

Headlines:

- **Democrats Retain Control of Senate After Crucial Victory in Nevada**
- **Qatar World Cup Comes with Human Rights Abuses and Controversy**
- **Talks between Pakistan and the IMF Rescheduled**

Details:

Democrats Retain Control of Senate After Crucial Victory in Nevada

Democrats have kept control of the Senate after the crucial race in Nevada was announced in their favour, cementing a midterms election performance for the party that widely beat expectations. Democratic Senator Masto has now beaten Republican challenger Adam Laxalt, a former state attorney general who was endorsed by former president Donald Trump, according to the Associated Press. With Masto's victory coming on the heels of Democratic Senator Kelly in Arizona late on Friday, the win takes the Democrats to the crucial number of 50 seats in the Senate, with the Republicans at 49. The race in Georgia is set to go to a runoff in December, but even if Republicans win there, a 50-50 split means the Senate would effectively be controlled by the Democrats because the tying vote falls to the vice-president, Kamala Harris. For the Republicans, it was another blow after they steeply underperformed in many races. The party had touted hopes of a "red wave" that could sweep across the US and deliver the upper chamber of Congress into their hands. Instead – with a few exceptions, such as Florida – the wave was more of a trickle.

The Democrat win in the Senate is likely to prompt further recrimination in Republican circles over who is to blame for the poor showing. Much attention has so far focused on Trump after he backed rightwing or celebrity candidates in several key races who lost, such as Dr Mehmet Oz in Pennsylvania.

The victory is also another boost for president Biden after his party defied immediate fears that his low popularity ratings and an electorate battered by high inflation would translate to punishment at the polls. The Democrats also defied historical precedent, as the party holding the White House often loses heavily in midterm elections. [Source The Guardian].

The Democratic victory may prove to be short lived. There is deep division within both parties as well as between the two parties. And this means that the polarization between the Democrats and Republicans will continue, and America's political elite will find it increasingly difficult to manage these tensions ahead of the presidential election in November 2024.

Qatar World Cup Comes with Human Rights Abuses and Controversy

When Qatar won the bid to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup, all the way back in 2010, it was clear what the tiny nation was trying to achieve. Hosting arguably the biggest sporting event in the world would put them on the map, show off their culture and oiled-fuelled riches, while simultaneously making their authoritarian and repressive regime come off as a model government. However, with just days left for the quadrennial showpiece, there are serious doubts as to the effectiveness of the washing part of Qatar's sportswashing strategy. If they hoped the World Cup would cast them in a positive light, they could not have been more wrong. Mere hours after their winning bid, the discussion turned to corruption within FIFA and

who Qatar had to bribe for the right to host the Cup. Then, as the tournament drew near, attention focussed on Qatar's questionable human rights record, their treatment of migrant workers and their institutionalization of homophobia. Instead of washing themselves clean, Qatar's ruling regime was coming off looking dirtier than ever before. The outrage over these issues intensified in the run-up to the World Cup. Danish apparel makers Hummel announced that they would be featuring a faded logo on the Denmark national team to protest human rights violations in Qatar. Captains of multiple teams, including Harry Kane of England, announced their decision to wear rainbow-coloured armbands to protest the Qatari treatment of the LGBTQ community. A German minister openly questioned whether Qatar should even host the tournament. The Australian football team released a video condemning human rights abuses in the gulf nation. The city of Barcelona announced that there would be no public screenings of World Cup matches. Fans at Borussia Dortmund games held up banners calling for a boycott of the tournament. Every day has seemed to bring a new protest against Qatar's ruling regime. The Qataris responded with a poorly thought-out PR drive of their own, attempting to portray the attacks on them as attacks on Arabs as a whole. This did little to take the focus away from their failings. The tragedy however remains that between the superficial protests mounted by governments and teams, and the counter PR drives launched by Qatar, the problems continue to go unaddressed, notably the numerous migrant workers who died constructing World Cup stadiums. [Source: Forbes]

It is evident that the West is attacking Islam by using human rights abuses in Qatar against labourers as a pretext. In response, the Qataris have miserably failed in their efforts to defend Islam. This is because the secular regime of Qatar is bitterly opposed to Islam and must use nationalism to rebut arguments put forward by the Western media. This makes it easier for the West to continue their attacks as Qatar continues to play by Western rules dressed up Islamic garb.

Talks between Pakistan and the IMF Rescheduled

The schedule for talks between Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has been readjusted but the negotiations are continuing, official sources in Washington say. Media reports, however, claim that the talks that were scheduled to begin last week have been postponed till the third week of November. According to these reports, the talks would resume after Pakistan fulfilled its pledge to adjust sales tax on petroleum products and took other measures required under a loan agreement revived earlier this year. But official sources, who spoke to *Dawn*, said the talks were rescheduled after last month's release of a World Bank report on flood damages in Pakistan. The damage, loss and needs assessment calls for "building back better", based on the principles of the poor first, transparency, inclusion and climate resilience. The assessment estimates total damages to exceed \$14.9 billion, and total economic losses to reach about \$15.2bn. Dismissing the claim that the talks have been postponed due to differences between Pakistan and the IMF, the sources pointed out that the Fund lauded the government's policies during a meeting last month between IMF Deputy Managing Director Antoinette Sayeh and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in Washington. [Source: Dawn]

IMF has not suddenly turned compassionate and delayed the talks. The talks have been delayed to allow the current government time to get on top of the political crisis before continuing to execute IMF reforms in return for tranches. The IMF is a tool of US foreign policy and works in tandem with the US to erode the economic sovereignty of nations.