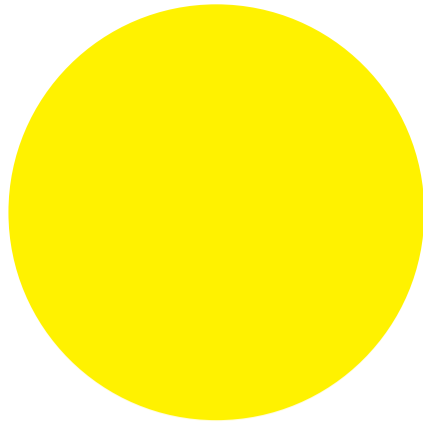




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Iran Daily

Managing tensions with West



By Abdolreza Faraji-Rad
Former diplomat

EXCLUSIVE
OPINION

During the current Persian calendar year ending on March 19, we saw a major crisis unfold known as the Gaza War, which had ripple effects on Iran's foreign policy. The aftermath of the bloody conflict extended beyond the Gaza Strip, encompassing Iraq, Lebanon and Syria as well as the Red Sea and the Bab al-Mandab Strait.

As the war erupted and Israel's atrocities against the innocent and vulnerable people of Gaza came to light, numerous accusations were hurled at Iran. Israel, in turn, took aggressive actions against Iran's interests in Syria and Lebanon, going as far as carrying out terrorist acts within Iran. This led to immense internal and external pressure aimed at luring Iran into a confrontation with Israel. Obviously, Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu personally tried to drag Iran into the war so as to provoke the United States to step in his assistance to pit Washington against Tehran. Despite the relentless push, Iran's foreign policy and decision-makers navigated the situation skillfully, steering clear of such a precarious scenario. The strategic approach stands out as a triumph in foreign policy.

In the realm of regional dynamics, particularly concerning Saudi Arabia, this year showcased a positive performance in foreign policy. The landmark agreement to normalize relations between Tehran and Riyadh eased many tensions in the region, serving as a trump card for Iranian diplomacy. While expectations were set for a swifter pace of progress and collaboration between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the anticipated developments did not materialize. The lack of progress in Tehran-Riyadh cooperation had repercussions, with statements made within the Persian Gulf Cooperation Council challenging Iran's territorial integrity. It is evident that engaging in more dialogue with Saudi Arabia and other Arab nations in the region, coupled with efforts to resolve lingering disputes, is imperative.

This year which is coming to an end soon, an unwritten deal emerged between Iran and the US to reduce tensions, if not prevent them from spiraling out of control altogether. Consequently, Iran's oil sales surged, and some of its assets frozen in South Korea were released conditionally. While the deal had the potential for further development, the Gaza war hindered its progression. The recent meeting between Deputy Foreign Minister Ali Bagheri-Kani and Enrique Mora, the European Union's political director, could mark the initiation of a fresh round of talks between Iran and the West to revive the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the JCPOA.

To attain further success in the upcoming year, it is necessary to explore avenues to defuse tensions with the US and Europe, averting any escalation. The political climate in the US presents an opportunity for Iranian diplomacy to resume negotiations on the nuclear issue. At the same time, dialogue with Europe should be pursued vigorously. Countries neighboring Iran deserve more attention for fostering relations and cooperation. India emerges as a nation with significant potential for collaboration with Iran, while Turkey stands out as another crucial partner necessitating well-thought-out plans for advancing economic cooperation.

Iran Daily wishes a happy Nowruz for its readers. Our next issue will be published after the New Year holidays, on April 13.



Researcher on Israeli affairs and author of the book on settler colonialism:

Israel is Limited by Palestinian, Regional Resistance

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW **3-6** >

Leader: Palestinian resistance in Gaza will bring Israel to its knees

Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said the resistance and steadfastness of the Palestinian people in the besieged Gaza Strip will bring the Israeli regime to its knees. Ayatollah Khamenei made the remarks in a meeting with Qur'an reciters and memorizers on the first day of the holy month of Ramadan in the capital Tehran on Tuesday. "Today, what is coming to pass in Gaza is the apex of crime, malice and brutality," the Leader said as he

pointed to the 158th day of Israel's genocidal war on Gaza. "The [Palestinian] resistance is still standing strong and will bring the Zionists to their knees." The Leader also said it is a disgrace to Western civilization that Israel has committed unprecedented crimes in Gaza, such as the killing of children and babies through starvation and thirst. "Although the Zionists have all kinds of weapons and aid coming from the United States and the West,

they have not been able to do anything whatsoever in the face of the unique patience of the people of Gaza and the resilience of resistance fighters."

Children casualties

The head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees said Tuesday more children have been reported killed in the war raging in Gaza than in four years of conflict around the world, AFP reported. "Staggering. The number of children reported killed in just over 4 months in



Leader of Iran's Islamic Revolution
Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei
Khamenei.ir

#Gaza is higher than the number of children killed in 4 years of wars around the world combined," Philippe Lazzarini said on X, formerly Twitter. "This war is a war on chil-

dren. It is a war on their childhood and their future," Lazzarini said. EU foreign affairs chief Josep Borrell also criticized the lack of aid entering Gaza as a "manmade" di-

saster on Tuesday, telling the UN Security Council that hunger was being used as a "war arm." "This humanitarian crisis... is not a natural disaster, is not a flood, is not an earth-

quake, it is manmade," said Borrell at UN headquarters in New York. Israel's war on Gaza has killed more than 31,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children.

Biden, Trump set for election rematch after clinching nominations



US President Joe Biden and former president Donald Trump both clinched their parties' nomination on Tuesday, kicking off the first US presidential election rematch in nearly 70 years. Biden needed 1,968 delegates to win the nomination, and he passed that number on Tuesday night as results began to come in from the primary contest in Georgia, Edison Research said. Results were also coming in from Mississippi, Washington state, the Northern Mariana Islands and Democrats living abroad, Reuters reported. Hours later, Trump clinched the 1,215 delegates required to secure the Republican presidential nomination as four states

held contests, including Georgia, the battleground where Trump faces criminal charges for his efforts to overturn the state's 2020 results. There were 161 delegates at stake on Tuesday in Georgia, Hawaii, Mississippi and Washington states. Biden, 81, issued a statement after he sealed the Democratic nomination, taking aim at what he called Trump's "campaign of resentment, revenge, and retribution that threatens the very idea of America." "Voters now have a choice to make about the future of this country. Are we going to stand up and defend our democracy or let others tear it down? Will we restore the right to choose and protect our freedoms

or let extremists take them away?" he said. The outcome of Tuesday's voting was essentially predetermined, after Trump's last remaining rival for the Republican nomination, former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley, ended her presidential campaign following Trump's dominant performance last week on Super Tuesday, when he won 14 of 15 state contests. In a video posted on social media, Trump said there was no time to celebrate, and instead put the focus on beating Biden, whom he called the "worst" president in US history. "We're going to drill, baby, drill. We're going to close our borders. We're going to do things like nobody has ever seen before. And we're going to make our nation's economy be the best ever in the world," said Trump. Biden, meanwhile, faced only token opposition in the Democratic primary campaign, though liberal activists frustrated by his support for Israel's war in Gaza have convinced a sizable minority of Democrats to vote "uncommitted" in protest. Both men have already turned their attention to the Nov. 5 general election, holding dueling rallies in Georgia on Saturday.

Iran, China, Russia engage targets in joint maritime exercise



The Maritime Security Belt - 2024 exercise had the active participation of China, Russia, and Iran, involving live firing at designated surface targets on Tuesday. Various vessels and fast attack boats from the IRGC Naval Force are involved in the exercise, along with soldiers from the Islamic Republic Army, Tasnim News Agency reported. The IRGC Naval Force enhanced its capabilities by introducing newly-added vessels to the exercise,

marking their inaugural participation in operational activities. These vessels are equipped for extended ocean missions, ensuring a prolonged naval presence, armed with the latest domestically-developed advanced weaponry. The commander of the Imam Ali (PBUH) Naval Base of the ICG Navy, Rear Admiral Amrollah Nozari, said, "We took part in this exercise with three vessels and two fast attack crafts, covering an area of

17,000 square kilometers. This area includes three of the world's five strategic straits, located in the northern Indian Ocean region, which is a crucial hub for energy and trade traffic globally." Admiral Nozari explained that the primary objective of this exercise is to "enhance regional security," foster broader multilateral cooperation among participating nations, and showcase the benevolence and prowess of these countries in upholding global peace, as well as ensuring maritime security, and forging a maritime community with a collective destiny, endeavors vigorously pursued by the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran. He also said that the exercise includes a variety of tactical maneuvers such as rescuing fire-damaged vessels, liberating hijacked vessels, targeting of specif-

ic objectives, conducting night-time aerial target practice, and other tactical and operational drills. Rear Admiral Mostafa Tajeddini, the spokesperson for the joint military exercise, also said that the naval units of Iran, China, and Russia conducted the 'Photo Ex' exercise and offensive formations. Tajeddini emphasized Iran's commitment to enhancing its international status through participation in international coalitions, stating, "Ensuring security at the regional and international levels is crucial for Iran." The operational phases of the Maritime Security Belt - 2024, involving Iranian, Chinese, and Russian naval units, commenced in the North Indian Ocean and the Sea of Oman, following a briefing session held on Tuesday. The maneuvers were scheduled to continue for two days.

Devastating toll of famine on Palestinians



By Syed Ali Hassan
Iran Daily's
correspondent
in Pakistan

The Israeli army's mission of genocide against Palestinians in Gaza, intensified since October 7 through aerial attacks, is pushing the region towards famine. The US is providing support to Israel in implementing this genocide project. The UN reports that 2.3m Palestinians are at risk of famine, warning of a looming humanitarian disaster without immediate help. In Palestinian refugee camps on the Rafah border, visible emaciation among children and women results from food shortages, compounded by diseases due to lack of clean water. Facing Israeli army brutal-

ity, starvation, and thirst, they receive just one meal within 24 hours, insufficient for basic nutritional needs. On February 28, 2024, reports emerged of Israel obstructing organized aid delivery to homeless Palestinians, raising fears of imminent famine. Footage from northern Gaza reveals the Israeli army's obstruction of food distribution through various means, including violence and blocking relief trucks. Human rights organizations say Israel is using hunger as a weapon, exacerbating the crisis by restricting international food aid. Special UN envoys warn of an unprecedented famine, with the entire Gaza Strip classified as the third phase of Integrated Food Security, possibly increas-

ing mortality rates by 25% in March. By May 2024, a mortality rate exceeding 50% is feared. The Chief Economist of the World Food Program notes that 80% of the world's population facing famine is in Gaza. Israeli bombings have depleted food stocks, causing increased prices in Gaza. On January 5, 2024, Martin Griffiths of the United Nations declared Gaza faces the highest level of food insecurity in a century. Western journalists report people grinding animal feed for flour, and CNN notes families resorting to boiled grass due to water scarcity. The global community and the Muslim world witness the situation as reluctant Israel takes no action. The increasing death toll from famine faces obstacles due

to American vetoing of UN peacekeeping agreements three times. The aid available is vastly insufficient for Palestinians, prompting a UN warning that without improved delivery, a quarter of Gaza's population may succumb to hunger. A senior doctor informed the Associated Press that in the past five weeks, 16 prematurely born babies died in Emirati hospitals in Rafah due to diseases linked to food shortages. Notably, since October 7, Israel has tightly restricted the entry of food, water, medicines, and other supplies into Gaza, resulting in rapid deaths among pregnant women and children. The international community must take practical steps to avert the humanitarian crisis in Gaza amid the looming famine.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



Researcher on Israeli affairs and author of the book on settler colonialism:

Israel is limited by Palestinian, regional resistance



By Ali Amiri
Cultural critic

EXCLUSIVE
INTERVIEW

Sai Englert is a lecturer in political economy of the Middle East at Leiden University, Netherlands, and the author of 'Settler Colonialism: An Introduction'. His research focuses on the Israeli state and the consequences of neoliberalism, as well as settler colonialism. He has made numerous contributions to various publications such as the New Left Review and Jacobin. In the following interview, Englert presents the settler colonialism analysis of Israel and references the transparent ambitions of the early Zionists, who shamelessly promoted the colonial project of Israel to Europeans as a solution to the rising anti-Semitism in the continent and as a means to establish European control in the Middle East. The Zionists have long attempted to portray the Israel-Palestine conflict as something other than what it truly is: a settler colony that must address the issue of "transferring" the indigenous people whose lands have been occupied. However, as long as we remain within this framework, it is clear that true Palestinian liberation can only be achieved once the colonizers are ousted.



British military parade in Al-Quds (Jerusalem) in 1936
● LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

IRAN DAILY: When we think about colonial powers, we usually think about great empires like the British, French, or German colonial empires. Israel, on the other hand, is a small state without apparent human resources or imperialistic ambitions, yet, it's essentially a settler colonial state. How can we explain this?

SAI ENGLERT: Well, I think that's a good question. It's true. The Israeli state portrays itself as being a small state surrounded by aggressive states and those enemies, depending on the

historical period – the 50s, 60s, and 70s – constructed different Arab states or now the Muslim states, and the practice of resistance and these kinds. I think that's quite a historical fallacy and we're just missing the larger picture, which is that the reason Zionism was able to establish itself in Palestine is absolutely because of its alliance with British imperialism and the British Empire. And Zionists are truly clear about this. If you read [Theodor] Herzl, he is very clear that Zionism will need the support of what he calls great powers, and it will rep-

resent the interests of the great powers in the region. In fact, imperial politicians were very clear about this. Ronald Storrs, the British governor of Palestine, described British Zionism as support for what he calls a "little loyal Jewish Ulster in a sea of potentially hostile Arabism," and he compares it to Protestant setup in the north of Ireland. Then comes the lateral shift to the United States, which goes on until today. Israel is a very close ally of the United States, and represents what the US Secretary of State in the past has called an "unsinkable aircraft

carrier," which was used to say that it's an extension of Americans in the region. So, that would be my response to this part of your question. I think it would be a mistake to think of Zionist project and the Israel state as simply an isolated state. I think it's always been part of the reason why the Imperial nations, first Britain and then the United States, support it. Because Palestine is situated in an old strategic point in the world economy, next to the Suez Canal. In the 1920s through 1940s it was on the route of the British oil pipeline that was

constructed in Kirkuk and went all the way to Haifa. You know, it's a key strategic region that all those powers want to defend. And I think another reason why the United States and Israel unite the way they do now is that it gives them diplomatic advantages because of their military political interests. When we think in terms of colonialism, it's a particular form of colonial rule that is developed by establishing a new population in the land that is conquered. Israel has reached and played that role, as a sort of outpost of the empire in a particularly strategic region in need of control. You know that the Dutch established posts in Dutch India in order to protect the routes to India. The French started colonizing what is today's Algeria, because they were trying to control the routes in the Mediterranean; the British established settlements in what is now the Falkland in the south of Argentina, in order to control trade routes in the south of America, etc., etc. I think Israel really represents a classic case of the settler colonies, with the role that other colonies also played across the world.



Sai Englert is a lecturer in political economy of the Middle East at Leiden University, Netherlands, and the author of 'Settler Colonialism: An Introduction'. His research focuses on the Israeli state and the consequences of neoliberalism, as well as settler colonialism. He has made numerous contributions to various publications such as the New Left Review and Jacobin.



Palestinian Arabs are being led out of the Old City of Al-Quds (Jerusalem) by British soldiers of the English Coldstream Guards during the Great Revolt against the British Mandate in 1938.
● NATIONAAL ARCHIEF



Do you agree with Richard Anderson Falk that Israel is a “colonialist solution to a European problem?”

Yes, I agree with him, and that’s ironic that until the 1960s or so, the Zionists agreed with him as well. Again, when you look at the early Zionists, they are dreamily transparent and clear about it. They say there is anti-Semitism in Europe, as the nation states are formed throughout the 19th century, and Jewish populations in Europe are increasingly targeted by a new form of anti-Semitism that considers them to be sort of fundamentally foreign to the nation states within which they find themselves. And the Zionist movement emerges as a particular response to that by saying European anti-Semitism will never disappear, and the only way for us to solve it is to also develop a nation state, and we will develop that nation states in the colonial world. They’re very transparent about this. Of course, they are European bourgeois thinkers from the late 19th century, and like all European bourgeois who lived in the late 19th and early 20th century, they see no problem with colonialism. They’re in favor of it. They think that’s an OK way to resolve internal problems in Europe through conquering, occupying, and subjugating the peoples of the world.

So, in that sense, I kind of doubly agree with the quote, since on the one hand, it’s a colonial solution to a European problem because it’s about European control in the Middle East, and it’s a colonial solution to European problem because it’s an attempt by the Zionists to resolve the kind of the contradictory position they find themselves in in Europe, as both they are very much part of Europe – they’re Europe-

an, of course – and victims of European racism. And in fact, that’s also how the Zionists are going to convince the great powers to support Zionism.

So, if I can sort of sum it up in a way the arguments for the European powers is to say, you want control over Palestine and you don’t want the Jews in Europe, we have a solution to both of those problems. Although at some point, they talk about Argentina, at some point, they talk about Uganda, but they mainly talk about Palestine. And so one of the things that becomes striking is that many of the colonial policymakers or officials who supported Zionism were rabid anti-Semites. The Balfour Declaration, when the British Empire signs away Palestine to the Zionist movement, carries the name of a British politician called Lord Balfour, a famous anti-Semite. He passed legislation in 1905, the Aliens Act, that attempted to limit Jewish migration into Britain. There are many examples like that. And in fact, we still see them today, when we see the Israeli government cozying up to anti-Semitic governments in Hungary or in Poland.

You know, there’s a logic here that continues, which is to say that the goal of the Zionists was not to challenge anti-Semitism in Europe, but to say, “It’s simply a fact, there is nothing we can do about it, and so we will solve it by becoming a European state in the Middle East.” And Herzl who founded the Zionist organization and writes ‘The Jewish State’, which is really kind of the founding document of the Zionist movement, writes that the Jewish state will be a rampart of European civilization against Asian barbarism. And so there’s already this kind of idea of that by leaving Europe, they will be-

come Europeans – if that makes sense.

Interesting. A few months ago, at the beginning of the recent war, there was a debate around banning the word “decolonization” on Twitter, now known as X. Why is Israel so afraid of this word?

First of all, I should say that I’m not on social media and don’t actually know the particular thing you’re referring to. But I think it’s part of a broader tendency, certainly in the context of Zionism and of the Israeli state, to limit the possibility and ability of the International Solidarity Movement to express itself. And I think we see that in lots of different ways. There are attempts at criminalizing the BDS Movement (the boycott, divestment, and sanction movements), attempts to make it illegal in lots of different places, both in Europe and in North America, there are attempts to make it into law that anti-Zionism is equated with anti-Semitism. And so that it can no longer be about solidarity with the Palestinians, but it can be criminalized as hatred towards Jews.

And, you know, of course the idea of decolonization is not one that is comfortable for people that are committed to a colonial project. I would say, however, and this might seem a little bit contradictory, but it seems to me that all these different repressive tactics are signs of weakness. And I think, in general, this is true. When political movements or regimes have to rely more and more on repression, I think it tells us something about the fact that they find themselves threatened, isolated, etc. I think two or three decades ago, what the Zionists would have said, in Europe, or in North America was “We are the only democracy in the Mid-

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Nur Masalha traces the uses and theories of “transfer” amongst the early Zionists, and shows that the Nakba, the expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians out of Palestine at the moment of the creation of the Israeli state, doesn’t come from nowhere.

dle East, we are bringing progress and advancement, and that’s why you should support us.”

In many ways, that’s still part of the narrative, but I think, fundamentally they know that they’ve lost the battle for hearts and minds in the majority of the populations of the world. And so instead of trying to wage an effective argument to convince, they are waging a campaign to repress. And that campaign can be very violent, people can lose their jobs, be slandered, attacked, etc. But fundamentally, I think it points to a weakness on their side, which is they feel that the popular sentiment has shifted away from them, and so they have to police people’s languages, political expression, etc., in these kinds of hyper repressive ways.

Israel tried and keeps trying to fabricate history in a way to legitimize their claim on the Palestinian land. How can we show the world that the land belongs to the indigenous people living on it regardless of their faith or race, and debunk the myth that the Palestinian land belongs to the Jews?

I think what’s interesting about that is, again, it’s striking when you look at, read, and engage with early Zionists and Israeli policymakers. They always had this double language. On the one hand, they would say Palestine is empty, so the early Zionists would say that Zionism was a movement for “people without a land in a land without a people,” and so the idea was that there was nobody in Palestine and so it was a perfect place to settle. And at the same time, they were hyper conscious of the fact that there was a population there, and that they were going to have to find a solution to it. And so

the early debates amongst the Zionists are really about what to do with the Palestinians. And so for people who claim that there were no Palestinians, it’s funny how much they spoke about them and debated what to do with them.

And you have two schools of thought here, which, by the way, also drives this point home of colonization and how aware they were that they were colonizers. You have one school of thought that is going to say we should do in Palestine what the French did in North Africa. So, we should colonize in the same way as the French were colonizing in Algeria at the time. And so we should have a minority of landowners who exploit the majority of indigenous workers, i.e. Palestinians, in order to pay them very little and work them very hard so that we can export cheap goods towards Europe. And against that, another camp would say no, what we have to do is to build an economy that is not dependent on the indigenous population. And they will point, for example, to South Africa, and they will say the problem is that if you build an economy that’s dependent on indigenous labor, that indigenous labor will rebel, fight back, and refuse to submit.

Again, I think in the kind of Zionist sources, whether it’s [David] Ben-Gurion, whether it’s [Haim] Arlosoroff, who was one of the key theoreticians of early Zionism, whether it’s people like [Ze’ev] Jabotinsky, who wrote a famous article called “The Iron Wall”, where he talks about the fact that the only way that the indigenous people will be defeated is if they are militarily defeated and separated through an iron wall from the future state, it’s very interesting that



all of them talk extremely candidly about the fact that there are indigenous people and that they will have to be defeated, expelled, etc., in order to develop a state.

From the 1920s onwards, there was very open debate amongst the Zionists about what at the time they called "transfer", which is a sort of euphemism, the polite way to say expulsion of the Palestinians out of Palestine if the Israeli state is to be built. There's a wonderful book by a Palestinian historian called Nur Masalha, who traces the uses and theories of transfer amongst the early Zionists, and shows that the Nakba, the expulsion of 750,000 Palestinians out of Palestine at the moment of the creation of the Israeli state doesn't come from nowhere. It comes from decades of political argument, preparation, strategy, etc., that makes the moment of expulsion possible in 1948, and it continues after that.

People have spoken a lot about a formative moment in Zionist historiography, which is in 1956. There was a clash between Palestinian fedayeen from Gaza and the militia in the kibbutz of Nahal Oz – which was attacked again on October 7, so it's a very long ongoing history – and the head of the militia of Nahal Oz was killed. Moshe Dayan, who's an important figure in the Israeli army and then in Israeli politics, gave the eulogy for the head of this militia who was killed, and in his eulogy he says that of course the Palestinians hate us, because they have been stuck in refugee camps for the last eight years, looking at us living on the lands of their ancestors. There are many more examples of this. But over and over and over again, in Zionist and Israeli historiog-

raphy, they are extremely clear about what they're doing. And I think that's important because you can't colonize a place, you can't ethnically cleanse a place, without doing it on purpose. It just doesn't come out of thin air.

And I think we're seeing that for the moment. So, while pro-Israeli speaking points say that the Israelis are just defending themselves, that they're fighting Hamas and so on, if you listen to what Israeli politicians and policymakers are saying, they're extremely transparent. They're saying there are no innocents in Gaza, that there is no difference between fighters and civilians. They say that they are cutting water, energy, etc. Some of them are calling for atomic bombs to be dropped on Gaza, they are talking about recolonizing Gaza, people are drawing up plans, and so on and so on. All of this is being discussed very much in the open. And so I think the smoking gun in a sense is that Israeli policymakers at all different times in the evolution, both of Zionism and of the Israeli state, are extremely clear about what they're doing, and are very, very transparent in how they discuss it.

Do you see this latest round of Israeli hostilities towards Palestinians as a way to lay the groundwork for dispossessing the Gaza natives?

I think that's a difficult question to answer. It is very clear that there are sections of the Israeli government who very much want to do that. I think it's very clear. We've seen plans to expel the Palestinians in Gaza into Egypt or just into the sea. Some Israeli politicians are saying that they can take boats and, you know, can go to Europe or the United States, but they won't

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What we're seeing is that there's a genocide being carried out against people in Gaza. Tens of thousands have been maimed and killed, millions have been displaced, infrastructure has been destroyed.

stay here. Or there are plans circulating about building artificial islands on which the people of Gaza can be sent.

And of course, what we're seeing is that there's a genocide being carried out against people. Tens of thousands have been maimed and killed, millions have been displaced, infrastructure has been destroyed. I think there's definitely an attempt at making life in Gaza either impossible or at least as difficult as possible. All of that is happening. And I think it is very clear that in a world in which they could do whatever they wanted, that is what Israelis would try to do. And again, it's a very old line of thought there. People like Yitzhak Rabin, who was the prime minister in the 1990s, famously said he wished he could wake up one day and that Gaza would have disappeared into the sea. Or in 1967, after conquering the whole of Historic Palestine, Levi Eshkol, who was the Prime Minister of Israel at the time, said that perhaps if Israel cut the water supply to Gaza, the Palestinians wouldn't have a choice and they would just leave.

So you have all these sort of dreams of if the Palestinians could just be gotten rid of. However, the Israelis do not live in a world that is shaped by their deepest desires, but they live in a world in which they have to engage with material limits that are imposed on them, and they're imposed on them by Palestinian resistance. They're imposed on them by social movements across the region. You know, the fact that we're seeing millions of people taking to the streets in Yemen, in Jordan, in Iraq, across the entire region. In Egypt, for the first time since 2013, people took to the streets again to demand that the Egyptian Government doesn't collaborate with Israel in allowing the expulsion of

Gazans, to demand that the ties with Israel are cut. You know, the fact that the Houthis in Yemen are stopping boats and disrupting world trade in an attempt to put pressure on Western governments to stop allowing Israel from acting the way it does, I think all of that points to the limits imposed on Israel.

Also there are massive social movements in the Global North as well, so that the governments that are the most supportive of Israel potentially have to pay the price. For example, I have doubts on the fact that Biden could win the election anyway in the United States, but it could very well be that his support for the genocide in Gaza will cost him his reelection.

The fact that the Israeli military seems to be doing quite badly inside of Gaza, and that the numbers that are starting to come up in terms of wounded and deaths, etc., on their side, seem to be very high, which probably means that their ability to carry this on for a long period of time is limited. All of that, I think, points to the fact that Israel can't just wish things into existence. And so, actually, I think it's fairly unlikely that they will be successful. In fact, if you look at the plans that, for example, the Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant has drawn up for what would come after, they look very similar to what came before. The only difference is that they don't name Hamas as being in control of the Gaza Strip. They talk about an unidentified Palestinian body. But apart from that, we're basically talking about the same thing.

And so I think that in reality, what's the most likely outcome is the same status quo, but with the Gaza Strip that has just gone through a genocidal assault. And I think what is going to be

the real lasting horror of this is the destruction, the loss of life, the loss of infrastructure, the loss of land, the loss of water, etc. It is unimaginable. And so the conditions inside of the Gaza Strip will be much worse than they were. But I think the settlement will be fairly similar to what came before.

In 2005, Israel, led by Ariel Sharon, pulled out the settlers in Gaza unilaterally, and this was often presented by pro-Israeli voices as a sort of a peace offering to the Palestinians. Now, of course, that wasn't the case. There was no negotiation around this in any kind of way. But it was a strategic decision that Gaza was too difficult to hold. Because there were 8000 settlers controlling 30 percent of the land in Gaza, surrounded I think at the time – my numbers might be wrong – by about 1.5 million Palestinians, and that balance of forces was considered impossible to hold and too difficult to secure. It demanded too many soldiers for too little strategic or economic interest, whereas in the West Bank, there was more land available. There were many more settlers, more growth was possible, etc. And so they made the choice to pull out. And so I think while there is a fanatical settler right in the Israeli government that thinks they can relaunch the settlements in Gaza, that would be extremely difficult to imagine. I might be wrong, but I find it very difficult to imagine because it's exactly because of that balance of forces, which has gotten much worse by the way. Today, there are 2.3 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip. I think it would be a total strategic mistake for the Israelis to do that. They would find themselves in the very situation that they tried to pull themselves out of in 2005.



Now, I want to ask whether the dispossession of the natives would go on in the West Bank, because as long as we understand this conflict in terms of settler colonialism, there is no other way for Israel, right?

Yes, and I think it's very clear. I think Israel is being very clear that they're increasing settlement construction in East Jerusalem, they are increasing it in the West Bank. The levels of violence that we've seen in the West Bank are immense. In fact, they were immense even before October 7. This year, before October 7, was the deadliest year for Palestinians since the Second Intifada, specifically in the West Bank and in East Jerusalem. So, we're talking about hundreds of people who have been killed, settler riots in Palestinian towns and villages, military actions in refugee camps. We've seen very, very high levels of violence that are all geared at dispossession.

And you're right. I think it's one of the strengths of the analysis of settler colonialism, which is to say, there's not some sort of national conflict. It's an ongoing process of colonization. And, by the way,

it's not only in the West Bank, it's also inside of Israel itself. There is a massive process that's been going on for the last decade, obviously, it's been going on since 1948, but in the last decade has again accelerated, and that is to displace Palestinians in the Naqab Desert in the south, also known as the Negev, where 70,000, Palestinians are being threatened with dispossession and displacement. There was a plan that was defeated by a social movement at the time, but which has not disappeared. And so there are big ongoing developments, or an ongoing push to achieve really what I think can be understood as the central strategic aim of the Israeli state towards the Palestinians: to concentrate as many Palestinians on as little land as possible – and that happens everywhere. You can see that happening everywhere, including inside of the green line.

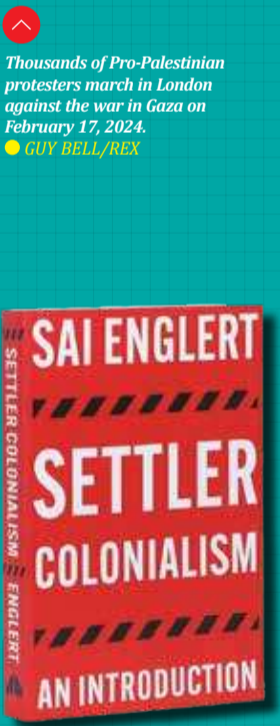
As my last question, I want to know that in your opinion, what hope is left for Palestinians at this stage?

I think I very much share the analysis that the Palestinian Left had already developed in the 1950s

and 60s, which was to say that it's impossible to understand Palestine, outside of wider regional relations. Similar to where we started our discussion today, which was that you can't understand Zionism and then the Israeli state without understanding wider relations of empire building and of imperialism, as Israel plays a particular role in imposing, defending, and reproducing Western power in the wider region. And so, that it's impossible to think about the Liberation of Palestine without thinking about a wider regional liberation.

The Palestinian leftist thinker, George Habash, used to say this famous sentence that the road to Jerusalem goes through the capitals of the Arab world. And, you know, without the fall of repressive regimes across the region, and somehow democratization of the region, I think it's impossible to think about the Liberation of Palestine.

Israel can function the way it does because the regional actors collaborate with it. The Palestinians are the majority of the population in Jordan, and they are an import-



Thousands of Pro-Palestinian protesters march in London against the war in Gaza on February 17, 2024.
● GUY BELL/REX

ant population in the south of Lebanon, as well as in the south of Syria. The fact that they are controlled by those regimes, that they are stopped from organizing for their return, plays a key role in stabilizing the region and stopping the Liberation of Palestine. But also I think there's a strategic question as well: halfway through the 20th century, the United States made a calculation that it was better for them to unite with Israel as a repressive force in the region than to unite with different sections of Arab nationalism. And that calculation obviously can be changed, in a region in which massive social movements, revolutionary movements – like we saw in 2011 – across the region were to take power, for example, and to genuinely start representing the will of their populations. I think you could see the United States and Europe being forced to rethink that strategic decision if they were to start losing control of the region in general. Would it still be worth it to continue supporting Israel in the blind and unconditional way that they do now? And so

in many ways, I think the Liberation of Palestine is intimately connected to the wider liberation of the region as a whole. And Ghassan Kanafani, who was also a very famous Palestinian author and political thinker, used to talk about the enemy trinity, and he used to say there are three enemies: there are the local ruling classes, the local bourgeoisie, there are reactionary regimes in the region, and there is imperialism. And the Palestinians are facing all three of those at the same time, which is obviously bad news. But the good news is that they're not the only ones. I think the rest of the region is facing them as well. And so if we think about it, at a wider level, I think the situation is less hopeless than if we simply think about the Palestinians, isolated, facing both the Israeli state on the one hand, and its Western backers on the other.

Iran Daily does not recognize the statehood of Israel, and any part of the text that points to the contrary strictly reflects the opinion of the interviewee.



Israeli soldiers and tanks are seen inside the Jabalia refugee camp, northern Gaza Strip, on December 12, 2023.
● CHAIM GOLDBERG/FLASH90



The photo shows the ship 'Theodor Herzl', carrying Jewish refugees, seized by the British Mandate authorities on its way to Palestine and escorted to the port of Haifa in April 1947. The banner reads, "The Germans have destroyed our families and homes — don't kill our hopes."
● X

Most popular Persian sweet snacks

Food is an essential part of a country's culture. In Iran, you won't be running out of options when it comes to food and snacks, in particular. Whether you're more into sweets or salty treats, you'll find a large variety of Persian snacks to enjoy along your trips. To get you ready, here is an introduction to the yummiest popular treats in Iran, *surfiran.com* wrote. While Iranians aren't much into desserts, they do have many kinds of sweets, some of which are perfect for accompanying a cup of tea. As delicious as they are, they're also pretty caloric and sugar-filled, so watch out for the excesses!

Gaz



● [tasteatlans.com](#)



Gaz is a beloved Persian sweet made with rose water, pistachios, and sugar. It is a soft, chewy nougat that is both delicate and flavorful. Gaz is often served as a dessert or snack.

There are two main types of gaz: Isfahan's gaz and Kerman's gaz. Isfahan's gaz is made with rose water and pistachios, while that of Kerman is made with saffron and almonds. Both types of gaz are delicious, but they have slightly different flavors.

Gaz is a symbol of Persian culinary mastery. It is a perfect example of how Persian chefs can take simple ingredients and create something truly special. Gaz is also a reflection of Iran's rich history and culture. The rose water used in gaz is a traditional ingredient in Persian cuisine, and the pistachios are a symbol of Iran's fertile lands.

Sohan



● [fae-magazine.com](#)



Sohan, a treasured Persian delight, is a combination of wheat flour, sugar, saffron, cardamom, and rose water. Originating in Qom, the capital city of Qom Province, sohan transcends a simple dessert, serving as both a popular snack and a versatile ingredient in ice cream and pastries. Often exchanged as a thoughtful gift or enjoyed during religious festivities, it embodies the essence of Persian culinary culture. If you seek a sweet with a twist, indulge in the captivating flavors and history of sohan.

Halva

Halva, a luscious sweet paste, finds itself prominently embraced in India and Arab countries, although its roots trace back to Persia. A multitude of tempting halva flavors abound in Iran, with each offering a unique taste sensation. As a treat that transcends borders, halva's evolution from its Persian origins reflects its enduring appeal, appreciated by diverse cultures as a delectable indulgence.



● [ashmazi.com](#)

Koloocheh



Koloocheh is a generic word for a sweet that resembles cookies. Each region in Iran has its own koloocheh, and some are more famous than others: The fumani koloocheh, from the city of Fuman, in the northern province of Gilan, which is made with cinnamon, is the superstar of these cookies. Kolompeh of Kerman is similar to koloocheh, as it is a soft and dry pastry filled with dates and walnuts that is also very popular.



● [topcooking.ir](#)

Zoolbia and bamieh



● [rokna.net](#)

Zoolbia and bamieh, the twin stars of Ramadan's indulgent array, are exceptional deep-fried delights, akin to the beloved churros. Exclusively gracing tables during this holy month, these treats bring a burst of sweetness to the fasting period. Bamieh, with its enticing saffron and rose water infusion, captures the essence of Persian



flavors. These delectable morsels, once fried to golden perfection, become the perfect canvas for the syrup's sweet embrace.

Zoolbia, a kindred spirit to bamieh, boasts the same saffron and rose water allure, tantalizing the taste buds with their unique blend. The deep-fried texture, when combined with a generous drizzle of honey or syrup, creates a heavenly experience that sweetens the spirit of Ramadan's gatherings.

Both treats symbolize the unity and togetherness of Ramadan, offering not only a delicious respite from the day's fast but also a shared joy during iftar, the fast-breaking evening meal of Muslims, when families and friends get together to enjoy these exquisite confections.

Faloodeh and bastani



● [noktechi.ir](#)

One can't go to Iran without trying *bastani*. Bastani is the Persian word for ice cream, and the most popular of all is traditional (sunnati) saffron ice cream. The texture is a bit different and thicker than other ice creams, and it has pistachios in it. Another refreshing treat is *faloodeh*, made of thin frozen noodles that are served in a syrup of sugar and rosewater. The best faloodeh are usually from Shiraz and Yazd.



Basloq



Basloq, a beloved delicacy, enjoys widespread popularity during Nowruz, the Persian New Year, with its roots tracing back to East Azarbaijan Province. This soft, tantalizing sweet is crafted from a delectable blend of sugar, fragrant

rose water, and gelatin, creating a delicate texture that melts in the mouth. Traditionally adorned with the rich nuttiness of walnuts and the delightful hint of coconut powder, basloq showcases the artistry and ingenuity of Iranian con-

fectionery. Its presence during Nowruz festivities highlights its significance as a symbol of new beginnings, adding sweetness to the celebratory atmosphere of the holiday. Basloq exemplifies the essence of Nowruz, embodying the joy

and hope that this special occasion brings to households across Iran. This treat, both culturally significant and exceptionally delicious, invites everyone to join in the festivities and indulge in the rich flavors of Iranian traditions.



Iranian wrestler Zare' tops UWW superheavyweight ranking

Sports Desk

Freestyle wrestler Amirhossein Zare' is the only Iranian to stand atop his respective weight class in the latest United World Wrestling Rankings.

The reigning world champion Zare' pipped Georgian great Geno Petriashvili – beaten by the Iranian in last September's world final – to the top spot of the 125kg class, with American Mason Parris and Taha Akgül of Turkey following the top two respectively.

A glorious five months saw Zare' add the Asian Games gold to his world crown in October before he came out on top against fellow-Iranian Amir-Reza Ma'soumi in the final in the season-opening Zagreb Open Ranking Series event in January to secure his place in the country's squad heading to the Paris Olympics in August. Zare' is widely regarded as

the favorite to walk away with the ultimate prize of the 125kg contests in the French capital, which would be a second Olympic medal – after his bronze-winning campaign in Tokyo – for the decorated 23-year-old Iranian, who has been the dominant force of the free-style superheavyweight wrestling over the past three years with double world golds and a bronze. Meanwhile, Mohammad Nokhodi – a bronze winner in the UWW Worlds – stood second in the 79kg ranking – next to Russian Akhmed Usmanov, who defeated Nokhodi in the world quarterfinals before going all the way to beat Georgian Vladimeri Gamkrelidze in the final. Gamkrelidze is third in the ranking with Azerbaijan's Orkhan Abbasov in fourth. Rahman Amouzad has endured an under-par run over the past year – failing

to defend his world title before being pinned in the Asian Games final – but still managed to stand fourth in the 65kg ranking – behind Armenian Vazgen Tevanyan, world silver winner Sebastian Rivera of Puerto Rico, and Hungarian world champion Iszmail Muszuka-jev.

Amir-Mohammad Yazdani is fourth in the 70kg ranking, with Armenia's Arman Andreasyan, American Zain Retherford – victorious over Yazdani in the world final – and Bulgaria's Ramazan Ramazanov completing the top three. Hassan Yazdani, who is yet to recover from a surgery on his injured shoulder in October, is fourth in the 86kg standing. Yazdani's familiar American foe David Taylor sits above the ranking, followed by San Marino's Myles Amine and Azamat Dauletbekov of Kazakhstan.



● UWW

Iran wins futsal gold in Winter Deaflympics



● IRNA

Sports Desk

The Iranian futsal team was crowned the men's champion at the Erzurum 2024 Winter Deaflympics in Turkey.

Alireza Mokhtar-Abadi bagged a hat-trick as Reza Davarzani's men defeated Japan 3-1 in the Tuesday's final showpiece. Iran overcame Italy and the

Netherlands before playing to a stalemate against the host to finish atop the group and progress to the quarterfinals. A last-eight victory over Algeria sent Iran into the

semifinal clash against Brazil, where goals from Mokhtar-Abadi, Ali-Asghar Mahboubi, and Ali-Akbar Ahmadvand secured a 3-0 win for Davarzani's side.

Al Hilal set world record for consecutive victories with 28th win

REUTERS – Saudi Pro League side Al Hilal have set a world record for consecutive victories by a top-flight team after beating Al-Ittihad 2-0 in the AFC Champions league quarter-finals on Tuesday for a 28th straight win.

Jorge Jesus' side beat the previous record of 27 consecutive victories by Welsh Premier League champions The New Saints (TNS) from the 2016-17 season. TNS had beaten Ajax Amsterdam's 26-game winning streak, a record that had stood for 44 years.



● AFC

"This is truly an incredible achievement and I want to thank everyone at the club for their part in this momen-

tous winning record," said manager Jesus. "As I have said throughout this period, however, records

do not matter as much as trophies. It is up to everyone at Al Hilal to ensure that we close out the season as Roshn Saudi League champions and meet our targets in the cup competitions. Only then can we truly celebrate."

Jesus' side lead the Saudi league with 65 points, 12 ahead of Cristiano Ronaldo's Al Nassr, who were eliminated from the Asian Champions League on Monday after a penalty shootout loss to Al Ain.

Al-Hilal, the 2022 runners-up, will face Al Ain in the semi-finals.

Jesus's side can extend their winning run when they host Damac in the league on Saturday.

Arsenal's defeat of Porto can fuel English title bid

REUTERS – Arsenal's penalty shootout victory against Porto on Tuesday not only snapped their Champions League last-16 jinx but could also fuel their belief as they try to hold off Liverpool and Manchester City in the English league title race.

David Raya's two penalty saves ensured Arsenal reached the quarter-finals for the first time in 14 years after a tense tie against the two-time European champions ended 1-1 on aggregate. It maintained the momentum that Mikel Arteta's squad have built up with eight successive Premier League victories and keeps them chasing silverware on two fronts.

As the emotion poured out inside the Emirates it felt like a psychological turning point for Arsenal as they ended a run of seven successive last-16 exits in the Champions League.

With no FA Cup involvement this weekend and then the international break, Arsenal will not play again until March 31 when they go to Manchester City in a crunch title clash.

But after overcoming a crafty Porto

side they will now head to City with renewed belief.

"The energy that it brings amongst the squad, amongst the club it's really powerful," Arteta said.

Forward Bukayo Saka said the result sets Arsenal up perfectly for the rest of the season.

"Right now, we're top of the league and we're into the quarter-finals of the Champions League, and we're going into the international break," the England international said.

"This result gives us a lot of momentum, a lot of belief that we can go to the Etihad and get a good result."

Former Arsenal defender Martin Keown said Arsenal's progress to the quarter-finals of the Champions League will be a huge confidence boost in the run-in.

"It would have been a downer if they had lost this tonight and gone into the City game, of course they are out of the FA Cup, but now this keeps it ticking along beautifully," he said. "The players grow from it, there's a lot of confidence now."



Arsenal players celebrate after the shootout victory over Porto in the UEFA Champions League last 16 in the Emirates Stadium, London, Britain, on March 12, 2024.
● HANNAH MCKAY/REUTERS