



By: *Sergei Stepancev, TA Moscow*

What did Putin bring home from his visit to the Gulf?



Russia has nothing significant to offer the UAE and Saudi Arabia apart from the massive amounts of money it is considering injecting into the global payments system to acquire goods - particularly technologies - that it desperately needs.

The UAE and Saudi Arabia will not jeopardise their relations with the West over a country which is realistically a competitor, given that the Russian principal export commodity is the same as that of UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Why would the UAE or Saudi Arabia agree to inject Russian clandestine savings in cash, or worse, be willing to launder the money paid to Russia in cash by various outlaw African governments or warlords, including those from Ethiopia?

The UAE and Saudi Arabia leaders will refrain from risky business and money laundering ventures proposed by Russia to various renegade governors globally.

Why did Putin come to the Gulf region, and why did the Gulf leaders welcome him?

Wedding general

The Gulf leaders are using Putin as a "wedding general". During the old pre-Soviet days, it was considered prestigious in Russia to have a general at your wedding. That was when fake generals were attending weddings, making money and newlyweds happy.

Since then, the term "a wedding general" has come to refer to having a relatively insignificant guest at your event whose presence could slightly improve your reputation.

The Gulf leaders used Putin to add value to their global image among the countries still standing aside from the Russian invasion of Ukraine

The Gulf leaders used Putin to add value to their global image among the countries still standing aside from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, while Putin pursued his own agenda.

Putin wants to break the existing world order, which he **explained** in detail at the recent World Russian People's Council.

No one should forget that apart from being the Russian head of state, Putin is also an accused war criminal, against whom there is an issued arrest warrant.

Tough-guy image

Putin needed that visit to the Gulf region to maintain his tough-guy image among the political and upper class.

He wanted to maintain his image of unrestrained intelligence to attract countries that shared Russia's objective of breaking the existing global order.

It has been a while since Putin **travelled** this far, crossing several borders. For years, he has been isolated, spending time in heavily guarded palaces in remote regions of Russia.

Putin decided to change that pattern first with his recent trip to China because the war in Ukraine has been unravelling the scenario he had promised the people of Russia, particularly his inner circle, and because by now, he understood that the Russian establishment at one point would stop hoping for him to produce another geopolitical miracle.

The Kremlin wanted the Gulf leaders not to obey the warrant issued by the International Criminal Court. The Gulf leaders gave that to the Kremlin in exchange for Putin's trip to honour them at home.

Putin urgently needs to come up with something that will pull the Russian upper class and Russia from the hole they have got into with the war in Ukraine.



Putin left Moscow to visit Gulf monarchs because the Kremlin has determined that America has lost touch with the Gulf region

The immoral and corrupt Russian upper and political class will, at one point, find a new person to reconcile with the West.

Putin understands that he cannot stop the war because his political career and the war Russia has been waging in Ukraine are now intertwined and can no longer be separated. Putin's forthcoming political campaign for the new presidential term, even though formal, will nevertheless be about this war.

By visiting the Gulf countries, Putin has demonstrated to the world community that he is defining new rules. No one should underestimate the importance of that trip to the countries which are looking at Russia with admiration.

The situation in Gaza brings Moscow and the Gulf capitals closer because of their joint support for the Palestinians

Putin left Moscow to visit Gulf monarchs because the Kremlin has determined that America has lost touch with the Gulf region, which could serve as a territory where Russia could undermine Western, predominantly American, interests.

The reason was the recent rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran with Chinese mediation after a long-term diplomatic break. Also, the situation in Gaza brings Moscow and the Gulf capitals closer because of their joint

support for the Palestinians.

Regardless of a lavish protocol, the Russian president's journey to the Gulf did not result in any new developments in the relations. Putin brought to Moscow pictures from which citizens could conclude that their leader was still in top diplomatic shape and was not isolated. That is why he travelled to the UAE and Saudi Arabia.