

THE FUTURE

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The Future is a newsletter periodically published by The Future Institute. This newsletter aims to chronicle the significant events and developments in the societies of the emerging nations with the potential of impacting their future. This publication offers snippets of news analysis that might be advantageous to academics, policymakers, social and political workers, students and various organisations.

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Muslim devotees offer Namaz at Sector 37 parking area amidst protests, on December 3, 2021 in Gurugram, India [Vipin Kumar/Hindustan Times via Getty Images]

Hindu Event Calling for the genocide of Muslims in India Sparks Outrage

A Hindu religious event held at Haridwar, Uttarkhand, in northern India caused outrage and raised concerns over the plight of Muslims in India, as participants at the event called for mass killings and the use of weapons against Muslims. Videos of the speakers at the event have gone viral, and have prompted demands for action from various quarters, including retired government officials. Indian police said that they had launched a hate-speech investigation into the Haridwar event. However, despite the presence of full-length video evidence from the event, little action has transpired so far. Many believe that this is due to the fact that the far-right rhetoric at the event resonates with that of the ruling Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP); news sources note that the meeting was attended by at least one leading member of the BJP.

While hate speech and hate crimes against Indian Muslims has increased exponentially under the rule of the BJP, the party repeatedly denies accusations that its agenda is to turn officially secular and pluralistic India into an ethnic Hindu nation. Experts have opined that the event and the hate speech comes at a time when state elections are around the corner in Uttarkhand, and the legitimacy of the BJP is at stake in the face of the extensive year-long farmer protests, most of which was centred in and around the states of Uttarkhand, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. The hate speech against Muslims follows other examples of oppression of Muslims and Muslim institutions around India. In an act representing a two-year campaign of subjugating the majority Muslim population of Kashmir, the Indian government decided to close Srinagar's Grand Mosque in an Indian-administered Kashmir, shutting the mosque for the first time in its six-hundred-year-old history.

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Turkey's "Drone Diplomacy" on the Rise in Africa

The success of Turkish military technology in recent conflict zones, including Syria, Libya and Nagorno-Karabakh, has created an increasing global demand for combat-proven Turkish manufactured Bayraktar TB2 armed drones and UAVs. Following a host of other countries such as Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Poland, Turkish drones are in hot demand around Africa, a phenomenon that highlights Turkey's drone diplomacy in the region. The Turkish drones are cheaper alternatives to US and Russian military technology, but military deals with Turkey are also often free from pre-conditions that come with the purchase of US or Russian technology, which has made it an attractive option for the various African countries.

According to various sources, the countries currently investing in Turkish military drones are Ethiopia and Morocco. Moreover, a three-day Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit was held in November, mainly focusing on defence cooperation between Turkey and its African counterparts. In Istanbul, leaders and top ministers from 39 countries, including 13 presidents, met with President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to set an agenda for military cooperation. Reuters had earlier reported that defence and aviation exports to Ethiopia rose to \$51 million in the first three months of 2021, from \$203,000 in the same period in 2020, with a jump in August and September, according to the Turkish Exporters Assembly. On the other hand, defence exports to Morocco, which recently ordered 6 more Bayraktar drones for its air force, were \$78.6 million in the same period in 2021 - with \$62 million in September alone - compared to \$402,000 in 2020.

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Passing Away of Desmond Tutu: a Hero for Palestine

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, South Africa's Nobel Peace Prize-winning icon for racial justice and a champion for Palestine, died last month at the age of 90. A hero of the resistance against the apartheid regime of South Africa that only ended in 1994, Tutu led his countrymen in resisting the violent apartheid regime through non-violent means, preferring to organise and frequent public demonstrations to galvanise public opinion against racial inequity and injustice, both at home and globally. In the aftermath of the end of apartheid, Tutu was appointed as the Chairman of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 1995, which sought to uncover the wrongs of apartheid and bring about a process of national healing.

In the international arena, he was a vocal champion for democracy and the rights of oppressed people. He condemned George Bush and Tony Blair for their role in the invasion of Iraq and even called for their trial at the Hague in 2012. A friend of Palestine, he was always very critical of Israel's treatment of Palestinians, comparing the Israeli occupation with the South African apartheid system. Moreover, Tutu was also highly critical of the US policies and aid which had continued to sustain this Israeli apartheid state for so long and strongly maintained that the cycle should end. In recognition of his stature as one of the world's most effective champions for human rights, he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984.

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The US has labelled China's treatment of its Uighur population and Muslim minorities as genocide [File: Leah Millis/Reuters]

US Law Banning Goods Made in China's Xinjiang Region

US President Joe Biden signed a new law imposing a near blanket ban on the import of products made in China's Xinjiang region. This happened after the law, known as the Uighur Forced Labor Prevention Act, passed unanimously in both the US Congress and the Senate. The reason behind the law is China's persecution of the Uighur Muslim minorities and the use of at least a million imprisoned Uighur detainees in forced labour camps in the Xinjiang region, an exporter of cotton and solar panels, and is yet another sign of worsening US-China relations.

Human rights concerns over the persecution of the mainly Muslim Uighur population has also led to a diplomatic boycott of the 2022 Winter Olympics in China by the US. The White House said the US would not send an official delegation to the games in protest against Chinese human rights abuses, including Beijing's treatment of Muslim Uighurs in its western Xinjiang region. China, on its part, has retaliated against some of the earlier US sanctions in a tit-for-tat fashion, imposing retaliatory sanctions against four members of the United States government's Commission on International Religious Freedom. China has consistently rejected international criticism and sanctions over the situation in Xinjiang, where the UN and rights groups believe at least one million Uighurs and members of primarily other Muslim minorities have been incarcerated.

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Emma Watson's Activism Exposes Deep Roots of Demonisation of Palestine Solidarity

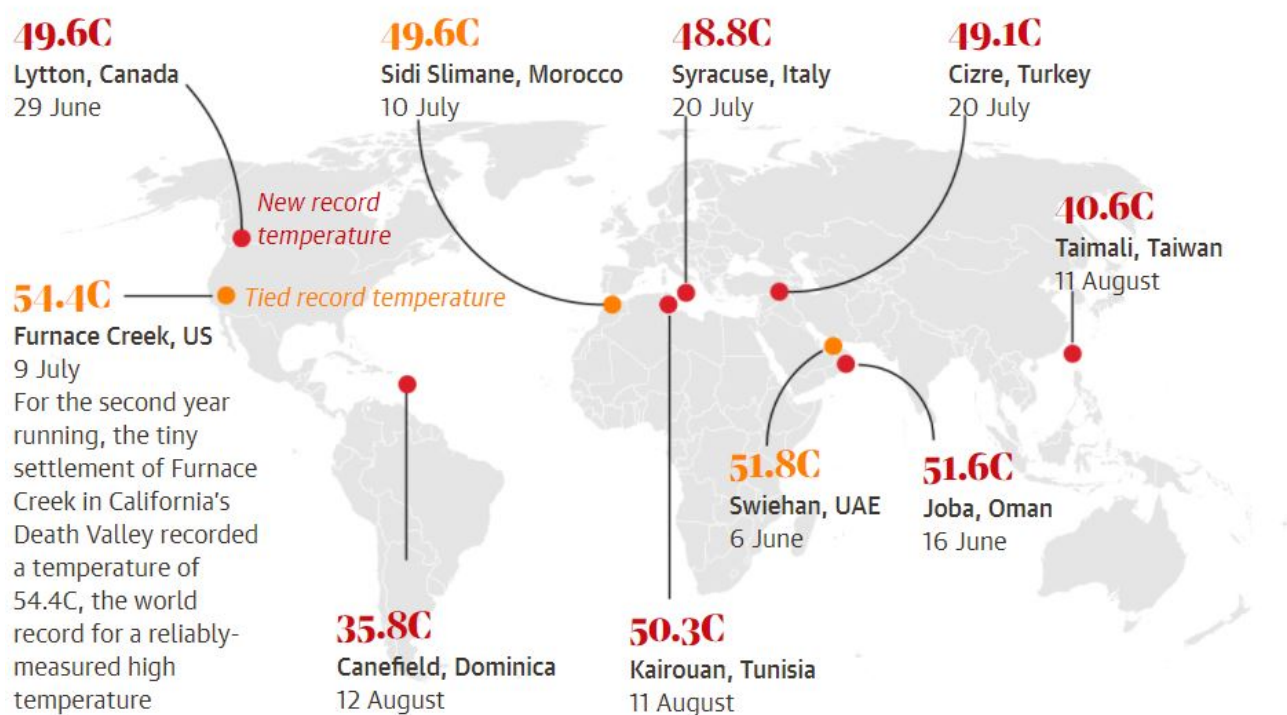
The BDS movement has time and again proved a thorn in the side of Israel and had often played a leading role in shattering Israel's image as the "only democracy in the Middle East," and the claim that the Israeli army is the "most moral army in the world." An important way in which BDS works is through partnering with artists and cultural icons to raise awareness of the brutality of the Israeli occupation in Palestine. While a backlash is almost sure to follow artists challenging Israeli narratives, more and more figures from the music and culture industry have been raising their voice over the years to bring to light the extent of Israeli crimes against humanity in Palestine; indeed, the voices supporting Palestinian rights to statehood have come a long way from Rachel Corrie's immense self-sacrifice that led to her tragic death back in 2003. Harry Potter star Emma Watson is the latest celebrity to have fallen into controversy for her support for Palestine when she shared an image on her Instagram account—with sixty-four million followers—featuring the text 'Solidarity is a verb' against a backdrop of Palestinian flags.

While there were many supporters, the post also generated a lot of controversies, as Israel's former Ambassador to the United Nations, Danny Danon, posted a tweet calling Watson an antisemite. While clearly, both malicious and absurd, Danny's tweet points to something far bigger, the process by which Palestinian identity, imagery, history, and heritage is deemed as an existential threat to Jews and is used to shield Israel from any kind of meaningful scrutiny or accountability for its brutal human rights abuses. Anti-semitism has become a buzzword to silence all manner of critics of Israeli policies, even if it is a simple expression of one's opinion on social media. While this demonisation of Palestine solidarity points to the vast lengths that the Israeli state goes to in order to silence critics, the fact that criticism of Israel is far more common and frequent than before shows that such absurd measures have their limit, and it is time for Israeli administrators to walk the talk instead of throwing around accusations and hoping the world won't notice.

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Guardian graphic. Source: Maximiliano Herrero

Disasters Across Muslim World

Over the past month, several places throughout the Muslim world have been experiencing climatic extremes, which have not just caused the loss of property, but a loss of many lives as well. This is part of an overall trend in global climate records – in 2021, more than 400 weather stations around the world beat their all-time highest temperature records. In global terms, the past six years have been the six hottest on record, but 2021 was a watershed year – around 107 countries beat their monthly high-temperature record, and five beat their monthly low-temperature record in 2021.

The BBC in December reported that at least 14 people had died and tens of thousands were displaced following some of the worst floods Malaysia has seen in decades; Three days of torrential rain over the weekend caused severe flooding in eight states, partially submerging a number of towns and villages, and forcing an estimated 51,000 people to be evacuated from their homes. On the other hand, 39 people were killed and about 100 others injured after a packed ferry caught fire in southern Bangladesh, bringing to light massive problems in transportation infrastructure in highly populated Bangladesh. The above have added to the already dire situation faced by the Muslim world in light of the recent surges in coronavirus cases and call for far-reaching solutions in a future that bodes an increasingly precarious environmentally unbalanced climate.

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SPECIAL
REPORT
OF
THE ISSUE



Has Erdogan's dis-interest in traditional banking logic gone bust?

Ibrahim DAYYAN

Mainstream media is rife with articles depicting what may be the remedy as a deadly poison, prescribed by a quack whose Islamic economic (Erdoganomic) potions are the prime cause of the inflation and currency crises Turkey is experiencing. The main criticism is the decision to lower the interest rates during a period of rising inflation, a move that challenges conventional wisdom.

In order to understand where this 'conventional wisdom' and media narrative originates from, we've investigated both the tool, usury itself, and the governance system that wields it.

To do this, we've looked into why interest rates are perceived to be important to the economy, why it can be harmful, whether or not raising interest rates does, in fact, reduce inflation, and the strength of the alternative Islamic based economy Erdogan is proposing versus the 300-year-old Capitalist system that appears to have stood the test of time and produced phenomenal economic and social results.

Only by answering these questions can we begin to understand the short and long term implications of Erdogan's 'unconventional' policies and his case for eliminating usury.

Read the full article on the Future website here: <https://tfiuk.org/blog/erdogan-interest-rates>

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