

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

# While Palestinians remain silenced, we must become their voice



THE OVERTON WINDOW  
ERESH OMAR JAMAL

NOVEMBER 29 marks the darkest day in history for the people of Palestine, for it was on this day in 1947 that the United Nations General Assembly passed Resolution 181 (II) to end the British mandate in Palestine by August 1, 1948. At the centre of this historic resolution was the decision to partition Palestine and establish, after a transition period, "Independent Arab and Jewish States and the Special International Regime for the City of Jerusalem."

Following the resolution, three-quarters of a million Palestinian Arabs, who were the majority of the population of historic Palestine, fled for their lives after facing or learning of brutal massacres by Zionist paramilitary organisations. During the ensuing Arab-Israeli war of 1948, many thousands of Palestinians were slaughtered and 531 villages and 11 urban neighbourhoods were destroyed. And by the time the armistice of 1949 was signed, the original partition lines had shifted violently so that Israel's footprint became much larger than envisioned by the proposed partition plan—it was granted 55 percent by the plan, but seized an additional 23 percent of Palestinian territory.

Today, more than 70 years later, the drastically reduced Palestinian land continues to be occupied by the Israeli military. And Palestinians who were originally displaced from their homes in 1948 are still refused their right to return to their homes—as Israel continues to grab vast tracts of Palestinian land to build up illegal settlements for Israeli citizens, contrary to the resolution and the Fourth Geneva Convention.

For more than 70 years now, both Israel and its western allies have worked tirelessly and systematically to erase Israeli oppression of Palestinians. An investigative report by the *Haaretz* newspaper in Israel, details how Israel's ministry of war's secretive security department (Malmab) has been tasked with making the "Nakba"—the catastrophe of 1948 for Palestinians—disappear ("Burying the Nakba: How Israel Systematically Hides Evidence of 1948 Expulsion of Arabs", July 5, 2019). The report says: "Its [Malmab] teams



An Israeli border policeman aims his weapon during a protest in support of Palestinian prisoners on hunger strike in Israeli jails, in the West Bank town of Bethlehem, May 12, 2017.

PHOTO: REUTERS/AMMAR AWAD

have been scouring Israel's archives and removing historic documents...conceal[ing] [them] as part of a systematic effort to hide evidence of the Nakba." *Haaretz* further discovered that the Malmab had "concealed testimony from IDF generals about" mass slaughter of Palestinians and destruction of their towns and villages, as well as dispossession of Bedouins during Israel's first 10 years of statehood.

Another often used tactic by Israel to wash the blood of its hands is to label its critics "anti-semitic". As Shulamit Aloni, former Israeli cabinet member and winner of the Israel Prize in 2000 explained in an interview with Amy Goodman: "Anti-semitic? It's a trick. We always use it" to stifle criticism of Israel. And this tactic is particularly revolting because semitism or semitic does not refer to a race, but a language group, which does not include the vast majority of Jewish people today, according to a large number of

Jewish scholars, but does include languages from today's Arab countries spoken by Arab people, including Palestinians. Therefore, the term "anti-semitic" is actually used by Israel to shield itself from any criticism for its "anti-semitic" actions—the mass brutalisation of Palestinians.

Despite numerous declarations and resolutions by the United Nations on the Israel-Palestinian situation, the status of the Palestinian people still remains precarious at best. In fact, about half of the world's Palestinian population today continues to live as refugees and in exile. And although UN member states have tried to propose and gain support for resolutions that push for Palestinian human rights, their efforts have been unsuccessful, because of the modification made to history by Israeli and western propaganda, and due to vetoes exercised in the UN by powerful members such as the United States in support of Israel.

In fact, so successful has been the anti-Palestinian propaganda, that few people today even know that as a condition for admission to the UN in 1949, Israel had accepted UN Resolution 194, which stipulates that Palestinians who fled or were expelled during the Israeli takeover of 1947-1949 in Palestine, have the right to return. Which is why it remains unfulfilled to this day, with very few uttering a word in support of the expelled Palestinians and calling for the removal of Israel from the UN for its failure to comply with the 1949 resolution.

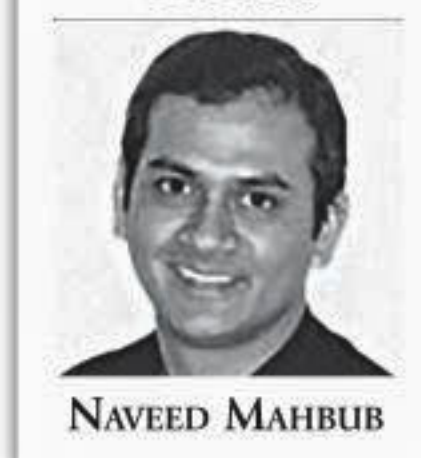
However, that is only one among countless UN and international rulings ignored by Israel. In 2004, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ruled the Palestinian West Bank "occupied". According to the ICJ, "Israeli settlements in the Occupied Territory, including East Jerusalem, are illegal and an obstacle to peace and to economic and social development [and] have been established in breach of international law." The ICJ further ruled against Israel's Separation Wall, calling it illegal and ordering its completed sections to be dismantled. Mandating reparations for the "requisition and destruction of homes, businesses, and agricultural holdings [and] to return the land, orchards, olive groves, and other immovable property seized." However, Israel, far from complying with the ICJ's ruling, has done the complete opposite by seizing even more Palestinian land ever since.

Despite Israel's refusal to comply with international law and UN resolutions, and the United States' undivided support for Israel in the face of that, it is essential that historians and others record the truth, according to Jewish author Stephen Lendman, as "they matter longterm"—"establishing a judicial record of Israeli lawlessness". At the end of the day, it is only through public support that the incredible backing that Israel receives from the world's only superpower, the US, can be made conditional on Israel complying with international law and granting Palestinians their due human rights and dignity. Which is why, it remains vital for people and nations of good conscience to show solidarity with the people of Palestine, until the injustice against Palestinians is ended, and maybe with great effort, perhaps someday undone.

Eresh Omar Jamal is a member of the editorial team at *The Daily Star*. His Twitter handle is: @EreshOmarJamal

# Every breath you take

HUMOROUSLY YOURS



NAVEED MAHBUB

NEITHER Pink Floyd nor the Pink Panther had anything to do with Bangladesh's pink wash, but the good thing is that Bangladesh at

least didn't let India play for a good two days during the first test. In fact, the runs of our boys in the first innings were 0, 1, 8, 1, 6, 0, 0, 0, 4, which together was perhaps a cryptic message to Robi to once again pick up the team sponsorship.

Perhaps there were illusions on the field as the players of the onion-starved nation didn't want to hit the pink ball which looked like a juicy, Egyptian Onion (note, I used a capital "O" in order to give the staple its due respect). Or, what's more likely is that the air of Eden Garden was "relatively" cleaner so as not to have emulated the metro rail dust laden Mirpur where the Tigers practice or the smog shrouded Delhi where they won with vague (visually) recollections of the team in blue, where in fact, a maiden over was bowling six balls in one breath.

But Bangladesh beat India in another three-day match. According to the Air Quality Index, the air of Dhaka was the most polluted in the world



Bangladesh's bowling coach Daniel Vettori, head coach Russell Domingo and batting coach Neil McKenzie wearing masks look on during a practice session ahead of their Twenty20 cricket match against India in New Delhi, India, November 1, 2019.

PHOTO: REUTERS/ANUSHREE FADNAVIS

for three days in a row, beating India's Delhi coming in at third place and with Pakistan's Lahore in second place. It was all in the spirit of SAARC.

A chain reaction is likely to

ensue. Crows will be upgraded from scavengers to migratory birds and will start mass migration from Jahangirnagar to Siberia. Signs will be up: "Breathing prohibited". Airports

will start offering glass enclosed breathing zones. Under the purview of the Road Transport Act, the air of Dhaka may be fined a whopping Tk 50,000 for failing the breathalyser test.

Meanwhile, Delhi has already taken some positive measures. It has opened up a restaurant called O2, that, for Rs 300, provides fresh oxygen to its patrons for a good fifteen minutes. Dhaka should follow suit, with a double dunk advantage of "O2 is a restaurant in Dhanmondi" being deemed a correct answer to the beauty pageant question "What is H2O?".

This air is tantamount to smoking a couple of packs of cigarettes in a day, all for free. So, the air of Begum Bazaar is a *biri*, the air of Saidabad is a local cigarette, the air of Farmgate is a higher brand of the local cigarette offerings and the air of Gulshan is an international brand of cigarette. Let's not even go to the air of Hazaribagh.

Will things change? No. For we will never see eye to eye on addressing the root causes of pollution. And how can we? Thanks to the smog, we literally cannot see each other's faces, forget the eyes. So, might as well kick back, relax and enjoy the song:

"Every breath you take  
Every move you make

.....  
I'll be watching you."

Sting may have written the lyrics, but it is being sung by the Grim Reaper.

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ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY



NOVEMBER 29, 1947  
United Nations resolution for the partition of Palestine

On this day in 1947, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution (not implemented) calling for the partition of Palestine into two separate states—an Arab and a Jewish one—that would retain an economic union.

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**  
1 President Ford  
7 Fix text  
11 Roma's land  
12 Mystique  
13 Uninvited guest  
15 Posh  
16 Pound hound  
18 Gofer's assignment  
21 Flag creator  
22 Did lab work  
24 In the manner of  
25 Min. part  
26 Old auto  
27 Hogwarts groundskeeper  
29 Fountain order  
30 Oboe part  
31 Shop tools  
32 Visitor from
- space  
34 Undecided person  
40 Heaps  
41 Smitten  
42 Frees (of)  
43 Oozed
- DOWN**  
1 Jazz job  
2 Seventh Greek letter  
3 Lab animal  
4 Tips off  
5 Permitted  
6 Pub missile  
7 Cake courses  
8 "Well, that's obvious!"  
9 Rage  
10 Road sealer
- 14 Early Mexican  
16 Back tooth  
17 Grammar topic  
19 Sipping aid  
20 Boat backbones  
21 Cheerring cry  
22 Kennedy or Cruz  
23 Morse E  
25 Move like a crab  
28 Gasps, say  
29 Yankees legend  
31 Paris river  
33 Egyptian goddess  
34 Remote  
35 Quarterback Manning  
36 Silent assent  
37 Summit  
38 Raiser of Cain  
39 Spectrum end

11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20  
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40 41 42 43

YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

OMEGA RASPS  
DONOR EXPEL  
DODOS SEETO  
SOFT DEW  
RAVENOUS  
ALIE EDWARD  
TONGS YALIE  
STOGIE NILE  
SEMESTER  
HUM SOLO  
APART SNAPS  
COCO AIGLOO  
KNEES ESSEX

BEETLE BAILEY by Mort Walker



BABY BLUES by Kirkman & Scott



WRITE FOR US. SEND US YOUR OPINION PIECES TO dsopinion@gmail.com.