

Headlines:

- **As leaders hold conference in Istanbul, Turkish border guards fire on Syrian refugees**
- **Erdogan gives greater weight to his personal dignity over the dignity of Islam**
- **Soleimani in Russia**
- **America Reasserts Presence in South China Sea**

Details:

As leaders hold conference in Istanbul, Turkish border guards fire on Syrian refugees

As Muslim rulers hold a two-day summit conference in the Turkish capital of Istanbul, Turkish border guards were reported firing on refugees trying to flee intensified fighting in northern Syria. Despite the newly secured refugee agreement with Europe, Erdogan continues to block Syrian refugees from entering into Turkey.

According to a Human Rights Watch report, about 30,000 Syrians are trapped near the border with Turkey, neither able to go back nor able to advance into Turkey. Behind them is intensifying fighting between the ISIS and the FSA. In front of them are Turkish border guards refusing to allow them to enter. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) also reports a "mass displacement" of Syrians at the Bab al Salam border crossing.

In the aftermath of Bashar al-Assad's assault on Aleppo, the IS group is advancing on brigades north of the city that are opposed to the regime. The British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights reported on Thursday that the IS group is making a wide advance on opposition-held territory along the Turkish border as a result. The IS group has also been targeting displaced person camps near the Turkish border and has forced out at least half of the camps' 60,000 residents during its advances on Wednesday and Thursday.

Human Rights Watch has called on Turkish border guards to stop shooting at civilians and allow them to cross into that country. The organisation quotes a civilian who said, "As we approached the border wall, we saw Turkish soldiers on a hill behind the wall and they just started shooting at us". "They shot at our feet and everyone just turned round and ran in all directions. I took my family and we walked to another camp nearby." "We're afraid now because ISIS is close to this camp too. But where can we go?"

Meanwhile, Erdogan called at the conclusion of the conference for unity: "As Muslims, we cannot overcome our difficulties without achieving unity in spite of our differences." In fact, Erdogan is putting geopolitics above the welfare of Muslims by trying to constrain the movement of the Syrian refugees in order to fulfil his desire to create a buffer zone in northern Syria alongside the Turkish border.

Erdogan gives greater weight to his personal dignity over the dignity of Islam

Turkish President Erdogan has imposed upon Germany's Merkel to pursue prosecution of a German comedian who appeared on German television making false accusations against the Turkish leader.

We do not accept attacks in the West upon Muslim leaders. But where was Erdogan's self-respect when the West was attacking the dignity of the Prophet of Islam (saw)?

Soleimani in Russia

Reuters is reporting from sources on Friday that Iranian Major General Qassem Soleimani travelled to Moscow to discuss how to enable the Syrian government to take back full control of the city of Aleppo. He met with Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and also Russian President Vladimir Putin, despite the meeting not previously being on Putin's schedule.

It seems that the Syrian government is facing greater than expected resistance in retaking Aleppo, and this has caused it to also introduce delays into the indirect negotiations being conducted by U.N. mediator Steffan de Mistura in Geneva. Previous to this, de Mistura had himself delayed the resumption of the negotiations. This indicates that the Western-sponsored negotiations are being carefully choreographed to match Syria's requirements on the ground.

Despite its loud rhetoric, Iran evidently sees its national interest to be in working closely with leading non-Muslim powers against the Muslims in Syria.

America reasserts presence in South China Sea

In a clear signal to China, US Defence Secretary Ash Carter landed aboard a US aircraft carrier in the South China Sea for the second time in five months, this time with Philippine Defence Secretary Voltaire Gazmin at his side as they watched US Navy fighter jets launch off the carrier's flight deck. Later in the ship's hanger bay, Carter explained that his message in making the trip is that the United States "intends to continue to play a role in keeping peace and stability in this region".

China is attempting to articulate a relationship of cooperation with America at a global level whereas America is creating problems for China at her doorstep. When will China realise that America can never be trusted as a reliable partner in world affairs? Western Capitalism creates personalities that are too deeply entrenched in self-interest to allow them to ever be sincere to the interests of others. China should compare the American posturing with its past experience of when the Khilafah state was the world's superpower; the peace and stability that the Khilafah established worldwide enabled China to dismantle her blue-water navy without fear of external attack from anyone. It was only during the final decline of the Ottoman State that China became prey to Western colonialist forces.