**[Gaza war impact](https://www.dawn.com/news/1820205/gaza-war-impact)**

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EVEN before the Israel-Hamas war began on Oct 7, the Palestinian territories were subject to horrible violations of int­ernational law and occupation by Israel. As a result, there were two major Intifadas (attempts to shake off the Israeli occupation) between 1987 and 2005, which were ruthlessly crushed. The third one is ongoing. International media controlled by the West and Israel treats this not only as normal but also justifies it through lies and misinformation, and sacks journalists who attempt to tell the truth, which is seen as pro-Palestinian. However, post Oct 7, some things have changed. One, the Israeli response has been so barbaric that it could not be ignored. Two, the Palestinians over time did their homework and have developed a superb social media response to Western and Israeli propaganda. Three, Al Jazeera, reports on the war round the clock. Fourth, millions of citizens in a lar­ge number of countries have demonstr­a­ted in favour of the Palestinian resistance (including Hamas), and against their resp­ective governments’ pro-Israeli policies.

The social media response has not been limited to the Palestinian cause; it has also covered the horrors of the US war against Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan, all initiated by the Americans. Details with images of the torture chambers that the citizens of these countries endured during and after the wars have also been screened. Anchors and commentators also point out that the US and its allies failed to achieve their political objectives in all three cases, unless the objective was to physically destroy civil infrastructure and housing, and leave behind hundreds of thousands of orphaned and maimed children — and immense hatred for the West. The anguish it has caused to Western citizens as well was expressed by an American soldier who self-immolated in front of the Israeli embassy in Washington in protest against the genocide of the Palestinians.

In addition, a better understanding between the youth in the West and the Arab and Muslim people has developed due to social and Arab media. Words that had no meaning before have acquired one — such as ‘Nakba’, or the catastrophe of 1948, and ‘Intifada’ or an uprising. There have also been many films on Islamic and Arabic civilisations and on the great Arab scholars who laid the foundations of present-day Western civilisation.

Palestinian music, art, architecture, dance, and literature — especially poetry — too, have been screened and discussed. This has blunted the decades of propaganda by the West and Israel of Arabs and Muslims being an inferior and inhumane people, who need to be feared and suppressed. Al Jazeera and social media have also exposed the hypocrisy and lies of Western media reporting on global and regional affairs. It is unlikely that the credibility of the Western media will ever be restored.

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Abrahamic religions and the links between them have also been discussed at length. It has been pointed out that Hazrat Ibrahim’s son Hazrat Ismail is the father of the Arabs, and his other son Hazrat Ishaq is the father of the Jewish people. Common practices and the importance of claimed common religious spaces have also been a subject of often controversial discussion.

The existing economic relationship bet­ween the Middle East’s resources and fut­ure plans for their exploitation by Israel and its allies to establish regional Israeli su­­­premacy and US hegemony have told the world a lot about the conditions in which we live, ini­­­tiating fear and conce­rn. It is unlikely that with this realisation, global politics can ever rev­ert to what it was.

The Houthis of Yemen are the only group to have supported the Palestinians directly. The glo­bal telecommunication network passes through the Bab al-Mandab strait which is in Yemeni control. In addition, 12 to 15 per cent of all global trade passes through the strait. The Houthis have targeted ships carrying cargo to and from Israel and have also threatened to cut off this communication network from the rest of the world, thus disabling internet activity.

Except for the US and its allies, the vast majority of the UN General Assembly supports a ceasefire in Palestine. However, the US vetoes every resolution that calls upon Israel to implement one. The world is now divided between those who support the Palestinian cause and those who support the US position.

If a larger conflict takes place (involving proxies of China and Russia) — which analysts foresee — Pakistan, because of its strategic location, will be drawn into it. But given its financial dependence on the US and its friendship with China for strategic reasons, its foreign policy will have a tough time creating a balance.

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