

The Business

Chief Editor

Irfan Athar Qazi

E-mail: editorthebusiness@yahoo.com

thebusinesslhr@gmail.com

Tijarat House, 14-Davis Road, Lahore  
0423-6312280, 6312480, 6312429, 6312462  
Cell # 0321-4598258

1270-B, Peoples Colony No I, Off: Chenone  
Road, Faisalabad, Ph: 041-8555582

ISLAMABAD / RAWALPINDI  
N-125 Circular Road, Ph: 051-5551654,  
5532761, Cell # 0300-8567331  
KARACHI  
3rd Floor Kehkashan Mall 172-I Block II PECHS  
Opp Rehmania Masjid Main Tariq Road  
Ph: 021-34524550, Cell # 0300-8251534



## Budget-making exercise

The budget exercise, an economic treatise of the administration for a year, remains in limbo not only because of the prevailing political uncertainty with the focus of all on the vote of no-confidence, but also because of pending endorsement by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), indicated by reaching an agreement on the mandatory seventh quarterly review. The sixth review consensus reached between the Pakistani authorities and the IMF envisaged external gross external financing requirements of a whopping 35 billion dollars for next year – up from 30.4 billion dollar in the current year (10.1 percent of Gross Domestic Product). The itemization of this requirement is as follows: amortization of previous loans would account for 21.79 billion dollar, short-term borrowing would reach a historic high of 16.97 billion dollar, long-term borrowing (non-IMF) 12.87 billion dollar and bonds/debt equity 4.8 billion dollar. Available financing is estimated at 33.4 billion dollar with disbursement from official creditors to public sector accounting for 12.4 billion dollar and from private creditors to public sector 9.4 billion dollar (including syndicated loans and Eurobonds) and rollover of short-term debt projected at 10 billion dollar. The large amount of borrowing required to meet the expenditure requirements would be at lower rates if the Fund seventh review talks are successful but at an exorbitant rate of interest if they remain stalled.

In addition, without an agreement on the seventh review, the likelihood of the rating agencies downgrading Pakistan would be high which would, in turn, further raise interest on borrowing. The lacuna in the seventh review talks as per Finance Ministry officials is the funding of the Prime Minister's February 28 relief package (envisaging a 10 rupee reduction in petroleum and products and 5 rupee reduction in per unit electricity tariff to be applicable till 30 June 2022 that requires additional subsidy that cannot be quantified but is expected to be high with the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war) and the industrial package that envisages exemptions (regarded as a disincentive to honest taxpayers) as well as an amnesty scheme opposed by the Fund, which would further raise concerns within the Financial Action Task Force (FATF).

There is, therefore, an urgent need to continue engagement with the Fund and as the government's response on its funding sources for the relief package have not satisfied the Fund staff it is time to make adjustments irrespective of the political cost and the Finance Ministry needs to make two budgets – one with the IMF next tranche disbursement but with significant curtailment of the current expenditure projections noted in the sixth review documents and, another, without it, with even higher curtailment of projected expenditure.

## Why did the PTI fail?



FAAHD HUSAIN

It is a dream gone sour. Here's why: 1 . Mismanaging the establishment: This was the easiest relationship to nurture because it formed the genesis of the PTI that was reborn, revamped and refueled somewhere around 2011. PTI's path to power was red-carpeted by the establishment without much care for nuance or subtlety. Imran Khan began his stint as the prime minister with one hundred per cent support from the establishment, a luxury few leaders had enjoyed before. And yet, even by event, issue by issue, and policy by policy, the PTI leadership began to rack up completely avoidable irritants with the establishment that finally exploded into the open with the controversy over the appointment of the DG ISI. Everyone in the PTI knew that if there was one relationship that was responsible for bringing the party to power, it was this; and if there was one relationship that would be responsible for sustaining the PTI in

power till 2023 and beyond, it was this. And yet the PTI leadership blew up this very relationship. There will now be plenty of time for the party rank and file to review the series of bad decisions that went into wrecking this relationship, and figure out who made these blunders, and why.

2 . Refusal to build a working relationship with the opposition: The PTI's ingrained divisiveness in its worldview worked well when the party was in the opposition. Extremes painted in simplistic colours make for uncomplicated and linear narratives. In government, however, the party needed to change gears. A basic working relationship with the opposition would have kept the political temperature down and enabled a smoother running of the affairs of the state. This would have also helped the government focus more on delivery as its primary agenda. The PTI, however, took its eye off the ball of governance and started chasing the wrong targets. It never could recover from this misjudgement and therefore could never really get its governance act – or narrative – together.

3 . The Buzdar blunder: It may have been an 'interesting choice' at the start, but it wasn't long before it became clear that Usman Buzdar could not deliver as the chief minister of Punjab. And yet, it was Prime Minister Imran Khan's adamancy that perpetuated the blunder instead of correcting it. As time went by, the blunder began to mutate into multiple crises: (i) It became the first source of friction with the establishment and kept on getting worse over the years (ii) it led to worsening governance in the province in sharp contrast to the Shehbaz Sharif years, and began to cement the perception of incompe-

tence for the party (iii) it resulted in poor political management among the elected members of the party leading to factionalism, groupings and ultimately breakaway members fed up with not having their issues resolved by the weak leadership of the party. The Buzdar blunder was an avoidable one. When it was not avoided, it became one of the leading factors for the PTI's failure. The fact that PM Khan finally threw Buzdar under the bus at the last moment for his political survival, made the blunder look even worse.

4 . Choice of team: The gap between what the PTI promised and the people it selected to deliver on the promises was wider than anyone could have imagined. The PTI's cabinet team was probably the weakest in living memory – and this explains why the PM had to reshuffle it so often. There were of course some exceptions like Dr Sania Nishtar and Dr Faisal Sultan, but the overwhelming majority was ill-suited for the task at hand. What made matters worse was their focus on combating the opposition instead of their focus on their ministries. Team management and selection, therefore, set up the PTI government for failure due to various reasons: (i) the team had no specific central vision other than the vague concept of a welfare state. This forced them to figure out how to define their parameters of "performance" which led to strange schemes and projects conjured up by bureaucrats in order to showcase that the minister was doing something/anything (ii) critical ministries like finance, energy and information saw constant change of ministers thereby keeping these areas in a constant state of flux (iii) disastrous performance in ministries and

divisions like aviation, human rights, accountability saw little or no change thereby reinforcing the governance crisis (iv) Perceptual damage was exacerbated by poor and negative communication by an array of spokespersons who were more busy trying to demolish the opposition than to build up their own government's perception.

5 . Hubris and arrogance: This misplaced sense of entitlement and self-righteousness became one of the key factors in PTI's failure. This attitude of contempt towards everyone else, laced as it was with mocking and sneering in press conferences and statements, injected a deadly dose of toxicity, antipathy and revulsion when what the PTI really needed to do was to inspire hope, inclusivity and a feel-good factor. Arrogance is a trait no one likes in a person, but when it becomes second nature to a political party, it turns off entire segments of society. When you combine this arrogance and hubris with the power that a government wields, you get a deadly combination. The PTI has hurt itself and its image badly by sporting such an attitude. It may want to review it as it prepares itself for an ignominious ouster from power.

Is it within the PTI's capacity to learn from its mistakes and correct them? Is it even feasible that its self-righteousness will allow itself to – for once – stop blaming the world and look inwards to find the reason for the disaster that has befallen it? The party is a reality – just a more diminished one. It can revive itself from the humiliation it has brought upon itself, but it can only do so if it is willing to look deep inside its soul and figure out what really went wrong.

## World powers overlooking pernicious acts of India in Kashmir

DR GHULAM NABI FAI

Washington, March 16 (KMS): The Vienna Declaration and Program of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, confirms the human rights of women as an "inalienable, integral and indivisible part of human rights." The Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, both are an outcome of more than two decades of collective efforts of the international community, NGO's and civil society at large, and their whole and sole objective was the empowerment of women.

The changing millennium has established the importance of women in the economic, social, cultural and political conditions. And it is a fact that true development of a society cannot be achieved and is not possible without the full participation and involvement of women in all activities of a human society.

Violence against woman remains a major issue in the development and advancement of women. The violations of women's rights during all conflicts has remained an issue in the twentieth century and if not corrected it will surely affect women not only in twenty-first century but also in the next millennium. As per report of the various NGO's and human rights agencies, hundreds of thousands of women have been the target of sexual crimes at the hands of the armed forces in Rwanda, Bosnia, Kosovo, Myanmar, Kashmir and elsewhere. These NGO's have documented incidents of gang-rape of young girls and grandmothers alike. Sexual abuse sometimes in the presence of male family members is used as a weapon of war. Rape by armed forces is, indeed, a gross violation of international human rights and humanitarian law. The condemnation of rape during war and internal conflicts must be condemned by all including Human Rights Council to protect the rights of women in all circumstances.

The report of the 'Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women' noted that rape, "is the destructive combination of power, anger and sex which incites sexual violence against women. The victims of rape suffer a disorder, anxiety, and the 'Rape Trauma Syndrome' which causes them to constantly relieve their rape through a series of flashbacks, dreams, nightmares and body memories." The United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights (UNHCHR) issued its "Report on the Situation of Human Rights in Kashmir," on July 8, 2019. The report contains graphic documentation of human rights violations being committed by the Indian military and paramilitary forces in Jammu & Kashmir. This is a signifi-

cant step towards greater international recognition of the serious abuses committed against Kashmiris at the hands of Indian army. This report takes the veil of secrecy off of India's crimes against humanity.

The 49-page report cites specific incidents where the Indian Government violated the very principles of human decency and democratic freedom against the people of Kashmir. It is well documented that the bloody occupation has resulted in massive human rights violations, particularly targeting women and children. The sanctity of women has been violated, in a gruesome and unforgiving fashion. The UN report upholds that [In the 2013 report on her mission to India, the 'Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women,' its causes and consequences, said, "[W]omen living in militarized regions, such as Jammu and Kashmir and the north-eastern states, live in a constant state of siege and surveillance, whether in their homes or in public.

Information received through both written and oral testimonies highlighted the use of mass rape, allegedly by members of the State security forces, as well as acts of enforced disappearance, killings and acts of torture and ill-treatment, which were used to intimidate and to counteract political opposition and insurgency." The United Nations report further illustrates that, "One significant case that illustrates the state's failure to investigate and prosecute allegations of sexual violence and addressing impunity for sexual crimes in Kashmir is the Kunan-Poshpora mass rape, which took place 27 years ago and for which attempts to seek justice have been denied and blocked over the years by the authorities at different levels. According to survivors and a local administration official, on the night of 23 February 1991, soldiers from the 4 Rajputana Rifles regiment of the Indian Army gang-raped around 23 women of Kunan and Poshpora villages of Kupwara district. The Indian Army and Government of India have denied the allegations"

The UN report further details that "survivors and human rights groups have campaigned for an independent investigation into this case for many years. In October 2011, SHRC [J&K State Human Rights Commission] directed the state government to reopen and reinvestigate the case and to prosecute a senior official whom it accused of deliberately obstructing the investigation. On 18 July 2013, a court in Kupwara district ordered the state police to reinvestigate the case within three months. When no progress was made despite these orders, five survivors filed a petition in the Jammu and Kashmir High Court in October 2013. In July 2014, the High

Court reportedly said the 2011 SHRC recommendations were supported by evidence and asked the state government to consider paying monetary compensation within three months." A joint report of Human Rights Watch and Physicians for Human Rights says on page 7 that "The reported rape on February 23, 1991, of women from the village of Kunan Poshpora by army soldiers of the Fourth Rajputana Rifles became the focus of a government campaign to acquit the army of charges of human rights violations. The incident provides a telling example of the government's failure to ensure that charges of human rights violations committed by members of its armed forces are properly investigated and those responsible held to account."

It further says that "This report is the second of a series which Asia Watch and PHR are publishing on human rights in Kashmir. In publishing this report, PHR and Asia Watch hope to focus international attention on the use of rape as a tactic of war in Kashmir and on government policies which have led the security forces to believe they can carry out these crimes with impunity. The cases included in this report are illustrative; there have been many more cases of rape than was possible to document here." The joint report also adds: "India's military laws, notably the Army Act and equivalent legislation governing the federal paramilitary forces, also prescribe courts-martial and punishments for members of these forces responsible for rape. In general, military courts in India have proved incompetent in dealing with cases of serious human rights abuses and have functioned instead to cover up evidence and protect the officers involved. In this report, Asia Watch and PHR recommend that all military or paramilitary suspects in rape cases be prosecuted in civilian courts." "Do You remember Kunan Poshpora" documentary evidence of five brave Kashmiri women scholars wrote these words on page 1, "This book is about one night in two villages in Kashmir.

It is about a night that has refused to end for 24 long years, a night that holds stories of violations, injustice, oppression and falsehood, as well as acts of courage, bravery and truth. This book is about Kunan Poshpora. Five courageous Kashmiri scholars, Essar Batool, Ifrah Butt, Samreena Mushtaq, Munaza Rashid & Natasha Rather narrate in the book on page xxv, the horrors in these words, "How does one illuminate this dark room, how does one replace despair with hope, how does one continue to invest in the belief that justice will be done? This is the essence of the 'story' that the authors share with us in this book.

## Appropriate penalties

HELEN CLARK

While the world is witnessing a positive shift towards progressive decriminalisation in the shaping of drug policies and an accompanying decrease in drug-related executions, punishments for drug offences continue to be drastically disproportionate and still too common in certain countries today. Although Singapore authorities had not carried out executions since 2019, in recent times there has been a sharp increase in the handing down of the sentence of the death penalty for drug-related offences. Then just two days ago, on March 30, Abdul Kahar bin Othman was executed in Singapore. He had been sentenced to death for a drug offence in 2015. There is also the ongoing case of Nagaenthran K. Dharmalingam, who could be executed within days after an appeal court upheld the death sentence against him on March 29. The 1973 Misuse of Drugs Act (MDA) is the basis for Singapore's national drug policy. Despite the draconian and disproportionate sentences it codifies – from imprisonment, strokes of the cane, and the mandatory death penalty for at least 20 different drug-related offences (be it trafficking, importing, or exporting specific amounts of drugs) – the MDA has not fulfilled its intention of preventing and combating illicit drug trafficking and drug use. There is plenty of evidence to explain why. It is more often than not the case that those people caught committing drug offences are the lower-level dealers and individual users, while those at the top of the "totem pole" go unnoticed and unpunished.

The burden of the focus on low-level offenders generally falls on more vulnerable and marginalised groups which end up being the victims of an overwhelmed and obsolete criminal justice system. The demographics of people facing the death penalty for drug-related offences are remarkably similar the world over, whether it be Singapore, sub-Saharan Africa or the United States: disproportionately women, minorities and the economically disadvantaged. At present, at least 3,000 people are on death row for drug-related offences in approximately 35 countries. In 2021, there were at least 131 executions for those same offences, a 336 percent increase from the previous year. These numbers reflect a regrettable trend, which is also apparent in an 11 percent increase in the number of people receiving the death sentence for drug offences. In September 2021, the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres tabled a report, Question of the death penalty, which emphasised the need to abolish the death penalty universally and protect the right to life for all. The Global Commission on Drug Policy reiterates that the use of the death penalty for drug-related offences does not meet the threshold of "most serious crimes" – for the purposes of article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – and thus clearly violates international human rights law.