

## **Quarterly Round Up**

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### **Key Takeaways from the UN Report on Climate Change**

United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns the world in its latest report about the worsening and deteriorating conditions of the climate in the world. The panel said that the countries have 12 years to mitigate the carbon emission into the space and to keep the temperature of the Earth below 1.5 degree Celsius. According to the scientists who participated in IPCC, half degree of rise will lead the Earth towards floods, droughts, extreme heat waves and famine for millions of people. Moreover, ice caps in both the North and the South poles are melting rapidly due to ever increasing temperature of the planet. The IPCC warned that if the carbon emission continues with the same pace, the sea level will rise. The scientists also stated that Islands of Maldives and New Zealand are the most vulnerable. One of the panellists warned that the climate change is spreading havocs even at a 1-degree Celsius rise of temperature. We need to overcome our carbon emission before it reaches at 2 degree Celsius thereby threatening the very existence of life on the Earth.

### **Yellow Vest Movement in France**

In October 2018, a populist in nature, grassroots political movement for economic justice that commenced in France known as yellow vests movement or yellow jackets movement became the worst civil unrest since 1968. Surprisingly, demonstrations started on November 17, 2018 after only an online petition posted in May. It had grabbed the attention of around a million signatures. The motivation behind the movement was hike in fuel prices, an unaffordable cost of living for person with an average income. It discussed imbalanced burden of the government's tax reforms falling on the middle and working classes of the society, particularly in rural and peri-urban areas. The protesters demanded for lower fuel taxes, a revival of the solidarity tax on wealth, a minimum-wage increase, the implementation of Citizens' initiative referendums, as

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well as the resignations of President Emmanuel Macron and the Second Philippe government. The protests included demonstrations and blocking of roads and fuel depots, some of which resulted in major riots, described as the most furious since those of May 1968, and the reaction of the police response, resulting in a number of incidences of loss of limb, has been lashed out by international media. The movement has achieved international attention, and protesters in many places around the world – some with same grievances, others related – have used the yellow vest as a symbol.

### **US Mid-term Elections**

Democrats have retaken the control of the House of Representatives in the mid-term election in United States of America. Experts are of the view that now Democrats can not only control much of Donald Trump's policies but can also put him under investigation. In the mid-term elections, Democrats slashed the victory in the House of Representatives, while Republican strengthened their position in the senate. Democrats have ended the 8 years rule of the Republicans in the HOR. Speaking in Washington, the Democrats' leaders of the House, Nancy Pelosi said, "Thanks to you, tomorrow will be a new day in America." Despite losing the HOR, Trump tweeted and declared mid-term election a big victory for his party. The important thing in this election was the victories of women contestants. 90 women, mostly from Democrats, won their seats. Moreover, two Muslim women, Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar, also won their seats. In short, the mid-term elections can considerably impact the future politics and policies of the USA.

### **US Re-imposes tough Iran Sanctions**

Oil and Financial sanctions have been imposed against Iran by the United States of America. The chain of sanctions has a link with Iran's missile and nuclear program. The sanctions by the USA are a pressure tactic to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear technology. Previously, the sanctions were lifted over Iran when and world powers signed the Iran nuclear deal also known as Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Moreover, in response of the US sanctions, Iran's President Hassan

Rohani said that America wanted to deteriorate the oil market of Iran. The Foreign Minister of Iran, Mr. Javad Zarif said that the sanctions were in the violations of International Law. The common people of Iran will be badly hurt from these sanctions. While the US Secretary of State said the sanctions were to force Iran to abandon its missile program.

### **Yemen, DRC, South Sudan at Risk of Humanitarian Crisis**

According to a recent report by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Yemen, Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan are at high risk of humanitarian crisis. Continuous conflicts and lack of economic activities are playing havoc with the masses. According to the IRC, civil war, drought, and flooding are posing serious threats in the above-mentioned countries. Owing to continuous natural and man-made destructions, these states have no basic life-saving equipment and funds to build strong disaster management systems.

Due to the war and natural disasters such floods and droughts, many people are compelled to relocate themselves. The displacement of people is igniting refugee crisis in the surrounding region. For instance, civil war in Yemen is deteriorating the country. Attacks on the civilian are rising as compared to 2018. On the other hand, in DRC, health diseases, such as, Ebola Virus, violence and continuous conflicts have been engulfing lives of millions of Congo People. Similarly, civil war in South Sudan is also creating food insecurity famine and hunger. In a nutshell, keeping in view the above-mentioned problems, the IRC feared and warned a nightmare for Yemen, DRC, and South Sudan in coming months.

### **Jamal Khashoggi Murder**

A Saudi dissident, journalist for the Washington Post, former general manager and editor-in-chief of the Al-Arab News channel, Jamal Khashoggi, was assassinated on October 2, 2018 at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul, Turkey. It is allegedly known to have been executed by agents of the Saudi government as per earlier investigations conducted by Turkish officials. Tempted to the consulate building on the pretext of providing him papers for his future wedding, Khashoggi was attacked in surprise, strangled, and dismembered by a team consisted of 15 Saudi

assassins. The last moments of Khashoggi are captured in audio recordings, transcripts of which were subsequently made public. No sooner did he enter the consulate building, concluded the Turkish investigation team, than he was suffocated. After his body was dismembered and disposed of. The same was reconfirmed by the New York Times. Moreover, the Saudi hit team had travelled all the way to Istanbul specifically to carry out the assassination. The Western media as well as prominent political leaders strongly condemned this incident and protested for the justice.

### **Overturing of Asia Bibi's Death Sentence**

Asia Bibi freed from death sentence after the Supreme Court of Pakistan overturned the 2010 verdict of her death plenty. Asia Bibi is accused of blasphemy of the Holy Prophet Muhammad PBUH. Islamic political parties such as Sunni Tehreek and Tehreek-e-Labaik Pakistan (TLP) rejected the verdict. These parties also warned the authorities about the complete lockdown of the country. The TLP and Sunni Tehreek blocked major roads in the various cities of Pakistan. On the other hand, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan strongly defended the decision and said the verdict of Asia Bibi is according to Constitution of Pakistan. After the announcement of the verdict, government is planning to send the lady abroad safely. Moreover, government is also providing security to the judges and their families.

### **Death of Maulana Sami-Ul-Haq**

Maulana Sami-ul-Haq, a renowned politico-religious personality, was assassinated in his home. Hamid-ul-Haq says that his father's driver informed him about his father's assassination. Maulana Sami-ul-Haq was an influential religious scholars and senator. The timing of the news was sensitive because religio-political parties were protesting against the verdict of freeing of Asia Bibi in the blasphemy case. Maulana was the head of Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam and Dar-ul-Uloom Haqqania. He was also considered of having influence over Taliban both in Pakistan and Afghanistan. When Pakistan started negotiation with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, Maulana played an important role in that process. The body of Maulana was taken to his home town Akora Khattak.