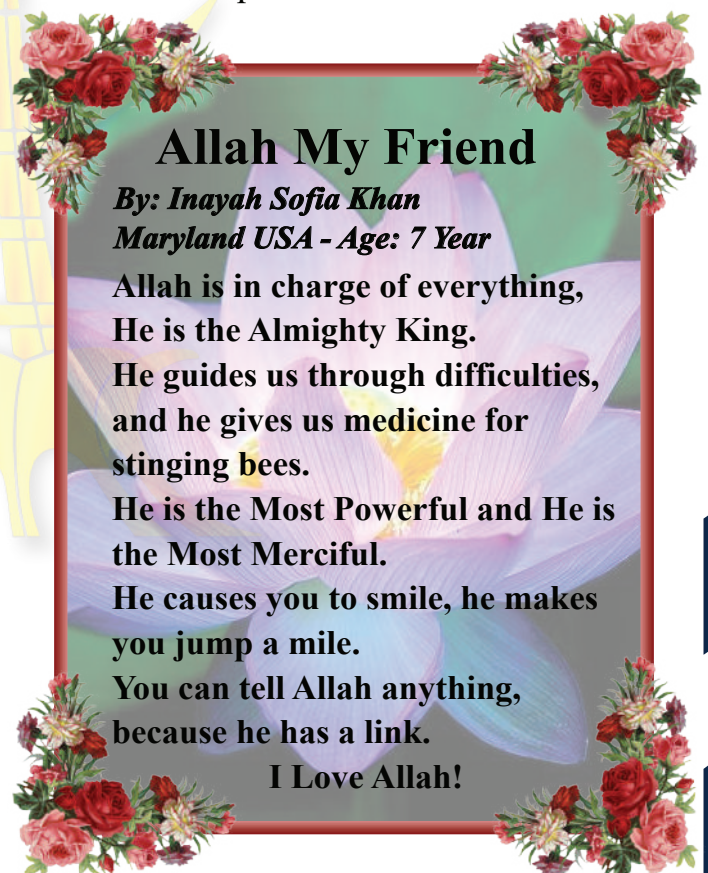
religious accounts at least four times a month. Further, thousands of libraries and millions of books are replete with references to Quran and Sunnah. So we have no dearth of knowledge and abundant advice is available on the subject provided we are mentally prepared to buy some. Despite all this what is the net outcome? Society has gone from worse to worst and there is no chance in sight of an early improvement or rapprochement. But Why so? That is the question we need to ponder upon and try to find and apply some pragmatic measures otherwise simple copy-past on Facebook or WhatsApp or delivery of big sermons is just useless. We, need to focus on the reasons for this paradoxical embodiment and evaluate why our continuous efforts have made no impact on our daily life. We will also have to do brainstorming to explore “Methods” as to how we could implement Islamic values and norms to our lives in general and the community at large. In our society there is no adherence to rule of law, people hate to stand in a queue, none is ready to follow traffic rules, everyone acts highly selfish, nobody cares for the rights of others, might is right so rampant, hypocrisy is the order of the day, telling lie and playing deceit is just fun. Under so much malaise at hand, a gigantic effort will be required to transform this mess into a civilized outfit. Another thorn in the head has been the proximity to Hindu culture for centuries. It has played havoc on our religious beliefs. Resultantly, we have crowded shrines and deserted mosques, we follow the plethora of Hindu traditions and rituals in our everyday life. One can witness it in our customs performed during marriages, on the birth of a child, rituals at shrines and in so many other areas. Even our affluent and educated class is not devoid of primitive superstition. You can see hundreds of people riding cars worth millions and tying black ribbon with the rear bumpers thinking it will save them from death and damage. Such social and cultural barriers and taboos serve as the stumbling blocks in the way of following simple

and basic Islamic principles. On the contrary, we in our wishful thinking expect convincing such a diverse and fragmented lot to follow Quran and Sunnah by forwarding simple copy-paste messages or pouring emotional and high sounding sermons into their ears. There is no denying the fact that the purpose of sharing ayyahs and ahadees or verbal sermons is backed by a noble sentiment and no one can refute their significance as a prophetic work but the question arises that do we really draw benefits from these holy pieces of wisdom? The answer is No. Quran is available in every house, big or small, rich or poor but 99% of us recite it for Tswab and not to understand and act upon the guidance it provides. Non-Muslim civilised countries do not have such a comprehensive divine book with them, then how come they are much disciplined, more truthful, greatly honest, more humane, highly responsible, more emphatic, perspectives and better motivated in relevant terms to what we are. Last Ramadan I was listening to a Bayan by Maulana Tariq Jameel on TV. He said and I “QUOTE”, I spent two months in New Zealand and did not come across any person telling lie. In our country travel from Peshawar to Karachi and you will hardly find a person telling the truth. UNQUOTE”. So why that dichotomy? Non-believers have not learnt the civilization from any holy book but probably from their observation starting from the cradle and subsequently going up the ladder of life. From childhood, they saw what their parents do, what their neighbours do, what their peers do and how they behave in different situations. They, therefore, are groomed accordingly on similar lines taking vibes from their role model or mentor in front. We have much bigger role models and mentors in front and we also sermonize a lot and boast about their majesty but once it comes to following their footprints we miserably fail and look the other way. Such double standards and difference between قول و فعل leave a highly negative imprint on the minds of our younger

lot. The kids, siblings and youngsters learn more by observing rather than listening. A child has a clean mental slate to start with. When he listens to a sermon an audio track is engraved in his brain. But later once he observes things happening quite opposite to what he had listened to his brain baffles. As a result highly confused and sceptical image imprints on his brain. From here his personality starts getting dents and ripples. If we focus on the theory of perception, a 'Picture' or 'Observation' has a tremendously higher impact on the mind as compared to events perceived through listening. Consequently, the pre-saved soundtrack of positive sermons on the child's brain gets obliterated by the contentious visual impact due to antagonistic exposure. So the end product is a stubborn human with a negative personality. Under such circumstances, a kid grows up carrying the baggage which keeps retarding his pace of mental growth and never let him reach his full potential. The bottom line is that we need to display a truthful, honest and pragmatic model before our children, siblings, relatives, neighbours, co-workers and peers, instead of exchanging messages on social media or verbally sermonizing and boasting our glory cum might that we lost some 700 years ago. Therefore, a beautiful message on social media or a firey sermon to the audience is not a motivating factor by any means. People just read the message or listen to the speech considering it a story or anecdote, raise some loud slogans of Wah Wah or سبحان الله and proceed to continue with their old routine and tricks well entrenched-in since ages. We need to display empathy, care and ethics in our everyday dealings rather than mere advising. Good manners and civic sense is better learnt by demonstration than by lecturing. Such initiatives need to be nurtured by setting the self example and not by sermonizing. We got to start this drive at grass root level from our households which could further transcend to all segments of the society gradually. One more aspect which is

hammered in our minds is that this is temporary life hence forget about it and prepare for the life hereafter. This is a great message but practically ill-conceived by the simple and naive masses. As a result, they become totally oblivious of civic sense and obligations towards society considering it a useless and temporary phase thus feel free to do anything right or wrong and move on. This concept needs to be revisited and masses be reassured that whatever little time they have to spend here will also be accountable in the next life. Hence, they are bound to give due importance to this worldly life as well. Unless you persuade people to realise the importance of this temporary life they will never be convinced to improve it. One last point, no government, police, army or any force can thrust upon norms, values, ethics, or civic sense upon the masses. It is only self-motivation that can be infused through Example and not by lectures, slogans, verbosity, sermonizing or beautifully crafted messages on social media.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/writer/lt-col-muhammad-shafiq-ret/d/>



Allah My Friend

By: Inayah Sofia Khan
Maryland USA - Age: 7 Year

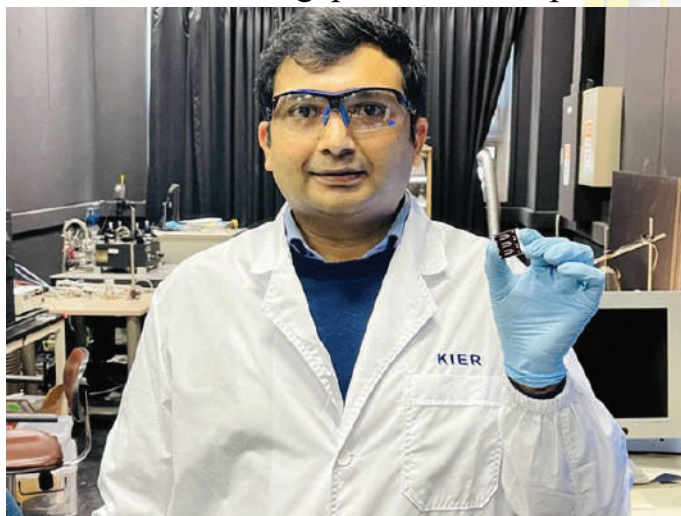
**Allah is in charge of everything,
He is the Almighty King.
He guides us through difficulties,
and he gives us medicine for
stinging bees.
He is the Most Powerful and He is
the Most Merciful.
He causes you to smile, he makes
you jump a mile.
You can tell Allah anything,
because he has a link.
I Love Allah!**

Pakistani scientist sets two world records in solar cell technology

Pakistani-Korean team's invention could help foster clean energy initiatives to combat global warming

KARACHI: A team comprising Korean and Pakistani scientists has developed a promising solar cell technology that sets two new world records of efficiency in the lab. The approach could help foster clean energy initiatives to combat the global warming issue. A team led by Dr SeJin Ahn, principal researcher at the Korea Institute of Energy Research (KIER) and consisting of Pakistani scientists, has made this remarkable solar cell technology. Yasir Siddique – a PhD scholar at KIER and the University of Science and Technology (UST), Daejeon, South Korea – has designed and fabricated solution-processed Copper Indium Sulphur Selenide (CISSe) solar cells. The stable solution-processed, low bandgap CISSe device perfectly works as a single cell, but could also be sandwiched with other thin-film solar cell materials having suitable bandgap as top cell-like recently emerging solar cell technology of Perovskite in tandem solar cell configuration. The bandgap is the amount of energy needed to free the electron from any semiconductor; the lower the bandgap the more it produces

electricity Our sun is an average 150 million kilometres away but a primary source of light and heat for our planet. Theoretically, the sun throws 1,360 watts per square metre of mixed energy on a surface directly facing it. However, the sunlight on any solar cell largely reflected or passed through the structure and a few per cent of energy converts directly from sunlight into electricity. So, the power conversion rate, roughly called the efficiency is the degree to which a solar cell converts energy from sunrays. There are many types of solar cells with varied efficiencies. The first, second and third generation of solar cells is another way to describe them. Different types of solar cell have different efficiencies for instance traditional silicon cell has efficiency from 15 to 20 per cent while concentrated solar cells could be 41 per cent efficient but need focused beams at one place. However, Siddique's cell falls in the emerging trend of Tandem solar technology and is now most efficient in its category. Siddique's recent innovation took three years to develop and finally the CISSe only cell allows the efficiency of 14.4 per cent when it is blended with perovskite (perovskite/CISSe) cell touched the efficiency of 23.03 per cent. This is the highest efficiency as compared to all solution-processed (perovskite/CISSe) solar cell category. Siddique's record efficiency solar cell has been certified Photovoltaic test laboratory at KIER, is an ISO/IEC17025 certified test centre and accredited by Korea Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (KOLAS) which signed the ILAC-MRA (International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation-Mutual Recognition Arrangement). The patent is to be filed soon and the studies published in the top



Yasir Siddique with efficiency record holder solution based CISSe solar cell at his lab in KIER. PHOTO: EXPRESS

research journal of the world “Energy and Environmental Science” have an impact factor of 38.532. “It is the single largest high impact research published from KIER, Daejeon Campus in the recent times,” Yasir Siddique said.

The recipe of solar cell

In the previous record, a team of Chinese, Americans and Australians declared 13.5 per cent efficiency of the same type of solar cells. But that cell fabrication was only possible in glass-based glove box filled with Nitrogen gas. A huge amount of Nitrogen was needed in mass production which made commercialisation nearly impossible. Siddique also devised a magic ingredient to make the device more stable and it was a molecular ink. “We successfully eradicated the need for Nitrogen and carved the cell in an open [ambient] air environment. The CISSe based thin film was made possible due to the addition of N, N-dimethylformamide (DMF) based molecular ink which has the ability to make highly stable complexes with Thiourea and metal chlorides,” Siddique added. Later on, the KIER team used air annealing temperature – common heating and cooling method used in electronics – not only to remove carbon contents in the cell’s absorber film but also proposed a way to control and acquire an optimum degree of crystallisation of the precursor layer. Perfect crystallisation is much needed for desired results. Air annealing is used to further enhance the physical, optical or structural properties in electronics fabrication. For example, heat treatment of steel is a common procedure in which the metal is made more ductile. Air annealing of four exact samples was performed on 210, 230, 280 and 330 degree centigrade. Out of these temperatures, 230°C has been found to be experimentally optimum air annealing temperature and at this temperature, they were able to fabricate a CISSe solar cell device having a certified world record efficiency of 14.4%. This study



A close view of the solution based CISSe developed by Yasir Siddique. . PHOTO: EXPRESS

revealed that air annealing temperature in solution-processed chalcogenide device formation is a significantly important parameter to control the electrical properties, unlike previously published research where all the emphasis has been given to selenisation temperature and pressure. In the next move, a thin perovskite solar cell was placed upon CISSe cell for further study. The Eureka moment observed when this double-layered; all-solution processed perovskite/CISSe tandem solar cell shows the efficiency of 23.03% which is also a world record in this category of solar cells. Discovered in the 1800s by Russian scientists, Perovskite is an emerging promising mineral to carve efficient solar cells and Siddique further enhanced this by adding the CISSe device. Long last stability is another important factor of solar panels. For instance, the traditional silicon-based cell can withstand all weathering conditions for 20 to 30 years. The KIER’s cell has promising stability as well. “We have analysed our new record holder solar cell for the past one year and it is working on the same efficiency perfectly,” Siddique also said.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2343626/pakistani-scientist-sets-two-world-records-in-solar-cell-technology>

Hazrat Asiyah

By: Aleesha Wasee, London,
Age: 12 Year

Hazrat Asiyah is a beautiful example for all mankind and was no ordinary woman. Although we don't have a great deal of information about her life, we do know that she carried in her such a deep faith that she was willing to die for what she believed in. It was for this reason that The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) mentioned her as one of the greatest woman of all times, also known as the woman of Paradise. Hazrat Anas (ra) narrated that the Holy Prophet Muhammad (saw) is reported to have said: 'It is enough for you to follow in the footsteps of Mary, daughter of Imraan; Khadijahra, daughter of Khuwailid; Faatimah, daughter of Muhammad (saw); and Aasiyah, wife of Pharaoh, from among all the women of the world'.



Hazrat Asiyah's story begins in Egypt where she lived with her husband. She was the wife of Pharaoh and the step mother of Prophet Moses (as) Hazrat Asiyah. She believed in Allah the Almighty and had an extraordinary relationship with Him.

She is mentioned 2 times in the Holy Quran in 2 different places:

The first is when she finds Prophet Musa (as) as an infant, floating in a basket and gives a suggestion to the Pharaoh that they should keep him:

“And Pharaoh's wife said, 'He will be a joy of the eye for me and for thee, slay him not. Haply he may prove to be useful for us, or we may adopt him as a son.' And they knew not Our purpose. (28:10) ”

It is through Hazrat Asiyah's encouragement and mercy for the child that Prophet Musa (as) was raised in the house of Pharaoh. The second occasion in which she has been mentioned in the Holy Quran is in Surah Al-Tahrim, Here

Allah presents her as an example for all of those who believe.

“And Allah holds forth as an example, for those who believe, the wife of Pharaoh when she said, 'My Lord! Build for me a house with Thee in the garden; and deliver me from Pharaoh and his work, and deliver me from the wrongdoing people;' (66:12)

We do not know whether Hazrat Asiyah professed her faith or chose to keep it hidden from Pharaoh but it is clear from this prayer that she totally rejected Pharaoh because of his beliefs and disassociated herself from the wrongdoing people. From this prayer it is clear that she pleaded with her God, who she was sincerely devoted to and trusted that only He could bring about a change in her circumstances.

The wife of Pharaoh represents those believers who, though passionately desiring and praying to get rid of sin, cannot fully disassociate themselves from evil influences, represented by Pharaoh.

Thus, Hazrat Asiyah possessed such strong faith, despite being married to a tyrannical ruler. Many others in the same position would surely succumb to their circumstances but her faith made her strong.

Hadhrat Asiyah was a true queen. She was the wife of one of the most powerful and controlling men to walk the earth but that didn't stop her. She lived a life of unparalleled wealth and luxury yet she knew that her true home was in Paradise.

She had no attachment to his life. Hadhrat Asiyah was not defined by the wickedness of the man she married. Her mind and her soul remained independent from her husband. Her heart was not a slave to his beliefs. She chose to devote her soul and her life to God.

She is an everlasting example of a woman who chose the hereafter over all of the glitter in this world.



Violences sexuelles dans l'église catholique, comment en sommes-nous arrivés là ?

By: Dr Idrissa KONE



Le 5 février 2021, la commission indépendante sur les abus sexuels dans l'église (CIASE) a présenté son rapport. Cette dite commission installée le 8 février 2019 a enquêté pendant deux années et demi sur les agressions de 1950 à 2020. Dans l'entendement collectif, l'on pensait que ces abus tant décriés ne concernaient les mineurs mais le rapport de plus de 500 pages a élucidé une forme d'agressions aussi physiques que morales en rapport avec les majeurs de sexe féminin à savoir les sœurs religieuses. Ce rapport édifiant révèle les faits suivants :

- L'institution ecclésiastique est le milieu le plus propice aux violences sexuelles après le cadre familial.
- 216 000 victimes d'abus sexuels par un membre du clergé.
- Ce chiffre grimpe à 330 000 (6% des victimes françaises) si l'on prend en compte celles qui ont subi les actes du personnel laïc

qui participe à la vie de l'institution catholique (professeurs de catéchismes, bénévoles, mouvements de jeunesse...). Le rapport précise qu'il s'agit d'une évaluation statistique avec "un intervalle de confiance" de plus ou moins 50 000 victimes.

- les violences sexuelles sur mineurs dans l'Eglise touchent près de 80% les garçons mineurs, spécifiquement de 10 à 13 ans ;
- L'approche est également décrite par les victimes comme progressive : depuis des attouchements « légers » qui, s'ils ne donnent pas lieu à résistance, vont de plus en plus loin, jusqu'au viol sur la « cible » finalement choisie.
- Au total, 60 % des hommes et des femmes ayant subi des violences sexuelles connaissent des perturbations fortes ou très fortes dans leur vie affective et sexuelle, ce taux approchant même 70 % pour les femmes et dépassant 50 % pour les hommes.

violences sexuelles subies par des religieuses sont un phénomène resté peu étudié, tant par l'Église ou les médias que par la recherche scientifique, jusqu'à l'avènement récent du mouvement « #MeToo »

Ce résumé n'est pas exhaustif mais elle met en exergue l'ampleur des agressions et les souffrances quasi irréversibles des victimes. Nous sommes forts étonnés que dans l'ensemble du monde de la chrétienté qui englobe plusieurs branches, seule l'église catholique est pointée du doigt pour ces actes condamnables ; Mais une étude quasi évidente montre que cette institution pratique le célibat des prêtres. La plupart des recherches à ce sujet a démontré qu'il s'agit d'une règle de discipline et non d'un point de foi ; ce n'est notamment pas un dogme. Elle est affirmée et justifiée dans le Code de droit canonique par le canon 277 : « Les clercs sont tenus par l'obligation de garder la continence parfaite et perpétuelle à cause du Royaume des Cieux, et sont donc astreints au célibat, don particulier de Dieu par lequel les ministres sacrés peuvent s'unir plus facilement au Christ avec un cœur sans partage et s'adonner plus librement au service de Dieu et des hommes. » (Extrait du Code [archive] sur le site officiel du Vatican.)

L'Islam est une religion en accord avec la nature de l'homme c'est pourquoi, cette approche religieuse qui fait partie de la vie monastique a été décriée par le Saint Coran. Allah dit : « Ensuite Nous avons fait marcher sur leurs pas Nos Messagers et Nous avons fait que Jésus, fils de Marie, les suive, et Nous lui avons donné l'Évangile. Et Nous avons mis de la compassion et de la miséricorde dans le cœur de ceux qui le suivaient. Et ils invitèrent le monachisme ; Nous ne l'avons pas prescrit pour eux ; pour rechercher le plaisir d'Allah ; mais ils ne l'observèrent pas comme il le fallait. Néanmoins Nous avons donné à ceux qui croyaient la récompense qui leur était dû, mais beaucoup d'entre eux sont rebelles. » (Saint Coran, chapitre 57, verset 28). Dieu a créé l'homme et connaît Sa nature

et comme Il le mentionne dans le Saint Coran, un mode de vie extrême et sera peu suivi et beaucoup se rebelleront contre ce modèle qu'ils se sont imposés eux-mêmes entraînant des conséquences incontrôlables tel que décrié par le rapport CIASE. L'exigence de la nature humaine veut que l'on partage une vie sexuelle mais la religion canalise ce désir à travers le mariage donc le célibat des prêtres est une forme de torture et de modèle contre-nature qui les a poussés à assouvir leurs désirs sur les maillons les plus faibles de la société à savoir les enfants mineurs.

Le Saint Prophète Mohammad (paix et bénédictions d'Allah sur lui) avait attiré l'attention de sa communauté sur ce type de vie extrême et contre-nature ; il a dit : « il n'y a pas de monachisme en Islam » (Ibn Athir).

D'après Anas (qu'Allah l'agrée), le Prophète (que la prière d'Allah et Son salut soient sur lui) a dit : « Lorsque le serviteur se marie, il a certes complété la moitié de sa religion alors qu'il craigne Allah pour l'autre moitié ». (cité par Tabari, dans son tafsir Majma' al-Bayan). Le Messager d'Allah (paix et bénédictions d'Allah sur lui) a dit : « Le mariage est ma pratique et celui qui ne la pratique pas ne fait pas partie de moi. Mariez-vous ! je serais certes fier que vous soyez la communauté la plus nombreuse parmi les autres communautés le jour du jugement. Que celui qui en a les moyens se marie et que celui qui ne trouve pas de quoi se marier, qu'il jeûne ! car le jeûne sera pour lui une protection. » (Ibn Maja)

En conclusion, canaliser les désirs naturels au lieu de les obstruer est une approche tout-à-fait erronée et dont les conséquences sont souvent terribles ; l'église catholique a adopté un concept contre-nature qui a détruit des milliers de vies en France et s'il l'on extrapole ces crimes à travers l'église catholique mondiale, les compteurs vont exploser ; la voie royale pour éradiquer ces crimes est d'adopter l'approche islamique à travers le mariage.



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