

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

# The need for global unity for the Palestinian cause



**Mohammad Auwal**  
is professor of communication studies at California State University, Los Angeles.

MOHAMMAD AUWAL

In the wake of Israel's devastating attacks on Gaza, a powerful global movement has emerged reshaping the previously skewed narrative of the Israel-Palestine conflict. This movement, marked by international solidarity for Palestinian liberation, is not just a reaction to the current crisis but also a response, and a collective resistance to a long history of oppression of the Palestinians by the state of Israel. Since 1967, when Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza, numerous grassroots organisations have formed, sowing the seeds for a broader global activism against occupation.

This year, social media platforms have played a pivotal role in this movement, challenging the bias in the Western countries and Western media. Young Palestinian journalists such as Motaz Aziza, Plestia Alaqad, Hind Khoudary, to name a few, have been relentlessly documenting and exposing the cruel ground reality on social media. Hashtags such as #FreePalestine and #BoycottDivestSanction (BDS) have spread like wildfire, transforming the

People are looking back at history to see the systematic trend of oppression that underlines the foundation of today's glaring injustice. For example, the Gaza assaults in 2008-2009 and 2014, and the Sheikh Jarrah incident in 2021, have intensified global activism. The Sheikh Jarrah crisis involved the threatened eviction of Palestinian families in East Jerusalem by Israeli settlers, leading to legal disputes, protests, and international focus on issues of land rights and Palestinian residency. Tensions in Sheikh Jarrah also contributed to heightened violence in Jerusalem and the Gaza conflict in May 2021.

Personal stories have also come to the forefront of the solidarity movement over the years. Malak Mattar, a Gaza artist, depicted life during the 2014 attacks. Muhammad al-Durrah, a 12-year-old Palestinian killed in 2000, symbolised children's plight in conflict. Rachel Corrie, a US activist, was bulldozed to death in 2003 while protesting home demolitions. Their stories highlight decades of civilian suffering and the resilience of activism.

**The movement for Palestinian rights faces challenges from the pro-Israel lobby, which often accuses activists, especially those involved in the BDS Movement, of anti-Semitism. These accusations contribute to a contentious atmosphere, impeding advocacy efforts. John Mearsheimer, a distinguished University of Chicago professor of international relations, highlights how claims of anti-Semitism are strategically employed to suppress discussions on Zionism in Western contexts, coining the term "the great silencer" to describe this phenomenon.**

Palestinian struggle from a distant issue to a globally relatable cause.

The movement marks a wide reckoning with the history of the colonial regime that is behind the unabated genocide of Palestinians.

This time, Israel's indiscriminate bombings of Gaza's civilian infrastructure, resulting in over 15,000 deaths including more than 10,000 women and children and over 101 UN staff, as per Al Jazeera,

has sparked global protests calling for an immediate ceasefire. This international community now sees no alternative to restoring Palestinian rights, addressing Gaza's humanitarian needs, and establishing a two-state solution.

In the UK, the Palestinian Solidarity Campaign (PSC) leads the way in advocating for Palestinian rights, while in the US, Jewish Voice

polices, highlights that criticism of Israel's actions is a matter of human rights advocacy rather than anti-Semitism. This coalition of diverse organisations, including IfNotNow and Friends of Al-Aqsa (FOA), underlines the inclusive nature of the movement, uniting various groups in a common goal of justice and human rights for Palestinians.

Activist Lucas Febraro, DiEM25's

those involved in the BDS Movement, of anti-Semitism. These accusations contribute to a contentious atmosphere, impeding advocacy efforts. John Mearsheimer, a distinguished University of Chicago professor of international relations, has critically addressed this dynamic. In his book, *The Great Delusion: Liberal Dreams and International Realities*, Mearsheimer highlights

escalating pressure from these groups. The culmination of this pressure coerced him into embarking on a high-profile visit to Israel's Gaza war front, where he appeared alongside Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, semiotically endorsing Israel.

This situation not only spotlights the substantial influence wielded by pro-Israel lobbies, but also accentuates the intricate challenges that public figures face in navigating such politically charged environments. Musk's transformation from a sympathiser of Palestinian rights to a prominent advocate for Israeli perspectives reveals the profound sociopolitical dynamics in play. It illuminates how influential lobbying groups can shape and manipulate public discourse surrounding the Israel-Palestine conflict, exerting their impact even on globally renowned figures like Musk.

Recent protests in Tel Aviv against Netanyahu's government reflect further the growing internal dissent within Israel. Sparked by the government's handling of the Hamas attacks, these protests underscore the diverse and often conflicting opinions within Israeli society. In Tel Aviv, several thousand protesters, including relatives and friends of some of the captives, chanted, "Bring them home now." Take for example, Maoz Inon, the son of Bilha and Yakobi, who were murdered in the Hamas attacks. Inon said in protest, "Unless the Western governments stop supporting Netanyahu the war will never end. So I am crying to the world, don't support Netanyahu, don't send us weapons." These often unheard perspectives from inside Israel show the need for solidarity with humanity, and illuminates the blatant politics driving the current genocide.

Today's global solidarity movement transcends mere political activism; it embodies a deeply human response to a long-standing conflict. It represents a collective call for justice, equality, and human rights, transcending national and religious divides. As the movement continues to grow, it holds the promise of significantly influencing future diplomatic and policy discussions, advocating for a peaceful resolution. It is imperative that we keep up the momentum to call for a permanent ceasefire.



Since 1967, when Israel occupied the West Bank and Gaza, numerous grassroots organisations have formed, sowing the seeds for a broader global activism against occupation.

PHOTO: REUTERS

for Peace (JVP) has been instrumental in keeping the Palestinian cause at the forefront of public discourse. Alongside them, organisations such as American Muslims for Palestine (AMP) and the European Coordination of Committees and Associations for Palestine (ECCP) have contributed significantly to maintaining momentum and visibility for the movement.

Jewish groups, such as JVP, have been active participants in the solidarity movement. Their engagement, notably in supporting initiatives like the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) Movement and opposing Israeli

director of communications, challenges Germany's stance on the Israel-Palestine conflict. He condemns support for "un speakable crimes" against Palestinians, rejects past atrocities justifying present injustice, and risks his career to oppose government violence. Febraro and activists like him redefine the debate, emphasising speaking out against oppression and advocating for humanist values, contributing to a global conversation on justice and equality.

However, the movement for Palestinian rights faces challenges from the pro-Israel lobby, which often accuses activists, especially

how claims of anti-Semitism are strategically employed to suppress discussions on Zionism in Western contexts, coining the term "the great silencer" to describe this phenomenon. Mearsheimer's insights reveal the complex ways in which these accusations influence and often hinder open discourse on the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Business tycoon Elon Musk's experience vividly illustrates the proactive strategies frequently deployed by pro-Israel lobbies. When Musk openly expressed sympathy for Palestinians, he found himself embroiled in accusations of anti-Semitism, and was subjected to

## How to make humanities great again

**Asmat Islam**  
is lecturer at Jagannath University and visiting assistant professor of ethics at North South University (NSU).

ASMAT ISLAM

In the QS World University Rankings 2023 by subject, universities in Bangladesh have not achieved a high position in the arts and humanities categories. This clearly shows our recurring failure in cultivating the importance of studying foundational subjects within our education system—a cause for concern indeed.

But through the multidisciplinary approach of humanities in Bangladesh, this branch of subjects can significantly contribute to a flourishing education system. In order to achieve this, we can look back to the golden era of humanities in 1971 in the Indian subcontinent. To receive a high ranking, students should blend the fundamental humanities courses—such as history, philosophy, religion, linguistics, literature, etc—with the Bangladeshi setting.

What factors contribute to the greater popularity and success of humanities subjects in affluent countries compared to resource-poor ones? Renowned universities in the United States have consistently achieved high rankings due to a confluence of factors, including their esteemed reputation and prominence, distinguished professors and abundant resources, interdisciplinary approach, and extensive international influence. To provide more clarification, these universities have demonstrated notable proficiency in attaining the measures pertaining to humanities, including academic

reputation, employer reputation, faculty-student ratio, citations per article, and h-index.

An overarching question is, given our low resource environments, how can Bangladeshi institutions meet the requirements to be included in such humanities rankings? It might be detrimental to believe that Bangladeshi universities and Western universities would benefit from the same stimulators. That is, in order to benefit from the humanities in our situation, we

to regaining a strong sense of nationalistic pride and a craving to shape a unique *deshi* identity by promoting the essence of Bangladesh's culture, heritage, history, language, literature, and so forth. Moreover, there was presumed tension in our political climate—which often circulated around topics such as social justice, human rights, and equality. Social movements and student activism prioritised solving these issues to promote progressive ideas. That is, there was an applied necessity or

comprehensive understanding of a topic. Collaborating across disciplines promotes the sharing of concepts and approaches by taking Bangladeshi context specific requirements into account.

Moreover, diverse academic disciplines provide distinct viewpoints and resources to the table, which stimulates creative problem solving and thinking. The creation of new theories or frameworks might result from this cross pollination, which can stimulate creativity. Organisations and funding agencies are coming to understand the importance of transdisciplinary research. Research efforts that are thorough and creative are likely to receive higher support when they are collaborative and incorporate numerous disciplines, since they may attract more funding.

Understanding culture is frequently essential in the humanities. With multidisciplinary methodologies, academics may investigate cultural phenomena from several perspectives, leading to a more sensitive and nuanced knowledge of various cultures and communities. Approaching multidisciplinary aspects in humanities is an untouched area that we should explore more seriously.

need to take a moment to consider our constraints.

We must reflect on our golden age of this field, which was around the time Bangladesh was founded. Humanities was not only an academic pursuit but also something that appealed to the understanding of the nature of a good life. Studying humanities, if we look back to the history of our country, we notice that the branch of subjects in the 1970s was the most popular in just-born Bangladesh.

At that time, studying humanities was closely connected

aspect of studying humanities.

Nevertheless, in the era of technological revolution, we possess an erroneous sense that humanities is disconnected with life and technological advancements. This also indicates that, given the fragilities in our educational system, a multidisciplinary approach is desperately needed. In the humanities, such an approach combines ideas and techniques from many fields to provide a more thorough grasp of complicated problems. Through the integration of diverse disciplinary viewpoints, scholars can cultivate a more



VISUAL: EHSANUR RAZA RONNY

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh  
Office of the Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer

Kanaighat, Sylhet

Email:kanaighat@uhfpo.dghs.gov.bd

Ref No. UHC/Kanaighat/MSR/2023-24/814

Date: 28-11-2023

### e-Tender Notice

This is an online Tender, where only e-Tenders will be accepted in e-GP Portal and no offline/ Hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-tender, please register on e-GP system portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>), For more details, please contact support desk contract numbers.

e-Tender are invited in e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) by Dr. Subol Chandro Bormon, UH&FPO, Upazila Health Complex, Kanaighat, Sylhet for the Procurement of:

Tender Id	Name of Goods	Tender/Proposal Last Selling Date & Time	Tender/Proposal Closing/Opening Date & Time
913066	Procurement of Medicine for the F.Y 2023-2024 at Kanaighat Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	13-December-2023 11:00	13-December-2023 12:00
913067	Procurement of Medical Equipment for the F.Y 2023-2024 at Kanaighat Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	13-December-2023 11:00	13-December-2023 12:00
913068	Procurement of Gauge, Bandage, Cotton etc for the F.Y 2023-2024 at Kanaighat Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	13-December-2023 11:00	13-December-2023 12:00
913069	Procurement of Linen for the F.Y 2023-2024 at Kanaighat Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	13-December-2023 11:00	13-December-2023 12:00
913070	Procurement of Chemical Reagents for the F.Y 2023-2024 at Kanaighat Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	13-December-2023 11:00	13-December-2023 12:00
913071	Procurement of Furniture for the F.Y 2023-2024 at Kanaighat Upazila Health Complex, Sylhet.	13-December-2023 11:00	13-December-2023 12:00

e-Tender details can be downloaded on e-GP system portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for pursuer.

e-Tender will be accepted only as stated in above list; accepted tenders will be opened online immediate as stated in above list.

20/11/2023

(Dr. Subol Chandro Bormon)  
Upazila Health & Family Planning Officer  
Kanaighat, Sylhet.

GD-1840