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

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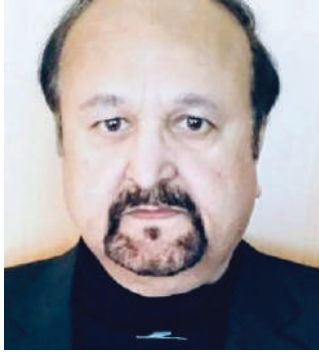


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EDITOR IN CHIEF
Mohiuddin Abbasi

EDITOR
Munazza Khan

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Dr. Busharat Elahi Jamil

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Amina Nuzhat
Attia Wasee

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

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

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E-Mail: lahoreintlondon@gmail.com

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

Write to :

Monthly Lahore International
Phone: +44 794 007 7825

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Editorial



Dr. Busharat Elahi Jamil

It's pity that after the demise of Mr. Jinnah, rather during his lifetime, the definition of "politics" lacked the word "service" in Pakistan. Mr. Jinnah's political efforts were to transform the minority into majority and strengthen the weak. Particularly, right after his death Pakistani political fabric altered from politics for human services into politics for rule and power like forever. The reason being the disappearance of political makers and genuine politicians from the political scenario of Pakistan.

Unfortunately, from Establishment to Mullahs and feudal to mercantile stratum, every band started to take part in self-styled foul politics in the name of democracy entertaining their certain purposes. They believe, public is just a synonym for 'vote' not human with their social needs whom they can exploit for "integration" and "nationalism".

Inappropriately, this so-called political conduct has impaired Pakistan nationally as well as internationally which has become evident these days. Religious extremism, provincialism and racialism divided the world's only Muslim nuclear power. Recently, the

mal-practices of PDM and role of establishment proved that politicians can go to any extent and back each other except the common Pakistani interest.

Since 1947, the politicized Mullahs have made people religious enough to consider horrible national situations to be from God on their way to accept the "fate" whereas establishment considers itself a super elite on behalf of the ruling gages. On the other hand, the politicians have also made people believe that it is them who are responsible for all the current circumstances; not political figure.

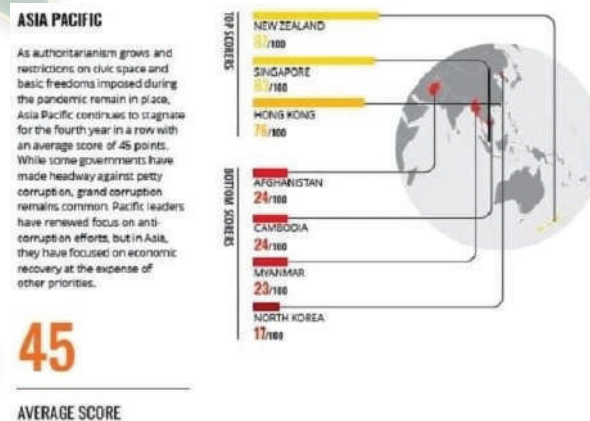
Undoubtedly, common Pakistanis are equally responsible of all these circumstances for they believed opportunistic politicians and religious influentials but could not understand the true-life situations, and compromised their national integrity and sovereignty. The Country is currently facing the worst financial, social, political hardships. Nevertheless, there is silver lining amid this financially defaulted Pakistan that somehow now Pakistanis seem to become aware and stand up for their rights and for the national integration of the Pakistan.

Pakistan's Corruption Score Worst in a Decade: Report

Retaining last year's CPI ranking, Pakistan remains 140th out of 180 countries. By: Anmol Ahmed

KARACHI: Pakistan was included amongst the list of ten countries that have “significantly declined” in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2022, hitting the lowest score since 2012, revealed a report by Transparency International (TI). The CPI is an index published annually by TI that ranks countries “by their perceived levels of public sector corruption, as determined by expert assessments and opinion surveys.” In 2018, Pakistan ranked 117 out of 180 on the CPI, but over the years, it has slipped to reach 140 in 2021. This year, while Pakistan’s rank remained the same as last year, its CPI score slipped to 27, deteriorating from the previous year’s score of 28 and placing Pakistan amongst the list of ten countries that significantly declined in the CPI scores. On the matter of Pakistan in particular, the report stated that while the previous Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf government had “promised to tackle rampant corruption and promote social and economic reforms, little has been accomplished on any of these fronts since they took the reins in 2018”. “It is most important that the new government does not allow such political scandals to derail comprehensive anti-corruption efforts,” stated Transparency International, stressing that the time was ripe for “concrete action with a holistic and effective anti-corruption plan that addresses illicit financial flows and introduces safeguards for civic space”. “It is most important that the new government does not allow such political scandals to derail comprehensive anti-corruption efforts,” stated Transparency International, stressing that the time was ripe for “concrete action with a holistic and effective anti-corruption plan that addresses illicit financial flows and introduces safeguards for

civic space”. The report shows that most of the world continues to fail to fight corruption with a staggering 95 percent of the countries making little to no progress since 2017.



TI also stated that in light of the Global Peace Index (GPI) report, “the world continues to become less peaceful”. “There is a clear connection between this violence and corruption, with countries that score lowest in this index also scoring very low on the CPI”, the statement added, “governments hampered by corruption lack the capacity to protect the people, while public discontent is more likely to turn into violence.” Denmark tops the index this year with a CPI of 90, with Finland and New Zealand following closely, both at 87. Strong democratic institutions and regard for human rights also make these countries some of the most peaceful in the world according to the GPI. Countries embroiled in protracted conflict remain at the bottom of the CPI. These include Somalia with a CPI of 12 as well as South Sudan and Syria scoring 13 each.

‘Corruption, conflict and security’

The report’s findings reveal a significant correlation between corruption, conflict and security. “The misuse, embezzlement or theft of public funds can deprive the very institutions in charge of protecting citizens, enforce

Score changes 2012 - 2022



ing the rule of law and guarding the peace of the resources they need to fulfill that mandate,” the TI explained in a statement. “Criminal and terrorist groups are often aided by the complicity of corrupt public officials, law enforcement authorities, judges and politicians, which allows them to thrive and operate with impunity,” it added. Making matters worse, the report states that “corruption, exclusion and outright discrimination increase the risk of outbreaks of violence and make them harder to control once they erupt”. Furthermore, the analysis shows that corruption has a direct negative impact on a state’s capacity to protect its citizens. “The misuse or theft of public funds can deprive institutions responsible for ensuring the security of the resources they need”, the report stated adding that “weak law enforcement and defence institutions make it harder for a state to secure control of its territory and prevent violent threats, including terrorism”. This paints a particularly bleak picture for Pakistan as the country struggles to grapple with the deteriorating security situation. After remaining dormant for nearly five years, the largest militant network in Pakistan, the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), commonly known as Pakistani Taliban, has made a strong comeback in terms of attacks carried out in Pakistan. With a dwindling economy, the government remains under pressure to turn the country's fate around.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2398583/pakistan-corruption-score-worst-in-a-decade-report>

Retired general arrested after FIR registered on charges of ‘inciting hatred against institutions’

Defence analyst and Lieutenant General (retd) Amjad Shoaib was arrested on Monday after an Islamabad magistrate registered a case against him on charges of inciting the public against institutions. The first information report (FIR), a copy of which is available with Dawn.com, was lodged at the Ramna police station by Magistrate Owais Khan on Sunday. It invokes section 153A (promoting enmity between different groups, etc) and 505 (statements conducing to public mischief) of the Pakistan Penal Code. In the complaint, Magistrate Khan said that the retired general — in an interview on BOL TV show ‘Imran Khan Bol Kay Saath’ aired on Saturday — passed statements that “incited the government officials and opposition from performing their government and legal duties”. The FIR quoted Shoaib as saying that the Jail Bharo court arrest movements could not produce the required outcomes because it was only the people who were bearing pain and agony in it, while “narcissist and shameless rulers sitting atop didn’t care the least about it”. The magistrate stated that the retired army officer had advised the PTI to “work out a strategy”. “For example, you can stop people from going to government offices in Islamabad,” the FIR quoted Shoaib as saying. The complaint said that the retired general’s statement had “tried to create further enmity, anarchy and hatred between the government and the opposition”, adding that Shoaib had passed these remarks “according to a well-thought conspiracy and planning to further weaken the country”. Subsequently, the complainant asked for legal action to be taken against the retired general for his remarks.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1739406>

'They appointed Manmohan Singh': Top economist praises India, blasts Pakistan leaders for default crisis

"The most important duty of a political leadership is to appoint competent people and the team at the helm of affairs to deal with the most important issues of the day," Atif Mian, Professor of Economics at Princeton University, said in a panel discussion organised by Brookings Institution. By: Saurabh Sharma



A top Pakistani-American economist has advised Islamabad to appoint competent people like India to avoid the default crisis in the cash-strapped country. He praised India for taking such steps when it was in a similar crisis decades ago. "The most important duty of a political leadership is to appoint competent people and the team at the helm of affairs to deal with the most important issues of the day," Atif Mian, Professor of Economics at Princeton University, said in a panel discussion organised by Brookings Institution. "But if you are making those decisions, you choose to bring family over competence, if for all important positions, you choose to appoint your brother, your brother-in-law, daughter, and nephews - you can not run a country of 220 million people like that," he said during the discussion with Pakistan's former finance minister Miftah Ismail. Pakistan has been involved in tough negotiations to secure a much-needed tranche of \$1.1 billion from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to ward

off the specter of default. Its forex reserves have plunged below \$3 dollar, the currency has fallen to a record low, and inflation has soared to a 48-year high of 27 per cent. Forex reserves are sufficient only for three weeks of import, pushing the country to the brink of collapse. Mian also blasted the previous government headed by former Prime Minister Imran Khan for the current debt crisis. He said the responsibility for all the mess was on the hands of the previous government. "Because they also refused to do what was their primary responsibility which again was to appoint competent people in the team who understood the issues, and could speak credibly with the international world so they actually believe in what they say." Instead, he said, for the previous government, the only requirement was - "how boisterous you can be, how good you are in name-calling". Mian, who is also the Director of the Julis-Rabinowitz Center at the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs,

praised India for appointing competent people during the balance of payments crisis in the 1990s. He said the Indian leadership understood that to turn the country around, in the 1990s, they needed competent people. "Who do they bring in - they bring in people like Manmohan Singh - a very accomplished and respectable person. He did not even share the religion of the main people. They didn't care, they appointed him," he said. The professor further said that for appointing people as Reserve Bank Governor, India picked people of the caliber of Raghuram Rajan. "You can't get any better than that," he said, emphasising that this is how countries are turned around. Mian said a similar practice was in Bangladesh, where none of the family members of Sheikh Hasina was in the government. "The only country I can think of with this level of incompetency at the top is Sri Lanka," he said, suggesting that incompetent leaders at the helm in Pakistan are the short and long-term cause that pushed the country into the current economic crisis. The noted economist also said that Pakistan's debt was much more than the figures often quoted like \$100 billion of debt. "The debt that we have is much more than that. Because debt means the liability you have on your head - those are the fixed liabilities you must pay back because of the obligations that you have and you just don't have enough revenue to pay for those," he said. Mian also raised the question of massive subsidies offered by the government and faltering productivity. He said Pakistan has been selling petrol cheaper than the average price in the world. "Despite selling cheaper fuel, why is it that Pakistan still had shortages and power breakdowns? Pakistan has the capacity to produce power but why can't it produce it? The reason is that it can't afford it," the professor said.

<https://www.businesstoday.in/latst/world/story/they-appointed-manmohan-singh-top-economist-praises-india-blasts-pakistan-leaders-for-default-crisis-369913-2023-02-12>

FO following reports of Pakistanis' presence in sunken migrants' boat

The Foreign Office (FO) spokesperson said that they are closely following the reports about the possible presence of Pakistanis in the vessel that has capsized off the coast of Italy. The FO spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch added, "The Embassy of Pakistan in Rome is in the process of ascertaining facts from the Italian authorities." Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif termed the reports of the drowning of over two dozen Pakistanis in a boat tragedy in Italy "deeply concerning & worrisome". Taking to Twitter, the premier has directed the Foreign Office to ascertain facts as early as possible and take the nation into confidence.

Boat wreck off Italy.

At least 59 migrants, including 11 children and a newborn baby, died after their overloaded boat sank early Sunday in stormy seas off Italy's southern Calabria region, officials said. "As of a few minutes ago, the number of confirmed victims was 59," Vincenzo Voce, mayor of the coastal city of Crotone, told TV channel Sky TG-24 on Sunday afternoon. Crotone's rescue centre said 12 of the 59 victims were children, including a newborn, and 33 were women, according to AGI news agency. Italian coastguards said the overloaded vessel broke up in violent waves off Crotone, with one officer reporting that a suspected people smuggler had been arrested by the security forces.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Feb-2023/fo-following-reports-of-pakistanis-presence-in-sunken-migrants-boat>

Injustice leads to destruction

Injustices destroy the existence of man and the state

By: Aftab Ahmed Khanzada



Sigmund Freud says, “Repressed emotions never die, but are buried alive and come out in terrible ways.” Ernest Hemingway, who won the Nobel-Prize for literature in 1954, wrote a story, For sale: baby’s shoes, never worn. This six-word story is considered the shortest complete short story ever. Who is selling the shoes? Maybe a child’s parents. Perhaps the child died at birth or was stillborn. The parents may have bought shoes with great desires, but are forced to sell the dead child’s shoes due to their financial situation. Monster of poverty, economic inequality, improper allocation of resources and helplessness of man in front of nature is all what this story features. This is the reason why Ernest Hemingway, called this story spanning six words the highest story of his career. Columbian writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez was much impressed by two masterpieces of world literature — Ernest Hemingway’s story, The Old Man and the Sea, and Albert Camus’s novel, The Plague. Marquez combined the ‘objective’ prose and philosophical symbolism of Hemingway with the existentialistic prose of Camus and created one of his most famous stories ‘No One Writes to the Colonel’. It tells the story of a nameless veteran in his late-70s who was a colonel in the Thousand Days’ War — a Colombian civil war at the turn of the 20th century. The colonel and his wife live in an impoverished village, stricken by repressive political violence and corrupt officials and aristocrats. Even though the colonel played a crucial role in the Thousand Days’ War decades ago, delivering “the funds of the civil war in two trunks roped to the back of a mule”, he never received his pension cheques. Each Friday the colonel walks to the post

office at the harbour and waits for the cheques. The postmaster has a cynical attitude towards the colonel’s hopefulness. The colonel’s wife too realises the pension will never come; and after years of disappointment and near-starvation, she tells her husband that they can’t eat hope. Though the colonel and his wife live on the brink of starvation, with no hope of income, the colonel’s dignity and pride remain intact. He refuses to let his wife sell their few possessions lest anyone find out they’re starving. At his wife’s insistence, the colonel sells his rooster to his friend, Sabas, a fellow veteran who became rich through opportunistic political allegiances. The colonel, however, reneges on the deal and reclaims the rooster. In the end, the colonel’s wife asks him in desperation what they will eat. The colonel replies they will eat shit. In Charles Dickens novel, Great Expectations, Pip says: “Nothing is so keenly seen and felt as injustice.” What strikes us the most is not the realisation that the world is not entirely just, as few of us expect it to be, but that there are clearly remediable injustices around us that we want to end. Without awareness of these obvious injustices, the people of Paris never attack on Bastille prison. Gandhi would not have challenged an empire on which the sun never set. Martin Luther King would not have fought against white supremacy. They were not trying to achieve a completely just world. Rather, they were trying to remove the obvious injustice as far as they could. Injustices destroy the existence of man and the state. The world has reached this conclusion after centuries of experience. That’s why it has completely eliminated injustices from its own societies. That is why today they are at

the height of development, prosperity, freedom and stability. On the other hand, due to the injustices today, our state and the people have reached the extremes of misery and instability. Due to these conditions, people have become physically and mentally ill. Their desperation and uncertainty are reaching their limits. Everyday thousands of troubles await them outside the door of their houses. They have become completely toxic. Remember that poison does not have eyes. Therefore, if anyone from the elite class thinks he is safe in the country, he is wrong.

<https://tribune.com.pk/story/2398159/injustice-leads-to-destruction>

Five held for vandalising Ahmadi worship place

KARACHI: Police on Friday booked and arrested five suspects for vandalising an Ahmadi place of worship in Saddar on Thursday. South-SSP Syed Asad Raza said that the Preedy police lodged an FIR against 15 persons and arrested Abdul Qadir Patel, Mohammed Saleem, Mohammed Nauman, Mohammed Irfan and Mohammed Shahid. The FIR stated that 10 to 15 persons attacked the place of worship and damaged its minaret

The police said that the suspects were booked under Sections 147 (rioting), 148 (rioting, armed with deadly weapon), 149 (every member of unlawful assembly guilty of offence committed in prosecution of common object), 295 (injuring or defiling place of worship, with Intent to insult the religion of any class), 506 (criminal intimidation) and 34 (common intention) of the Pakistan Penal Code.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1735225>

Ahmadiyya Graves Desecrated, Shop Defaced In Gujranwala

Two more incidents of the ongoing persecution of the Ahmadiyya community were reported yesterday in the Gujranwala district of Punjab province in Pakistan. Unknown persons desecrated 5 Ahmadi graves in the combine graveyard in Talwandi area of Khajoorwali in district Gujranwala on the night of 10th February 2023. Also in the middle of the night between 9th and 10th February, in the same area of Talwandi in district Gujranwala, unknown miscreants blackening out the sacred Islamic names and other Islamic writings written outside the shop of an Ahmadi shopkeeper. The Ahmadiyya community has been a target of religious bigots and violent attacks since it is labeled a 'heretic sect' by the majority Sunni Muslim population of Pakistan. The country's strict Islamist laws also prohibit members of the Ahmadiyya community from presenting themselves as Muslims and from using Islamic iconography or scriptures. Attacks on Ahmadi places of worship have picked up pace in 2023, with mobs of miscreants and religious zealots attacking places used by Ahmadis for their worship rituals in Karachi and Mirpur Khas. In late January, Ahmadiyya graves were desecrated in Faisalabad while deceased persons belong to the community were denied burial in Sialkot. Also in late January, police in Toba Tek Singh forced the Ahmadiyya community to remove minarets from their place of worship. The country's blasphemy law is also widely used to target all religious minorities in Pakistan, including Christians, Hindus, Ahmadis, and even Muslims who are accused under the draconian Section 295-C of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC). <https://www.thefridaytimes.com/2023/02/12/ahmadiyya-graves-desecrated-shop-defaced-in-gujranwala/>

Up to \$5mn smuggled into Afghanistan from Pakistan daily: report

In Bloomberg interview, Zafar Paracha said 'currency is being smuggled without any doubt. This has become quite a lucrative business'

Traders and smugglers were transferring as much as \$5 million across the Pakistani border and into Afghanistan everyday, Exchange Companies Association of Pakistan (ECAP) General Secretary Zafar Paracha told Bloomberg. "Currency is being smuggled without any doubt. This has become quite a lucrative business," he said, adding that this is due to Pakistan's "flawed" immigration and trade policies and border controls. The report said the smuggling of dollars provides "some support for the squeezed economy after the US and Europe denied the Taliban regime access to billions in foreign reserves." "The illicit flows show how the Taliban are evading sanctions after their 2021 takeover of the country". However, it noted that "for Islamabad, the outflows are exacerbating a rapidly developing economic crisis." Paracha's comments come as the Pakistani rupee continued to take a hammering along with sharp depletion in the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) held foreign exchange reserves. The rupee closed near an all-time low at Rs276.28 per dollar on Tuesday. In addition, the foreign exchange reserves held by the SBP plunged \$592 million to stand at a critical level of \$3.09 billion as of January 27. Meanwhile, the afghani has gained about 5.6% against the greenback over the past year through Monday, one of the strongest performances of any currency in the world. Bloomberg quoted Alpha Beta Core CEO Khurram Schehzad as saying that Afghanistan needed about \$10 to \$15 million daily and half of this amount comes from Pakistan. Meanwhile, Haseeb Noori, spokesman of Taliban-run Da Afghanistan Bank, stated that the neighbouring nation had



enough dollars in reserve to support the economy, some of it coming from the UN, which has been providing about \$40 million in humanitarian aid each week since last year.

"The smuggling really took off in the middle of last year after Afghanistan increased coal exports to energy-hungry Pakistan," Bloomberg quoted officials at Afghanistan's finance ministry as saying. Smuggling has also been boosted by the Taliban's ban on the use of Pakistan's rupee as legal tender in Afghanistan, which forces exporters to trade in dollars and bring the US currency back to the country, the officials said, asking not to be identified because they aren't authorised to speak to media. Meanwhile, SBP governor Jameel Ahmad said that "Pakistani market is bound to get affected when they purchase dollars from the local market."

<https://www.brecorder.com/news/40224880>

A Nation without Justice is a ship without Rudder.

By: Safeer Khan



Justice is the bedrock upon which the foundations of a prosperous society are laid, without which it is bound to disintegrate. When the courts become dysfunctional and hostage to an “outside force,” the cancer of injustice rapidly spreads in the body politic of such a society rendering it ineffectual. The rule of law becomes the first casualty and an atmosphere of “free for all” quickly takes hold ushering in a chaotic environment degenerating into Jungle Law where “might is right” reigns supreme. The days of such a society are always numbered. When injustices are unleashed indiscriminately at the highest level which wreaks havoc with the judicial structure of a society, it either triggers a set of violent events from within or invite a bloody revolution from without and in either case such a society does not last long and ceases to exist forever. The ultimate destruction and dismemberment of such societies is a foregone conclusion and history bears ample testimony to that injunction. Let us examine what Quran has to say about such societies. “And never think that Allah is unaware of what the “unjust” do. He only delays them for a Day when eyes will stare in horror.” (Al Quran 14:42). “O you who believe, stand firm for justice even against yourselves.” (Al Quran 4:135). “Indeed, Allah does not do injustice even as much as an atom’s weight.” (Al Quran 4:40). “Do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just.” (Al Quran 5:8). The Messenger of Allah once got up amongst his companions and delivered a short sermon and I quote, “People before you were destroyed who would let the noble among them steal and go free, but would punish the poor or the weak for the same crime. By God if Fatima, my daughter, stole, I

would cut her hand off,” unquote. The second Caliph of Islam, Hazrat Umar bin Khattab is credited for putting the Islamic Justice system in it’s paces by setting some outstanding personal examples. Once when the spoils of war were being distributed and each individual received a certain measure of cloth enough to make a tunic, he was intercepted by a beduin who wanted to know how he managed to have a tunic made for himself in that allocation as he was a tall man and that measure of cloth was inadequate for a man of his built. The Caliph asked his son to stand up and answer the beduin, who explained that he had donated his share to his father after which the beduin was satisfied. On another occasion as he entered a court of law, the judge rose from his seat to pay respects to the Ameerul Momeeneen. Guess what. Hazrat Umar exited the court immediately and ordered the replacement of that judge, as he would not be able to deliver justice if he treated him in any different manner than a common man. Hazrat Ali the fourth Caliph of Islam enjoyed a reputation of being extremely knowledgeable. His business partner, a Meccan Jew, took him to the court to settle a business dispute. Lo and behold, the verdict was delivered against the sitting Caliph and Hazrat Ali ended up paying the Jew reparations. Such outstanding examples of Justice are unheard of in the annals of human history. Just to quote a few, let us see what different world leaders had to say about justice. “We need leaders not in love with money but in love with justice.” Martin Luther King, American Civil Rights leader of the 60’s. On another occasion he said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere,” MLK. “He who commits injustice is made ever more wretched than who suffers

it.” Plato. “It is certain that ignorance allied with absolute power, is the most ferocious enemy justice can have.” James Baldwin, Black American writer and essayist of the 60’s. “If our social justice is guided by retribution, we shall simply perpetuate the use and abuse of power to inflict violence and suffering on others.” Jamie Arpin Ricci, American Author of religious & community issues known for upholding justice. “If you want to eradicate poverty, introduce justice.” Brian Stevenson, American Social Justice Activist, Lawyer and Law Professor. During the height of Battle of Britain when hundreds of Luftwaffe bombers raided London everyday, Winston Churchill was asked to comment on the wholesale destruction of London by the German aerial bombing. Churchill counter questioned the journalist asking if justice was being delivered in the courts. Implying that everything will be fine if justice was served to people in the courts of law. A cursory glance on the world stage is enough to find out that the United Nations and the International Court of Justice in the Hague have not been doing what was expected of them and the Palestinian and the Kashmiri people continue to suffer at the hands of Israeli and Indian Armies and while hundreds of thousands of them have lost their lives in their struggle for freedom, the conscience of the World Community sleeps soundly and justice seems like a pipe dream to these two tormented nationalities. This is sad, while the Palestinian and Kashmiri women, children and elderly continue to pay with their lives, the United Nations and the International Court of Justice stand on the sidelines like helpless onlookers while a genocide of gargantuan proportions continue unabated. The powers that be better serve the cause of justice and mitigate human suffering before Divine intervention descends with devastating consequences for all. May the poor, weak and the marginalized communities be served with Justice without any further delay. Amen. It is said and I quote, “Justice delayed is justice denied.”

Cholera threatens over 1b people in 43 countries, including Pakistan: WHO

UNITED NATIONS - A global surge of cholera cases has put one billion people in 43 countries, including Pakistan, at risk, the World Health Organization (WHO), a Geneva-based UN agency, has warned. Three countries, this week alone, have reported outbreaks, WHO cholera team leader Philippe Barboza told reporters at a press conference on Friday, according to a UN press release issued in New York on Sunday. For the first time, WHO is asking donors for help to fight the outbreaks, he said. Right now, 22 countries across the world are fighting outbreaks of the acute diarrhoeal infection caused by eating or drinking contaminated food or water. Cholera cases climbed in 2022, following years of falling numbers of cases, and the trend is expected to continue into this year, he said. He said cases have been reported in five of the six regions where WHO operates. The latest WHO global overview published in early February showed the situation has further deteriorated since 2022. Poverty, disasters, conflict and climate change consequences continue to be driving factors alongside a lack of access to safe water and sanitation, Dr Barboza said. “An unprecedented situation requires an unprecedented response,” he said, drawing attention to the limited availability of vaccines, medicines, and testing kits. Only 37 million doses are available in 2023, he said. More doses are expected to be available by next year. As a result of the current global surge, WHO is, for the first time ever, appealing to donors to support a \$25 million fund to help to address cholera outbreaks and save lives, he said. Prevention is key, he said, noting that nearly half of the world lacks access to safely managed sanitation. <https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Feb-2023/cholera-threatens-over-1b-people-in-43-countries-including-pakistan-who>

US Air Force Prepares For ‘Ultimate Clash’ With China’s J-20 Stealth Fighters; USAF Gets 1st Fifth-Gen Aggressor Pilot

By: Tanmay Kadam

The Commander of the USAF’s Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center (AFOTEC), Brig. Gen. Trey “Lou” Rawls has become the first general officer to be certified as a fifth-generation aggressor pilot on the F-35A Lightning II aircraft with the 65th AGRS. “I’m incredibly thankful for the opportunity to fly with the 65th Aggressors,” said Rawls. The USAF’s aggressors were established as a consequence of the service’s Project Red Baron study, which assessed the air war over North Vietnam to determine why there had been such a dramatic change in the outcome of air-to-air engagements in the conflict. In the Korean War, USAF pilots had achieved a 10:1 kill ratio over North Korean and Chinese adversaries, whereas, during the conflict in Vietnam, the kill ratio dropped to 2.5:1. The 65th AGRS was reactivated in June last year with the mission to know, teach and replicate fifth-generation air adversaries at Nellis AFB. Before that, the squadron was active from 2005 to 2014, and during that time, it replicated the tactics and techniques of potential adversaries with a fleet of F-15 Eagles.

US Pilots Prepare To Meet J-20 Threat

Interestingly, shortly before activation of the 65th AGRS, US Pacific Air Force Commander General Kenneth Wilsbach revealed that the J-20 of the PLA Air Force (PLAAF) and the F-35 of the USAF had their first-ever ‘encounter.’ “It’s a bit early to say what they intend to do with the J-20, so really, all we’ve seen it do is air superiority. But we notice that they are flying it pretty well. We recently had – I wouldn’t call it an engagement – where we got relatively close to the J-20s and our F-35s



in the East China Sea. We’re relatively impressed with the command and control associated with the J-20,” General Wilsbach said in March 2022. Therefore, using the F-35 as an aggressor platform will allow the USAF pilots to train against low-observable threats like the Chinese J-20 or the Russian Su-57. “Due to the growing threat posed by PRC [People’s Republic of China] fifth- and sixth-gen fighter development, we must use a portion of our daily fifth-generation aircraft today at Langley, Elmendorf, Hill, Eielson, and now Nellis to replicate adversary fifth-generation capabilities,” said Gen. Mark Kelly, commander Air Combat Command, during the reactivation of the 65th AGRS. “Precisely because we have this credible threat, when we replicate a fifth-gen adversary, it must be done professionally. That’s the aggressors.” The F-35 offers an adversary air platform that enables the 65th AGRS to customize the jet to replicate the desired red air aircraft through mission planning software. The 65th AGRS determines these settings with the help of the intelligence community. As the AFOTEC Commander, it is Rawls’ responsibility to ensure independent testing and evaluation of new and existing systems

for the USAF. Therefore, Rawls flying with the 65th AGRS is expected to provide a unique opportunity to determine how an Operational Test Agency can contribute to improving warfighter training. "We must ensure we're keeping up with and surpassing our adversaries," said Rawls. Rawls further explained that in his role as an aggressor, he would present the USAF airmen with the types of challenging problems they are likely to face from the adversaries and provide material solutions and capabilities to address those problems. "The challenge is that we're no longer the only big kid on the block regarding technology," said Rawls. "However, we're still king of the hill when it comes to training, readiness, and talent. AFOTEC has an important role in ensuring the US remains the world's most dominant purveyor of air power. We do this by ensuring we only focus on problems that need solving and then relentlessly pursuing those solutions that enable us to continue to enjoy an unfair advantage," he added.

US Navy To Increase Its Aggressor Capabilities With The Help Of USAF

The Russian aggression in Ukraine and the looming Chinese threat have worried the US military about conventional threats from near-peer adversaries. Therefore, like the USAF, even the US Navy is trying to increase its aggressor capabilities, however, the service has turned to the USAF due to budget constraints. As part of that, the F-16s retired by the USAF are replacing the F-5N Tiger 2s belonging to Fleet Composite Squadron (VFC) 13 "Fighting Saints" at US Naval Air Station Fallon in Nevada, which is the Navy's Reserve Force Squadron that specializes in replicating adversary threats or 'red air' in support of the US Naval Aviation Warfighting Development Center (NAWDC).

<https://eurasianimes.com/us-f-35-to-train-against-chinas-j-20-stealth-fighters-usaf-gets/>

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Russia's Next-Best Submarine Dwarfs Largest in U.S. Fleet

By: Thomas Kika`

With Russia's best and largest nuclear submarine now out of commission, the next-best option in its submersible fleet still dwarfs the largest U.S. crafts in some regards. Following months of speculation, Vladimir Maltsev, head of the Russian Movement for Navy Support, confirmed to the Russian press on Monday that the country's largest nuclear-equipped submarine, the Dmitry Donskoy, was officially being decommissioned. The craft was the last of Russia's Cold War-era Typhoon class of submarines, which were recognized as the largest in the world in terms of tonnage. With the Dmitry Donskoy out of the fleet, the honor of the largest submarine in the Russian fleet now falls to the Belgorod, an Oscar II-class submarine introduced in July. While the Belgorod is not yet fully outfitted with nuclear armaments, it is capable of carrying the Poseidon nuclear-capable underwater drones, which Russian naval forces have hyped as a "weapon of the apocalypse." "This nuclear 'mega torpedo' is unique in the history of the world," American submarine expert H.I. Sutton wrote in Naval News in March. "Poseidon is a completely new category of weapon. It will reshape naval planning in both Russia and the West, leading to new requirements and new counter-weapons." At a little over 603 feet in length, the Belgorod also holds the distinction of longest submarine in the world, considerably longer than the longest crafts in the U.S. naval fleet. The Ohio-class submarines are the largest ever deployed by the U.S. and reach around 560 feet in length. A successor to the Ohio class, known as Columbia class, is currently under development with plans to enter naval service in 2031. Those crafts will be the lengths of their predecessors, giving Russia's Belgorod the edge in that metric for the foreseeable

future. "The Belgorod, if it performs to the level claimed, would be a powerful strategic asset," military expert Daniel Davis told Newsweek. "Among other potent armaments, it features the Poseidon nuclear torpedo. This may be one of the most powerful submarine-launched weapons in the world. It can be used to destroy coastal cities, naval bases—or can target major surface combatants, like aircraft carriers." "Russia may be showing less than stellar in its conventional warfighting on the ground in Ukraine, but its strategic weapons? They could still destroy the globe several times over, and even a limited nuclear exchange could wipe out some of our most powerful surface combatants," Davis added. "Bottom line: We don't want to get into any nuclear exchange with Russia for any reason." Without the Poseidon armaments, the Belgorod remained secondary to the nuclear-ready Dmitry Donskoy in Russia's fleet. However, the Russian state news agency Tass recently reported that a first batch of the armaments has been constructed and will ship soon. With its nuclear capabilities realized, the Belgorod will outclass the now-decommissioned craft in every facet. "The first batch of Poseidon ammunition has been manufactured and will be soon delivered to [the] special-purpose nuclear-powered submarine Belgorod," a source told the outlet in mid-January. The source also said that "various trials of core components of [the] Poseidon underwater drones, including the nuclear power unit" were complete, according to Tass. Newsweek could not independently verify these claims, and the Russian government has also not spoken on the matter.

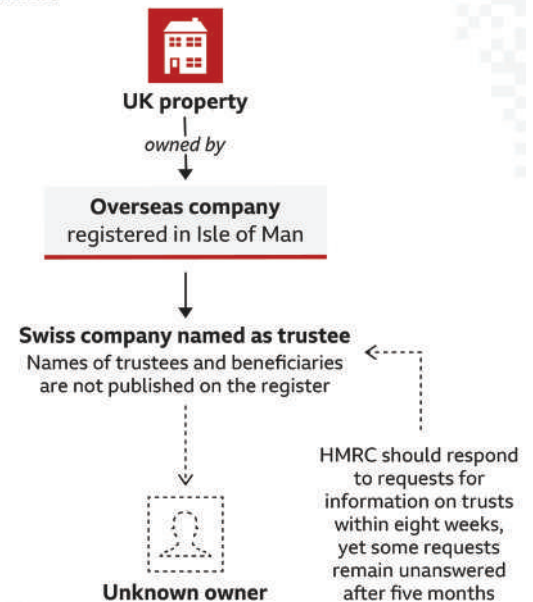
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UK property register: What three luxury homes reveal about who owns UK real estate

By: By Nassos Stylianou, Will Dahlgreen and Alison Benjamin

Owners of around 50,000 UK properties held by foreign companies remain hidden from public view, despite new transparency laws. The Register of Overseas Entities, launched in August 2022, was meant to reveal who ultimately owns UK property. But analysis by BBC News and Transparency International found almost half of firms required to declare who is behind them failed to do so. Labour MP Margaret Hodge said the legislation was not "fit for purpose". A UK government spokesperson said the register has been an "invaluable source of information for law enforcement, and tax and revenue services". The UK government has long promised to crack down on "corrupt elites" from overseas, including "Russian oligarchs and kleptocrats", using UK property to launder illegal wealth. Ministers insisted they would crack down on foreign criminals using UK property to launder money by ensuring they "can't hide behind secretive chains of shell companies". As a result, under a law passed in February 2022 in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, ministers said anonymous foreign companies seeking to buy UK land or property would be required to reveal full details of the individuals who ultimately owned them. Overseas organisations that already owned land in the UK were given a six-month period to do the same. Now that six-month grace period is up - all the people, whatever their reputations, behind companies that own thousands of British properties should have been uncovered for the first time. The BBC and Transparency International matched thousands of filings from the new register with Land Registry records. This analysis suggests that some 18,000 offshore companies - which

How trust structures hide beneficiaries from public register



Source: BBC and Transparency International research

BBC

between them hold more than 50,000 properties in England and Wales - either ignored the law altogether or filed information in such a way that it remains impossible for the public to find out who the individuals are who ultimately own and benefit from them. "While the register is starting to serve its intended purpose, our analysis reveals there are far too many companies that could be trying to skirt the rules, not knowing they exist, or ignoring them altogether," says Duncan Hames, Director of Policy at Transparency International UK. To understand how the law is and isn't working, it helps to look at three very expensive properties. The first is a pair of luxury apartments. Another is a sprawling £48m estate in north London, the third a £10m country mansion. All have been linked in some way to figures connected with Vladimir Putin's regime. For instance, look at the two luxury flats in central London worth an estimated £11m. Their ownership by the former

Russian deputy prime minister, Igor Shuvalov, was first reported by the Anti-Corruption Foundation, set up by jailed Russian opposition leader Alexei Navalny. According to the UK government, who placed him under sanction in March 2022, Mr Shuvalov - who heads the management board of a Russian bank - is "a core part of Putin's inner circle". And now the register has confirmed that he and his wife are the ultimate owners of the flats, held through a Russian company, Sova Real Estate LLC. Mr Shuvalov's spokesperson told the BBC last year that these issues "have been the subject of competent government audits", and that "no complaints were ever filed". But while there are thousands of examples where the register is working, the ultimate ownership of thousands of properties remains shielded from public view. Take Beechwood House, a north London estate bought for £48m in 2008 with a value around £85m. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine 12 months ago, the UK government came down hard on wealthy businessmen close to Putin's regime. Assets were frozen, stopping rich Russians from taking their money out of the UK. But it wasn't always clear exactly which assets belonged to these oligarchs. For instance, Beechwood House was listed by the government as owned by oligarch and ex-Arsenal shareholder Alisher Usmanov when it announced sanctions against him. A spokesperson for the oligarch has now told the BBC that he transferred Beechwood House, as well as other assets, to family trusts "long before sanctions were imposed" and that while Mr Usmanov was a beneficiary for a period of time, he withdrew "on an irrevocable basis". The spokesperson added: "Neither Mr Usmanov nor members of his family are the beneficial owners of these companies."

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You would think the register should shed light on who actually owns Beechwood House. But it does not. The owner is given as Hanley Limited, an Isle of Man company. And in turn

How property ownership is hidden from the public register

There are 92,000 properties in England and Wales owned by **32,000 overseas companies**, according to Land Registry data.



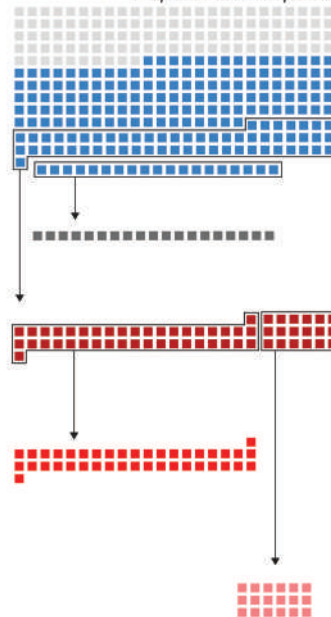
21,000 companies submitted their details to the Register of Overseas Entities*.

1,900 of these companies said they **do not have a beneficial owner**.

Of the companies that did, **5,700** list another foreign company as their owner.

4,000 companies name overseas trusts as their beneficiary.

1,800 companies list a foreign company that is not a trust, potentially making their filing non-compliant.



Some figures may not add up due to rounding.

*A proportion of companies that submitted to the register do not appear to currently own property.

Source: BBC analysis of Companies House, data up to 3 February 2023

BBC

the beneficial owner of Hanley Limited is Swiss company Pomerol Capital SA, which controls it as part of a trust structure. However, nothing about the individuals who own Pomerol Capital is listed on the public register. That is because companies owned through trusts - as opposed to other set-ups - are exempt from having their beneficial owner information made public on the register. So from the filing, it is impossible to identify the people who own, control or stand to benefit from Beechwood House - a property that the government itself said was owned by Mr Usmanov, which would have made it subject to an asset freeze. While the names of individuals linked to trusts are not included in the register, companies do have to provide their details privately to the corporate registry Companies House. And many other owners have found an even more straightforward means of keeping their names off the register - by simply not complying with the new legis-

lation. Overseas companies with property in the UK - bought since January 1999 in England and Wales and since December 2014 in Scotland - were supposed to reveal the identity of their owners by 31 January. But around half of offshore firms with property in England and Wales - approximately 15,000 - had no matching record in the property register before last week's government deadline.

This includes the company that owns a £90m home in west London linked with former Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich. The Cyprus-based firm does not yet appear to have submitted its details to the property register. Mr Abramovich could not be reached for comment. As well as the firms that are yet to file, BBC analysis has found that one in four offshore companies that have submitted their details have actually included other foreign firms, not people, as their owners. Some of these are owned by trusts, as with Beechwood House. But that is not the only way in which companies are avoiding publicly disclosing the individuals who are actually behind them. And there is a third category - companies that have filed their details to the property register, but have not complied with the rules. The BBC's investigation has identified more than 1,800 companies whose filings do not appear to do so. Among these is Uart International, a Panamanian company that, according to Land Registry records, acquired a countryside mansion in 2008. As part of the Pandora Papers, a leak of almost 12 million files, the property was owned through an offshore corporate network controlled by Vladimir Chernukhin and his wife, Lubov. Mr Chernukhin is a former Russian deputy minister of finance and businessman who had financial links to oligarchs close to the Kremlin. He moved to the UK after being sacked by Putin in 2004 and insists he is not a supporter of the Russian president. His wife Lubov, whom he married in London in 2007, is a major donor to the Conservative Party, having given the Tories more than

£2.3m since 2012. Companies House records show that Uart International lists another foreign firm as its "person of significant control". This means that the individuals who ultimately own the property remain hidden from the public register, despite the change in the legislation. Under the new regulations, another anonymous offshore firm should not be named as the owner of a company with UK property. There is no indication in the filings that the company owner is a trustee, which would exempt the firm from having their person of significant control revealed on the register - suggesting it could be a violation of the rules. Lawyers for the couple told the BBC that "Mr and Mrs Chernukhin do not support, and have never supported, the policies of President Putin, nor are they allies of President Putin" and that they are "unaware of Uart ever having made corporate filings contrary to the applicable rules and regulations in all relevant jurisdictions". While the new rules include severe penalties for companies and individuals who do not comply, experts have questioned whether this will work. "Although the legislation contains some stringent penalties for non-compliance, the government has failed to equip Companies House with the teeth and resources to apply these in practice," says Helena Wood, head of the UK Economic Crime Programme at the Royal United Services Institute think tank. Margaret Hodge MP, chair of the all-party parliamentary group on anti-corruption and responsible tax, said the new register was "turning into a joke". She added: "We need to know who owns these fantastically expensive properties, why they bought them and how they got the money to do so." A government spokesperson said that Companies House was now "assessing and preparing cases for enforcement action" and further legislation would allow it to impose fines and pursue legal avenues against companies that are flouting the law.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-64536926>

Will Trumpism II succeed in crushing China?

Undeterred by the counterproductive record of the former president's anti-China policies, Republicans are pushing more of the same. By: Ken Moak

It appears that the US Republicans are raring to go in bringing back former president Donald Trump's anti-China policies. The newly installed Speaker of the House of Representatives, Kevin McCarthy, made good on his pledge to establish a select committee on China, the first nation to receive the "honor." Perhaps afraid of losing popular support or genuinely fearing China's rise, US President Joe Biden and the Democratic members of Congress have introduced anti-China policies of their own. Case in point is a "full blanket" ban on selling advanced semiconductors to China. But will the new measures – let's call them Trumpism II – be tougher than those implemented by the former president, herein referred to as Trumpism I, and be more effective? The answer depends on one's perspective. To Trump supporters, his policies did wonders for the US. But to Trump's critics, he took a wrecking ball to the economy and to US standing in the world. Perhaps a brief reiteration on the effects of Trumpism I policies might shed light on which side has the stronger argument. If history is any guide, Trumpism I policies were misguided or counterproductive at best. Imposing tariffs on Chinese-made goods in 2018 not only did not stop China's export machine, but undermined America's economic recovery from the recession induced by the Covid-19 pandemic and fermented inflationary pressures. It could indeed be argued that Trump's efforts at stifling China's rise and "making America great again" had the opposite effects on trade, economy, technology and geopolitics

Trade/economic effects

According to the United Nations' Comtrade database on international trade, Chinese

exports to the US actually jumped after Trump imposed tariffs on them. From 2013 to 2017, Chinese exports to the US were valued at around \$375 billion, \$390 billion, \$425 billion, \$360 billion and \$460 billion respectively. From 2018 to 2021, the US imported \$475 billion, \$425 billion, \$450 billion, \$575 billion respectively. China's exports to the world also rose year-to-year during that period. On the economic front, Trump's trade war against China harmed the US economy just as much as, if not more than, China's. According to the US Federal Reserve, America's central bank, US businesses and consumers paid the excise taxes, not China. That resulted in the rise of production costs and consumer prices, incubating inflationary pressure. Trump also had to subsidize farmers heavily. These, in part, undermined the US economy's ability to recover from the Covid-induced recession. China was also hammered by the Covid-19 outbreak, but its early control of the pandemic resulted in more than 8% growth in 2021, according to IMF and other organizations' data. Though Beijing's "zero-Covid" policy indeed hindered economic growth, its GDP grew at a higher rate than that of the US in 2022, estimated at 3% around 2% respectively, according to the International Monetary Fund. The IMF has also predicted that China will likely outgrow the US in 2023, estimated at 5% and less than 2% respectively. Simply put, Trumpism I failed to stop China's economic and trade growth. The reasons were simple: The tariffs were misguided, in that most of the "imports" from China were produced by US enterprises in China. Moreover, the excise taxes were paid by US importers. And China's develop-

ment model, though not perfect, had a history of success in turning adversity into opportunity. Case in point is China's massive 2008 stimulus package of more than \$580 billion. Spending on infrastructures and other employment creating projects reversed the downward economic trajectory – raising growth from 6.5% in 2008 to more than 9% in 2009, according to IMF statistics.

Social effects

Without any scientific evidence and in spite of studies by the World Health Organization, Trump blamed China for manufacturing the coronavirus (in the Wuhan Institute of Virology) lab that infected more than 100 million and killed a million Americans. Calling it the “Chinese virus” created a surge in the number of anti-Asian hate crimes, culminating in heightened racial tensions between Asians and non-Asians. However, Asians are hitting back, becoming major gun buyers, according to a June 20, 2021, Time magazine report, citing a US National Shooting Sports Foundation survey. The reason was rising anti-Asian hate crimes. So it could be concluded that Trumpism I might be responsible for reviving anti-Asian sentiments which, if not controlled, could lead to social discontent or instability, increasing violence and social costs.

Technological effects

Trump was the first president to bar Chinese telecommunications firms such as Huawei, ZTE and others from the US market and ban US firms from selling technology goods to China. Trump's “decoupling” policies hurt both China and the US. According to US-based GlobalData, China accounts for more than 30% of US microchip sales. That huge loss of revenues caused more layoffs in the already troubled industry. According to the US Semiconductor Industry Association, firms such as Google are laying off around 6% of their workforce. That would adversely affect the US technology industry's future, financially and technologically. Huawei's

smartphone business was hit hard, dropping from the top of the heap to the bottom. But the company proved resilient, expanding its business scope. The company is now reporting that its revenues are returning to the pre-ban period, estimated at nearly \$92 billion for 2022. Indeed, Trumpism I was a blessing in disguise. Prior to its policies, Chinese firms were buying US and other countries' technologies instead of developing their own. With Trump closing that avenue, the Chinese government and technology firms spent hugely to be self-sufficient in the technologies that they want and need.

Geopolitical effects

Trump revived the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, and renamed the Asia Pacific region as “Indo-Pacific.” In doing so, he might have hoped to turn the late Japanese prime minister Shinzo Abe's “diamond of democracies” – the US, Japan, Australia and India – into a military alliance against China. But the problem was China is a major trade partner to all four countries. Simply put, the four countries were unable and unwilling to sacrifice their economic interests in a fight that they might not win. China is not a weak country; it too possesses conventional and nuclear weapons capable of hitting all four Quad countries. Perhaps it might be with this in mind that the chairman of the US select committee on China, Republican Representative Michael Gallagher, said a war with China would be a disaster (for all those involved). In the meantime, China is not sitting idly by; it continues to beef up its economic and military might to counter any potential “Quad threat.” The conclusion of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) strengthened China's influence in the Asia-Pacific region. Indeed, China has been the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' largest trade partner for many years. Australia and New Zealand, the United States' “kin and kith” cousins, are resetting their relationship with Beijing to enhance their trade relation-

ship. This raises the question: Why is the US hell-bent on crushing China by instituting even tougher policies? Case in point is the US establishment of the select committee on China, a committee on the origin of the coronavirus, and politicians from both major political parties vowing to stop Beijing from “threatening” America. Simply put, America is instilling Trumpism II. The select committee is meant to find evidence China is responsible for everything that is wrong in America and a threat to US national security. China’s alleged “evil deeds” include infecting the US and the world with the coronavirus, stealing American technology and jobs, and building a military possibly meant to invade the US, just to name a few items of a long list. Judging by the words of US politicians, it would not be a surprise if the committee finds China guilty on all counts. It will somehow find “experts” to testify that China manufactured Covid-19 at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. US politicians will continue to accuse China of spying on the US with the “balloon crisis.” Whether or not Trumpism II will succeed in destroying China only time can tell. But if history and empirical evidence are of any merit, the answer is probably no. Whether China is as “evil” as US politicians insist or is threatening America is unclear or depends on one’s perspective. Yes, China is walking on an ideology and development path different from America’s. But there is no evidence to indicate that China is demanding that the US follow that path. China has always urged other countries to adopt a development and governance platform that suits their own histories and institutions. China’s “socialism with Chinese characteristics,” though not perfect, proved effective in transforming a backward economy into the world’s second-largest (in nominal exchange-rate terms). That puts China in a position to deal with the US from a position of strengthen. Perhaps that is why US politicians consider China a threat. Since the model works and China has the resources to

sustain economic growth, technological advancement and its military buildup, Beijing has no intention of abandoning it just to please Washington. So Washington must be willing to make the ultimate sacrifice if it wants to stifle China so badly. Furthermore, China is not isolated other than from the US and its allies. The number of countries joining the Belt and Road Initiative continues to grow, the latest being countries in Latin America. In addition, Beijing’s proposal of BRICS+ is taking root, with countries like Saudi Arabia wanting to join. Last but not least, more than 125 countries count China as a major trade partner, their largest in some cases. So even if the US and its allies are to decouple from Beijing, China can still maintain its growth trajectory. As mentioned earlier, trade between China and the Global South is surging. Even if the US and allies are not willing to do business with China, the majority of the world is. Look at Huawei’s fifth-generation (5G) telecommunications products for example – more and more countries are lining up to buy its products, though the US and a handful of its allies have ditched them. With regard to who is threatening whom, Western media, politicians and pundits fail to mention the United States’ many military bases surrounding China. And China’s single base in Africa is a “threat” to the US and its allies’ national security? Cut to the chase, the “tougher” Trumpism II policies and measures will not succeed in toppling China any more than those of the first version. Ken Moak taught economic theory, public policy and globalization at university level for 33 years. He co-authored a book titled China’s Economic Rise and Its Global Impact in 2015. His second book, Developed Nations and the Economic Impact of Globalization, was published by Palgrave MacMillan Springer.

<https://asiatimes.com/2023/02/will-trumpism-ii-succeed-in-crushing-china/>

HUMPHREY YOUNG: Why parliament is crucial in security sector governance

It has the mandate to represent the people and dutifully pursue matters of public interest. By: Humphrey Young

• Governed by the rule of law and guided by the principles of human rights, the security sector players are mandated to abide by and implement the laws produced by the duly constituted authorities.

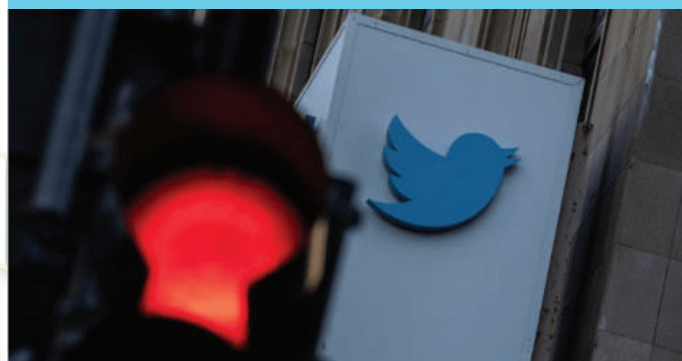
In a democratic society, the security sector plays an important role in guaranteeing public order and safety. Governed by the rule of law and guided by the principles of human rights, the security sector players are mandated to abide by and implement the laws produced by the duly constituted authorities. On the other hand, an elected parliament is another important feature of a democratic polity. It has the mandate to represent the people and dutifully pursue matters of public interest. As democratically elected representatives of the people, among its many mandates, parliament is tasked with overseeing the state apparatuses authorized to bear weapons for the protection of the state and its people, more specifically the military, police, intelligence services, prisons, border security and private security companies. It is the parliament's role to ensure that the security sector is effective and accountable. As the primary agency for law enforcement, the police operate in close proximity to the public and exert significant influence over the security of individuals and communities through their behaviours and performance. Therefore, ensuring accountability of both the individuals and institutions of the police is a fundamental condition for the good governance of the security sector in democratic societies. The parliament, as the highest representative body in a democratic system, and its committees play a significant role in maintaining police accountability. This

has been emphasised in international and regional conventions and codes of conduct. Indeed, in Kenya, parliament apply their generic functions of law-making, oversight and budget control to the organisation and functioning of the police. While parliament is not the only external accountability mechanism, outside the executive and outside the police, it is one of the most important forums for public accountability of the police. We all agree that if the security sector is well governed, it can be characterised as an effective and accountable sector capable of fulfilling its mandate to protect society against internal and external threats while respecting the rule of law and human rights. On the other hand, a poorly governed security sector is characterised by multiple security and accountability deficits, including over-inflated security establishments that are difficult to support financially, but frequently constitute a major political and economic force; lack of transparency and accountability; inadequate defence planning, poor management and budgeting capacity in both civilian and military institutions. Other aspects are a long history of human rights abuses by security forces and a tendency for security forces to act with impunity; corruption; an insufficient number of civilians capable of managing and providing oversight of security matters; and inadequate professional development. Furthermore, political interference by the security forces and politicisation of security forces by civilian actors are two sides of the same coin, reflecting major deficiencies in the security sector. The current Kenyan constitution and the various mechanisms thereof provide a

strong framework to hold the police accountable to Parliament and the citizenry. The constitutionally-guaranteed fundamental rights of the citizens, an independent judiciary, and the media ensure that the excesses of police authority are adequately checked. Several other institutions (e.g. the IPOA and various Parliamentary Standing Committees and State Assemblies) also provide accountability mechanisms. All these mechanisms generally work, though ineffectively. The problem is not in the methods, but in the people who execute them. Our elected representatives do not act on behalf of the citizens always as is required and, on several occasions, fail to pursue citizen complaints. Indeed, the elected representatives themselves have acquired notoriety for such behaviour. The term “criminalisation of politics” has taken root in Kenyan discourse. This phenomenon involves not just charge-sheeted criminals entering legislative assemblies, but also the fact that a significant number of the members of parliament are beholden to criminal elements. There is good reason to believe that criminals are entering politics in order to use political power to stymie investigations against them. Another example is the lack of seriousness exhibited by members in the proceedings of the House. Discussions on substantial issues, and even deliberations about the bills introduced in the House, are not taking place adequately. We have also seen, the Government simply pushing bills through parliament having them voted on amidst the “din and furore” of the House. Most members of Parliament seem to look upon their responsibilities primarily as distributors of patronage rather than as policy-makers. Let us not allow Parliament to be ineffective in holding the executive responsible for the administration of the country and by extension the security sector.

<https://www.the-star.co.ke/opinion/star-blogs/2023-02-17-humphrey-young-why-parliament-is-crucial-in-security-sector-governance/>

Twitter lays off 10pc of current workforce



Twitter Inc has laid off at least 200 employees, or about 10 per cent of its workforce, the New York Times reported late on Sunday, in its latest round of job cuts since Elon Musk took over the micro-blogging site last October. The layoffs on Saturday night impacted product managers, data scientists and engineers who worked on machine learning and site reliability, which helps keep Twitter's various features online, the NYT report said, citing people familiar with the matter. Twitter did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment. The company has a headcount of about 2,300 active employees, according to Musk last month. The latest job cuts follow a mass layoff in early November when Twitter laid off about 3,700 employees in a cost-cutting measure by Musk, who had acquired the company for \$44 billion. Musk said in November that the service was experiencing a “massive drop in revenue” as advertisers pulled spending amid concerns about content moderation. Twitter recently started sharing revenue from advertisements with some of its content creators. Earlier in the day, The Information reported that the social media platform laid off dozens of employees on Saturday, aiming to offset a plunge in revenue.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1739410/>

Jerusalem's Palestinians need more than Arab condemnations

By: Jalal Abukhater



On February 12, the Arab League is holding a conference on Jerusalem to demonstrate Arab support for the occupied city. The Palestinian Authority (PA) seems to have high hopes for it. President Mahmoud Abbas spoke about the suffering of the Palestinian people of Jerusalem, their rights and their steadfastness. Ahead of the event, Fadi al-Hidmi, the PA's minister of Jerusalem affairs, declared that this conference would be "different" from previous ones and that it would produce interventions that would be felt on the ground. The event would put the occupied city at the top of the "Arab agenda", he maintained. But for many of us Jerusalemites, this new Arab League initiative is invoking more scepticism than anything else. The last time Jerusalem was included in the title of an Arab League get-together – the so-called Jerusalem Summit of 2018 – not much changed for us on the ground. The summit issued a strongly worded communique, rejecting United States recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the transfer of its embassy to the occupied city. Just two years later, however, several Arab nations signed normalisation deals with that same Israel, sponsored by that

same US. These so-called "Abraham Accords" irrevocably hurt the Palestinian cause – and by extension Jerusalem. With the firm support of the US and the confidence of normalisation with Arab states, successive Israeli governments have accelerated the Judaisation of the occupied city over the past five years. Some of the most brutal tools of the ethnic cleansing of Jerusalem have been the forced evictions and house demolitions perpetrated against Palestinian residents in violation of international law. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), there are close to 1,000 Palestinians facing the imminent threat of eviction under various legal pretences. Their homes will be either taken over by Israeli settlers or demolished. In January alone, 39 Palestinian homes and other civilian buildings were bulldozed by the Israeli authorities, dispossessing some 50 people. The argument the Israeli government most often gives for these criminal acts is that Palestinian buildings do not have permits issued by the Israeli state. According to the UN, a third of Palestinian homes do not have such permits, which puts some 100,000 resi-

dents at risk of being forcibly displaced at any given moment. Needless to say, the Jerusalem municipality rarely issues permits to Palestinians, but it readily does so for Israeli Jews and Jewish settlers. Since 1967, more than 55,000 housing units were built for Jews in occupied East Jerusalem. Last year, the local authorities approved the construction of a new illegal settlement of 1,400 housing units between two Palestinian neighbourhoods of East Jerusalem, Beit Safafa and Sur Baher, cutting them off from each other. This is one of many examples of how Israel is purposefully breaking up Palestinian territorial contiguity and eliminating any possibility of carrying out the so-called two-state solution, which the Arab League continues to call for. The Israeli state has also accelerated the expansion of infrastructure servicing illegal Jewish settlements in Jerusalem at the expense of the Palestinians. Take, for example, the so-called American Road, a highway project that is set to link illegal settlements in south, east and north of occupied East Jerusalem. It will cut through several Palestinian neighbourhoods, such as Jabal Al-Mukabber, and lead to the demolition of dozens of Palestinian houses. While ramping up the forced displacement of Palestinians from occupied Jerusalem, Israel is also doing everything to make life unliveable for those who remain. As an occupying power, the Israeli state has the obligation under both international humanitarian law and human rights law to ensure the welfare of the population, but it is not doing that. Although Palestinians pay taxes to the Israeli state, just like Israelis, they do not get the same level of services. Basic infrastructure and utilities in Palestinian neighbourhoods are neglected, as the Israeli municipality of Jerusalem allocates less than 10 percent of its budget to Palestinian residents, who represent more than 37 percent of the population of the city. In 2001, the Israeli Supreme Court found that Israeli authorities were violating their legal obligations to provide proper access to education to

Palestinians in East Jerusalem. Unsurprisingly, the problem only got worse over the following two decades, and today there is a deficit of 3,517 classrooms in Palestinian schools due to Israel's systematic negligence. Palestinians, of course, have no legal means to hold the Israeli authorities accountable for violations. They are not allowed to vote in Israeli general elections and choose who to represent them. At the same time, the Israeli government is trying to bar them from participating in Palestinian politics. In 2021, when Palestinian legislative elections were supposed to be held, Israel made it clear it would not allow Palestinian residents of Jerusalem to vote. Palestinian political parties are also unable to operate freely in Jerusalem. Any event that is suspected of links to the PA is raided and shut down. In early January, for example, the Israeli police raided a meeting of a parents' committee in the neighbourhood of Issawiya, where parents had gathered to discuss the shortage of teachers. Israeli officers informed them they were closing the meeting because it was a "terror summit". Worse still, the Israeli government has also made it clear that it is in no way committed to the status quo of the holy sites in Jerusalem. Recently, the Jordanian ambassador was violently expelled from Al-Aqsa compound by Israeli police who decided he cannot visit. This is despite the fact that Jordan holds the rights to administer that same compound and other holy sites in Jerusalem under an internationally recognised agreement. Under the rules of the Jordan-run Jerusalem Waqf Department, non-Muslims are allowed to visit Al-Aqsa only during certain visitation hours and only if they respect the holy place. But in the past few years, we have seen more and more Jewish worshippers allowed by the Israeli police to pray in Al-Aqsa, in violation of these rules. Meanwhile, Palestinian Muslims from outside Jerusalem are regularly barred from visiting their holy place and praying. It should also come as no surprise that

while dispossessing the Palestinians of their homes, proper services, and even access to their holy places, Israel is also ramping up the economic oppression of the Palestinian people in Jerusalem. Palestinian Jerusalemites suffer from high poverty rates and economic insecurity, which is only getting worse. In East Jerusalem, an estimated 77 percent of Palestinians live under the poverty line, compared to 23 percent of Jewish residents of West Jerusalem. Palestinian businesses in Jerusalem are being suffocated, as Israel deepens our isolation from the rest of Palestine. A system of walls and military checkpoints deny access to Jerusalem to visitors and shoppers from nearby Jerusalemite towns like Abu Dis, Al-Ram, and Hizma, as well as from the West Bank and Gaza. This isolation has been detrimental to the local economy.

In addition, Palestinian business owners face exorbitant taxes without any support from the Israeli state or the PA. This has led to the closure of at least 250 Palestinian-owned shops in recent years, according to local media. Indeed, Jerusalem does need assistance, including financial support. The PA is hoping that the conference in Cairo will help raise much-needed funds to support the educational and healthcare sectors and give the local economy a much-needed boost of foreign investment. But any such support – if it indeed materialises – would only bring limited, temporary relief to Jerusalemites. Our city suffers from occupation and apartheid. We need action on the political front and we need it immediately. Strongly-worded condemnation and communiques will not do. Indeed, we Jerusalemites are known for our “sumoud” (steadfastness) and it should be celebrated at international forums like the Arab League. But under the oppression of a merciless occupier, we are getting near the limits of our resilience.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2023/2/12/jerusalem-palestinians-need-more-than-arab-condemnations>

Brazil floods, landslides: Death toll rises to 64



SAO PAULO: The death toll from floods and landslides in southeast Brazil a week ago was officially increased to 64 Sunday, as the search continued for one missing person. Among the confirmed toll, 18 were children, the Sao Paulo state government said in a statement. More than an entire February's worth of rain fell in 24 hours on the picturesque beach resort town of Sao Sebastiao and surrounding areas last weekend. Authorities said the largest daily rainfall ever registered in Brazil triggered violent floods and landslides that tore through precariously built hillside communities. According to the G1 news site, quoting civil defense authorities, one person remained missing Sunday, down from dozens initially. More than 2,400 people were displaced by the downpour which washed away homes, roads, clinics and other infrastructure. An estimated 9.5 million of Brazil's 215 million people live in areas at high risk of flooding or landslides -- mainly poor favela neighborhoods. The South American country has been hit by a series of deadly weather disasters in recent years, which experts say are likely being made worse by climate change.

<https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/1044525-brazil-floods-landslides-death-toll-rises-to-64>



Russia suspends only remaining major nuclear treaty with US

By: Vladimir Isachenkov

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin declared Tuesday that Moscow was suspending its participation in the New START treaty — the last remaining nuclear arms control pact with the United States — sharply upping the ante amid tensions with Washington over the fighting in Ukraine. Speaking in his state-of-the-nation address, Putin also said that Russia should stand ready to resume nuclear weapons tests if the U.S. does so, a move that would end a global ban on nuclear weapons tests in place since the end of the Cold War. Explaining his decision to suspend Russia's obligations under the 2010 New START treaty, Putin accused the U.S. and its NATO allies of openly declaring the goal of Russia's defeat in Ukraine. "They want to inflict a 'strategic defeat' on us and try to get to our nuclear facilities at the same time," he said, declaring his decision to suspend Russia's participation in the treaty. He later sent a draft bill on the pact's suspension to the Kremlin-controlled parliament, which is expected to quickly rubber-stamp it Wednesday. The document says that it will be up to the Russian president to resume Moscow's participation in the pact. Putin emphasized that Russia was not withdrawing from the pact altogether, and hours after his address, the Russian Foreign Ministry said the country would respect the caps on nuclear weapons set under the treaty. Russia also will continue to exchange information about test launches of ballistic missiles per earlier agreements with the United States, the ministry said. Noting that the decision to suspend Russia's participation in New START could be reversed, the Foreign Ministry urged the

U.S. to deescalate tensions and create a proper environment for the treaty's implementation. The New START treaty envisages caps on the number of nuclear weapons and broad inspections of nuclear sites. Putin said such inspections don't make sense after the U.S. and its allies declared the goal of dealing Russia a military defeat in Ukraine and helped the Ukrainian military mount strikes on Russian nuclear facilities. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken deplored Putin's move as "deeply unfortunate and irresponsible," noting that "we'll be watching carefully to see what Russia actually does." He said that "we'll, of course, make sure that in any event we are postured appropriately for the security of our own country and that of our allies," but emphasized that "we remain ready to talk about strategic arms limitations at any time with Russia irrespective of anything else going on in the world or in our relationship." "I think it matters that we continue to act responsibly in this area," Blinken told reporters on a visit to Greece. "It's also something the rest of the world expects of us." NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg also voiced regret about Putin's move, saying that "with today's decision on New START, full arms control architecture has been dismantled." "I strongly encourage Russia to reconsider its decision and respect existing agreements," he told reporters. Putin argued that while the U.S. has pushed for the resumption of inspections of Russian nuclear facilities under the treaty, NATO allies had helped Ukraine mount drone attacks on Russian air bases hosting nuclear-capable strategic bombers. The Russian military said that it shot

down the Soviet-built drones that struck two bomber bases deep inside Russia in December, but acknowledged that several servicemen were killed by debris that also damaged some aircraft. Putin on Tuesday mocked NATO's statement urging Russia to allow the resumption of the U.S. inspections of Russian nuclear weapons sites as "some kind of theater of the absurd." "The drones used for it were equipped and modernized with NATO's expert assistance," Putin said. "And now they want to inspect our defense facilities? In the conditions of today's confrontation, it sounds like sheer nonsense." Putin described the U.S. push for access to Russian nuclear sites as "the height of hypocrisy and cynicism." "They want to inflict a 'strategic defeat' on us and at the same time, they keep trying to get to our nuclear facilities," he charged. He noted he signed an order a week ago to deploy new land-based strategic missiles and asked: "Are they also going to poke their noses there?" The Russian leader also alleged that a NATO statement on New START raised the issue of the nuclear weapons of Britain and France, which are part of the alliance's nuclear capability but aren't included in the U.S.-Russian pact. "They are also aimed against us. They are aimed against Russia," Putin said of the European weapons. "Before we return to discussing the issue, we need to understand what are the aspirations of NATO members Britain and France and how we take it into account, their strategic arsenals that are part of the alliance's combined strike potential." Then-presidents Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev signed the New START treaty in 2010. The pact limits each country to no more than 1,550 deployed nuclear warheads and 700 deployed missiles and bombers. The agreement envisages sweeping on-site inspections to verify compliance. Just days before the treaty was due to expire in February 2021, Russia and the United States agreed to extend it for another five years.

Russia and the U.S. have suspended mutual inspections under New START since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, but Moscow last fall refused to allow their resumption, raising uncertainty about the pact's future. Russia also indefinitely postponed a planned round of consultations under the treaty. The U.S. State Department has said that Russia's refusal to allow the inspections "prevents the United States from exercising important rights under the treaty and threatens the viability of U.S.-Russian nuclear arms control." It noted that nothing prevents Russian inspectors from conducting inspections of U.S. facilities. Putin on Tuesday challenged the U.S. assertion, alleging that Washington has rejected some Russian requests for visits to specific U.S. facilities. "We aren't allowed to conduct full-fledged inspections under the treaty," he said. "We can't really check anything on their side." He alleged that the U.S. was working on nuclear weapons and some in the U.S. were pondering plans to resume nuclear tests banned under the global test ban that took effect after the end of the Cold War. "In this situation, Rosatom (Russia's state nuclear corporation) and the Defense Ministry must ensure readiness for Russian nuclear weapons tests," Putin said. "We naturally won't be the first to do it, but if the U.S. conducts tests we will also do it. No one should have dangerous illusions that the global strategic parity could be destroyed." U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for Russia and the U.S. to immediately return to dialogue because "a world without nuclear arms control is a far more dangerous and unstable one with potentially catastrophic consequences," U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

<https://apnews.com/article/russia-ukraine-putin-politics-government-united-states-23cc21a1f42798177a40d4e53204b054>



Realistic and interesting description of Iran from the language of a non-Iranian

Fahui Hossein, an Egyptian journalist who has an Arab nationalist tendency and also has an anti-Iranian approach, writes in a detailed article comparing Egypt and Iran:

- We and the Iranians were on the same level in the international space more than 30 years ago. Iranians chose the path of struggle and resistance against the superpowers, especially America, and we chose the path of compromise.
 - Every year, we used to get 4 billion dollars in free aid from the United States for our betrayal of the Arabs, and Iranians experienced political, economic pressure, embargo, civil war, and unequal war from the very beginning.
 - Today, Iran has turned from a regional power into a global power, and no problem in the region or the world can be solved without Iran's opinion.
 - And the US presidential candidates use the term Iran 64 times each in their televised debate. It is as if they have no other opponent except Iran in the world.
 - And another thing is that Iranians are among the top ten countries in the world in all strategic sciences, from nuclear to space, to nano, simulation, medicine, etc., and in missile industry, they are the fourth power in the world, and in terms of the accuracy and speed of their missiles, they are perhaps the first country in the world.
 - And in the island region, it is safe and stable, and despite the support of America and receiving annual aid, we are concerned about preparing a meal of bread for most of our people and...
 - When there is no honest leader in a country, then the situation will be like Egypt; When there is no unity in a society, it becomes Iraq; When a country does not have a strong commander, it becomes Pakistan; When in an apparently Muslim country, the leader and president of that country sells himself to the East and the West, it becomes Turkey;
 - But when in a Shia country, the leader does not give ransom to the land and time, with all the pressures, tastes, extremes, extremes, 8 years of war, 30 years of political and economic embargo, there is no room left for the enemy to breathe.
 - Well, then it will be Iran, in the middle of a fence of the fire of regional wars, where wounded wolves howl restlessly behind their borders... (and) no one dares to look left at their land; Even their flies (drones).
- Source: Sharq Al-Awsat newspaper

World's Longest Conveyor Belt System – 61 Miles Long

By: Emily Cassidy, Nasa Earth Observatory

The conveyor belt helps transport an essential agricultural fertilizer from the remote reaches of Western Sahara to farmlands across the world. On the western edge of the Sahara Desert, a 61-mile-long white line cuts across the sand. This conspicuous line is the world's longest conveyor belt system, which traverses Western Sahara's desert from the Bou Craa phosphate mine to the coastal town of El Marsa near Laayoune. The conveyor belt helps transport a critical mineral from remote parts of northern Africa to farmlands across the world, including in the United States. Phosphorous is a fundamental element to all living things and forms the backbone of our DNA. It is also one of three key nutrients used in commercial fertilizers. Most of the phosphorous in these fertilizers comes from phosphate rock, which is mined predominately in China, Western Sahara and Morocco, and the United States. According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Morocco and Western Sahara produce about 38 million metric tons of phosphate rock a year, which was 17 percent of global production in 2021. USGS also estimates that this region contains 70 percent of all known phosphate rock reserves on the planet. White dust from chalky phosphate rock can be seen blowing from the belt structure in the image above, acquired on December 14, 2022, by the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectroradiometer (MODIS) on NASA's Terra satellite. The white dust helps the belt stand out from the beige and brown desert landscape. The open pit mine and its conveyor belt, which carries 2,000 tons of phosphate rock an hour, is so conspicuous in the Sahara Desert that it has attracted the attention of astronauts on the International



Space Station. An astronaut took a photograph (second image above) of the mine in 2018.

NASA Earth Observatory image by Lauren Dauphin, using MODIS data from NASA EOSDIS LANCE and GIBS/Worldview. Astronaut photograph ISS056-E-32453 was acquired on June 16, 2018, with a Nikon D5 digital camera using a 1600 millimeter lens and is provided by the ISS Crew Earth Observations Facility and the Earth Science and Remote Sensing Unit, Johnson Space Center. The image was taken by a member of the Expedition 56 crew. The image has been cropped and enhanced to improve contrast, and lens artifacts have been removed. The International Space Station Program supports the laboratory as part of the ISS National Lab to help astronauts take pictures of Earth that will be of the greatest value to scientists and the public, and to make those images freely available on the Internet. Additional images taken by astronauts and cosmonauts can be viewed at the NASA/JSC Gateway to Astronaut Photography of Earth. <https://scitechdaily.com/worlds-longest-conveyor-belt-system-61-miles-long/>

NASA just test fired a rocket designed to power long-term Moon trips



A revolutionary new form of rocket has just been tested by NASA. Called RDRE, this new propulsion device could make long-term Moon missions viable.

NASA's propulsion development engineers have built and tested the agency's first full-scale rotating detonation rocket engine, or RDRE for short. This advanced rocket engine design could change how propulsion systems are built in the future in a big way. This work comes as NASA begins to take the first steps toward establishing a long-term presence on the surface of the Moon. NASA's plan for a long-term presence on the Moon is called the Artemis program. The program's goal is to set up a stable way to explore the Moon by the decade's end. This includes making a lander that people can use, building a Gateway space station in lunar orbit, and sending surface systems and rovers to the Moon. The end goal of the Artemis program is to set up a permanent base on the Moon and prepare to send people to Mars. The RDRE is different from other rocket engines because it gets thrust from a supersonic combustion process called detonation. This design can power human landers and interplanetary vehicles that travel to faraway places like the Moon and Mars. This is because it produces more power than current propulsion systems while using less fuel. Data from RDRE hot fire tests carried out in 2022 at Marshall's East Test Area is confirmed by engineers at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, and principal collaborator IN Space LLC in West Lafayette, Indiana. The engine was started over a dozen times for more than ten minutes. RDRE is built in part using 3D printing. By proving that its hardware, constructed using cutting-edge additive manufacturing or 3D printing, designs, and processes, could function for extended periods while withstanding the intense heat and pressure

environments produced by detonations, the RDRE successfully met its main test objective. The RDRE achieved the highest pressure rating for this design ever recorded while operating at full throttle, producing almost 4,000 pounds (17.8 kilonewtons) of thrust for nearly a minute at an average chamber pressure of 622 pounds per square inch (4.6 Newton/mm²). The RDRE uses the powder bed fusion additive manufacturing technique and the NASA-developed copper alloy GR-Cop-42, enabling the engine to run in harsh circumstances without overheating. Powder bed fusion (PBF) is a type of additive manufacturing (AM) process that uses a laser or an electron beam to melt and fuse successive layers of metal or plastic powder. The process is typically used to create complex, three-dimensional parts with high precision and accuracy. The powders used in PBF can be made of various materials, including metals (such as titanium, aluminum, and stainless steel) and plastics (such as nylon and polyamide). PBF is commonly used in the aerospace, medical, and automotive industries to prototype and produce end-use parts. Some of the most popular PBF technologies are Selective laser melting (SLM) and Direct Energy Deposition (DED). Because of the RDRE's recent success, NASA engineers are now working to construct an utterly reusable 10,000-pound (4,536 kg) RDRE to compare its performance to conventional liquid rocket engines. The Game Changing Development Program at NASA's Space Technology Mission Directorate oversees and funds RDRE.

<https://interestingengineering.com/innovation/nasa-successful-rdre-rocket-test>

India trying to prevent declassification of 'sensitive' 1947 Kashmir papers

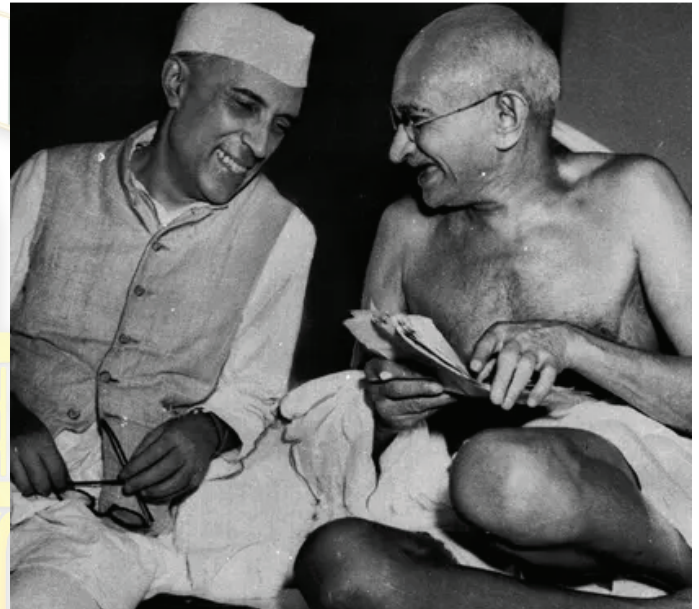
Government documents fear letters about special status known as Bucher papers could affect foreign relations. By: Anisha Dutta

India may prevent the declassification of papers from 1947 related to Kashmir as it fears the "sensitive" letters could affect foreign relations, according to internal government documents seen by the Guardian.

The letters, known as the Bucher papers, are believed to include political and military arguments for why India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, called for a ceasefire with Pakistan and provided special status to the state of Jammu and Kashmir. For decades the region in the foothills of the Himalayas was given a separate constitution, a flag, and autonomy over all matters except for foreign affairs and defence. Those measures were seen by Kashmiris as crucial to protecting their rights in the Muslim-majority state. But in 2019, under the Hindu nationalist prime minister, Narendra Modi, the government in Delhi formally revoked the disputed state's constitutional autonomy, in an attempt to integrate it fully into India. The decision tightened the government's grip over the region and stoked anger and resentment as a three-decade armed revolt continued to rage.

The Bucher papers refer to communications between Gen Sir Francis Robert Roy Bucher, who served as second commander-in-chief of the Indian army between 1948 and 1949, and government officials, including Nehru. Over the years, several attempts have been made by activists to declassify the papers to throw light on the reasoning for article 370, which gave Jammu and Kashmir its special status.

A recent foreign ministry document seen by the Guardian said the contents of the papers should not be declassified yet. The papers contain "military operational matters in Kash-



mir and correspondences amongst senior government leaders on sensitive political matters on Kashmir", the document said. The papers have been kept at the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, an autonomous body under India's culture ministry. According to a source with knowledge of the matter, they reveal that Nehru was aware and informed of the military development in Kashmir, including Pakistan's attempts to use external military assistance to escalate the situation. "Roy Bucher suggested a political approach to solve the escalating situation given military fatigue faced by Indian troops due to 13 months of military deployment, including taking the matter before the United Nations," the source said. That advice may have influenced Nehru's decision to grant Kashmir special status. In 1952, the prime minister argued that the aspirations of the people of Kashmir should be respected. "I want to stress that it is only the people of Kashmir who can decide the future of Kashmir," he told India's parliament. "We are not going to impose ourselves

on them on the point of the bayonet.” The Bucher papers were handed over by India’s external affairs ministry to the Nehru museum and library in New Delhi in 1970, with a note saying they should be kept “classified”. They have remained in the library’s closed collection since then, the foreign ministry document said. An Indian activist, Venkatesh Nayak, has filed multiple appeals to declassify the papers, a move that was initially rejected. However, in 2021 the Indian information commissioner ruled it was in the “national interest” but fell short of ordering the disclosure of the crucial documents. The order advised that the library may seek the foreign ministry’s permission to declassify the papers for academic research.

In a letter dated 12 October 2022 that has been reviewed by the Guardian, the chair of the museum and library, Nripendra Misra, wrote to India’s foreign secretary arguing the papers “are very important for scholarly research” and requested declassification. “We have read the contents of the Bucher papers. Our view is that the papers need not remain ‘classified’ beyond the reach of academicians. We are opening papers of other important public figures also,” Misra argued. India typically allows the declassification of archival documents after 25 years. The foreign ministry argued in the document that the disclosure of the papers should be put in “abeyance” for the time being and advised that the “sensitivity of Roy Bucher papers and the likely implications of their disclosure” should be examined further. Sources say the government has yet to take a final decision on the matter.

The Guardian has contacted the Indian foreign ministry and the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library for a response.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/feb/14/india-trying-prevent-declassification-sensitive-kashmir-papers>

China sees potential in ChatGPT-like technology



BEIJING: China’s ministry of science and technology said on Friday said it saw the potential of ChatGPT-like tech and would be pushing for the integration of artificial intelligence into Chinese society and the economy.

“[This technology] has the potential to be applied in many industries and fields,” Chen Jiachang, who heads the ministry’s high-tech department, told a news briefing, praising its natural language processing capabilities.

Minister Wang Zhigang also told the same briefing that from an ethics standpoint, technologies like ChatGPT should not be limited too much so they can be developed effectively, though he cautioned that all technological achievements have “two sides”.

Their comments came at a time when Chinese tech companies and investors are keeping an eye on how Beijing will regulate ChatGPT-like technology.

<https://www.dawn.com/news/1739047/>

Severe dollar crisis hobbles Bangladesh businesses



The import-dependent nation is facing economic hardship in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine as prices shoot up. By: Faisal Mahmud

Dhaka, Bangladesh – Spice trader Mohammed Enayet Ullah has made at least four attempts since November to open a letter of credit to pay for imports of cumin, cardamom and cloves, some of the most essential spices used in Bangladeshi cooking, only to be refused by banks due to a shortage of dollars. Importers in Bangladesh need to open letters of credit with one of the country's 61 scheduled banks to buy foreign goods and services. It is essentially a financial contract issued by an importer's bank that guarantees payment to the seller in dollars. In case a buyer doesn't pay up, the bank has to take on the liabilities. But there is a severe shortage of greenbacks in Bangladesh due to its dwindling foreign reserves and a sharp drop in the value of its taka currency against the dollar. In the past six months, Bangladesh's foreign reserves have dropped below \$32bn from \$39bn while the value of the taka has fallen by 27 percent from 84 to the dollar to 107. The South Asian nation has been facing severe economic hardship since Russia's invasion of Ukraine a year ago. In its import-dependent economy, rising global fuel oil and other commodity prices have caused nearly double-digit inflation and depleted foreign reserves. To protect the declining reserves, the government had stopped all non-essential imports and reduced the supply of dollars to commercial banks. This has not only forced banks to refuse new letters of credit applications but also has made their promised payments to foreign suppliers for previous imports uncertain. Local media reported that at least 20 banks with negative balances in their foreign currency holdings could not make these payments. According to



Bangladesh Bank, the central bank, the number of new letters of credit slumped 14 percent year-on-year in the July-to-December period, and payments of those debts declined by 9 percent, indicating defaults. These numbers, however, don't fully convey the perils of medium-sized importers like Ullah. Ullah owns the spice trading company Hedayet & Brothers, which usually imports half of its annual \$2m of essential spices ahead of Ramadan, the Muslim holy month, in which local consumption at least triples in the South Asian nation. But now, with barely a month left until the start of Ramadan, he is worried that a failure to secure new supplies would put a big dent in his balance sheet. "I will lose a huge business," Ullah, who also acts as the president of the Bangladesh Spices Traders Association, told Al Jazeera, "Traders will be compelled to increase the prices of spices because of the increasing gap between demand and supply. Ultimately consumers will be the biggest losers."

Fear of losing credit rating

Large businesses also have not been able to insulate themselves from the dollar crisis. In January, multiple ships carrying goods like



sugar and cooking oil for the importer Meghna Group of Industries (MGI), a Bangladeshi conglomerate with \$1.2bn in revenues, got stuck in Chattagram port for weeks as the guarantor Agrani Bank couldn't make the payment to the foreign supplier due to a shortage of dollars. MGI, however, had paid the full amount to the bank for the products in local currency. "We had to pay a daily shipping demurrage of \$78,000 while the ships got stuck in the port because of the bank's failure to settle the payment," Monowar Ali, MGI general manager told Al Jazeera. Agrani Bank declined to comment on its current US dollar reserves, but one of its officials who spoke on the condition of anonymity because he is not authorised to speak to the media confirmed that the bank is still scrambling for dollars to settle its previous letters of credit obligations. On Tuesday, news agencies reported that Bangladesh's private power producers, which provide more than half of the country's electricity, were also short of the \$1bn in foreign currency that they need to pay for imports of fuel oil to avoid an energy crisis in the summer. Delays in dollar payments to foreign counterparts, meanwhile, have caused an image crisis. Bankers and economists fear that the failure to comply with payment deadlines, which are usually 180 days, will put Bangladesh at risk of a credit rating downgrade. Moody's, one of the big three global rating agencies, recently lowered Bangladesh's local-currency and foreign-currency

ceilings to Ba1 and Ba3 from Baa3 and Ba2, respectively. It also placed the country's long-term issuer and senior unsecured ratings of Ba3 on review for downgrade. Ba ratings indicate substantial credit risk. "Bangladesh's weakening external position raises external vulnerability and government liquidity risks in a way that may not be consistent with its current rating," Moody's said. Syed Mahbubur Rahman, former president of the Association of Bankers, Bangladesh told Al Jazeera that if the country's rating ultimately goes down, import costs for banks will significantly go up because they will have to pay commissions to third parties to get letters of credit confirmations. Zahid Hussain, former lead economist at the World Bank's Dhaka office, told Al Jazeera that towards the end of 2020, the three major ratings agencies – S&P Global Ratings, Moody's and Fitch Ratings – all downgraded Sri Lanka's credit ratings on expectations of deterioration due to the lack of favourable economic and fiscal conditions. "If the situation does not improve, it surely can happen here," he warned.

Will IMF loans make an impact?

Officials from the Bangladesh Bank said high import payments, especially since the Ukraine war has stoked commodity prices, was the main reason for the depletion of foreign reserves. However, Mezbaul Haque, the central bank's spokesperson, predicted the crisis created by the shortage of dollar would be resolved within the next few months. "Since we have curbed our spending on imports, our import bills will be lower in the coming months," Haque told Al Jazeera. "This will ease the pressure on our dollar reserves." He said the net dollar balance of the country's commercial banks has already increased up to \$3.17bn from \$2.2bn at the beginning of this year. That amount however, is still half of the \$5bn to \$6bn that these banks typically had in their coffers before the country plunged into the ongoing economic



turmoil, Rahman said. The flip side of that, however, is that curbing imports is pushing up prices when inflation is already high. Data from the Consumer Association of Bangladesh, an advocacy and research organization, showed prices of at least 56 consumer products that included import-oriented edible oil, sugar and lentils have increased from 15 percent to as high as 60 percent in the past year. But there is a glimmer of hope for the country's beleaguered finances. At the beginning of February, Bangladesh received a dose of financial relief as the International Monetary Fund approved a \$4.7bn loan programme. Bangladesh has become the third South Asian nation after Sri Lanka and Pakistan to seek IMF loans, but unlike its crisis-hit neighbours, Bangladesh has not asked for a bailout package, rather a stabilization package. Australia-based Bangladeshi economist Jyoti Rahman told Al Jazeera that the IMF loan should help bolster the foreign currency reserves and avoid a credit downgrade. "In addition to direct IMF financing, such programmes have a 'crowding in' effect as other international lenders will become more amenable to finance the current account deficit of Bangladesh," said Rahman, who is hopeful that will happen soon.

<https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2023/2/23/severe-dollar-crisis-hobbles-bangladesh-businesses>

Twin cyclones may hit New Zealand next week

Already reeling from the impact of cyclone "Gabrielle," New Zealand may be hit by a pair of tropical cyclones next week, meteorologists said on Sunday. The pair may form in the South Pacific next week, with a potential risk of more rain and swells for eastern parts of New Zealand, local English daily New Zealand Herald reported citing MetService, the country's official meteorology department. However, unlike Gabrielle, the chances of another direct hit on the country are considered low at this stage, the newspaper reported. According to the MetService, a tropical low moving westward towards South Pacific Ocean country, Vanuatu, this afternoon was likely to develop into a tropical cyclone early this week. "Potentially 2 tropical cyclones developing this week. At this stage, the risk of either directly impacting New Zealand is relatively low. However, there is a lot to happen before the track becomes certain so things could change," it said in a Twitter post. Police on Sunday continued the search for at least eight people still missing after Gabrielle struck the nation two weeks ago, authorities said. Gabrielle lashed New Zealand's northern region on Feb. 12, and subsequently battered the east coast, leaving at least 11 dead and displacing thousands. Historically, late February and early March mark the height of New Zealand's November-to-April cyclone season. Each season, around nine cyclones formed in the southwest Pacific, of which at least one traveled within 550 kilometers (342 miles) of the country, the newspaper reported.

<https://www.nation.com.pk/27-Feb-2023/twin-cyclones-may-hit-new-zealand-next-week>

Forced Marriage: A Violation of Human Rights

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



Assessment of the Validity of Forced Marriages. The court must not hesitate to use every weapon in its protective arsenal if faced with what is, or appears to be, a case of forced marriage (Munby J).

The Validity of Forced Marriages

A forced marriage will be considered valid up until the time the court awards a decree of nullity, thus invalidating the marriage. The court limits its powers in awarding this decree nisi (an order made by a court which states that a divorce must take place at a certain time in the future unless a good reason is produced to prevent this) to where there is no valid consent between the parties to the marriage.

Defining Forced Marriage as a Void or Voidable marriage

The difference between a void and voidable marriage is that, a marriage will be regarded as voidable if it once existed, but due to certain circumstances, it had been annulled by the courts and therefore ceased to exist. In such a circumstance, a divorce will be granted. On the other hand, a void marriage is a marriage that never existed in the eyes of the law, therefore a divorce cannot take place. The circumstances on which a marriage may be declared void are on grounds which reflect a public policy objection to the marriage. Only the parties to the marriage can seek an annulment. It is, therefore, important to make a distinction between void and voidable marriages, as there is no element of a public policy objection in voidable marriages. Rather, that a party to the marriage may wish to annul the marriage if there is a major problem in it. A forced marriage does not fall within the grounds on which a marriage is void. It therefore falls within the categories of

a voidable marriage, which are contained in the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973: A marriage celebrated after 31st July 1971 shall be voidable on the following grounds only, that is to say— (c) That either party to the marriage did not validly consent to it, whether in consequences of duress, mistake, unsoundness of mind or otherwise... It is evident that s.12 (c) is applicable in the case of forced marriages, as it clearly falls within the scope of the definition of a forced marriage ‘a marriage conducted without valid consent [emphasis added] of both parties, where duress is... invariably a factor.’

Nullity of forced marriages

Previously, it was held that a marriage was voidable on the above ground, only if it could be shown that there was a threat of imminent danger to life, limb or liberty, so that the constraint destroys the reality of consent (per Sir Jocelyn Simon P in *Szchter v Szechter*. This line of authority was followed by the Court of Appeal in two following cases. Both of which were considered to be valid arranged marriages. In *Singh v Singh* (1972), a young woman married under emotional pressure from her parents. It was held to be a valid arranged marriage, as she did not marry under a threat to life, limb or liberty, but rather out of a reluctant duty to her parents and religion. Akin to this is the *Singh v Kaur* (1981) case that involved the husband who gave in to family pressure. His family stated that if he refused to go ahead with the ceremony, he would bring disgrace and dishonour to the family in front of the Sikh community, and was threatened to lose his job (working in a business with his father and brother), his van, and his income. Ormrod LJ stated that it was

a case where “the court must have considerable sympathy for the husband”, as he had never lived away from home before, and at the age of 21 considering the situation he was placed under, he had no choice but to go ahead with the marriage. However, it was held that under English law, he was considered an adult, and the decision was up to him whether to give in to his family’s pressure or refuse to go ahead with it. Ormrod LJ held that it was a valid marriage and that: this court cannot possibly...hold that this marriage is invalid by reason of duress unless it can be shown that there were threats to his life, limb and liberty...It would be a very serious matter if this court were...to water down Sir Jocelyn Simon's test...It would be a most serious thing for this court to introduce any less religious burden of proof in these matters than that which the court decided was right in the case of *Singh v Singh*... However, this test is no longer the law. A couple of years later, Ormrod LJ rejected this subjective test in the case of *Hirani v Hiram* (1983) where a young Hindu woman was threatened with eviction from the family home if she did not submit to an arranged marriage, initiated due to her parents' abhorrence of her dating a Muslim. The Court of Appeal reversed the first instance judge's decision and expressed that he had erred in law by applying the above subjective test. It was held that: the crucial question...is whether the threats, pressure, or whatever it is, is such as to destroy the reality of the consent and overbears the will of the individual. This test was applied by Coleridge J in *P v R* (Forced Marriage: Annulment: procedure, 2003). This case involved the victim being forced into marriage through physical duress, by her mother pushing her head forward to nod three times to convey consent to the marriage. It was held that the victim had not validly consented to the marriage, as her consent had been extracted by physical force, and enormous emotional pressure brought to bear

on her (by her mother and brother) while she was in Pakistan. The emotional pressure consisted of her mother blackmailing her that she would commit suicide had the daughter failed to go ahead with the marriage. It can be suggested that the victim was in such awkward circumstances where she was placed in front of her family and community guests and therefore, at that time, had no opportunity to object to the marriage. Coleridge J stated that: “There is a real stigma attached to a woman... if merely a divorce decree is pronounced and it is desirable from all points of view that where a genuine case of forced marriage exists the court should, where appropriate, grant a decree of nullity and as far as possible remove any stigma that would otherwise attach to the fact that a person... has been married. Munby J described in *NS v MI* (2006) that there are many ways in which duress or coercion may be brought to bear. In this case, there was a series of situations where the victim was placed under immense emotional pressure and moral blackmail over many months, as the parents threatened to commit suicide if she did not marry her cousin. The Court of Appeal granted an annulment under s. 12 (c) of the Matrimonial Causes Act 1973 where the girl had been “lured to Pakistan on a false pretense (for holiday) ... subjected to unrelenting pressure ... [d]eprived of her passport as a means of escape ... [and] overborne by duress. She did not validly consent, as “her lips may have spoken, but not her mind.” It was held in this case, that pressure of whatever character is a species of restraint under which no valid consent can be made, and very little pressure may suffice to bring about the desired result.

Procedure of nullity

Where the marriage is considered voidable at law, it can be annulled on the basis of lack of consent on the part of the party (or both parties) to the marriage. Emphasis is added here, that the petition will be for nullity, and not for

divorce. The rationale behind this is that a petition for divorce may not be the most appropriate legal action for numerous explanations. Initially, access to divorce proceedings is generally much harder to gain, not forgetting the expense that can be incurred from such arrangements. Secondly, and more significantly, undertaking divorce proceedings may create further frictions between the parties and their families. Once a divorce has been granted, in many communities, the status of a divorcee will be seen as stamp of shame and dishonour on the family and the divorcee herself, for the rest of her remaining life. Even once a divorce is successfully granted, the claimant may continue to suffer pressure from her family to return to her matrimonial home. It is for the above-mentioned reasons, to avoid the financial and emotional turmoil of divorce proceedings that a petition against a forced marriage will be made for nullity, instead of a divorce. The advantage in nullity as against divorce proceedings is that it could help the victim to avoid stigma within their community. There is a requirement that there must be a court hearing in every case of nullity, whether defended or not. Thus, proving to be a very distressing experience for the applicants (victims), as the hearing takes place in open court. Oral evidence is required in court, after which the judge will decide whether a decree of nullity should be granted on the basis of the evidence given. In cases of forced marriages, this would prove to be a very unsatisfactory requirement, as it would further aggravate the position between the parties, placing the victim under further immense pressure. Under general forced marriage circumstances, applicants are referred to mediation to see if there are other methods of resolving the issue. Health professionals dealing with cases of forced marriage might sometimes pressure the victim in their care to seek mediation, reconciliation and counselling with their family. This has often proved

to be a dangerous and erroneous solution, unwittingly increasing the victim's vulnerability by placing them under a risk of further abuse, with cases of women being murdered by their families whilst mediation was taking place (FCO, 2007).

Court's Inherent Jurisdiction in the International matrix of forced marriages

Forced marriage is not only an abuse of human rights, it is an abuse of parental power, which can affect children, primarily girls, suggests Sir Peter Singer. The court's wardship powers were utilised in the case of *Re K.R.* (a minor) to protect a young girl from a forced marriage overseas, where she was being held against her will, and to facilitate her safe return to the UK. In this case, the young woman was returned to her family by the police after informing them of her threat of abduction to India by her family for the purpose of forced marriage. The UK then intervened once the woman had been abducted to ensure her safe return to the UK. In another case, *I Hogg J* considered that the English courts could exercise jurisdiction and make the child a ward of the court, even though she had never lived in the UK. The only connection she had with the UK was her father's nationality. However, these were "dire circumstances", as she sought help from the British High commission, and it was held that "the tentacles of this court should stretch towards Pakistan to rescue this child...[i]t is a very unusual thing to do but such were the circumstances that [it was] justified", and the *parens patriae* principle was used to protect her (a doctrine that grants the inherent power and authority of the state to protect persons who are legally unable to act on their behalf). In this case, the circumstances were exceptional because the child was only 15 years old, and the law in the UK prohibits marriages before the age of 16. Her protection was necessary as "she is, and always has been, a British child, and was seeking British help. It

would therefore, be inequitable to ignore her pleas. This case suggests that the outcome of every case turns on its own facts. Willingness of the court to intervene in the international matrix of forced marriage cases can be seen, not only on behalf of minors, but also adults, although support is more reluctantly offered to adults. Although courts can utilise their powers and ensure the safe return of the victim back to the UK, in some cases this will not be possible. In typical cases where the victim is abducted and taken abroad to be forced into marriage, the victim is often hidden away and kept as far away as possible from the public view. She is often deprived of using the phone or any other methods of communication with anyone apart from the immediate family members, prevented from leaving the house unescorted and a watchful eye is employed to ensure that she does not escape. What solution would the court then be able to provide to victims in such an imprisoned situation? In some cases, therefore, this procedure could be ineffective and too late.

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Admire The 3000-Year-Old Condom Of The Egyptian Pharaoh Tutankhamun: Archaeologists Are Amazed



When Tutankhamun's tomb was first discovered in 1922, archaeologist Howard Carter was stunned by the astonishing array of grave goods – more than 5,000 artifacts were left for the boy king to use in his afterlife. But amongst all the gold, silver, ebony, ivory, precious jewelry, weapons, furniture, fine linen and rare perfumes, a small piece of cloth caught the eyes of the experts; it was King Tut's condom and, apparently, it was deemed essential for him to take into eternity. Tutankhamun's condom, which contained traces of his DNA, consisted of a sheath made of fine linen, soaked in olive oil, and attached to a string that would have tied around his waist. Dated to 1350 BC, it is the oldest known condom in existence. If the condom was used for contraceptive, rather than ritual purposes or the prevention of disease, it is unlikely to have been very effective. Indeed, the remains of two fetuses were also found in his tomb, and genetic testing revealed King Tut was the father. The ancient Egyptians had other methods of contraception too. The Kahun Medical Papyrus (known also as the Gynaecological Papyrus), which has been dated to around 1825 BC, recommends the use of a mixture of crocodile dung and some other (now unknown) ingredients as a contraceptive. This mixture would then be formed into a pessary. According to one hypothesis, the dung of crocodiles is alkaline in nature, thus acting as a spermicide. The Egyptians may have been among the first civilizations to use condoms, but others soon followed. In ancient Rome, condoms were made from linen and animal intestine or bladder. The ancient Chinese fashioned sheaths from silk paper soaked in



oil. In Japan, they used tortoise shell or animal horn that was used to cover the glans only. The archaic Djukas tribe of New Guinea had a female condom made from a specific plant. Muslims and Jews during the Middle Ages covered the penis in tar or soaked it in onion juice. When the first well-documented outbreak of the sexually transmitted disease syphilis occurred in the 15th century among French troops, the need for something to protect against disease became more essential, and linen sheaths soaked in a chemical solution were widely adopted. In addition to linen, some condoms during the Renaissance were made out of animal intestines or bladder. The condom was revolutionized in the early 19th century with the introduction of rubber. By 1850, several rubber companies began the mass production of condoms, and the rest is history.

<https://www.thearchaeologist.org/blog/admire-the-3000-year-old-condom-of-the-egyptian-pharaoh-tutankhamun-archaeologists-are-amazed?format=amp>

High Cholesterol Signs In Fingers And Toes

Keeping the cholesterol in control is crucial:

It is important for everyone to keep an eye on their cholesterol levels. Tingling in the hands and legs is caused by interruptions in the blood flow to specific body parts. High blood cholesterol levels cause the blood to flow thickly, which interferes with the normal flow of blood to the nerves and results in tingling.

Factors that lead to high cholesterol:

Dr. Tanmai Yermal Jain, Consultant - Cardiology, Manipal Hospitals, Kharadi, Pune says, "Several concerning diseases and situations are made more likely by high cholesterol levels. Aside from eating meals high in fat, smoking, drinking, not exercising, and being overweight are other factors that contribute to the build-up of cholesterol in our systems. This may result in blood vessel blockages and perhaps fatal conditions including heart attacks or strokes."

Painful finger and toes:

High cholesterol can also be indicated by painful fingers and toes. Cholesterol build-up in the hands and legs' blood arteries can make them hurt to touch. Another sign of elevated cholesterol levels that is frequently present is tingling in the fingers and toes.

Yellow cholesterol deposits on palm:

Dr. Yermal says, "Hyper cholesterol will have yellowish-colored deposits on the skin, especially around the eye and sometimes in the palm and the back of the lower legs. It is called Xanthelasma, if it is around the eye and xanthomas if the cholesterol deposit is there in any other part of the body like hands or legs. High cholesterol does not cause numbness in the fingertips."

Yellow and orange deposits on eyes:

There are small yellowish and orange-coloured growths or deposits on the skin especially on the upper eyelid or on the palms of the hands or the lower part of the leg. If the condition reaches hyper triglyceride levels, there is a formation of clusters of fatty deposits in the body. Hyper cholesterol and hypertriglyceridemia lead to cardiovascular and neurological diseases in the patient.

The Takeaway:

To prevent the disease, make sure that your lifestyle modification, diet modification, and regular exercise are taken care of. If the condition is on the higher side, medications must be started to keep hitting the optimal situation.



Ensure you're working out every day and consuming a healthy diet rich in all micro and macronutrients. Spend your day actively all day by walking and taking the stairs instead of the lift. Keeping your mind at ease may also benefit you. Try to meditate and do breathing exercises to keep your mind healthy and stress-free.

https://m.timesofindia.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/high-cholesterol-signs-in-fingers-and-toes/amp_etphotostory/98126188.cms

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