

This Week's Developments

December 27 – January 2, 2020

- Iran and US edge close to conflict
- Tehran flexes Palestinian muscle with Gaza rockets
- New era for UK as it completes separation from EU
- Russia announces new tit-for-tat sanctions on UK
- America's unprecedented and explosive year in politics
- 2020: Epic year for fires, floods, hurricanes, & locusts
- *Additional & Supporting Articles*

A year after Qassem Soleimani's assassination, Iran and US edge close to conflict

The Independent, January 1, 2021



EVENT

The anniversary and an outgoing US president with little to lose could prove a tipping point for tensions between Tehran and Washington. In Washington, there is frenzied worry about an Iranian revenge attack, likely carried out in Iraq, and equally frenetic apparent attempts by officials to de-escalate. United States warships and bombers have skirted past Iran in what American officials have described as shows of force against Tehran, while other armadas have been redeployed. The United States and Iran have ratcheted up their decades-long confrontation to a degree rare in recent history, just 20 days before the administration of Donald Trump is set to leave office, triggering fears of a potential armed conflict. “Some friendly health advice to Iran,” Mr Trump wrote on Christmas Eve, days after a barrage of rockets presumably fired by pro-Iranian Iraqi militias struck near the US embassy in Baghdad and initiated the latest round of tensions between Tehran and Washington.

COMMENT

There is speculation that Trump in his dying days of office could trigger a war with Iran. Fuel was added to this fire when Mr Trump cut short his annual New Year's Eve visit to his Florida resort and rushed back to Washington, followed by vice president Mike Pence, who cancelled a planned trip to Israel. In the closing months of 2020, the US sent 2,000 more troops and an additional squadron of fighter jets to Saudi Arabia, and flew three long-distance B-52 bomber missions near Iran. In Isaiah 13 we read of the Medes (Iranians) being stirred up. They use their bows (missiles). They attack Babylon (Iraq). We know that Isaiah had an initial fulfilment in ancient times but there is also a latter day fulfilment that could possibly play out very soon....

BIBLE QUOTE

Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb; their eye shall not spare children.

(Isaiah 13:17-18)

Tehran flexes Palestinian muscle with Gaza rocket exercise out to sea

Debkafile, December 29, 2020



EVENT

The Gaza-based radical **Palestinian Jihad and Hamas** on Tuesday, Dec. 29 **staged a joint rocket exercise out to sea** – carefully pointed away from the Israeli border. The two Palestinian terrorist groups openly **activated their joint war room for the first time** and in, another first, tested a Hamas drone. (See picture.) This exercise was in keeping with the watchword of muscle-flexing combined-with-prudent caution that a jittery Tehran has circulated to all foreign proxies, **lest President Donald Trump or US allies are provoked into a direct attack on Iran before he bows out on Jan. 23**. With Iranian financial and military backing, the Jihad terrorists have often loosed their rockets with deadly effect against Israel. However, these days **in the last weeks of the Trump presidency, Tehran is accentuating its Palestinian surrogates' preparedness for a direct US or allied attack**, while holding back from action that may provoke one.

COMMENT

Iran is under huge pressure to retaliate for the assassination of its top nuclear scientist a few weeks ago and the assassination last year of its top military commander. **One place Iran could strike is Iraq where the US still has a base**. The other area it could cause trouble is with Israel. **Iran controls Hamas and Hezbollah** – both terrorist organisations dedicated to **destroy Israel**. Iran supplies them both with rockets and recently precision missiles. The military exercises this week **are intended to show Trump that they are ready if he decides to launch any attack**. Psalm 83 says that there is an initial inner ring conflict with Israel by tribes that surround Israel. But they are backed by a nation – Assur. Assur could well refer to Iran. The next few weeks could be significant....

BIBLE QUOTE

They have said, **Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance**. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee: The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; **Assur also is joined with them: (Ps 83:4-8)**

New era for UK as it completes separation from European Union

BBC, January 1, 2021



EVENT A new era has begun for the United Kingdom after it completed its formal separation from the European Union. The UK stopped following EU rules at 23:00 GMT, as replacement arrangements for travel, trade, immigration and security co-operation came into force. Boris Johnson said the UK had "freedom in our hands" and the ability to do things "differently and better" now the long Brexit process was over. But opponents of leaving the EU maintain the country will be worse off. Under the new arrangements, UK manufacturers will have tariff-free access to the EU's internal market, meaning there will be no import taxes on goods crossing between Britain and the continent. But it does mean more paperwork for businesses and people travelling to EU countries, while there is still uncertainty about what will happen to banking and services.

COMMENT Britain left the European Union on Jan. 31 2020 and has been in a transitional period applying most EU economic regulations. The new deal governs trading rules when the transition ended on Dec. 31. The agreement provides for zero-tariff, zero-quota trade in goods and allows trade in some services to continue with minimal restriction. The agreement allows the UK to strike trade deals with other nations. This is very much like ancient Tyre. Tyre was the capital city of Phoenicia. They traded with many nations and became very wealthy. Tyre came to an end when they turned against Israel. Isaiah 23 says that when Tyre came to an end it would "pass over to Tarshish". Tarshish is Britain. So Britain would have a capital city like Tyre – trading with many nations. London became this city and became centre of a worldwide trading empire. It wants to do so again. But God says that Britain will NOT keep her wealth – she is going to lose it...

BIBLE QUOTE Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the isle.,.,., And it shall come to pass after the end of seventy years, that the LORD will visit Tyre, and she shall turn to her hire, and shall commit fornication with all the kingdoms of the world upon the face of the earth. And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; (Isaiah 23:6+17-18)

Russia announces new tit-for-tat sanctions on UK nationals over Alexei Navalny poisoning

EuroNews, December 30, 2020



EVENT

Russia has announced an extended travel ban on a number of British nationals in retaliation to UK sanctions over the poisoning of Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny. The Russian Foreign Ministry summoned the UK ambassador, Deborah Bronnert, on Wednesday to announce that certain British nationals would be "denied entry" to the country. While the Ministry has not named the individuals affected, the statement added that the expanded list included "those who are involved in escalating anti-Russian sanctions activities". The travel ban comes after the UK and European Union imposed sanctions on six Russian officials and a state research institute after German authorities accused Russia of poisoning Navalny with a nerve agent. Russia has described the sanctions as "unacceptable and unfounded" and said the expanded list of banned UK nationals was made in response to "unconstructive and unfriendly actions of the British authorities." Last week the ministry announced a similar response to the EU sanctions.

COMMENT

The UK Russia Sanctions Regulations 2019 came fully into force on the 31 December 2020. The government website says "They are intended to ensure that certain sanctions relating to Russia continue to operate effectively. This sanctions regime is aimed encouraging Russia to cease actions destabilising Ukraine or undermining or threatening the territorial integrity, sovereignty or independence of Ukraine." More sanctions have also been applied because of the poisoning of the Russian opposition leader Alexai Navalny. Russia has responded with its own sanctions on the UK. The Bible speaks of the king of the south (UK / US) pushing / provoking the king of the north (Russia). We see this happening and the "push" will one day lead to Russia attacking.

BIBLE QUOTE

And at the time of the end shall the king of the south push at him [Gog]: and the king of the north shall come against him like a whirlwind, with chariots, and with horsemen, and with many ships; and he shall enter into the countries, and shall overflow and pass over.

(Daniel 11:40)

America's unprecedented and explosive year in politics

ABC News, December 30, 2020



EVENT

As 2020 ends, so does one of the most explosive and unprecedented years in American politics. The nation witnessed its leaders clashing amid a presidential impeachment, a once-in-a-lifetime pandemic and an election delayed by extended vote counts and legal battles. It was a year of firsts: The first time a president sought reelection after being impeached; the first woman elected vice president; a record-breaking number of women elected to Congress. Then, for the first time in modern history, a peaceful transfer of power was put in doubt. In the weeks following the election, Trump and his allies filed a barrage of lawsuits to nullify millions of votes in key battleground states Biden won with Trump alleging widespread voter fraud. However, election officials across the country, the Justice Department and Trump's own legal team could not substantiate those claims.

COMMENT

At the start of 2020 Trump looked on track to easily win the US elections. However everything turned against him as he decided to divide God's land and Jerusalem. On the 28th January (during his impeachment trial) Trump published his long awaited Middle East Peace Plan. For the first time ever it had a detailed map of the division of Israel and also the division of Jerusalem. The next day the WHO declared a global health emergency. COVID19 ended up impacting the US more than any other country on earth. 20% of all deaths are in the US with only 4% of the world's population. Trump then went on to ditch his Mid East Plan and come up with the Abraham Accords. This forced Israel to give up annexing any part of the West Bank in exchange for peace with Arab nations. Abraham would never have signed these accords! Chaos, disorder and political division has racked the US since. God does not tolerate his land being divided.

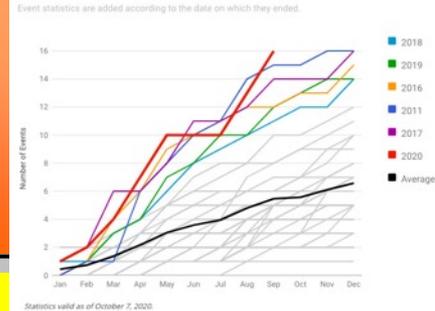
BIBLE QUOTE

For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you [Jerusalem]: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple [pupil] of his eye. For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me. (Zechariah 2:8-9)

I will also gather all nations ... for ... they have ... parted my land. (Joel 3:2)

Fires, floods, hurricanes, and locusts: 2020 was an epic year for disasters

Vox, December 30, 2020



EVENT

The Covid-19 pandemic was unfortunately not the only natural disaster of 2020. There were so many that it's easy to forget everything that happened this year. Here is a brief sampling of 2020's weather-related events: The year began with a series of bushfires in Australia that forced thousands to flee, killed at least 29 people and more than a billion animals. The fires that sent smoke around the world had ignited amid weeks of record-breaking heat and drought. Swarms of locusts descended on East Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia, threatening food supplies for millions of people in the spring. The swarms were triggered in part by torrential rainfall in East Africa. This summer, California experienced its worst fire season on record in terms of area burned, as well as its largest single wildfire on record. Colorado also had its largest wildfire in history, and blazes in Washington and Oregon created an unprecedented disaster. A record number of wildfires this summer swept through the Pantanal, the world's largest tropical wetlands, spanning Bolivia, Brazil, and Paraguay.

COMMENT

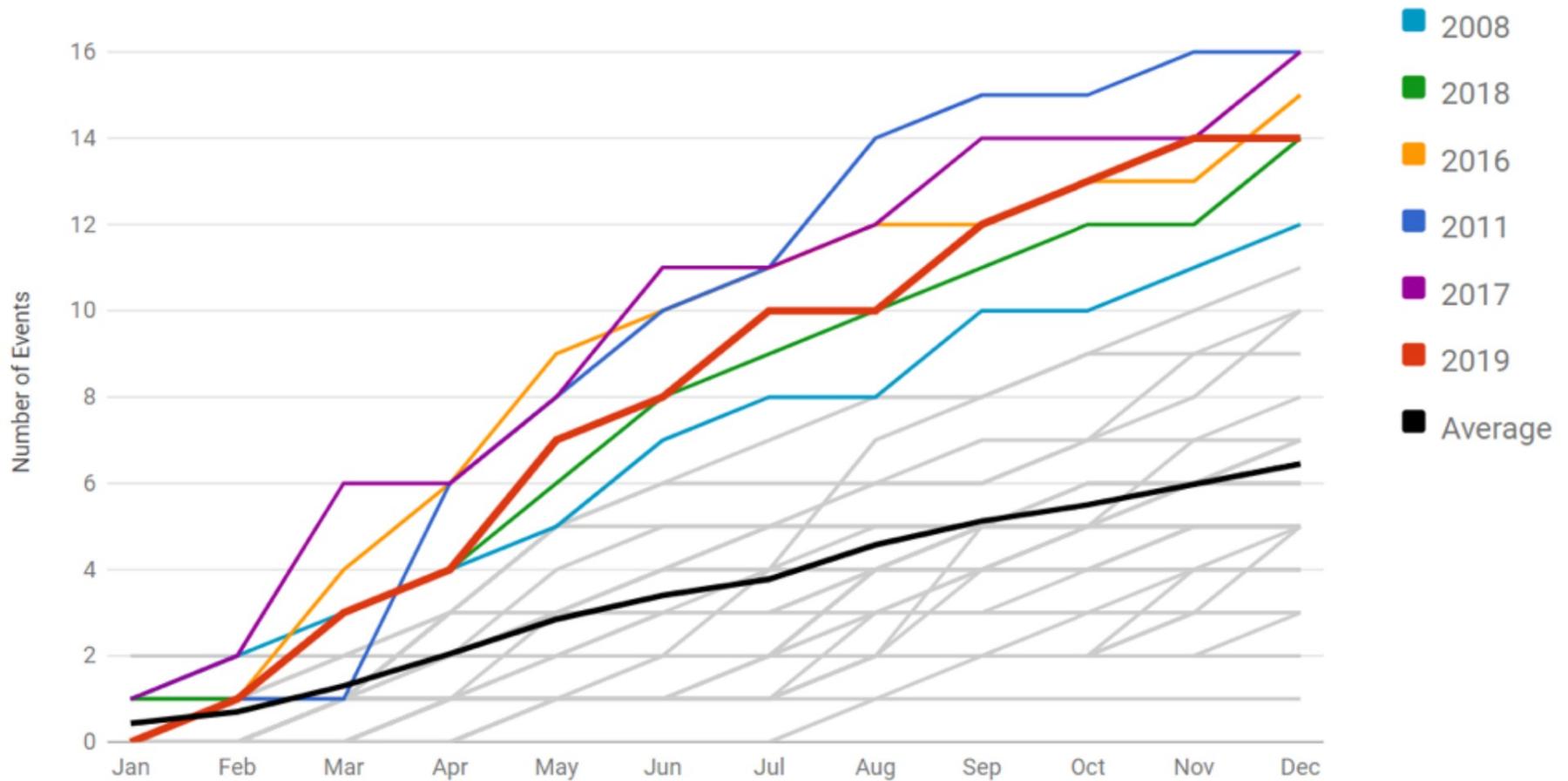
2021 has begun and many people hope that 2020 will soon be forgotten and that the world will enter a much better time. However we know the "better time" will only come with the return of our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven. Until then it will not get better – we have not yet entered the "time of trouble such as never was". That is still to come. Armageddon has not started – the inner ring war hasn't started – the Russian invasion hasn't begun. The total financial collapse hasn't happened. But all these things will come and 2020 is a sign to us all is very close to happening. We need to be ready..

BIBLE QUOTE

Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh. (Luke 21:26-28)

1980-2019 Year-to-Date United States Billion-Dollar Disaster Event Frequency (CPI-Adjusted)

Event statistics are added according to the date on which they ended.



This graphic above shows the month-by-month accumulation of billion dollar disasters for each year on record. 2019 (thick red line) had the 4th highest total number of events (tied with 2018, green), following the years 2017 (purple), 2011 (dark blue) and 2016 (orange). Other years appear in gray. There is considerable overlap, and some years' traces are obscured. Screenshot from NOAA NCEI Billion-dollar Disasters webpage.

ADDITIONAL AND SUPPORTING ARTICLES

This Week's **DebkaFile Review** (world events through the bi-focals of Israeli military intelligence)

Why Russian Military Expenditure Is Much Higher Than Commonly Understood

Weapons of the weak- Russia and AI-driven asymmetric warfare

How artificial intelligence is transforming the world

The 'Great Reset,' world leaders' radical plan to transform the economy – The Hill

The 'Great Reset' – What Is It & What Does It Mean ?

U.S. Calls for 'Moratorium' on Nord Stream 2 Pipeline

Is Putin Really Considering a Military Alliance with China?