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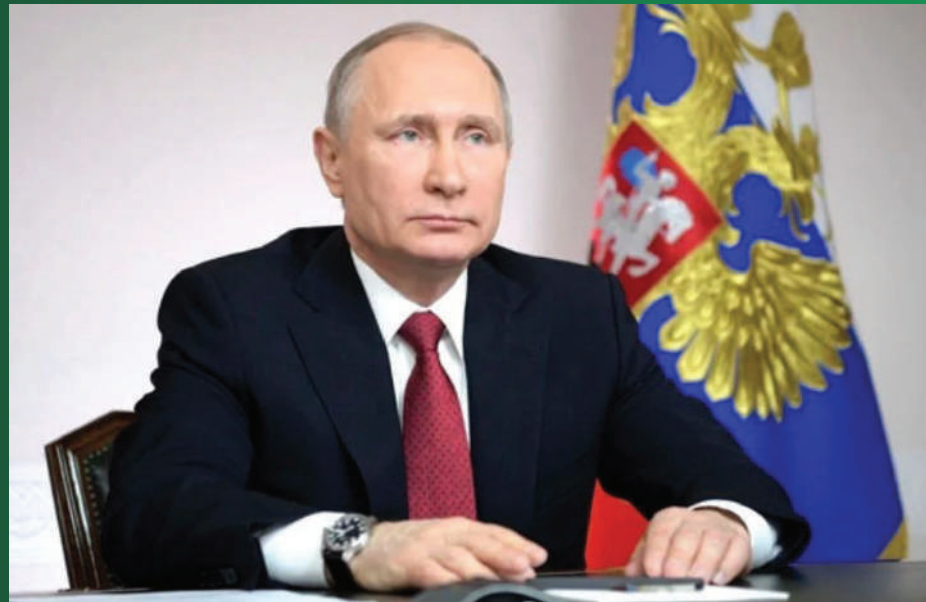
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December
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A Magazine for Scholarly, Literary, Political, Economic and Religious Activities

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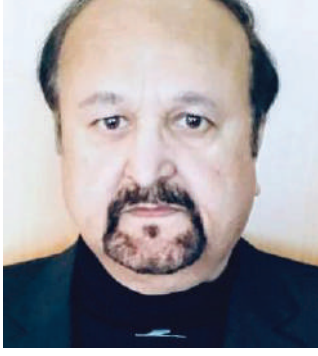


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Editorial



Dr. Busharat Elahi Jamil

Justice is Just-Ice in Pakistan. Or we can say it denies the common folks through delaying tactics and serves influential stratus protecting the interests of certain classes and ruling elite. In Pakistan judiciary like other ruling elites use laws subjecting to their own drives. A certain social and politically hegemonic class have reigned the Country since 1947 with zero intention to represent Pakistan's common masses and to safeguard the national interests.

The ruling elite and "establishment" never reform the judicial system because this obsolete system supports their hegemony over the out-dated politisl of Pakistan. From political murder of Z. A Bhutto to Nawaz Sharif's attack on Supreme Court in 1997 and Rafique Tarar's superfluous sympathies, they have ever been backing political elite. Lately, the role of establishment in the recent past defined by Miftah Ismail suggests that legal code of Pakistan is nothing but a doxy of powerful stratus in Pakistan.

PDM's coup of May 2022 over the democracy, illegitimate legislations to ground NAB and the statement of Khurram Dastagir all seem approved through the silence of SC, which certainly mirrors Justice in denial. Courts are only eventful to facilitate and serve hegemonic classes and the layperson can only hope the time may heal or the issue may get media hype compromising their privacy.

There are certain elements in the society like deficiency in awareness, ignorance, less prac-

tice of human rights, poverty, illiteracy, personal interests of ruling elite, hegemonic ideologies of establishment and submission of common masses that work like endorsement for this crippled 'rule of injustice' in Pakistan where people are getting acquitted after the execution of death sentence and many imprisoned for decades waiting for the court's verdict.

"The country's superior and lower judiciaries are dealing with a huge backlog of 2.144 million cases as 4.102 m cases were decided and 4.06 m new cases were filed during 2021..." (Daily Dawn July 13, 2022). Comparatively, the number of judges in the courts is extremely low, judicial system is biased, bar councils and lawyers usually try to suppress the courts, even in many cases they have tortured and abused the judges in the courts.

According to the reports Pakistan is standing on 130th position out of 139 in rule of law. However, judges particularly from higher judiciary nevertheless enjoying lavish and elite privileges. As Islamic republic, the practice of rule of law should be the key responsibility of a state, but discriminations have put Pakistan on the trail to a socio-political anarchy. Rule of law, appropriate explanation of the laws and judicial codes by higher judiciary is need of the time. Judiciary should play its role to strengthen the rule of law because justice delayed is justice denied, and Pakistan is in no position to face its consequences.

Who is Asim Munir, Pakistan's new army chief?

Lieutenant General Asim Munir will take charge of the 600,000-strong nuclear-armed army on November 29.



Islamabad, Pakistan – Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has nominated Lieutenant General Asim Munir as the new army chief, putting an end to days of uncertainty that engulfed the nation.

Munir, whose nomination was approved by President Arif Alvi on Thursday evening, takes charge of the 600,000-strong nuclear-armed army on November 29 when incumbent General Qamar Javed Bajwa retires after a six-year stint. Lt Gen Sahir Shamshad was nominated for the post of chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee.

'Sword of Honour' winner

Munir joined the Pakistani military through the Mangla Officers Training School (OTS) programme, where he won the prestigious Sword of Honour, given to the best performing cadet. He has commanded a division which overlooks Pakistan's northern areas,

including the disputed region of Kashmir, where he worked in tandem with Bajwa, who then headed the Pakistan army's elite X Corps. Munir, who currently serves as the quartermaster general at the army headquarters in Rawalpindi, is considered an officer with an "impeccable reputation" within the Pakistani military.

He was made the head of Military Intelligence (MI) in 2017, the unit mandated to look after the army's internal affairs. After his promotion as a three-star general the next year, he was given charge of the country's premier spy agency, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI).

However, his eight-month stint as the head of ISI remains one of the shortest in the army's history. Political commentators said he was removed after falling out with former Prime Minister Imran Khan.



“Given his stint as head of intelligence [ISI] was shortened by Prime Minister Khan, after both reportedly fell out, PTI [Khan’s Tehreek-e-Insaf party] believes, Munir could be tilted against them,” Muhammed Faisal Khan, an Islamabad-based security analyst, told Al Jazeera. “The government, thus, feared that Khan through President Alvi would attempt to jeopardise the process and make the selection of Munir controversial before it could actually take effect,” he said. Alvi is a founding member of the PTI.

A military source told Al Jazeera that Munir has a “clear line of thinking” and is considered apolitical in his approach. “He is a rare officer in the sense that he has led both the MI and the ISI. He is the first army chief who has headed both the intelligence agencies,” the source said.

“The MI experience will help him look at the army’s internal dynamics, while the ISI experience will serve him well for a global outlook in future.”

Singapore-based Pakistan analyst Abdul Basit said contrary to the reservations of Khan’s PTI party, Munir is a professional soldier who will keep the institution away from politics. “It is a fact that the military wants to leave politics but will the politics leave the military is a question to ponder over,” he told Al

Jazeera.

Munir has previously served in Saudi Arabia, one of Pakistan’s key allies, Basit added. Munir was deputed in Saudi Arabia as part of the Pakistan army’s close defence cooperation.

“Being a familiar face in Riyadh could well be one of the factors that may have influenced his appointment for the top job,” he said.

‘Proved himself worthy’

Retired army official Muhammed Zeeshan said Munir was his senior in the military and has served on prominent operational and instructional appointments.

Zeeshan, currently the director general of the Centre for Peace, Security and Developmental Studies think-tank in Islamabad, said Munir’s career postings show he was groomed for senior positions throughout his career.

“Based on his postings and the results of his courses, it is pretty evident that he proved himself worthy of where he is today,” he told Al Jazeera. Zeeshan said Munir served as MI head when Bajwa was the army chief and performed well.

“As the head of ISI, however, he was a bit unfortunate to be caught in an evolving political environment. But the fact that he departed in such a graceful manner when asked to leave speaks volumes about his maturity,” Zeeshan said.

On the challenges ahead for Munir, the retired brigadier said these are difficult times in the country. “In my opinion, his biggest challenge would be to restore the trust and confidence of the nation regarding the army,” he said.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/24/who-is-asim-munir-pakistans-new-army-chief>

Out of the Box or Out of the Ring A Blueprint to Quit the Bottomless Pit or Become a Monkey Republic

By : Shaheen Sehbai

PAKISTAN has almost been turned into what I call “A Monkey Republic” although no such term exists for a country. The best, or the worst, is a Banana Republic, but we are now visibly way past that benchmark.

Why I say so is that mafias of all kinds are playing havoc, believing that they are unstoppable, as institution after institution crumbles and the ultimate guardians of the State too have in the last six months acted as if a rogue mafia was running it. The entire institution has been reeling under the weight of this bunch headed by General Bajwa. If someone is not clear what “reeling” means, it is defined in Dictionary.com as “staggering or swaying; unable to walk straight because of a blow, intoxication, etc.” Only some honorable judges of the higher courts are still considered, or can be the last roadblock to stop the tsunami of devastation and ultimate chaos that is already upon us. God knows what hit his mind, General Bajwa went berserk in April and let loose a chain of events that overthrew an elected government, brought in corrupt politicians, a gang of criminals to run security agencies, threw aside all rules, regulations, laws, traditions and even the Constitution to unleash a reign of terror. But within a few hours of removing the Khan government all his schemes went to dogs, in an unbelievable spontaneous outpouring of the people on the streets throughout the country. Then started a power struggle between the army and the people, led by Imran Khan.

The corrupt and the criminals all scrambled

under the umbrella of a rogue army gang. Bajwa and his men surprised the world by acting like tinpot despots, arresting and torturing people, banning the media, arrested undressing and humiliating journalists and politicians, tightening their grip on institutions, foisting corrupt mafias on government institutions, giving special concessions to convicted leaders, hijacking elections and making and unmaking parliamentary majorities — a list that can go on and on. The target was the unprecedented people’s protest and resentment that grew in numbers and strength in direct proportion to the atrocities like May 25 crackdown on women and children, tanking of the economy and surge of the dollar — all approved and overseen by Bajwa as he was becoming desperate with each passing day his date of retirement inched closer. The wave of despotic activities turned into murders of journalists, forcing them to flee the country and finally to a botched assassination attempt on Imran Khan to physically eliminate him.

Yet nothing worked. In fact every action Bajwa took strengthened Khan and his resistance movement. Even when Khan was injured, even in his absence his march continued to grow on the streets. This unpatriotic behavior of the Bajwa Bunch brought the army into such disrepute that slowly but surely dissenting voices started being heard inside the top Corps Commanders’ meetings. All hell broke in the latest meetings this week. Bajwa had to surrender and announce repeatedly that he was leaving to the extent that his mouthpiece ISPR started mentioning his fare-

well calls on regiments. But the mess he has created is becoming deeper as panic has struck the criminals and political forces which Bajwa pushed and supported — something the next army chief will never do. Pakistan is in a swamp of intrigues, conspiracies, uncertainties and economic collapse which no one knows how to resolve quickly. If Bajwa had any sense of patriotism he would have resigned immediately and left the scene, taking away with him the bunch of crony criminals who have made Pakistan a laughing stock in the world. I had written in April 2022: “When political engineering can go on for over two years, those in charge should put the derailed train back on the rails before they wash off their hands. It becomes their national duty under their oath. Bajwa can call a Corps Commanders meeting tomorrow to tell them he has decided to resign... The new chief should declare that the army will not indulge in any political engineering but it will correct the wrongs done by Bajwa by undoing what he has done.”

That call in April was a bit too early but not wrong. The army also took its time to come around and realize that the rest of them will have to undo these grave wrongs. Now probably they may but it is almost, almost too late and too complex to be handled by routine lines written in the law books or the constitution. Generals worried, politics in disarray, parliament dysfunctional, government non-existent, public furious on streets, media scared, courts confused yet an injured but resolute Imran Khan marching on the Capital. Islamabad and Pindi are banging their heads to stop the freight train. Many minds are at work and one blueprint is gaining approval in critical circles including the Generals. It has to be an out of the box solution, bending some rules here and there but with the consent and prior approval of the higher courts. The urgency is obvious as a new army chief has to be appoint

ed, but by whom?

The solution being debated is as follows: - President Alvi is active behind the scenes and he should seek a Track-2 type understanding from the courts to impose a national emergency, send all assemblies home and appoint, by consensus of all major players, an interim government prior to general elections in 3-4 months. - General Bajwa should resign now and as per army traditions the GHQ should name a new chief to fill the vacancy. The position cannot remain vacant even for a day. The new name should be the candidate who merits the job and be acceptable to all. -

The Establishment under the new chief ensures that the interim government runs smoothly and elections are held in an absolutely free and transparent way with no engineering. - The interim government investigates all the major cases of atrocities on politicians, journalists including assassination of Arshad Sharif and attempt on Imran Khan, besides restoring all freedoms and rights and guaranteeing security to journalists who have gone abroad. - All those accused of corruption, crimes and misusing authority and power, including General Bajwa and his cronies, should not be allowed to leave the country. - Once elections are completed, political governments are inducted, either the army chief in office be confirmed or a new chief be appointed as per rules. These actions may appear to be difficult or impossible but for the army to restore its image and respect, nothing short of such drastic steps will be acceptable to the people who have been treated like a herd of sheep. The roles of the Generals minus Bajwa, the judges of the Supreme Court and the High Courts, the President and patriotic politicians will determine if Pakistan can emerge from this dirt pond. Drowned in a well, it is fatal to dig down further. A Divine hand must lift this nation back to sanity.

We are sorry, Dr Abdus Salam

If Salam had been celebrated in his own country, science may have had a completely different status in Pakistan.

By: Nayyar Afaq

November 21, marks the death anniversary of Dr Abdus Salam – Pakistan's only Nobel laureate and one of the legendary physicists of the 20th century. The list of his achievements and awards is so long that one wonders how an ordinary man who grew up in the outskirts of Jhang, a relatively small and less developed city in Punjab, could accomplish so much. Yet, Jhang, the land of the Sufi saint Sultan Bahu and the burial place of Heer and Ranjha, gave us another gem, Dr Abdus Salam. Salam truly knew what the way forward for the country was. He had a vision for the socio-economic development of third-world countries and saw development in the progress of science. He worked tirelessly all his life towards this cause. Abdus Salam worked as the science advisor for the Government of Pakistan and laid the infrastructure of science in the country. He also served as a founding director of SUPARCO, worked for the establishment of PAEC and contributed in PINSTECH as well. He believed in the idea of 'Atom for Peace' and contributed in the atomic bomb project of Pakistan. These are just a few selected contributions out of many. Salam's biggest dream was to establish an international research centre in Pakistan. Unfortunately, the Government of Pakistan did not show any interest in his cause and eventually Salam had to set up the International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Trieste, Italy, the name of which was later changed to Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics. Just last year, when the world of physics applauded the discovery of the 'God-particle', CNN's report was enough to make us lower our heads in shame. "Imagine a world where the merchant of death is rewarded, while a scientific visionary is disowned and forgotten. Abdus Salam, Paki-



stan's only Nobel laureate, the first Muslim to win the Physics' prize helped lay the groundwork that led to the Higgs Boson breakthrough. And yet in Pakistani schools, his name is erased from the text books..."

Although Salam worked all his life in order to serve his motherland, his countrymen failed him. How can we even attempt to excuse ourselves from this failure? While most countries worship their heroes, we chose to reject Abdus Salam. Salam received the Nobel Prize in traditional Punjabi attire and quoted the verses of the Quran in his acceptance speech. However, he had already been disowned in Pakistan. On his return to Pakistan in December 1979, there was no one from the public to receive him at the airport. He was like a pariah in his own country. He could not even give a lecture in the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, since there were threats of violence from students belonging to Islami Jamiat-i-Talaba. This was not an isolated event and other institutes also found it difficult to invite him for the same reason. His reputation was further tarnished when the right-wing journalist stalwarts came up with their fictional stories claiming him an agent

and a traitor, who had sold the country's nuclear secrets to India. Salam's misery did not end here. In 1988, he had to wait for two days in a hotel room to meet with the then Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. However, the meeting was cancelled without any reason given. Unfortunately, he was not even spared in death. The epitaph on his tombstone was defaced and the word 'Muslim' was erased on the orders of the local magistrate. This final disgrace explains why this hero was abandoned in the first place. The theological amendment in the constitution of Pakistan does not allow members of the Ahmadiyya faith to call themselves Muslims. Ironically for the rest of the world, Salam is still a Muslim and a hero.

While he was shunned in his own country, the world held him in high regard. The then Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi, invited him to India and bestowed a great gesture of respect by not only serving him tea with her own hands, but also sitting by his feet. In Geneva, Switzerland, a road was named after him. In Beijing, the prime minister and president of China attended a dinner hosted in his honour while the South Korean president requested Salam to advise Korean scientists on how to win the Nobel Prize. Salam was also presented with dozens of honorary degrees of doctorate and awards for his hard work. Perhaps, if Salam had been accepted and embraced in his own country, science would have enjoyed a completely different status in Pakistan. Our people may have travelled far on the road of scientific progress.

Alas, we did not. However, it is never too late. If Pope John Paul II could apologise on behalf of the Catholic Church for the mistreatment of Galileo in the 17th century, why can't we apologise to Salam? We are sorry, Salam.

We are sorry for defaming you and for not understanding your worth. We are sorry for all the hatred we showed you in life and in death. For only once a mistake is acknowledged, can one strive on the path of rectifying it.

<https://tribune.com.pk/article/19695/we-are-sorry-dr-abdus-salam>

Supreme Court allows release of Musharraf's attacker

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Monday rejected Punjab government's appeal and upheld the Lahore High Court ruling that Rana Mohammad Naveed, a convict in the 2003 case of Jhanda Chichi assassination attempt on then president Pervez Musharraf, was entitled to pre-conviction period in detention and general remissions. Senior counsel Hashmat Habib who pleaded the convict's case before the Supreme Court told Dawn that the natural corollary of Monday's order would be that Naveed who already spent 20 years behind bars after serving out his 14-year jail term would be released immediately. Headed by Justice Sardar Tariq Masood, a three-judge bench dismissed the appeal of Punjab government and Sahiwal jail superintendent after accepting the March 2019 decision of LHC's Rawalpindi bench that he was entitled for the benefit of pre-conviction period in detention as well as the remissions under the Army Act, 1952. In 2005, the SC had converted his death sentence into life imprisonment. In the case before LHC's Rawalpindi bench, the petitioner had sought that the benefit of pre-conviction period amounting to one year seven months and 23 days. The court had held that one of the accused convicted along with Rana Naveed, Adnan Khan, by the Field General Court Martial was allowed pre-conviction period in detention and remissions by a different bench of the high court in 2015.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1722321>

Karachi Police Book Ahmadi Lawyer Over 'Syed' Prefix In Name

Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya says first instance of Ahmadi being booked in connection with name in Pakistan's history

**AHMADI NOT
MUSLIMS??
WHY??**

An Ahmadi man was booked on Monday by Karachi police under the nation's Ahmadiyya-specific penal provisions for using 'Syed' as a prefix. A copy of the FIR is available with The Friday Times — Naya Daur. The suspect, a lawyer, had been representing other Ahmadis before a court. The man had submitted some documents in connection with the case. The documents, it has been claimed, featured Islamic terms. His name featured alongside. The complainants sought action against the Ahmadi lawyer over this and for employing 'Syed' as a prefix. The suspect was booked under Section 298-B and C of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) after at Karachi City Court police station. Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya press in-charge Amir Mehmood said the development constituted the first time an Ahmadi had been booked (in part) over their name under the nation's Ahmadiyya-specific penal provisions. He said the registration of the FIR was representative of rising religious extremism in Pakistan. Now, Mehmood said, tolerance was

at such a level that Ahmadis' names were being used to persecute them. Life for Ahmadis, he said, was deliberately being made difficult. The community, he said, had been deprived of basic, fundamental rights. Mehmood said it now appeared that Ahmadis would not be permitted to keep names of their choice. Pakistan's tiny Ahmadi community is routinely subjected to discrimination which often enjoys legal and state sanction. A school in Punjab's Attock district expelled four Ahmadi students over their confession earlier in September. Tahir Khan*, a relative of the students, said they had been expelled for simply being Ahmadi. He said a class fellow of one of the students had been harassing one of the students for some time. The students, Khan said, were expelled after some parents prevailed on school principal Kulsoom Awan.

<https://www.thefridaytimes.com/2022/11/22/-karachi-police-book-ahmadi-lawyer-over-syed-prefix-in-name/>

Vigorous administration of 'feudal' and 'waderas'



By: Badaruddin Kalhoro, Bureau Chief Lahore International London

feudalism, was known as the 'wadera system' in our part of the world, was a concept of labour class, serving the ruler's piece of land, to get a fraction of land in return. In modern times, in Pakistan, feudalism is known as exploitation of the less privileged by the privileged landed elite. Through the government shapes, defense drive, and political tip top, Pakistan's structure families have picked up impact in national things. it's progressed to man of the cloth a sole understanding of the concept of social association in West Pakistan these days be that as it may it beyond any doubt as shooting may be a framework of support, wherever individuals of the low-income category buy expanding control of the well off. The structure landowners have planned states inside states inside which they administration their fiefs without stressing of paying back. The seed of social association was sowed inside the colonial times through the conviction of isolate and run the show. it's earned its roots in West Pakistan ever since. all through the Indo-Pak segment, the course structure created by British run the show was canceled that Driven to a exchange of greater control in hands of proprietors, fixing system of the government..The social bunch of Sindh majorly spins around social association masters as they're being treated as rulers. It's a revile that has waited ever since the nation was born. The jirga/panchayat framework wins, and choices are made by the social association being head of the Jirga. Guiltless people are either murdered or punished brutally to exclusively 'equal' the score in strife settlements. Police and legal have exceptionally small to no control inside the undertakings of the town or city. Exceptionally vigorous administration of 'feudal' and 'waderas'

through and through components of Sindh has been existing for ages. They require an quick impact on the financial lifetime of the destitute. Resultantly, the destitution line inside the insides of Sindh is alarmingly tall. Since of the expansive control base of the 'feudal', local people don't set out to boost their voices against the 'land-lord' as a result of they stress being financially stop. The fury of fear which may be unleashed at any time in addition utilized within the equitable strategy of decisions. This is often regularly the key reason one party has been administering since decades. District administration officers are named straightforwardly on the counsel of social gather chiefs, instep on advantage and in step with legitimate methods. Enormous landholders over the territory have secured seats in national and Sindh gathering prevailing each property and other individuals. They monopolize its farming, sit in its parliament and take advantage of its assets. So, the frame of government of the area on a broader level gives proprietors the chance to watch structure values in an exceedingly broader field. Primitive culture is acclimatized into the legislative issues of Asian nation that's commonly seen since the greatest scourge on the province's improvement. The fiendish viewpoint of the Sindh government (primitive rulers) towards the common open is ethically unsatisfactory and ought to be condemned in any kind. There's a necessity for down to earth ways which might construct the people of Sindh cognizant of their political, social moreover as financial opportunity. Subsequently, the thought of feudal framework needs to be isolated from legislative issues to realize advance in one in each of the preeminent ignored territories of Asian country.

Bank of England Expects Uk to Fall into Longest Ever Recession

By Dearbail Jordan & Daniel Thomas



The Bank of England has warned the UK is facing its longest recession since records began, as it raised interest rates by the most in 33 years. It warned the UK would face a "very challenging" two-year slump with unemployment nearly doubling by 2025.

Bank boss Andrew Bailey warned of a "tough road ahead" for UK households, but said it had to act forcefully now or things "will be worse later on". It lifted interest rates to 3% from 2.25%, the biggest jump since 1989. By raising rates, the Bank is trying to bring down soaring prices as the cost of living rises at the fastest rate in 40 years. Food and energy prices have jumped, in part because of the Ukraine war, which has left many households facing hardship and started to drag on the economy. A recession is defined as when a country's economy shrinks for two three-month periods - or quarters - in a row. Typically, companies make less money, pay falls and unemployment rises. This means the government receives less money in tax to use on public services such as health and education. The Bank had previously expected the UK to fall into recession at the end of this year and said it would last for all next year. But it now believes the economy already entered a "challenging" downturn this summer, which will continue next year and into the first half of 2024 - a possible general election year.

While it will not be the UK's deepest downturn, it will be the longest since records began in the 1920s, the Bank said. The unemployment rate is currently at its lowest for 50 years, but it is expected to rise to nearly 6.5%. The interest rate announcement is the first

Unemployment expected to reach 6.4%

Percentage of economically active people aged over 16 who are unemployed



Source: Office for National Statistics, Bank of England

BBC

since former Prime Minister Liz Truss and former Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng unveiled their controversial mini-Budget in September. Their plans for £45bn worth of unfunded tax cuts - much of which have been reversed - sent the value of the pound tumbling and sparked market turmoil, forcing the Bank of England to step in to restore calm. Mr Bailey told the BBC he believed that the mini-budget had "damaged" the UK's standing internationally. He said that at a recent International Monetary Fund gathering in Washington "it was very apparent to me that the UK's position and the UK's standing had been damaged". That same week, Mr Kwarteng was sacked as Chancellor. Chancellor Jeremy Hunt said: "The most important thing the British government can do right now is to restore stability, sort out our public finances, and get debt falling so that interest rate rises are kept as low as possible." But shadow chancellor Rachel Reeves said families could not withstand such high rate rises "when we've got rising food prices, rising energy bills and now higher mortgage rates as well".

The latest rate hike - the Bank's eighth since December - takes borrowing costs to their highest since 2008, when the UK banking system faced collapse. The Bank believes by raising interest rates it will make it more expensive to borrow and encourage people not to spend money, easing the pressure on prices in the process. But while its latest rate rise will be welcomed by savers, it will have a knock-on effect on those with mortgages, credit card debt and bank loans.

It said that it would increase interest rates if inflation remained high. Financial markets had been expecting rates to peak at 5.25% but the Bank does not expect them to rise this high. The Bank's rate decision comes before the government unveils its tax and spending plans under new Prime Minister Rishi Sunak at the Autumn Statement on 17 November. On Thursday, the pound slumped 2% against the dollar and the cost of government borrowing rose in response to the Bank's warnings. The



Bank has done something it doesn't normally do in the published minutes of its decisions - it has given guidance that seems to suggest a peak in interest rates of about 4.5% next autumn. For those with a glass half-full - this is lower than the 6% assumed just a month ago in the post mini-budget market

'I'm nervous about the loan on my van'

Michelle, 58, from East Riding in Yorkshire has a loan on a van and is nervous about rising interest rates. "My disposable income has gone down dramatically recently and I earn more than the amount to get benefits," she told the BBC. "They need to help the middle earners." Michelle needs the van to get to work as there's no public transport near her. But if her loan repayment costs rise she fears she'll have to give up the vehicle. "I can work from home, but like most places my place of work wants us back in the office at least three days a week and I've had to have talks with them about how I can afford that. "It's a 60-mile round trip, it's expensive." Those with mortgages are also feeling nervous. The Bank forecasts that if interest rates continue to rise, those whose fixed rate deals are coming to an end could see their annual payments soar by up to £3,000.

turmoil. While government borrowing costs and the level of the pound has somewhat recovered after a series of U-turns since, mortgage markets and business loans are still showing some stress, adding to the prolonged hit to the economy. The forecast predicts that the unemployment rate will rise, while household incomes will come down too. It is a picture of a painful economic period, with the UK performing worse than the US and the Eurozone. Indeed, what was forecast as a sharp energy recession just three months ago, is now a shallower, but more prolonged energy and mortgage shock.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-63471725>



Opinion | Replacing Putin—Be Careful What You Wish

By: Michael O. Slobodchikoff And G. Doug Davis



President Joe Biden attracted attention earlier this year in Warsaw, Poland, when he stated that Russian President Vladimir Putin "cannot remain in power." There has been consensus across the West to oppose Russian aggression, but this statement provoked concern from surprised allies. Administration officials were quick to point out that the president was not calling for regime change. The reality is that Biden expressed what many policy makers were secretly thinking. Namely, that Putin needs to go. While this view expresses optimism that Russian leadership change would produce a less militant Moscow that is more open to the West, it is a problematic assumption that ignores history and Russia's domestic political reality.

Russia is a challenging state to govern. Its leaders have relied on a top-down leadership structure that originated under the Tsars, was recapitulated in the Soviet era, and is present today. When new leaders emerge, they need to work endlessly to consolidate their control over the state and society. Even regional specialists sometimes fail to perceive the grueling circumstances awaiting new Russian leaders who will need to employ violence strategically to maintain their rule. In the past, many people looked forward to better East-West relations when Leonid Brezhnev replaced Nikita Khrushchev following the Cuban missile crisis. This hope failed as the Soviet Union moved away from the West by adopting a more conservative and defensive orientation. Even Mikhail Gorbachev faced a serious internal fight when he gained the premiership and needed to solidify his leadership. He



sought to re-forge Moscow's claim to international supremacy by rebuilding and reviving the economy—this created an opportunity for a special relationship with Ronald Reagan that led to several arms reduction treaties and enhanced cooperation.

The Russian Federation presented similar difficulties to new leaders who were forced to use force to consolidate their position. Boris Yeltsin, for example, used violence internally to preserve his rule. Similarly, when Putin came to power, violence against the Chechens was a means for him to firm his control and consolidate his authority. Both leaders engaged in military activity against Chechnya and also targeted opponents in Russia's major cities. Anyone who succeeds Putin will have to face strong, entrenched rivals and their survivability will depend on being able to overcome this challenge. A successor would not be able to consolidate power without resorting to violence.

Russia is undergoing a demographic transition where its Slavic population is declining while its central Asian and Indigenous population is growing. Putin's replacement will face more internal opposition and will be forced to employ force to maintain rule. When Putin exits, Chechnya will again rebel

and try to gain its independence. Given the growth in Muslim populations in Russia's Central Asian regions, it is likely that additional areas will also rise up and attempt to break away. The tension between Slavs and Central Asians will be so great that it is possible that a civil war may emerge—one where both parties have nuclear weapons. This nightmare scenario is a real possibility and is something that the world needs to consider. Since his position would be predicated on using violence, the successor would immediately face Western opposition for his behavior. The circumstances will require the new leader to broadly use force and this will make it very difficult to build more constructive relations with the West.

Many Americans see Sergey Viktorovich Lavrov, Russia's foreign minister, as a possible replacement for Putin. While Lavrov is well-liked in the West, his diplomatic background does not fit the profile of a Russian leader. A more likely scenario is that the successor will come from the intelligence community and will have ties to the actors most-opposed to Russia's re-integration into the West. It is unlikely that Putin's eventual replacement will embrace the West and be more open to compromise. The more likely possibility is that a new leader will actively oppose Washington and NATO to satisfy his base and to rally the Russian public.

Words have consequences. Jack Matlock, Reagan's ambassador to the Soviet Union, noted that if Gorbachev was publicly belittled as Putin has been, this would have prevented the transition that saw communism fall and the Soviet Union would still be present today. What made Reagan great was that although he detested communism, he always respected Soviet leaders and never belittled them publicly or minimized their power.

<https://www.newsweek.com/replacing-putin-careful-what-you-wish-opinion-1760140>

Govt to upgrade cyber security at important offices



ISLAMABAD: The information technology (IT) Ministry had prepared cyber security rules for important and sensitive government offices and institutions in the wake of the recent audio leaks from the Prime Minister's Office, sources said on Friday. The sources said that the federal government had taken the decision in principle to ensure cyber security at all important and sensitive offices and institutions, so that such incidents like the audio leaks could be prevented in the future. The rules had been formulated in the light of the recommendations of an inquiry committee formed after the audio leaks. The sources said that the committee had identified lapses in cyber security at key offices, adding that bugs were found in the software installed in many institutions. IT Ministry officials said that the draft rules had been shared with all the stakeholders for their input. They added that the rules would be finalised after soliciting the input from the relevant departments and then these would be submitted for government's approval. Under the draft rules, the officials said, an early alert would be issued to the institutions for protection of the government data, while the future annual security report of computers and devices would also be taken from the department concerned. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2388296/govt-to-upgrade-cyber-security-at-important-offices>

Trump, the loser, is back

The serial loser is back. And he is threatening to take his party and country down with him.

By: Marwan Bishara



Former US President Donald Trump's announcement on Tuesday that he will run in the 2024 presidential polls, only a week after his fiasco in the United States midterm elections, smacks of desperation and hypocrisy. But it will have key implications for his party and country. The long, "low energy" announcement was full of lies, half-truths and distortions about his record and that of President Joe Biden, especially on climate change, energy reserves and America's standing in the world. While it is true that Trump did not embark on big new wars, an accomplishment for an American president, international security, peace and stability suffered because of his abrupt hyper-nationalism. In typically Trumpian fashion, it was all vanity and venom. The former president took credit for Republicans likely taking back the House of Representatives following last week's elections, albeit with the slimmest of majorities. The midterms elections were a referendum on Biden's management of the economy, as much as on Trump's menace to democracy. What historically and politically could have been an easy win for Republicans, especially with high inflation and Biden's low approval ratings, turned out to be a disappointing outcome for them. Once again, Trump, the de facto party leader, proved more of a liability than an asset. In 2016, candidate Trump promised that if he became president, the country would enjoy so much winning that people would get tired of it. Instead, President Trump led his party and country from one failure to another, until they got sick of losing. In 2018, Republicans lost the House. In 2020, they lost the Senate and the White House too. And last week, many of Trump's handpicked candidates lost the midterm elections and delivered

a great deal of humiliation to their party, which, instead of a predicted "red wave", had to settle for a ripple. The party failed to retake the Senate, and might even end up with fewer numbers than in the outgoing chamber. The crushing defeat suffered by Trump's candidates is a testimony to America's rejection of his unsubstantiated claims that the 2020 elections were rigged, merely because he lost. In the process, tornado Trump ravaged the country's international reputation and shook the foundations of its democracy. And if that was not enough, he cheered as his supporters came to Washington to block the Congressional certification of the 2020 presidential elections. Now, following the midterms, it is clear that Trump the sore loser is a certified serial loser, too. And still, there appears to be no end to the nightmare. The defeated, delusional and twice-impeached former president, who is facing many legal woes, has pledged to go on – despite growing opposition within the Republican party, as more and more of its leaders speak out against him. Referring to the last three election setbacks for the party, Maryland's Republican Governor Larry Hogan emphasised the need for Trump to step aside, using a popular baseball metaphor, "three strikes and you're out". Indeed, like baseball, US elections are competitive, expensive and long zero-sum games, producing net winners and losers, who are expected to accept the outcome. Not any more, alas. Not since Trump appeared on the field.

Lacking all sportsmanship in life as in politics, Trump has rejected the most basic of rules of democracy and its basic pillars, such as a free media and an independent judiciary. Since he entered politics in 2015, Trump first changed the rules of the game to suit his inter-

ests, and soon enough changed the game altogether. Instead of baseball, Trump switched to tougher, more confrontational and violent American football tactics, where he has been mounting aggressive offensives, fierce defence, and brutal sackings. Indeed, Trump has embraced less democratic, more combative and confrontational means in campaigning and governing. If he had won the 2020 elections, or if his minions had won the recent midterms elections, US democracy may have not been able to recover for some time — if at all. Thankfully, the country has pulled back from the edge, not once but twice, denying populist Trump the opportunity to demolish their liberal democracy. In fact, it is easy to see the feeling of *schadenfreude* among many of his detractors within the Republican Party: elated by his defeat, they might have been hoping for good riddance before he causes even more damage to the conservative movement. But Trump's determination to run again for president may well take the Republican Party to the brink. Enjoying the strong and unwavering loyalty of some 40 percent of Republican voters, Trump is sure to present the GOP with an "after me, the flood"-type ultimatum: Nominate me or risk devastation. Although it is too early to tell, Trump may in fact get his way against a number of less committed and less-known candidates. And if an ageing President Biden insists on running again at the age of 82, well, Trump may have a real chance of bulldozing him come 2024. The ramifications of a vengeful Trump returning to the White House for the country and the world may be too hard to fathom at this stage. But some things are clear: It would be a victory for the anti-democratic insurrectionist ultra-right faction that stormed Congress on January 6, 2021. It would be a victory for racism and hate. For too long Trump has managed to fail successfully. It is high time he fails miserably, once and for all.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2022/11/16/trump-return-push-republicans-brink>

Lt Gen Faiz Hamid goes for early retirement: sources



Lieutenant General Faiz Hamid — former intelligence chief and the current commander of Bahawalpur Corps — has decided to take early retirement, Geo News reported on Saturday, citing sources. News of Lt General Hamid's retirement comes a day after family sources said that Pakistan Army's Chief of General Staff (CGS) Lt General Azhar Abbas had sought early retirement as well. The two army men were listed among the six army officers nominated by the General Headquarters for the army chief's post. CGS Lt Gen Azhar Abbas decided to bid farewell, seeking early retirement, his brother confirmed to Geo News on Friday. "I confirm that Lt Gen Azhar Abbas has sought earlier retirement to maintain his grace, honour and dignity as a decorated officer of Pakistan Army," he said. "Known for his professionalism, farsightedness and leadership, Lt Gen Azhar Abbas has decided to bid farewell, seeking early retirement — true to his personality," a trusted family source said. It may be noted that Lt Gen Hamid was the director-general of Inter-Services Intelligence of Pakistan while Imran Khan was prime minister. The developments come two days after the federal government appointed General Asim Munir as the next chief of army staff and Gen Sahir Shamshad Mirza as chairman of the joint chiefs of staff committee (CJCSC). <https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/1014004-lt-gen-faiz-hamid-goes-for-early-retirement-sources>

Major General Jailed For Dorset School Fees Fraud



An Army major general who dishonestly claimed £48,000 for his children's boarding school fees has been jailed. Nick Welch, 57, claimed to live in London rather than Dorset, near their schools. Welch was convicted of fraud by a panel of senior officers after a four-week trial at Bulford Military Court and handed a 21-month sentence. He is believed to be the most senior officer to be court-martialled since 1815. Judge Advocate Gen Alan Large also sentenced Welch to retrospective dismissal from the Army, meaning he can no longer benefit from his rank of retired major general.

'Ignominious end'

Welch, who left the military in 2018, has been ordered to pay back the fraudulently claimed cash. The Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) allows children to remain at the same schools to enable their serving parent to be accompanied by their spouse as they are posted to different locations. However, it

cannot be claimed if a soldier's spouse is away from the military home for more than 90 days per year, the trial heard. The prosecution said Welch applied for the allowance on the basis both he and his wife would not be living close to the children. But it said his wife Charlotte actually spent most of her time at a cottage in Blandford Forum, Dorset, close to the £37,000-a-year Clayesmore School and the £22,500-a-year Hanford School. An investigation was launched after a neighbour told authorities about the family's absence from London. Judge Large said: "A disciplined organisation such as the Army relies on those in rank and authority to set an example and to be beyond reproach. "The higher your rank, the more important it is that you uphold the values and standards of the Army in which you serve and when an officer of the rank of major general offends as you have, the potential to erode discipline and undermine morale is considerable." Welch joined the Army in 1984 and when he retired he held the position

of the assistant chief of general staff at Ministry of Defence (MoD) headquarters in London.

'Unimpeachable integrity'

He had been awarded medals for his service in Northern Ireland, Afghanistan and for long service with good conduct. Judge Large told him: "In stark contrast to the events leading to your conviction in this trial, you had a highly successful military career, served your country with distinction on operations and you were a fine ambassador for your service and nation." During the trial, Welch denied being dishonest and said his wife was living with him for the majority of the time. His barrister, Sarah Jones QC, had argued that the CEA system and the 90-day rule were a "mess" and not strictly enforced. Miss Jones said the sentence would "shake the foundations of the man and what he has achieved and what he has failed in two things he cared about most". She said his career had been "brought to an ignominious end and his family life has been shattered as his children are distraught and his wife puts a brave face on things". Welch was remorseful and acknowledged "he had not taken enough care", she added. A character reference from the former Commander of Joint Forces Command, General Sir Richard Barrons, said Welch was of "unimpeachable integrity".

But prosecutor Sarah Clarke QC said he had attempted to manipulate the figures regarding his family's locations to cover up his dishonesty. Welch will spend half his sentence in prison before being released on licence. Following his sentencing, an MoD spokesperson said: "It has been proven in this case that retired Major General Nicholas Welch OBE did commit fraud and he has been sentenced accordingly."

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-dorset-56538334>

China's daily COVID cases hit record high: health bureau

China's daily COVID cases have hit a record high since the beginning of the pandemic, official data showed Thursday, as the country works to curb the spread with snap lockdowns, mass testing and travel restrictions

BEIJING: China's daily COVID cases have hit a record high since the beginning of the pandemic, official data showed Thursday, as the country works to curb the spread with snap lockdowns, mass testing and travel restrictions. China recorded a total of 31,444 domestic cases Wednesday, of which 27,517 were asymptomatic, the National Health Bureau said. The numbers are relatively small when compared with China's vast population of 1.4 billion. But under Beijing's strict zero-COVID policy, even tiny outbreaks can shut down entire cities and place contacts of infected patients into strict quarantine. The unrelenting policy has caused fatigue and resentment among swathes of the population as the pandemic nears its third year, sparking sporadic protests and hitting productivity in the world's second-largest economy. Wednesday's figures exceed the 29,317 domestic infections recorded in mid-April when megacity Shanghai was under lockdown, with residents struggling to buy food and access medical care.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/1013255-chinas-daily-covid-cases-hit-record-high-health-bureau>

Canada: Why the country wants to bring in 1.5m immigrants by 2025

By: Robin Levinson-King

Canada is betting big on immigration to fill the gap in its economy left by aging Baby Boomers leaving the workforce - but not everyone is on board with bringing in so many people from abroad. Earlier this month, the federal government announced an aggressive plan to take in 500,000 immigrants a year by 2025, with almost 1.5 million new immigrants coming to the country over the next three years. This plan would see Canada welcome about eight-times the number of permanent residents each year - per population - than the UK, and four-times more than its southern neighbour, the United States. But a recent poll shows that there is also anxiety about welcoming in so many newcomers.

Canada bets big

For many years, Canada has tried to attract permanent residents - landed immigrants who have the right to stay in the country indefinitely but who are not citizens - to keep the population and the economy growing. Last year, the country took in 405,000 permanent residents - the most in its entire history. The reasons are in, some ways, about simple math. Like many western nations, Canada has an aging population with a lower birth rate. What that means is that if the country wants to grow, instead of shrink, it will have to bring in immigrants. Immigration already accounts for practically all of the country's labour force growth, and by 2032, it is expected to account for all of the country's population growth too, according to a government news release. Earlier this month, the government announced that by 2025, they hope to bring in 500,000 new immigrants a year, up about 25% from 2021 numbers.

A unique place in the world

Today, about one in four Canadians have come to the country as an immigrant, the highest among G7 nations. Compare that to the US, known colloquially as the world's melting pot, where only 14% are an immigrant. The UK also has an immigrant population of about 14%. Madeleine Sumption, director of the Migration Observatory at Oxford University, said these numbers do not mean the UK is behind in immigration, but rather than Canada is a bit of an "outlier".

The UK, a small island with twice the population of Canada, already has high population density, while Canada, which has a population of just over 38 million and one of the largest land masses in the world, has room to grow. "Generally the UK has not had an objective of increasing population in the same way that Canada (has) done," she said. Geoffrey Cameron, a political scientist at McMaster University, said that while many countries, like Canada, face lower birth rates and an aging population, the success of any immigration system relies on popular support.

"The limiting factor for most countries is public opinion," he said. In the US, where the number of migrants entering the country through the southern border has reached an all-time high, there is overall a concern about having more immigrants than there are jobs.

Pre-Brexit, a wave of European Union migrants from eastern Europe moving to the UK created a backlash against migration. But over the past several years, Ms Sumption said, popular opinion for immigration has risen, in part because people believe the country has better control over who comes in than they did before. Canada, meanwhile, has historically had very high support for immi-

gration. "I think part of the reason for that is that there is a degree of public trust that immigration to Canada is well-managed by the government and also is managed in a way that serves Canada's interests," Mr Cameron said. But that does not mean that there are no immigration concerns. In recent years, an influx of migrants at the US border has caused some controversy, and the emergence of a new fringe right-wing party in 2018, the People's Party of Canada, kept the topic in the national conversation in the lead-up to the 2019 federal election. Different parts of Canada also have different attitudes towards immigration. When the government announced its aggressive targets of up to 500,000 new immigrants a year, the province of Quebec, which gets to set its own immigration limits, said it would not take in more than 50,000 a year. That would mean that Quebec, which has 23% of the country's population, would only be taking in 10% of the country's immigrants. Quebec Premier Francois Legault said he is concerned more immigrants would weaken the French language in the province. "Already at 50,000 it is difficult to stop the decline of French," he said. And while it's true that Canada may have more room to grow, some places are still feeling the crunch. Major cities like Toronto and Vancouver - where about 10% of the population currently lives - have affordable housing crises. In a poll of 1,537 Canadians conducted by Leger and the Association of Canadian Studies, three out of four said they were somewhat or very concerned about the affect the new plan would have on housing and social services. Almost half, 49%, said the targets were too high, while 31% said that they were the right number.

The Canadian approach

22 Another way that Canada is unique in the western world is its emphasis on economic immigration - about half of Canada's permanent residents are welcomed because of their skills, not under family reunification. By

2025, the government hopes to make that 60%. This is partly because of how the Canadian system was designed, said Mr Cameron. In the 1960s, Canada shifted from a system of quotas, where different countries were assigned different targets, to a points-based system that gave preference to highly-skilled immigrants who would more easily contribute to Canada's economy. "The same kind of principles guide the system today," he told the BBC. Globally, this is unique, although Australia and New Zealand have similar systems in place. In the UK, a bit over one in four permanent residents are welcomed through the economic stream. In the US, only about 20% of green cards are issued for economic reasons. Both countries have signalled they hope to increase the proportion of economic immigrants entering their respective countries, but a big difference for both countries is that most economic immigrants must be sponsored by their employers. In Canada, a job offer can count towards your total points, but it is not necessary. While the UK recently switched to a points-based system, Ms Sumption said that in effect, it remains similar to their old system, which gave preference to immigrants who had job offers in place.

Can Canada meet its targets?

Not only does Canada take in more economic-class immigrants than other major nations, the country is also one of the top for refugee resettlement, accepting 20,428 refugees in 2021. But while the country has set ambitious targets for the future, history has shown it does not always meet its own expectations. In 2021, Canada had a target of resettling about 59,000 refugees - almost three times as many as the country took in. In an interview with the CBC, immigration minister Sean Fraser said the gap was largely due to Covid-related border closures both in Canada and around the globe. By 2023, Canada aims to help resettle 76,000 refugees.

www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-63643912

Shadow of hot and cold wars



By: Maleeha Lodhi

FEW G20 summits have taken place in the shadow of a hot and cold war. The conflict in Ukraine and US-China tensions both cast a shadow over the annual meeting of the Group of 20 countries in Bali. President Vladimir Putin didn't attend the summit, where Russia's aggression against Ukraine loomed large on the agenda. Geopolitical tensions unleashed by the conflict as well as its far-reaching fallout on the global economy, including disruption of supply chains and soaring energy and food prices, were top concerns at the summit. Geopolitics dominated the gathering of the world's largest economies. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy addressed the summit by video, making an emphatic call for Russia to withdraw its troops and end the war, but rejecting peace proposals that would erode his country's "sovereignty, territory and independence".

The joint statement issued at the close of the summit declared that "today's era must not be of war" and that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons was "inadmissible" — a reference to Putin's threat to resort to the nuclear option if the Ukraine crisis escalated. The statement sent an important message to Moscow. But it was the meeting between President Joe Biden and President Xi Jinping on the eve of the summit that was more consequential for international stability, as it indicated a deceleration of tensions between the two global powers. The opening statements by both leaders set a positive tone in their first face-to-face meeting since Biden assumed the presidency. Both pledged to improve relations, which had sunk to a historic low in recent years, raising concerns across the world about the advent of a new Cold War.

Xi told Biden that the world is at an inflection point, which obliged their countries to chart the right course for the relationship and "elevate" it. The present state of China-US relations, he asserted, was not in the fundamental interests of the two countries and needed to be on a "healthy and stable track". Biden said it was "critical" for the two to work together on urgent and global issues.

He later told a press conference that he was not looking for a conflict and that US-China competition had to be managed "responsibly" to avoid a new Cold War. Both leaders came to this meeting strengthened in their respective positions — Xi after securing an unprecedented third term in power, and Biden after an unexpectedly strong electoral performance by the Democratic Party, which retained control of the Senate in midterm Congressional elections. Both leaders have known each other long before they reached the helm of their respective country. That personal factor may have contributed to good atmospherics for the meeting. One outcome of their three-hour-long parleys was agreement to increase communication between their countries and "empower key senior officials" to engage on global issues such as food security and climate change.

The Biden-Xi meeting on the summit sidelines marked a serious effort to stabilise their turbulent relations.

This did not, of course, mean their differences narrowed over the contentious issues and disputes that divide them — Taiwan, trade disputes, technology curbs and military postures. Indeed, both sides once again spelt out their respective red lines on Taiwan. Although Biden reiterated the US commitment to a One

China policy, he sounded a warning over what he described as China's coercive posture on Taiwan, which he claimed posed a threat to stability in the region. President Xi, for his part, welcomed Biden's assurance that Washington did not support Taiwanese independence, but made it clear that Taiwan was a core interest for China and "the first red line" which "must not be crossed in China-US relations". Before their meeting, a spokesman of the Chinese foreign ministry, in a tough statement, called on the US to "stop fudging, distorting and hollowing out the One China principle [and] strictly abide by the basic norms of international relations". For Asia-Pacific countries, as indeed for much of the world, the tentative bid to stabilise US-China relations was a welcome development as few, if any, of them want to be caught in the cross hairs of a dangerous confrontation. A top American official acknowledged the risk of unmanaged competition descending into conflict was of concern to US allies and partners in the region. For a global economy in turmoil and struggling with record inflation, an easing of US-China tensions is necessary to counter the blows from the Ukraine conflict and the trade/tech war between the two superpowers. The host of the summit, Indonesia's President Joko Widodo, stated clearly that "G20 must be the catalyst for inclusive economic recovery ... [and] not divide the world into parts. We must not allow the world to fall into another Cold War". He urged concrete action and collaboration to heal the ailing global economy at a summit whose theme was 'Recover together, recover stronger'. The declaration issued by G20 leaders said the world economy was facing "unparalleled multidimensional crises", and called for steps to curb inflation, protect the vulnerable, calibrate monetary tightening and avoid high currency volatility. But no plan for global recovery was agreed because the economic interests of its members are so varied.

In fact, differences among G20 nations, especially on the war in Ukraine, were laid bare in the leaders' statement issued after the summit. Recognising that the G20 is "not the forum to resolve security issues", the 17-page document acknowledged that "there were other views and different assessments of the [Ukraine] situation and sanctions" even as "most members strongly condemned the war in Ukraine". Nevertheless, Russia's aggression against Ukraine was denounced in the "strongest of terms", which it said was damaging the global economy, especially by fueling inflation and exacerbating energy and food shortages across the world. While many Western commentators saw the most important outcome of the G20 summit to be Putin's increasing international isolation, the global gathering may well be remembered more for the Biden-Xi meeting on the sidelines, which opened an opportunity to improve US-China relations and move the two global powers toward 'responsible competition'.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1722188>

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Brexit: Rishi Sunak rules out deal that relies on EU law alignment

By: Nick Eardley



The UK will not pursue any post-Brexit relationship with the EU "that relies on alignment with EU laws", Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has said. It follows reports that some in government want to move towards a Swiss-style deal, with less trading friction and more migration. Switzerland can trade easily with the bloc, but must follow some EU rules.

Mr Sunak told business leaders that control of migration was one of the immediate benefits of Brexit. Speaking at the CBI conference in Birmingham he said: "I voted for Brexit, I believe in Brexit. "I know that Brexit can deliver, and is already delivering, enormous benefits and opportunities for the country."

He argued that the UK was now able to "have proper control of our borders". He also said the UK was free to pursue trade deals with "the world's fastest-growing economies". Over the weekend, The Sunday Times reported that senior government figures were considering pursuing a Swiss-style deal. Government ministers as well as Downing Street have denied the story, but it still prompted concern from some Brexit-supporting Conservatives. Former minister Simon Clarke tweeted: "I very much hope and believe this

isn't something under consideration. We settled the question of leaving the European Union, definitively, in 2019." And Lord David Frost, who negotiated the existing deal, said: "I hope the government thinks better of these plans, fast." Switzerland is not a member of the EU, but does have a several agreements with the trading bloc, and has access to the single market for most of its industries. It also pays into the EU budget and has freedom of movement, meaning EU citizens can live and work in the country.

Last week, Chancellor Jeremy Hunt said he hoped the UK would be able to remove trade barriers with the EU but added that it would "take time". "Having unfettered trade with our neighbours and countries all over the world is very beneficial to growth," he said.

He was speaking after delivering his Autumn Statement in which he confirmed the UK was in recession and that the economy was due to shrink further. The chancellor's statement was accompanied by an economic forecast from the Office for Budget Responsibility which said Brexit had had a "significant adverse impact" on UK trade. Does Rishi Sunak really want to reopen the Brexit Pandora's box?

Not if you listen to ministers on the airwaves, spokespeople in Downing Street and the PM himself this morning. You can understand why. The Conservative Party has been a pretty fractious place in the last few months. Revisiting the Brexit question would throw all the debates from 2016 onwards back into the open. Labour's leadership don't want to spend months talking about it either. But even if the PM isn't going to revisit a Swiss-style arrangement, the debates about post-Brexit Britain aren't going away. There are questions over migration, Northern Ireland and broader trade with Europe. Reducing friction is only likely if there are other compromises with Brussels. So even if the fundamentals aren't back on the table, parts of the debate over Brexit are. Asked if Brexit had damaged UK trade, Home Office Minister Robert Jenrick told the BBC it was hard to separate the disruption caused by leaving the EU, the coronavirus pandemic and the war in Ukraine. "There will be challenges and disruption as a result of fundamentally altering our relationship with the EU," he said but added that it was too soon to say whether or not that is going to be to the UK's long-term economic disadvantage. He said the government was determined to take advantage of the opportunities provided by Brexit, pointing to plans for the regulatory regime of the financial services, life sciences and the green economy. He also insisted the government did not want to make any fundamental changes to the UK's relationship with the EU, arguing that the country had settled on the right approach. The message was reiterated by No 10 who said Mr Sunak was "categorical" the deal would not be fundamentally changed. Specifically the Downing Street spokesperson said there would be no reintroduction of freedom of movement, no "unnecessary" payments to the EU and "nothing that limits the UK's freedom to do trade deals".

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-63700905>

Google Play Store services will no longer be available in Pakistan after Dec 1



Google Play Store services will no longer be available to Pakistani users after December 1 as the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) has suspended the direct carrier billing (DCB) mechanism. Users will not have to use their bank cards to avail the services and most won't be able to download apps from Google Play Store because of limited credit card facilities. The Telecom ministry, PTA and cellular service operators have approached the SBP to seek revocation of the step, since the move will cause issues for customers. "It is pertinent to mention here that we all understand the prevailing challenge of worsening economic conditions of the country and thus are open to working in an amicable way with the Regulator (SBP); as we are already working with them in case of the telecom sector imports related transactions to navigate through these testing times," said the letter sent by the telcos to the SBP. Tech giants like Google, Amazon and Meta are being impacted by non-payments from Pakistan, which owes \$34 million to international service providers, and might be moved to discontinue their services altogether.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2388316/google-play-store-services-will-no-longer-be-available-in-pakistan-after-dec-1>

Mohamed Al Fayed now - £1.6bn wealth, Harrods change and rule about Dodi's flat

Billionaire Mohamed Al Fayed's close ties with the royal family features heavily in season five of *The Crown*, especially his son Dodi's relationship with Princess Diana

In the 1990s, Egyptian businessman Mohamed Al Fayed was one of the richest people in the world, with an impressive list of businesses and property to his name. As the owner of luxury department store Harrods and his involvement with high-profile charities brought him into the same circles as the royal family, including Princess Diana. The story of his rise in power and incredible wealth features heavily in season five of *The Crown*, focusing on his close ties to The Firm. His eldest son, Dodi, was friends with Princess Diana for about a decade before romance blossomed during a yacht holiday in the south of France. However they were denied the opportunity to spend their lives together, dying side-by-side in the horrifying Paris car crash. Mr Al Fayed claims the couple were just hours away from announcing their engagement when they died, something the late princess' friends deny. Now, 25 years after losing his beloved son, we look at Mohamed Al Fayed's life now, including his staggering wealth and high-profile business deals.

Massive wealth and business deals.

In the past few decades, Mr Al Fayed has sold off several of his high-profile businesses. Back in 2010, he sold Harrods to Qatar for a staggering \$2.4billion. While he said he would never part ways with his beloved department store, it was a row over dividends and pension funds which finally showed him it was time to say goodbye. Speaking to the *Evening Standard* at the time, he said: "Of course it makes me sad ... you can go ask everyone, people don't want me to go. But first of all I can't take this. I am 77 years old, right. I have children, I have grandchildren, you know ... I have done it. And time for me now to rest. And enjoy." Three years later, in

2013, he also said goodbye to Fulham Football Club, which he sold to billionaire Shahid Khan for \$300m. However he's still the proud owner of the famous Ritz Paris Hotel, regarded by many as the most beautiful in the world. In 2016 it underwent a massive refurbishment and remains as popular as ever. In May of this year, *Forbes* listed his wealth at \$1.9billion - which is about £1.6billion.

Investigations into Paris car crash

Following the tragedy, Mr Al Fayed insisted the crash was not an accident and hired an expensive team of investigations to look into what happened. A report by former Met Police commissioner Lord Stevens published in 2006 rejected the murder claims voiced by some, including Mr Al-Fayed's. The inquests into the deaths finished in 2008, with a jury returning a verdict that the 'People's Princess' and her boyfriend were unlawfully killed.

In 2013, Scotland Yard concluded that there was "no credible evidence" of any SAS involvement in the death, following claims that the couple were murdered by a member of British special forces. Grieving son's death Speaking on the 20th anniversary of the crash, a friend told *The Sun* that Dodi's apartment remains the same as it did at the time of his death. They told the newspaper: "He often spends hours on end sitting with Dodi. After 20 years he still misses him terribly. And when he is in London he will take time out to visit Dodi's apartment. Not one thing inside has changed since Dodi died. He will not allow anyone to move anything. "The apartment is cleaned but it is still exactly the same as when Dodi and Diana used to spend time there."

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/mohamed-al-fayed-now-16bn-28416446>

British Bangladeshi Achievement: Mansoor Ahmad received British Empire Medal



British Bangladeshi Mansoor Ahmad was presented with the prestigious **British Empire Medal (BEM)** at an Honours Presentation 2022 held on behalf of His Majesty The King in the New Armouries, The Tower of London on Friday 18th November, 2022 for services to the community of London Borough of Merton during the pandemic Covid-19. He received this Medal from The Lord-Lieutenant of Greater London, Sir Kenneth OBE, who is His Majesty The King's representative in Greater London and is charged with upholding the dignity of the Crown. Mansoor would later be invited to attend at the King's Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace to meet His Majesty The King. Earlier this year in June he was honoured of having his name published in the late monarch, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second's Birthday Honours List 2022.

Being a leader of nine members' team of a school in Merton, Mansoor Ahmad generously supported the British Community during the challenging period of the Covid-19 pan-

demic. He has provided a telephone contact service for older civilians; provided medication, taken part in food bank projects, and has offered advice on civilian welfare entitlements during the lockdown. As an active team leader he, during these challenging phase has enthusiastically been taken part in helping around the home to do essential shopping for the community members & vulnerable older people; delivering hand sanitizer, gloves, cleaning products etc. He managed social contact with advice and support on matters such as health and welfare entitlements whilst the lockdown is in place. Mansoor Ahmad is the first British Bangladeshi to be honoured with the British Citizen Awards (BCA) Roll of Honour 2021, receiving the BCAv – Medal of Honour at The Palace of Westminster Official Presentation ceremony in House of Lords, UK Parliament for his amazing endeavours and incredible inspirational and voluntary contribution to the British Community. Mansoor was also awarded with the House of Lords British Community Honours



Award (BCHA) in October 2019, held at the UK Parliament, for his enormous support towards British Society. He was awarded with the Mayor of London Borough of Merton's Covid-19 Award in December 2020 for his outstanding local contributions, and for the noteworthy differences which he made in people's lives during the challenging period of the pandemic. Mansoor has also been received with some other awards & recognitions at local levels – like School Governors' Awards, Community Awards etc. for his contribution, efforts and supports towards the British community. Expressing his feelings and reaction Mansoor said - *I am extremely humbled, honoured, and delighted to be receiving this prestigious award, the British Empire Medal for services to the community of Merton during Covid-19. Today I express all of my gratitude to God Almighty. This award of mine is the product of the grace of God, and of the continued prayers, guidance, and inspiration of our beloved spiritual leader Head of the Worldwide of Ahmadiyya Muslim Community in Islam his holiness Mirza Masroor Ahmad* . Mansoor Ahmad migrated to the United Kingdom from Bangladesh in February 2007 under the British Government's Highly Skilled Migration Programme. He has currently been serving as Manager of Accounts & Finance with Al Shirkatul Islamiyyah, one of the largest charities in the UK. He is a life devotee of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association UK.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

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Hoping for an encouraging response for our readers for this noble cause.

May Allah be with you - Amen

Russia-Ukraine war: List of key events, day 272

As the Russia-Ukraine war enters its 272nd day, we take a look at the main developments.

Life in Ukraine

Ukrainians braced for winter with little or no power in several areas including Kyiv where temperatures have already dropped below freezing. Russian air attacks have crippled half of the country's energy capacity. "Stock up on warm clothes, blankets, think about options that will help you wait a long outage," said Sergey Kovalenko, the head of YASNO, which provides energy for Kyiv. Ukrainians are most likely to live with blackouts at least until the end of March, said Kovalenko. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said half of the country's power capacity had been knocked out by Russian rockets. As they head into a cold winter, residents of a bombed-out Ukrainian village say they appreciate graffiti artist Banksy's mural of a warm bath. The mural shows a man scrubbing his back in a bathtub.

Fighting

Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak said Russia was bombarding Kherson city from across the Dnieper River, now that its troops had fled. "There is no military logic: they just want to take revenge on the locals." There are no immediate nuclear safety or security concerns at the Russian-held Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine despite shelling at the weekend that caused widespread damage, the UN atomic watchdog said after its experts toured the site. Zelenskyy urged NATO members to guarantee the protection of Ukraine's nuclear plants from Russian sabotage. Russia's leading war hawks rallied behind the decision for Mos-



cow's forces to retreat from the Ukrainian city of Kherson this month, but the commander who argued in favour of the move is now under growing pressure to prove it was worth it. The Kremlin said it was not discussing calling up more Russian soldiers to fight in Ukraine through the second round of mobilisation.

War crime accusations

Ukrainian police and prosecutors have identified four places in Kherson where they suspect Russian forces tortured people before abandoning the city, the prosecutor general's office said. The United States is monitoring allegations that Ukrainian forces summarily executed Russian troops. Russia's defence ministry cited videos circulating on social media that allegedly showed Ukrainian soldiers executing Russian prisoners of war. The Kremlin said it would bring to justice those responsible.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/11/22/russia-ukraine-war-list-of-key-events-day-272>

President Xi humiliates Trudeau as he is caught on camera tearing strips off Canadian PM that their conversation at G20 'has been leaked to the papers... it's not appropriate'

By: Rachael Bunyan

Toe-curling footage has emerged of Chinese President Xi Jinping humiliating Justin Trudeau with a dressing down on the sidelines of the G20 conference. The two leaders were caught on camera having a heated discussion at the global summit in Bali today, with Xi tearing into the Canadian Prime Minister.

Xi appeared visibly frustrated as he confronted Trudeau about how details of an earlier meeting between them, which was held yesterday, had been leaked to the press by Canadian government sources. To add to the tensions, a planned meeting between Rishi Sunak and Xi was called off today, hours after the new prime minister was urged not to 'go soft' on the Chinese premier. Number 10 expected a 'frank' meeting with the 'authoritarian leadership intent on reshaping the international order' but there does not appear to be any thawing in relations between China and the West. Canadian sources had reported that Trudeau raised 'serious concerns' with Xi over suspected domestic interference by China during their first talks together in more than three years. But Xi, trying to mask his anger with a pointed smile, was filmed by Canadian journalists telling an increasingly awkward-looking Trudeau: 'Everything that we discussed yesterday has been leaked to the papers and that's not appropriate.' A stunned Trudeau, almost at a loss for words, just nodded as Xi continued his rant through a translator. The Chinese President looked pointedly at Trudeau and added: 'And that's not the way the conversation was conducted.' Trudeau, knowing that details of his meeting

with Xi had been leaked by his Canadian government sources, did not address the Chinese President's concerns and instead gave a hapless response. 'Well in Canada, we believe in free and open and frank dialogue, which we will continue to have,' he eventually managed to say. 'We will continue to look to work constructively together but there will be things that we will disagree on.' While Trudeau spoke, Xi looked frustrated and refrained from making eye contact with the Canadian Prime Minister. Xi then smiled broadly and reached out and shook Trudeau's hand to end the excruciating exchange. Seemingly stunned by the onslaught, Trudeau wandered off alone while Xi smiled at the camera. It comes after a Canadian government source said Trudeau raised 'serious concerns' over suspected domestic interference by China in his first talks with Xi on Tuesday in more than three years. Ottawa has in recent weeks accused the Chinese government of interfering with its democratic institutions and judicial system, after years of strained relations between the two countries. Today, Trudeau said he had discussed the issue of Chinese interference in Canadian affairs again today on the sidelines of the summit. This conversation was the one filmed by Canadian journalists. 'I have raised the issue of interference with our citizens,' Trudeau told a news conference on the Indonesian resort island on Wednesday. Trudeau met Xi on Tuesday, the first face-to-face dialogue between the two leaders since 2019. He said he told the Chinese leader, who last month

secured an historic third term, 'it is important to be able to have a dialogue about this'. Canadian federal police said on Thursday they were investigating so-called police stations set up illegally by China in the North American country. Trudeau also said last week China was playing 'aggressive games' after Canadian broadcaster Global News reported on a 'clandestine network' of federal election candidates funded by Beijing. 'It's extremely important we continue to stand up for the things that are important for Canadians,' Trudeau told reporters. He said he also highlighted 'areas of mutual concern and geopolitical challenges' in his talk with Xi, including the war in Ukraine and tensions on the Korean peninsula. China's foreign ministry declined on Wednesday to confirm any details of the conversation between the two leaders. Ministry spokeswoman Mao Ning said she had no information when asked about the meeting. Diplomatic tensions between Canada and China have been running high since the detention of Huawei Technologies executive Meng Wanzhou in 2018 and Beijing's subsequent arrest of two Canadians on spying charges.

While the standoff ended when all three people were released last year, relations have remained sour. Citing national security concerns, Ottawa banned the use of 5G gear from Huawei in May and earlier this month ordered three Chinese companies to divest from critical minerals in Canada. Trudeau and Xi last met in June of 2019 on the sidelines of another G20 in Osaka, Japan. The met three other times previously, once in 2015 on the sidelines of the G20 in Turkey, and twice during official visits to Beijing in 2016 and 2017. The Canadian government is poised to launch a so-called Indo-Pacific Strategy that

Foreign Minister Melanie Joly says will challenge China on human rights, while seeking cooperation with the world's second-biggest economy on climate change and other shared goals. Meanwhile, a planned G20 meeting

between British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Xi has been cancelled due to 'scheduling issues', a Downing Street spokesperson said today. The schedule at the summit on the Indonesian island of Bali has been disrupted by an emergency meeting called after a missile killed two people in Poland. Sunak and Xi had been due to hold the first meeting between British and Chinese leaders for almost five years, with Sunak's office saying beforehand that the prime minister would seek to establish a 'frank and constructive relationship'. Relations between London and Beijing have deteriorated in the last decade as Britain expressed alarm that an open door to Chinese investment could pose national security risks. London had also criticised Beijing's trade practices and human rights record in Hong Kong and Xinjiang. In a statement released before the planned meeting, Downing Street said the challenges posed by China were 'systemic' and 'long-term'. 'China is a country with fundamentally different values to ours, with an authoritarian leadership intent on reshaping the international order,' it said.

However Sunak was expected to take a more nuanced approach to Beijing than his predecessor Liz Truss, who had said that China must play by the rules. 'None of the issues the Prime Minister is discussing at the G20 - the global economy, the impacts of the war in Ukraine on food and energy security, climate change and global health - can be addressed without coordinated action by all the world's major economies. That includes China,' his office had said. Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said she had no information to offer on the cancellation of the meeting between Xi and Sunak.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-11434835/President-Xi-humiliates-Trudeau-caught-camera-taking-strips-Canadian-PM.html>

On eve of World Cup, FIFA chief accuses Qatar's critics of hypocrisy



FIFA WORLD CUP
Qatar 2022



FIFA president Gianni Infantino accused critics of World Cup host Qatar's treatment of migrant workers of hypocrisy on Saturday, adding that engagement was the only way to improve human rights. In lengthy, and sometimes angry, opening remarks at a news conference on the eve of the start of the tournament, Infantino rounded on European critics of the host nation over the issues of migrant workers and LGBT rights. "I am European. For what we have been doing for 3,000 years around the world, we should be apologising for the next 3,000 years before giving moral lessons," he said. "I have difficulties understanding the criticism. We have to invest in helping these people, in education and to give them a better future and more hope. We should all educate ourselves, many things are not perfect but reform and change take time. "This one-sided moral lesson is just hypocrisy," he said. "It is not easy to take the criticism of a decision that was made 12 years ago. Doha is ready, Qatar is ready and of course, it will be the best World Cup ever." Infantino drew on his own experience as the child of migrant workers growing up in Switzerland,

saying he had been bullied for being Italian and for having red hair and freckles. "I know what it feels to be discriminated [against], I know what it's like to be bullied," he said. "What do you do? You start engaging, this is what we should be doing ... The only way of getting results is by engaging. "I believe the changes that have happened in Qatar would maybe not have happened, or not at least at that speed, [without the World Cup]. Obviously, we need to keep pressure, obviously, we need to try and make things better." Infantino's remarks sparked a backlash from human rights advocates. "In brushing aside legitimate human rights criticisms, Gianni Infantino is dismissing the enormous price paid by migrant workers to make his flagship tournament possible — as well as FIFA's responsibility for it," said Steve Cockburn, of Amnesty International. Cockburn said demands for fair compensation should not be "treated as some sort of culture war". Nick McGeehan of migrant worker advocacy group Fair Square described Infantino's comments as "crass" and "clumsy". Qatar has said that it is a welcoming country that does not

discriminate against people and has denied accusations of abuse of workers. Infantino also defended the presence of Iran at the tournament despite the current spate of deadly protests there sparked by the death of a woman in police custody in September.

"It's not two regimes playing against each other, it's not two ideologies playing against each other, it's two football teams," he said.

"If we don't have at least football to bring us together ... which world are we going to live in? In Iran there are 80 million people, are they all bad? Are they all monsters?"

Beer ban

Addressing Friday's decision to ban the sale of alcoholic beer at stadiums during the tournament, Infantino said FIFA had failed to persuade the Qatar government to stand by the original decision to allow it. "We tried and that is why I give you the late change of policy," he said. "We tried to see if it was possible." Infantino said he had received assurances from the highest level of the Qatari government that LGBT people would be welcomed in the country for the World Cup. Same-sex relations are illegal and punishable by up to three years of jail time in Qatar. Some soccer stars have raised concerns over the rights of fans travelling for the event, especially LGBT+ individuals and women, whom rights groups say Qatari laws discriminate against. In an extraordinary end to the news conference, Bryan Swanson, FIFA's director of media relations, took the microphone to defend Infantino. "I've seen a lot of criticism of Gianni Infantino since I joined FIFA, in particular from the LGBTI community," he said. "I'm sitting here in a privileged position on a global stage as a gay man here in Qatar. He has received assurances that everyone will be welcome ... Just because Gianni Infantino is not gay, does not mean he does not care. He does care."

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1721896>

Amazon to shut down food-delivery business in India



NEW DELHI: Amazon Inc will shut down a food-delivery business it was testing in India, the e-commerce giant said on Friday, a day after it announced the winding down of its online learning platform for high-school students in the country. Amazon Food, a business the company was trialing in the southern Indian city of Bengaluru, would be discontinued, it said. "As part of our annual operating planning review process, we have made the decision to discontinue Amazon Food," a company spokesperson told Reuters. "We don't take these decisions lightly. We are discontinuing these programs in a phased manner to take care of current customers and partners." The Economic Times earlier reported that the business would be discontinued from Dec. 29 onwards, citing a communication from the company to its restaurant partners. On Thursday, Amazon said it was shutting down the Amazon Academy platform in India that was launched early last year amid a boom in virtual learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. An uncertain macro-economic environment is making the e-commerce giant review its global workforce, as the company plans to lay off around 10,000 employees in corporate and technology roles, Reuters reported last week.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2388458/amazon-to-shut-down-food-delivery-business-in-india>

Forced Marriage: A Violation of Human Rights

By **Munazza Abbasi LL.B (Hons)**



The national laws of any country prohibit the practice of forced marriages. Under Article 12 of the Human Rights Act 1998: “Men and women of marriageable age have the right to marry and to found a family, according to the national laws governing the exercise of this right.” Conducting such a marriage procedure therefore is an overt violation of this right. Article 5 further offers victims the right to protection from deprivation of liberty and security. Where the acts comprised in coercing someone into marriage consist of some element of physical pressure being applied to the victim, it may lead to an infringement of the negative right to be protected from torture: No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. (Article 3, HRA 1998). Some cases of forced marriages involve the infringement of the right to prohibition of slavery and forced labour found in Article 4 of the European Convention for the protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (ECHR). One such case highlights such an infringement, where the wives of three sons were treated as “slaves and dogs”. They were kept as prisoners inside the mother in law's home, and were forced to carry out 'gruelling work' all day long. The three wives were ignored by their husbands and exploited by their mother in law. This ordeal began in 2001 when the first wife arrived in England from Pakistan. She was ordered to sew day and night since she arrived in Britain. This was in return for money, which she did not receive a penny of, as her mother in law would keep it. All three were denied access to the outside world, with their calls being monitored by the mother in law, and were beaten if refused to work.

This inhumane behavior and imprisonment of the wives continued for over a decade before their ordeal was brought to light in 2006, when one of the children of the wives informed his teacher that his mother was beaten by his grandmother. The second wife escaped onto the street where the police was informed by neighbors and the third was taken back to Pakistan and abandoned there. Although the mother in law was imprisoned in 2009 for 7 years, the sensitivity around the definition of forced marriages can be examined. This case may not be considered as a forced marriage case, as initially the wives agreed to the marriage to take place as they genuinely believed they would be married happily with their husbands. This is regardless of the fact that neither of the husbands ever had intentions of living as their husbands. In extreme circumstances, a victim's right to life, contained in Article 1 is violated, where the perpetrator murders the victim for refusing to marry the spouse of their choice. Violence against Women - Gender Discrimination: Forced marriage is commonly a gender related issue, with women and girls being the core subjects of abuse of the customary practice. It is mainly the rural women that are at risk of gender-based violence “because of traditional attitudes regarding the prevalence over any such belief based on culture or tradition that is seen to impede this right. Forced marriage falls within the definition of domestic violence provided by the Crown Prosecution Service. In most cases it constitutes child abuse, and in very rare cases may lead to non-consensual forced sexual abuse or emotional manipulation. The United Nations views the practice as a form of traf-

ficking, sexual slavery and exploitation. It also recognises it as child abuse where a child is forced into marriage (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989).

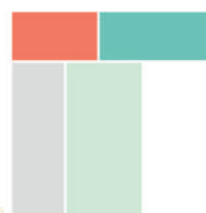
Forced marriage may further amount to crimes against humanity under customary international law. The inhumane act of forcing someone into marriage can be categorised under "odious offences in that they constitute a serious attack on human dignity or grave humiliation or a degradation of one or more human beings" (The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court Explanatory Memorandum). Although some people may perceive this practice as a private, personal, domestic, family, religious or cultural issue, it is nevertheless viewed in the eyes of the law as an unacceptable practice which is unjustifiable to any personal, religious or cultural belief, and is an apparent abuse of human rights. Perpetrators of this practice are inexcusable and are answerable to the law. It is a "gross transgression of individual integrity" (Sir Judge Peter Singer), and victims of such an atrocious practice are not licensed to abuse.

Culture vs. Religion

The issues arising from a forced marriage fall within the sphere of a cultural, more than a religious context. Religion is often used as an excuse to make decisions based on solely local interests that fail to take account of the effect of the decision on the wider community. Forced marriage is a victim of this, and is a practice that is often considered to be trivial by parochial members of a certain community, in comparison to the views of the grand scheme of the more liberal and open minded communities, who scrutinise the practice as immoral and unacceptable and is not a part of anyone's culture. A 19th Century British Anthropologist depicted culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." Religion is a factor that

can be inserted into the other capabilities element comprised in this socio-cultural anthropology. On the other hand, it may also be viewed that culture stems from religious beliefs. It is this diffusion of religion with social practices and cultural forms that allows forced marriages to elope as a religiously acceptable practice. However, this dire practice "cannot be justified on any religious or cultural basis" (FCO Human Rights Annual Report, 2004). Although the Western world regards forced marriages as a religious practice, no major world faith condones forced marriage and the element of consent being freely given by the spouse(s) to the marriage is a prerequisite of all marriages in major world religions, whether it is Christian, Muslim, Hindu or Sikh marriages. Mike O'Brien, Minister for Racial Equality, expressed that the government must respond sensitively to the issues of cultural diversity, but multicultural sensitivity is no excuse for moral blindness (House of Commons debate on Human Rights). In some countries, this traditional practice is perpetuated by culture and tradition that, often unknowingly, proves to be harmful to their own community. This is coupled with the occurrence of family violence, which is the most insidious forms of violence against women. This violence in the context of forced marriages consists of battering, sexual assault, mental and other forms of violence. Many individuals associate forced marriage as being a practice that is acceptable in Islam. However, Islamic Scholars have condemned the practice, declaring that it not permissible under Islamic law and fathers who coerce daughters into marriage should be jailed and not released 'until they change their minds. This stems from the Islamic view related by the Prophet Muhammed (peace be on him): A previously married woman shall not be married without being consulted and a virgin shall not be married without her consent (Bukhari). Due to the subordinate role of women that persist in many rural communi-

ties, these women often suffer disadvantage from gender discrimination on many levels. According to the Convention to Eliminate all forms of Discrimination Against Women 1979 (CEDAW), the State is under an obligation to ensure equality of men and women by granting them 'the same right to choose a spouse and enter into marriage only with their free and full consent.' Such a right is supported by the General Recommendation No.12 UN Committee on CEDAW, *where a women's right to choose a spouse and enter freely into marriage is guaranteed "central to her life and dignity and equality as a human being."* The proliferation of this innovative and ambitious treaty (CEDAW) was mainly to eliminate gender discrimination. An element of the imposition of this sanction is to uphold a woman's consent to wed. Contravention of such a right, consequently, leads to a subordination of women's civil liberties. Akin to the above, the right to be able to voluntarily choose a spouse is recognised in various other international human rights conventions, including Article 23 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966 and Article 10 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966 which mirrors the right to enter freely into a marriage discussed above. The Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages requires that all States to the Convention...
...should take all appropriate measures with a view to abolishing such customs, ancient laws and practices by ensuring, inter alia, complete freedom in the choice of a spouse. Such consent by the parties is to be expressed in person "after due publicity and in the presence of the authority competent to solemnize the marriage and of witnesses, as prescribed by law." The Convention, therefore, prohibits the use of coercion to impair the freedom of others to adopt a marriage procedure of their choice. (...to be continued).



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A brain expert shares his 7 'hard rules' for boosting memory and fighting off dementia

By: Marc Milstein

The average human brain shrinks by approximately 5% per decade after the age of 40. This can have a major impact on memory and focus. What's more, brain disorders are on the rise. In 2020, 54 million people worldwide had Alzheimer's disease or other dementias, and that number is expected to grow.

But serious mental decline doesn't have to be an inevitable part of aging. In fact, certain lifestyle factors have a greater impact than your genes do on whether you'll develop memory-related diseases. As a neuroscience researcher, here are seven hard rules I live by to keep my brain sharp and fight off dementia.

1. Keep blood pressure and cholesterol levels in check

Your heart beats roughly 115,000 times a day, and with every beat, it sends about 20% of the oxygen in your body to your brain.

High blood pressure can weaken your heart muscle, and is one of the leading causes of strokes. Ideally, your blood pressure should be no higher than 120/80.

Cholesterol is critical to your brain and nervous system health, too. The American Heart Association recommends getting your cholesterol levels measured every four to six years.

2. Manage sugar levels

Blood sugar is the primary fuel of the brain. Not enough of it, and you have no energy; too much, and you can destroy blood vessels and tissue, leading to premature aging and cardiovascular disease.

Keep in mind that sugar isn't enemy, excess sugar is. It's easy for grams of sugar to add up,



even if you think you're being careful — and usually, sugar will sneak in through packaged foods. Where is the sugar hidden? Look for these in the ingredients list:

- Dextrose
- Fructose
- Galactose
- Glucose
- Lactose
- Maltose
- Sucrose

And be wary of any product that includes syrup, such as agave nectar syrup or high-fructose corn syrup.

3. Get quality sleep

Studies show that people with untreated sleep apnea raise their risk of memory loss by an average of 10 years before the general population.

For most people, a healthy brain needs somewhere between seven and nine hours of sleep a night.

My tips for memory-boosting, immune-enhancing sleep:

Keep a consistent bedtime and wake-up schedule.

Turn off devices one hour before bedtime.

Do something relaxing before bedtime, like

listening to soft music or doing mindful breathing exercises.

Go outside and get in natural sunlight as soon as you can after waking up.

4. Eat a nutritious diet

One way I keep things simple is to have most, if not all, of these items in my grocery cart:

- Fatty fish like salmon
- Avocados
- Nuts
- Blueberries
- Cruciferous veggies like arugula, broccoli, Brussels sprouts and collard greens

When food shopping, I ask myself three questions to help determine whether something is good for my brain:

1. Will it spoil? In many cases, perishable is a good thing. The additives and preservatives that keep food from spoiling wreak havoc on your gut bacteria.

2. Are there tons of ingredients in that packaged food? And for that matter, can you pronounce the ingredients? Or does it look like the makings of a chemical experiment? Also avoid anything where sugar is one of the first few ingredients.

3. Do you see a rainbow on your plate? The chemicals that give fruits and vegetables their vibrant colors help boost brain health.

5. Don't smoke (and avoid secondhand and thirdhand smoke)

Smokers have a 30% higher risk of developing dementia than non-smokers. They also put those around them at risk: Secondhand smoke contains 7,000 chemicals — and at least 70 of them can cause cancer.

Then there's thirdhand smoke, which is not actually smoke. It's the residue of cigarette smoke that creates the telltale smell on cloth-

ing or in a room. That residue alone can emit chemicals that are toxic to the brain.

6. Make social connections

In a recent study, people over the age of 55 who regularly participated in dinner parties or other social events had a lower risk of losing their memory. But it wasn't because of what they ate, it was the effect of the repeated social connection.

To lessen isolation and loneliness, you can also boost brain chemicals like serotonin and endorphins by performing small acts of kindness:

Wish others well or check in with somebody. Give a compliment without expecting anything in return.

Make a phone call to somebody you don't usually reach out to.

7. Continuously learn new skills

Maintaining a strong memory is not all about brain games like Sudoku, Wordle and crossword puzzles.

Learning skills and acquiring information are much more effective ways to make new connections in the brain. The more connections you make, the more likely you are to retain and even enhance your memory.

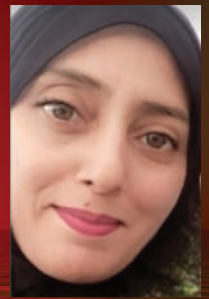
When you think about learning something new, approach it the way you would with fitness training. You want to work out different muscles on different days. The same goes for the brain.

Over the course of this week, try cross-training your brain by mixing mental activities (learning a new language or reading a book) and physical learning activities (playing tennis or soccer).

<https://rb.gy/0qbw59>

Interview: Hoor Rahman

Esha Saima
Representative Host KPK
Lahore International London



Many people are like that in life Not only those who search for a destination and find it, but every moment they are looking for a new destination, a new goal - one of them is the name of Hoor , who found new paths at a young age and success followed her steps. Despite being from an underprivileged area, Charsadda not only got her education but also joined the teaching profession and at the same time established a relationship with the US Embassy which not only helped her in her field. Hoor rather, you also involved others in an important cause and thus proved your skills, so let me start the discussion with you, correspondent of Lahore International London.....



Hoor Rahman.... I played a lot of sports like basketball, volleyball, badminton, cricket, running, cards and hide and seek etc

What is your full name?

Hoor Rahman... My name is Hoor Rahman

Which province and city do you belong to?

Hoor Rahman... KPK, Charsadda

How many siblings do you have?

Hoor Rahman... Four – three brothers, one sister.

How was your childhood?

Hoor Rahman... I was very shy so I made few friends in my childhood. But the ones who became my friends are still in contact with me and we had good memories together. I was an average student who lacked confidence and I didn't like school as well as studying. I remember I used to cry every day while going to school.

How did you play sports as a child?

In the province you belong to, less attention is paid to the education of girls. How did you find the educational environment?

Hoor Rahman.... So, I am basically from Charsadda, KPK but I was born in Peshawar thus, my primary schooling was in Peshawar after that we shifted to Islamabad. So, I have attained most of my education in Islamabad. In Charsadda, girls only get education till the 10th grade and girls belonging to poor families are not educated at all. The families that are wealthy and has educational exposure let their daughters attain education and usually, some are sent to Peshawar for higher education.

Who supports and helps in higher education?

Hoor Rahman.... The government is trying its best for higher education in Charsadda as it has a university now, Bacha Khan University. The elders of educated families also promote

higher education according to the need of the time. teaching.

How did you come to English literature?

Hoor Rahman... I was kind of confused till my O'levels as to which major should I opt for at a higher secondary level. At that time, I wanted to become a fashion designer and wanted to choose home economics but my father suggested that as you like reading you should opt for English literature because fashion designing will take ages for you to establish your name as a designer so there might not be that much scope for you. Ultimately, I selected English Literature as my major at the FA level.

Why did you choose the teaching profession?

Hoor Rahman... I always wanted to teach since my childhood. I used to play with myself alone in a room assuming that I am a teacher teaching students.

How long have you been affiliated with the US Embassy?

Hoor Rahman.... Not long, since July 2022 through the Regional English Language Office.

How did you feel after connecting with them?

Hoor Rahman.... I feel blessed and lucky to be in some way connected with them through these programs which are completely funded and provide exposure to the youth and teachers of Pakistan.

When did you start the series of training workshops and under what thought or idea did you join this institution?

Hoor Rahman.... This was my first training workshop and I am glad it was a success as I didn't bore anyone and everyone learned as well as enjoyed the training sessions. The thought behind joining was to have more exposure about English Language and its

According to you what is the purpose of life? Hoor Rahman.... For me, the purpose of life is obeying Allah (SWT) and following His commandments. Having peace with one's soul attempting to reach nafs-e-mutmainna. Life is to attain knowledge as much as possible to become a better version of yourself.

What positive change happened in you after being associated with this institution?

Hoor Rahman.... It motivated me a lot and helped me learn new methodologies to teach in an interesting way. It has broadened my horizon and has multiple other opportunities for teachers' development which can enhance their teaching styles by updating them according to modern learning ways.

How this institute help the working women?

Hoor Rahman.... This institution is empowering women, helping and motivating them to become the breadwinners of the family and look after their children in case of any mishap. Women are given equal presentations to men in these programs. Women's education is motivated and facilitated through programs by selecting women from areas with fewer educational opportunities.

How can girls make themselves successful in the academic field or any other field?

Hoor Rahman.... Girls need to be passionate and dedicated towards their studies in order to be independent. They need to be motivated and encouraged by their families. Girls should be trusted that they can do any type of work or study so that they can have a bright future. Their focus should not wander to other things.

Discuss what difficulties did you face being a girl?

Hoor Rahman.... Sometimes we are unable to express ourselves as we want or go out alone at night. Even a walk alone can bring goosebumps but sometimes it is required for your mental peace; some solitude. While traveling we have to think that whom should we go with is the way safe or not; such are the issues which I guess every girl faces but their intensity varies.

What is the role of constant effort and dedication in life?

Hoor Rahman.... Constant effort and dedication bring success to the life of anyone because hard work pays off.

What are your hobbies?

Hoor Rahman... My hobbies are reading, writing poems sometimes, sketching and playing table tennis and badminton.

Naturally as my mother is an Urdu Literature graduate, she used to write as well but never published it so you can say it runs in the genes. Writing is catharsis for me.

How long have you been writing?

Hoor Rahman... I started writing during my higher secondary level of education.

Tell me the poem you wrote?

"Nostalgia"

The pain that kills me,
The sorrow that lives with me,
The sadness that frightens me,
The misery that hurts me,
The loneliness that bursts me,
The burden that blinds me,
The worry that reminds me.
Leaving me to shatter,
The problems that scatter.

What message would you like to give to girls

who want to continue their education, having less opportunities?

Hoor Rahman.... Do not lose hope, nowadays the internet has made things very easy. There are a lot of opportunities online for education and many courses are also offered which can accommodate girls who want to have higher education but cannot go to a university.

What can be the ways to boost up the confidence level in less privileged girls/females?

Hoor Rahman.... Awareness and motivation especially from their families. Their opinion and views on matters are also important and they should be involved in every discussion. They should be heard and their emotions should be given value because they are very important for the development of a generation.

What's your opinion that how can females prove themselves (their abilities) in any field of life?

Hoor Rahman... Females are more hard-working than males and their hard work will prove them in any field of life. They have great patience which brings them success and motivation towards work.

In any profession, everyone faces the prejudice or negativity, what should one do to deal with?

Hoor Rahman.... Sometimes it should be ignored if it doesn't harm you but sometimes it should be addressed for a good professional environment. Negativity should be dealt with by the positivity of the individual and motivation towards work.

Can you tell what should be the role of an educated person in the society?

Hoor Rahman.... The role of an educated person in society is to eliminate evil, spread positivity and give to society what they have learned.

Situation in Iranian Balochistan



By: Riyan Ghulam Akbar Phull

Today, representatives of the Supreme Leader of Iran met with the scholars of the Makkah Mosque in Zahedan, Baluchistan Province, Iran. This mosque is the largest Sunni mosque in Iran, whose imam is Maulvi Abdul Hameed, who is recognized as the leader and leader of the Iranian Hanafi Sunnis. At one time, Ahle Sunnats were also the representatives of the people by the Supreme Leader.

This meeting is taking place in the circumstances when serious problems have been going on in the Sunni majority province of Balochistan for the past several days. It started with an alleged allegation when a top Chabahar police officer was accused of raping a 15-year-old Baloch girl. Regular protests started on this and about 40 days ago, a protest rally was held after Friday prayers from Makkah Mosque in Zahedan.

The protesters marched towards the police headquarters and started pelting stones. After that, firing was opened by the police. The police and the official statement is that the terrorists of the banned group Jaish-ul-Adl entered the protestors and opened fire on the police, in response to which the police opened fire, but this charge was denied by Maulvi Abdul Hameed and other Baloch leaders and the Jaish itself. Al Adl has also done it. According to official figures, thirty-four people were killed, while according to Baloch leaders, the number of dead was more than hundred. This Friday is remembered as "Bloody Friday" of Zahedan and was commemorated again three or four days after forty

days of the incident.

After this incident, Maulvi Abdul Hameed, Imam of Makkah Masjid, in his Friday sermon, put all the responsibility of the incident on Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei, saying that all the armed and sensitive institutions of the country come under you, so you are responsible. There are Also demanded the government to take action against those responsible for these incidents. In another statement, he also demanded a referendum on the "Islamic Democratic" system in the presence of foreign observers.

The matter escalated further when the representative of Majlis Shoori from Chabahar while speaking in Parliament said that when there is a protest elsewhere in the country, rubber bullets are fired but when Baloch protest, bullets are fired directly on the head and chest. Therefore, two different attitudes in the same country are condemnable. But he was stopped from further conversation and the mic was turned off.

In these circumstances, when the concern in Iranian Balochistan has increased to the limit, Leader Moazzam has specially sent his representatives to Makkah Mosque of Zahedan, who today met with Ahl-e-Sunnah scholars and Baloch elders, including Maulvi Abdul Hameed. It is hoped that the situation will now be under control and the leaders will focus exclusively on solving the problems of Baloch and Sunnis.

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