



September, 2024

Price: US\$ 4, per copy

Annual Subscription: US \$ 48

E-Mail: info@theglobalvoice.net

www.theglobalvoice.net

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



Whether Trump or Harris Is President,
There Isn't Much Hope on North Korea
Policy | Opinion

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Editorial

Dr. Busharat Elahi Jamil - Assistant Editor



Pakistan's court system is creating a history of judicial anarchy and lawlessness under the direction of Justice Qazi Isa. The majority population of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, which also has a historical past, continues to oppose and boycotting the small religious communities and non-Muslims. The rule of law is not available physically; it is only available in text or speech. Pakistan is, in reality, the epitome of what it means to be strong and righteous "might is right". It is also the worst possible illustration of how Islam and its principles have been misapplied.

Since the beginning, we have heard that the law follows its own course, but regrettably, lawlessness in Pakistan is managing and monitoring the system of law and order. There are no consequences for breaking the law. A taint to the law is lawlessness. Tragically, Pakistan's elite use the law as a slave, while the general public views it as a web, and the weak are giving in to the deceitful system. The judiciary, the system, and the constitution all support the dominant.

Tragically, the powerful religious groups, unscrupulous establishment, and dishonest politicians have a hold over Pakistan's legal and administrative systems. These clutches are unable to provide much vision. Corrupt politicians are to blame for the immoral judicial system's upbringing. The PMLN bears the blame for the current state of injustice in the nation. They have attempted to sway the judiciary since the attack on the Supreme Court in 1997 and the Panama Case. The tradition established by the PMLN is to approach judges and exert pressure on them to comply.

The Khatm-i-Nabuwat Movement and the TLP, two purportedly religious organizations, following the precedent, and last week the SC of Qazi Faiz Isa submitted to the inflexible, fanatical, and radicalized Islamic forces targeting the Ahmadi community. In actuality, the SC gave them religious lawlessness by compromising its position on history in a ruling. Because ignoring justice actually compromises one's ability to survive.

Islam is being used by religious fanatics as fuel for their own fervor. Religious pressure groups have demonstrated their supremacy over the law and over moral and ethical principles. This is also a major contributing factor to Islamophobia. It appears that the SC, which is tasked with upholding the Constitution, is merely protecting the rights of radicals. It is enough to demoralize and destabilize the country that non-Muslims and small communities feel secure, helpless, and lawless with the SC's submission.



DNC 2024

Kamala Harris Needs to Win Over Hearts More Than Minds | Opinion

By Dan Perry

As Democrats gather in Chicago, the most remarkable of the storylines is going strangely unremarked: America in 2024 might finally elect a woman president. The personal differences between Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump is so stark that it will overwhelm the issues. She needs to use this week's Democratic National Convention in Chicago to win hearts far more than minds.

One could argue, of course, that politics should be gender-blind, and that only policy and competence should matter to the voters. But that argument would be hard to sustain considering that no woman has ever been elected to the highest office. And it would also require having never met the voters.

Human beings are not so gender blind. No women anywhere could even vote before about a century ago—meaning there were no true democracies. The first country to extend the vote to women was New Zealand in 1893 (and even there they were barred from running for office until 1919). In the U.S., women were only awarded the vote in 1920, sadly lagging after key countries in Europe.

Moreover, many countries are way ahead of America in electing women as well. We lag behind Britain (leading the pack with three, all from the Conservative party), Germany (Angela Merkel served as chancellor for 16 years, until 2021), India (Indira Gandhi actually governed twice), Italy, Israel, Argentina, Brazil and now Mexico.

I am the father of two daughters, and I recall their joy at the prospect of the U.S. finally catching up in 2016; it felt like a breakthrough moment, whatever one thought of the candidates otherwise (we forgot about the Electoral College, which rendered Hilary Clinton's 3-million-vote margin irrelevant).

This time around, the election is personal even beyond the gender issue—because of the singularity of Trump. The importance of the particular candidate is evident in the swing that followed Biden's departure (perhaps 5 percent nationally in an average of the polls).

How could this be, in a supposedly deliberative democracy? Are the people simpletons, simply swayed by shiny things? Some yes, but far from most. It's just that on the matter of the issues, people's positions are mostly set, and there is no clear advantage to either side. Let's take a moment to examine.

The Democratic side is far more closely aligned with public opinion on several key issues, to be sure: Health care (Pew finds most Americans favor some version of Medicare for all), gun policy (Gallup says most Americans favor stricter gun control and understand the connection between laxness and America's insane gun death rates), and abortion (by 2-to-1 Americans want abortion to be legal in all or most cases). Most Americans also do not approve of the authoritarian direction Trump wants to drag the country toward (less than a third say they want "a strong leader").

But the Republicans have certain advantages of their own. At least as regards public perceptions, the Republicans are aligned with a national impatience with the perceived tolerance of illegal immigration—in the U.S. exactly as in Western Europe. They also find a willing audience for their claim that the inflation of recent years was fueled by public spending, especially the Covid stimulus package of 2021. Their tough talk on crime also resonates with many (perhaps the one issue where Harris, a former prosecutor, might offer a measure of surprise).

And although most Americans approve of DEI programs, the Republicans' cultural wars don't fall on deaf ears in the critical political middle, and even across broader population there is unease with the Woke movement (Pew finds 57 percent of Americans agreeing that people today are too easily offended by what others say).

Other issues also break even. On the question of free trade versus tariffs, Americans still lean slightly toward the former, which might help the Democrats—but not necessarily so in the swing states where elections are won. On truly huge questions like what to do about artificial intelligence upending the labor market, or about Big Tech gaining too much power, all is confusion on all sides of politics.

In short, the issues are confounding and largely balance out. It is a wash.

What is not a wash is that Americans seem to understand quite well the fundamentally warped nature of Trump. Less than a third believe his lies about the supposed theft of the 2020 election (shockingly high, but a clear minority nonetheless) and according to Pew, 64 percent consider him mean-spirited and few see him as honest in any way (PolitiFact locates three-quarters of his public statements on the range from "mostly false" to "pants on fire").

Twice impeached and now a convicted felon, the increasingly incoherent and genuinely preposterous Trump is simply implausible for governing the world's indispensable country. Biden's advantage in 2020 was not much more than that he was not implausible. That's his 7-million vote advantage right there (which sufficed only barely, again due to the



Electoral College).

This year, Biden was revealed to have an implausibility of his own—the product of an additional four years of superannuation. Most voters concluded he was simply way too old—a less reprehensible implausibility than Trump’s, but a more devastating one nonetheless. His advantage was wiped out, and so he had to go.

Harris has turned that around merely by not being implausible. And it may finally be the moment when being a woman is advantageous. Pew finds that 53 percent of American adults and almost two-thirds of women want more women in public office. That, at a moment when the issues offer no real advantage, may be the crucial tipping point.

But for all the talk of Democratic euphoria in recent weeks, Harris is not widely loved. She is somehow reminiscent of the last Democratic nominee to come out of a Chicago convention, Hubert Humphrey: a former local official, senator and veep who was still something of an enigma. That is Harris’ real challenge at the convention: It’s a tremendous spotlight under which to win over hearts much more than minds.

If it works, that will leave France as one of the few major Western powers to have never been governed by a woman: liberty and equality still take a back seat to fraternity there, it seems. If the United States finally takes the plunge, the cry will resound across the globe: Vive l’Amerique!

Dan Perry is the former Cairo-based Middle East editor and London-based Europe/Africa editor of the Associated Press, the former Chairman of the Foreign Press Association in Jerusalem, the author of two books—and a voter in the swing state of Pennsylvania. Follow him at danperry.substack.com.

The views expressed in this article are the writer’s own.

Source: <https://www.newsweek.com/kamala-harris-needs-win-over-hearts-more-minds-opinion-1941350>



September 1 rule changes for hand luggage and liquids on all flights

By Ben Hurst

The European Union is poised to roll out a new set of rules aimed at making air travel more straightforward and less unpredictable. From September 1, changes to hand luggage regulations will be implemented as part of an initiative to standardise the dimensions of carry-on bags.

Simultaneously, the guidelines for carrying liquids on planes will return to a universal standard. Up until now, airlines have had the freedom to establish their own conditions regarding hand luggage measurements.

This has resulted in a bewildering array of rules about the permitted weight and size of carry-ons, often catching out even the most seasoned travellers. The fresh EU regulations will enforce uniformity across all European airlines, meaning passengers can anticipate standardised baggage sizes and weights.

Here's a rundown of the EU rules governing hand luggage that will apply to all travellers from the beginning of next month. The EU has also resolved to reinstate previous rules concerning the quantity of liquid passengers can bring on flights.

At present, travellers passing through terminals equipped with Explosive Detection Systems for Cabin Baggage (EDSCB) have been permitted to carry liquids in quantities exceeding 100ml. However, it has been decided to abolish this exception until all airports in Europe are equipped with the same screening device.

From the 1st of September onward, the familiar 100ml rule will be reinstated for all passengers. The EU has stated that this uniform approach is required for the time being, but future modifications could be on the cards as airport security technologies advance.

These fresh alterations should ideally make journeys less complicated and more straightforward for travellers.

Sourc:<https://search.app/9zSTAECfNfG48H328>



End of an era: The big change coming to European travel in November

By Maureen O'Hare, CNN

In travel news this week: an accidental megadeal on first-class tickets, the world's best-connected airport and why now is a good time to plan a trip to Europe. Plus a bit of relief for those of you traveling this Labor Day weekend.

Goodbye to EU passport stamps

Paper mementoes of our travels, from boarding cards to even passports themselves, are fast moving into obsolescence.

The inky, smudgy joy of a fresh passport stamp will be a thing of the past for visitors to the 29 countries of the European Union Schengen Area starting November 10. That's when the new automated Entry/Exit System (EES) comes into effect.

It's separate from the delayed ETIAS visa waiver program, which is due to start in the first half of 2025 and will mean travelers from outside the EU will be charged a 7 entry fee that is valid for three years.

Destination inspiration

Get your stamps while you can with these European vacation picks.

Il dolce far niente – “the sweetness of doing nothing” – has been perfected by Italians on their vacations in southern sweet spots such as Naples, Ischia, Puglia, the Amalfi Coast and Capri. These remarkable photographs by UK photographer Lucy Laucht show how to relax the Italian way.

In Hungary, the Gresham Palace is the grandest Budapest hotel of them all, having sat in its prime position overlooking the River Danube for more than a century. Here's how this architectural gem looks in its current incarnation.

Finally, if you're considering a longer stay, an idyllic Swedish town is selling off land with prices so low you might think they're mistakes. But Götene, 320 kilometers (200 miles) southwest of Stockholm, is indeed selling plots with prices starting at just 1 krona, or 9 US cents, per square meter (11 square feet).

Aviation news

An airline accidentally offered a megadeal on first-class tickets, with 300 lucky customers getting savings of 85% off. Here's what happened next.

The staff at Australian flag carrier Qantas must have been flat-out like a lizard drinking sorting that mess out. And if you don't understand that lingo, it's time to check out our guide to Aussie slang.

An airport on the edge of southeast Europe has been named the best connected in the world, with more than 300 direct flights to unique destinations. It's been networking fast, too; it only opened in 2018.

I can't believe it's not Greece

One of Mongolia's best-kept secrets is Khyargas Lake, a spot in the west of the country that looks more like Greece than Northeast Asia. It's about a three-day drive from the Mongolian capital, but it's certainly one way to avoid tourist crowds.

A new Anantara luxury resort in Abu Dhabi will have many travelers doing a double-take. The white-domed buildings and crystal-blue waters scream Santorini, but this retreat is at the edge of the desert, not on a volcanic island.

Whether you're off to Greece, Asia or the Middle East, you'll likely find a use for these 45 best-selling travel accessories. Our partners at CNN Underscored, a product reviews and recommendations guide owned by CNN, say their readers can't get enough of them.

American spotlight: Duluth, Minnesota

Back in June, CNN Travel unveiled its best US towns to visit for 2024. Closing out the top 10, we have Duluth, Minnesota.

It's going to be an unseasonably warm fall in the United States, the forecast says, so the cooler temperatures Duluth enjoys on the shores of Lake Superior will be particularly welcome.

The city offers wholesome outdoor activities aplenty, including hiking, bird-watching and kayaking. Visitors can find a multitude of breweries and other craft industries, as well as a lively music and art scene.

In case you missed it

Turkmenistan's mysterious, flaming "Gates of Hell" have been burning for decades. But they might not be around much longer.

Watch a plane struggle to land in a Japanese typhoon.

Japan urged nearly four million people to evacuate from Typhoon Shanshan's path.

A rare "flying spaghetti monster" has been caught on video.

It was spotted in a new underwater mountain range off the coast of Chile.

This US airport now has a forest growing inside it.

It's the result of a \$2.5 billion renovation.

Source: <https://amp.cnn.com/cnn/2024/08/31/travel/travel-news-eu-passport-best-connected-airport>



Dubai: Global Village announces opening date for 29th season

The popular destination remains open during the cooler half of the year

By Web Desk

Season 29 of Global Village will kick off on October 16, 2024, the outdoor destination announced. The season will run until May 11, 2025.

The popular destination remains closed during the summer months.

This year, Global Village is expanding its offerings, featuring more cultural representations, never-before-seen entertainment, and exciting infrastructure upgrades.

In its 28th season, Global Village set a new record with 10 million visitors. Over 90 cultures were showcased across 27 pavilions. Over 400 artists took part last season, and audiences witnessed over 40,000 performances.

The season also featured more than 200 rides and entertainment attractions, and over 3,500 shopping outlets and 250 dining options.

Open to visitors during the cooler half of the year, Global Village tickets are usually free for children under the age of three, senior citizens aged 65 and over and people of determination.

Source: <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/uae/uae-global-village-announces-dates-for-29th-season>



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Why I am not voting for Kamala Harris

By: Maura Finkelstein

I registered to vote in 1998, and I have voted Democrat ever since. I have not always felt good about the candidates on the Democratic ticket. In fact, I have usually felt angry, disillusioned, disappointed and dirty after casting my vote. Still, it felt like part of the job of being a citizen of a pseudo-democracy. It was not the only work to be done, but it was something.

This November, however, I plan not to vote for the Democrats in the election. If the party's presidential candidate, Kamala Harris, does not change her policy on Israel, I will not be casting a ballot for her.

And I will not be the only one. More than 700,000 Americans have cast an “uncommitted” vote in the Democratic primaries, demonstrating their rejection of the Democratic Party’s “ironclad” support for Israel.

If Harris wants the progressive vote, she has to support an arms embargo on Israel and stop funding the Israeli genocide of Palestinians in Gaza. This is a red line for many of us who have not bought into her liberal cult of personality.

When President Joe Biden finally dropped out as the 2024 Democratic nominee on July 21, I was not one of the many people celebrating his endorsement of the vice president. Harris was on the wrong side of history as San Francisco’s district attorney when she opposed criminal justice reform, and she has been on the wrong side of history in regards to Israel, which she is a staunch supporter of.

Still, a small part of me hoped she would be savvy enough to understand the power of the “uncommitted” movement – which is conditioning voting on support for an embargo on Israel and a permanent ceasefire in Gaza – and the level of outrage felt by those opposed

to the ongoing genocide, funded these past 10 months by US aid. I was wrong.

At a rally in Detroit on August 7, Harris was met by a group of anti-genocide, pro-Palestine protesters chanting, “Kamala, Kamala, you can’t hide! We won’t vote for genocide!” In a democracy, this is a perfectly reasonable and acceptable (if not necessary) action. Politicians serve the people, and the people have the right (and the responsibility) to make demands on their political leaders, especially when the latter are asking for their votes and campaign donations.

Yet Harris decided to respond: “You know what? If you want Donald Trump to win, then say that. Otherwise, I’m speaking.”

What purpose does this attitude serve? The protesters were merely expressing their demand that Harris pledge to stop arming Israel amid its genocidal war on Gaza. A war that has brought the official death toll in Gaza to more than 40,000; some estimates project that number to reach 186,000 or even higher. A war that has put one million children at risk of famine, according to the international nonprofit organisation Save the Children. A war that has decimated Gaza’s health sector, bringing back polio infections for the first time in 25 years.

Many of us spend our days scrolling through the most horrific images imaginable – toddlers beheaded by Israeli air strikes, people burned alive in their tents, emaciated children who die of starvation, political prisoners brutally raped by Israeli soldiers. The atrocities go on and on. My days and nights are haunted by these images, and none of this would be possible without US aid, without our tax dollars.

But Harris doesn’t want to engage these very reasonable demands – to stop funding this slaughter, this genocide, this horrific violence. Instead, she wants to be celebrated for being charismatic, for her affect, for her vibes.

This politics-as-vibes is not new. It is nothing more than celebrity culture bleeding into politics. Another word for it is fascism.

I am reminded of Erik Larson’s 2011 book *In the Garden of Beasts: Love, Terror, and an American Family in Hitler’s Berlin*, which tells the story of William Dodd, the US ambassador to Germany from 1933 to 1937 and his family. Over the years since the book was published, I have thought occasionally of Dodd and often of his daughter, Martha, who accompanied him to Berlin.

The ambassador was chairman of the history department at the University of Chicago at the time of his appointment, and he just wanted to be left alone to finish his book about the antebellum American South. He was somewhat concerned but not too alarmed about what was happening in Germany, telling President Franklin Roosevelt, “Give men a chance to try their schemes” as the Nazi Party prepared to deny Jews citizenship.

Martha, on the other hand, was swept up by the “glamour” of the Nazi Party and its social scene, dating and sleeping with Nazi officers.

So many liberals I know are a form of William or Martha Dodd. Like William, they are either too consumed with their own comfort to care too much about the daily atrocities experienced and endured by Palestinians, or, like Martha, they approach politics through the frame of celebrity culture and good feelings, happy to fangirl Harris, whose charisma

and Beyonce-scored inspire-ads overwhelm the pesky reality of genocide.

This is, after all, about feeling good. “Don’t spoil our fun!” they scream at me (and so many others) on social media. This anti-outrage is deafening. But you cannot just live off vibes.

In a memoir written a few years after she left Nazi Germany, Martha admitted to just not really liking Jews all that much. This casual anti-Semitism foreshadows today’s liberal attitudes towards Palestinians, a disregard rooted in Islamophobia and anti-Arab racism, which is driving a genocide.

This is a make-or-break moment – we must pressure the Democrats to change their position on Gaza before the elections in November. While we should all be doing absolutely everything we can to stop the genocide, the bare minimum right now is demanding that a presidential hopeful, in need of our votes, commits to ending US funds to Israel. It is not that complicated.

Harris may be the lesser of two evils when it comes to Donald Trump, but the lesser of two evils is still evil. If she wants to win in November, she needs to give us more than vibes and celebrity culture – she needs to make a real commitment to ending the genocide in Gaza, first and foremost by not funding it. Anything less than this will lose her the progressive vote and, quite possibly, the presidency. If this happens, the liberals across the country will likely blame a nebulous “leftist-progressive” block, but in the end, this loss will be on Harris herself.

The views expressed in this article are the author’s own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeera’s editorial stance.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2024/8/19/why-i-am-not-voting-for-kamala-harris>

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May Allah be with you - Amen

Whether Trump or Harris Is President, There Isn't Much Hope on North Korea Policy | Opinion

By Daniel R. DePetrís

The Korean Peninsula, arguably the most heavily militarized region of the world, hasn't seen full-scale conflict since July 27, 1953, when an armistice agreement stopped a three-year war that claimed the lives of millions (including more than 36,000 Americans). But the absence of war doesn't necessarily translate into peace. With a third-generation dictator in Kim Jong Un on one side and a brash conservative South Korean president in Yoon Suk Yeol on the other, decent inter-Korean relations don't stand a chance for the foreseeable future.

It certainly never had a chance this year, which started off with Kim announcing that South Korea will now be referred to as North Korea's "principal enemy." Sure, such a designation isn't exactly surprising given the seven decades of animosity between Pyongyang and Seoul. But it was significant because it demonstrated that North Korea had no intention of offering even minor concessions for the sake of a better relationship. Kim's declaration on New Year's



Day that reunification was no longer on Pyongyang's docket was even more important, for it overturned a decades-long North Korea policy that Kim's father and grandfather long advocated for.

Yoon Suk Yeol, hawkish on North Korea issues, wasn't about to extend olive branches either. Rather than beg for a summit meeting like his predecessor, Moon Jae-in, Yoon essentially wrote of dialogue with Pyongyang as a waste of time. In its place, the Yoon government focused on deterrence and defense—deepening its trilateral military relationship with the United States and Japan, creating its own strategic command to respond to a hypothetical North Korean attack, and confronting North Korean military drills with military drills of its own. Talk about South Korea acquiring an independent nuclear deterrent, once a fringe topic, is now well within the mainstream. Instead of finding diplomatic ways to communicate, the two Koreas are menacing each other with Cold War-style psychological warfare; Pyongyang had sent more than 3,600 balloons filled with rubbish into the South, and Seoul is re-broadcasting K-Pop songs from loudspeakers along the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

The situation is quite bad on the Korean Peninsula, and it isn't getting any better. Perhaps this is why Yoon devoted a good chunk of his recent speech marking the 79th anniversary of Korea's liberation to righting the ship of inter-Korean relations. Is Yoon slowly coming around to a new position? And if so, would Kim be open to re-examining his own?

Don't count on it. First, the speech itself wasn't extraordinary. The potential resolutions Yoon floated were geared less toward solving the systemic political and ideological problems that exist between the two Koreas and more toward winning the propaganda war. Yoon claimed he had a plan for achieving freedom for the entire Korean Peninsula, yet his proposals were a mishmash of vague generalities about fighting the evil forces of disinformation, changing the minds of the North Korean people, and expanding information flows into the North so the public there can see for themselves all the wonderful capitalism and political pluralism it's missing out on. There are no tangible steps offered, likely because Yoon recognizes in the back of his mind that his lofty objective of freedom-based unification is unachievable.

This isn't the first time the security environment on the Korean Peninsula has looked dicey. There was a time not so long ago when a U.S. president by the name of Donald Trump was threatening "fire and fury" against North Korea, Kim was talking about his nuclear button, and the South Koreans were infuriated about Pyongyang's nuclear and intercontinental ballistic missile tests. Then, after the rhetoric scared everybody straight and Trump embraced the unconventional, the talk tough was replaced by summitry, nice words, and long strolls together. In 2018, a comprehensive military de-escalation accord was signed by Pyongyang and Seoul, which minimized the miscalculations that periodically flared between the two nations.

Yet the circumstances couldn't be more different today. Even if Trump did win the 2024 presidential election, it's not a given that Kim, humiliated after walking away from diplomacy in February 2019 with nothing to show for it, would be eager to get back to negotiations. If Kamala Harris wins the election, her position toward North Korea is likely to be a carbon copy of her former boss, Joe Biden, who recited talking points about unconditional diplomacy but still insisted on Pyongyang's complete denuclearization.

Plus, it's unclear whether Kim even feels the need to negotiate with the U.S. or South Korea at this point. Compared to 2017, when North Korea was isolated at the U.N. Security Council and dealing with an ever-tightening sanctions regime, its geopolitical position looks brighter today. Courtesy of Russian and Chinese vetoes, the Security Council hasn't passed any sanctions against Pyongyang since December 2017. The war in Ukraine has given Kim the opportunity to exploit Russia's desperation for artillery shells to his advantage, so much so that he signed a comprehensive strategic partnership with Russian President Vladimir Putin in June. China and Russia used to cooperate with each other to save North Korea from trouble; now, the two are competing for influence in North Korea, which gives Kim leverage he otherwise might not have.

If anybody in Washington or Seoul thinks Yoon's recent speech could be the beginning of a new era, they should sit down on a couch and close their eyes until the feeling passes.

Daniel R. DePetrìs is a fellow at Defense Priorities and a syndicated foreign affairs columnist at the Chicago Tribune.

The views expressed in this article are the writer's own.

Source: <https://www.newsweek.com/whether-trump-harris-president-there-isnt-much-hope-north-korea-policy-opinion-1941228>

Bad weather behind Raisi helicopter crash, probe report confirms

TEHRAN: Iran's final investigation into the May helicopter crash that killed president Ebrahim Raisi has found it was caused by bad weather, the body investigating the case said on Sunday.

The helicopter carrying 63-year-old Raisi and his entourage came down on a fog-shrouded mountainside in northern Iran, killing the president and seven others, and triggering snap elections.

The main cause of the helicopter crash was the "complex climatic and atmospheric conditions of the region in the spring", the special board investigating the dimensions and causes of the helicopter accident said, according to state broadcaster IRIB.

The report added that "the sudden emergence of a thick mass of dense and rising fog" caused the helicopter's collision into the mountain. Iran's army in May similarly said it had found no evidence of criminal activity in the crash that also killed Raisi's foreign minister, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian.

In August, Fars news agency cited the main causes of the May 19 crash as bad weather conditions and the helicopter's inability to ascend with two extra passengers against security protocols.

But the Iranian armed forces were quick to reject the finding saying, "what is mentioned on Fars news about the presence of two people in the helicopter against the security protocols... is completely false".

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1856332>

Pakistan's jailed ex-PM Khan seeks Oxford University chancellor role

By Ayaz Gul

Islamabad — Imran Khan, Pakistan's former prime minister, has formally applied to run for chancellor of the University of Oxford in Britain from his prison cell, a close aide announced Sunday.

Khan served as Pakistan's leader from 2018 until April 2022, when he was ousted through an opposition parliamentary no-confidence vote he alleges was planned by the powerful Pakistani military.

"As per Imran Khan's instructions, his application form to Oxford University Chancellor Election 2024 has been submitted," Sayed Zulfiqar Bukhari said on social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter.

"We look forward to everyone's support for a historic campaign," he wrote.

Khan, who remains Pakistan's most popular politician, has been in jail since last August after becoming embroiled in a series of prosecutions and lawsuits on charges that include corruption, sedition and stoking violent anti-army protests. He rejects the allegations as baseless and claims the military is behind them.

The 71-year-old former cricket star turned prime minister has had all convictions against him before Pakistan's February 8 national elections suspended or overturned by appellate



courts because of lack of evidence, yet Khan remains incarcerated on newer charges.

The convictions also barred him from running for public office. Candidates backed by his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf, or PTI, party emerged winners on most parliamentary seats but not enough to form the government amid allegations the vote was massively rigged to prevent PTI from sweeping the polls. This allowed military backed rival political parties to form a coalition administration with Shehbaz Sharif as the prime minister.

Khan graduated from Oxford in 1975, studying philosophy, politics, and economics. Former British prime ministers Tony Blair and Boris Johnson are also among the candidates to become the university's chancellor.

The Convocation members, which include all university alumni who have been granted a degree, are responsible for electing the chancellor of Oxford University. Anyone seeking to run for the position must receive a nomination from at least two Convocation members to be considered eligible.

The University of Oxford website states that the Convocation will be asked to elect the new chancellor through an unprecedented online ballot during the third week of the Michaelmas term, beginning on October 28.

The new chancellor will hold the position for 10 years. The chancellorship traditionally goes to university graduates, often politicians.

The United Nations last month declared Khan's detention arbitrary, saying there is no legal basis for keeping him in jail. Hundreds of his party workers and leaders, including women, have been jailed or being prosecuted on charges defense attorneys reject as baseless and part of the military-backed state crackdown on the party.

Khan served as the chancellor of Bradford University from 2005 to 2014.

The Pakistani military and Khan's successors denied allegations of orchestrating his removal from power or being involved in the numerous legal challenges facing him.

Source: <https://www.voanews.com/amp/pakistan-s-jailed-ex-pm-khan-seeks-oxford-university-chancellor-role-/7747135.html>

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Pakistan conducts successful training launch of **Shaheen-II** ballistic missile

By Zarmeen Zehra

ISPR says launch aimed at evaluating sub-systems incorporated for improved accuracy, enhanced survivability

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan on Tuesday successfully conducted a training launch of surface-to-surface Shaheen-II ballistic missile making the country's defence even more impregnable.

The launch was aimed at training troops, validating various technical parameters and performance evaluation of different sub-systems incorporated for improved accuracy and enhanced survivability, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement.

The military's media wing also noted that the launch was witnessed by senior officers from the Strategic Plans Division, Army Strategic Forces Command, scientists and engineers of strategic organisations.

Reacting to the Shaheen-II launch, the director general Strategic Plans Division appreciated the technical prowess, dedication and commitment of scientists who contributed towards this landmark achievement.

Furthermore, President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad Mirza and the three services chiefs also congratulated the scientists and engineers on this accomplishment.

Today's training launch comes as the country's security forces often carry out routine test launches of various missiles in its arsenal.

Last month, the Pakistan Navy, demonstrated combat readiness via successful live weapon firing of FN-6 surface-to-air missiles (SAM) in Karachi.

During the impressive firepower demonstration, the PN's GBAD system fired SAMs and successfully engaged the intended airborne targets.

Source: <https://www.geo.tv/latest/560105-pakistan-conducts-successful-launch-of-shaheen-ii>

Why conservatives should back Calgary's low-income transit pass

By Jeromy Farkas



Just months after criticizing the UCP government for temporarily halting support for the Calgary low-income transit pass, city council quietly voted down its own motion for \$15 million in funding to meet growing need.

The 7-7 vote failed on “progressive” versus “conservative” fault lines. Councillors’ opposition was predictable, blasting the program as a “free ride,” expensive and ineffective, and pointing fingers at the provincial government.

Simple and compelling — but wrong.

At its core, the low-income transit pass is a fiscally conservative idea. It’s not just about helping the less fortunate; it’s smart economics and fiscally prudent. More than anything, it fosters personal responsibility: principles that align with, rather than contradict, conservative values.

Many of our neighbours today are forced into impossible choices, such as whether to pay for gas or food. This program is not the whole solution, but is a part of solving the puzzle nonetheless. With mobility, people are better equipped to fulfil their responsibilities, take control of their lives, and are empowered to seek and maintain employment — without relying so heavily on social assistance programs.

What’s in it for people who don’t need it? More paying users make our transit system safer. Cents spent here lead to dollars of savings, by reducing the need for much deeper support programs. Without it, many would struggle to stay employed or access education, leading to a cycle of poverty that can be impossible to break.



What's in it for business? By making transit accessible, we're not just helping people. We're helping employers access the workforce they need to keep our local economy competitive. In the first quarter of this year alone, Calgary distributed about 139,000 low-income transit passes, a 27 per cent increase from the previous year. If those Calgarians were suddenly no longer able to reliably or safely get to work, the consequences would be immediate and severe.

Who should pay for the low-income transit pass, the city or the province? Both.

The city runs the transit system and knows local needs best. The province has more money to support income-related programs. Sharing the cost (and the benefits) makes sense.

Is it worth it? This is the most perplexing part of the debate.

The low-income transit pass doesn't actually cost anything, except for some administration. The city claims to "spend" millions annually to subsidize the program. But this assumes that all those 139,000 users — many of whom earn less than \$15,263 per year — would have otherwise bought a pass at full price. In reality, this discount helps bring in new revenue.

Even if this program did cost what the city claims, it represents a rounding error amid the billions of dollars of reserves and funding dedicated to city hall's infrastructure projects and sports team subsidies. This program shows that as Calgarians, we care about our neighbours. It's a strategic move to help businesses and keep more money in the pockets of Calgarians who need it the most.

Let's stop playing political "hot potato" with our most vulnerable. Calgary's low-income transit pass isn't a "free ride," nor is it left-wing.

It's simply the right thing.

Jeromy Farkas, a former Calgary City Councillor, is CEO of the Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation and serves on boards of non-profit organizations working to empower Calgarians facing adversity.

Source: <https://calgaryherald.com/opinion/why-conservatives-should-back-calgarys-low-income-transit-pass>

Multinational companies plan exit amid internet disruptions: Pakistan Business Council

By Shahid Iqbal

KARACHI: *The Pakistan Business Council (PBC) warned on Friday that several multinational companies are planning to relocate their back offices from Pakistan, with many having already done so recently.*

The warning came amid a report by the Dubai Chamber of Commerce that 3,968 Pakistani companies registered in Dubai between January and June 2024 — making Pakistan the second-ranked country on the list. The figure was also 17 per cent higher than the 3,395 firms registered during the same period in 2023.

Last year, the Dubai Chamber of Commerce registered 8,036 new Pakistani businesses.

The surge in Dubai-based Pakistani businesses highlights a growing exodus from a country already grappling with severe unemployment and sluggish economic growth. As hundreds of thousands of skilled and unskilled workers have already left Pakistan, millions more are reportedly seeking opportunities abroad.

Says high-speed connectivity vital for domestic economy

“Many multinational companies (MNCs) are either planning to relocate their back offices from Pakistan or have already done so, as the reported imposition of a firewall causes widespread internet disruptions across the country,” the PBC said in a statement.

This migration reflects a deepening lack of confidence in the government’s economic policies. Key factors contributing to this trust deficit include the high cost of doing business, political uncertainties, soaring electricity costs, and deteriorating law and order.

“While we struggle with the costs of idle capacity in power generation leading to unemployment and loss of exports and tax revenue, we now have to contend with the threat of idle capacity in the emerging software sector due to poor execution of a firewall,” the PBC said.

The tech industry has already expressed serious concern over the recent internet slowdown, warning that these disruptions could cost Pakistan up to \$300 million. The PBC asked the authorities concerned to go back and get the right firewall or learn to apply it without creating an unnecessary impact on employment and exports.

“IT and IT-enabled services, besides agriculture and tourism, offer a valuable opportunity to achieve the PM’s export target over the next three years. High-speed connectivity is also vital for the domestic economy,” the council said.

The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) also warned that frequent internet disruptions in Pakistan could derail the country’s economic progress.

The Pakistan Software Houses Association said in a statement that these disruptions are not mere inconveniences but a direct, tangible and aggressive assault on the industry’s viability, inflicting devastating financial losses estimated to reach \$300m, which can increase exponentially.

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1852763>

Fatherhood at Fifty Is a Growing Trend, With Impacts on Child Health

By Jess Cockerill



Most need no reminder that motherhood is constrained by a biological clock – it’s a fact that keeps many women awake at night, governs career and relationship choices, and contributes a lion’s share to the US\$819 million IVF industry.

But mature fatherhood comes with its own risks, and a new study finds the proportion of US fathers aged 50 or older at the time of their child’s birth is on the rise, meaning more children are likely to be impacted.

The reasons for this trend are unclear, but Stanford University urologist Albert Ha and colleagues note it’s often attributed to “diminished concerns of the male ‘biological clock’ and the desire for educational and financial stability prior to starting a family.”

“Previous studies have also highlighted the influence of evolving gender norms that promote active parental involvement while emphasizing traditional roles like the male ‘breadwinner’,” the authors add.

In a world where the focus is usually squarely on the mother, the researchers are concerned that public awareness of these “modest but significant” risks associated with advanced paternal age (APA) is lacking.

A 2018 study identified many of the risks of mature fatherhood, using data from 2007 to 2016 for more than 40 million live births in the US.

The data revealed that babies born to fathers over the age of 35 were at higher risk for adverse outcomes like low birth weight, seizures, and breathing problems immediately after birth.

And the older a father was, the greater the risk – for a man aged 45 years or older, his baby was 14 percent more likely to be born prematurely, and for a man aged 50 or older, his child was 28 percent more at risk of being admitted to neonatal intensive care.

Ha and colleagues analyzed the more than 46 million live births reported in the US from 2011 to 2022. Their cross-sectional study highlights that the proportion of US families affected by these risks is rising as more men opt in to parenthood at a mature age.

The average paternal age rose steadily from 30.8 years in 2011 to 32.1 years in 2022, and

the proportion of births involving fathers aged 50 or older increased from 1.1 percent in 2011 to 1.3 percent in 2022. It's a small but significant uptick.

"Recent socioeconomic and demographic trends have shifted the timeline for family building in the US, with many couples increasingly delaying parenthood," Ha and colleagues write.

Even after controlling for maternal age and other factors, every 10-year increase in the father's age increased the proportion of births that relied on assisted reproductive technology (ART). It was also associated with a higher likelihood of being the mother's first birth, and an increased risk of preterm birth and low birth weight compared to fathers aged 30 to 39.

"Paternal age has also affected fertility, pregnancy trajectory, and child health," the authors write.

"Age-related conditions, such as erectile dysfunction and hypogonadism, impair paternal fecundity, while older age is associated with decreased semen volume, motility, and morphology."

Research has also linked older paternal age to declines in sperm quality, meaning the squiggly little gene packets that contribute half of a baby's DNA are more likely to be affected by DNA fragmentation, abnormal chromosome numbers, new mutations, and epigenetic alterations.

"Overall, the accumulation of alterations in older men may increase the risk of conditions like autism, pediatric cancers, achondroplasia, and schizophrenia; decrease likelihood of ART success; and heighten risk of perinatal complications," the authors write.

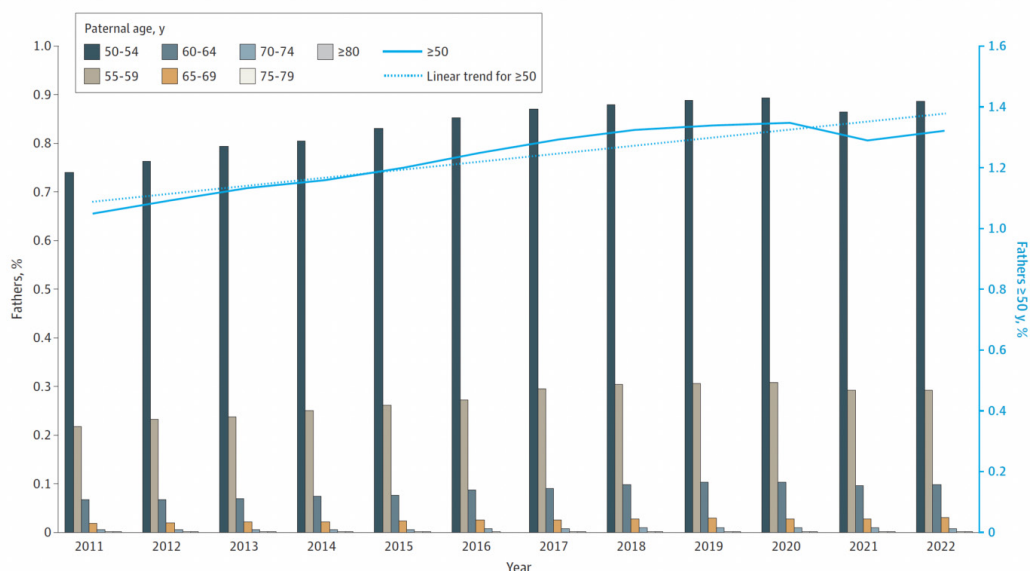
There were no significant differences found in infant sex ratio based on a father's age, except among fathers aged 70 years or older, who were more likely to have a female baby.

Ultimately, the research highlights the need for better awareness of the risks of mature fatherhood, and further investigation into the factors driving this societal shift.

This research is published by JAMA Network Open.

Source: <https://www.sciencealert.com/fatherhood-at-fifty-is-a-growing-trend-with-impacts-on-child-health>

Figure 2. Trends in Older Fatherhood in the United States, 2011-2022





Iran could declare it has nuclear weapons by end of year, House Intelligence chair says

By Karissa Waddick

WASHINGTON – Iran could declare that it has nuclear weapons “by the end of the year,” House Intelligence Committee Chair Rep. Mike Turner, R-Ohio, said during an interview Sunday in which he blasted President Joe Biden for failing to deter the U.S. adversary from advancing its program.

“There is a possibility, with the advances that have been made under the Biden administration’s policy ... that Iran could declare itself a nuclear weapon state by the end of the year,” Turner said on CBS News’ “Face the Nation.”

Nuclear weapon states are countries recognized as possessing nuclear weapons. Iran has denied having a nuclear weapons program, but its Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei has said that world leaders wouldn’t be able to stop the country from obtaining one if it wanted to.

When asked whether Khamenei’s comments had “changed his conclusion” on Iran’s nuclear capability, Turner said “No.”

The Ohio Republican’s comments come days after former President Donald Trump said during a campaign rally that, if elected a second time, he is “not looking to be bad to Iran,” but would “make sure that they don’t have a nuclear weapon.”

As president, Trump exited the Iran nuclear deal, a multi-national agreement to slow Iran’s nuclear program negotiated during the Obama administration, and argued that it would allow the Middle Eastern country to garner weapons.

Turner argued Sunday that Trump put the most pressure on Iran of any administration, “both economically, militarily.”

“The flexibility and freedom that they’ve had under the Biden administration has given them the ability to both try to influence our elections, actively try to undertake a plot to assassinate Donald Trump, and to continue their nuclear weapons and their nuclear enrichment programs,” he added.

The FBI is investigating allegations that Iranian cyber agents hacked Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris’ presidential campaigns. U.S. intelligence agencies also tracking Iranian threats against Trump.

Source: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2024/08/19/iran-nuclear-weapons-mike-turner/74857362007/>

Afghan Taliban

ready to engage with world over morality law

KABUL: A Taliban government spokesman has said the Afghan authorities were committed to engagement with the international community after a new morality law sparked tense exchanges over women's rights.

The United Nations and the European Union have warned that the law — requiring women to cover up completely and not raise their voices in public — could damage prospects for engagement with foreign nations and international organisations.

Deputy government spokesman Hamdullah Fitrat was responding to comments by a spokesman for the UN secretary-general assuring continued engagement with the Taliban authorities after Afghanistan's morality ministry said it would no longer cooperate with the UN mission in the country, UNAMA, over criticism of the law.

Fitrat said the authorities were “committed to positive interactions with all the countries and organisations in accordance with Islamic law”, in a voice message to journalists.

**Zabihullah Mujahid previously termed rejection of the law
'arrogance'**



“Interaction is the only way to achieve solutions to problems and for the progression and expansion of relations,” he said, urging nations and organisations to engage positively with the Taliban authorities.

Since taking power in 2021, no state has recognised the Taliban government but it has made diplomatic inroads recently, including attending UN-hosted talks on Afghanistan in Qatar.

The spokesman for UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres earlier on Friday stated, “We will continue to engage with all stakeholders in Afghanistan, including the Taliban”.

“We have always done so following our mandate and I would say impartially and in good faith, always upholding the norms of the UN, pushing the messages of human rights and equality,” said Stephane Dujarric.

“We would urge the de facto authorities to, in fact, open more avenues for diplomatic engagement,” he added.

‘Gender apartheid’

The Afghan morality ministry had stated it would no longer cooperate with UNAMA over its criticisms of the “Law on the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice”, which was ratified last week.

The law, which includes rules on many aspects of Afghans’ lives according to the Taliban’s strict interpretation of Islamic law, sparked concern among Afghans, various countries, human rights advocates, UN agencies and the EU.

It prohibits women from raising their voices in public and requires them to cover their entire body and face if they need to leave the house “out of necessity”.

Men’s behaviour and dress are also strictly regulated by the law, which gives morality police powers to warn and detain people for non-compliance.

UNAMA head Roza Otunbayeva said that the law offered “a distressing vision for Afghanistan’s future”, adding that it could set back cooperation efforts, a warning echoed by the EU.

The Taliban government has consistently dismissed international criticism of its policies, including restrictions on women that the UN has labelled “gender apartheid”.

Chief government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid has said the law is “firmly rooted in Islamic teachings” that should be respected and understood, adding rejection of the law showed “arrogance”.

Source:<https://www.dawn.com/news/1856324>

FO slams Jaishankar's remarks on Kashmir

ISLAMABAD: *Pakistan has rejected India's claims on Jammu and Kashmir, terming them "misleading" and "dangerously delusional".*

In response to media queries regarding the recent statement of India's minister for external affairs on held Kashmir, the Foreign Office spokesperson emphasised that the Kashmir dispute was an "internationally recognised" issue.

It must be resolved through the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people, the FO spokesperson said on Sunday.

The spokesperson reiterated Pakistan's commitment to diplomacy and dialogue but warned that any hostile actions would be met with "unyielding resolve".

The statement urged India to abandon its "provocative rhetoric" about the region and engage in a meaningful dialogue for a just and lasting resolution of the dispute.

India's "unilateral actions" in held Kashmir cannot and will not change this reality.

The FO statement added that true peace and stability in South Asia can only be achieved by settling the Kashmir dispute in accordance with UNSC resolutions.

The statement has come in response to the remarks made by S. Jaishankar, who last week said the "era of uninterrupted dialogue with Pakistan is over".

When asked about the status of held Kashmir, the Indian minister said, "[In]sofar as Jammu and Kashmir is concerned, I think Article 370 is done."

Source:<https://www.dawn.com/news/1856323>

One of Australia's most prolific paedophiles pleads guilty to over 300 offences

The judge took more than two hours to read out all the charges, which are related to around 60 children across locations in Australia and Italy.

A former childcare worker accused of being one of Australia's most prolific ever paedophiles has pleaded guilty to raping, sexually abusing and exploiting dozens of girls. Ashley Paul Griffith, 46, from the Gold Coast, faced 307 charges at a court in Brisbane on Monday.

Several victims and their families had gathered at the court for the hearing, according to broadcaster ABC.

It took Judge Anthony Rafter more than two hours to read out all the charges, which are related to around 60 children. Many of the victims were under the age of 12 and were in Griffith's care. Police accused Griffith of being one of the country's worst ever paedophiles after the charges against him were made public last year.

Griffith was first arrested in 2022 for making child sexual abuse content. A year later he was charged with 1,623 offences against 91 children. However, some charges were dropped and ABC reported Monday's charges related to around 60 children. The offences happened between 2003 and 2022 in 12 different locations across Australia as well as in Pisa, Italy.

Griffith is in custody and will be sentenced at a later date. The court heard sentencing could take more than two days to give time to read victim impact statements, ABC reported.

Source:<https://news.sky.com/story/one-of-australias-worst-paedophiles-pleads-guilty-to-over-300-offences-13208380>

Sudan crisis: Burhan and Hemedti - the two generals at the heart of the conflict

By James Copnall

A soundtrack of explosions, a skyline dominated by bitter, black smoke, a daily existence of fear and uncertainty as bullets, rockets and rumours fly.

Life in Sudan's capital, Khartoum, and in many other parts of the country, has taken a sudden, very dramatic turn for the worse.

At the heart of it are two generals: Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the leader of the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF), and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, better known as Hemedti, the head of the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

The two worked together, and carried out a coup together - now their battle for supremacy is tearing Sudan apart.

The relationship between the two goes back a long way.

Both played key roles in the counter-insurgency against Darfuri rebels, in the civil war in Sudan's western region that began in 2003.

Gen Burhan rose to control the Sudanese army in Darfur.

Hemedti was the commander of one of the many Arab militias, collectively known as the Janjaweed, which the government employed to brutally put down the largely non-Arab



Darfuri rebel groups.

Darfur conflict: A bloody stalemate

Majak D'Agoot was the deputy director of the National Intelligence and Security Services at the time - before becoming deputy defence minister in South Sudan when it seceded in 2011.

He met Gen Burhan and Hemedti in Darfur, and said they worked well together. But he told the BBC he saw little sign that either would rise to the top of the state.

Hemedti was simply a militia leader "playing a counter-insurgency role, helping the military", while Gen Burhan was a career soldier, though "with all the ambitions of the Sudanese officer corps, anything was possible".

The military has been running Sudan for most of its post-independence history.

The government's tactics in Darfur, once described by Sudan expert Alex de Waal as "counter-insurgency on the cheap", used regular troops, ethnic militias and air power to fight off the rebels - with little to no regard for civilian casualties.

Darfur has been described as the first genocide of the 21st Century, with the Janjaweed accused of ethnic cleansing and using mass rape as a weapon of war.

Hemedti eventually became the commander of what could be described as an offshoot of the Janjaweed, his RSF.

Hemedti's power grew massively once he began supplying troops to fight for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen.

Sudan's then-military ruler, Omar al-Bashir, came to rely on Hemedti and the RSF as a counterweight to the regular armed forces, in the hope that it would be too difficult for any single armed group to depose him.

In the end - after months of popular protests - the generals clubbed together to overthrow Bashir, in April 2019.

Later that year, they signed an agreement with the protesters to form a civilian-led government overseen by the Sovereign Council, a joint civilian-military body, with Gen Burhan at its head, and Hemedti as his deputy.

It lasted two years - until October 2021 - when the military struck, taking power for themselves, with Gen Burhan again at the head of the state and Hemedti again his deputy.

Siddig Tower Kafi was a civilian member of the Sovereign Council, and so regularly met the two generals.

He said he saw no sign of any disagreements until after the 2021 coup.

Then "Gen Burhan started to restore the Islamists and the former regime members to their old positions", he told the BBC.

"It was becoming clear that the plan of Gen Burhan was to restore the old regime of Omar al-Bashir to power."

Mr Siddig says that this is when Hemedti began to have doubts, as he felt Bashir's cronies had never fully trusted him.

Sudanese politics has always been dominated by an elite largely drawn from the ethnic groups based around Khartoum and the River Nile.

Hemedti comes from Darfur, and the Sudanese elite often talk about him and his soldiers in pejorative terms, as “country bumpkins” unfit to rule the state.

Over the last two or three years, he has tried to position himself as a national figure, and even as a representative of the marginalised peripheries - trying to forge alliances with rebel groups in Darfur and South Kordofan that he had previously been tasked with destroying.

He has also spoken regularly of a need for democracy despite his forces having brutally put down civilian protests in the past.

Tensions between the army and the RSF grew as a deadline for forming a civilian government approached, focused on the thorny issue of how the RSF should be re-integrated into the regular armed forces.

And then the fighting began, pitting the RSF against the SAF, Hemedti against Gen Burhan, for control of the Sudanese state.

In one way, at least, Hemedti has followed in the footsteps of the SAF top brass, who he is now fighting - over the last few years, he has built a vast business empire, including interests in gold mines and many other sectors.

Gen Burhan and Hemedti have both faced calls from civilian leaders and victims of the conflict in Darfur and elsewhere to face trial for alleged abuses.

The stakes are extremely high, and there are plenty of reasons for these former-allies-turned-bitter-enemies to not back down.

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-65297714>



We're getting lousy value for the taxes we pay in Canada

If governments across Canada want to leave more money in the pockets of Canadians, they should reduce taxes.

By Jake Fuss and Grady Munro

Every year at the Fraser Institute, we calculate the total tax bill — which includes income taxes, property taxes, sales taxes, fuel taxes, etc. — for the average Canadian family. This year we found the average family paid 43.0 per cent of its annual income in taxes in 2023. That is more than it spent on basic necessities such as food, clothing and housing combined, and significantly higher than the 33.5 per cent it paid in 1961.

Put differently, the average family's tax bill has increased 2,705 per cent since 1961 — or 180.3 per cent after adjusting for inflation.

And yet, in a recent column, Star contributing columnist Linda McQuaig said we're "distorting the public debate over taxes" by publishing these facts while stating that the effective tax rate the average family pays has only "increased by 28 per cent since 1961."

Presumably, she arrived at her 28 per cent figure by calculating the change in the share of income going to taxes from 33.5 per cent (in 1961) to 43.0 per cent (in 2023). And yes, that's one way to measure tax increases. But again, the inflation-adjusted dollar value — what the average family actually pays — of the tax bill has increased by 180.3 per cent. That's not distortion, that's explaining the increase in terms everyone can understand.

Of course, these aren't simply academic points. Taxes, particularly at a time when families are struggling with the cost of living, have real-world effects. According to a recent poll, 74 per cent of respondents feel the average family is overtaxed, and 80 per cent believe the average family should pay 40 per cent or less of its income in total taxes.

Another important question is whether families get value for the taxes they pay. Polling shows nearly half (44 per cent) of Canadians feel they receive "poor" or "very poor" value from government services while only 16 per cent believe they receive "good" or "great" value. This should be no surprise. Health care wait times are at record highs. Student test scores are declining. And Canada routinely fails to meet our NATO defence spending commitments.

Meanwhile, governments waste taxpayer dollars on pet projects such as a federal infrastructure bank, which, despite a budget of at least \$13.2 billion, has delivered only two relatively minor projects in seven years. Or handouts to new electric vehicle (EV) owners that cost taxpayers — including Canadians unable to afford EVs — more than \$587 million annually.

Can we really say governments are using our money wisely?

Unfortunately, many governments are doubling down. Municipalities such as Vancouver



and Toronto raised property taxes by at least 7.5 per cent this year. Toronto city council has even floated the idea of a municipal sales tax.

It's hard to argue that you want to make life more affordable for families by leaving less money in their pockets.

And of course, the Trudeau government recently raised taxes on capital gains. But despite claims to the contrary, this tax hike won't only affect wealthy investors. According to an analysis by economist Jack Mintz, 50 per cent of taxpayers who claim more than \$250,000 of capital gains in a year earned less than \$117,592 in normal annual income from 2011 to 2021. These include Canadians with modest annual incomes who own businesses, second homes or stocks, and who may choose to sell those assets once or infrequently in their lifetimes (when they retire, for example).

Finally, more tax hikes are likely on the horizon. The federal government and eight provinces are currently running budget deficits, meaning they're not taxing enough to keep up with spending. Deficits produce debt, which will be passed onto future generations of Canadians in the form of higher taxes.

If governments across Canada want to leave more money in the pockets of Canadians, they should reduce taxes. And everyone should want an honest discussion about taxes in Canada, based on facts, not distortions.

Jake Fuss and Grady Munro are fiscal policy analysts at the Fraser Institute.

Source: https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/were-getting-lousy-value-for-the-taxes-we-pay-in-canada/article_57bd7cb6-5a53-11ef-a403-d3126dcf4788.html

Flying electric ships are headed to Saudi's NEOM

With a speed of 25 knots, Candela P-12 is the fastest and longest-range electric passenger ship in the world

by Web Desk

Saudi Arabia has placed order for eight of Candela's P-12s, the world's first electric hydrofoil ship, to serve the water network at NEOM — the massive sustainable city that the Gulf country is building in its northwest. The order is the largest ever for the Stockholm-based company.

Launched last year, Candela P-12 is set to debut in Stockholm's public transport during fall 2024.

Flying above the waves on computer-controlled underwater wings or hydrofoils, the P-12 uses 80 per cent less energy than conventional ships. With a speed of 25 knots and more than two hours of endurance, the Candela P-12 is currently the fastest and longest-range electric passenger ship in the world.

"The P-12 is designed to create zero-emission water transport systems which have significant improvements over traditional water commute," says Gustav Hasselskog, CEO and founder of Candela.

"Unlike legacy systems with large, slow, and energy-inefficient conventional ferries, the Candela P-12 is a smaller and faster unit, allowing much more frequent departures and quicker journeys for passengers. All daily necessities and services will be just a short boat commute away."

Meanwhile, the P-12 also enhances the level of comfort with its digital control system balancing the ship 100 times per second by adjusting the hydrofoils' angle of attack, keeping it stable even in winds and waves.

The Candela P-12 seats between 20 and 30 people.

The electric Candela C-POD motors, located in pods underwater, are exceptionally silent and create minimal disturbance for marine wildlife. "We're extremely proud to provide a vessel system designed with both passengers and the environment in mind. Short waiting times, quick connections, and a very enjoyable experience without taxing the environment with wakes, emissions, and noise will revolutionize how we travel on water," said Gustav Hasselskog of Candela.

The first batch of 8 vessels, to be deployed on the Red Sea, will be delivered in 2025 and early 2026.

Source: <https://www.khaleejtimes.com/world/mena/electric-flying-ships-are-coming-to-saudis-neom?amp=1>

Anti-Hasina Bangladeshis on alert for 'evil remnants'

Toppled Hasina forces plot to organize a protest today around independence fighter's assassination anniversary

By Masum Billah and Faisal Mahmud

Late Wednesday night, a surreal scene unfolded in Dhaka's Dhanmondi area. Hundreds of students gathered, lighting candles to honor those who had fallen and injured during what is now referred to as the "July Revolution" in Bangladesh, which led to the end of Sheikh Hasina's 15-year autocratic rule.

Initially, the students observed the night in silence, with the flickering candlelight creating a somber atmosphere. Later, they sang solemn songs in remembrance of the more than 400 individuals who had lost their lives in recent weeks. Although the event, organized by students from various universities, appeared to be a commemoration, it carried a deeper message.



"It's a signal to the remnants of a fascist autocratic regime that we remain vigilant," said Abu Hamza Tareq, a student from a private university. "The Awami League, despite their disgraceful fall from power, is still trying to create chaos and destabilize the country."

In the past few days, reports and social media chatter have suggested that the Awami League might attempt a "counterrevolution" on August 15 to overthrow the new interim government led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus. Suddenly, several Awami League leaders and activists emerged from hiding, issuing calls to mobilize on the streets.

August 15 has been observed as National Mourning Day in Bangladesh for the past 15 years during Hasina's tenure, commemorating the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Hasina's father and a central figure in Bangladesh's liberation war of 1971, along with most of his family members.

Sajeeb Wazed Joy, Hasina's son who lives in the US and has been giving interviews to Indian media since his mother's ousting, has called on party members to regroup. "The Awami League hasn't been defeated; it remains a party of the people," he stated.

In her first statement since being removed from power, Hasina urged her supporters to "pray

for the forgiveness of souls by laying floral wreaths at the portrait of the father of the nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, at Bangabandhu Bhaban in Dhanmondi, Dhaka.”

Reports indicate that Awami League activists and supporters have been instructed to gather in Dhaka to ensure a strong turnout for this event. If they convene in the capital, it will be their first major assembly there since Hasina’s removal. However, students, protesters, and other political parties perceive this not merely as a mourning event but as a possible attempt to destabilize the country’s nascent interim government.

Riding on minority issues

Concerns about August 15 have intensified on social media, fueled by a series of rallies from the country’s minority Hindu community over the past three days. These demonstrations in Dhaka have voiced several demands to the new interim government, including the establishment of special tribunals to expedite trials for those who persecute minorities, reserving 10 percent of parliamentary seats for minorities and enacting a minority protection law. The rallies, held at Shahbagh in central Dhaka, caused significant traffic disruptions on two consecutive days.

Since August 5, Hindu temples, homes, and businesses have been targeted, and at least two Hindu leaders affiliated with the Awami League, Sheikh Hasina’s former party, have been killed. It is important to note that nearly 150 people, including Awami League members, police, and protesters, have been killed in the violence following Hasina’s removal.

Nabila Idris, a university teacher, expressed support for the minority community’s right to protest and seek justice for the violence its members have suffered since Hasina’s fall. However, she is concerned that the violence against minorities is being framed through a communal rather than a political lens.

“Some Indian media outlets have exaggerated the violence against minorities and spread false reports, such as claims that dozens of Hindus have been killed in Bangladesh,” Idris said. “This seems to be an attempt to destabilize the interim government. I strongly suspect that Awami League activists and leaders are trying to leverage the issue, rallying behind the minorities to advance their own agenda.”

The protesting students, the main catalysts behind the July revolution, remain vigilant, like Tareq.

On Wednesday afternoon, hundreds of students assembled at Shahbag Square in Dhaka for the “Rally of Harmony,” organized by various student groups. In that rally, student leaders on stage not only highlighted Bangladesh’s long history of communal harmony in which people of diverse religions have coexisted peacefully for generations, but also gave the message that they are ready to thwart “any evil force” that “tries to destabilize” the country again.

Ritu, a university student, joined her friend in chanting slogans at the event. She voiced her worries about the ousted Awami League potentially trying to return by targeting innocent people and religious minorities. “Our revolution is still in its early stages,” she stated. “Our adversaries are plotting a comeback by committing violence, but we remain vigilant on the streets.”

“Given the timing of August 15, the Chhatra League and Jubo League might target minorities to exploit the situation and then blame it on the protesters,” said Arif Sohel, a student leader from Jahangirnagar University in Dhaka. “We’ve seen the Awami League’s propaganda media stoking these fears. They are trying to undermine our movement by spreading false narratives about attacks on minorities.”

Arif emphasized that they will continue to protect minority communities and their places of worship from potential harm. They are also organizing road marches to sites where students

were killed, lighting candles, and holding prayers in their memory.

“We are concerned they may create chaos and disrupt the lives of ordinary people. We will be on the streets to prevent such attempts and will keep demanding justice against the fascist Awami League,” Arif added.

Akhter Hossain, a prominent student leader, addressed the Shahbag rally on Wednesday, expressing concern about the Awami League and its student wing, Chhatra League, noting their history of carrying live weapons. “The live weapons they carried previously were never recovered. With such armament, they could act at any moment,” Akhter warned.

While he was skeptical about the Awami League’s current capacity to mobilize a large crowd, he stated, “We will remain on the streets to prevent any attempts at conspiracy.”

Does the Awami League have the capacity now?

In addition to student groups, various political parties have organized events across the capital and other parts of the country. The August 15 public holiday has been canceled.

“Awami League is a long-established political force. We firmly believe that their current leadership is what led to their downfall,” remarked Tabith Awal of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP). “We cannot predict what the Awami League might do or if they will make a comeback. But if they choose to, they certainly have the capability,” he added.

Despite the heightened tensions surrounding August 15, not everyone is alarmed.

“Barking dogs seldom bite,” said Shahab Enam Khan, a professor of International Relations at Jahangirnagar University. Despite the Awami League being ousted from power and the BNP’s prospects looking promising, Professor Khan suggested that the chances of violence on August 15 are slim unless there is an external effort to incite chaos.

“I am uncertain whether the Awami League will manage to make the comeback they are aiming for. The BNP will likely seek to avoid discrediting themselves, so while there may be some displays of strength, widespread violence seems unlikely,” Khan stated, adding, “However, the government must remain vigilant about any external influences on the situation.”

Political analyst Zobaida Nasreen, a professor of Anthropology at the University of Dhaka, stressed the importance of allowing people to pay their respects to Sheikh Mujib on August 15 if they wish.

“August 15 is a day of mourning, and Sheikh Mujib is deeply associated with our struggle for independence. I do not support undermining Sheikh Mujib due to Sheikh Hasina’s downfall,” she said. “We are striving to build a new and reformed Bangladesh through this uprising, and all parties involved must work to prevent a new wave of violence from emerging,” she added.

Meanwhile, as tensions and rallies persist across Bangladesh, there are increasing calls for a trial of Sheikh Hasina. A murder case had already been filed against the former prime minister, and on Wednesday, a new case was brought before the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT) accusing Hasina and eight others of alleged genocide, crimes against humanity and murder during the student movement from July 15 to August 5.

Tabith Awal believes that Sheikh Hasina should face trial in Bangladesh. “Since Sheikh Hasina’s alleged crimes occurred in Bangladesh and the accusations are from Bangladeshis, she should be tried under Bangladeshi law,” Awal said.

Masum Billah and Faisal Mahmud are reporters based in Dhaka.

Source: <https://asiatimes.com/2024/08/anti-hasina-bangladesis-on-alert-for-evil-remnants/>

Islamic Emirate Marks 105th Anniversary of Afghan Independence Day

By Naweed Samadi



Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani also said that the interim government is striving to expand its relations with the world.

Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, during the commemoration program said that the country should learn from the experiences of other nations for its development.

“Instead of trying new experiences, we should implement what other nations have tested and are now reaping the benefits of. We should observe what countries in the region and the world have done, how they have secured their defense, and where and how they have maintained it under the close scrutiny of their enemies,” Baradar said.

Abdul Salam Hanafi, the Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs, said: “A war for freedom, a war for independence, no matter when it happens, is always respectable for us.”

The acting ministers of defense and interior described the 28th of Asad, the day marking Afghanistan’s independence, as significant in the country’s history. They highlighted that citizens should not allow anyone to take up arms again and weaken the current system.

Mohammad Yaqoob Mujahid also said during the program that they would not remain silent in the face of any occupier or enemy of the system and Afghanistan.

“Everyone should hear this clearly: we will not surrender to anyone by force, under any name or title. We have established an Islamic system in this land, and we will defend it to the death and with our last breath,” The acting defense minister added.

In his remarks, Mohammad Yaqoob Mujahid also emphasized that they would not accept any illegitimate conditions imposed by the world, and reiterated that the Islamic Emirate seeks positive engagement with all countries, including the West. He added: “To all the countries of the world, whether strong or weak, listen and understand that Afghans will not accept your illegitimate interference.”

Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani also said that the interim government is striving to expand its relations with the world.

Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani, the acting interior minister, said: “The enemy is still engaged in intellectual and cultural invasion; they are trying to destroy us intellectually and culturally.”

Meanwhile, Amir Khan Muttaqi, the acting foreign minister, said during the program that freedom is not given, but taken, and emphasized that engagement is a serious need in the current era. Muttaqi added: “Freedom is taken, not given; freedom is seized with the strength of the sword, it is not handed out as charity.”

Officials of the interim government in this program highlighted the importance of protecting the current system and added that if the system is not protected, the fate of the interim government will be the same as previous regimes.

Source: <https://tolonews.com/afghanistan-190289>

Police presence at UK's oldest purpose-built mosque

By Amy Walker



A large police presence was at the UK's oldest purpose-built mosque in Woking on Monday evening following reports of possible disorder.

Surrey Police's Woking beat said on Facebook it was made aware of “plans to target the mosque” circulating on social media and officers arrived “within minutes” of the first call being received.

It later added that it had not seen any disorder taking place at Shah Jahan Mosque, or the surrounding area.

It said the response shows it is “continually monitoring the situation” and said its “priority is ensuring that our communities feel safe and supported by us”.

Continuing violent disorder was seen in parts of the country on Monday night, in which police came under attack in Belfast, Darlington and Plymouth.

The government has offered mosques at risk of violent disorder additional security personnel after riots broke out following the Southport attack last week.

Sussex Police has said it is investigating a threat to attack Hastings Mosque on Sunday as a hate crime.

Surrey Police said officers would continue to engage with local communities “who have been feeling vulnerable since we first saw the increase in violent disorder across the country”.

“We recognise that this is a really challenging time for these communities, and we have increased our visibility and engagement where we know that residents, businesses, and faith leaders are feeling vulnerable,” it added.

Shah Jahan Mosque has been contacted for comment.

Source: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c9d1198xqd4o.amp>

LILLEY: Ontario spends least on health, gets better results

By Brian Lilley

Ontario spends the least per capita on health care of all of the provinces. It's a fact, and a talking point, that has been used widely since Premier Doug Ford's comments last week about sending patients to a vet clinic for MRIs and CT scans.

The outrage was palpable over Ford's joke and critics used it as proof that we simply need to spend more to fix our system.

All of us have horror stories of long waits in emergency rooms, to see a doctor or get a specialist appointment. The system desperately needs to improve, and the Ford government says that they are making moves in that direction, some of which I discussed in a recent column.

That said, the same source that shows Ontario spends the least per capita of all provinces also shows that Ontario has the best outcomes on key metrics.

According to the Canadian Institute of Health for Health Information, the average spent per resident when considering both public and private funding is \$8,740. The highest province in the country is Newfoundland and Labrador at \$10,333 while Ontario is dead last at \$8,245.

What's interesting is that on six treatments measured nationally, Ontario is the leader across Canada in providing timely access to hip replacement and knee replacement surgeries. When it comes to providing timely access to radiation therapy, Ontario meets the mark 99% of the time just behind Manitoba at 100% but well ahead of Newfoundland, the big spender among the provinces which only meets the mark 57% of the time.

On hip fracture repair, Ontario is just ahead of the national average meeting the guidelines 83% of the time. For cataract surgery, the province is behind the national average meeting the timeliness guidelines just 65% of the time which is still well ahead of Newfoundland which meets the guideline just 43% of the time.

None of this is to say that Ontario's health system is perfect, it's not, but it does show that simply pouring more money into the system each year doesn't guarantee you better





outcomes.

On that note, Ontario has been increasing spending on health care over the past several years. In fiscal year 2017-18, the last year of the Liberal government, the province spent \$55.6 million on health and long-term care while in fiscal year 2022-23, they spent \$74.2 billion.

That's a 33% increase in spending.

Even after taking inflation and population growth into account, that's a real increase in spending.

Could the province spend more on health care?

Perhaps in some areas it would be beneficial but this current fiscal year, the province has budgeted \$85 billion for health alone while long-term care, now its own department, is close to \$8 billion.

To claim that health funding in Ontario is being cut as the opposition parties claim

and too many in the media repeat without checking the facts is disingenuous. While some areas could likely use more funding, the above statistics on outcomes show that more money doesn't necessarily mean better outcomes — it just means a more expensive system.

As a patient of the system, I'd prefer better outcomes to blindly spending more money.

The people advocating for simply spending more on a system that doesn't always work are the same ones opposing the innovations the Ford government is implementing. Marit Stiles of the NDP, Bonnie Crombie of the Liberals and Mike Schriener of the Greens are three opposition leaders united in saying no to innovation.

No to letting pharmacists treat common ailments as happens in other provinces. They say no to allowing private or community clinics to provide MRIs, CT scans or surgery for cataract, hip or knee replacement.

They warn it will mean paying with your credit card instead of your OHIP card when they know that is not the case.

All three of them are against innovation that will improve patient access to care.

When they, or anyone else says we need to spend more, point them at the results from Newfoundland and ask them if that is what they want.

Source: <https://torontosun.com/opinion/columnists/ontario-spends-least-on-health-gets-better-results>

He won Olympic gold for Pakistan. He got \$1 million. And ... a buffalo!?!

By Benazir Samad



Arshad Nadeem made history at the Paris Olympics.

A strapping 6 feet 4 inches tall, he set a new Olympic record for the longest javelin throw – 92.97 meters or 305.02 feet.

The 27-year-old became the first Pakistani to secure an individual gold medal.

And oh, one more historic thing: He is undoubtedly the first Olympic champion to be given a buffalo as a reward for his prowess.

Nadeem grew up in a rural community in the Punjab province of Pakistan, the third oldest of eight children. He was a gifted athlete who gravitated to cricket. Then his dad, who worked as a mason, suggested he try a javelin.

Nadeem says he did not get support from the Pakistani government in his training. But his gold medal triggered a gold rush: \$50,000 from World Athletics, around half a million dollars from Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and \$350,000 from Punjab's Chief Minister Mariam Nawaz. He also got a couple of cars, including a Honda Civic whose license plate bears the number 92.97 as a tribute to his javelin distance.

Then there's the lifetime supply of free fuel, an apartment, even a gold crown (!).

And from his father-in-law: a buffalo.

Jokes were made – including by Nadeem. On a morning TV show, an anchor asked about the buffalo. Arshad said he had been hoping for a large tract of land since his father-in-

law is wealthy. Then he added, “Okay, a buffalo will suffice, too.”

Actually that’s an understatement. The buffalo holds deep cultural significance in Nadeem’s home province of Punjab. “In rural communities, a buffalo is considered one of the most honorable and valuable gifts, much like camels in desert regions like Saudi Arabia,” says Rashad Bukhari, a writer and cultural commentator born and raised in Punjab.

The gift that keeps on giving ... milk

Buffalo are valued for their milk -- called the “black gold’ of Pakistan. With a higher fat and protein content than cow’s milk, buffalo milk makes up 72% of the nation’s milk supply. Their milk is also well-suited to turn into ghee, a clarified butter that is a staple of the Pakistani diet,

So for farmers in the agricultural province of Punjab, a female buffalo is ... um ... a cash cow.

And it’s a gift that keeps on giving ... milk. The average lifespan of a buffalo is 20 years. A female usually starts producing milk after birthing a first calf at 3 years old. The animal will continue giving milk for the rest of its life, according to Dr. Burhan-e- Azam, a veterinarian who works for Punjab’s livestock dept as a farm manager and an animal nutritionist at a buffalo research institute. He notes that most buffalo will yield milk if the udders are massaged – even if the calf is not around.

If you have a buffalo and need some money, you’re in luck. “You can sell it whenever you want and get good money right away,” says Azam. The price of a buffalo typically ranges from \$1,500 to \$3,600.

That’s why Pakistanis call a buffalo “a poor man’s bank.”

“Buffalo is a blessing for our region,” he adds. “It does not even require too much care like other high maintenance animals.” After letting the animal graze during the day, he says, “mostly people would tie their buffalo with a tree” in their compound at night. He adds that buffalo are well-suited for both hot and cold climates.”

The importance of a buffalo for Punjab can be gauged from the fact that in ancient times there was a profession called khoji, an Urdu word that can mean “detective.” A khoji could study the footprints left by a buffalo thief and follow trails for days, even weeks, until the buffalo rustler was discovered. (The advent of security cameras and modern roads have brought an end to the profession.)

Buffalo are also a part of the traditional dowry in Punjab. And when a family buffalo dies, Bukhari says that to this day, neighbors visit to offer condolences.

And you may wonder – is it a little odd to have just one buffalo? That’s often the case for families in Punjab, says Azam. Many households have a sole buffalo — and benefit from free door-to-door vaccination services and medical care provided by the government.

For javelin king Nadeem, the buffalo is not just symbolic. Buffalo milk and homemade ghee were a staple in his diet while training. His father-in-law’s gift ensures that the Olympic medalist will have fresh milk as he trains for his next competition.

Benazir Samad is an international journalist at Voice of America in Washington, D.C. She tweets @benazirmirsamad

Source:<https://www.npr.org/sections/goats-and-soda/2024/08/21/g-s1-17578/olympics-gold-javelin-pakistan-arshad-nadeem-buffalo>

ICC prosecutor urges judges to urgently rule on warrants for Israeli, Hamas officials

By Reuters

THE HAGUE, Aug 23 (Reuters) - The prosecutor of the International Criminal Court stressed the court had jurisdiction to investigate Israeli nationals and asked judges to urgently decide on arrest warrants for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his defence minister Yoav Gallant.

In court filings made public Friday, prosecutor Karim Khan urged judges weighing the arrest warrants sought against Israeli officials and Hamas leaders to not delay.

"Any unjustified delay in these proceedings detrimentally affects the rights of victims," he said.

Khan stressed that the court had jurisdiction over Israeli nationals who commit atrocity crimes in the Palestinian territories and asked the judges to dismiss legal challenges filed by several dozen governments and other parties.

"It is settled law that the court has jurisdiction in this situation," the filing said, dismissing legal arguments based on provisions in the Oslo accords and assertions by Israel that it is carrying out its own investigations into alleged war crimes.

ICC prosecutors say there are reasonable grounds to believe Netanyahu and Gallant, as well as Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, military chief Mohammed Al-Masri, and another Hamas political leader Ismail Haniyeh, bear criminal responsibility for alleged war crimes and crimes against humanity.

Haniyeh was assassinated in Iran late July. The court has since declined to comment on reports of his death. Israel has said it killed Al-Masri, also known as Mohammed Deif, in another airstrike but Hamas would neither confirm or deny that news.

About 1,200 people were killed in the initial Hamas attack and around 250 taken hostage, according to Israeli counts. Nearly 40,000 Palestinians have since been killed in an Israeli assault on Gaza that has caused a deadly and widespread humanitarian crisis.

Israel and Palestinian leaders have dismissed allegations of war crimes, and representatives for both sides have criticised Khan's decision to seek warrants.

There is no deadline for judges to decide on warrants.

Source:<https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/icc-prosecutor-urges-judges-urgently-rule-warrants-israeli-hamas-officials-2024-08-23/>