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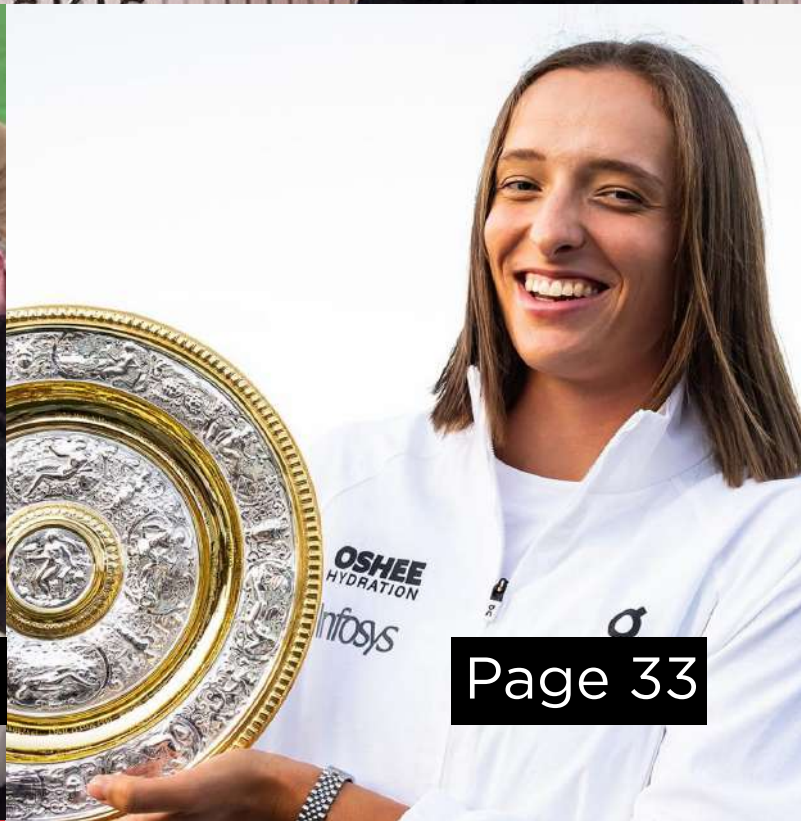


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Editorial

Dr. Busharat Elahi Jamil - Assistant Editor



Social, moral, and religious values are all seriously deteriorating in Pakistani society. Instead, it wouldn't be incorrect to argue that we are touching on social and religious intolerance and narrow-mindedness in every way. We know that we use religion, so-called social ideals, and compromise over the actual advancement of humanity to justify our extremism and degeneration. Unfortunately, we frequently treat ourselves as slaves or subordinates to others in order to preserve our social status and tyranny. We also frequently deprive ourselves of humanity and violate human rights, forgetting that laws and principles are meant to benefit humanity rather than harm it.

Unfortunately, religious monopolies, the erosion of human values, humanity, and human rights, and some social behaviors that we are torturing mankind by embracing as rituals are all key contributors to Pakistan's societal downfall. The two most recent reports of karo-kari (karo-kari means BLACK, with karo meaning 'man' and kari meaning 'woman') in Baluchistan and Rawalpindi are the worst occurrences. In truth, this is a sort of honour killing that is commonly practiced in Pakistan's interior, particularly in tribal areas. Unfortunately, the tragedy does not end here; these are only two occurrences that have been brought to light, with the vast majority of them being unreported. It illustrates how our culture prioritizes its own self-made social prestige over human principles. Beyond the religious teachings on the value of human life.

In most cases of honour killing, the killer is spared because the plaintiffs are members of the victim's own family or weak people, or because a powerful tribal system of sardars provides barriers to justice. The plaintiff in the incident that occurred in Baluchistan is the State; otherwise, the victim's (lady) mother supported the verdict of the Jirga, demonstrating the approach and narrow-mindedness of the tribal people, as well as the influences of sardars; this is unquestionably a situation that requires a lot of criticism.

More than 250 honour killing events were reported in 2017, with more than 400 expected in 2024, whereas more than 1000 women were victims in 2011. Karo-Kari (honour killing) is absolutely antithetical to human rights, religious injunctions, and individual freedom, and the perpetrators are aware of this and flee into hiding following the crime. This inhumane practice can be put an end to by strong regulation, increased awareness, and harsh punishment for those who engage in it. The legal system's weakness and strength are the primary causes of such instances. Political institutions, media, and human rights organizations can all play a helpful role in raising awareness about these types of rituals.



Yes, The New York Times is committing genocidal journalism

In his latest column for the NYT, Bret Stephens tries to excuse a uniquely horrific crime with uniquely horrific journalism.

The Israelis certainly owe Bret Stephens a favour.

Yesterday, The New York Times opinion columnist took to the pages of the United States newspaper of record to promote his latest deranged argument, headlined: “No, Israel Is Not Committing Genocide in Gaza”.

Never mind that numerous global institutions, ranging from various United Nations bodies to Amnesty International, have determined that Israel is committing just that. These are organisations that hardly throw the G-word around lightly, but Stephens knows better. And he will tell us why.

In the very first paragraph of his Times intervention – which should perhaps come accompanied by a trigger warning for readers prone to aneurysms – Stephens demands defiantly: “If the Israeli government’s intentions and actions are truly genocidal – if it is so malevolent that it is committed to the annihilation of Gazans – why hasn’t it been more methodical and vastly more deadly?”

It would seem, of course, that the Israeli military’s near-comprehensive conversion of much of the Gaza Strip into rubble – via the bombardment of homes, hospitals, schools, and everything else that can be bombed – would be rather “methodical”. As for the perceived insufficient deadliness of Israel’s ongoing “actions”, Stephens cites the official Palestinian death count of “nearly 60,000” in less than two years, and wonders why there are “not, say, hundreds of thousands of deaths”.

He goes on to proclaim that “the first question the anti-Israel genocide chorus needs to answer is: Why isn’t the death count higher?”

Among the many questions that Stephens himself needs to answer, meanwhile, is why he thinks slaughtering 60,000 people is no big deal. As of November 2024, Israel had killed at least 17,400 children in Gaza – but even this is apparently not “malevolent” enough. Furthermore, according to a study published in the Lancet medical journal more than one year ago, the true death toll in Gaza was already potentially set to exceed 186,000. How’s that for “hundreds of thousands”?

In lieu of waiting for an answer from the “anti-Israel genocide chorus”, Stephens presents his own, which is that “Israel is manifestly not committing genocide.” Citing the UN

genocide convention's definition of the term as the "intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such", Stephens proceeds to announce that "I am aware of no evidence of an Israeli plan to deliberately target and kill Gazan civilians."

Objectively speaking, this is the equivalent in terms of ludicrousness of claiming that there is no evidence of a plan by the operators of a chicken slaughterhouse to deliberately end the lives of the poultry therein. You don't kill 17,400 children in 13 months by accident; nor do you repeatedly bomb hospitals and ambulances if you aren't, you know, deliberately aiming to kill civilians.

But it's not just about bombs. Forced starvation is genocide, too. And on that note, another question Stephens might answer is how intentionally depriving a population of two million people of the food and water that is necessary for human survival does not constitute an "intent to destroy" that group. Yesterday alone, Gaza health officials reported that at least 15 Palestinians had starved to death, including four children.

Since the end of May, more than 1,000 Palestinians have also been killed while trying to procure food from the so-called Gaza Humanitarian Foundation (GHF). This diabolical outfit, backed by Israel and the US, not only concentrates large numbers of starving Palestinians in a single location for easier mowing down by the Israeli army, but also furthers Israel's US-backed vision of forcibly expelling the surviving Palestinian population.

While Stephens does deign to mention the "chaotic food distribution system" in Gaza, he insists that "bungled humanitarian schemes or trigger-happy soldiers or strikes that hit the wrong target or [Israeli] politicians reaching for vengeful sound bites do not come close to adding up to a genocide."

And yet in his war on the use of the G-word in the Gaza context, Stephens refuses to acknowledge that Israel itself has been a genocidal endeavour from the get-go. Zionists were well aware of the need to dispense with the majority of the Indigenous population of Palestine even before the formal creation of the state of Israel on Palestinian land in 1948, a process that entailed mass killing and the destruction of hundreds of villages. Some three-quarters of a million people were made refugees.

Since then, Israel has continued on what is fundamentally genocidal footing, working to disappear the Palestinians both physically and conceptually – as exemplified in the late Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir's famous assertion that the Palestinians "did not exist". Indeed, Israel's existence as a Jewish settler-colonial state is predicated on the very "intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such".

Anyway, forget history and reality. Stephens warns us that, if the word genocide "is to retain its status as a uniquely horrific crime, then the term can't be promiscuously applied to any military situation we don't like".

Speaking of promiscuity, the Israeli military has long been in bed with The New York Times and a host of other US corporate media outlets, which do their best to sanitise Israeli atrocities as self-defence. But as Israel now continues to carry out a uniquely horrific crime in Gaza with the firm backing of the global superpower, Stephens's genocidal journalism is also uniquely horrific.

Source:<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2025/7/23/yes-the-new-york-times-is-committing-genocidal-journalism>

No, Trump Did Not Start the Global 'Trade War' | Opinion

By Gordon G. Chang

After strong growth in 2024, global trade will take a hit this year. Many point the finger at President Donald Trump. That's a mistake.

The World Trade Organization said the volume of merchandise trade this year will contract by 0.2 percent. Its revised forecast "is nearly three percentage points lower than it would have been without recent policy shifts."

The culprit? The trade body blames "a surge in tariffs and trade policy uncertainty." That, of course, is an indirect reference to Trump's series of tariff hikes, pauses, and pullbacks.



Just about everyone thinks Trump is responsible for the breakdown of the global trade system.

The Associated Press, for instance, wrote that the American president declared "a trade war on the rest of the world." By doing so, he has "panicked global financial markets, raised the risk of a recession and broken the political and economic alliances that made much of the world stable for business after World War II."

That narrative is superficial. It's far more accurate to say the post-war rules-based trade order is dead, but China killed it, and Trump stopped pretending it continued to exist.

There had been great hope at the turn of the century that China would end long-standing predatory and criminal trade practices by joining the World Trade Organization. By and large, however, Beijing did not abandon those practices after accession in December 2001.

Trump, in response to Chinese intransigence, changed the world, irrevocably. As POLITICO wrote, "The Trump administration has dealt a lasting blow to much of the post-World War II consensus around free trade and long-term cooperation." Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, at the just-concluded Aspen Security Forum said, "We have to recognize that we're probably not going back to exactly that system."

In all probability, we're not going back to that system at all. For one thing, there is, at least at this moment, almost no domestic pressure on Trump. His policies are working.

"Remember in April, after Liberation Day and the markets plunged and there was so much concern about what this would do to growth, these higher reciprocal rates, what it would do to inflation," CNBC's Sara Eisen said on July 16. "Guess what? First of all, those rates haven't panned out and while we have seen higher tariff rates across the board,

what hasn't panned out either is a big surge of inflation, weakness in the economy, or a slump in the financial markets."

"We saw \$26.6 billion come in the month of June," Eisen said, referring to the federal government's net tariff revenue. "Of course, someone's paying for the tariffs, but it's not the American consumer."

Yet can Trump, to use one of his favorite terms, keep "winning"?

"There's no question that foreign-based exporters keep paying many of the new levies," Washington, D.C. trade analyst Alan Tonelson told Newsweek this month. "Import prices from major trade competitors such as China, Mexico, and Canada are down on an annual basis. In fact, for import-heavy items such as footwear, smartphones, and school supplies, prices keep falling. Strikingly, on an annual basis the per-vehicle prices of Japanese auto exports to the U.S. have nosedived nearly 30 percent."

There is some bipartisan support for his general policy.

"It's a big deal that you've now had two presidents of two different parties take a protectionist line," said Robert Zoellick, former U.S. Trade Representative and former World Bank Group president, at Aspen, referring to Trump and Joe Biden. "That is a very big switch in the nature of trade politics."

Nonetheless, Trump needs to execute policies well. As Tonelson, who blogs on trade at RealityChek, noted, "It's reasonable to argue that Trump's tariff moves have been needlessly complicated and erratic and that domestic businesses would benefit from predictability."

Yet as the trade expert also said, "most American companies have managed to navigate the turbulence."

Foreign competitors have far fewer options. "The U.S. remains the largest integrated market, so no foreign leader will last long after being priced out of serving American customers," Charles Ortel, an Asia-based investor and financial writer, told Newsweek. "Meanwhile, many will rush to invest inside America so as to work around these tariffs."

Trump will also have to stimulate American-owned manufacturing, best done with an expanded investment tax credit.

At a time when China is fast preparing for war—"Dare to fight," is Xi Jinping's trademark phrase these days—Trump will not have much time to rebuild American manufacturing behind his new tariff wall.

Time is running out for another reason: Trump's trade measures are roiling global trade, which means they are also roiling geopolitics and changing the world, as Rice suggested.

"Any student of history will know the most dangerous phase is the interregnum between one world order and another," Singapore Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan said at Aspen. "Are we in that interregnum? Yes, we are."

Source:<https://www.newsweek.com/no-trump-did-not-start-global-trade-war-opinion-2103083>



The Business of Obedience—Trump's Blueprint for Authoritarian Capitalism | Opinion

By Nicholas Creel

Three days after comedian Stephen Colbert called Paramount's \$16 million settlement with President Donald Trump "a big fat bribe," CBS canceled his top-rated late-night show. The timing wasn't coincidental, it was calculated, and it represents the most brazen example yet of how Trump has weaponized presidential power to extract what amounts to total capitulation from corporate America.

Since his election victory, Trump has orchestrated the largest corporate shakedown in American history. Disney paid \$15 million to settle a defamation case legal experts called frivolous. Meta handed over \$25 million for suspending Trump's social media accounts after January 6. Paramount paid \$16 million over routine interview editing. Most audaciously, Trump has extracted nearly \$1 billion in "pro bono" commitments from nine major law firms through executive orders that stripped security clearances and threatened to destroy their businesses.

The pattern is unmistakable. Trump targets companies with government leverage points, demands payment, and punishes those who resist. When CBS executives needed Federal Communications Commission approval for their \$8 billion merger with Skydance Media—run by the son of Trump ally Larry Ellison—they paid the president's demanded settlement. When Colbert publicly called it what it was, they silenced him permanently.

This isn't capitalism. It's an oligarchy.

The law firm shakedowns reveal the system's true mechanics. Trump issued executive orders against firms like Paul Weiss and Perkins Coie, citing their representation of his critics or participation in investigations against him. Faced with losing security clearances, federal contracts, and access to government buildings, these firms capitulated with shocking speed. Paul Weiss agreed to \$40 million in "pro bono" work. Skadden, Arps pledged \$100 million. Additional firms each committed \$125 million apiece.

These aren't valid contracts but coerced payments extracted under duress. Yet corporate

executives have calculated time and again that paying Trump's tribute was cheaper than fighting.

The international parallels are chilling. President Vladimir Putin perfected this model with Russian oligarchs, using tax investigations and regulatory pressure to force compliance and extract wealth. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan seized businesses from perceived enemies in Turkey, forcing "donations" to state causes. Trump has simply refined the technique for American democracy, using executive orders and regulatory approval processes as leverage points.

What makes Trump's approach particularly insidious is its veneer of legality. Unlike Putin's crude asset seizures, Trump's extortion operates through ostensibly voluntary settlements and pro bono commitments. Companies can claim they weren't technically forced to pay—they just faced continued harassment if they didn't. The payments flow to Trump's presidential library or favored causes, creating plausible deniability while enriching his political infrastructure.

Corporate executives defend these payments as rational business decisions. They're wrong. By normalizing presidential extortion, they're destroying the rule of law that makes American capitalism possible. No business can operate successfully in a system where the president's personal whims determine regulatory outcomes and government access.

The Colbert cancellation crystallizes the stakes. When a network cancels its most successful late-night host three days after he criticized their tribute payment to the president, the message is unmistakable: criticism of Trump will not be tolerated, regardless of ratings or revenue. CBS' transparently false claim that this was "purely financial" only emphasizes their capitulation's brazenness.

Democratic senators are now investigating whether Skydance made additional commitments to Trump beyond the announced settlement. The Writers Guild has called for state prosecutors to examine potential bribery violations. But investigations move slowly, while Trump's extortion machine operates in real time.

The business community's response will define whether America remains a democratic republic or becomes a kleptocracy where presidential favor determines corporate survival. Every payment normalizes the system. Every capitulation invites the next demand.

Trump has made clear this is just the beginning. He's boasted about putting law firms to work negotiating trade deals and suggested expanding his corporate pressure campaign. Having successfully extracted \$1 billion through extortion, why would he stop?

Corporate America faces a choice: resist now, while democratic institutions still function, or accept permanent subordination to presidential whims. The cost of resistance keeps rising, but the cost of submission is democracy itself.

The oligarchy has arrived. The only question is whether anyone will fight it.

Source:<https://www.newsweek.com/business-obediencetrumps-blueprint-authoritarian-capitalism-opinion-2103628>

Trump Order on International Criminal Court Likely Violates First Amendment, Judge Rules

By Mattathias Schwartz

The ruling's scope is limited to two American activists, but it represents a striking, if tentative, blow to the president's efforts to penalize and isolate the world's highest criminal court.

An executive order by President Trump seeking to punish people who work with the International Criminal Court is most likely a violation of the First Amendment, a federal judge found on Friday.

Judge Nancy Torresen of the Federal District Court in Maine shielded two U.S. human rights activists from any penalties for violating the directive, saying that by threatening to punish anyone who provides “funds, goods or services” to I.C.C. officials under sanctions, the order restricts a swath of speech-based activity that goes beyond its stated aims.

The ruling marked a striking, if tentative and limited, blow to Mr. Trump's efforts to penalize and isolate the world's highest criminal court. It has drawn his ire by issuing arrest warrants for high-ranking Israeli officials and conducting preliminary investigations into U.S. personnel at secret C.I.A. sites overseas years ago. The court, in turn, has said Mr. Trump is trying to harm its “independent and impartial judicial work.”

The stated focus of Mr. Trump's executive order is what it characterizes as the court's “baseless actions targeting America and our close ally Israel” and the potential arrest of “current and former United States personnel.” But those objectives, the judge found, have little to do with the work performed by the two plaintiffs, Matthew Smith and Akila Radhakrishnan, who have assisted the court's Office of the Prosecutor with investigations in Bangladesh, Myanmar and Afghanistan. Because of the executive order, lawyers with the American Civil Liberties Union told the court, Mr. Smith and Ms. Radhakrishnan had suspended their work with the court.

The United States is not part of the treaty that founded the court, which is based at The Hague. It prosecutes individuals for war crimes and atrocities. An older court at The Hague, the International Court of Justice, issues opinions on broader issues between nations, such as climate change.

Judge Torresen, who was appointed by President Barack Obama, paused the enforcement of the order while she considers the case, but only for the two plaintiffs. When Mr. Smith and Ms. Radhakrishnan filed their lawsuit in April, they sought the sweeping relief known as a nationwide injunction that would have blocked the president's order across the country. Judge Torresen's decision appeared to reflect a June ruling by the Supreme Court that curtailed such injunctions.

The Trump administration has used the executive order to impose sanctions on four I.C.C. judges; the court's embattled prosecutor, Karim Khan; and Francesca Albanese, a special rapporteur for the United Nations who has worked with the court in its investigation of Israel's war in Gaza. Last year, the court issued arrest warrants for Benjamin Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, as well as the country's former defense minister and three Hamas officials.

Secretary of State Marco Rubio said Ms. Albanese was assisting the I.C.C. with “campaigns of political and economic warfare, which threaten our national interests and sovereignty.” Ms. Albanese called the sanctions against her “mafia techniques of intimidation” in a recent phone interview with The New York Times.

Source: <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/07/19/us/politics/trump-international-criminal-court-ruling.html>



Israel is proceeding with annexation, and there is only one way to stop it



By Samer Jaber

Global grassroots organising is the only way to challenge Israel and its plan to legalise the theft of Palestinian land.

My brother recently sent me a copy of an Israeli military order that was found by farmers on our land and nearby plots in the occupied West Bank. The document, accompanied by a map, states that the land is being seized for military purposes.

It does not specify how long the land will be held and offers the landowners and users only seven days from an upcoming field visit – coordinated between the Israelis and the Palestinian Authority (PA) liaison office – to file an objection with the Israeli army's legal adviser. This field visit typically serves to demarcate the boundaries of the confiscated land.

From our family's past experience, confiscation under the guise of "security reasons" often precedes the establishment of a colonial settlement. This happened in 1973 when our family received a similar military order for land along the Jerusalem-Hebron Road. Within a week, a military post was established. Months later, a civilian settlement, Elazar, was erected in the same location.

What's shocking this time is that this new order has barely made headlines despite the size of the land being slated for confiscation. According to the military order, it amounts to 5,758 dunums, or more than 5.7sq km (2.2sq miles). The confiscation is not arbitrary. At the centre of this particular area is the outpost of Sde Boaz, which was illegally established on private Palestinian land in 2002. The residents – about 50 families – are not fringe extremists. They're middle-class professionals, including doctors, engineers and accountants.

This confiscation is one of many that have taken place in the past 21 months. Under the shadow of the genocidal war in Gaza, Israel has accelerated its annexation drive in the West Bank. The objective is to formally annex parts of what the Oslo Peace Accords designated as Area B, which is 21 percent of the West Bank, and the whole of Area C, which constitutes 60 percent of the West Bank and includes the whole of the Jordan Valley and Jerusalem countryside as well as other areas.

Most Palestinian farmland and pastures fall within this area as do a large number of Israel's illegal settlements. My town, al-Khader (St George), owns more than 22,000 dunums (22sq km/8.5sq miles) of land, of which more than 20,500 (20.5sq km/7.9sq miles) are classified as Area C, 500 (half a square kilometre/0.2sq miles) as Area B, and less than 1,000 dunums (1sq km/0.4sq miles) as Area A.

Israeli settlers play an active role in advancing this annexation plan. This is not limited to seizing strategic hilltops but also includes systematic violence against Palestinians. The settler attacks on Palestinian property, the torture and killings of Palestinians are all part of an organised campaign intended to uproot Palestinians from Areas B and C to facilitate annexation. This strategy aligns with what Israeli policymakers refer to as “voluntary transfer”, a euphemism for ethnically cleansing Palestinians from their homeland.

All of this is illegal, according to international law, and goes against repeated resolutions by the United Nations and a 2024 ruling of the International Court of Justice. So who will stop Israel?

The PA, which nominally administers Area A in the occupied West Bank, will certainly not. Since its establishment as part of the Oslo peace process, the PA has not only failed to resist Israeli moves towards annexation, but it has also arguably facilitated them by working with Israel to stem out armed and even peaceful resistance that does not support its political agenda.

The international community is also unlikely to take decisive action. For decades, Western governments, in particular, have offered rhetorical condemnations while simultaneously providing security and economic support to Israel. These same actors who have failed to stop the ongoing genocide in Gaza are unlikely to object if Israel formalises its de facto annexation.

This was most recently evident during a diplomatic visit to Taybeh, a Palestinian village located northeast of Jerusalem and Ramallah. The visit, which included more than 20 diplomats from around the world, including European and American representatives, came in response to repeated attacks by Jewish settlers, who burned parts of the village's land, including property belonging to the local church. That was all these countries were willing to do – send representatives to the area for a couple of hours to utter a few words of condemnation. Beyond that, it is business as usual in their relations with Israel.

What remains then is the resilience and agency of the Palestinian people and their principled political movements. In the current context, the mere presence of Palestinians on their land is an act of resistance.

To sustain this presence and strengthen their struggle, Palestinians must continue to mobilise global progressive and freedom-oriented movements to support their cause – not only in solidarity but also as part of a broader global fight against the far-right, racist, anti-justice forces that support Israel and simultaneously threaten civil rights and social justice in their own countries.

Solidarity activities at the global level should be strategic and impactful. They should focus on disrupting all components of the supply chain that benefit the Israeli occupation in general and settler colonialism in particular. This means citizens around the world in different sectors of society can contribute to the struggle for Palestine as both producers and consumers by heeding the call to boycott and divest from Israel.

Direct actions from the working class are crucial. Workers can integrate the Palestinian cause into their demands for better working conditions. For instance, public strikes in

solidarity with Palestine, such as those organised by rail workers in European countries, might pressure governments to reconsider their support for Israel.

Similarly, port workers could strike to disrupt shipping linked to Israel, pushing governments to reassess their positions. Employees in high-tech industries can play a critical role in supporting Palestinians by demanding their companies align products, services and partnerships with international law, refusing to support technologies complicit in the Israeli occupation or settler violence. If companies refuse, workers can escalate to protest action, such as disrupting supply chains and whistleblowing.

In addition to expanding and strengthening Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) activities, there are other solidarity actions that could be carried out. In Palestine, individuals and groups can organise to accompany Palestinian farmers to their lands, serving as witnesses to settler and soldier attacks while helping to protect communities.

They can also help Palestinian farmers and other communities by assisting them in selling their products. This challenges the dominant business model that exploits small-scale producers. I can attest to the importance of such initiatives as I have begun facilitating the connection of local Palestinian producers with the European market through the Palestine General Cooperatives Union and Cooperatives UK.

With governments abrogating their legal obligations to stop genocide and colonisation, grassroots mobilisation for impactful actions is the only way to disrupt Israeli colonial activities. An active global movement can force Israeli citizens to confront and relinquish the racist, apartheid, and colonialist foundations of their society, prompting them to seek real change.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2025/7/22/israel-is-proceeding-with-annexation-and-there-is-only-one-way-to-stop-it>

IMPORTANT NOTICE

We are truly grateful to our esteemed readers for their continued interest in **The Global Voice** and **Aabgeenei Magazines** through which we have been able to fulfil our vision of promoting understanding of different sections of society through our informative articles. This has been a non profit organisation running without any financial help from others. We would be very grateful for any monetary contribution you can provide on a monthly basis so we can continue bringing you true and unbiased journalism.

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Hoping for an encouraging response for our readers for this noble cause.

May Allah be with you - Amen

A photograph of Donald Trump and Justin Trudeau standing side-by-side. Trump is on the left, wearing a dark suit and a red tie, looking towards Trudeau. Trudeau is on the right, wearing a dark suit and a dark tie, gesturing with his hands as if speaking. In the background, there is a Canadian flag on the left and a sign with a maple leaf and the year '2025' on the right.

DAGRES: Examining reasons why Canadians have lost trust in Ottawa

By Samantha Dagres

The vast majority of Canadians say their high tax bill is eroding their quality of life, according to a new Montreal Economic Institute-Ipsos poll. Fully two-thirds (67%) believe they pay too much income tax, while nearly half say they're getting poor value in return. Clearly, Ottawa's fiscal path is unacceptable to most of us.

From housing to trade policy, Canadians feel they're being squeezed by a government that has been living large. More than half say the federal government is spending too much, while a mere 6% think it's spending too little.

The laundry list of federal spending programs that have been unfruitful (to say the least) is long. Just on corporate subsidies, Canadians have forked over \$352 billion between 2007 and 2019 (inflation adjusted, all levels of government). In the 2023-24 fiscal year, Ottawa alone handed out \$800 in subsidies per Canadian. Electric vehicle manufacturers in particular have been raking it in over the past few years.

Such profligate spending on subsidies has been accompanied by an explosion of the federal bureaucracy. Since 2015, it has grown by over 110,000 employees. That is three times faster than the population has grown. The cost of Ottawa's bureaucracy, meanwhile, has nearly doubled from \$40.2 billion in 2016 to \$69.5 billion today.

A decade of expensive ribbon-cutting policies with meagre results has taught Canadians that the tax man isn't a fix-all for their problems. In fact, he might just be a wolf in sheep's clothing.

This disillusionment is a natural consequence of a government that insists it can and should insert itself into every aspect of our lives, from national security to school lunches.

We should be asking ourselves whether the government even has the expertise.

When asked whether taxes contribute to housing unaffordability, 74% of Canadians said yes. Of course, this is absolutely correct. Over the past decade, municipal development fees have shot up by 33%. Today, taxes make up a quarter of the cost of a new home in Toronto. Thanks, tax man.

Canada ranks well behind most Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries in the time it takes to get a building permit thanks to the tax man's buddy — the over-regulator. Despite clear evidence that more government means fewer homes and higher prices, Ottawa has chosen to double down, pledging billions to play housing developer.

New Zealand's government tried a nearly identical program in 2018 and eked out a measly 3% of its 100,000-unit target in nearly seven years.

The more a government overpromises and underdelivers, the less trust its population will have in that government. Only 46% think Ottawa is effectively allocating funds to the country's most pressing issues.

Worse, the government is also undermining our trust in each other. On housing, politicians are constantly sabotaging the private sector by making it difficult and onerous to build.

Demonizing the market may be politically useful, but it is misguided. The free market works because both sides benefit from voluntary exchange, and value is created as each party walks away better off. People want homes; developers want to build them. And importantly, they know how.

What fuels human progress is the dispersed knowledge that exists in the market. As Friedrich Hayek, Nobel laureate in economics, wrote: "(T)he knowledge of the circumstances of which we must make use never exists in concentrated or integrated form but solely as the dispersed bits of incomplete and frequently contradictory knowledge which all the separate individuals possess."

Think of all of the expertise, the labour and the business relationships that go into making your car, your phone, even your morning cup of coffee. No central planner could replicate that.

So if Canadians feel like they're getting a raw deal, who can blame them? Governments promise the sun and the moon and when they inevitably fall short, we're left with a tax bill we can ill afford and not much to show for it.

Source: <https://torontosun.com/opinion/columnists/dagres-examining-reasons-why-canadians-have-lost-trust-in-ottawa>

The Canada Strong Pass grants free admission for all to national parks and historic sites, meaning more people than ever will have the opportunity to explore our greatest shared wonder: the natural world. Our connection to the cherished landscapes, mountains, waters and wildlife defines Alberta and our culture, and cannot be overstated.

Increased access is worth celebrating. Getting into nature is a fundamental part of people's health, as well as the health of society at large. When people connect with nature, they're also more likely to care for it. That's why this summer is a hopeful one — it's a chance to grow a new generation of nature advocates.

For Albertans, this conversation hits particularly close to home. The Rocky Mountains are more than a destination; they're part of our identity. From the towering peaks of Banff to the pristine wilderness of Jasper, these landscapes shape how we see ourselves and our place in the world. The same is true across Canada, where our national parks preserve the very essence of what makes this country extraordinary: vast boreal forests, rugged coastlines, Arctic tundra and prairie grasslands that stretch to the horizon.

The Canada Strong Pass encourages more people to discover these treasures. This is fundamentally positive. Connection to nature is essential for our collective well-being and environmental consciousness. When visitors experience the majesty of a sunrise over Lake Louise or make memories in the mountains with friends or family, they become stakeholders in conservation. These experiences forge the emotional bonds that sustain long-term environmental protection.

Yet, increased visitation also brings challenges. Popular trails suffer from erosion, wildlife becomes stressed by human presence and fragile ecosystems face increased pressure. The problem isn't that too many people love our parks; it's that we need to invest more in managing that love responsibly. We need increased resources to manage existing parks, and we need more parks for both people and nature.

The federal government must match the Canada Strong Pass with strong parks management and education — empowering visitors to minimize their effects — to balance recreation with protecting nature. Parks Canada is doing heroic work with what they've got, but they're stretched thin.

Record numbers of visitors are flocking to Canada's 37 national parks and 11 national reserves



Opinion: As more Albertans explore parks this summer, it's time to protect nature

By Jodi Hilty, Calgary Herald

each year. Since 2010, visitor numbers have exceeded 12 million, and in 2024 reached 15 million, according to Parks Canada. Trends are similar in Alberta. This puts pressure on existing parks and the species that live there. We need to ensure we put adequate resources into managing existing parks and create more protected areas and parks to make enough wild space for both people and wildlife to thrive.

The solution is to dramatically enhance our investment in park infrastructure, education and management. This means more interpretive programs that teach visitors about Leave No Trace and coexistence principles, expanded trail networks that distribute visitor effects, and sufficient staffing to maintain facilities and monitor ecological health.

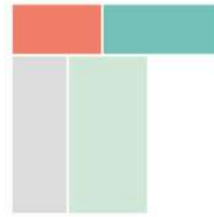
At Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, we see this moment as an opportunity. Y2Y drives conservation solutions at the scale that nature demands. We work to maintain natural connections for wildlife, for people and nature, communities and culture, for habitat and waterways.

From Yellowstone to Yukon, we strive to connect and protect enough space for a wide range of wildlife to roam, feed and reproduce. We know this requires sound management of existing federal, provincial and territorial parks, and we also need additional large, protected areas for nature and people, with wildlife corridors that enable animal movement between parks.

Summer is upon us. Let's make sure that the places that define us today still define us as Canadians in the future.

The Canada Strong Pass opened the door — now let's build the foundation to care for and expand upon these treasured parks for future generations.

Source: <https://calgaryherald.com/opinion/columnists/opinion-as-more-albertans-explore-parks-this-summer-its-time-to-protect-nature>



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Second-largest population increase in England and Wales in over 75 years – mainly fuelled by migration

Official figures show an estimated 61.8 million people living in England and Wales in mid-2024, up from 61.1 million the year before.

The population of England and Wales has grown by more than 700,000 in the year to June 2024 - the second-largest increase in over 75 years.

The change was largely fuelled by international migration, with natural change - the difference between births and deaths - accounting for only a small proportion.

According to the Office for National Statistics, there were an estimated 61.8 million people in England and Wales in mid-2024, up from 61.1 million the year before.

It is the second-largest numerical jump since at least 1949, when comparable data began.

And it is behind only the rise of 821,210 that took place in the preceding 12 months from mid-2022 to mid-2023.

Nigel Henretty of the ONS said the population of the two countries has increased each year since mid-1982, but said the rate of population increases has been higher in recent years.

“Net international migration continues to be the main driver of this growth, continuing the long-term trend seen since the turn of the century,” he said.

Net international migration - the difference between people moving to the country and leaving - accounted for 690,147 of the estimated population increase of 706,881 people, or 98% of the total.

There were slightly more births than deaths in the most recent year, which added 29,982 to the population.

There was also a net decrease in internal migration - the number of people moving from England and Wales to elsewhere in the UK.

Source: <https://news.sky.com/story/second-largest-population-increase-in-england-and-wales-in-over-75-years-mainly-fuelled-by-migration-13403904>



US lands African resources with version of Chinese-Russian scheme

By Hanri Mostert and Tracy-Lynn Field

Minerals are being bartered for security in a bad deal for Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo

A US-brokered peace deal between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Rwanda binds the two African nations to a worrying arrangement: one in which a country signs away its mineral resources to a superpower in return for opaque assurances of security.

The peace deal, signed in June 2025, aims to end three decades of conflict between the DRC and Rwanda.

A key part of the agreement binds both nations to developing a regional economic integration framework. This arrangement would expand cooperation among the two states, the US government and American investors on “transparent, formalized end-to-end mineral chains.”

Despite its immense mineral wealth, the DRC is among the five poorest countries in the world. It has been seeking US investment in its mineral sector.

The US has in turn touted a potential multi-billion-dollar investment program to anchor its mineral supply chains in the traumatized and poor territory.

The peace that the June 2025 deal promises, therefore, hinges on chaining mineral supply to the US in exchange for Washington’s powerful – but vaguely formulated – military oversight.

The peace agreement further establishes a joint oversight committee – with representatives from the African Union, Qatar and the US – to receive complaints and resolve disputes between the DRC and Rwanda.

But beyond the joint oversight committee, the peace deal creates no specific security obligations for the US.

The relationship between the DRC and Rwanda has been marred by war and tension since the bloody First (1996-1997) and Second (1998-2003) Congo wars. At the heart of

much of this conflict is the DRC's mineral wealth. It has fueled competition, exploitation and armed violence.

This latest peace deal introduces a resources-for-security arrangement. Such deals aren't new in Africa. They first emerged in the early 2000s as resources-for-infrastructure transactions. Here, a foreign state would agree to build economic and social infrastructure (roads, ports, airports, hospitals) in an African state. In exchange, it would get a major stake in a government-owned mining company. Or gain preferential access to the host country's minerals.

We have studied mineral law and governance in Africa for more than 20 years. The question that emerges now is whether a US-brokered resources-for-security agreement will help the DRC benefit from its resources.

Based on our research on mining, development and sustainability, we believe this is unlikely.

This is because resources-for-security is the latest version of a resource-bartering approach that China and Russia pioneered in countries such as Angola, the Central African Republic and the DRC.

Resource bartering in Africa has eroded the sovereignty and bargaining power of mineral-rich nations such as the DRC and Angola.

Further, resources-for-security deals are less transparent and more complicated than prior resource bartering agreements.

DRC's security gaps

The DRC is endowed with major deposits of critical minerals including cobalt, copper, lithium, manganese and tantalum. These are the building blocks for 21st century technologies: artificial intelligence, electric vehicles, wind energy and military security hardware. Rwanda has less mineral wealth than its neighbour, but is the world's third-largest producer of tantalum, used in electronics, aerospace and medical devices.

For almost 30 years, minerals have fueled conflict and severe violence, especially in eastern DRC. Tungsten, tantalum and gold (referred to as 3TG) finance and drive conflict as government forces and an estimated 130 armed groups vie for control over lucrative mining sites. Several reports and studies have implicated the DRC's neighbours – Rwanda and Uganda – in supporting the illegal extraction of 3TG in this region.

The DRC government has failed to extend security over its vast (2.3 million square kilometers) and diverse territory (109 million people, representing 250 ethnic groups). Limited resources, logistical challenges and corruption have weakened its armed forces.

This context makes the United States' military backing enormously attractive. But our research shows there are traps.

What states risk losing

Resources-for-infrastructure and resources-for-security deals generally offer African nations short-term stability, financing or global goodwill. However, the costs are often long-term because of an erosion of sovereign control.

Here's how this happens:

- Certain clauses in such contracts can freeze future regulatory reforms, limiting legislative autonomy.
- Other clauses may lock in low prices for years, leaving resource-selling states unable to benefit when commodity prices surge.
- Arbitration clauses often shift disputes to international forums, bypassing local courts.
- Infrastructure loans are often secured via resource revenues used as loan security. This effectively ringfences exports and undermines sovereign fiscal control.

Examples of loss or near-loss of sovereignty from these sorts of deals abound in Africa.

For instance, Angola's US\$2 billion oil-backed loan from China Eximbank in 2004. This was repayable in monthly deliveries of oil, with revenues directed to Chinese-controlled accounts. The loan's design deprived Angolan authorities of decision-making power over that income stream even before the oil was extracted.

These deals also fragment accountability. They often span multiple ministries (such as defense, mining and trade), avoiding robust oversight or accountability. Fragmentation makes resource sectors vulnerable to elite capture. Powerful insiders can manipulate agreements for private gain.

In the DRC, this has created a violent kleptocracy, where resource wealth is systematically diverted away from popular benefit.

Finally, there is the risk of re-entrenching extractive trauma. Communities displaced for mining and environmental degradation in many countries across Africa illustrate the long-standing harm to livelihoods, health and social cohesion.

These are not new problems. But where extraction is tied to security or infrastructure, such damage risks becoming a permanent feature, not a temporary cost.

What needs to change

Critical minerals are "critical" because they're hard to mine or substitute. Additionally, their supply chains are strategically vulnerable and politically exposed. Whoever controls these minerals controls the future. Africa must make sure it doesn't trade that future away.

In a world being reshaped by global interests in critical minerals, African states must not underestimate the strategic value of their mineral resources. They hold considerable leverage.

But leverage only works if it is wielded strategically. This means:

- investing in institutional strength and legal capacity to negotiate better deals
- demanding local value creation and addition;
- requiring transparency and parliamentary oversight for minerals-related agreements;
- refusing deals that bypass human rights, environmental or sovereignty standards.

Africa has the resources. It must hold on to the power they wield.

Source:<https://asiatimes.com/2025/07/us-lands-african-resources-with-version-of-chinese-russian-scheme/#>

US must win the battle for AI supremacy over China

By Derek Levine

The United States and China are engaged in what is likely the defining contest of the century over artificial intelligence and who controls the most advanced technology. At its core, it is a struggle over which nation's values and vision will shape the world's future.

It is crucial that the United States, not China, emerges as the leading global power. American leadership has helped build a system based on democracy, transparency, the rule of law and respect for individual rights.

While not perfect, it has brought decades of peace, prosperity and expanding freedom. It has enabled open markets, international cooperation and free expression to flourish.

China, ruled by the Communist Party, presents a very different model. It is authoritarian and tightly controlled by the state, with little tolerance for dissent or independent institutions.

Beijing applies economic and political pressure to advance its agenda both at home and abroad. If China gains influence over global institutions and norms, the world could move away from openness and toward centralized control.

This is not a distant or abstract threat. China already uses its growing power to silence critics far beyond its borders. It pressures corporations and governments to avoid challenging its policies. It censors Chinese-language media abroad and targets journalists, scholars and members of the Chinese diaspora.

Inside China, the government monitors citizens, marginalizes ethnic minorities, and suppresses political opposition, especially in regions such as Xinjiang and Tibet.

China is actively exporting this model. Through the Belt and Road Initiative, it offers infrastructure and technology to developing countries, often with conditions that create dependency and allow Beijing to exert political leverage. Many of these nations become reluctant to criticize China on human rights or issues related to Taiwan.

At the same time, China has expanded its influence in global institutions, redirecting conversations away from universal rights and toward a focus on state sovereignty and control. This shift weakens international support for democracy and civil society.

In the Asia-Pacific, China's growing assertiveness is impossible to ignore. Its military expansion in the South China Sea, aggressive posturing around Taiwan and increasing pressure on regional neighbors threaten stability. These actions challenge principles such as peaceful conflict resolution and freedom of navigation.

The United States must respond with clarity and resolve. This response must go beyond military readiness. It must include leadership in technology, innovation and the global

standards that will define the next century.

The US must continue investing in research and development and safeguard critical technologies from misuse by authoritarian regimes.

For years, American policy assumed that closer economic ties would encourage China to liberalize politically. That assumption has not held. Under Xi Jinping, China has become more centralized, more ideological and more resistant to outside influence. The United States can no longer wait for change to come from within. It must engage in active and sustained competition.

Fortunately, the US still holds significant advantages. Its universities are among the best in the world and continue to train global talent. The private sector leads in vital technologies such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, quantum computing and clean energy.

Government and industry collaboration, including through organizations like DARPA, has led to major technological breakthroughs. A robust venture capital system supports rapid innovation and commercialization.

The CHIPS and Science Act is a step in the right direction. It aims to restore domestic semiconductor manufacturing and reduce reliance on foreign sources. But more is needed.

The United States must expand investment in advanced sectors such as aerospace, robotics and secure communications. Immigration policy is also essential. Attracting and retaining the world's brightest scientists, engineers, and entrepreneurs has long been a key American strength and must be preserved.

China is not merely trying to catch up. It is working aggressively to leap ahead. Through state subsidies, targeted industrial policies, and illegal practices such as cyber espionage and intellectual property theft, China is closing the gap rapidly.

If it overtakes the United States in key technologies, the world could fracture into competing spheres with different rules and competing standards. Countries could be forced to align with one model or the other.

This type of global division would carry serious risks. International rules on cybersecurity, data privacy and artificial intelligence could splinter. Global supply chains could become more fragile.

Institutions like the World Trade Organization and the United Nations would struggle to function and for relevance. Misunderstandings and mistrust could lead to conflict, and progress on global challenges like climate change and pandemic response could stall.

The United States cannot afford to step back and hope the system it built will survive without active leadership. Liberal democracy, freedom of expression, and human rights are under increasing pressure from rising authoritarianism and disruptive technologies. America must shape the future instead of reacting to it.

This contest is not about power for power's own sake. It is about securing a global order that remains open, cooperative and respectful of human dignity. If the United States does not lead, China will fill the vacuum, and the global system that has ensured prosperity and stability for over 70 years could erode or collapse.

The stakes are enormous. The challenge is urgent. But the outcome is still within America's reach and control.

Source:<https://asiatimes.com/2025/07/us-must-win-the-battle-for-ai-supremacy-over-china/>

Lughmani family dedicates life to public service worldwide and close to home

By **GINA NAPOLI**



Career choices were a frequent topic of discussion in Naeem Lughmani's childhood home "The parents always wanted their children to be successful; you either became a doctor or engineer," the native of Abbottabad, Pakistan, said. "My dad would say, 'My son is going to become a doctor,' and everyone started calling me doctor when I was in high school." As a 15-year-old, 'Dr. Lughmani' had a nice ring to it, but the ambitious teenager still had a lot of schooling to complete.

"There was no doctor in my family, and that career was considered prestige back home, but we were more of a farming family," he said. "So, I was the first one. I kept with that focus, and then I was able to get into med school." After graduating from Ayub Medical College in Pakistan, Dr. Lughmani knew both he and his future family were destined to lead a life of selflessness. The 59-year-old now lives in Toledo with his wife, Shameela, and has two daughters, Mehwish and Medeeha, and two sons, Musa and Haroon.

The family of six has devoted their lives to public service by traveling to rural areas around the world, educating young generations and offering medical assistance to the less fortunate. They volunteer with Humanity First USA, a nonprofit organization founded in 2004. Humanity First USA is affiliated with the Humanity First International consortium, which was founded in 1995 by the head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, His Holiness Hazrat Mirza Tahir Ahmad. Since 2004, Humanity First has welcomed 55 chapters around the United States, serving more than 5 million people in 65 countries. The organization strives to "serve humanity" and "safeguard human life and dignity."

Inspiration out of devastation

Dr. Lughmani unexpectedly joined Humanity First in 2005. Desperate to contact his family after the catastrophic earthquake in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan, in October, 2005, the devoted son traveled to Balakot, where he witnessed widespread destruction and death firsthand. "My father's hometown is Balakot. I went and saw the misery. I mean it was just horrible to see," he said. "The smell of death in my own village, where I used to go. They were all psychologically disturbed, and I didn't help them, and that image stays in my mind."

During this devastating trip, he contacted Humanity First, which he had only heard of through the grapevine. Trucks with water, medical, and cleaning supplies were quickly sent to Balakot, and Dr. Lughmani was nothing short of impressed. Dr. Lughmani returned to the town two months later, but this time as a volunteer with Humanity. He later became medical director in 2010. "If you are a doctor, you can help. Doctors have a presence in certain disasters," he said. "They make a huge difference." Flash forward 20 years, and Dr. Lughmani's children have not only followed in his footsteps but paved the way for future generations.

"He inspired me, and I am so blessed," Musa Lughmani, a fourth-year medical student at the University of Toledo, said of his father. "Seeing that in your parents puts into perspective how they were not lecturing me, they were training me how to live my life as humbly as I can." At just 25 years old, Mr. Lughmani is the student division executive director for Humanity First, overseeing the 55 chapters across the United States. He has also embarked on six mission trips to Guatemala,

including, four “gift of health” trips and two “gift of sight” trips.

“A lot of the patients we see, we are visiting them in rural communities,” he said. “These people have never seen a physician, and when you communicate with these patients you hear their stories and how many problems they struggle with.” Volunteers on “gift of health” missions set up mobile clinics in the heart of communities and offer up to three months of free medications, while “gift of sight” trips strive to correct people’s vision impairments. Other mission trip titles include, disaster relief, food security, knowledge for life, orphan care, and water for life.

Helping worldwide

On a particular “gift of sight” mission in Guatemala, Mr. Lughmani recalls aiding a rural farmer who had a cancerous pterygium over one of his eyes. “He had never received treatment,” Mr. Lughmani said. “We saw that his mass looked malignant. We set him up for surgery and removed the mass and confirmed it to be cancer. We preserved his sight.”

While Mr. Lughmani has helped thousands of residents of Guatemala, his brother, Haroon, and cousin, Zohaib, traveled to Guyana, southeast of Venezuela. “Humanity First sees villages and patients who really need that help and don’t have access to health care,” the younger brother said. “Students collected eyeglasses across the country for the people of Guyana and found the exact prescription that met the needs of every person.”

“It was a great experience,” his cousin added. “It is good to step out of your comfort zone and help people in need. It makes you feel fulfilled and happy.” Dr. Lughmani’s son recently graduated from UT with a bachelor’s degree in biology while his nephew is a sophomore at UT studying biology. The UT graduate plans to start medical school in July and said despite taking the next year off, he will stay busy as the director of the Humanity First education project. “We serve 600 students around the country and have teams in Texas, Toledo, Illinois, Florida, and all over to recruit tutors from universities and connect them with schools in need,” he said. “[We are] working with students and tutoring in math and ELA primarily.”

Since the project launched in 2020, the 21-year-old has been heavily involved. Trips to Lahaina, Hawaii, to educate students recovering from the 2024 Maui wildfires and starting a summer project with elementary schools across the Toledo are just a few of the project’s accomplishments. “With the summer program, we are able to connect with the kids,” he said. “We have career mentoring sessions in engineering and medicine ... the students are genuinely inspired by career mentors and excited to learn and make something from their lives. Even the education project can make an impact in a [natural] disaster situation.

Next opportunity to help always awaits

In the eyes of Dr. Lughmani, a new and rewarding service opportunity is always right around the corner. Recent catastrophic floodings in Texas called him and Humanity First volunteers to the scene. From July 17 to July 21, Dr. Lughmani found himself in Kerrville, Texas, offering medical care at Center Point City’s fire station. “I did care for two days to support and offered vaccinations,” he said. “They have just a nurse practitioner there, so we offered them telemedicine.”

Dr. Lughmani said he has recruited more than 200 doctors to Humanity’s Doctors 4 Humanity project to make telemedicine appointments available for those affected by the Texas floods. Dr. Lughmani has returned to Toledo; however, volunteers from Humanity will be in Kerrville for the next month rehabilitating homes, he said. As the Lughmanis continue to share their passion for public service in various corners of the world, family members hope to encourage others to lead a life of compassion. “That is the whole purpose of doing this, right?” Dr. Lughmani said. “It is a whole livelihood. Social change is such a big thing. All faiths have social connections... [we should] take care of each other and help each other.”



The next Iranian massacre is unfolding in plain sight

By Stephen J. Rapp

As a former international prosecutor, I am compelled to speak out against a pattern of escalating human rights violations in Iran, a pattern that evokes the darkest chapters of that country's history and demands a sustained international response. At stake is not only justice for the victims, but also the world's credibility in preventing mass atrocities.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has never hesitated to use lethal force against dissent. A stark example came in 2019 when hundreds of Iranians were gunned down for protesting fuel price hikes. Despite international outcry, that bloodshed was a prelude, not a climax.

Three years later, the death of a young woman, Mahsa Amini, at the hands of the "morality police" sparked a national uprising. This time, the regime responded with strategic brutality: more than 750 protesters killed and about 30,000 arrested. But executions — not gunfire — became the regime's long-term weapon of repression. In 2023, more than 850 people were put to death. In 2024, the number approached 1,000. This year, a U.N. special rapporteur warned that Iran is set to surpass that figure again.

At least a dozen protesters from the 2022 uprising have already been hanged. Others, accused of vague crimes such as "enmity against God" (moharebeh), are condemned for affiliations with opposition groups. These judicial killings are not just sporadic. They are calculated measures to suppress dissent and reassert control in the aftermath of two nationwide uprisings, as well as the most recent war with Israel.

The regime's response to its perceived vulnerability in the wake of that conflict has become increasingly aggressive. While its failures may be attributed to incompetence and the foreign penetration of its security services, its fury is being directed at domestic political opponents. Thousands of Iranians are in danger as parliament now seeks to expedite death sentences in cases involving imagined collaboration with foreign entities.

If the present trajectory continues, Iran's execution tally for 2025 could exceed any in modern memory — except, perhaps, for the horror of 1988. That summer, approximately 30,000 political prisoners were summarily executed. Their only crime was “holding onto their belief” in a democratic opposition. The death commissions responsible for those atrocities are now praised for their brutality.

This month, the Fars News Agency — a mouthpiece of the Revolutionary Guard Corps — published a chilling editorial heralding the death commissions as a “successful historical experience”. Calls for renewed purging of political dissidents have followed. Three activists allegedly linked to the Mujahedin-e-Khalq, a prominent dissident organization — Farshad Etemadi-Far, Masoud Jamei and Alireza Mardasi — were sentenced to death in July. The charge: moharebeh, the same justification used by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1988. Hundreds of other cases are pending.

In 1988, Iranian activists attempted to raise alarms throughout the international community as the groundwork was being laid for mass executions. Most Western officials chose to ignore the calls to action. The danger emerging with the latest executions and politically motivated arrests is not just that Iran will perpetrate another massacre, but that the world will repeat its failure in allowing it to happen.

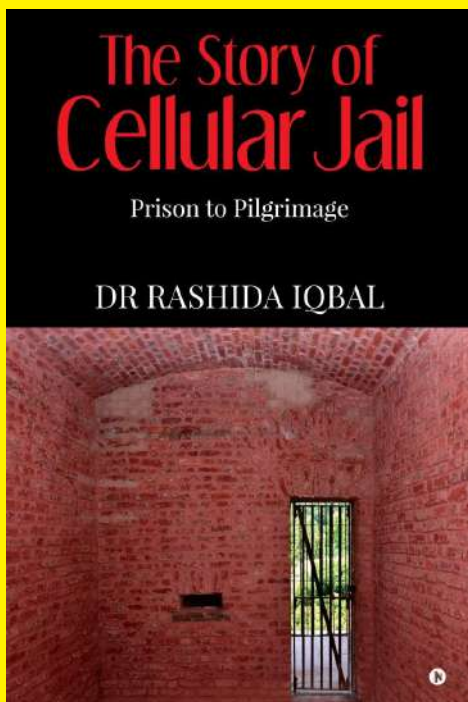
To their credit, some experts and policymakers have already begun raising the alarm. On July 4, 10 experts at the U.N. Human Rights Council denounced the crackdown that began as the 12-day war kicked off on June 13, noting that state-media rhetoric, including calls for “surveillance” and “killings”, echoes the regime's prior justifications for the “1988 atrocities”.

Impunity breeds impunity. It is incumbent upon global institutions to act now. The U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, should use his authority to launch a fact-finding mission that would signal to the regime that its judicial murders would be exposed to the world. And democratic governments around the world should impose sanctions on perpetrators of Iran's human rights abuses and downgrade diplomatic relations with Iran until it ends its systematic attempts to kill its political opponents.

We should not be under any illusions about what such moves will be able to achieve in the near term. Iran was already isolated before its 1988 massacres, and yet the regime survives to this day, under varying degrees of censure for its well-documented human rights abuses.

This is, however, no excuse for inaction. As someone experienced in bringing war criminals to justice, I know accountability is slow but never impossible. Iran's rulers may rely on impunity today, but with sustained international effort, tomorrow they can face justice — either before their own citizens or at an international tribunal yet to be convened.

Source:<https://www.almendron.com/tribuna/the-next-iranian-massacre-is-unfolding-in-plain-sight/>



BOOK REVIEW

THE STORY OF CELLULAR JAIL

PRISON TO PILGRIMAGE

BY DR RASHIDA IQBAL

Published by Notion Press.
com

Pages 245 , Price Rs 349



By Bilal Ahmad Shamim

It all began on March 24, 2009, when I read an article ‘A bit of Peshawar in Port Blair ‘ written by P.C. Sharma, in The Tribune, Chandigarh, a widely read newspaper in the North India. The write-up was about Ainullah Khan, a convict transported to Port Blair from Peshawar. During his incarceration, he earned the reputation of a most conscientious driver and was released from the notorious jail. Thereafter, he chose to settle in the islands, married twice, and was blessed with a good number of children. One of his daughters, Dr Rashida Iqbal, is a well-known figure in the Andaman Islands as a poet, writer, historian , orator and anchor. A couple of years ago, I had the opportunity to read one of her earlier books entitled ‘ Unsung Heroes of Freedom Struggle in Andaman, Who’s Who’ containing a brief introduction of the freedom fighters and martyrs who suffered brutal excesses and untold tortures in the dreaded cellular jail.

On 29th May , 2025, a news appeared in the Daily Telegrams, Sri Vijayapuram about the launching of the book ‘The story of Cellular Jail, Prison to Pilgrimage ‘ written by Dr Rashida Iqbal. I immediately ordered it online.

The author has dedicated this book to her parents.

This is a book that should interest anybody enthusiastic to have an overview of the emerald green Andaman and Nicobar Islands, how and when they began to be used as penal settlements, the ill-fated people condemned to be brought here, the construction of the cellular jail , and the inhumane treatment meted out to the freedom fighters and revolutionaries at the hands of the British and the Japanese. The author has provided a brief but poignant and vivid description of the events related to the penal settlements in the islands starting from the deportation of the freedom fighters of 1857 from the mainland till the repatriation

of the last batch of prisoners on 18 January, 1938. While going through the book, a reader feels himself completely identified with all the happenings in these islands during the pre- independence era. The life of the freedom fighters fraught with untold and unimaginable persecutions and sufferings - both physical and mental - carry the readers on an emotional voyage reigniting the spirit of nationalism and patriotism.

The book has been divided into eight chapters.

The first chapter ‘ Andaman and Nicobar Islands - an Overview ‘, provides a succinct but sufficient introduction to the geographical location, terrain, history, and the pristine tribes of these islands. The author has particularly drawn references

from Ptolemy, Abu Zaid Hasan, Marco Polo, and a few others while describing the history of these islands. Regarding the origin of the word Andaman, M.V. Portman's reference is given wherein he says that these islands were mentioned as Handuman in Ramayana.

The second chapter deals with the circumstances that necessitated establishment of a penal settlement here. The author gives a brief account of the survey done by Captain Archibald Blair and Colonel Colebrook in the year 1788.

The reader is offered an insight into events connected with establishment of a settlement at Chatham island in 1790, and its subsequent relocation to North East Harbour in 1792, the naming of Port of Cornwallis as Port Blair, the abolition of the first settlement in 1796, and the exigencies leading to the colonization of Nicobar Islands.

Elaborating upon the causes and conditions of the penal settlement, the author makes a particular reference of the Great Mutiny of 1857, genesis of Kala Pani, and the miserable life of convicts under the most and adverse and inhospitable conditions which ultimately caused the deaths many inmates. A year-wise chart depicting the percentage of death rate is also provided in the chapter.

The third chapter discusses the freedom fighters of 1857 and of subsequent revolutionary movements who were transported to Andaman. A brief account of Musai Singh and Allama Fazle Haq Khairabadi, who were among the earliest people condemned to life imprisonment in the Islands, and also some other patriots exiled from the United Provinces. The chapter also contains a comprehensive detail of the Rebellion in South India in 1857, Andaman-Assam connection during 1857, Wahabi and Kuka Movements, and a few other Movements.

Among many other freedom fighters, two persons, although not directly associated with any movement, are specially mentioned in the chapter - one, Sher Ali, the assassin of Lord Mayo, the Viceroy of India, and the other, Maharaja Divyasingh Dev III of Puri. Unsung heroes of Mizoram, and Maharaja of Manipur have also been accorded a special mention.

Highlighting the role of Lyall-Lethbridge Commission, chapter IV sheds light on the history of Cellular Jail- its construction, the costs incurred, the dimensions and design and the number of cells in each other seven wings of the jail, besides providing a summary of year- wise count of the convicts imprisoned.

Chapter V contains an absorbing overview of the prisoners convicted between the period 1908- 38 for their involvement in different revolutionary movements such as, Alipore Bomb case, Nasik Conspiracy case, Nangla Khulna Conspiracy case, and Dalhousie Square Bomb case, just to name a few. A section of the chapter is dedicated to the heroes of the Ghadar Movement of 1905, and also of the Moplah Rebellion of 1921. Names of some prominent revolutionaries involved in various movements have also been mentioned- Ullaskar Dutty, Babu Ram Hari of Swarajya, Ghulam Sarwar of N.W. Frontier, V.D. Savarkar, Suresh Chandra Sen Gupta of Dacca and many more.

Chapter VI ' Cellular Jail Story- Incarceration to Repatriation ', arguably the most significant one, poignantly summarises the ordeals borne by the revolutionaries during the arduous and harrowing voyage to Andaman islands, the most inhuman and barbaric treatment they were subject to by the callous Jailer David Barry, the

extremely inhospitable and horrible and unhealthy conditions they were made to live in during their incarceration, and the most exacting and exhausting labour they were engaged in such as - coir pounding and oil grinding like the beasts of burden - besides being subjected to severe and merciless punishments at the slightest oversight or negligence in the performance of their allotted task.

The author has given a detailed account of the suicide of Indu Bhushan Roy, the severe persecution of Ullaskar Dutty, the hunger strike and martyrdom of Mahavir, Mohit and Mankrishna, Bhai Bhan Singh and Pandit Ram Rakha.

The penultimate chapter of the book, no less important than the rest, portrays the reign of terror and fear unleashed by the Japanese during their short stint in the islands beginning from 23 March, 1942 till 7 October, 1945. The islanders had to face and suffer the most heinous and barbaric persecution at the hands of the Japanese rulers. The author has given a brief account of the brutal execution of Zulfiqar Ali alias Sunny, the first victim of the Japanese. Many innocent persons were shot by the firing squad on the false pretext of spying for the British. Dr Diwan Singh, a prominent figure and an active member of the Indian Independence League and Peace Committee also attained martyrdom on 14 January, 1944, succumbing to the merciless tortures.

A brief account of the three-day visit of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose as the Head of the State of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, to these islands is also given.

The concluding chapter deals with the current state of the Cellular Jail, and its surviving history through the vagaries of nature. At present, only three of the seven wings are remaining which constitute 283 cells.

The Cellular Jail was dedicated to the nation as a National Memorial by the then Prime Minister, Shri Morarji Desai on 11th February, 1977.

The book contains two appendices. The first one contains the list of freedom fighters who were imprisoned in the cellular jail, and the other, carries some important photos and facsimiles related to the cellular jail and the author. Noteworthy among them is the driving licence of Shri Ainullah Khan, the author's father.

This book is the saga of the freedom fighters, revolutionaries, and other political prisoners besides many other innocent victims, who exhibited the most exalted standard of patriotism and bore the yoke of persecution and incarceration so that their countrymen might see the dawn of freedom and independence.

The title of the book is very apt and appropriate and a befitting tribute to all those who sacrificed their lives for our country.

The printing of the book is very neat and nearly error-free, the title cover is sober but dignified, and the language and style is easy to understand.

A must-read for all those who want to have an overview of the history of Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

The Case of the Global Conscience and the Role of a Muslim



By Arshad Ahmad Shahbaz

Vice Chairman, Foreign Advisory Council, Darmstadt – Germany



Today, the world stands at a delicate and decisive crossroads. On one hand, we hear lofty claims of human progress, justice, and freedom; on the other, the horrors of war, devastation, and the tragic devaluation of human life unfold before our eyes every single day.

The recent tensions between Iran and Israel, the catastrophic situation in Gaza, and the massacre of innocent civilians — these are earthquakes that should have shaken the very foundations of humanity. Alas, they have been reduced to mere “news stories,” quickly consumed and forgotten. It seems as though human hearts have lost their sensitivity, and apathy has taken its place.

Bombings and attacks do not merely topple buildings — they extinguish the light in hearts, crush families’ peace, trample on children’s dreams, and reduce parents’ hopes to dust. The pain-stricken faces of mothers and the silent, questioning eyes of children bear the most heart-rending witness to these tragedies.

When corpses turn into nothing but statistics, the sanctity of life and the essence of human feeling fade away. Life, once regarded as sacred and priceless, is now reduced to a cold number. One calamity barely ends before our attention drifts to the next “breaking news.”

What is even more tragic is that the great powers themselves ignite the fires in which the homes of the oppressed are burnt, the dreams of children turn to ashes, and the blood of humanity is spilled. They supply the weapons, fan the flames of hatred, and then sit in their comfortable chambers to watch the spectacle. Later, a mockery of justice is staged — the oppressor is shielded, the oppressed silenced, and the world is shown a theater of false peacemaking — while the true aim remains to strengthen their own rule and fill their own treasuries.

This attitude starkly reflects the dismal state of our collective conscience. Another bitter reality is that pain and destruction are not measured equally. When a tragedy strikes in the West, the whole world erupts in outrage; but when the same befalls Gaza, Yemen, or Iran, the shattered lives of innocents are often ignored in silence. Such an attitude violates the very idea of humanity.

The current plight of Palestine is the clearest testament to this injustice. Despite generations of oppression, Palestinians still persevere for their homes, their places of worship, and their basic rights — while the powerful of the world either remain silent or soothe their hollow consciences with empty statements.

The Holy Qur'an declares the sanctity of human life as a universal principle:

"Whoever kills a person — unless in retribution for murder or for spreading corruption in the land — it is as if he killed all of mankind. And whoever saves a life, it is as if he saved all of mankind." (Surah Al-Ma'idah: 33)

This teaching reminds us that every life is equally precious, regardless of race, nation, or faith. Yet sadly, today's conduct openly defies this fundamental truth.

For the Muslim world as well, this is a moment of deep self-reflection. At a time when their own brothers and sisters are victims of oppression, most Muslim nations have contented themselves with mere statements. If the Muslim ummah were to unite for truth and justice, the world would hear a strong and effective voice.

This is not just a political obligation but a moral and religious duty — to stand not only for ourselves but for every oppressed soul.

Today, the power of media is unprecedented. Through it, the images and stories of the oppressed can reach the entire world and awaken humanity's dormant conscience. But this power must be wielded responsibly, truthfully, and with noble intent.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih IV (rh) said:

"Convey the beautiful message of Islam through the internet and media. Use it with sincerity, piety, and in the service of humanity. Beware of its sinful and harmful aspects, for they can be very dangerous." (Friday Sermon, 3 May 1996; Khutbat-e-Tahir, Vol. 15, p. 244)

Similarly, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V (aba), has repeatedly emphasized the global conscience and the role of a Muslim. In his address to the United Nations, he declared:

"Justice must be shown to every group and every nation. There should be no hatred, but justice must prevail in all circumstances. If the world's conscience remains alive, wars can be avoided. And this is exactly Islam's teaching — that peace cannot be established without justice." (United Nations, 2012)

In his address to the European Parliament, he said:

"It is the duty of a Muslim to tell the world that Islam is the religion of love, tolerance, and justice. And every Muslim must demonstrate through his life that he has come to awaken the world's conscience, not to lull it to sleep."

And in Germany he stated:

"We must develop such strength within ourselves that the world, seeing us, declares: These are the people who stand for justice in all circumstances; who respect the dignity of every human being; and who have kept their consciences alive."

History teaches us again and again that oppression cannot endure. The tragedy of Karbala stands as a shining testament that sacrifices made for truth never go in vain. It reminds us that to resist tyranny and to stand with the oppressed is the foremost duty of humanity.

To awaken the global conscience, we must take small yet sincere steps: promoting justice in our own spheres, raising our voices for the oppressed, dedicating our abilities and resources to the cause of goodness. But all this becomes possible only when our intentions are pure and we sincerely seek God's guidance and help.

May Allah Almighty grant that the cries of the oppressed are heard in every corner of the earth, that the tyrants meet their fate, and that justice, peace, and compassion triumph over cruelty, injustice, and hatred. Ameen.

Wimbledon 2025: Who were the winners of this year's tennis tournament?



Another year, another sunny, strawberry and cream-filled Wimbledon draws to a close.

Players were battling the heat as well as one another, as the competition closed out during the UK's third heatwave of the year.

The tournament, organised by the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club with the Lawn Tennis Association, attracts the top tennis talent from around the world.

So who were Wimbledon 2025's winners?

Find out the Gentlemen's Singles, Ladies' Singles, Wheelchair Singles and Doubles winners here.

Who won the Wimbledon Women's Singles final?

On Saturday, Poland's Iga Swiatek had a decisive victory over USA's Amanda Anisimova - claiming her first Wimbledon Ladies' Singles title.

Both players were competing in their very first Wimbledon final, but Iga took control of the match quickly.

She dominated Amanda with a 6-0 6-0 victory in just 57 minutes.

No one has won the women's Wimbledon final without dropping a game since Dorothea Lambert Chambers in 1911.

"It seems super surreal," said 24-year-old Iga.

"Honestly, I didn't even dream of winning Wimbledon because it was way too far.

"I feel like I'm an experienced player, having won other Slams, but I didn't expect this."

Who won the Wimbledon Men's Singles finals?

On Sunday, two titans of tennis battled it out on Centre Court for the Gentlemen's Singles title.

Carlos Alcaraz, the 2024 Wimbledon title holder, was up against world number one Jannik Sinner.

Ultimately Jannik Sinner was the winner, following a nail-biting match.

Both Carlos and Jannik are currently two of the best players, having won the past seven Grand Slam titles between them.

Despite being rivals in tennis, the pair have a strong bond off the court.

After winning the men's title, Jannik thanked Carlos, saying: "It is so difficult to play you, but we have a great relationship off the court."

"Keep going, keep pushing, you are going to hold this trophy many times - you already have twice!"

Who won the Wimbledon wheelchair final?

Great Britain's Alfie Hewett returned to defend his Wheelchair Singles title against world number one Tokito Oda.

19-year-old Tokito lost the opening set but went on to win the next two sets, claiming victory.

Alfie shared his gratitude for the support he received during the match.

"When you lose, to have this amount of love and support, this sort of atmosphere doesn't happen to us on a regular basis.

"It is really incredible the amount of support wheelchair tennis has got."

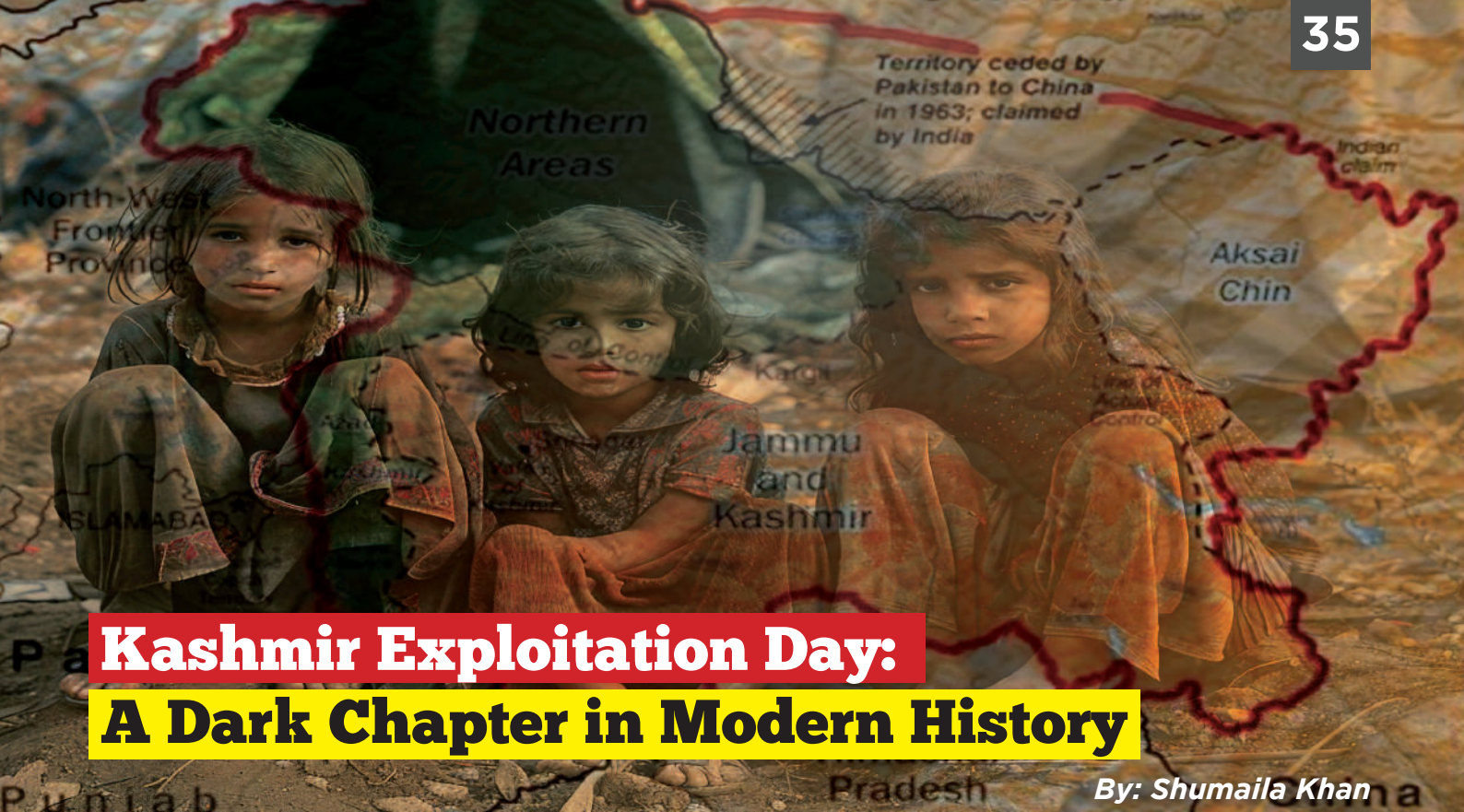
Who won the Wimbledon doubles finals?

There are a number of doubles finals played at Wimbledon.

Below is a list of the winners.

- **Men's Doubles** - Britain's Julian Cash and Lloyd Glasspool. You can read more about their victory [here](#)
- **Women's Doubles** - Russia's Veronika Kudermetova and Belgium's Elise Mertens
- **Mixed Doubles** - The Netherlands' Sem Verbeek and Chechia's Katerina Sin
- **Wheelchair Doubles** - Martin de la Puente and Ruben Spaargaren, defeating reigning British champions Alfie Hewett and Gordon Reid

Source:<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/articles/c9vr3mlme79o.amp>



Kashmir Exploitation Day: A Dark Chapter in Modern History

By: Shumaila Khan

In April 2019, general elections were held in India, resulting in the re-election of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), a political party aligned with the far-right Hindu nationalist organization, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Narendra Modi assumed office as Prime Minister for a second consecutive term. Soon after returning to power, his government launched a calculated assault on the autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir—one that would shake the very foundation of the region's identity.

On August 5, 2019, in a unilateral and unconstitutional move, the Indian government revoked Articles 370 and 35A of its constitution. These articles had granted Jammu and Kashmir special status, allowing it to have its own constitution, flag, and control over local residency laws. The abrogation of these constitutional safeguards marked one of the darkest days in the history of Kashmir—now observed as Kashmir Exploitation Day.

The removal of Article 370 stripped Kashmir of its special constitutional status, while the revocation of Article 35A opened the door for demographic engineering. The latter had stipulated that only those born in the region, or who had lived there for generations, could claim permanent residency. With its removal, non-Kashmiris from other Indian states began settling in the region, threatening to dilute the ethnic and cultural identity of the native Muslim population. It was a direct attack on the demographic fabric of the valley.

In the wake of this decision, the Indian government imposed a brutal curfew and communications blackout across the region. For months, the internet was cut off, mobile networks were disabled, and the press was silenced. Political leaders, activists, and thousands of civilians were detained without charges. Public life came to a standstill, and basic human rights were trampled under the guise of national security.

To further cement its control, India passed the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization

Act, effectively splitting the region into two federally administered territories—Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh. This political restructuring was aimed at undermining the unity and voice of the Kashmiri people.

In the past six years, this policy of suppression has resulted in devastating consequences: hundreds of thousands of Kashmiris have lost their livelihoods, education has been disrupted, and a climate of fear and uncertainty looms large. The region has, in essence, become an open-air prison.

India's actions are not only morally reprehensible but also a blatant violation of international law and the UN Charter of Fundamental Human Rights. The abrogation of Kashmir's autonomy and the use of military force to silence its people have laid bare the true face of the so-called world's largest democracy.

Despite all efforts to crush their spirit, the people of Kashmir have refused to surrender. They continue to fight for their right to self-determination, enshrined in multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions. Their struggle is not merely political—it is existential.

As the global community commemorates August 5 as a day of remembrance and resistance, it must confront the uncomfortable truth: Kashmir is still occupied, still bleeding, and still yearning for freedom. The soil of Kashmir is stained with the blood of martyrs, yet its people remain unbowed.

This day serves as a reminder to the world: silence in the face of oppression is complicity. The world must rise beyond political interests and stand on the side of justice, humanity, and the inalienable rights of the Kashmiri people.

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Why this Muslim festival begins with raising the Union Jack

By Arifa Khan



Islam teaches that “love for one’s nation” is a core part of the faith, a global Islamic leader has said before he joins 45,000 Muslims for a festival in Hampshire that starts on Friday with the raising of the Union Jack.

A YouGov survey commissioned by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, which organises the event, found that 53 per cent of people in Britain believed “Islam is not compatible with British values”.

There was a stark age divide, however: 64 per cent of those aged over 50 held this view, while only 25 per cent of those aged under 25 agreed.

Defining Islamophobia could cause universities to curb free speech

Under-25s were more likely to believe Muslim immigrants had made a positive impact in Britain, as 37 per cent of them agreed and 25 per cent disagreed. Among those aged 50 to 64, 23 per cent felt there had been a positive impact compared with 46 per cent who felt it had been negative.

Islamic community leaders have stressed there is no “clash of civilisations” for British Muslims and hope the three-day Jalsa Salana, the UK’s largest annual gathering of Muslims, this weekend in Alton will illustrate this.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, caliph of the global community of more than ten million Ahmadi Muslims, said of the survey: “A well-known saying of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) is that ‘love for one’s nation is a part of one’s faith’. Given this, how can it be suggested true Muslims are not loyal citizens or likely to sow seeds of division in society?”

“I believe integration requires an immigrant to always seek the betterment of his adopted nation, to be ready for all sacrifices for it and to endeavour to serve his

people with sincerity.”

The festival has received messages of support from the King and Sir Keir Starmer. The King said: “Please convey my warmest thanks to members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community for their loyal greetings.” He said he hoped the festival would be a “memorable event”, welcoming its “spirit of unity and peace”.

The prime minister said: “I am very much impressed by your message of peace, non-violence, respect for all and hatred for none. This event provides a wonderful opportunity to promote unity, harmony and mutual respect.”

The festival will include exhibitions, youth events, prayer sessions and a programme of speakers including the Pope’s ambassador to Britain, the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop Miguel Maury Buendía, on Sunday plus Fleur Anderson, the Northern Ireland minister, and the MP Dame Siobhain McDonagh.

Fareed Ahmad, an executive with the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, said: “We have an [opening] ceremony where, symbolically, the British flag is raised as well as the Ahmadiyya flag. There’s a lot of discussion around Islamophobia and identities for Muslims and for our youth in particular, so this is just another way of reaffirming our bond and loyalty to our country.”

Azhar Chaudhry, from the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community’s department for external affairs, said: “It’s instilled from a very early age that Islam is about service to humanity and also being loyal to your country. So for us as Muslims, it isn’t a conflict or a clash of civilisations.”

Organisers are expecting a record turnout for the 59th festival. Data shows a 27 per cent increase in attendees from Generation Z between 2022 and last year.

There are about 40,000 Ahmadi Muslims in the UK, around 1 per cent of the country’s Muslim population. Many are expected to fly in for the festival from around the world; those from India and Pakistan and from Israel and Iran have been asked to put aside any differences between their home nations for a festival focused on peacebuilding.

The Ahmadi denomination faces persecution in some countries including Pakistan, where adherents have been formally declared to be non-Muslims due to their belief that God sent a messiah in the 19th century in the form of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

The Bishop of Winchester, the Right Rev Philip Mounstephen, said: “I’m very conscious of the pressures the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community are under globally so I wanted to send them a message of support and solidarity and my best wishes for a very happy Jalsa Salana.”

Men and women will attend different programmes of speeches. Organisers said there were lots of prayer sessions, so the festival followed the practice in mosques of having separate spaces for men and women.

There will also be a place for families to discuss the arrangement of marriages. It has been described as “a respectful area where parents and boys and girls can meet in nice surroundings” to discuss matches.

Aged 31, Sabah Ahmadi is one of Britain's youngest imams, having completed seven years of training at a seminary in the UK. He is known as the Young Imam on social media.

"It began at a tea shop," he said, "just as a way to connect with young people, to talk about faith and give them a place to ask questions. The primary objective was to help non-Muslims understand a bit more about Islam and help them remove misconceptions they might have.

"At the same time, it's been a source of help for young people to reach out, to talk about faith, any questions they might have about Islam, struggles they might be going through ... with drug abuse, with relationships, even as simple as someone asking me for a prayer before they go into an exam."

He said that at Jalsa Salana a farm would be turned into a "mini tent village", adding: "I think the beauty of Jalsa is we have thousands of volunteers. My dad is going to be helping clean the toilets this year, along with other people, some of them will be Gen Z. There'll be other people who are working in the [on-site baking] factory making 10,000 chapatis an hour. Right the way through to people working delivering water to different stations, working in the kitchens."

In the Bread for Britain initiative attendees will bring freshly baked chapatis back to their home towns to donate to food banks.

Hulk Hogan's ex Linda Hogan speaks up about his 'shocking' death

By Syeda Fazeelat

Linda Hogan finally broke her silence after the death of her ex-husband, Hulk Hogan.

On Monday, replying to an Instagram post she shared on July 19, when she recalled the "good old days," she stated, "It's so hard to know he's just gone."

The 65-year-old said, "I had no idea he would pass away this soon. We all really thought he would make a comeback ! Big surprise. We are all devastated. It's hitting me so hard . I loved Hulkster more than he loved me."

Linda continued, "It hurt when he cheated . But he was sooo famous. I sort of understood but it was crushing . It hurt . I never got over him or started a real relationship with anyone .. I missed HIM!"

She called the news shocking and said that she couldn't stop crying the whole day. While reflecting on their memories, she said that the ex-couple spent each minute together and expressed her love for the WWE star.

However, it's hard for her to know that he's just gone, and tried to stay strong for their son, Nick, but she's melting now, and said, "I love you Hulkster. You were my man . The only man for me . RIP."

For those unaware, the ex-couple tied the knot in 1983 and parted their ways in 2009.

The couple shared daughter Brooke, 37, and son Nick, 34.

Source:<https://jang.com.pk/en/43811-hulk-hogans-ex-linda-hogan-speaks-up-about-his-shocking-death-news>

Persecution of Ahmadis in Pakistan

By Muhammad Amjad Khan Advocate

Background:

The systematic institutional, state sponsored persecution and denial of religious freedom of Ahmadis started in 1974 when anti Ahmadiyya movement resulted declaring Ahmadis as not Muslim through the constitutional 2nd amendment Act 1974.

Religious belief is a matter of conscience and conscience cannot be compelled. Any attempt to do so is bound to inflict incalculable misery on those who are subjected to such compulsion. Denial of religious freedom to Ahmadis in Pakistan is not merely cleavage between religious groups, it is a state sponsored and institutionalized denial. It can properly be described as an attempt to change theology and prescribe a religion for Ahmadis against their conscience. Freedom of religion begins with freedom to profess faith in religion of one's choice. The right to practice and propagate that faith follows the right to profess. But even before the right to profess there is a right of self-identification. All these rights have been denied to Ahmadis in Pakistan. The copy of some anti Ahmadiyya laws is attached.

The Mullahs are going to introduce some new articles in the constitution of Pakistan, which will allow every Muslim in the country to punish any person or community who is acting against their type of Islam. Moreover, they also intend to include death penalty in the Pakistan penal code for those who change the religion from their brand of Islam to some other religion.

These proposed laws will also be used against Ahmadis like other prevailing laws, such as ordinance NO: XX, section 298-B, 298-C and 295- C of Pakistan penal code. The sections are so widely worded that anything under the sun can be brought within the mischief of these sections.

While the apostasy law is still in the process of legislature, it is being already executed in extra judicial manner, like recent incidents. If Ahmadis will take any legal action against these fundamentalists in response, the opponents might register a false case against them under aforesaid sections, particularly under section 295-C of Pakistan penal code, which may result either death penalty or life imprisonment.

Every manifestation of religious belief for an Ahmadi is considered as an offence, whether it is done privately or in public. In Pakistan, the clergy and state have merged their authorities against Ahmadis through anti Ahmadiyya laws.

The brutal inhuman fanatics and opponents of the Ahmadis have government with them, laws with them, majority with them and all resources with them. The state laws and government officials have provided a license to mullahs to harass, harm and persecute us under the umbrella of anti-Ahmadiyya laws.

Impact of Anti Ahmadiyya laws:

Due to the above-mentioned circumstances, it is not possible for Ahmadis to live in Pakistan as

the hatred, persecution, threats and discrimination is found everywhere any every aspect of their life. They are continuously living under threat and mental torture. In majority of cases the law enforcing authorities do not provide any protection. The Ahmadis are always subject to assault, attack, and provocation by non-Ahmadi Muslims.

Every government remains under the political pressure of fanatics, and they will always remain subject to assault, attack, and provocation by non-Ahmadi Muslims.

The laws of land do not permit them to declare, propagate and practice their faith independently. There is no freedom of religion and conscience for them. They are also deprived of the fundamental right of vote, taking part in elections, obtain employment, and apply for passport, National Identity Card, seeking admission in school, college or university, until and unless they accept themselves as non-Muslim minority against their beliefs and faith. On the other hand, if they try to be considered as Muslim, they are compelled to sign a declaration on oath that we consider the honorable founder of the Ahmadiyya community as an imposter, cheater, and use abusive language against him. This forced obligation is totally against Ahmadiyya faith and hurts their feelings deeply. If they refuse to sign this declaration and declare themselves as Muslim, they shall be deprived of fundamental human rights and there are also penalties for the same including imprisonment and fine.

They are facing hardships due to severe religious discrimination. The Mullahs (fanatic Muslims) enjoy the liberty to use harsh and abusive language against their spiritual leaders. Their life and property always remain in danger and the law enforcement agencies never bother to register a criminal case against the fanatics for their cruel and illegal activities. I believe that the situation has become worse and the incidents of violent actions against Ahmadis have increased.

Some examples of religious persecution also include:

Physical attacks, burning and looting of property, kidnapping, murdering, social boycott. Ahmadis are not allowed to purchase any necessity for living from markets, get medical treatment, to run any trade or business etc. Ways of killing Ahmadis includes shooting, stabbing, stoning by mob, tearing body parts apart, throwing people from the roofs, and throwing them into their burning house. The fanatics induce other Muslims to kill Ahmadis and get blessings from God and have a place in heaven.

The role of authorities and courts:

The authorities of Pakistan do not provide any kind of protection to Ahmadis. They will never do so because the persecution of Ahmadis is constitutionally and legally protected in Pakistan. The laws aim at curbing our freedom of religion and conscious. The ordinance XX and other Anti Ahmadiyya laws have overriding effect of on any other law of Pakistan. The Ahmadi specific laws are so vague and have such wide amplitude that almost every act of an Ahmadi can be brought within their purview, to prosecute and punish any Ahmadi.

Dozens of Ahmadis have been murdered in recent years only due to their faith and almost none of the murderers have been arrested. Thus, the judicial road for them has come to an end. The lower courts have mostly stopped accepting bail applications of Ahmadis, facing trials. Magistrates and police find it convenient to add the crime of blasphemy under 295 C of Pakistan panel code. The government of Pakistan is not heeding towards the international reaction on the persecution and discrimination of Ahmadis on the religious grounds.

Although international human rights organizations have taken notice of this unfortunate situation. Amnesty international, international commission of jurists, Pakistan human rights commission, human right advocate INC. USA etc. have published reports on the subject. The UN sub commission on prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities, in 1985, expressed its great concern over ordinance XX and urged the commission to call on the government of Pakistan to repeal the ordinance and to restore Ahmadi's fundamental human rights. However,

regrettably nothing substantial or effective has been done to compel the authorities in Pakistan to repeal this ordinance.

Examples of brutal incidents:

Following is just a few from hundreds of incidents, which the Ahmadiyya community faces every day now and then. The recent killing of many Ahmadis in Karachi and Sargodha are current examples.

In Khattalian, Pakistan on 30 October 2000 some fanatic mullahs came into one of their mosques and brutally murdered five Ahmadis and left 10 badly injured. In another incident in Takht Hazara, Pakistan on 10 November 2000 where innocent Ahmadis were killed by a mob of people, mosque was demolished and set it on fire. Among those killed Ahmadis there were two children. The fanatics killed innocent Ahmadis brutally with guns, knives and axe their faces become unidentifiable. On 28th May 2010 during attack on two places of Ahmadiyya worship, 86 Ahmadis were massacred.

Even during the court hearings, sometimes Mullahs take the matter in their hands. For example, in Peshawar Pakistan two Ahmadis were stoned to death when they were being taken out from the court along with the law enforcement agencies

The current Situation

Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Pakistan is facing the worst ever religious persecution in the current era of human history.

This persecution is constitutionally guarded and state sponsored. The anti-Ahmadiyya laws are so widely worded that any legal act of an Ahmadi can be brought under the mischief of these laws.

Hundreds of Ahmadis have been martyred in recent years. Almost every place of worship is being attacked. The domes, minarets and Mehrabs are demolished. Ahmadi graves are being destroyed and remains of dead bodies are being exhumed and humiliated.

Thousands of Ahmadis including children and women in almost every city of Pakistan have been arrested just because of offering their worship prayers in places of worship or in their homes.

Dozens of Ahmadis are in prisons either after awarding death penalty or waiting for the judgment under false allegations of blasphemy which includes reciting holy Quran or offering Durood on their beloved prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)

They are being forced to change their names and not to celebrate their religious festivals.

Even during last few months one Ahmadi was stoned to death in mosque during mob attack, another had died in the jail custody and famous Ahmadi surgeon was brutally murdered in his hospital. This situation is worsening day by day and the government authorities are not taking notice of this.

Conclusion:

The Ahmadi specific laws are so vague and have such wide amplitude that almost every act of an Ahmadi can be brought within its purview to harass, prosecute and discriminate against any Ahmadis. Their life, prestige and property always remain in danger.

The clergy and state have merged their authority. The legislation and judicial pronouncement provide clear and convincing evidence that Ahmadis are being forced to change Theology. Anti-Ahmadiyya laws are so widely worded that anything under the sun can be brought within the mischief of the Law. Every manifestation of religious belief for an Ahmadi is an offence, whether it is done privately or in public. Anti Ahmadiyya laws have transformed the daily life of an Ahmadi in Pakistan as a crime.

Why reading one page daily may be the best thing you do

By Saniya Ahmad Khan



Discover how reading just one page a day for 30 days can sharpen your focus, improve memory, and reduce stress—one habit, big results.

In a world where time feels like a luxury and attention spans are shrinking, the idea of reading an entire book may seem overwhelming. But what if the secret to better brain health, increased focus, and emotional clarity was as simple as reading just one page a day?

Yes—just one page.

This tiny commitment takes no more than 2-3 minutes, yet the compounding effects after 30 days can be surprisingly powerful. Think of it like planting a seed; while it may not look like much in the beginning, with daily nourishment, it begins to take root—changing the landscape of your mind, habits, and even your life.

Let's break down what really happens to your brain when you stick to this seemingly small reading habit for a month—and why it could be the smartest move you make this year.

How one page a day goes a long way

1. Improves focus in a distracted world

Reading one page demands your attention. Even in a short burst, it pulls your mind into the present moment and away from digital noise.

Why it works: When you read, your brain activates the prefrontal cortex—the area responsible for focus and decision-making. Like a muscle, the more it's engaged, the stronger your concentration becomes. Over time, your attention span grows, making it easier to focus on other areas of life too.

2. Boosts memory and retention

Each time you pick up the book and recall what happened before, your brain is strengthening memory pathways. Even reading one page requires you to track information—names, ideas, timelines, or arguments.

Why it works: Reading boosts neural connectivity, especially in the left temporal cortex

(linked to language and memory). Repetition improves recall, meaning that even small daily reading trains your brain to remember better.

3. Reduces stress and calms the mind

Reading creates a mental escape. Just one page can transport you into a different world, helping you detach from stress and anxiety.

Why it works: Studies have found that reading for just 6 minutes can reduce stress by up to 68%. This works better than music or walking because reading demands enough cognitive focus to redirect attention away from stressors—helping you feel calmer.

4. Strengthens vocabulary and communication

Even on a single page, you're likely to encounter new words, sentence styles, or ways of expressing ideas. Over time, this expands your vocabulary and improves how you communicate.

Why it works: Reading regularly builds what's called passive vocabulary—the words you understand but may not actively use. Exposure makes them familiar, which eventually makes them usable in everyday conversations, writing, or work emails.

5. Fosters a growth mindset

Reading daily, even just one page, builds discipline. It tells your brain: "I follow through." This small success becomes part of your identity and reinforces the idea that consistent effort leads to real change.

Why it works: Psychologists say identity-based habits (like "I'm a reader") are more effective than goal-based ones. One page a day is achievable, which makes it sustainable. The habit becomes proof that you can change—leading to a growth mindset.

6. Improves sleep quality

If you read a page before bed, especially from a physical book, it helps cue your body that it's time to sleep. It replaces screen time with something soothing and grounding.

Why it works: Unlike scrolling through your phone, which emits blue light that disrupts melatonin, reading a book relaxes your nervous system. This consistent bedtime ritual improves sleep hygiene, helping you fall asleep faster and sleep more deeply.

7. Inspires consistency and self-belief

There's power in keeping a promise to yourself. Reading one page a day shows you're capable of creating change—one day at a time. This improves self-esteem and builds a sense of control.

Why it works: The brain rewards consistency. Each time you complete your page, dopamine is released—giving you a small boost of motivation and satisfaction. This reward loop reinforces the behaviour and makes you more likely to continue it.

Final thoughts

What starts as a two-minute commitment quickly becomes something deeper. Your brain changes. Your thoughts become sharper. You feel more confident, calmer, and in control. After 30 days, it's no longer about the number of pages. It's about who you're becoming: someone who honours habits, seeks growth, and makes time for their mind. So start today. Just one page. Because from that one page, a whole new chapter begins.

Source:<https://yourstory.com/2025/07/reading-one-page-everyday>



3 foods that can improve kidney function

Dr. Eric Berg suggests incorporating cucumbers for hydration to flush out waste. Lemons, rich in Vitamin C and citrate, reduce kidney stone risk and lower uric acid. Parsley's antioxidant properties combat oxidative stress, improve renal function, and potentially prevent kidney-related disorders, according to studies.

The kidneys play a vital role in our body, filtering waste from the blood. Kidney health is crucial because kidneys filter waste and excess fluids from the blood, maintaining fluid and electrolyte balance, and regulating blood pressure. What we eat has a significant impact on kidney health. Dr. Eric Berg, a chiropractor and nutrition author, has now shared three foods that can improve kidney function. Let's take a closer look.

Cucumbers

Keeping the body hydrated is crucial for kidney health. Dr. Berg suggests incorporating cucumbers into the diet. Cucumbers have 95% water content, which means they provide additional hydration. This water content can help in flushing out waste products from the kidneys, like creatinine and uric acid. Among the other water-rich vegetables, cucumbers are one of the lowest in calories. This means you can munch as many, without worrying about your weight loss goals. You can add them to salads or prepare cucumber-infused water to improve hydration levels in the body.

Lemon

Second on the list is lemon. Yes, when life gives you lemons, make lemonade and boost your kidney function. The high Vitamin C and citrate content in lemon plays

a significant role in reducing the risk of kidney stones.

Studies have shown that drinking half a cup of lemon juice concentrate diluted in water each day, or the juice of two lemons, can increase urine citrate and likely reduce the risk of kidney stones. Squeezing fresh lemon juice into water or tea is a simple way to harness these benefits. Regular consumption may also help to lower uric acid levels, which can contribute to kidney strain when elevated. However, people who have acid reflex or sensitive stomach may have to consult a doctor before incorporating lemon into daily diet.

Parsley

Yes, that's right. This humble herb has protective effects on the kidneys. The antioxidant properties of parsley help reduce oxidative stress, which is crucial when it comes to kidney diseases. Parsley contains several flavonoids, such as apigenin, luteolin, and quercetin. These compounds are known for their potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. A 2024 study found that parsley can reduce oxidative stress, improve metabolic biomarkers, enhance renal function, and inhibit the growth of various bacterial and fungal strains.

This herb also has potential in preventing and managing kidney-related disorders, infections, and other chronic conditions associated with oxidative damage and inflammation. Another 2017 study in rats with kidney stones found that those treated with parsley had decreased urinary calcium and protein excretion. An increased urinary pH and urination were also reported in the rats fed with parsley regularly and consistently.

Source: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/life-style/health-fitness/health-news/3-foods-that-can-improve-kidney-function/articleshow/122816958.cms>

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