



April, 2026

Price: US\$ 4, per copy

Annual Subscription: US \$ 48

E-Mail: info@theglobalvoice.net

www.theglobalvoice.net

A Magazine for Scholarly, Literary, Political, Economic and Religious *Activities*



Page 24



Page 4



Editor in Chief
Mohiuddin Abbasi

Editor
Munazza Khan

Assistant Editor
Dr. Busharat Elahi Jamil

Associate Editor
Amina Nuzhat
Attiya Wasee

Bureau Chief Canada
M. Sultan Qureshi



Page

1. Editorial
4. Even a 'superpower' is nowhere near as powerful as it looks
7. Why the world should worry about Israel's nuclear doctrine
9. The Gulf Is About More Than Oil. The Iran War Is Proving It. | Opinion
11. King opens world's longest coastal path around England
14. Canada's Supreme Court must strike down Quebec's Bill 21
16. EDITORIAL: Beware PM's benign view of China, India
18. Ukraine announces 'mutually beneficial' defence deal with Saudi Arabia
20. Is the US slipping into another uncontrollable war quagmire?
22. See Ramses II's Intricately Decorated Coffin and Rare Treasures From His Reign at This New Immersive Exhibition
24. Global Muslim leader denounces Western interference in Muslim nations, urges Islamic countries to unite peacefully and rely on God for protection, not Western powers
27. Archaeologists Uncover World's Oldest Gold Relics in a 5th Millennium BC Tomb Tied to Prehistoric Power
29. 'The world is in great need of major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics'
32. Hospital attack in Sudan kills 64, including 13 children
33. Nearly 5 million children are still dying annually before their fifth birthday: Here's why
35. UN weather agency warns of record 'climate imbalance' as planetary warming accelerates
37. Bird's-eye view of London seen in 280-year-old map
38. The 444-Day Crisis: Why America Failed to Resolve Iran in 1979
40. Elections of the Foreigners' Advisory Council in Darmstadt, Germany - 2026
41. Peace Enforcement, Responsibility to Protect, and the Crisis of Legitimacy in International Law
43. World's Smartest Mathematician

Disclaimer

The Views and opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy of magazine.

Send your writeups at
info@theglobalvoice.net
Write to:
Monthly The Global Voice
Phone: +44 794 007 7825



Editorial

Dr. Busharat Elahi Jamil - Assistant Editor



The United States and Israel made a grave mistake on February 28, 2026, by invading Iran. In reality, this attack appears to be a continuation and extension of Israel's aspiration for a "Greater Israel." However, Iran has so far significantly undermined Israel's ambitions of dominance and regional expansion. The conflict seems to have been initiated on the assumption that Iran would be preoccupied with its internal resources following the death of Ali Khamenei. Yet this miscalculation is proving costly, and even after a month of fighting, Iran shows no intention of ending the conflict without reaching what it considers a meaningful conclusion.

In the aftermath of the attack, the Iranian nation has largely united, setting aside internal differences and supporting its government in resisting external pressure. This has been seen by many as a strong display of national resolve. Iran's defence posture and strategic response have also drawn global attention. Additionally, its position appears to be strengthened by the backing of China and Russia. The unfolding situation has made international alignments more visible. Meanwhile, reports suggest that the United States is incurring significant financial costs, and Israel—particularly Tel Aviv—faces increasing strain. Many civilians are living under difficult conditions, with some seeking safety in shelters or leaving affected areas.

Tragically, several Muslim-majority, particularly Gulf, countries are supporting the United States and Israel, even offering their territories for strategic use against Iran. At the same time, Iran's actions in the region are placing pressure on neighbouring Gulf states, influencing shifts in their policies. Some European countries, including Germany, Spain, and Switzerland, appear more cautious in their support. Within the United States, President Trump faces growing criticism, with protests such as the "NO KING" demonstrations reflecting concerns over his administration's approach. The broader global climate is increasingly tense, with fears that continued escalation could lead to a wider conflict if current challenges remain unaddressed.

Nearly 3 million people have reportedly been displaced, and around 1,800 civilians have died in Iran as a result of this conflict, contributing to ongoing tensions in the Strait of Hormuz. Israel is also facing serious humanitarian and security challenges. Groups such as Hizbullah and the Houthis are reportedly involved in the conflict on Iran's side. Iran has also targeted US installations and commercial hubs in Gulf countries. On a global scale, concerns over an emerging oil crisis are growing. Internationally, oil crises are underway. The UN must take significant action to ease tensions and curb Israel's aggressive activities with the peaceful input of Iran. Resolving this conflict and establishing lasting peace now remains an urgent priority.

Even a 'superpower' is nowhere near as powerful as it looks

By Bill Emmott



Yet again, the US-Israel war against Iran is showing that even a so-called superpower is nowhere near as powerful as it looks.

Although we will all suffer the political and economic effects of this war for many months and years to come, we humbler powers in Europe should find this renewed proof quite reassuring. With the important exception of nuclear weapons, the gap between what a superpower can achieve and what humbler, so-called “middle powers” can do is a lot smaller than it seems.

It is tempting to attribute this to the strategic incompetence that has been demonstrated by the Trump administration. Despite having had many months to plan and prepare for this war, Donald Trump and his team have been taken by surprise by the ability of the Iranian regime not just to survive but also to hit back against American military assets and Arab allies and to restrict the flow of oil out of the famously narrow Strait of Hormuz.

Yet the most shocking sign of incompetence has not been the lack of planning or the absence of clear objectives, but the failure to learn the lessons of almost every other war involving a superpower since 1945.

That lesson should have been made clear by the Vietnam war that ended in a costly American failure in 1975. It should have been made clear by Russia's disastrous invasion of Afghanistan in the 1980s and then by the equally disastrous American failures in Afghanistan and Iraq during the past 20 years, failures that Trump himself highlighted during his three election campaigns. It should also have been made clear by Russia's failure to force Ukraine into submission since its attempted invasion in February 2022.

In the modern, post-colonial era, even the greatest military power in the world cannot force a determined opponent to lay down its weapons, especially when that opponent continues to have popular support. The delusion common to Vietnam, Afghanistan, Iraq, Ukraine and now Iran has been the belief that those countries' populations would treat the superpower as a liberator.

Some people did think the outside attacker was a liberator, in all those cases, but a lot more did not, and as in Iran today many considered the superpower to be just as evil as the dictatorial regime under whose rule they previously suffered. Perhaps a point will

come in Iran when the regime finally collapses, but even then neither peace nor friendly collaboration can be considered the likeliest outcomes.

There is another painful lesson from this war, and an important question will be how the United States chooses to learn from it, especially during the remaining two-and-three-quarter years of the Trump administration.

This lesson is that even a country that spends more than US\$900 billion every year on its military, a defense budget more than three times larger than China's and four times larger than Russia's, can find its forces and weapons stocks severely stretched and depleted after a short, intense war against an already weakened adversary.

America's allies in Asia, led by Japan and South Korea, have watched with growing concern the fact that the United States has had to move crucial military assets from Asia to the Middle East in order to fight this supposedly short war. This has included aircraft carriers, a special US Marines regiment and several missile-defence systems. This is despite the many lectures given to Asian allies in recent years by the Trump team and by President Joe Biden's administration about how vital those assets are to deter China and North Korea.

The war in Iran has created big holes in the structure of deterrence, especially against China. The speed and intensity with which America has used up much of its stock of its most powerful missiles and of its expensive missile-interceptors has also exposed a lack of production capacity and of stockpiles.

American defense-planners have declared ever since the end of the Cold War that the US military would not now be big enough to be able to fight two wars simultaneously around the world. The Iran war may have displayed the impressive destructive power of the US and Israeli militaries, but it has also displayed clear limits to the capacity of the US military to fight even one war without quickly feeling the consequences.

There are, essentially, two ways in which America could respond to this lesson. One would be to abandon the pretence of being a global military power by cutting back, sharply, forces and bases America maintains overseas whether in Europe, the Middle East, the Indian Ocean, the western hemisphere or Asia. By reducing overstretch and the high overhead costs of foreign bases, such cutbacks might enable the US\$921 billion budget to be spent more effectively.

That sort of response, however, given Trump's angry reaction to European and Asian allies' refusal to join the US-Israeli war on Iran, could lead to an American withdrawal from NATO and an even more explicit support for Russia in Ukraine than Trump has already displayed.

It could also lead to an agreement with China that opens the way towards a Chinese annexation of Taiwan, whether by force or by coercion. Trump has often said that Taiwan is too far away for the United States to be able to defend it, and the overstretch shown by the Iran war might have confirmed him in this view.

The other way in which America could respond to this lesson, however, would be by embarking upon a major effort to repair the shortcomings that the Iran war has exposed: inefficient spending, inadequate defense production and, above all, inadequate coordination with allies.

If America wants to be serious about deterring China from bullying its neighbours and invading Taiwan, and the China-Russia partnership from dominating the world, then it will

need to use Japanese and South Korean shipbuilding capacity, greater collaboration over missile defence, and a genuine renewal of the NATO and Asian alliances.

This will not happen under the Trump administration, given Trump's clear contempt for Europe and our well-justified distrust of him. But in the longer term, the only viable option for an overstretched America that wishes to play a global role and deter China will be to rebuild the alliance system that served it so well during the Cold War.

In Europe, we have known since Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine that we need to do a lot more to defend ourselves, and we surely know now that we have to do a lot more immediately to support Ukraine. But also, as non-superpowers, we have long known that collaboration, active diplomacy and support for international law can be powerful tools, sometimes more powerful than bombs and missiles.

Russia, America and Israel may now have destroyed the force of international law for many years to come, through their brazenly illegal attacks. But they have meanwhile confirmed that while missiles may look powerful in the short term, other more European-style geopolitical tools are essential for the longer term.

Source:<https://asiatimes.com/2026/03/even-a-superpower-is-nowhere-near-as-powerful-as-it-looks/>

Pope Leo says God rejects prayers of leaders who wage wars

By Joshua McElwee

VATICAN CITY, March 29 (Reuters) - Pope Leo said on Sunday that God rejects the prayers of leaders who start wars and have "hands full of blood", in unusually forceful remarks as the Iran war entered its second month. Addressing tens of thousands in St. Peter's Square on Palm Sunday, the celebration that opens the holy week leading up to Easter for the world's 1.4 billion Catholics, the pontiff called the conflict "atrocious" and said Jesus cannot be used to justify any wars.

"This is our God: Jesus, King of Peace, who rejects war, whom no one can use to justify war," Leo, the first U.S. pope, told crowds in brilliant sunshine. "(Jesus) does not listen to the prayers of those who wage war, but rejects them, saying: 'Even though you make many prayers, I will not listen: your hands are full of blood'," he said, citing a Bible passage.

Leo did not specifically name any world leaders, but he has been ramping up criticism of the Iran war in recent weeks. During an appeal at the end of Sunday's celebration, the pope lamented that Christians in the Middle East "are suffering the consequences of an atrocious conflict" and may not be able to celebrate Easter.

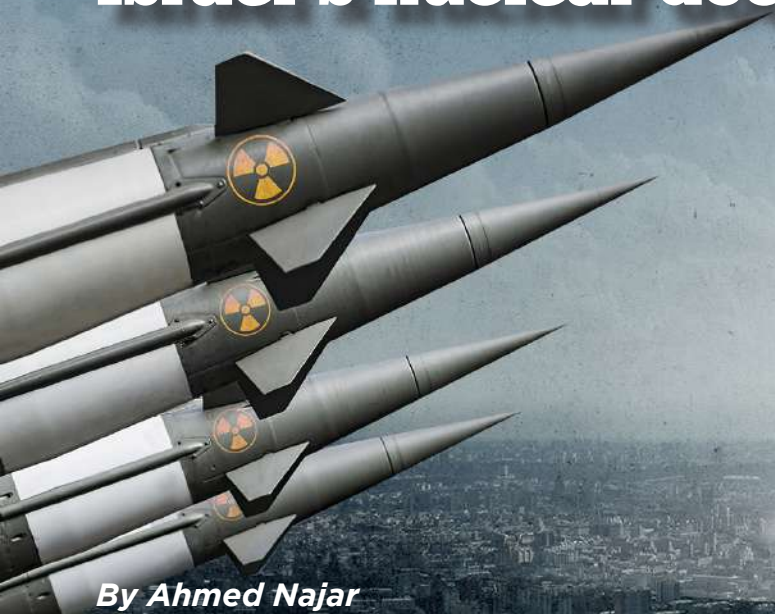
The pope, who is known for choosing his words carefully, has repeatedly called for an immediate ceasefire in the conflict and said on Monday that military airstrikes are indiscriminate and should be banned. Some U.S. officials have invoked Christian language to justify the joint U.S.-Israeli strikes on Iran on February 28 that initiated the expanding war.

U.S. Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, who has started leading Christian prayer services at the Pentagon, prayed at a service on Wednesday for "overwhelming violence of action against those who deserve no mercy". In his homily on Sunday, Leo referenced a Bible passage in which Jesus, about to be arrested ahead of his crucifixion, rebuked one of his followers for striking the person arresting him with a sword.

"(Jesus) did not arm himself, or defend himself, or fight any war," Leo said. "He revealed the gentle face of God, who always rejects violence. Rather than saving himself, he allowed himself to be nailed to the cross."

Source:<https://www.reuters.com/world/pope-leo-says-god-rejects-prayers-leaders-who-wage-wars-2026-03-29/>

Why the world should worry about Israel's nuclear doctrine



By Ahmed Najar

The threshold the Israeli authorities have set for the use of a nuclear weapon is dangerously low.

For decades, the world has treated Israel's nuclear arsenal as an awkward secret — something everyone knows exists but few are willing to discuss openly. Israel has never officially acknowledged possessing nuclear weapons, yet it is widely understood among security experts that the country maintains a significant nuclear capability.

Estimates from institutions such as the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute suggest Israel possesses roughly around 80 nuclear warheads, along with delivery systems that could include aircraft and ballistic missiles. The policy governing this arsenal is known as “nuclear opacity.”

Israel neither confirms nor denies the existence of its weapons. In practice, this ambiguity has allowed the international community to avoid confronting a difficult question: under what circumstances would Israel actually use them?

That question matters more today than at any point in recent decades, as the United States and Israel wage a dangerous war on Iran. On Saturday, Iran struck the Israeli city of Dimona which houses a key nuclear facility, demonstrating that it can retaliate for attacks on its own nuclear sites.

Israeli strategic thinking has long been shaped by the fear of an existential threat. Unlike most nuclear states, whose doctrines revolve around deterrence or competition with other nuclear powers, Israel's security narrative is rooted in the belief that the country could face destruction if a war turns decisively against it. Israeli leaders have repeatedly framed regional conflicts — from the wars of 1967 and 1973 to present confrontations with Iran and armed groups in Gaza and Lebanon — as struggles for national survival. That mindset matters enormously when nuclear weapons are involved.

In most nuclear doctrines, the threshold for nuclear use is deliberately set extraordinarily high. Nuclear weapons exist primarily to deter other nuclear powers. Israel's strategic thinking introduces a different variable: the possibility that nuclear weapons could be considered if the state believes its survival is in jeopardy due a threat from a non-nuclear state.

Strategic literature has long discussed what is sometimes referred to as the “Samson Option”

— the idea that Israel could resort to nuclear weapons if faced with defeat. Whether or not such a doctrine formally exists, the logic behind it is clear. If a state genuinely believes its existence is threatened, the pressure to escalate dramatically becomes far greater.

That concern becomes even more significant when viewed against Israel's current regional posture. Israel is engaged in a widening network of conflicts and confrontations across the Middle East — from Gaza to Lebanon, Syria and Iran. The possibility of wars unfolding across multiple fronts is no longer theoretical.

In such a scenario, Israeli leaders might perceive themselves not merely as fighting a conventional war but confronting a regional coalition. The more a state interprets its wars as existential, the lower the psychological barrier to extreme escalation becomes. This is precisely why nuclear doctrines in most countries are constrained by rigid strategic frameworks and international oversight.

Israel's nuclear arsenal, however, exists almost entirely outside international regulation. Israel is not a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and its nuclear facilities are not subject to the same inspection regimes that govern most other states.

This creates a rare situation in global security: a nuclear-armed state whose capabilities and doctrine remain largely shielded from international scrutiny. While the world has spent decades focusing on preventing nuclear proliferation elsewhere in the Middle East, the region's only existing nuclear arsenal has remained largely beyond debate.

Recent events in Gaza also raise difficult questions about escalation thresholds. Since October 2023, Israel's military campaign in Gaza has resulted in the killing of tens of thousands of Palestinians and the near-total destruction of much of the territory's infrastructure. Entire neighbourhoods have been flattened. Hospitals, schools and civilian infrastructure have repeatedly been struck. The scale of destruction has led many human rights organisations and legal scholars to describe the campaign as genocidal.

The intensity of the bombardment has been extraordinary. Some military analysts estimate that the explosive power dropped on Gaza during the early stages of the war alone amounted to several times the explosive yield of the Hiroshima atomic bomb.

The comparison does not suggest equivalence between nuclear and conventional weapons. The devastation of a nuclear detonation would be vastly greater. But it does reveal something important about the scale of force Israeli leaders have been willing to deploy when they believe national security is at stake. If a state is willing to unleash such overwhelming destruction through conventional means, the uncomfortable question arises: what would its threshold be if it believed it was actually losing a war?

Another factor rarely discussed in strategic debates is the political climate within Israel itself. The current Israeli government is widely described as the most hardline in the country's history, with ministers who openly advocate extreme positions regarding Palestinians and regional adversaries.

At the same time, Israeli society has undergone significant political shifts in recent years, with growing support for more nationalist and militarised policies. That makes the threshold of what could be perceived as an "existential threat" even lower.

All of this should worry the rest of the nuclear states and the international institutions tasked with averting a nuclear Armageddon. And in the context of the ongoing US-Israeli war with Iran, it should spring them into action.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2026/3/22/why-the-world-should-worry-about-israels-nuclear-doctrine>



The Gulf Is About More Than Oil. The Iran War Is Proving It.

| Opinion

By Jason D. Greenblatt

President Trump is clear: Long-standing threats like the one emanating from the Iranian regime cannot be managed indefinitely. At some point, they must be confronted directly. That moment has arrived.

The region is under attack. Missiles and drones are targeting infrastructure, economies, and civilian life. But this is not a story of a region breaking. It is a story of a region proving the resilience of what it has built.

Because what is being tested right now is not just security. It is the economic and strategic model the Gulf has spent years, and in some cases decades, building. And under pressure, it is holding up remarkably well.

Across the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar, different paths, sometimes overlapping, have led to a shared direction. Each has invested heavily in building economies that are open, globally connected, and less dependent on a single source of revenue.

The UAE has spent decades establishing itself as a diversified global hub. Saudi Arabia is advancing a sweeping transformation through Vision 2030. Qatar has strengthened its position as a major energy, aviation, and logistics center. All three have significantly expanded their global reach. Different timelines. Different focus. Same direction. And that direction is now being targeted.

The Iranian regime's attacks have struck airports, ports, energy infrastructure, and civilian areas. These are not peripheral sites. They are central to how the Gulf connects to the world, and how the world connects through it. Trade routes, logistics hubs, financial centers, energy networks, and airports that serve as global transit hubs, moving tens of millions of passengers between continents each year.

The disruption is real, and at times significant. Airlines have rerouted and canceled flights. Some airport and energy operations have been temporarily reduced or halted. Shipping and logistics have adjusted in response to heightened risks, including instability around the Strait of Hormuz. Businesses have activated contingency plans, shifted personnel, and adapted supply chains in real time.

But disruption is not breakdown. Air defense systems have intercepted the overwhelming majority of incoming threats. Core financial systems remain stable. Trade continues to move, even with delays. Companies are not exiting. They are adapting and continuing to operate.

The system is under pressure, and it is performing. That is not by chance. It reflects how these countries were built.

Diversification has created multiple engines of growth. Financial reserves provide stability. Infrastructure has been built for scale and continuity. Leadership has consistently prioritized execution, speed, and long-term planning.

Those choices are now being validated. There is also a human dimension that is often missed from the outside.

Speak with people across the region, Emiratis, Saudis, Qataris, and expatriates who live and work there, and a consistent sentiment emerges. There is confidence. Confidence in leadership. Confidence in direction. Confidence that this period will pass.

A large majority of residents have stayed, continuing their work and daily lives through uncertainty because they believe in where these countries are going and how their leadership is managing this moment. While some have left for understandable reasons, many will return for the same reasons they came: opportunity, stability, and growth. Those fundamentals remain intact.

That matters—because capital and talent are drawn to places that manage risk, create opportunity, take care of their people, and continue to function under pressure.

That is what the Gulf is demonstrating.

Investors, companies, and institutions are watching closely. What they are seeing is not collapse. They are seeing systems that absorb pressure and continue to operate. That builds confidence. There is also a broader strategic context. The region's trajectory will not be defined by this moment alone. It will be defined by what has been built, and what continues to be built.

These economies are evolving, investing, and expanding even amid uncertainty. Their ambition to serve as global hubs, attract talent and tourism, host major global events, and lead across energy, aviation, finance, and technology remains unchanged.

If anything, it has been reinforced. And when this period passes, the story will not be about what was disrupted. It will be about what endured, and the momentum that continued despite it.

The UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar will continue to deepen their roles as global hubs and expand their reach across the global economy. They will move forward. And they will move faster.

Because resilience proven under fire does not just preserve confidence. It multiplies it.

What the Gulf has built is not fragile. It is built to win. And when this period passes, the Gulf will not simply return to where it was.

It will rise stronger, more confident, and more central to the global economy than ever.

Source:<https://www.newsweek.com/the-gulf-is-about-more-than-oil-the-iran-war-is-proving-it-opinion-11713691>

King Charles has inaugurated a new footpath stretching around the entire coast of England.

At 2,689 miles long, it is the longest managed coastal walking route in the world, according to Natural England, the government body which created it.

Its name is quite a trek too - King Charles III England Coast Path - but for the first time it creates a continuous trail, allowing walkers to explore England's shoreline step by step.

Along the way, it passes through some of the country's most beautiful and varied landscapes, from salt marshes and sandy beaches to cliffs, dunes and historic coastal towns.

Among the highlights is the iconic chalk downland of the Seven Sisters in East Sussex, which also forms part of a newly designated National Nature Reserve being announced by Natural England.

The King inaugurated the coastal path and the new nature reserve at a reception hosted by the South Downs National Park Authority.

He later walked a section of the newly completed path at Seven Sisters, joined by Natural England Chair Tony Juniper and Environment Secretary Emma Reynolds.

Juniper said the path "is a testament to how public enjoyment, conservation, heritage, history and community can come together, helping make life better for millions of people."

Much of the new coastal route already existed, but more than 1,000 miles of new paths have been created, and many other sections upgraded. Paths have been resurfaced, stiles removed, boardwalks built and bridges installed.

The project was initiated during Gordon Brown's government, and it has taken 18 years and seven prime ministers to get to this stage.

About 80% of the route is now open and most of the rest of the path is due to be completed by the end of the year.

King opens world's longest coastal path around England

By Justin Rowlatt



"It is brilliant - the best thing I'll do in my working life," says Neil Constable, who led the project for Natural England.

For him, the length of the path isn't really the point. What makes it so special, he says, is that you can walk to the coast anywhere in England, turn left or right, and walk beside the sea for as long as you like.

Creating the route required new legislation - the Marine and Coastal Access Act, passed in 2009 - as well as years of careful planning and extensive work along the shoreline to establish a clear and continuous footpath.

Natural England says that in many places, new rights of access have opened land that was previously off-limits to the public - including beaches, dunes and cliff-tops between the path and the sea.

It says accessibility for those with reduced mobility has been improved so that more people can enjoy sections of the trail.

Gaps in the existing network of footpaths have been filled with a focus on bringing the route closer to the water and connecting stretches of coastline that had never been joined by a single walking trail.

But in a few places, walkers must briefly leave the trail. In north-west England, for example, a ferry across the Mersey is needed to follow the route.

One stretch in south Devon is particularly challenging. At the River Erme, there is no bridge or ferry, and the land further upstream is privately owned and inaccessible. Walkers must therefore roll up their trousers and wade across the river within an hour either side of low tide.

"It's all part of the experience," says Constable.

The path has been designed with the heavier rains and rising seas that climate change is expected to bring in mind.

For the first time in English law there is provision for the route to be moved inland - "rolled back", Natural England calls it - if the coastline erodes or shifts.

This allows the trail to adapt to the changing shoreline and aims to ensure that the coastal walk remains continuous and practical for generations to come.

Recent weeks have shown how dynamic the route can be. A large section of the path on the cliffs outside Charmouth in Dorset was lost in early February after heavy winter rains caused a landslide.

"The path was closed and a diversion was put in place," explains Lorna Sherriff, who heads up the team that manages the South West Coast Path - the longest and hilliest section of the new trail.

The diversion added an extra mile and a half and - worse still - took walkers along roads. Sherriff says her team quickly arranged a 15-metre rollback with the landowner, and within weeks the path was open again.

"Without this rollback provision in place that would have taken us months," she says.

The Ramblers charity has been campaigning for greater access to England's coastline since the end of World War II. Jack Cornish, director of England for the Ramblers, describes the new path as "transformational".

"It creates a band of access land from the trail to the high water mark, so that means you can leave the trail to go and roam the beaches," Cornish says. "You can picnic - and on an island nation you can really enjoy our coast for the first time."

The route also raises the possibility of a continuous coastal walk around the entire island of Britain.

The new English coast path links with the Wales Coast Path - an 870-mile route encircling the Welsh coastline. It was completed in 2012 and was the first path in the world to follow an entire national coastline.

There is no single official coastal trail in Scotland, though much of the shoreline is accessible thanks to Scotland's "right to roam" law passed more than 20 years ago. Estimates of its mainland coastline vary depending on how it is measured, but it is often put at around 5,500 miles.

Taken together, a continuous coastal walk around Britain would therefore total some 9,000 miles. At an average of 15 miles a day, it would take almost two years to complete, assuming no rest days.

If you want to walk some - maybe even all - of the King Charles III England Coast Path, you can access route maps at the National Trails website.

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cyOdxexdd8xo>

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.

We thank you for your contributions to the following account :

Bank Name:

Lloyds Bank PLC

Account Name:

The Global Voice

Account No: 42534160

Sort Code: 30-96-26

IBAN: GB89LoyD30962612534160

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

May Allah be with you - Amen



Canada's Supreme Court must strike down Quebec's Bill 21

By y Stephen Brown and Howard Sapers

Under the guise of preserving secularism, this law allows the exclusion of people based on their religious identity.

On Monday, the Supreme Court of Canada will begin a four-day hearing for one of the most consequential constitutional cases in the country's recent history. At issue is Quebec's so-called "secularism law", known as Bill 21 – a law enacted in 2019 that prohibits certain public sector workers from wearing visible religious symbols at work.

It bars many public sector employees, including teachers, prosecutors, police officers, and judges, from wearing religious symbols such as hijabs, turbans, kippahs, and other visible expressions of faith while at work.

There is much at stake in this case that raises fundamental questions about religious freedom, equality, and the limits of state power in a constitutional democracy. In addition, another significant issue is that to get the bill passed, Quebec's government had used the "notwithstanding clause", a unique provision in Canadian law that allows it to override fundamental rights and freedoms. No other constitutional democracy in the world has a similar blanket override of fundamental rights and freedoms.

The Quebec government claims that the law is necessary to preserve the religious neutrality of the state. Yet Bill 21 does the opposite: by forcing some individuals to choose between their profession and their religious identity, the Quebec government is not remaining neutral – it is effectively excluding people of faith from public sector employment.

The use of this extraordinary, and until recently rarely used, constitutional mechanism has turned the spotlight on Bill 21 beyond the borders of Quebec and

the debate over secularism and religious freedoms. It has become a test of how far a democratic government can go in limiting fundamental rights and freedoms. Evidence before the courts shows that Bill 21 affects religious people of many faiths, including Jewish men who wear kippahs and Sikh men and women who wear turbans; but its impact falls particularly heavily on Muslim women who wear the hijab. For many Muslim women who wear headscarves, teaching and other public service careers have effectively been closed off.

The message of exclusion that this law sends to young people is especially troubling. Generations of young people in Quebec are being told that their full participation in public life requires abandoning visible aspects of their identity.

This is why the National Council of Canadian Muslims and the Canadian Civil Liberties Association launched the constitutional challenge against Bill 21. The Supreme Court of Canada must consider the implications, and possible limitations, of allowing governments to sidestep rights protections through pre-emptive use of constitutional override powers. The court's decision will help determine whether constitutional rights in Canada remain meaningful constraints on government power, or whether they can be suspended whenever politically convenient.

These questions extend far beyond Canada. Across Europe and elsewhere, debates about secularism have increasingly centred on restrictions targeting religious expression, often impacting Muslim women in particular.

Canada often prides itself on being a model of multicultural democracy, one that accommodates diversity. Bill 21 challenges that reputation by testing whether neutrality can coexist with policies that effectively exclude people of visible faith from public service.

True secularism does not demand the erasure of religious identity. A neutral state does not require citizens to shed visible expressions of belief in order to participate fully in public life.

The Supreme Court of Canada now has the opportunity to reaffirm these principles and clarify that constitutional rights cannot be easily set aside. At a time when countries around the world are grappling with questions of belonging, pluralism, and the rights of minorities, the Canadian court's ruling will send an important signal about whether liberal democracies are willing to uphold their commitments to freedom and equality.

We say this is not an abstract idea, but an imperative to demonstrate that commitments to freedom and equality are more than mere words.

Source: <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2026/3/22/canadas-supreme-court-must-strike-down-quebecs-bill-21>



EDITORIAL: Beware PM's benign view of China, India

The foreign interference commissioner identified China as ‘the most active perpetrator of foreign interference targeting Canada’s democratic institutions’

It defies belief that China and India — despite their denials — have ended foreign interference in Canada, simply because the federal government is now led by Prime Minister Mark Carney instead of Justin Trudeau.

The fact that the Carney government is downplaying those concerns suggests it's willing to pursue trade deals at the expense of the safety of Canadians.

Foreign interference commissioner Marie-Josée Hogue identified China as “the most active perpetrator of foreign interference targeting Canada’s democratic institutions” in her final report last year and that it “views Canada as a high-priority target.”

But now, in addition to a trade deal with China resulting from Carney’s recent trip to meet with President Xi Jinping, we also have an agreement with China, ostensibly to combat crime, as part of a “new strategic partnership.”

This despite the fact as early as 2019, Trudeau was warned by the all-party National Security and Intelligence Committee of Parliamentarians that he appointed, that China, through its National Intelligence Law, compels all Chinese companies and citizens — “regardless of whether or not they are also citizens of other countries” — to co-operate with China’s intelligence and security agencies at home and abroad. It said China’s targeting of 1.8 million Canadians of Chinese origin in Canada, was

the primary method by which it sought to influence decision-making at all levels of government — federal, provincial, municipal and Indigenous — through “flattery, bribery ... manipulation” and “threats” aimed at dissidents.

The foreign interference inquiry described India as “the second-most active country engaging in electoral foreign interference in Canada.”

Trudeau expelled six senior Indian diplomats in 2024 after Canada accused the Indian government of involvement in the extra-judicial killing of Canadian separatist Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar in B.C..

The RCMP alleged agents of the Indian government were involved in “serious criminal activity” in Canada including more than a dozen “credible and imminent” death threats.

But prior to Carney’s recent trip to India to meet with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a senior Canadian government official told the media India no longer engages in such activities and the head of the RCMP said last week it no longer has evidence the Indian government is involved.

While China and India deny all wrongdoing, these new positions of the Carney government defy common sense.

Source: <https://torontosun.com/opinion/editorials/editorial-beware-pms-benign-view-of-china-india>



SARMAD GLOBAL
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS

QUALIFIED CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS
WITH BIG 4 EXPERIENCE

FREE TELEPHONE / EMAIL & WHATSAPP SUPPORT

Our Services

- UK Company Incorporation / UK Registered Office Address
- UK company Director verification as an ACSP
- UK Personal Income Tax Return Investigations
- UK Rental Income Tax Returns / ATED
- UK State Pension/Contracted Out Entitlement Tracing
- Advice on Filling Gaps in UK State Pension
- Making Tax Digital (MTD)
- Appealing Past Years' HMRC Penalties
- Preparation/Filing of Prior Year Tax Returns
- Duplicate Payslips / P60s



Sarmad Khan FCA, FCCA

Office: 115 London Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 5HP, UK
Tel: +44 (0) 208 646 3666 | Whatsapp: +44 (0) 7903 416966
Email: info@sarmadglobal.com | Web: www.sarmadglobal.com



Ukraine announces 'mutually beneficial' defence deal with Saudi Arabia

By Reuters

Ukraine says it has signed a defence agreement with Saudi Arabia as Gulf countries continue to come under Iranian attack amid the United States and Israel's war on Iran.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, who arrived in the kingdom on Thursday, said on X that an "important arrangement" had been made ahead of a meeting with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

"It lays the foundation for future contracts, technological cooperation, and investment ... Saudi Arabia also has capabilities that are of interest to Ukraine, and this cooperation can be mutually beneficial," Zelenskyy posted on Friday.

Saudi Arabia's state news agency said the two countries had signed a memorandum on defence procurement.

Riyadh has intercepted hundreds of drones and dozens of missiles from Iran since the US and Israel first struck Tehran on February 28. At least six missiles were intercepted on Friday, the Saudi defence ministry said.

Kyiv, which has long battled Russian drones, was quick to signal willingness to partner with Gulf countries after Iran began launching

attacks on Gulf nations. Tehran insists it is targeting US assets in the region, but the assaults have upset relations as Gulf nations say civilians are being put at risk. So far, 25 people have died in Gulf countries, two as recently as Thursday in the United Arab Emirates.

Ukraine has become a major producer of cheap but efficient interceptor drones to counter Moscow's waves of drone attacks that have intensified since late 2024.

"This winter alone, Russia launched over 19,000 drones into Ukraine, just to give some perspective on how much experience they do have in shooting down drones," said Al Jazeera's Audrey MacAlpine, reporting from Kyiv.

"We spoke to the air force, for example, which said that an increasing number of objects being shut down are shut down with interceptor drones. So there is a growing experience from Ukraine, which is probably one of the global leaders when it comes to drones, and that's because they've been able to react and respond in real time to troubleshoot this technology," she said.

On March 18, Zelenskyy said 201 anti-drone experts had been deployed to the Middle East to assist in the defence against Iranian attacks.

Yurii Cherevashenko, deputy commander of Ukraine's Air Defence Cover Forces, told Al Jazeera the drones face unique challenges in the Middle East, such as sandstorms. But successful interception ultimately boils down to the pilot's skills, he said.

In one of Russia's largest wartime aerial attacks on Ukraine, it launched 948 drones within 24 hours on Tuesday, killing two people.

Source:<https://www.aljazeera.com/amp/news/2026/3/27/ukraine-announces-defense-pact-with-saudi-arabia>

Is the US slipping into another uncontrollable war quagmire?



The US-Israel-Iran conflict has entered its fourth week. What began as lightning “decapitation strikes” against Iran aimed at quick victory is turning into a full-scale quagmire.

Citing “productive” talks to halt war, the US is postponing strikes on Iran’s power plants. Yet observers remain cautiously optimistic, viewing it as merely a temporary expedient - the White House simply doesn’t want to blow up the war right now. As of press time, Tehran has not confirmed any talks with the US.

On Monday, mainstream US media outlets voiced deep concern that Washington is losing grip on the war. The Associated Press reported that the US is cycling through an increasingly desperate list of options as it searches for a solution to the crisis in the Strait of Hormuz, ranging from calls to secure the waterway to lifting sanctions, and now escalating to a direct threat against civilian infrastructure in Iran.

The Economist bluntly laid out the US’ “four bad options for the war in Iran.” Negotiating is the least likely scenario as both sides have almost zero trust in each other and neither is in the mood to make concessions. Unilaterally declaring victory would leave Iran choking the Strait and pocketing enriched uranium. Pressing ahead with several more weeks of air strikes might lead to Iran’s attacks on critical infrastructure in the Gulf. Escalating the conflict, including conducting amphibious landings to seize Kharg Island, would bring even greater peril. The conclusion is stark: None of the options may actually end the war.

Four weeks in, missiles are flying, oil prices are soaring, civilians are dying, and no one knows how this war will end. Washington can threaten to obliterate Iran’s power plants, then delay action by five days, yet somehow lacks a workable plan for a ceasefire.

The initial “decapitation strikes” against Iran on February 28 appeared at first to be a “decisive victory” for the US. By now, reality has turned upside down. Analysts point out the paradox: The strikes were “too successful” - they wiped out certain

key Iranian figures to the point that it has become difficult to find someone to negotiate with - and “too unsuccessful” - Iran’s Revolutionary Guard command structure has survived. This allows missile and drone counterattacks to escalate from military bases, critical infrastructure, and now a de facto blockade of the Strait of Hormuz, dragging the US and Israel into a war of attrition.

Even if Washington seeks an off-ramp, it still needs the other two parties - Iran and Israel - to be on the same page. Iran views this as an existential fight for national survival. After repeated assassinations and heavy losses, Tehran has lost trust in negotiating with the US. Israel, meanwhile, is escalating strikes on Iran, which effectively blocks the possibility of a swift American withdrawal, according to observers.

Discussions of a landing in Iran are now actively on the table in Washington. At least 2,000 US Marines, constituting the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), headquartered in Japan, have been dispatched toward the Middle East. And 2,500 Marines from the 11th MEU in California and the USS Boxer amphibious ready group will go in April. The 82nd Airborne Division is also reportedly preparing for a pre-planned Middle East deployment.

The US reportedly is having Kharg Island, a huge crude export hub of Iran, in its sights. “The Marines could seize the island so the US could use it as leverage to reopen the strait, according to experts and former officials,” reported the Wall Street Journal.

However, the idea has sparked internal pushback. Joe Kent, who recently resigned as the national counter-terrorism center director, warned that it would “essentially be giving Iran a bunch of hostages on an island that they could barrage with drones and missiles.”

Whether a limited amphibious landing in Iran, a nation vastly larger than Iraq, may yield the results Washington is hoping for - only time will tell. History, however, has already delivered a lesson: In 2003, the US invaded Iraq under the pretense of “weapons of mass destruction.” After a swift military “victory,” no such weapons were found, yet the resulting chaos in Iraq lasted over 20 years. The Iraq War seriously undermined the Bush administration’s public approval ratings and left an enduring stain on its historical legacy.

In Iran’s case, the US now finds itself caught between a rock and a hard place: On the front line, Iran fights back with fierce determination; in the rear, domestic support is eroding and allies are distancing themselves.

Worse, the US is trapped in a profound strategic dilemma: terrified of sinking into a full-scale war quagmire yet unwilling to give up dominance in the Middle East; desperate to defeat Iran completely yet reluctant to pay the enormous price that would entail.

One can start a war, but ending it is another matter entirely.

Source: <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202603/1357414.shtml>

Now on display in London, “Ramses and the Pharaohs’ Gold” features 3,000-year-old artifacts alongside virtual reality experiences that transport museumgoers to the 13th century B.C.E.

An immersive exhibition dedicated to Ramses II, the third king of Egypt’s 19th Dynasty, is now officially open in London. Featuring 180 artifacts dating back more than 3,000 years, “Ramses and the Pharaohs’ Gold” is on view in a pop-up space at Battersea Power Station.

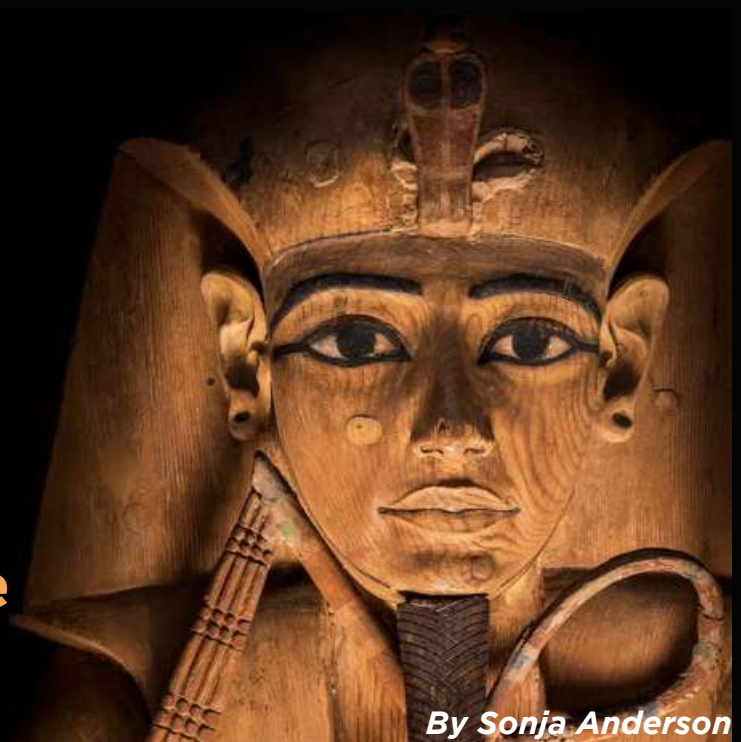
The show includes virtual reality experiences that transport visitors to 13th-century B.C.E. Egypt, where Ramses reigned for 66 years during the prosperous New Kingdom era. Museumgoers will also see a trove of artifacts on loan from Egypt’s Supreme Council of Antiquities. The exhibition marks their first appearance in London.

“Known for his extensive monument-building, military strategy and diplomacy, and a vast dynasty of more than 100 children, Ramses remains one of history’s most iconic pharaohs,” organizers say in a statement. “[He] is celebrated as the mighty warrior-king who helped define the height of ancient Egyptian civilization.”

Artifacts on display include statues depicting the ancient king and an obelisk fragment bearing his name. But the highlight of the show is the wooden coffin that once held Ramses’ mummy. It depicts the pharaoh as Osiris, the Egyptian god of the afterlife.

The Egyptians began mummifying their dead around 2600 B.C.E. By the end of the New Kingdom era, the practice was widespread. Ramses’ mummy is housed in Cairo’s National Museum of Egyptian Civilization, but visitors to the London exhibition will see examples of ancient animal mummification.

See Ramses II’s Intricately Decorated Coffin and Rare Treasures From His Reign at This New Immersive Exhibition



By Sonja Anderson

“There are cats, a lion cub and a mongoose with a curled and lifeless tail,” writes the London Times’ Laura Freeman. “Even scarab beetles were mummified. Two of their miniature sarcophagi are on display.”

The show also features artifacts from beyond Ramses’ lifetime, including jewelry found in the tomb of the pharaoh Psusennes I and the recently restored coffin of the pharaoh Shoshenq II. Museumgoers can see gold funerary masks belonging to Psusennes’ general, Wendjebauendjed, and the pharaoh Amenemope.

“Ramses and the Pharaohs’ Gold” includes less gold than its title suggests. “But when it does turn up, it’s dazzling,” writes the Telegraph’s JJ Charlesworth. “The bling at the show’s heart is mostly the accoutrements of various princesses: heavy necklaces, girdles, elaborate pendant earrings and a carnelian-inlaid dagger.”

Several objects on view shed light on everyday life in ancient Egypt. These domestic artifacts include kohl pots used to store eye makeup, a princess’ ornate hand mirror, architectural models and a fist carved from red jasper, according to the Telegraph.

The exhibition is full of multimedia elements, including a virtual animation depicting the Battle of Kadesh, which Ramses’ forces fought against the Hittites in 1275 B.C.E. The battle had no clear winner—both sides later claimed victory—but it led to the world’s earliest known surviving peace treaty, signed by Ramses and Hattusilis III, the Hittite king. Visitors can also participate in a unique virtual reality experience. By sitting in motion-synced pods and donning goggles, they travel to Abu Simbel, two massive temples built by Ramses in southern Egypt. Queen Nefertari, the pharaoh’s first wife, serves as their guide.

“‘Ramses’ is teen-friendly ‘edutainment’ made all the more fun by the virtual reality experience,” writes the Telegraph. “It’s virtual tourism with a fantasy ending straight out of The Mummy, as an angry spirit chases you across the desert.”

“Ramses and the Pharaohs’ Gold” debuted at the Houston Museum of Natural Science in 2021. Since then, it has traveled to San Francisco, Paris, Sydney, Cologne and Tokyo. The world tour coincided with the development of the long-awaited Grand Egyptian Museum in Giza, which opened in late 2025.

“The exhibition is an ambassador [for Egypt],” Hisham El-Leithy, the acting secretary-general of Egypt’s Supreme Council of Antiquities, tells the Art Newspaper’s Gareth Harris. Officials hope the immersive show will entice more travelers to visit Egypt in person.

“Ramses and the Pharaohs’ Gold” is on view at Battersea Power Station in London through May 31, 2026.

Source:<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/see-ramses-iis-intricately-decorated-coffin-and-rare-treasures-from-his-reign-at-this-new-immersive-exhibition-180988306/>

Global Muslim leader denounces Western interference in Muslim nations, urges Islamic countries to unite peacefully and rely on God for protection, not Western powers



During his weekly Friday Sermon, His Holiness Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad advised Muslim nations to rely on God rather than major powers for their prosperity, to prioritise unity amongst one another and work towards finding a peaceful resolution to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East. The full Friday Sermon has been linked at the end of this webpage.

The Muslim world should forgo reliance on Western powers for its security and should peacefully unite to be saved from the machinations of those who seek to harm them, the World Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, urged during his weekly Friday Sermon.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“The United States has established military bases in many Muslim countries. But for what purpose? From whom, after all, were these nations facing a threat? In reality, it was these very powers that themselves created the threats. Thereafter, the narrative was advanced that these [Muslim] countries were in danger, and therefore it was necessary to establish military bases to safeguard them.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad further stated:

“Due to the presence of these bases, the likelihood of attacks upon Arab countries increased, and such attacks eventually did occur. As a result, their economies are also being severely damaged... Yet, against the very forces from whom Muslims might genuinely face danger, these powers would never employ their strength or weaponry. ”

Speaking from the Mubarak Mosque in Tilford, UK, which serves as the headquarters of the global community of 20 million Ahmadi Muslims, he warned that the conflict in the Middle East could easily continue to spiral out of control, and Arab nations would suffer most if this war continues.

With the war spreading across the Gulf, His Holiness said Western powers were trying to take advantage of the divisions within the Muslim world.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“The governments of Muslim countries, their politicians and rulers should set aside their personal interests and instead strive for the unity of the Muslim Ummah.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“Western powers have instigated unrest within Muslim countries, and then, gradually, by fuelling that unrest, continued to spread it from one country to another. It seems evident they wished to use their power to seize control of the resources of these countries and bring them under their influence.”

Muslims should not rely on Western powers for their security and prosperity, His Holiness further advised.

“They [Muslim nations] must not regard the great powers of the world as their gods, for the only power that endures forever is the power of God Almighty. If these great powers are regarded as the ultimate authority, they will gradually seize control of the entire Muslim world, one country after another. These worldly powers have already destroyed the peace and stability of the world, and particularly the peace of the Muslim world, and they will continue to do so in the future as well.”

His Holiness said that the United States claimed it would attack Iran to liberate its people, and in particular, the women of Iran. However, His Holiness quoted a Spanish MEP who said it was false that this war was being waged by the United States for the freedom of Iranian women.

Ms Irene Montero said: “No woman has ever been freed by American bombs or illegal aggression...And it will not happen in Iran either.

Commenting on the double standards in how the lives of innocent Muslim civilians are viewed in the West, Hazrat Mirza Maroor Ahmad said: “If one observes the situation in Western countries, some commentators themselves have begun to point out that if an attack were to occur in Israel, the United States, or any Western nation, and even a few of their children were killed, newspapers would publish column after column for days on end expressing outrage. Yet in Iran, a school is bombed, and hundreds of children are killed, and hardly anyone raises their voice. This was the situation in Palestine, and now the same is unfolding in Iran. It appears as though, in their view, the life of a Muslim carries little value.”

His Holiness condemned the coercive posture of the United States, which threatens other nations that fail to comply with its demands.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“Countries that refuse to participate in wars are subjected to sanctions and punitive measures... in such circumstances, justice no longer remains. And when justice disappears, destruction inevitably follows.”

Praising the Spanish government's stance on the conflict, His Holiness said the Prime Minister of Spain, Pedro Sánchez, “displayed the courage to state that Spain would neither take part in the war nor provide its bases.”

His Holiness said it is merely an assumption when commentators state that the United States is facing economic losses and is taking on the financial burden of the war, stating that powerful nations make “meticulous calculations of every matter” and conduct “comprehensive assessments before acting.” His Holiness said that instead, the Arab nations will likely be made to bear the immense costs “under the pretext of providing them with defence.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“On the one hand, their oil production is being disrupted, and inflation is rising ... while on the other hand, they are compelled to cover these immense costs, which will gradually diminish or even exhaust their financial reserves. Ultimately, the Arab world will suffer severe economic damage. Although the Western world may also incur losses, the greatest harm will fall upon the Arab nations.”

His Holiness said, in his opinion and the view of various analysts, a world war has already started, but even now, if the Muslim world united, it could save itself from further harm.

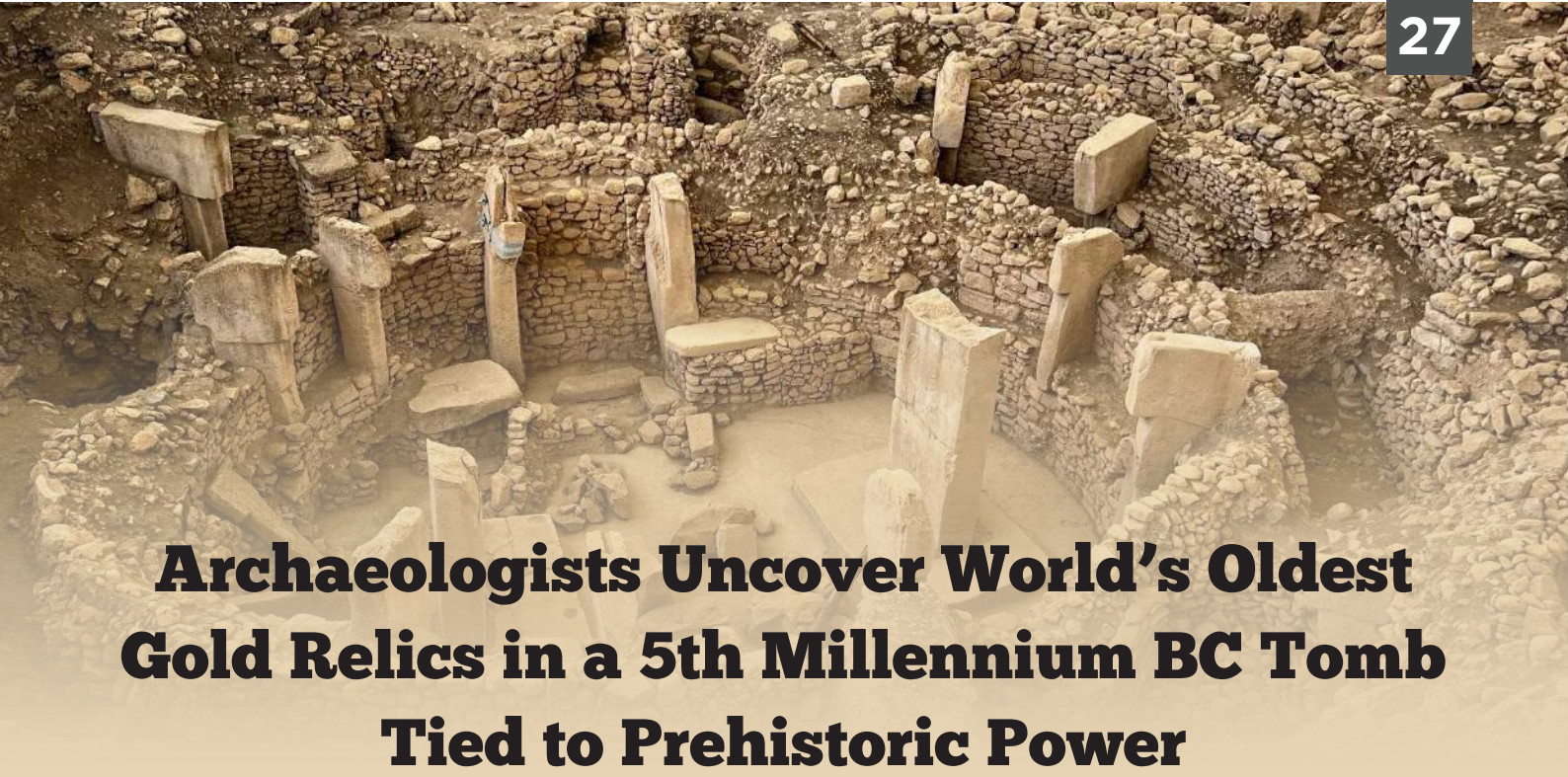
Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad said:

“The Muslim world must strive to become peaceful and to live as brothers among one another. This is the true teaching of Islam, not that they should become people who cut one another's throats... Only then will we be able to safeguard ourselves from the attacks of the world, maintain our dignity and honour, and prevent the forces opposed to Islam from tearing us apart from within.”

His Holiness said Arab nations and the government of Iran should strive to find a path towards reconciliation. “It is reported that China and certain other countries, including Pakistan, have offered to play a role in facilitating peace. One can only hope that the Muslim world comes to understand the importance of this matter.”

His Holiness concluded by praying for peace in the world and calling on members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community to pray for peace and an end to all forms of injustice and cruelty in the world.

Source:<https://www.pressahmadiyya.com/press-releases/2026/03/global-muslim-leader-denounces-western-interference-in-muslim-nations-urges-islamic-countries-to-unite-peacefully-and-rely-on-god-for-protection-not-western-powers/>



Archaeologists Uncover World's Oldest Gold Relics in a 5th Millennium BC Tomb Tied to Prehistoric Power

By Arezki Amiri

Buried near the Black Sea, a cluster of graves filled with gold is forcing archaeologists to rethink when inequality first took hold in human societies.

In 1972, a young excavator operator working near Varna noticed something glittering in the dirt. He pulled out a bracelet, gathered more pieces, and passed them on through a retired teacher to the local museum. When archaeologists arrived and saw the objects laid out on a table, Alexander Minchev later recalled, “We took them in that same shoebox straight back to Varna.”

What followed was not a single lucky find but the opening of the Varna Chalcolithic Necropolis, one of the most important prehistoric burial grounds in Europe. As archaeologists followed the trench and began uncovering graves, the pattern became stranger with each dig. Some burials were modest. A few were loaded with gold, prestige objects, and symbols of rank.

That was the core discovery. Varna did not simply yield the oldest worked gold yet found. It also preserved one of the earliest clear records of social hierarchy in prehistoric Europe, showing how wealth, labor, and status were sharply concentrated long before the rise of the better known kingdoms of the ancient world.

The Trench Opened Onto a Cemetery of Extremes

According to Smithsonian Magazine, excavations between 1972 and 1991 uncovered nearly 300 graves, while another account based on the same site history notes 294 burials. The broader picture is the same across the sources: archaeologists were dealing with a large late fifth millennium B.C. cemetery, and a significant section of it still remains unexcavated.

The distribution of wealth is what made the site impossible to ignore. Most graves contained very little, sometimes only a bead, a flint knife, or a bone bracelet. About one in five had small gold items. But just four graves held roughly three quarters of the cemetery's gold. As Vladimir Slavchev put it, “The cemetery shows big differences between people, some with lots of grave goods, some with very few.”

The richest burial was Grave 43, now one of the defining images of ancient Europe. The man buried there was laid out with gold bangles, necklaces, pendants, pierced gold disks, a polished axe with a gold wrapped handle, another axe beneath it, and a 16 inch flint blade at his side. One account says he was interred with more than 1.5 kilograms of gold.

Inside the Varna museum, much of that discovery is still visible. The collection includes about 11 pounds of the roughly 13 pounds of gold excavated from the cemetery, and the museum displays a reconstruction of Grave 43 using the original placement of the artifacts. The museum itself is at 41 Maria Luisa Boulevard in Varna.

Gold Points to Trade, Control, and Organized Labor

The riches buried at Varna were not only local ornaments. High status graves included Mediterranean Spondylus shell jewelry and obsidian blades from distant volcanic regions. The gold itself likely came from central Bulgaria, pointing to trade routes and resource control that stretched well beyond the cemetery.

Those materials also carried a hidden cost. Mining, transporting, and shaping metal demanded time, skill, and coordination. Svend Hansen explained the attraction of the material in simple terms: “If a metal axe is broken, you can melt it down and produce another axe. Metal is never used up. It can be recycled endlessly.”

That is where Varna stops looking like a treasure story and starts looking like a system. Metalworking was already established in the region by about 4600 B.C., and the concentration of high value objects suggests that access to raw materials and finished goods was controlled by a small group. The graves show not only wealth, but the ability to organize labor and assign roles.

Some of the Most Powerful Graves Had No Bodies

Varna’s strangest burials may be its most revealing. Some were cenotaphs, symbolic graves with no human remains. Grave 36 contained gold scepters, miniature bull figurines, a small crown, and a clay mask placed where a head would have been.

These symbolic graves show that power could be represented even without a body present. Status was being staged through objects, placement, and ritual. That makes the cemetery more than a record of burial customs. It looks like a carefully ordered display of authority.

The site also challenged older interpretations of prehistoric southeastern Europe as small, egalitarian farming communities. Slavchev was blunt about that shift: “It’s clear the society here was male dominated. The richest graves were male; the chiefs were male.”

The Site Is Famous, but Part of It Is Still Buried

Despite its importance, the prehistoric cemetery is unfinished archaeology. Roughly a third of the site may never have been excavated, because work was halted in 1991 so future researchers could return with better methods and so earlier discoveries could be fully published. Parts of the unexamined cemetery now lie under spoil from previous digs in an industrial area near community garden plots.

The society behind the Varna gold also came to an abrupt end around 4000 B.C. Settlements across the lower Danube and western Black Sea basin were abandoned, but the sources do not point to clear evidence of war or massacre. Instead, changing landscapes and rising water levels have been put forward as a likely explanation. Standing above the overgrown site, Slavchev offered one possibility: “Perhaps their fields became swamps. With the changes in climate, maybe people had to change their way of life.”

What remains is a cemetery that still shapes how archaeologists think about ancient gold, early inequality, and the first visible signs of organized power in prehistoric Europe.

Source: <https://dailygalaxy.com/2026/03/bulgaria-varna-prehistoric-grave-with-oldest-gold-artifacts/#>

‘The world is in great need of major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics’



Editor's Note:

As China convenes the 2026 two sessions - the annual meetings of China's top legislature and top political advisory body - it's expected to send strong and fresh signals on pushing high-quality development, leveraging greater policy and reform support to ensure steady economic growth and social progress.

In the "Understanding signals at two sessions" series, the Global Times (GT) invites internationally renowned scholars, policy observers and business leaders to interpret the key signals from the two sessions regarding China's domestic roadmap, covering advancements in whole-process people's democracy, high-quality development, high-level opening-up, major-country diplomacy and the improvement of people's wellbeing.

On the margins of the Fourth Session of the 14th National People's Congress, Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Foreign Minister Wang Yi held a press conference on Sunday, answering questions from Chinese and foreign media on China's foreign policy and external relations. In the fourth piece of the series, GT reporter Xia Wenxin discussed topics regarding China's diplomacy, including its achievements in the past year, the Global Governance Initiative (GGI) and the country's role in UN reforms, with Pino Arlacchi (Arlacchi), an Italian sociologist and former UN under-secretary-general.

GT: In the opening remarks delivered by Foreign Minister Wang Yi at a press conference on Sunday, he emphasized that China's diplomacy firmly safeguards national sovereignty, security and development interests, firmly upholds international rule of law and fairness and justice, firmly opposes all unilateral acts, power politics and bullying, firmly observes and fulfills our international obligations,

and firmly stands on the right side of history. Which diplomatic achievement that China made in the past year impressed you the most?

Arlacchi: 2025 was quite an active year for Chinese diplomacy. Rather than a single landmark achievement, it was characterized by a broad initiative across multiple fronts.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit in Tianjin was arguably the most symbolically significant event. It was the largest gathering in the 24-year history of the organization, bringing together leaders from more than 20 countries and heads of 10 international organizations. It was at the “SCO Plus” Meeting where Chinese President Xi Jinping proposed the GGI.

Consolidation of the Global South was another major front. In June, the heads of state of China and the five Central Asian countries jointly signed a treaty of permanent good-neighborliness and friendly cooperation in Astana. And China’s Southeast Asia outreach was also notable in 2025: President Xi paid state visits to Vietnam, Malaysia and Cambodia, and during the Vietnam visit alone, the two countries signed 45 agreements covering connectivity, artificial intelligence, customs inspection and quarantine, agricultural trade, and more.

If one had to single out the most consequential achievement, from the perspective of long-term systemic impact, it would be the combination of the GGI proposal and the BRICS/Global South consolidation - which together represent China’s most systematic effort yet to build an institutional architecture that provides additional options for global governance amid the Western-led order.

GT: China has successively put forward a series of proposals, including the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative, the Global Civilization Initiative and the GGI. In his press conference, the foreign minister noted that the series of important initiatives and propositions “point out the right way forward for the changes in the world unseen in a century.” How do you interpret the characteristics of China’s proposals, particularly when compared to Western development logic and governance approaches?

Arlacchi: China’s proposals are welcome. The defining feature of China’s four proposals is their capacity to introduce a framework for order, peace and cooperation in a world in which former, declining masters would prefer to see anarchy and war. Those proposals now need to be further articulated through specific governance plans.

Besides the four global initiatives, here I would also like to highlight the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The BRI is simultaneously an infrastructure project, a development strategy, a trade policy and a grand strategic vision.

GT: How can major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics contribute to building a more just international order, and what role might China play in reshaping global governance?

Arlacchi: The world is in great need of major-country diplomacy with Chinese characteristics. What I expect is that the transition from an “active participant” to a “proactive shaper” will materialize in a set of proposals based on the urgent need to update the international system. A multipolar world has the potential to be a more just and peaceful equilibrium vis-à-vis the past. Its logic should represent a radical change from the tragic, oppressive great power politics of the post-Westphalian era.

What struck me most about current Chinese foreign policy and diplomacy is its profound inspiration from the grand history. At a political-philosophical level, all major Chinese foreign policy proposals are inspired by the concept of tianxia - the first conceptualization of a world society to which all of us belong. At the operational level, Chinese foreign policy reflects the two epochal mega-trends in action today: the re-orient movement and the rise of the Global South.

I served as a UN under-secretary-general. Currently, the UN faces severe challenges and tests. China’s most important contribution as a “proactive shaper” of a new world order could be a “refoundation of the UN system.” Not just a UN reform, but a true refoundation of the organization based on a revival of its original spirit plus a democratization of its governance.

GT: In his Sunday press conference, Wang called the collective rise of the Global South “the distinct hallmark of the great transformation unfolding in the world.” The rise of China, a natural member of the Global South, has consistently gained global attention, especially from the West. How should the West adapt to China’s rise, and what would a constructive multipolar world order look like?

Arlacchi: The West must now find ways to adapt to a world in which China returns to being one of the fundamental centers of gravity of human civilization. This adaptation need not be antagonistic - there is no inherent reason why European prosperity cannot coexist with Chinese prosperity. But it does require abandoning the assumption of permanent Western hegemony and accepting a world of genuine multipolarity in which different civilizations and political systems coexist without one dominating all the others.

In this new world, Europe could rediscover its natural role not as the Western periphery of the Atlantic, but as the Western peninsula of Eurasia. This would mean reorienting its economic and political relationships to reflect geographical reality. Some US strategists, meanwhile, are already rethinking their country’s role in a context where control of the oceans, while remaining important, no longer guarantees global hegemony. They increasingly recognize that the 1990s unipolar moment was just that: a moment, and that the future will require more true diplomacy, abstention from the use of military force, and greater willingness to accept a post-American global order.

Source: <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202603/1356661.shtml>

Hospital attack in Sudan kills 64, including 13 children



The total number of deaths linked to attacks on healthcare facilities during the latest war in Sudan has now surpassed 2,000.

At least 64 people have died in another attack on a hospital in Sudan, according to the World Health Organisation (WHO).

Among the dead were 13 children, two nurses, a doctor and multiple patients at the Al Deain Teaching Hospital in Al Deain.

89 people, including eight health staff, were also injured and the hospital's paediatric, maternity and emergency departments were all damaged.

The attack is the latest in the conflict between Sudan's military and the rebel Rapid Support Forces.

The RSF has blamed the military for the strike, which was in RSF territory.

The army has denied the attack, but two officials told the Associated Press news agency that a strike was targeting a nearby police station.

"Enough blood has been spilled. Enough suffering has been inflicted," wrote Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director general of the WHO on X.

"The time has come to de-escalate the conflict in Sudan and ensure the protection of civilians, health workers, and humanitarians."

The total number of deaths linked to attacks on healthcare facilities during the latest war in Sudan has now reached 2,036, according to the WHO.

"Beyond the devastating human toll, attacks on health care have immediate and long-term consequences for communities already in desperate need of both emergency and routine medical services," said Mr Ghebreyesus.

The latest attack on Friday night has rendered the Al Deain Teaching Hospital nonfunctional and other healthcare facilities are filling gaps in urgent healthcare.

Source:<https://news.sky.com/story/hospital-attack-in-sudan-kills-64-including-13-children-13522914>

Nearly 5 million children are still dying annually before their fifth birthday: Here's why



An estimated 4.9 million children died before their fifth birthday in 2024, including 2.3 million

newborns, according to new United Nations estimates released on Tuesday – highlighting a worrying slowdown in global progress on child survival.

Most of these deaths are preventable with proven, low-cost interventions and access to quality health care, the report stresses.

For the first time, the analysis provides a comprehensive picture of not only how many children are dying and where – but also why, by fully integrating global estimates on causes of death.

The Levels and Trends in Child Mortality report launched by the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation shows that, although under-five deaths have fallen by more than half since 2000, the pace of reduction has slowed by more than 60 per cent since 2015.

Malnutrition and other major threats

Among its key findings, more than 100,000 children aged between one month and five, died directly from severe acute malnutrition – the first global estimate of such deaths – with some of the highest numbers recorded in Pakistan, Somalia and Sudan.

Experts warn the true toll is likely higher, as malnutrition weakens immunity and increases vulnerability to other diseases, while many cases go unrecorded.

“No child should die from diseases that we know how to prevent. But we see worrying signs that progress in child survival is slowing – and at a time where we’re seeing further global budget cuts,” said Catherine Russell, Executive Director for the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

Infectious diseases remain a major threat, with the nine leading infections accounting for 43 per cent of under-five deaths globally.

Beyond the first month of life, illnesses such as malaria, diarrhoea and pneumonia continue to be leading causes of death, particularly in high-burden settings.

Deaths remain concentrated in a handful of endemic countries – including Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Niger, and Nigeria – where conflict, climate shocks, invasive mosquitos, drug resistance, and other biological threats continue to affect access to prevention and treatment.

Newborn deaths now account for nearly half of all under-five mortality, reflecting slower progress in preventing deaths around the time of birth. Complications from preterm birth and those arising during labour and delivery are the leading causes, alongside infections.

Children in conflict more likely to die

Geographical disparities remain stark. Sub-Saharan Africa accounted for 58 per cent of all under-five deaths in 2024, while Southern Asia represented a further 25 per cent.

Children in fragile and conflict-affected settings are nearly three times more likely to die before their fifth birthday than those elsewhere.

The report also notes that 2.1 million children, adolescents and young people aged 5 to 24, died in 2024. While infectious diseases and injuries remain leading causes among younger children, risks shift in adolescence, with self-harm the leading cause of death among girls aged 15 to 19, and road traffic injuries among boys.

UN officials warned that declining development financing is placing essential maternal, newborn and child health programmes under increasing strain.

Countries off track to meet child survival targets

The UN's Economic and Social Affairs chief Li Junhua described the findings as “a stark reminder” that many countries are off track to meet child survival targets under the Sustainable Development Goals.

“We know how to prevent these deaths. What is needed now is renewed political commitment, sustained investment in primary healthcare, and stronger data systems to ensure no child is left behind,” he said.

The report underscores that investments in child health remain among the most cost-effective development measures, with proven interventions such as vaccines, nutrition programmes and skilled care at birth capable of saving millions of lives.

Source: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/03/1167151>



UN weather agency warns of record 'climate imbalance' as planetary warming accelerates

All-time high greenhouse gas concentrations in Earth's atmosphere continue to drive heat records on land and sea, with long-lasting consequences for humanity, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) warned on Monday. Hot on the heels of a scorching decade, the UN's weather agency has said that the planet's climate is "more out of balance than at any time in observed history".

"Between 2015 and 2025, we experienced the hottest 11 years on record," WMO's deputy executive secretary Ko Barrett said.

Last year was some 1.43°C above the 1850 to 1900 baseline in addition to breaking an ocean heat record, she explained.

Grim state of climate

Presenting a grim overview of the state of the climate in 2025, Ms. Barrett stressed that as glaciers continue to retreat and ice continues to melt, "the warming ocean and melting land-based ice are driving the long-term rise in global mean sea level rise."

She said that the findings are an inspiration "to work harder to get lifesaving forecasts and early warnings into the hands of those who can protect lives and livelihoods" so that they can mitigate the devastating impacts of the ongoing climate turmoil on the most vulnerable.

For its part, WMO has been issuing annual climate updates for more than 30 years, and the record figures in the last decade have been an increasing cause for concern.

Record greenhouse gas levels

The agency's scientific officer John Kennedy said that concentrations in the atmosphere of three key greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide) reached record levels in 2024, the last year for which there are consolidated global numbers.

This marked the single-largest year-on-year increase.

"Data from individual sites around the world indicates that levels of these greenhouse gases continue to increase in 2025" and to modify "the energy balance of the planet", he added.

Worrying energy imbalance

Mr. Kennedy explained that under a balanced system, incoming energy from the sun is about the same as the amount of outgoing energy, but this is not the case at present.

"There's less outgoing energy due to the increased concentrations of greenhouse gases," he said. "More energy coming in than going out means that energy is accumulating in the Earth's system."

The Earth's energy imbalance is a new indicator WMO has started tracking, with results pointing to a notable acceleration in the rate at which warming has been progressing between 2001 and 2025.

"The largest fraction of that absorbed energy is going to the oceans, around 90 per cent of the excess energy in the climate system," Mr. Kennedy said. "This matters because over three billion people depend on these marine and coastal resources for their livelihoods. They're living off the ocean, and nearly 11 per cent of the global population live on low-lying coasts directly exposed to coastal hazards."

Source: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2026/03/1167178>

The Global Voice Magazine

 @theglobalvoice

 theglobalvoice

 @theglobalvoice

 +447940077825

 theglobalvoice

 +447940077825

 theglobalvoice

 theglobalvoice@gmail.com



Bird's-eye view of London seen in 280-year-old map

An 18th Century official map of London is to be republished 280 years after its first printing.

John Rocque's An Exact Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster, and the Borough of Southwark provided an unprecedented, detailed bird's-eye view of the capital for the first time.

The outskirts of London were Hyde Park, Marylebone, Vauxhall and Spitalfields and the city's population was about 650,000 - including 551 people living on London Bridge.

English Heritage historian Steven Brindle described the map as "almost miraculous" considering the simple tools available to Rocque. It has been reproduced in a new book, *London in the 18th Century*.

Brindle explained that mapmaking was much harder in Rocque's era than it is now.

"Rocque would have set out with a couple of assistants and some very basic tools.

"A chain, 66ft long, a surveyor's wheel and a notebook, and they would go over, for example, a field, and they would measure it on all its sides, and they would draw that as accurately as they could. "It might be a few days' work. And it's really accurate.

"This is what almost seems miraculous when you understand how simple the tools he had to work with were."

"The City of London was packed with dense alleys and streets, a lot of them very insanitary," Brindle said.

"There were slums just a couple of streets away from really rich merchants living in their houses. The city had large fields, orchards - and tall ships crowded the Thames.

"It's all depicted on Rocque's masterpiece created in 1746."

Many areas depicted on the map were fields and at the time lay outside the City of London - but there are buildings on the map that still exist today, including the church of St George in Bloomsbury, which was built between 1716 and 1731.

Brindle said: "It would have been a great monument, it would have loomed above all the other houses in the street.

"London changed and rebuilt so much - now the other buildings all loom over the church.

"It's slightly overwhelming, actually; I mean it was the whole of London in 1746 and it's such a beautiful thing, too. It's so beautifully drawn and engraved."

Source: <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cpqwrqp3yzxo>



The 444-Day Crisis: Why America Failed to Resolve Iran in 1979

By Raja Atif Raza

As tensions once again rise between Washington and Tehran, the world is reminded that the relationship between the United States and Iran has long been shaped by mistrust, confrontation, and unresolved history. Reports of military activity near the Strait of Hormuz and renewed diplomatic friction in 2026 highlight how fragile this relationship remains. Yet to understand the depth of this rivalry, one must return to one of the most dramatic diplomatic crises of the twentieth century: the 444-day hostage standoff that began in 1979.

The crisis unfolded in the aftermath of the Iranian Revolution, which transformed Iran from a monarchy allied with the West into an Islamic republic deeply suspicious of American influence. The revolution led to the overthrow of Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, the Shah of Iran, whose government had long been supported by the United States. For many Iranians, Washington's support for the Shah symbolized decades of foreign involvement in their country's political affairs.

Tensions escalated dramatically on November 4, 1979, when hundreds of Iranian students and activists stormed the U.S. Embassy in Tehran. They took 66 American diplomats and personnel hostage, 52 of whom remained in captivity for the full 444 days. The captors accused the United States of sheltering the exiled Shah and demanded his return to Iran for trial. What began as a political protest quickly evolved into a prolonged international crisis that would grip global attention for more than a year.

For Americans watching events unfold on television, the images were shocking and unprecedented. Footage of blindfolded hostages and crowds chanting outside the embassy appeared nightly on news broadcasts. The embassy takeover was not only a diplomatic emergency but also a challenge to the prestige and influence of the United States on the global stage.

The crisis placed enormous pressure on the administration of U.S. President Jimmy Carter. Diplomatic negotiations dragged on for months with little progress, while frustration grew among the American public. The hostage crisis soon became one of the most defining political issues of the era, shaping public debate and dominating international headlines.

In April 1980, the United States attempted a daring rescue mission known as Operation Eagle Claw. The plan involved elite military units traveling deep into the Iranian desert to reach Tehran

and extract the hostages. However, mechanical failures and severe logistical difficulties quickly undermined the operation. During the mission, a helicopter collided with a transport aircraft in the desert, resulting in the deaths of eight American servicemen. The rescue effort was aborted before it could reach its objective.

The failed mission became one of the most painful moments of the crisis. Beyond the tragic loss of life, it exposed weaknesses in the coordination of American special operations forces at the time. In response, the U.S. military began a process of reform designed to strengthen cooperation between elite units. These reforms later contributed to the creation of United States Special Operations Command, which today oversees some of the most complex military operations conducted by the United States.

While the rescue mission failed, diplomatic efforts continued quietly behind the scenes. International mediators played a crucial role in facilitating communication between Washington and Tehran. Algeria, in particular, helped bridge the gap between the two governments and provided a channel for negotiations to move forward.

After months of negotiations, an agreement was finally reached. On January 20, 1981, after 444 days in captivity, the remaining hostages were released. Their freedom came on the same day that Ronald Reagan was sworn in as president of the United States, bringing an end to one of the longest hostage crises in modern diplomatic history.

Although the immediate crisis ended, its political consequences were profound. In the United States, the prolonged standoff damaged public confidence in the Carter administration and became a defining issue in the 1980 presidential election. The episode also hardened American attitudes toward Iran, shaping foreign policy debates for decades.

In Iran, the embassy takeover reinforced the revolutionary government's narrative of resistance against foreign influence. Opposition to American power became deeply embedded in the country's political identity and continued to influence Iran's foreign policy in the years that followed.

The crisis also had lasting regional consequences. In the decades after the revolution, Iran expanded its influence through alliances with various groups across the Middle East. Among the most prominent was Hezbollah in Lebanon, which developed into a powerful political and military organization. The emergence of such alliances added new layers of complexity to regional geopolitics and intensified tensions between Iran, the United States, and their respective allies.

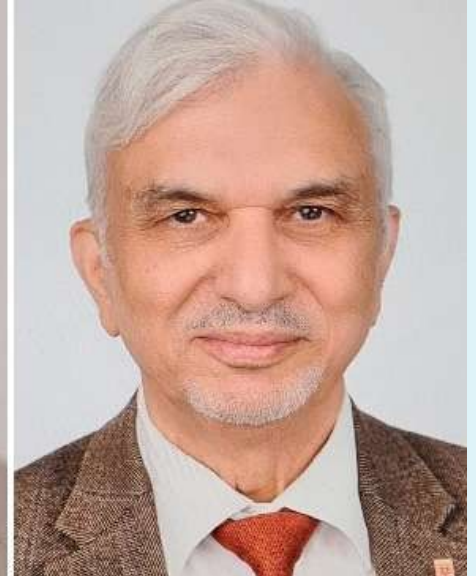
More than four decades later, the legacy of the 1979 hostage crisis continues to shape international politics. Diplomatic negotiations between Washington and Tehran—from nuclear agreements to economic sanctions—often unfold under the shadow of the mistrust created during those 444 days.

For policymakers and observers, the crisis remains a powerful reminder that historical events can cast long shadows over international relations. Decisions made during moments of political upheaval often create narratives that persist for generations, shaping the way nations perceive one another.

As tensions once again dominate global headlines, the lessons of 1979 remain more than historical reflection—they are a warning. The crisis showed how quickly confrontation can spiral and how enduring mistrust can become once it takes root. If policymakers fail to learn from that history, they risk repeating it, prolonging a cycle of hostility that has already shaped generations.

Elections of the Foreigners' Advisory Council in Darmstadt, Germany – 2026

Notable Success of Party Chairman Arshad Ahmad Shahbaz (PAU)



In the scientifically renowned and academically distinguished city of Darmstadt, Germany, the elections for the Foreigners' Advisory Council (Ausländerbeirat) were held on 15 March 2026, alongside the municipal elections. The primary objective of these elections was to ensure effective representation of the foreign resident community and to bring their concerns and issues to the forefront at the local level.

The Foreigners' Advisory Council is a significant institutional body that plays a vital role in conveying the rights, concerns, and needs of people from diverse nationalities living in the city to the municipal parliament. The elected members of this council serve a term of five years and provide guidance on a wide range of social, educational, and legal matters.

According to official estimates, approximately 30,000 foreign residents in Darmstadt were eligible to vote. However, the voter turnout remained relatively low, with only about 3,000 to 3,500 individuals casting their votes—representing roughly 10 to 12 percent of the total electorate. Experts suggest that a lack of awareness and limited engagement in the political process may have contributed significantly to the low turnout.

A total of 21 seats in the Foreigners' Advisory Council were contested, with six groups and organizations participating in the election.

In a remarkable outcome, Party Chairman Arshad Ahmad Shahbaz (PAU) emerged with a decisive lead, securing 1,297 votes. Muhammad Yaqoob followed with 1,097 votes, while Nisar Syeda Rehana also achieved success with 977 votes.

According to political and social observers, these elections serve as clear evidence that opportunities for representation are increasingly becoming available to the foreign community. Furthermore, it is emphasized that enhanced awareness campaigns, stronger community engagement, and the active participation of the younger generation can significantly boost voter turnout. Such efforts would contribute to making the democratic process more robust, effective, and inclusive.

Peace Enforcement, Responsibility to Protect, and the Crisis of Legitimacy in International Law

An Islamic and Contemporary Perspective



By Chaudhry Columbus Khan, Adv.

The doctrine of the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) emerged in the early twenty-first century to reconcile state sovereignty with the moral imperative to prevent mass atrocities. Its proponents argue that the international community has a duty to intervene when states fail to protect their populations from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing, or crimes against humanity. Yet the practical implementation of R2P has sparked intense debate, particularly regarding selective intervention, geopolitical interests, and the use of humanitarian rhetoric to justify military action.

This article examines the ethical and legal foundations of humanitarian intervention by comparing the modern R2P framework with principles in Islamic teachings regarding mediation, peace enforcement, and collective responsibility to restrain aggressors. It argues that while both systems share common moral objectives—protecting the oppressed and restoring justice—the politicization of humanitarian intervention has undermined the legitimacy of international law. Through case studies of Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Ukraine, and Gaza, the article explores how the gap between normative ideals and political realities has placed international law “on trial.” It concludes that restoring credibility to humanitarian intervention requires stricter adherence to legal principles, genuine multilateral decision-making, and renewed emphasis on prevention and mediation.

The pursuit of justice and the prevention of violence are central goals of both religious ethics and international law. After the Second World War, the international community attempted to create a legal order capable of preventing the recurrence of global conflict. The adoption of the United Nations Charter established principles such as the prohibition of aggressive war, respect for sovereignty, and peaceful settlement of disputes.

Despite these aspirations, the international system continues to struggle with mass atrocities and violent conflicts. Failures to prevent genocide in Rwanda in 1994 and atrocities in Bosnia in the early 1990s triggered renewed debate about whether sovereignty should shield governments that commit or permit large-scale violence against their populations.

In response, the concept of R2P was introduced in 2001 and later endorsed by the United Nations in 2005. R2P asserts that sovereignty entails responsibility and that the international community may intervene when states fail to protect their populations from grave crimes. Critics argue, however, that the doctrine has sometimes been used selectively or opportunistically. In several instances, humanitarian arguments coincided with geopolitical interests, raising questions about the sincerity and consistency of international responses.

Islamic Principles of Conflict Mediation and Collective Peace Enforcement Islamic teachings emphasize

justice, reconciliation, and the protection of human life. A key Qur'anic directive states:

"If two groups of believers fight each other, make peace between them. But if one of them transgresses against the other, then fight against the transgressing group until it returns to the command of God; then make peace between them with justice."

This passage outlines a structured process:

1. Mediation between conflicting parties
2. Collective action against the aggressor if mediation fails
3. Restoration of justice and reconciliation

Classical jurists interpreted this principle as a communal responsibility to prevent oppression and restore peace. Ethical limitations accompany this obligation: protection of non-combatants, prohibition of unnecessary destruction, and emphasis on reconciliation once hostilities cease. These principles allow force only as a last resort, always directed toward justice rather than domination.

The Emergence of the Responsibility to Protect

R2P, formulated by the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty in 2001, sought to reconcile sovereignty and human rights. It rests on three pillars:

1. States must protect their populations from atrocity crimes.
2. The international community must assist states in fulfilling this obligation.
3. The international community must intervene when states fail to protect their populations.

Endorsed at the 2005 UN World Summit, R2P institutionalized humanitarian protection within international law. However, its implementation remains controversial.

Case Studies: Humanitarian Intervention and Political Reality

- Iraq (2003): The U.S.-led invasion lacked explicit UN authorization, causing extensive civilian casualties, political instability, and long-term regional consequences.
- Afghanistan (2001-2021): While initially a justified act of self-defense, prolonged military presence and nation-building efforts raised questions about the limits of external intervention.
- Libya (2011): NATO intervention, framed as R2P, exceeded its mandate, leading to regime change and prolonged instability.
- Ukraine (2022-present): Russia's invasion violated international law, demonstrating the limits of enforcement against powerful states.
- Gaza: ICC investigations illustrate the difficulty of applying international criminal law in politicized conflicts.

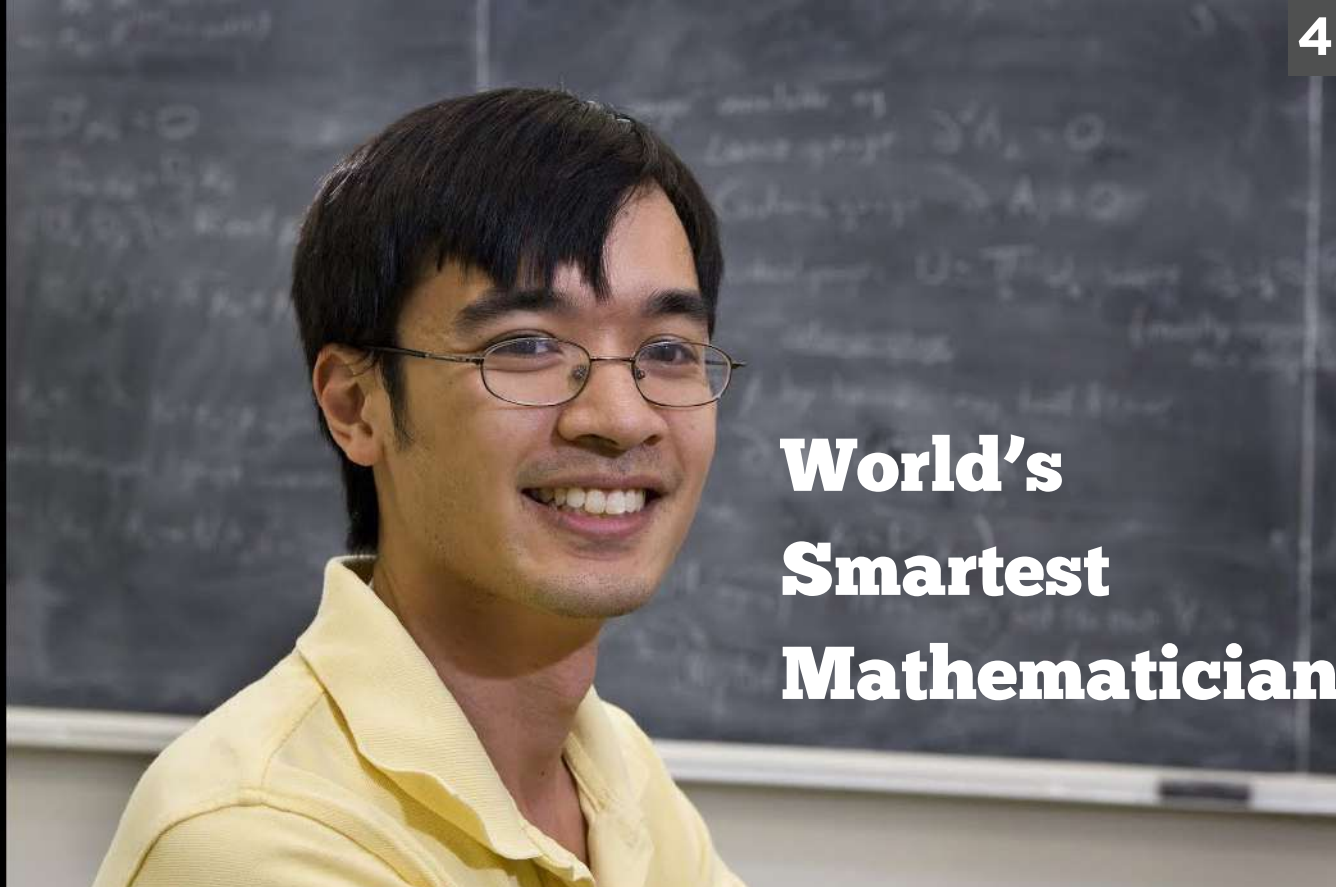
Selectivity and the Crisis of Legitimacy

Selective enforcement undermines credibility. Some conflicts prompt rapid international response, while others receive little attention, fueling the perception that humanitarian principles serve geopolitical interests.

Lessons from Islamic Ethical Traditions

Islamic teachings stress impartial justice, restraint in the use of force, and a consistent commitment to fairness. These principles, if applied sincerely, could strengthen the ethical foundation of international law.

Both Islamic ethics and modern international law recognize a moral obligation to protect the vulnerable and restrain aggression. The challenge is to apply these principles consistently. Genuine commitment to justice, multilateral cooperation, and prevention-focused approaches are essential to restore the legitimacy of humanitarian intervention.



World's Smartest Mathematician

In July 1988, the International Mathematical Olympiad gathered the brightest teenage minds in the world. They came to Australia to tackle problems so difficult that even seasoned professors might hesitate.

Among them stood a boy who seemed almost misplaced — small, quiet, and only thirteen years old: Terence Tao.

When Bob Hawke stepped forward to award a gold medal, few expected it to hang around the neck of that young boy. Yet it did. The hall erupted in applause as Tao became the youngest gold medalist in the competition's history.

He accepted the honor calmly, almost shyly, as though the noise around him belonged to someone else.

While most children his age were busy with schoolyard games, Tao was already pushing the limits of human thought.

By twenty-four, he would become a full professor at University of California, Los Angeles — the youngest in its history. Many students assumed he was one of them.

In 2006, at just thirty-one, he received the Fields Medal, often described as the highest honor in mathematics. That same year, he was awarded the MacArthur Fellowship. Over time, his achievements would also include the Crafoord Prize and the Breakthrough Prize in Mathematics.

But this story is not only about brilliance. It is about growth.

Tao's journey began far from the spotlight. His parents left Hong Kong for Adelaide in search of opportunity. His father was a doctor, his mother a teacher. They valued education deeply — but even they could not have predicted what their son would become.

From the beginning, Tao was different. He taught himself to read before the age of two. Numbers were not just symbols to him; they were patterns to explore. Traditional schooling struggled to keep up, so his parents guided his learning carefully, allowing him to grow without pressure.

At an age when most children are just discovering multiplication, Tao was attending university lectures at Flinders University. At eight, he scored near-perfect marks on the SAT, a test meant for high school seniors.

Recognizing his potential, his father took him to the Institute for Advanced Study, where he met great mathematicians like Charles Fefferman and Enrico Bombieri. They gave him problems far beyond his years — and he solved them in ways no one expected.

Another influential figure was Paul Erdős, a wandering legend in mathematics. Erdős treated the young Tao not as a child, but as an equal. His encouragement left a lasting mark.

Despite all this early success, Tao faced a turning point. At Princeton University, where he began his PhD at seventeen, he encountered something new: difficulty. For the first time, raw talent was not enough.

Under the guidance of Elias Stein, Tao learned that real mathematics is not about quick answers. It is slow, uncertain, and often frustrating. It demands patience. It demands persistence.

This realization changed him.

He learned to read deeply, to struggle through problems, and to accept failure as part of progress. By twenty-one, he completed his PhD — not just as a prodigy, but as a true mathematician.

At UCLA, Tao flourished. His work spanned multiple fields, from number theory to partial differential equations. He became known not only for his brilliance but for his openness. Unlike many researchers, he shared ideas freely, collaborated widely, and welcomed discussion.

One of his most famous achievements came with Ben Green. Together, they proved the Green-Tao Theorem, showing that prime numbers — long thought to be random — can form patterns of any length.

He also helped develop compressed sensing with Emmanuel Candès, a breakthrough that improved technologies like MRI scans. His ideas even touched deep unsolved problems like the Navier-Stokes equations.

Yet for all his success, Tao remains remarkably grounded. He writes openly about mistakes, rejected papers, and the importance of effort. Through his blog and projects like the Polymath Project, he has helped turn mathematics into a shared, global conversation.

Today, Tao continues to explore new ideas — from artificial intelligence to ancient problems like the Twin Prime Conjecture and the Collatz Conjecture.

Those who meet him are often surprised. He does not look like a legend. He speaks softly, listens carefully, and prefers simplicity over attention.

So, is he the greatest mathematician of our time? Many believe so. But Tao himself would likely disagree.

Because, in his view, mathematics is not about genius. It is about curiosity, patience, and the willingness to keep going — even when the answers do not come easily.

And perhaps that is what makes his story truly remarkable.

Source: <https://medium.com/@ganeshonline6/worlds-smartest-mathematician-26d784a858bf>