Global Watch Daily – March 16, 2026

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A concise summary of significant developments in Israel and the world through a grounded Christian worldview.

Israel & Jerusalem

Recent attacks by the Iran-linked group Harakat Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamia have targeted Jewish institutions across Europe, including Belgium and the Netherlands, as part of a psychological warfare campaign. European governments are urged to strengthen security measures to protect Jewish communities amid these ongoing threats (Times of Israel; JNS).

In New York, antisemitic incidents have surged, with disturbing graffiti discovered on a bike trail, underscoring the persistent threat to Jewish communities even outside the Middle East. This rise in hate crimes highlights the global dimension of antisemitism today (JNS; Times of Israel).

Meanwhile, the humanitarian situation in Beirut continues to deteriorate as Israeli bombings devastate the southern suburbs, causing mass displacement. Analysts emphasize Hezbollah's role in the escalating conflict, highlighting the complex regional dynamics at play (Al Jazeera; toi.li).

Wars & Security (Israel and Region)

US and Israeli strikes persist in targeting Iran's military infrastructure, including recent operations on Kharg Island, signaling a strategic effort to weaken Tehran's capabilities. The conflict has entered a perilous phase, with threats to critical shipping lanes, including the Strait of Hormuz, raising concerns about regional stability (Long War Journal; FDD).

Dozens of airstrikes have targeted Iran-backed militias across Iraq, resulting in significant casualties and heightened tensions. Although militias claim to have downed US aircraft, official reports deny any involvement of hostile fire, reflecting the fog of war in the region (Long War Journal; Long War Journal).

In West Africa, the foreign ministers of Nigeria and Ghana emphasize the importance of local security solutions to address Boko Haram and other threats, advocating for regional peacebuilding efforts that are indirectly supported by the US. This approach highlights the

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diverse global security challenges intertwined with the Middle Eastern conflict (Chatham House; FDD).

Global Macro & Geopolitics

South Africa is investigating the murder of whistleblower Marius van der Merwe, a former elite officer, amid growing concerns over police corruption. Meanwhile, Ecuador has deployed 75,000 troops to combat violent drug gangs, signaling a regional crackdown on organized crime (BBC News; BBC News).

In France, the municipal elections in Paris reveal a competitive five-way race with Socialist Emmanuel Grégoire leading, reflecting heightened voter engagement. Concurrently, Israel has expanded ground operations in southern Lebanon targeting Hezbollah, intensifying the regional conflict with significant humanitarian consequences (France24; France24).

China's strategic partnership with Iran exposes the limits of Beijing's non-interference policy, especially amid the escalating Iran war. Meanwhile, ASEAN calls for a halt to the conflict, warning of sustained economic challenges that could affect millions across the region (The Diplomat; The Diplomat).

Pestilence & Global Health

MIT scientists have identified intelectin-2, a gut protein that strengthens the mucus barrier and traps harmful bacteria, offering new insights into gut immunity and antibiotic resistance. Concurrently, a major clinical trial found no reduction in COVID-19 severity from high-dose vitamin D3, but suggested a potential decrease in long COVID risk for regular supplement users (ScienceDaily; ScienceDaily).

New research links severe COVID-19 or influenza infections requiring hospitalization with an increased risk of lung cancer years later, likely due to chronic lung inflammation. Vaccination remains crucial in preventing these dangerous long-term effects (ScienceDaily ; ScienceDaily).

Contrary to popular belief, medieval Danish communities did not exclude those with diseases like leprosy from prestigious burial sites, indicating a more inclusive social approach. Additionally, scientists have uncovered the molecular mechanism behind mint's cooling sensation, advancing potential treatments for pain and eye disorders (ScienceDaily ; ScienceDaily).

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Natural Disasters & Signs in the Heavens

Recent seismic activity includes a magnitude 1.9 earthquake near Tonopah, Nevada, and a magnitude 4.9 quake west-northwest of Abepura, Indonesia, with depths ranging from 8 to 10 kilometers. Additionally, a 4.6-magnitude tremor struck southeast of Itō, Japan, underscoring ongoing global tectonic activity (USGS; USGS; USGS).

NASA citizen scientists have identified unexpectedly high rates of solar flares linked to long-lived active magnetic regions on the Sun's surface, enhancing understanding of solar activity cycles. The Daily Minor Planet project has expanded its data streams, thereby improving asteroid-tracking capabilities. Meanwhile, severe winter storms and weather events continue to impact the US Midwest and East Coast (NASA; NASA; weather.gov).

Middle Eastern Artifacts

Archaeologists in Upper Egypt have uncovered approximately 3,000 ostraca pottery fragments this season, bringing the total to around 43,000—the largest collection from a single site in Egypt. These discoveries illuminate the practices of ancient Egyptian craftspeople, including their use of corrective fluids in pottery (BiblePlaces; BiblePlaces).

The Israel Antiquities Authority continues to publish detailed studies on artifacts from Jerusalem's Giv'at Shapira area, providing valuable insights into the region's historical and cultural heritage. These publications document significant archaeological discoveries that deepen our understanding of ancient Jerusalem (Israel Antiquities Authority; Israel Antiquities Authority).

With museums in Israel currently closed due to war restrictions, online exhibitions such as "The Girl Who Wrote" at the Israel Museum offer educational opportunities, including activities for children, maintaining cultural engagement during these challenging times (BiblePlaces; BiblePlaces).

Reflection

We should interpret these developments soberly, resisting both panic and apathy while attending to what is true. Our aim is prayerful discernment—grounding convictions in Scripture and keeping watch with steadiness and hope.

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