

1761

The Third Battle of Panipat is fought in India between the Afghans under Ahmad Shah Durrani and the Marathas.

1784

American Revolutionary War: Ratification Day, United States - Congress ratifies the Treaty of Paris with Great Britain.

1814

Treaty of Kiel: Frederick VI of Denmark cedes the Kingdom of Norway to Charles XIII of Sweden in return for Pomerania.



1822

Greek War of Independence: Acrocorinth is captured by **Theodoros Kolokotronis** and **Demetrios Ypsilantis**.



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are more aware, yes. But we are also muffled with fear of being inappropriate.

The global reckoning on the abuse of power is extraordinary – and it is empowering. Women will no longer put up with being victims. But my worry is that this can be abused. My other concern is that so many men have now been rendered pariah. Can, and should, figures like actor-director Woody Allen – alleged to have molested his adopted daughter – be forgiven? I am not sure I can ever watch a Kevin Spacey film again. But should we bring people like him back into society?

Here in America, we are going through a massive societal change akin to what happened to this country in the 1960s, at the height of the anti-Vietnam war movement, the sexual revolution and the birth of civil rights.

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journalist bent on going after powerful men in an international government organisation by trying to find a ring of predatory abusers. She found no substantial proof. Yet she specifically targeted those men she considered to be “womanisers” without making the important distinction between rapists and men who woo women. Neither is appetising of course, but while one is illegal, the other is not. The journalist nonetheless succeeded in black-

ening the name of several powerful officials before eventually giving up her campaign for lack of evidence.

This question of how to interpret an inappropriate remark has come into sharp focus here in the US, where political correctness and “woke-ism” – which refers to a perceived awareness of issues concerning social and racial justice – have made it imperative to censor one’s speech before saying anything. Is this good or bad? We

pending disaster

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having spent much of the past decade looting instead of leading. Nevertheless, they have retained key positions in the current government and devote much of their time toward undermining economic reform and finding ways to unseat Mr Ramaphosa.

The ANC’s bruising internal battles have stymied critical reforms to jumpstart the economy, prompting outbursts of frustration from officials like the finance minister Mr Mboweni. Yet while the short-term consequences are readily obvious to many, the long-term reckoning that South Africa will face is less clear. First and foremost, the country’s lacklustre economy, wracked by recession in recent quarters, is set for only tepid grow for the foreseeable future.

This will make it ever harder for Pretoria to rid itself of a potential debt trap it has gotten itself into, as ever more money will need to service ballooning debt instead of new roads, the health or education sectors, law enforcement, etc. To make matters worse, the terrible and stubborn unemployment situation will underscore for millions of impoverished South Africans operating in the dangerous black-market economy that the country is one

of “haves” and “have nots”. Violent crime will only worsen as millions more are obligated to eke out a bleak existence despite seeing wealth around them.

Consequently, the ever-worsening crime, weak economic growth and collapsing infrastructure will drive up the costs of living and doing business in South Africa. For the country’s high-net worth and skilled individuals, this will prove intolerable. In fact, signs already suggest that emigration of the country’s most productive members has jumped in recent years and data suggests most will never return. This will rob South Africa of its best and brightest, likely disproportionately hurting key sectors of the future like high tech, science and medicine. It will also mean ever-greater budgetary shortfalls as the richest and most mobile of South African society departs for sunnier – and safer – shores.

For a country that started with such promise following the end of the apartheid in 1994, South Africa finds itself in a sorry mess. But as political infighting and Eskom’s woes continue, the chances of South Africa halting its rot will become ever more difficult in the years ahead.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



Ten years after an earthquake devastated Haiti, the country has faced one setback after another in its recovery. I’m glad @DHSgov extended TPS for Haitian refugees, & I’ll keep fighting to protect Haitian families in MA & across the country.

@SenWarren

02



Not to break the ‘unity’ or anything, it’s difficult to believe that, if Congress were to come to power they would reverse Modi gov’t’s 370 move and do away with NPR. Just as they continue to defend Aadhaar and GST. Half-baked ‘solidarity’ can be a method to police the oppressed.

@Shehla_Rashid

03



Many believe that by the Senate giving credence to a trial based on the no evidence, no crime, read the transcripts, “no pressure” Impeachment Hoax, rather than an outright dismissal, it gives the partisan Democrat Witch Hunt credibility that it otherwise does not have. I agree!

@realDonaldTrump

04



After this weekend’s 6.0 earthquake, we continue to pray for our fellow American citizens in Puerto Rico. Trump Admin must quickly approve Governor’s request for a Major Disaster Declaration and stop withholding Congressionally appropriated funds to recover from 2017 hurricanes.

@SpeakerPelosi

Disclaimer: (Views expressed by columnists are personal and need not necessarily reflect our editorial stances)

Battle ground...



YENUS S

Last week’s assassination of General Qasim Suleimani, the head of the Iranian Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC)’s Quds force, at Baghdad airport by the US drones, has proved beyond that Iraq remained a battleground for the two countries to settle their scores.

It all starts when Iran backed Iraqi militia, the Kataib Hizbollah, launched a missile attack against US military base in the city of Kirkuk, in late December killing an American contractor. The US responded by bombing camps belonging to the militia killing scores. Then came attack on US embassy in Baghdad. The US killed Suleimani for allegedly planning further attacks on US targets.

These chain of events forced Iraqis to request their government end the presence of foreign troops in Iraq, namely the US and Iran. Since the US and Iran, both with antagonistic agenda set foot in Iraq, the confrontation of the two was inevitable, say political pundits.

It is known that the US and Iran forces operate in Iraq either directly or through proxy militias, using

Iraqi soil and airspace against the so called Islamic State (IS) terrorist organisation. IS is almost eliminated but still Iraq served as battleground for both in their attempt to dominate the political, military and economy of the country.

Iranian existence in Iraq is manifested by its proxy militias, which it has recruited and most of whom are Iraqis. Most of the Iraqi government establishments appear to be infiltrated by Iranian intelligence personnel and Iraqis loyal to Iran.

The Iraqi public’s demand to expel foreign troops may be successful to some extent when it comes to the US forces. Donald Trump, the US president, has spoken on several occasions of ending troop presence in foreign countries including the Middle East. He declared that during his tenure, he wants to ensure that all soldiers return home. However, his rhetoric does not seem to hold water.

Greg Myer, NPR National security correspondent believes that the presence of US military in Iraq is to prevent resurgence of IS, stabilize Iraq politically and limit Iranian influence. (<https://www.npr.org>, Dec 31, 2019).

These aims have not been successfully attained implying that the evacuation of US soldiers from Iraq appears to take some time, if ever, it happens.

The US has several national interests to take care of in the region including ensuring the smooth flow of oil through the Strait of Hormuz where most of world oil supply passes through. The culprit that can hinder this smooth flow of oil seems to be no other country than Iran and its proxies. The US needs to build a strong military against the threats posed by these forces.

When it comes to the expulsion of Iranian soldiers from Iraq, the government will find itself between a hard rock and a stone. There is likely to be a big challenge. Above all, there may not be Iranian foot soldiers in Iraq, or few officers, who are tasked with directing Iraq’s intelligence and security apparatus. Iranian existence in Iraq is manifested by its proxy militias, which it has recruited and most of whom are Iraqis. Most of the Iraqi government establishments appear to be infiltrated by Iranian intelligence personnel and Iraqis loyal to Iran.

These Iraqi militias subscribe to Iran, ready to sacrifice their lives for Iranian cause rather than their motherland and work to keep Iraq under Iranian influence.

During the last few years when the fight against the so-called Islamic State terrorist group (Daesh) was at its climax, Iran sent troops and recruited proxies not only with the intention of defeating the terrorist group but also with the intention of expanding its sectarian agenda and ensure its hegemonic ambitions.

Though the Iraqi government appears to push more on the expulsion of the US from its soil than the Iranian forces, the public needs both ‘interventionists’ what they call them as occupiers to leave Iraq as soon as possible. This issue is likely to trigger conflict between the government and the public.

Unless the US and Iran leave Iraq, it is unlikely to be a stable country and will remain a theatre of war, endangering its security and sovereignty.