

1980

First winter ascent of Mount Everest by **Krzysztof Wielicki** and **Leszek Cichy**.



1992

Nagorno-Karabakh War: Armenian troops massacre more than 20 Azerbaijani civilians during the Capture of Garadaghly.

1995

The **Cenepa War** between Peru and Ecuador ends on a ceasefire brokered by the UN.

1996

In **Philadelphia**, world champion Garry Kasparov beats the Deep Blue supercomputer in a chess match.



It has taken up too much of the focus of the UN envoy's efforts, obscuring the essential truth that the militias stretching from Misrata to the heart of the capital have not had their grip removed since the aftermath of Gaddafi's flight from power. The vacuum left by the fall of the regime has resulted in a concerted ideological campaign to capture Libya.

battle. Factions steeped in programmatic Islamist politics have been and are determined to control Libya. These groups, aligned to the Muslim Brotherhood, have tried to own the revolution that toppled Gaddafi.

Backing from Turkey has sustained this campaign. There are clear parallels between the policy pursued by Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and the Ottoman approach to North Africa over hundreds of years.

Countries such as France have seen the agenda to control Libya and are deeply concerned about the implications of this power putsch. Paris convened a meeting of sub-Saharan countries earlier this month to address the security risks involved.

Europe does not want an outflow of migrants from Libya to be compounded by an outflow of radical ideologies.

Moreover, oil sets Libya apart from other African nations in this calculus, too. Gaining control of

the enormous revenues generated by Libya's natural resources would mark a new departure for the Islamists. The consequences of the 1979 revolution in Tehran for Iranian oil are clear enough for Europe to deter Libya from taking a similar path.

As it is, Europeans have recently suffered a series of terror attacks staged by young men who have spent time in Libya. One accused, Hashem Abedi, is standing trial in British courts for multiple murders. He tried to flee justice by going to Tripoli.

Therefore, a well-resourced Islamist-run state in Libya is a risk that many in the European security establishment are not prepared to countenance. But on the sidelines of the Munich gathering, there was no uniformity on the question of how to avoid this.

Italy continues to seek its own agenda gains, while British policies have not really shed their Arab uprising alignments. Germany's diplomats, on the other hand, have done more than most to provide a much-needed boost for what had been a flagging role for diplomacy.

Nonetheless, holding the line against Libya succumbing to the control of ideologues remains an important strategic goal for everyone.

The prize – a unified, stable Libyan state – will not happen merely by devolving control to whoever happens to occupy Tripoli. Fighting in Libya is an open sore. At the Munich Security Conference, there are signs that it may yet heal.

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Therein lies the country's real

ilemmas



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recently remarked that Washington is looking into how to give Turkey support within the framework of Nato. The US is increasingly weighing into the conflict there not only because of the massacres taking place against civilians in Idlib, which have caused more than 800,000 Syrians – mostly civilians – to flee, but also because Washington sees Turkish-Russian differences in Syria as an opportunity.

President Trump is inclined to personally steer the wheel of foreign policy on Russia, Turkey, and Iran. He is reportedly revisiting US foreign policy across the globe, not to deviate from its current trends, but rather to take stock of successes and failures. This would involve scrutinising various political fronts and bolstering his policies on economic sanctions. Mr Trump also wants to shore up support for his so-

called Deal of the Century and to ensure that the Arab Gulf states present a united front against Iran.

This week, the US Senate passed a resolution requiring congressional consent for future military operations against Iran. Mr Trump may veto it, but he may also use the resolution to contain further escalation with Tehran. Although it continues to support the Al Assad regime, Iran is not directly involved in Russia and Turkey's Syrian standoff, giving some limited respite to Moscow's military strategists.

Those strategists are more concerned at the moment with a potential revival of Turkey's Nato links, having thought Moscow succeeded in driving a wedge between Turkey and its Western allies through co-operation in Syria and the sale of missiles to the Turkish military.

Riding above all of these individual tensions, however, is the fact that Moscow, Washington, and Ankara all converge on their desire to avoid a large-scale conflict in Syria that would draw in the three countries as well as Israel. As Mr Jeffrey said, "the four major players...in Syria – that is Russia, the United States, Turkey and Israel – are being very careful militarily". The problem however is that these major players do not care about the disastrous consequences of their battles for the human population of Syria. In this regard, they are anything but careful.



TOP
4
TWEETS

01



CCTV footage has emerged showing police assaulting Jamia students without provocation. Horrifying. Exemplary punishment must be levied on these lawless policemen.

@ShashiTharoor

02



As Londoners will know, I'm proud that my dad worked as a bus driver. It's a tough and important job, and I've launched a new scheme to help support them. 20,000 bus drivers will receive up to £1,600 as part of our recruitment and retention plans.

@SadiqKhan

03



To help Hubei province fight the epidemic, medical teams from across China were sent to the central Chinese city of Wuhan to save the infected and assist the combat. Salute! #coronavirus #COVID19 #China

@ChinaDaily

04



Chinese spying has creached unprecedented levels in the United States. The FBI is now overseeing around 1,000 cases of espionage, with Chinese spies infiltrating the State Department, the CIA, and Defense Intelligence Agency.

@NikkiHaley

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

Celebrating Bahrain Sports Day



YENUS S

Last week, Bahrain Sports Day was celebrated in various places. A host of outdoor activities carried out by mostly public employees, were observed encompassing staff from ministries at all levels.

It will be a waste of time to discuss here the importance of sports in contributing healthy lifestyle, reducing chronic diseases and generally, healthy and active body.

However, mention of a summary by Dr Edward R Laskowski from the Mayo Clinic in the US will be sufficient to give us a clear picture of the negative impact of employees who sit long hours in the office.

He said, the effects of continuous sitting include obesity and a cluster of conditions including blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess body fat around the waist and abnormal cholesterol levels. He continues, too much sitting also seem to increase the risk of death from cardiovascular disease and cancer.

Here, I will try to focus on the political implication of the event. Since February 11, started to be marked as an annual public event under the royal order of

Every year, Bahrain Sports Day will be observed and while the body is in motion, our subconscious mind should appreciate and thank the Premier, who works not only for the developments of the nation as a whole but also imparts health awareness of the individual staff who contribute in nation building.

His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa few years ago, the occasion has given employees awareness of the importance of sports in everyday life, which has now become a culture worth appreciating.

Bahrain Sports Day is then an awareness campaign of the importance of sports in our daily lives. Not necessarily, we have to be limited to outdoor activities but while seated in the office exercising and /or stirring different parts of the body including fingers and the neck can make a difference. A person working on the tenth floor can go two stairs up and catch the elevator on the third floor. Similarly, when leaving office, one can go two stairs down and use the elevator at the eighth floor. Such minor exercises play important roles in maintaining a healthy body.

If we see it in a broader sense, the half-day event is a government investment in order to build a healthy body. Paying full-day's salary but working half of the day is an investment worth considering. Considerable amount of budget is allocated by government sectors to boost human development, and training its staff in various trades ranging from skill upgrading courses to full-fledged degree courses to equip its citizens with the necessary knowledge and technical know-how of modern technology.

The government does not stop here; it also invests in building a healthy physical body capable of putting the gained knowledge into practice and positively contribute to the development the country is going through.

So far, what we have observed was the involvement of public employees but private employees need to be engaged as well. The employers may not allow half-day event but even half to one-hour commitment is enough to put the body in the right gear and motivate workers. Studies show that motivated workers who work less hours are more productive than those engaged in routine work for long hours.

Few countries in the region, if any, have Sports Day programme in their annual schedules. For his initiative, His Royal Highness Prime Minister Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa deserve appreciation for his vision in building a talented mind and a healthy body, two assets needed to develop Bahrain.

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