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Political Crises in Maldives, Domestic instability in Colombia, and the Debt Crisis in Pakistan

Immaculine Joy Paul C, Subiksha S, and Taffy Tonia



(Image Source: avas mv)

Political Crises in Maldives

Immaculine Joy Paul C

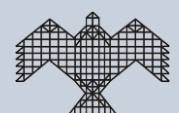
What happened?

On 7 June, the ruling party's parliamentary group, the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP), lodged a no-confidence motion targeting the parliamentary speaker and the leader of MDP, Mohamed Nasheed. He was accused of stalling a no-confidence motion against Attorney General Ibrahim Riffath over the latter's failure to act in the best interest of the Maldives in the maritime dispute with Mauritius.

On 6 June, the new party 'The Democrats' filed an emergency motion in the parliament. It complained of government intimidation of those who signed up for the party.

What is the background?

First, the long-standing internal feud within the MDP. A factional conflict emerged between parliamentary speaker Mohamed Nasheed and President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih. While having no quarrel over foreign policy stance (both Nasheed and Solih are pro-India and anti-China), Nasheed has pointed out key shortcomings in Solih's domestic governance relating to



adherence to party ideology and constitutional reforms. Nasheed also accuses the Solih regime of corruption and changing or using rules to suit his political interests.

Second, turmoil in the opposition party - PPM. The main opposition and second largest party, the Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM), is facing challenges, with its leader and presidential candidate, former president Abdulla Yameen serving a jail term on a money laundering case.

Third, the difference between Nasheed and Solih over the nature of the political system. Both had agreed before the 2018 Presidential election that, within 18 months of coming to power, Solih would hold a referendum on changing the country's Presidential system to the Parliamentary system. But Solih failed to hold the referendum. Nasheed believes that the Presidential system would lead to concentration of power, dictatorship, and corruption, while the parliamentary system would be more democratic. He also believes the parliamentary system would provide a conducive environment for inter-party coalitions to work better in the country.

Fourth, the ITLOS and Mauritius. Earlier in April, ITLOS (International Tribunal for the Law of the Seas) ruled on a maritime dispute between the Maldives and Mauritius that the conflicting Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) between the two would be divided based on the equidistance formula. The Maldives gained 47,232 square kilometres of the disputed maritime territory, while Mauritius gained 45,331 square kilometres. The opposition argues that the Maldives is entitled to 95,563 square kilometres and alleges President Solih influenced this move by recognizing the Chagos as part of Mauritius. Previously, Nasheed criticized Solih, holding him responsible for losing a portion of the Maldives' maritime territory in the border dispute with Mauritius. Maldives National Party (MNP) 's leader, Mohamed Nazim, wants to sue President Solih for the loss.

What does it mean?

First, the divisions can potentially disrupt the upcoming September presidential elections. There is also a fear of a lack of consensus in the national decisions, thereby hampering the democratic process or the concern for people's welfare.

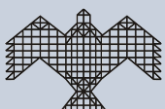
Second, the current turmoil in the Progressive Party of Maldives (PPM) can potentially create violence as the Opposition PPM-PNC combined have threatened to halt the elections if their jailed leader Abdulla Yameen is not allowed to contest.

Domestic instability in Colombia

Subiksha S

What happened?

On 4 June, *Semana*, a Colombian magazine, released a series of audio messages sent by Armando Benedetti (Colombian ambassador to Venezuela) to Laura Sarabia (Former chief of staff of the Presidency), threatening to reveal damaging information about President Gustavo Petro's presidential campaign, which Benedetti was in charge of the last year. He mentioned that the campaign received around USD 3.4 million, but he questioned the legitimacy of how that money was obtained. This has shaken the government and raised serious concerns about civil liberties and the transparency of intelligence agencies.



The scandal revolves around two key members of President Petro's inner circle: his chief of staff, Laura Sarabia, and the Colombian ambassador to Venezuela, Armando Benedetti, who previously served as Petro's campaign manager. It all began with accusations made by Sarabia that her child's nanny, Marellys Meza, had stolen USD 7,000 from her home. A senior analyst for Colombia at the International Crisis Group said: "It's a reality of Colombian politics that elections, particularly in the coastal region, have traditionally been plagued by the corruption of the sort that is mentioned in the tapes."

What is the background?

Firstly, Colombia's history of surveillance abuses and violations of civil liberties, including illegal wiretapping. In 2008, the now-defunct Administrative Department of Security (DAS) was engaged in widespread illegal surveillance, including wiretapping of human rights activists, journalists, judges, and politicians who were critical of the government. In 2011, the DAS got dismantled. Analysts point to a systemic infringement of civil liberties, irrespective of the political party in power, highlighting the need for structural reforms and effective parliamentary commissions to address these issues.

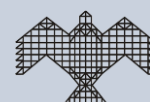
Second, political instability in the making. The current scandal has led to the suspension of debates on the President's reform proposals and has caused significant political unrest in Colombia. It evokes doubts about the case being backed up by the opposition party. Petro has responded to all the comments and indicated that his "political opponents" were trying to carry out a "soft coup" against his administration. The same term was used by a group of leftist leaders countrywide in a letter on 7 June accusing the country's opposition party is working illegally to remove Petro from power.

Third, the differences over reforms. Petro proposed several social and economic reforms in February to Colombia's Congress. They include healthcare improvements, labour, and pension reforms, free access to university education, and subsidies for vulnerable groups. However, opposition parties were against the reforms and argued they might jeopardize economic stability and increase poverty. The differences over the reforms have resulted in a stalemate.

What does it mean?

First, the present scandal challenge President Gustavo Petro's administration, tarnishing his image and reputation. It puts him on thin ice politically and hampers his ability to implement his ambitious domestic agenda and push for political change. State agencies, such as intelligence and law enforcement, face severe repercussions as their credibility and transparency are scrutinized. The scandal highlights the abuse of power, lack of oversight, and violation of civil liberties within these agencies, necessitating reevaluating their operations, which can erode democratic values.

Second, the scandal in Colombia reflects a recurring issue in surveillance states across Latin America. Countries like Venezuela, Cuba, and Nicaragua have a history of extensive state surveillance, where intelligence agencies are utilized to suppress dissent, target political opponents, and violate citizens' privacy rights. This will fuel a complex political crisis by eroding trust, challenging the government's legitimacy, and causing political fallout within parties leading to long-lasting effects on the political system and governance.



The Debt crisis in Pakistan

Taffy Tonia

What happened?

On 10 June, Dawn referring to the World Bank estimates, reported the economic crisis due to a balance-of-payments crisis and political chaos, with 0.4 per cent economic growth projected for 2023 and 2 per cent for the next fiscal year. This is lower than the 3.5 per cent goal the National Economic Council set. Inflation has risen, the PKR has plummeted, and Pakistan cannot afford imports, causing a decline in industrial output.

On 9 June, Pakistan's government released a PKR 14.5 trillion budget, with a half set aside to service PKR 7.3 trillion of debt. Around 950 billion is allocated for development projects, while populist measures include civil service pay increases and a 17.5 per cent increase in state pensions.

On 9 June, Pakistan's Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif stated he was hopeful that the IMF would resume the stalled USD 6.7 billion bailout program. He said: "The budget needs to satisfy the IMF to secure the release of more bailout money for the cash-strapped Pakistan." Additionally, he stated that the ninth review will be completed soon.

What is the background?

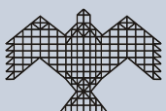
First, the IMF-Pakistan deadlock. Pakistan's economic turmoil has been exacerbated by political instability and devastating flooding, further underscoring the need for external support. An IMF mission visited Islamabad during January-February 2023 to address the financial challenges. However, negotiations did not agree on external financing estimates and specific domestic fiscal measures. The IMF has requested assurances on external finance from Islamabad before moving further with Pakistan to disburse the rescue tranche. The delay in the resumption of the IMF program is "unprecedented" as Pakistan waits for the completion of the ninth review of the bailout. Pakistan has been waiting for the completion of the ninth review of the bailout since November 2022. Talks on the staff-level agreement have stalled due to difficulties in securing the necessary financing assurances.

Second, Pakistan's external debt. A deepening economic crisis has left Pakistan with barely enough dollars to cover imports and struggling to service sky-high levels of foreign debt. The government had been holding the bank's exchange rate artificially high, contributing to the lack of dollars. At the end of last month, the government allowed it to drop, which could help some businesses and push prices up. Businesses and industries across Pakistan have had to slow down or stop work while prices rise.

Third, the threat of default without an IMF bailout. On 9 May, Pakistan's Federal Minister for Power, Khurram Dastgar Khan, highlighted the potential consequences of failing to secure an agreement with the IMF. He emphasized the increased reliance on China if an agreement was not reached, signalling the country's willingness to seek financial assistance from friendly nations.

What does it mean?

First, the urgency vis-à-vis the IMF support. The government has presented a 14.5 trillion PKR (about USD 50.5 billion) budget, of which more than half would be used to pay down the debt of 7.3 trillion rupees. The PKR has fallen into inflation, and the nation can no longer afford imports, which has resulted in a sharp reduction in industrial production.



Second, a cautious IMF and Pakistan's structural problems. Due to Pakistan's high debt service costs, a sizable chunk of tax income is lost to pay interest on the principle, which harms economic development and GDP growth. Pakistan's inability to solve structural issues and produce "inclusive" growth is the cause of its having only enough foreign reserves to cover one month's worth of imports. This debt crisis may result in Hyperinflation, a depreciation of the Pakistani rupee, a halting of imports, the closing of more factories, a rise in unemployment, and political instability.

Also in the news...

Regional Round-ups

East and Southeast Asia This Week

Taiwan: Hostage crisis drills

On 10 June, the Strait Times reported Taiwan's armed forces conducting drills in Kaohsiung, featuring a simulated hostage crisis. These exercises are held regularly in response to increasing military and political pressures from China, including frequent Chinese warplane incursions into Taiwan's air defence zone. In the scenario at Kaohsiung port, the coastguard, military, police, and airborne services surrounded a ship and descended from a helicopter. Action-movie music played as the announcer shouted commands, and officers simulated boarding the ship and engaging the hostage takers with simulated gunfire. Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen observed the drill and received salutes from the participating officers.

China: Largest naval training ship concludes the regional tour

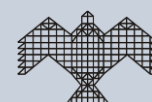
On 09 June, the Strait Times reported on China's Qi Jiguang, a massive training vessel marking the final leg of its regional tour. The ship, carrying 476 navy students and officers, visited Vietnam, Thailand, and Brunei before heading to the Philippines. The trip covered the Yellow Sea, East China Sea, South China Sea, Gulf of Thailand, and West Pacific. The training activities on board focused on navigation, anti-piracy measures, and lightweight weapon shooting exercises. The visit comes amid escalating tensions in the South China Sea, with various countries making territorial claims.

Japan: Lifting tattoo ban to boost military recruitment

On 09 June, the Strait Times reported Japan's Defence Ministry is considering lifting a ban on tattoos to address recruitment challenges in the Self-Defence Force. Currently, candidates with tattoos are rejected based on a ministry directive established in 1954. The declining birth rate in Japan has prompted officials to review the rule, aiming for inclusivity. Indigenous populations like the Ainu, who have tattoos as part of their tradition, further highlight the need for revisions. With Japan facing labour shortages, including in the military, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has prioritized addressing the country's declining birth rate and plans to allocate significant spending for childcare and parental support. Tattoos are still associated with criminal elements in Japanese society, but changing perceptions among the younger generation is challenging this view.

Taiwan: Sharing real-time data from surveillance drones with US and Japan

On 08 June, the Strait Times reported that the US, Taiwan, and Japan are set to enhance coordination by sharing real-time data obtained from surveillance drones. This move follows the US announcement, during the final stages of the Trump presidency, of arms sales amounting to over USD 5 billion to Taiwan. These sales included the provision of four aerial



drones valued at USD 600 million, intended to bolster Taiwan's capabilities and deter potential Chinese aggression. The Financial Times reports that the US will integrate these aircraft into a joint system utilized by its regional forces and the Japanese self-defence force. This integration will enable simultaneous observation of information collected by the US and its partners by unmanned aerial vehicles.

China: Joint air patrol with Russia, prompting South Korea

On 06 June, the Strait Times reported that China and Russia carried out their sixth joint air patrol over the Sea of Japan and East China Sea, leading South Korea to scramble fighter jets. The Chinese Defence Ministry stated that the patrol was part of their annual cooperation plan. South Korea responded by deploying fighter jets after four Russian and four Chinese military aircraft entered its air defence zone. Japan also scrambled jets in a similar incident when Chinese bombers and Russian drones flew into the Sea of Japan. These joint patrols reflect the deepening bilateral ties between China and Russia, driven partly by shared concerns over the US and other military alliances.

Thailand: Prime Minister candidate joins Pride parade

On 04 June, Thailand's leading candidate for the position of prime minister participated in a Pride parade in Bangkok, pledging to legalize same-sex marriage and protect gender identity rights if elected. The parade, held in support of gender equality during Pride month, saw thousands of LGBTQ+ individuals, allies, and political leaders marching through central Bangkok. The event witnessed a significant increase in attendance compared to the previous year. Pita Limjaroenrat, leader of the progressive Move Forward party, affirmed their commitment to passing the Marriage Equality Act and other laws to ensure equal rights for all couples, emphasizing the importance of celebrating diversity beyond Pride Month. The coalition formed by eight political parties aims to address the existing legal gaps and discrimination faced by the LGBT community in Thailand.

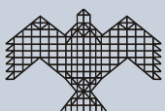
Cambodia: 2023 ASEAN Para Games commences with a spectacular opening ceremony

On 04 June, Khmer Times reported that the 12th edition of the ASEAN Para Games (APG) kicked off in Phnom Penh with a magnificent opening ceremony at Morodok Techo National Stadium. More than 2,000 exceptional athletes from Southeast Asia participated in the week-long tournament, themed "Sports: Live In Peace." Cambodia's Prime Minister Hun Sen officially inaugurated the event, which showcased the vibrant Khmer Heart performance and a stunning fireworks display. The ceremony included flag-raising, oath-taking, and remarkable shows. As the host nation, Cambodia fielded 252 athletes, competing against participants from 10 other regional countries in 14 sports across multiple venues in the capital city.

South Asia This Week

India: President concludes her two-nation visit to Suriname and Serbia

On 09 June, President Droupadi Murmu concluded her six-day visit to Suriname and Serbia. She held wide-ranging talks with the leaders of both countries to strengthen and reaffirm India's strong bilateral relations. On 04 June, she visited Suriname, where she met President Chandrikapersad Santokhi and discussed various ways to bolster bilateral cooperation in defence, IT and capacity building. Murmu then visited Serbia upon the invitation of Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic. During the meeting, they discussed potential mutual engagements in several sectors, including defence, military-tech cooperation, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, industrial cooperation, information technology, AI and cultural



cooperation. She met Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic and National Assembly speaker Vladimir Orlic.

India: Germany to build six new submarines

On 06 June, the German Federal Minister of Defence Boris Pistorius arrived in India on a four-day visit and met Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. During the talks, Pistorius pitched for building six advanced submarines in India to bolster bilateral defence cooperation by focusing on stronger industrial partnerships. Pistorius called the deal a "flagship project" and stated that they would want to intensify military cooperation with the Navy and Airforces.

BIMSTEC: Marking the 26th anniversary

On 06 June, the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectorial Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) marked its 26th anniversary. On this occasion, the heads of all the countries expressed their warm greetings and emphasized the importance of the grouping for the region's socio-economic development. BIMSTEC is a regional multilateral organization comprising seven members: Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. It was formed in 1997 to develop an enabling environment for the economic development of the countries through collaboration and mutual assistance, along with cooperation in the fields of education, science, and technology.

Bangladesh: First foreign payment in taka

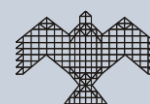
On 07 June, The Daily Star reported that Bangladesh made its first foreign payment in taka. The payment was made to a primarily foreign loan-funded project on constructing a 24-kilometre elevated expressway. This step was taken to address the depleting forex reserves caused by higher import bills compared to exports and remittances. Shahabuddin Khan, the project director, said, "This will continue until the situation pertaining to the foreign currency reserves improves."

Sri Lanka: Ratification of CTBT approved

On 6 June, the Cabinet of Ministers approved the proposal to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). This ratification would recognize the country's diplomatic role in promoting international peace and security by making the world free of nuclear weapons. It would also help Sri Lanka to get useful data for civil and scientific purposes such as tsunami warnings, climate change, and geographical studies. Currently, Sri Lanka is a signatory to the CTBT and cooperates with the CTBT organization in training, capacity development, data, and information sharing.

Maldives: Prioritizing environment-friendly energy generation

On 5 June, while speaking at a function to commemorate World Environment Day 2023, the President said his administration aims to shift Maldives' energy generation into an environment-friendly one. This can be achieved by shifting to renewable energy sources and reducing fossil fuel usage. During the address, he highlighted the government's progress in the renewable energy path, including expanding solar panel electricity generation by 36 megawatts. The measures have yielded substantial savings of 17 million litres of fossil fuel, equivalent to MVR 270 million.



Pakistan: Elected to UN Economic and Social Council

On 8 June, Pakistan was elected to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for a three-year term starting in 2024. Ambassador Munir Akram expressed satisfaction with Pakistan's success, stating that it recognizes the country's positive role in international diplomacy. Pakistan aims to contribute to developing consensus on economic recovery and sustainable development goals within the ECOSOC forum.

Middle East and Africa This Week

Iran: 'Fattah'- the first-ever hypersonic missile unveiled

On 6 June, the state media published the images of Iran's first-ever hypersonic missile, Fattah. The unveiling ceremony was held in the presence of President Ebrahim Raisi and senior commanders of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC). The missile can move up to Mach 15 (5,145 meters or 16,880 feet per second), has a range of 1,400km (870 miles), and can penetrate missile defence systems. The West and Israel have raised concerns over Iran's missile programme as they perceive the country's ballistic missiles could be turned into nuclear warhead carriers. So far, the US, Russia, China, and North Korea are believed to be the countries having successfully tested hypersonic missiles.

Israel: Continuing protests against PM Netanyahu's proposed judiciary reforms

On 10 June, Israelis protested against PM Benjamin Netanyahu's judiciary reforms and violence against the Palestinian communities in Israel. A 23-week-long protest persists, and people are firm in not giving up until the government revoke the proposed changes. Meanwhile, the talks on judicial reforms have been halted because of Netanyahu's trial on corruption charges since March. During Israel's state budget passage in May, Netanyahu announced to "continue our efforts to reach understandings as broad as possible on the legal reform." Further, Benjamin and his supporters argue that reforms are needed to rebalance powers between legislators and the judiciary. At the same time, the opposers consider it a direct threat to civil rights and pave the way for a totalitarian regime.

Iran: Reopens Tehran's embassy and consulate in Riyadh

On 5 June, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani announced that Tehran's embassy in Riyadh and the consulate in Jeddah would be officially reopened, which was shut down for seven years. The reopening initiative was taken in response to the China-brokered deal with Iran and Saudi Arabia. However, there was no confirmation from Saudi Arabia on reopening the embassy and consulate in Iran. Further, Tehran announced Alireza Enayati, a former envoy to Kuwait and a foreign ministry deputy for regional affairs, as its envoy to Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia: Joint statement with the US

On 8 June, as a part of the GCC meeting, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Saudi Arabia. The US and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) published a joint statement highlighting shared priorities. The US remarked on the joint statement as an "enduring commitment" to the Gulf region. The joint statement demands a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict "along 1967 borders with mutually agreed swaps consistent with internationally recognized parameters and the Arab Peace Initiative." Although Blinken iterated the intention of collaborating with countries to deepen the normalization of relations with Israel, the statement had no reference to it. Further, the statement welcomed the restoration of diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran; and Arab efforts to resolve the crisis in Syria by its readmission into the Arab League.



Sierra Leone and Algeria: Elected as UN Security Council non-permanent members

On 7 June, BBC reported that Sierra Leone and Algeria had been elected non-permanent members of the United Nations Security Council representing Africa. The two countries will serve from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2025. The Sierra Leone President, Julius Maada Bio, called the election a generational accomplishment and stated that it represents our unique success as a democratic and peaceful country of resilience that had successfully transitioned from war to peace. The two countries would join Ecuador, Japan, Mozambique, and Switzerland as non-permanent members.

Tunisia: Italy's Prime Minister discusses the issue of Tunisian migration

On 7 June, BBC reported that Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni visited Tunisia to address the issue of irregular migration. The Italian Prime Minister, Giorgia Meloni, warned that Europe could witness a huge migration wave due to irregular migration. Additionally, Meloni discussed the border surveillance and repatriation of undocumented migrants. Meloni pledged to grant USD 750 million in aid to Tunisia to avoid an economic meltdown in Tunisia and to address the illicit migration issue.

South Africa: Pretoria welcomes Portuguese President

On 7 June, Africanews reported that the Portuguese President, Marcelo Rebelo De Sousa, visited South Africa to commemorate the National Day of Lisbon with the Portuguese diaspora. The countries signed a defence cooperation agreement and discussed the ongoing conflict with Mozambique. Additionally, the two countries discussed opportunities of mutual benefit in science and innovation, education, and energy. During a press conference, President Cyril Ramaphosa elaborated on the previous meeting with the heads of state of Zambia, Senegal, the Republic of Congo, Uganda, and Egypt. He confirmed their visit to Kyiv and Moscow for a peace mission to resolve the Ukrainian crisis.

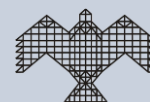
Europe and the Americas This Week

The US: Atlantic Declaration for economic cooperation with the UK

On 8 June, the US and Britain endorsed a new Atlantic Declaration for cooperation on economic challenges in areas including clean energy, critical minerals, and artificial intelligence. The declaration covers many US-UK economic, technological, trade, and commercial relations. The declaration focuses on US-UK governance in important and developing technologies, advancing closer collaboration on supply chains for economic security and technology protection, working together for an inclusive and responsible digital transformation, creating a clean energy economy for the future, and solidifying alliance in the areas of defence, health security, and space.

The US: A communique addresses shared priorities with Saudi Arabia

On 8 June, the US and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) issued a joint statement outlining shared aims and areas of agreement. The statement was released in a communique after US Secretary of State Antony Blinken attended a GCC meeting during his visit to Saudi Arabia. The US emphasized its enduring commitment to the Gulf region, which addressed various regional and global crises in the statement. The key takeaways from the statement were the two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict based on the 1967 borders, a



rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran, and stressed territorial integrity and international law.

The US: Justice Department indicts Donald Trump for possessing classified files

On 10 June, the United States Department of Justice indicted former President of the United States, Donald Trump, with 37 counts in the Mar-a-Lago documents case. Justice Department accused Trump of possessing classified documents related to US nuclear and defence programs and sharing them without clearance. The documents included information about the defence and weapons capabilities of the US and foreign countries, the US nuclear programs, potential vulnerabilities of the United States and its allies to military attack, and plans for possible retaliation in response to a foreign attack.

The US: Congress decides to introduce legislation to transfer nuclear-powered submarines to Australia

On 9 June, the US Congress moved to submit legislation allowing nuclear-powered submarines to be transferred to Australia. The AUKUS Undersea Defence Act, presented by Democrat Congressman Joe Courtney, Gregory Meeks, and Ami Bera, offers legal approval for transferring a Virginia-class nuclear-powered submarine to Australia. Additionally, the bill would lead to training Australian private-sector defence staff members and incorporating Australian monetary contributions to the US defence industrial base.

Canada: Bank of Canada increases the interest rate

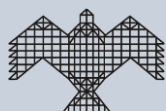
On 7 June, the Bank of Canada increased its interest rate from 4.5 per cent to 4.75 per cent. The previous rate hike in January added more than USD 1,000 to the monthly payment on a USD 500,000 mortgage. Canada's big banks raised their prime lending rates to 6.95 per cent following the hike in interest rates. The move by the central bank would make life even more difficult for variable-rate mortgage holders, who have seen their payments rise this year.

Serbia: Sixth anti-government protest in Belgrade

On 09 June, anti-government protests took place in Belgrade. This protest was the sixth following the two mass shootings of May 2023. Opposition parties and left-wing parties called for the protests. The protesters demanded the resignation of Serbian President Alexander Vucic, Interior Minister Bratislav Gasic and Secret Service Chief Aleksander Vulin. On 07 June, Serbian Prime Minister Ana Brnabic announced that she would resign and called the opposition parties for talks, but they refused. Protesters claim that the government and some news broadcasters and tabloids are responsible for the widespread gun culture.

Europe: EU member countries agree on two migration rules

On 09 June, the EU member countries agreed on the Asylum and Migration Management Regulation (AMMR) and the Asylum Procedure Regulation (APR). APR aims to prevent asylum seekers who are unlikely to procure asylum from staying inside the bloc for a long time through quick border procedures. AMMR will replace the Dublin Regulation, which determined who was responsible for examining an asylum application. The member countries are provided with three choices for dealing with asylum seekers. First, they can accept relocated asylum seekers. Second, pay the rejected applicants to return to their origin country. Third, provide financial support to the countries that are accepting asylum seekers.



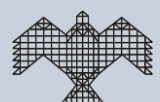
Argentina: Judge dismisses money laundering case against Vice President Cristina Fernandez

On 5 June, Federal Judge Sebastian Casanello dismissed the money laundering case against Vice President Cristina Fernandez after stating that there was no evidence she was involved in the corruption. The lawsuit began with charges that Báez, owner of Austral Construcciones, was paid for unfinished public works contracts and subsequently laundered the money on behalf of Fernandez. The conviction of Fernandez can still be challenged and evaluated by higher courts, a process that could take years. In the interim, she is exempt from arrest before the October elections.

About the authors

Harini Madhusudan, Rashmi Ramesh, Akriti Sharma and Ankit Singh are PhD scholars in the School of Conflict and Security Studies at the National Institute of Advanced Studies.

Padmashree Anandhan, Anu Maria Joseph, and Femy Francis are Research Associates at NIAS. Rishika Yadav, Jerry Franklin, Sreeja J S, Immaculine, R B Nithyashree, Lakshmi Parimala, Taffy Tonia, Subkish S and Melvin George are Research Interns at NIAS.



About Global Politics:

The course provides an introduction to contemporary world affairs. The primary objective of the course is two – first, to enhance the understanding of contemporary global developments, with an attempt to comprehend the larger picture. Second, to identify trends leading forecasts on contemporary world affairs.

The Course will also invite senior scholars within and outside NIAS – also from within and outside India to provide lectures on contemporary world affairs.

The World This Week



6 February 2021

Biden's new US foreign policy priorities, Russia-EU tensions over Navalny, and China's redline on Xinjiang, Hong Kong and Taiwan



30 January 2021

The Daniel Pearl case in Pakistan and the new vaccine complications in Europe



23 January 2021

The US returns to the Paris Agreement, and India reengages the region through a Vaccine diplomacy



16 January 2021

North Korea's Party Congress, Houthis as terrorists, and Elections in Uganda



9 January 2021

Disorderly transition in the US, Breakthrough over Qatar, Enrichment in Iran and Arrests in Hong Kong



27 December 2020

The Year of COVID, Protests and Elections



20 December 2020

India-Bangladesh reset and China's Chang'e-5 success



13 December 2020

Morocco recognizes Israel, Maduro consolidates in Venezuela and No-deal Brexit gets real

About TWTW

The World This Week is an academic initiative of the Global Politics course at the National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS), Bangalore. The alert, published every Saturday aims to provide its readers with a ready reckoner of major developments during the week under three heads - what happened, what is the background and what does it mean. The Alert also provides an opportunity for the young scholars at NIAS and its partner institutions to follow and comment on contemporary global developments.

Editor: D. Suba Chandran

Assistant Editor: Ankit Singh and Femy Francis

