

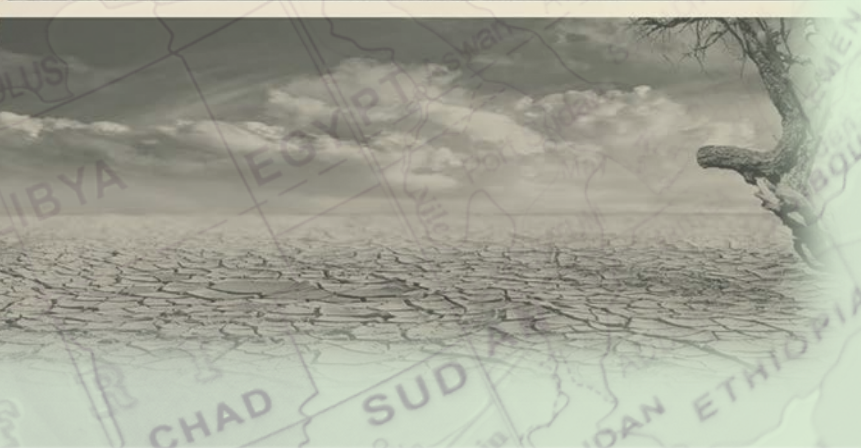
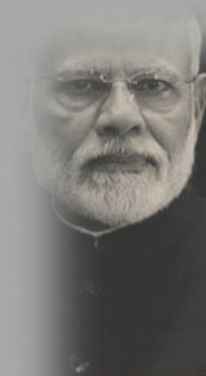


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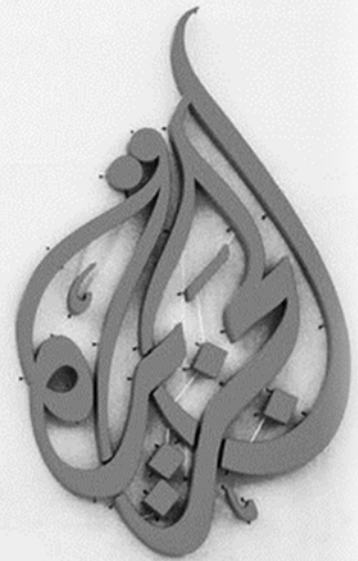


The Future is a newsletter periodically published by The Future Institute from Marlyon Road, Ilford, United Kingdom.

This newsletter aims to chronicle the major events and developments in the societies of emerging nations with the potential to impact 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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ALJAZEERA
ENGLISH LANGUAGE CHANNEL



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Israel-Gaza war continues past 200 days

Following 200 days of war, Palestinians in the Gaza Strip continue to live in famine-like conditions amidst an ongoing genocidal onslaught by the Israeli military. As of yet, negotiations between Israel and Hamas have not borne any fruit, mainly as a result of continued Israeli attempts at sabotaging them, including a stubborn insistence on the invasion of Rafah. A mass grave of 324 victims was discovered inside Gaza's Nasser Hospital after similar mass graves were found at the al-Shifa Hospital complex, where about 381 remains had been exhumed since Israeli troops departed from the hospital in early April. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights has expressed concern that both hospitals may have been the locations of crimes against humanity, including torture and extrajudicial murders, necessitating an impartial inquiry. Israeli forces have also killed seven international aid workers in airstrikes at the beginning of April, drawing widespread international condemnation. Global protests against Israeli actions have taken on a new dimension with major pro-Palestine protests in US universities, and police action against the protesters, including arrests and crackdowns, has only served to fuel and spread the protests and strengthen calls for divestment from companies and individuals benefiting from Israeli occupation.

Following the above, Netanyahu is believed to have tried to draw attention away from Israeli crimes in Gaza by attacking the Iranian consulate in Damascus, killing thirteen people, among them top Iranian military commander Major General Mohammad Reza Zahedi. This generated a regional crisis when Iran, for the first time in the region's history, directly attacked Israel. The Iranian attack involved more than 120 ballistic missiles, 170 drones and more than 30 cruise missiles, according to a report by The Associated Press news agency. The Israeli military stated that the great majority of the missiles were intercepted beyond the country's boundaries with assistance from the United States, United Kingdom, and France. Jordan also fired down several of the missiles headed at Israel as they flew across its territory. Despite initial fears of escalation, a flurry of regional diplomacy involving Türkiye and the Gulf States seems to have helped in averting a major crisis to date. Following this, the Israeli military tried other ways to sabotage the negotiations, chief among them the assassination of the children and grandchildren of Hamas chief Ismail Haniyeh on the eve of Eid Al Fitr after the holy month of Ramadan. Observers noted that it only led to further

isolation of Israel in the region, as the Hamas chief was soon invited to visit Türkiye by President Erdogan, and Türkiye cut all trade ties with Israel in its aftermath.

The number of Palestinian casualties in Gaza as of May 6 is at least 34,735 dead, including more than 14,500 children, while the number of Palestinians wounded has reached more than 78,108. The number of missing people is more than 8,000. In the Occupied West Bank, there have been at least 497 deaths, of whom more than 124 are children, while more than 4,950 are injured. According to the latest data from the UN, WHO and the Palestinian government as of May 6, more than half of Gaza homes have been destroyed or damaged, 80% of commercial facilities, 73% of school buildings, 12 out of 35 hospitals are partially functioning, 83% of groundwater wells are not operational, while 267 places of worship have been damaged. Every hour in Gaza, 15 people are killed, of whom 6 are children, while 35 people are injured and 12 buildings are destroyed. As of April 5, more than 100 journalists, predominantly Palestinians, had been killed since October 7. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), 96 Palestinian, three Lebanese, and four Israeli journalists were killed.

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Pro-Palestinian protests sweep across major US universities

Student protests have continued to sweep dozens of universities and college campuses around the United States, with commentators claiming that they are the largest and longest-lasting since anti-Vietnam War rallies in the 1960s and 1970s, and internationally. Students at other schools stayed in their tents despite police warnings to crack down, while elsewhere, students have started hunger strikes. According to the Associated Press and CNN, more than 2,500 individuals have been detained across 46 universities, while many universities have struck agreements with their students to end the "Gaza Solidarity Encampment." A large number of student arrests occurred despite the fact that 99 per cent of pro-Palestine protests at US colleges have been peaceful, as reported in data from Armed Conflict Location & Event Data [ACLED], and despite snide remarks from President Joe Biden characterizing such demonstrations as violent and former President Donald Trump and his fellow Republicans supporting a police crackdown on students and scholars. Videos from the protests showed police employing violent tactics to arrest and subdue student protesters and included scenes of police tackling and aggressively arresting senior academics and professors who were trying to ensure the safety of their own students.

The main demands of the student protesters have been to ask their respective educational institutions to divest from Israeli funding and from entities supporting Israel, in response to the ongoing Israeli genocide in Gaza and the deliberate and calculated destruction of all universities, colleges, and schools in Gaza by Israeli forces after October 7. April 30 saw the highest number of arrests in a single day, with over 400 made on college campuses; the majority of the arrests (282) occurred at Columbia University in New York. On May 2, over 250 protesters were detained around the country, the majority at the Institution of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) (210), where rallies grew violent and numerous individuals were injured, causing the institution to stop classes for the week. Demonstrations are anticipated to continue in the following weeks when graduation ceremonies take place, and college administrators are increasing police presence or, in some cases, cancelling commencement ceremonies entirely. Student demonstrations have spread outside the United States, reaching France, Germany, Canada, Mexico, Australia, and numerous Middle Eastern nations, including Türkiye. Protesters on several campuses won early gains and ended their protests when school officials made deals with them. The agreements at Brown, Northwestern, and Rutgers stand out among the tumultuous images and huge waves of arrests nationwide since April 17. Some of these universities agreed to assess their investments in Israel or with enterprises involved in Tel Aviv's genocide in besieged Gaza.

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Aljazeera banned by Israeli government

On Sunday, Israel's cabinet decided unanimously to shut down Al Jazeera in the country, ordering the immediate closure of its offices and a ban on the company's broadcasts. The shutdown comes a month after Israel's Knesset enacted legislation on April 1 authorizing Israel to temporarily shut down international media sites, including Al Jazeera, if it deems them a danger to security. Initially announced by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on X, Israel's Communications Minister Shlomo Karhi later published footage on X showing Israeli authorities – specifically inspectors from the Ministry of Communications, backed by the police – raiding the Al Jazeera office in East Jerusalem and confiscating the channel's equipment. This ban is significant in light of the fact that foreign journalists are banned from entering Gaza, and Aljazeera staff there have been some of the only reporters on the ground to report on Israel's lethal bombing and deaths in the Palestinian territory.

Following the ban, Al Jazeera issued a statement criticizing the shutdown, calling it a "criminal act" and warning that Israel's persecution of the free press violates international and humanitarian law. Journalism advocacy groups and officials from within Israel and around the world denounced the ban, warning it could stop the free flow of information and chill democratic ideals. These included the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), The Foreign Press Association (FPA), The Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI), the International Federation of Journalists, and the UN human rights office. Aljazeera has been targeted by Israel before - Netanyahu threatened to close its Jerusalem office back in 2017, and an Israeli rocket destroyed the broadcaster's Gaza office in 2021. Many Aljazeera journalists, as well as their families, have been killed in Israeli attacks, especially during the ongoing conflict in Gaza, prominent among them the journalist Hamza al-Dahdouh, the son of Al Jazeera Gaza bureau chief Wael al-Dahdouh, who himself was targeted by the Israeli military multiple times.

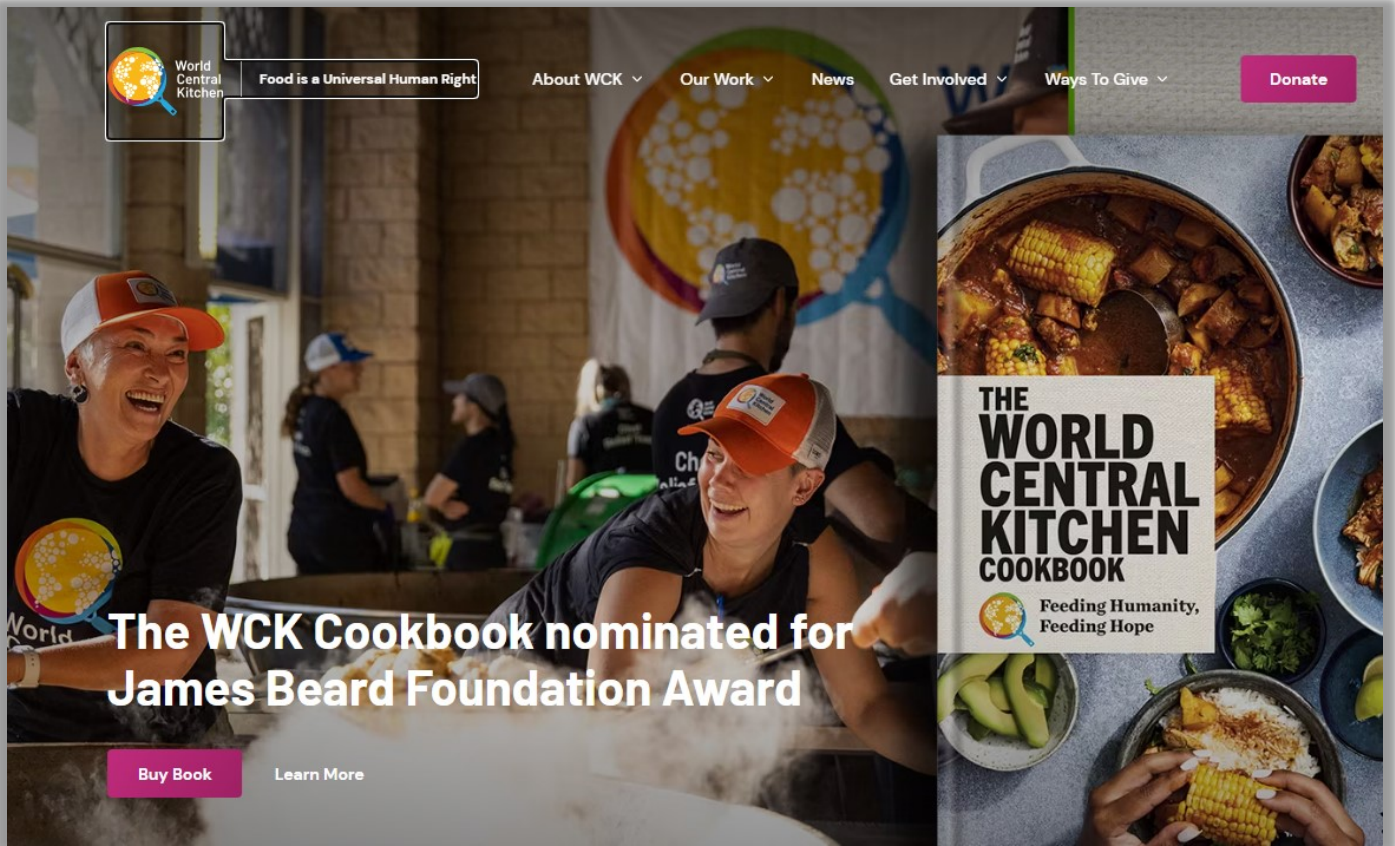
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Global outrage as Israel kills seven international aid workers in precision strikes

An Israeli air attack killed seven relief workers in northern Gaza on April 1, just hours after they delivered a new cargo of food to the famine-stricken enclave. Graphic images revealed the crushed, bleeding bodies of the charity workers, some still wearing World Central Kitchen (WCK) t-shirts and passports, at al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in the central Gaza town of Deir al-Balah. The WCK, which is now concluding construction of a jetty created from bombed-out buildings to alleviate Gaza's food shortages, confirmed the attack and claimed the charity workers came from several countries, including the UK, Poland, Australia and Palestine, as well as a US-Canadian dual national. The WCK stated that its employees were travelling in a "deconflicted zone" when Israeli air strikes attacked two armoured vehicles with its logo in Deir al-Balah. Following the incident, Australia, Poland, the United Kingdom, and the United States called on Israel to clarify the circumstances around its air attacks. After the attack, the WCK suspended all its aid operations, only resuming them almost a month later.

The role of WCK in providing food for Gazans was important in light of the fact that Israel had been preventing most aid from reaching Palestinian people, creating famine-like conditions. The Israeli military later dismissed two officers and formally reprimanded senior commanders after an inquiry into the incident found serious errors and breaches of procedure, calling the incident a "grave mistake." However, as many noted, Israel has neither been coy nor apologetic over its actions in starving Palestinians. For months, the United Nations and other humanitarian organizations have warned of an impending famine in northern Gaza. According to a recent UN-backed estimate, 70 percent of the population was facing catastrophic levels of hunger in late March. The attack on the WCK convoy followed a string of attacks on convoys and aid seekers, including the February shelling of a United Nations relief vehicle with food supplies. Israeli bombardment has killed at least 400 Palestinians seeking relief, according to Palestinian health officials. In addition, Israeli strikes on relief missions have even killed seven Palestinian police officers who were securing food delivery.

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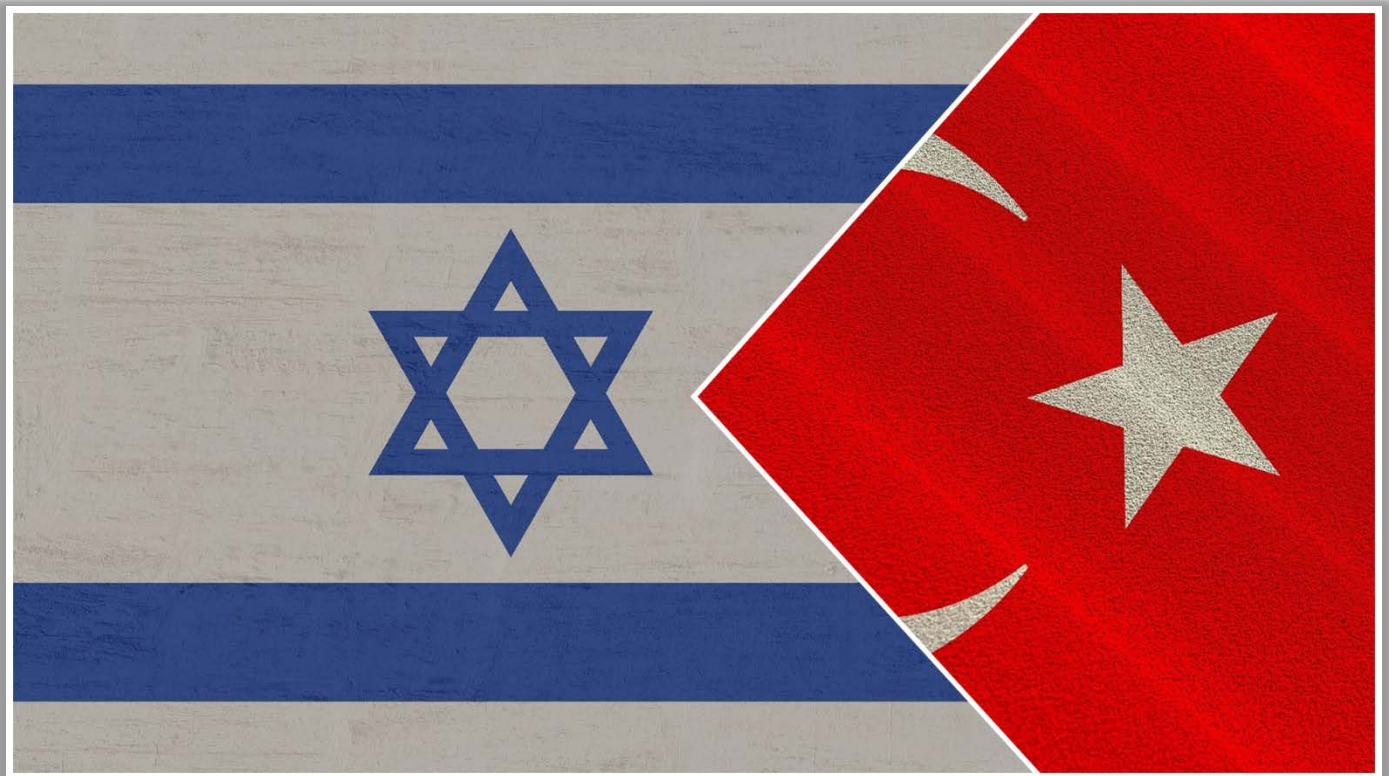
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Türkiye imposes total trade ban against Israel as Erdoğan meets Hamas officials in Ankara

Türkiye has announced it is suspending all trade activities with Israel over the latter's ongoing military assault against Palestinians in Gaza until a permanent cease-fire is established and Israel allows unrestricted flow of humanitarian aid to the territory. According to Trade Minister Ömer Bolat, the move came amidst Israel's "uncompromising attitude" and the deteriorating situation in Gaza's southern Rafah region, where Israel has threatened to launch a fresh offensive. Through this ban, Türkiye has become the first of Israel's important trading partners to suspend exports and imports, amounting to nearly \$7 billion (TL 226 billion) a year, because of its war in Gaza. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan stated that Turkey enforced the trade restriction due to its inability to "stand by and watch" the ongoing bloodshed in Gaza. This follows the country's previous decision to limit exports of steel, fertilizer, and jet fuel, among 54 product categories, in response to Israel's refusal to allow Ankara to participate in relief air-drop operations for Gaza, as well as later preventing the sail of an aid flotilla for Gaza from Türkiye. All remaining commerce, which totalled \$5.4 billion in Turkish exports and \$1.6 billion in Israeli imports last year, will now be halted.

Earlier, on April 20, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan met with Ismail Haniyeh, the Head of the Hamas Political Bureau, in Istanbul. In their meeting, the leaders discussed Israel's attacks on Palestinian territories, particularly

Gaza, what has to be done to secure adequate and uninterrupted humanitarian aid delivery to Gaza and a fair and long-term peace process in the region. The Turkish President had invited the Hamas chief to Ankara following an Israeli assault in Gaza that targeted and killed the children and grandchildren of Haniyeh. In other news, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said that Türkiye was in the process of applying to join in South Africa's genocide case against Israel at the International Court of Justice (ICJ). By doing so, the country will join Colombia in formally requesting to join the case against Israel. Türkiye is also one of Gaza's main humanitarian aid partners, sending 45,000 tons of supplies and medicine to the region. In response to the earlier trade ban, Israel's Foreign Minister, Israel Katz, had accused Türkiye of blocking Israeli imports and exports from Turkish ports, adding that Israel would create alternatives, focusing on local production and imports from other countries.

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Humanitarian catastrophe amidst one year of devastating war in Sudan

A year ago in mid-April, a devastating conflict broke out in Sudan as an already shaky alliance between the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) broke down. The conflict, which began in the capital city of Khartoum, swiftly expanded to other regions of Sudan, including Darfur, Port Sudan, and Gezira state, which is located in the country's agricultural heartland. One year later, the fighting has killed nearly 16,000 people and displaced millions, forced almost 9 million people to flee their homes, destroyed the country's healthcare infrastructure, and produced the world's largest hunger and displacement crisis. According to the UN, Sudan is now

witnessing a humanitarian catastrophe of unprecedented proportions. The country is experiencing extreme shortages of basic necessities like food, clean water, medications, and gasoline, and prices have skyrocketed due to the shortage of these essential items.

The UN estimates that over half of Sudan's 49 million people require humanitarian aid. Nearly 18 million people are also experiencing "catastrophic levels of food insecurity," particularly in portions of West Darfur, Khartoum, and among IDPs. Moreover, aid organisations are struggling to supply humanitarian aid due to restricted access, security hazards, and other logistical issues, especially in otherwise inaccessible regions such as West Darfur. According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Sudan has also seen devastating outbreaks of illnesses like cholera, measles, and malaria. Meanwhile, around 65 per cent of the population lacks access to healthcare, and 70 to 80 per cent of hospitals in combat zones are no longer operational owing to air raids, supply shortages, and assaults on healthcare professionals by both sides of the conflict. Critical infrastructure, such as water treatment plants and power plants, has been damaged or destroyed in several locations. Schools in Darfur are closed preventing millions of children from obtaining an education or having access to a safe area, according to the UN refugee agency.

Several efforts are underway to settle the conflict in Sudan, but their failure has been attributed to regional schisms between the mediating nations, as well as competing interests among international parties such as Russia, the United States, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Several cease-fire agreements have been negotiated over the last year, but both sides have accused each other of continuing to fight in each case. The regional schisms between mediating nations refer to the fact that both the RSF and SAF are backed by different nations such as UAE in the former case, and Egypt in the latter case, leading to the contention that peace talks between the two parties will not be successful unless their regional backers are also present. Talks are not only underway in Cairo, led by the Emiratis and Egyptians, but also in Jeddah backed by the Saudis, and observers note that this internal squabble severely limits the international community's ability to jointly promote peace.

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Major heatwaves across South and Southeast Asia endanger lives and livelihoods

Hundreds of millions of people in South and Southeast Asia were suffering from a brutal heat wave in the last week of April, which prompted schools to close, hampered agriculture, and increased the danger of heat strokes and other health concerns. The weather in the region in April is often hot, and it precedes Asia's annual summer monsoon. However, this April's temperatures have been abnormally high. Temperatures in certain places of Bangladesh have risen beyond 42 degrees Celsius after schools and institutions closed for the last week of April. In addition to the high temperature, the high humidity makes the heat feel almost unbearable, primarily affecting poorer sections of society. The heat wave poses similar problems in neighbouring India, where severe temperatures have strained electricity infrastructure, prompted school closures, and jeopardised wheat and grain output. The heat coincided with the beginning of India's six-week general election, where election officials are striving to supply water during polling days, and some political parties are bringing water and cooling gadgets to campaign rallies. Election turnout has also fallen in these elections, with the extreme levels of heat being among the factors to blame.



In Myanmar, the mercury hit 48.2 degrees C in the town of Chauk in the central Magway region on April 28, according to a statement from the country's weather office, the highest in 56 years of recorded history. Extreme heat also has a political component in Myanmar, where the governing military junta used rising temperatures last week to justify relocating Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the country's deposed civilian leader, from jail to an unknown location. In the Philippines, temperatures have sizzled around 40 deg C in parts of the archipelago, with the heat index in one area hitting 53 degrees C. In Thailand, more than three dozen districts across the nation's 77 provinces have seen record temperatures in April, with Bangkok's heat index listed as being above 52 degrees C and "very dangerous" on April 30. The heat wave in Asia is not occurring in a meteorological vacuum. Last year was by far the hottest in the past century and a half. The region is now experiencing an El Niño cycle, which is characterised by warm and dry weather across Asia.

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Low turnout in Indian elections despite Modi's rhetoric of Muslim hate

India's 2024 general election, which will take place over six weeks from April 19 to June 1, is the world's largest ever. India is the world's most populous country, with 1.4 billion inhabitants and 969 million of them can vote in this year's election - roughly one in eight of the global population. The 13.4 million Indian citizens who live abroad can also vote but must register and return to India to do so. Prime Minister Narendra Modi hopes to win a third term, but opposition parties warn that if he remains in power, Indians will face the loss of many freedoms. In the 2019 election, the BJP got 303 seats, and the coalition of which it was a partner, the National Democratic Alliance, gained 352 seats altogether. The opposition to the BJP in 2024 includes a coalition of political parties led by the largest opposition party, the Indian National Congress. The coalition includes Delhi's governing Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) as well as numerous key regional parties. Opposition candidates have complained of severe restrictions placed by the government on funds and activities using arbitrary means, which they say will prevent them from putting out a strong electoral campaign.

In the meantime, however, a lower turnout till now in India's long general election has alarmed Prime Minister Narendra Modi's campaign managers. It has raised doubts about whether his Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its allies will achieve the landslide win projected by opinion surveys only one month ago. The most recent major opinion poll indicated that the BJP and its allies will win three-fourths of the 543 seats in parliament due to Modi's popularity, good economic development, freebies, and the construction of a Hindu temple on a controversial site in the Hindu majority country. The lack of momentum has been attributed in part to indifference among party workers who believe victory is guaranteed. This has prompted Modi to play the religion card and stir hatred in his campaign speeches, calling Muslims inflators, and saying that if the opposition comes to power, they would take the wealth of the Hindus and give it to Muslims. More than half a dozen BJP leaders and political analysts interviewed by Reuters said a lack of momentum in the first two phases of the seven-phase election had dashed hopes for a large majority for the party, but they said it was still likely to retain power in the world's most populous country.

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Thirty years of Rwandan genocide commemorated amidst global double standards

On April 7, 2024, the people of Rwanda commemorated 30 years of the 1994 Rwandan genocide during a civil war in the country, where members of the Hutu ethnic majority brutally killed hundreds of thousands of ethnic minority Tutsi, as well as moderate Hutus who opposed the killings, over a period of about 100 days. Estimates vary, but around 500,000 to 800,000 people are thought to have been murdered in this genocide. Fueled by ethnic tensions that had been simmering for decades, extremist Hutu leaders used propaganda to turn people against their Tutsi neighbours, and the killings were carried out by armed militias and even ordinary citizens. The international community's response was widely criticized as slow and inadequate; French President Emmanuel Macron recently said that France and its allies could have stopped the 1994 Rwanda genocide but lacked the will to do so. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was created after the Rwandan genocide and was the first

international tribunal to rule on genocide. Since then, other tribunals have been created to address human rights abuses around the world.

However, since then, it has been argued that powerful countries have undermined the effectiveness of these tribunals by pressuring other countries not to investigate them or their allies. Recent examples include political and economic sanctions by the US on ICC prosecutor Fatou Bensouda and her staff when the International Criminal Court (ICC), in 2020, announced an investigation into potential war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the invasion of Afghanistan by the US and its allies in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, as well as Chinese threats following a Spanish courts ordering of arrest warrants in 2013 for former Chinese President Jiang Zemin, citing his responsibility for alleged human rights abuses in Tibet. Such incidents, scholars have argued, undermine the credibility of international justice and make it less likely that future atrocities will be deterred. Moreover, in addition to this, many have pointed out the irony behind the presence of Israeli President Isaac Herzog attending the commemoration event and expressing support for the Rwandan people at a time when Israel itself is perpetrating an ongoing genocide in Palestine that has already led to the deaths of more than 35,000 Palestinians, and pushed the people of Gaza to the brink of famine that could undoubtedly lead to the deaths of thousands more of children and women.

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