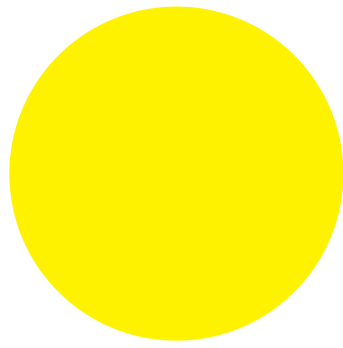


Iran, Iraq sign deal for scientific cooperation



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Resistance's blows forced Israel to accept cease-fire

By Mosadegh Mosadeghpour
Regional affairs expert

O P I N I O N

The stance taken by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and his faction about the administration of Gaza post-cessation is just a demand from the Palestinian Authority. The fact is that the PA has not exactly been embraced with open arms in the Gaza Strip. This suggests that Hamas still holds considerable sway in the coastal enclave. Interestingly, the PA and Abbas did not take a hardline stance against Israel and its actions against civilians during the 16-month war on Gaza and now they are angling to take the reins of Gaza's governance. Meanwhile, Hamas officials, despite expressing a desire for Palestinian unity, might find themselves in a situation where such ongoing disputes become a substitute for war in Gaza.

If the Palestinian factions remain divided over the Gaza Strip, it will play right into the hands of the US and Israel, who have been playing a strategic game regarding the territory. Historically, Israel has sought to drive a wedge between Hamas and the PA. The future of post-war Gaza is a hotly debated topic and Israel might revert to its old playbook of targeted killings and military actions.

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Serenity Descends on Gaza

Hamas: Cease-fire 'result of legendary steadfastness' of Palestinians

Gen. Qa'ani calls truce agreement biggest defeat for Israel

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Displaced Palestinians walk past the rubble as they attempt to return to their homes in the northern Gaza Strip, January 19, 2025.
● DAWOUD ABU ALKAS/REUTERS



Why are Asians less concerned about 'Trump 2.0'?

O P I N I O N

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Trump's Middle East doctrine;

War or peace

By Hoda Yousefi
Mideast affairs expert

O P I N I O N E X C L U S I V E

During his first term, Donald Trump's administration took an unconventional stance in the Middle East, deviating from the well-worn path of US policy. Eschewing the traditional focus on power balance and regional stability, Trump crafted new policies: unconditional support for age-old allies, squeezing rivals to the max, and cutting back on direct military involvement. The strategy hinged on the belief that economic and military alliances between Arab nations and Israel, sans the Palestinian issue, could birth a new regional order. The Abraham Accords and the ramped-up pressure on Iran were the byproducts of this vision.

A cornerstone of Trump's doctrine was the preference for economic and diplomatic levers over direct military interventions. The 2018 withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal and the ensuing "maximum pressure" campaign on Tehran epitomized this tactic. Trump also aimed to nudge regional players to shoulder their security responsibilities, thus lightening the financial burden of US military presence. During his first term, Trump, wielding sanctions and economic pressure as his main tools, tried to coax Iran to the negotiating table while simultaneously propping up support for Israel unprecedentedly. With Trump's comeback to the White House on January 20, these strategies are poised to be revived and possibly ramped up.

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