



MIDDLE EAST WEEKLY

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Middle East in a Week

Regarding international relations and world politics, the Middle East may be the most controversial region in the current times. On the one hand it sits on most of the world's oil reserves, while on the other hand, it inhibits the followers of the most controversial religion in the world, Islam. These matters combined have created a region filled with drastic events. Every day, there are new wars erupting in the region and every day, there are new ways through which the west and the far east try to increase their influence in the region. This region inhibits 411 million people out of which 28 % are under the age of 25 years old. This newsletter tries to give weekly updates on the important issues in the Middle East and combining them with some analysis, hopes to have a role in changing the region's situation to the better.

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PROMISES, PROMISES...YET...NO ACTIONS¹

After a two-hour meeting with European Union foreign policy chief as the chairperson, the world's 'superpowers' renewed their commitment to the deal they signed in 2015 with Iran. In a tweet before the meeting, Borrell said the aim is to 're-emphasise our commitment to preserve' the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), as the nuclear deal is formally known. A joint statement following the meeting said the ministers 'discussed that full and effective implementation of the JCPOA by all remains crucial and discussed the need to address ongoing implementation challenges, including on nuclear non-proliferation and sanctions lifting commitments.' This is one of many instances in which these so-called superpowers claimed to be in the side of justice and dedicated to the JCPOA. When in fact, until the end of Trump's administration was assured, none of them lifted a finger to uphold their ends of the deal.



PAKISTAN: PALESTINE FIRST!!!²



Islamabad will not recognize Israel! Not until the Israel-Palestine conflict has resolved. Since such a resolve seems far ahead, so does Pakistan's recognition of Israel. 'I categorically presented Pakistan's stance on Israel to the UAE's foreign minister that we will not and cannot establish a relationship with Israel until a concrete and permanent solution to the Palestine issue is found,' Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi told reporters in the central city of Multan on Monday. Responding to questions regarding reports about alleged pressure from Saudi Arabia, the UAE and other Gulf states for recognition of Israel, Qureshi said he explained to his UAE counterpart the 'depth of emotions and feelings Pakistanis have about Palestine and Kashmir'. The UAE, Bahrain and Morocco recently established diplomatic and economic relations with Israel, while reports suggest some other Gulf states, including Saudi Arabia, are also weighing the options to normalize ties. Given Pakistan's policy of 'neutrality' on several issues in the region, its relations with other Middle Eastern states has been somewhat unstable.

MORE PALESTANIAN BLOOD...MORE ISRAELI VIOLENCE³

‘He shot first’ was the Israel’s excuse for shooting a teenage boy, Mahmoud Omar Kameel, several times. The boy was merely seventeen and he will not see his 18th birthday. Simply because an Israeli soldier thought he shot at him. According to Israeli police, the teen, identified by local media as 17-year-old Mahmoud Omar Kameel, approached a police post near the Lion’s Gate entrance to the Old City and shot at them. Witnesses said Israeli forces shot Kameel multiple times after chasing him and surrounding him in the area. Kameel belonged to the village of Qabatiyeh near the occupied West Bank city of Jenin. There was no immediate comment from Palestinian officials following the incident. This was not the first time Israeli forces open fire on innocent youngsters. Over the past five decades and counting, Israel has shown the same, and sometimes worse, acts of violence. Ironically, the international community shows a blind eye once again!



US BUYING INDONESIAN FRIENDSHIP FOR ISRAEL⁵

Given the current statement of US officials, Indonesia could receive massive amounts of aids if only it agrees to join the body of Islamic states which are normalizing their relations with Israel. The U.S. International Development Finance Corporation, a government agency that invests overseas, could more than double its current \$1 billion portfolio if Indonesia develops ties with Israel, DFC Chief Executive Officer Adam Boehler said in an interview Monday at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem. American and Israeli leaders have said they expect more countries to join the wave of normalization agreements with Israel announced in the past few months, including with United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco. The U.S. also hopes Oman and Saudi Arabia will join, although Boehler said DFC funding to those two countries would be restricted because the organization isn’t allowed to invest directly in higher-income states. The Trump administration seems keen on achieving as much mayhem as it can before leaving office. That includes its persistence on intervening in the Middle East’s affairs.

THEY CAN... WE CANNOT!!!⁴

While the UAE citizens are now allowed to enter Jerusalem with ease, the Palestinians are still facing severe resistance to do so in their own land. This past year was full of adversity and hopelessness for many around the world. But for Palestinians, it was even harsher – they were forced to face a deadly pandemic in an apartheid state, amid a collapsing economy, and a general feeling of hopelessness and abandonment. In the second half of the year, a series of Arab states added to their collective misery by announcing their decision to normalize their relations with Israel. By effectively abandoning their supposed commitment to supporting Palestinian self-determination for money, weapons and a few short-term political gains, they sent Palestine a clear message that Palestine's suffering and struggle for the most basic human rights no longer matter to them. Even though they share many ethnic features, these Arab states have decided to turn a blind eye on all the human rights violations of the state of Israel and normalized their relations with it. As a result, Palestine is getting stuck in a corner, becoming more and more alone under such heavy waves of travesty.



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