Can we please stop calling Israel “the only democracy in the Middle East”?

By Frank , 13 July 2026

It is difficult to grasp what is more shocking about the news that three Lebanese journalists were targeted by the Israeli army and killed while doing their job: the killing itself, or the lack of protest from the Western media, which are biased both toward the practice of killing journalists and toward the way the stories about their deaths are presented.

> Israel has long had an extraordinary grip on the Western media, which largely function as a PR platform for its objectives. Journalists are not allowed into Gaza and are therefore dependent on a kind of Stockholm-syndrome-like cooperation with the IDF press office. This press office provides them with distorted “facts” about what is happening on the ground, omits crucial information, and in some cases even feeds them entirely with fake news.



The killing of three Lebanese journalists, however, has raised the stakes in Israel’s war with Iran and shown us how desperate the government is, as it struggles with the fact that the country is slowly being reduced to rubble by Iran’s daily missile attacks. The war now seems less about keeping score of who hit what and more about holding journalists at gunpoint and forcing them to write false “news reports” or, in the case of many major Western media outlets such as the BBC, simply not reporting on the Iranian attacks on the ground. What we see on our television screens is completely distorted and bears no resemblance to reality.

Corruption also lies at the heart of this sad story. Both Netanyahu and Trump are being investigated for corruption, or certainly will be on a large scale after leaving office. They simply cannot step down, and their only way of staying in power is by

creating chaos and disorder that the media can feast on, while attention is temporarily diverted away from them. New footage was recently released of an interrogation by police officers investigating him over allegations of corruption surrounding expensive gifts he received from people seeking favors from his office.

> It is suspected, however, that this is only the tip of the iceberg and that, upon further investigation, the police will uncover more serious cases of corruption. Bibi will certainly serve a prison sentence if investigators are allowed to do their work freely and the justice system is given time to handle the case.



Trump, on the other hand, seems to have distracted the American media from the thousands of pages of details about his relationships with children, which one would think would have damaged his support among his own base. Both men want to control media attention at all costs, and killing journalists while claiming that the victims worked for Hezbollah, using the press as cover, comes straight out of Donald Trump’s “art of lying” playbook.

Trump is currently telling so many lies every hour about what is happening in Iran. If we do not ask critical questions and do not report what Trump and Netanyahu say or claim as false, it is easy to understand how much power they think they have over journalists who largely go along with the false reporting, simply out of fear of becoming targets themselves.
The losses of American military equipment, to give just one example, are pure fiction. According to Trump, warships are out of action because of poor maintenance and fighter jets are crashing due to friendly fire. It is a Hollywood scenario that he develops further every day with the help of journalists. But the truth is that there are no American journalists facing the facts. The Strait of Hormuz is in Iran’s hands, the U.S. has virtually no missiles left, its two aircraft carriers are battered after airstrikes, oil prices have risen, giving both Iran and Russia enormous sums to spend on their own wars.



As the cherry on top of this spectacular failure by Trump and Israel, the U.S. has lost both its influence in the region and, soon, its petrodollars. What I predict is that somewhere a second invasion will be staged purely for the cameras, and that these images will be presented to journalists as “released” videos, while the real battle with record casualty numbers continues. Trump’s experience with reality television and Israel’s already remarkable track record in video manipulation will play an empirical role, with the killing of the Lebanese journalists only encouraging them to believe that anything is possible with journalists.

Source: Martin Jay on Strategic Culture Foundation censored in the West