Twitter Thread by Stuart



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THREAD on the Palestinian territories & the vaccine: The Israeli government is facing criticism from human rights groups & international organisations for not extending the vaccination programme currently underway in Israel to the millions of Palestinians in the WB and Gaza 1/

Let's just deal in some facts. The Israeli government is embarking on an unprecedented drive to become one of the first countries to vaccinate its entire population, including Arab citizens of Israel and Palestinians in East Jerusalem and in Israeli prisons. 2/

#Israel is receiving supplies from #Pfizer. In return, Israel has agreed to share its #vaccination data with the pharmaceutical company to help it ascertain how successful its COVID-19 vaccine will be in a real world environment. 3/

The argument from critics that Israel is carrying out "medical apartheid" is based upon Israel's perceived international law obligations as an "occupying power" to vaccinate the Palestinian population in the West Bank and Gaza. 4/

However, the Oslo Accords, signed in the 1990s by Israel & the Palestinians, moved the relationship between them beyond the default occupier/occupied legal paradigm by creating the Palestinian Authority (PA) and giving it a range of autonomous powers. 5/

Specifically, the Accords gave the PA control of their own healthcare provision –something they wanted as a step toward statehood. Oslo II, Article 17, Annex III, states: Powers & responsibilities in the sphere of Health in the WB & Gaza will be transferred to the Palestinians 6/

"The Pal side shall continue to apply the present standards of vaccination of Palestinians & shall improve them according to internationally accepted standards in the field, taking into account WHO recommendations." So, ALL vaccination programmes were specifically mandated 7/

More specifically the accords state: "Israel & the Palestinian side shall exchange information regarding epidemics & contagious diseases, shall cooperate in combating them & shall develop methods for exchange of medical files and documents." (All currently done) 8/

As part of the Accords, the PA Health Ministry is responsible for vaccinating the Palestinian population for all known diseases, including Hepatitis B, Polio, MMR, Tuberculosis etc. #Covid19 is different however as Pandemics know no borders. 9/

Yuli Edelstein, Health Minister, said “it's in Israeli interests that there will be less cases on the Pal. side. Many of the Palestinians are working here in Israel. You can't divide the two neatly and say, you know, 'they can deal with it themselves; it's not our issue” 10/

Even if Israel wanted to help, the PA M of H has not requested assistance from Israel to acquire mass vaccines. In fact, the PA has been assuring its ppl for 2 months that its M of H is in control, has ordered vaccines & that their arrival is imminent, without Israel's help 11/

The PA has signed its own deals to receive vaccines for the WB & Gaza. On 12 Dec the PA said it had ordered 4m vaccines from Russia, w.out any request from the Israelis for assistance. Then, on 9 Jan the PA said, “4 vaccine producer companies will deliver for 70% of the Pal ppl”

“the WHO will provide for 20 per cent,” which included 2m vaccines from AstraZeneca. Most vaccines are expected to arrive in the Palestinian territories from mid-March. 13/

It is worth noting that this timescale, according to figures from the Economist Intelligence Unit, puts the Palestinians way ahead of all of Africa and most central and south-east Asian countries where vaccines are not expected to be widely available till 2022. 14/

Please feel free to retweet to counter the misinformation campaign from the usual social media trolls who are obsessed with delegitimising Israel, alongside MSM like @guardian. With thanks to @BritainIsrael for source material. END OF THREAD