

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

The time for the world to act in Palestine’s favour is now

A CLOSER LOOK



TASNEEM TAYEB

DISPLACED, colonised, marginalised, terrorised, tortured, victimised, killed; these are just some of the many forms of dispossession and ethnic cleansing the Palestinian people have had to endure at the hands of the Zionists and Israelis since the turn of the 20th century.

To be specific, things started getting edgy for Palestinians as the mighty Ottoman Empire neared its end, and the British and the French found themselves in an advantageous position from where they could easily exploit the rich resources of the vast Middle Eastern hinterland.

Making good of this opportunity, British diplomat Sir Mark Sykes and his French counterpart François Georges-Picot got down to work to redefine the Middle Eastern landscape: tearing apart the map with their inconsiderate and reckless judgement, which they did with complete disregard for the ethno-political sensitives of the

and Jewish states. The State of Israel was created on May 14, 1948, leading to the end of the British Mandate of Palestine and sowing the seeds of the first Arab-Israel War. By the time the nine-month-long war ended on March 10, 1949, with Israel emerging as the victor, the Palestinians helplessly endured the Nakba or “Catastrophe.”

Around 750,000 Palestinians were displaced during the Nakba, with about 500 Palestinian villages being depopulated. Over a span of a few months, the native Palestinians became outcasts in their own lands. Those who fled the war, lost their right to return home, most of them turning into poor refugees in neighbouring countries, with a new nightmare unfurling in their lives.

The result of the first Arab-Israel War was the division of the territory into three chunks: the biggest was Israel, followed by the smaller Gaza Strip, and the West Bank. This was only the beginning of a new era of subjugation, persecution and dispossession of the Palestinians at the hands of Israel.

Over the years, the displacement of the Palestinians continued as Israel became more aggressive and more vicious in its apartheid-like misadventures. To this day, Israel keeps



A demonstrator holds a Palestinian flag during a protest at the Hawara checkpoint near Nablus.

PHOTO: RANEEN SAWAFTA/REUTERS

to carry on its colonisation of Palestine. But then, perhaps the world is not a fair place.

While every year, on November 29, we observe the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, we have done very little to actually support, promote and facilitate the cause of the Palestinians. Other than issuing a few templated statements, the day makes no difference for the rest of the world. As a result, Israel keeps gaining ground, while the Palestinians keep suffering—their spaces shrinking every day.

What the Palestinians need right now are not hollow words, but action from the global community. The world can stop Israel in its tracks by imposing the same stringent sanctions that they have imposed on Iran for lesser ambitions. Why does the US create maximum pressure campaign on Iran for trying to enrich uranium, but does not apply the same on Israel for killing innocent civilians, for imposing an apartheid regime? And why does the global community not speak up against these inconsistencies and injustices?

Rather than contemplating these questions, many countries around the world are now normalising ties with Israel, betraying the cause of the Palestinian people. And Israel is taking advantage of these situations to carry on with its nefarious activities in the Middle East, especially against Palestinians and its supporters. This must stop.

The world community must now reflect on where they are going wrong with their Middle East policy; on what they could do to effectively support the cause of the Palestinians; or even what their priorities are, because many of their actions do not complement their words.

The Palestinians are caught alone, in the middle of nowhere, and their time is running out. But so is ours to show meaningful solidarity with them. Let this display of solidarity not be a cosmetic one-day-a-year show-off. Let this day be an occasion for us to play a thoughtful and effective role in the Palestinians’ quest for their right to self-determination, for their basic human rights.

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people inhabiting the region. The Sykes-Picot Agreement resulted in the decades-old bloodbath that the region is still reeling from.

In the face of growing animosity between the Arabs and the Jews, in 1947, the United Nations adopted Resolution 181, also known as the Partition Plan, aimed at creating Arab

encroaching on Palestinian territories, and expanding unlawful Israeli settlement inside what is supposed to be Palestinian lands. The result: the Palestinians are being uprooted from their own homes and lands by a bunch of outsiders, albeit powerful. The recent major conflict between Israel and Palestine in May this year was the outcome of one

such attempt by Israel. They tried to oust several Palestinian families from their own homes in the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood in East Jerusalem. When the Palestinians resisted the forced eviction, Israel not only used law enforcement agencies to coerce the Palestinian victims into subjugation, but also encouraged hard-line Jewish settlers to attack the protesting Palestinians.

With regard to Israel’s aggression in Sheikh Jarrah, Rupert Colville, a rights office spokesman for the United Nations, stated, “We wish to emphasise that East Jerusalem remains part of the occupied Palestinian territory, in which international humanitarian law applies . . . The occupying power . . . cannot confiscate private property in occupied territory.”

Colville further suggested that Israel’s attempt at forced eviction of the Palestinian families in Sheikh Jarrah “may amount to war crimes.”

However, while the United Nations and rights groups, including Human Rights

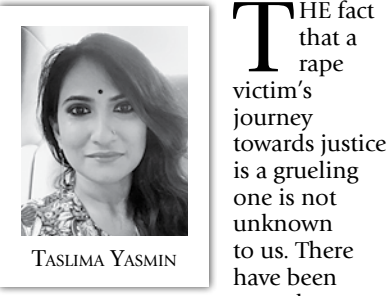
Watch, had been vocal in condemning Israeli actions, Israel’s major ally the United States, along with many European countries, had been prosaic in their response to this incident, to say the least. When the conflict between Israel and Palestine escalated, with Israeli forces attacking worshippers in Al Aqsa mosque, and Israeli bombing of the Gaza Strip in retaliation of Hamas’ homespun rocket attacks, Germany even suggested that Israel has a right to defend itself.

But one might be pardoned for asking: if the aggressor has the right to defend itself, why is the same right not afforded to the victim? Are Palestinians not human beings? Do they not qualify to demand their basic human rights: right to life and liberty, right to dignity? Or are human rights exclusive to the West and its cronies, including Israel?

In a fair world, Israel would not have the patronage and tools to carry out the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinians. They would not have the licence to kill Palestinians, including children; Israel would not have the support

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

A rape victim’s journey to justice should be easier



THE fact that a rape victim’s journey towards justice is a grueling one is not unknown to us. There have been several reports and extensive research in the past identifying causes for such hurdles in rape prosecution, including those that focused on the extremely low rate of conviction in rape cases. Added to those causes is how various levels of justice services often receive victims of sexual offences with utmost suspicion, making the already difficult task of proving the accused’s guilt “beyond all reasonable doubt” further challenging. The suspicion also commonly results in an overwhelming reliance on medical evidence suggesting specific injuries on the victim’s body. This particular aspect came into even greater focus recently when a Nari o Shishu Nirjaton Daman Tribunal decided to acquit all five suspects in the much-discussed Banani Raintree Hotel rape case trial. While it is unclear what exactly had been said by the recently revoked Judge of the Tribunal regarding the suggestion to police to not accept rape cases 72 hours after the incident, there’s no doubt that the concerned Judge was simply following the dominant trend of insisting on the need for medical evidence that indicates signs of violence present on the victim’s body and DNA evidence to corroborate the truthfulness of the victim’s testimony.

Having medical evidence that strongly suggests that the victim

had been subjected to forcible intercourse will surely make it easier for the victim to prove her case. But when there is no such evidence, it should not lead to conclusions of falsity regarding the victim’s complaint. Of course, absence of medical evidence often makes it rather impossible for the occurrence of rape to be proven. In addition, there are also sometimes pointless efforts to gather DNA evidence even in cases where matching the DNA won’t have any impact in proving or disproving rape. DNA evidence would, of course, be essential when the accused has altogether denied the (forced) intercourse. But when both the parties acknowledge that sexual intercourse had happened, then the question that needs to be answered is whether it happened with or

medical examination. To mention a few examples, a rape that happened on gunpoint would most likely be without much resistance from the victim; or a victim might have fainted, seized, or been otherwise threatened with death if she resisted. Similarly, because of prevalent social barriers in accessing justice, when a rape victim files a case after a considerable time has elapsed since the occurrence of the attack, there would most likely be no injury marks found during the medical examination.

Besides, certain special attributes are often attached to the patriarchal portrayal of a rape victim. A victim who belongs to a lesser economic background or is uneducated, has an existing or a past sexual life, or has a lifestyle that does not match

adding insult to injury and as such, unless there are compelling reasons, the court should find no difficulty in acting on the sole testimony of the victim. But unfortunately, such rulings are not consistently followed in rape prosecutions. Rather, because of the inherent suspicion imposed on a rape victim’s complaint, the necessity of corroboration is

often overtly emphasised. The fear embedded by the British colonial jurisprudence, that a rape victim may have falsely accused an innocent man, sadly still influences modern day decisions in rape prosecutions. As Bangladesh prepares to step into the developing country category, it is our sincere hope that, as a nation, we will now positively take

up the plight of the victims of sexual offences and carry them to justice. Together, we need to build a platform for action to break the patriarchal and misogynist narratives around victims of rape who are brave enough to knock on the doors of justice.

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A woman holds up a placard, asking to end the rape culture that is rampant in the country, during a protest in front of Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban in Dhaka.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

without both parties’ consent, and not whether the DNA samples had matched.

This heavy reliance on medical evidence can be largely attributed to the stereotypical understanding of rape, which perceives it to always be a violent and forcible act of sexual intercourse. A “modest and truthful” victim as such, is expected to have resisted the attack with all possible force. This misogynistic perception often brushes over the question of legal consent, which is in fact the key element that needs to be proved in a rape case wherein the occurrence sexual intercourse is not disputable. There can be many contexts wherein the victim may not actively resist the attacker. In some cases, even if she did resist, the injury marks might not be visible during

the traditional image of a “helpless and shunned” victim of rape, such a victim will likely not match the description of “modest and truthful” and hence, the burden of proving her testimony would probably be even heavier.

While we are circling around the age-old misogynistic questions of whether the medical evidence shows injury marks or not, or whether she was “habituated” to sex or not—our Supreme Court had long set the rule in a number of cases that there is no bar for the court to act on the sole testimony of a rape victim except in rarest of rare cases. The Supreme Court had even held onto that to insist on corroboration of the statement of a victim of sexual assault before putting reliance upon the same, as a rule amounts to

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ
কমিশনার এর কার্যালয়
গাজীপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, গাজীপুর।
“দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি”

স্বাক্ষরিত অফিস
মুদ্রা হয়ে কাজ করে

তারিখঃ-২৮/১১/২০২১ খ্রিঃ।

স্মারক নং-গাজীপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ/প্রশাসন/২০২১/২৮৭১/৪

“The Public Procurement Act-2006 & The Public Procurement Regulation-2008/2010” (সংশোধনী-২০১৬) মোতাবেক ২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বছরে গাজীপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশের জন্য রেশন সামগ্রী তয় কোয়ার্টার (জানুয়ারি/২০২২ হতে মার্চ/২০২২ পর্যন্ত) সয়াবিন তৈল, মস্তর ডাল, পরিবহন, গম পেয়াই, পোলাউ’র চাল, জ্বালানী কাঠ, কুলি কাজ এবং চট্টের/গ্রান্সিকের খালি বস্তা নিলামে বিক্রয়ের নিমিত্তে বাংলাদেশের প্রকৃত ব্যবসায়ী/ঠিকাদার/সরবরাহকারী প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরযুক্ত খামে প্রতিযোগীতা মূলক উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র আহ্বান করা যাচ্ছে।

দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি নম্বর :- ০৫/২০২১-২০২২ অর্থ বছর।

১৬. মন্ত্রণালয়/বিভাগ	১৭. সংস্থা	১৮. দরপত্র সম্পাদনকারী প্রধান	১৯. দরপত্রের বিষয়	২০. দরপত্র সূত্র নং ও তারিখ	২১. দরপত্রের পদ্ধতি
১৬. মন্ত্রণালয়/জননিরাপত্তা বিভাগ	১৭. বাংলাদেশ পুলিশ।	১৮. পুলিশ কমিশনার, গাজীপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ।	১৯. সয়াবিন তৈল, মস্তর ডাল, পরিবহন, গম পেয়াই, পোলাউ’র চাল, জ্বালানী কাঠ, কুলি কাজ এবং চট্টের/গ্রান্সিকের খালি বস্তা নিলামে বিক্রয়।	২০. ২৮৭১/৪, তারিখঃ-২৮/১১/২০২১ খ্রিঃ।	২১. উন্মুক্ত দরপত্র পদ্ধতি (OTM)।
২২. বাজেট ও অর্থনৈতিক খাত	২৩. দরপত্র সিডিউল প্রান্তির সর্বশেষ তারিখ	২৪. দরপত্র জমা প্রদানের সর্বশেষ তারিখ ও সময়	২৫. দরপত্র খোলার তারিখ ও সময়	২৬. দরপত্র গ্রান্তির স্থান	২৭. দরপত্র দাখিলের স্থান
২২. রাজস্ব খাত।	২৩. ২৬/১২/২০২১ খ্রিঃ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত।	২৪. ২৭/১২/২০২১ খ্রিঃ তারিখ সময় বেলা ১২.০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত।	২৫. ২৭/১২/২০২১ খ্রিঃ তারিখ সময় বেলা ১২.৩০ ঘটিকায় দরপত্র দাতা বা মনোনীত প্রতিদ্বন্দ্বিতার উপস্থিতিতে যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকেন। দরপত্র সমূহ খোলা হবে।	২৬. (১) পুলিশ কমিশনার এর কার্যালয়, গাজীপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ। (২) পুলিশ সুপারের কার্যালয়, গাজীপুর।	২৭. পুলিশ কমিশনার এর কার্যালয়, গাজীপুর-এ রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাস্কে।
২৮. দরপত্র দাতার যোগ্যতা ও দরপত্রের সহিত যে সকল কাগজপত্র জমা প্রদান করিতে হইবে	২৯. দরপত্র গ্রান্তির স্থান	৩০. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী	৩১. দরপত্র গ্রান্তির স্থান	৩২. দরপত্র গ্রান্তির স্থান	৩৩. দরপত্র গ্রান্তির স্থান
২৮. দরপত্র দাতার যোগ্যতা ও দরপত্রের সহিত যে সকল কাগজপত্র জমা প্রদান করিতে হইবে	২৯. দরপত্র গ্রান্তির স্থান	৩০. দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী	৩১. দরপত্র গ্রান্তির স্থান	৩২. দরপত্র গ্রান্তির স্থান	৩৩. দরপত্র গ্রান্তির স্থান
কাজের বিবরণ					
ক্রম নং	লট নং	কাজের বিবরণ	পরিমাণ (টন)	সিডিউলের মূল্য (জয়েরপ্রযোজ্য)	দরপত্র জামানতের পরিমাণ (ফেরপ্রযোজ্য)
০১.	০১	উন্নতমানের সয়াবিন তৈল	কার্যাদেশ মোতাবেক	১,০০০/-	১,০০,০০০/-
০২.	০২	উন্নতমানের মস্তর ডাল	ঐ	১,০০০/-	১,০০,০০০/-
০৩.	০৩	পরিবহন	ঐ	৫০০/-	৫০,০০০/-
০৪.	০৪	গম পেয়াই	ঐ	৫০০/-	৫০,০০০/-
০৫.	০৫	পোলাউ’র চাল	ঐ	৫০০/-	৫০,০০০/-
০৬.	০৬	জ্বালানী কাঠ	ঐ	৫০০/-	৫০,০০০/-
০৭.	০৭	কুলি কাজ	ঐ	৫০০/-	৫০,০০০/-
০৮.	০৮	চট্টের ও গ্রান্সিকের খালি বস্তা বিক্রয়	ঐ	৫০০/-	৫০,০০০/-

বিশেষ জ্ঞাতব্যঃ

- ঠিকাদার ব্যক্তি বা প্রতিষ্ঠানের স্বত্বাধিকারীর স্বাক্ষরযুক্ত প্যাডে আবেদন পূর্বক বর্ণিত স্থান হতে পরিকায় বিজ্ঞাপন প্রকাশের তারিখ হতে ২৬/১২/২০২১ খ্রিঃ তারিখ অফিস চলাকালীন সময় পর্যন্ত দরপত্র সিডিউল জমা/সমগ্র্য করা যাবে।
- সর্বক্ষেত্রে প্রচলিত দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট আইন-২০০৬ ও দি পাবলিক প্রকিউরমেন্ট রেগুলেশন-২০০৮/২০১০ (সংশোধনী-২০১৬) বিধিমালা অনুসরণ করা হবে।
- দরপত্র সিডিউলে অন্যান্য শর্তাবলী বিস্তারিতভাবে বর্ণনা করা হবে।
- দরপত্রদাতা সিডিউলে বর্ণিত সকল শর্তাবলী অবশ্যই পালন করতে হবে।
- নির্ধারিত তারিখ ও সময়ের পর সিডিউল বিক্রয় এবং দরপত্র গ্রহণ করা হবে না।
- কোন কারণ বশতঃ দরপত্র খোলার দিন অফিস বন্ধ থাকলে পরবর্তী কার্য দিবসে একই সময়ে ও নিয়মে দরপত্র গ্রহণ ও খোলা হবে।
- দরপত্র আহ্বানকারী কর্তৃপক্ষ যে কোন কারণ দর্শানো ব্যতিরেকে যে কোন অথবা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল বা গ্রহণের ক্ষমতা সংরক্ষণ করেন।

২৮/১১/২১

(ফারজানা ইসলাম)

বিপি-৭৮০৬১১৪২২৪

উপ-পুলিশ কমিশনার (সিভিলিয়ন এন্ড ট্রাণ্সপোর্ট)

পেছ/পুলিশ কমিশনার

গাজীপুর মেট্রোপলিটন পুলিশ, গাজীপুর।

GD-2182