

Gazans remain collateral damage

Tehran's latest move will only help 'Bibi' continue his murder spree



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Benjamin "Bibi" Netanyahu is seemingly a bloodthirsty warmonger, hell-bent on continuing the Gaza offensive, ignoring the whole world. Why?

Israel's military and political establishment, particularly under the leadership of Netanyahu, has metamorphosed into a monstrous entity the world can't control. Netanyahu has embraced the most extreme forces, the Israeli orthodox hardliners, to stay in power. He is now using Hamas' terrorist acts to justify his actions of genocidal proportions.

The roots of this monstrosity go back to Britain's infamous Balfour Declaration of 1917 wherein it pledged support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine. This fateful declaration, driven by imperial ambitions and strategic calculations, laid the groundwork for the creation of Israel—a nation born out of Europe's guilt-consciousness for persecuting the Jews.

The birth of Israel through

the United Nations vote in 1947 to partition the British mandate of Palestine into two states—one Jewish, one Arab—inflicted an indelible wound on the Arabs. About 700,000 Palestinians had to leave their homeland. Israel occupied almost 85 percent of the land. It was a Nakba, or "catastrophe," for Palestine, the most traumatic event in its modern history. Those who remained in Israel became minorities in ghettos like those of the Jews in Nazi Germany.

Israel fought a series of wars against the neighbouring Arab countries. It received unconditional Western support each time, making it stronger and more aggressive. The degree of violence inflicted on the Palestinians also intensified. More and more Arab land was taken over for Jewish settlements, restricting the Palestinians in two enclaves: the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), born in 1964 to fight Israel for Palestinian rights, became prominent but later

accepted the Oslo Peace Accord in 1993. However, it lost much of its earlier prominence as the Israeli establishment didn't follow the agreed-upon path to peace and the "two-state solution."

Hamas, originally an Islamic charity, was nurtured by Israel to counter the PLO. Hamas has controlled Gaza since 2006, while

and Nazi." Thus, hardline Israelis became stronger at the cost of the moderates who backed Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's signing of the peace agreement with PLO's Yasser Arafat. Rabin was assassinated after delivering a speech at a peace rally in November 1995.

Over the decades since its birth,



FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

Netanyahu must continue the war for his survival because he draws power from his coalition of religious zealots and hawkish ideologues.

PLO became confined within the West Bank. Hamas turned down the peace move and adopted suicide bombings and other violent means, making it convenient for Israeli hardliners to reject the Accord. Netanyahu led demonstrators carrying Rabin's mock coffin, calling him a "traitor, murderer,

Israel morphed into a behemoth of military might and a political untouchable—a concept that no one can question. This has given rise to a power block in Israel, which is accountable to none for its actions towards the Arabs.

Some Arab groups such as the PLO, on the other hand, resorted to

clandestine warfare and terrorism, which some call "weapons of the weak." Israel, as was expected, retaliated with full force on the whole Arab population, including women, children, and refugees in other countries. The result was incidents such as the massacres in Sabra and Shatila refugee camps in Lebanon in 1982, and many others.

But it is all good for Israel's hardliners because these are strengthening their position in the country's power game and practically killing the so-called "two-state solution" option.

Netanyahu must continue the war for his survival because he draws power from his coalition of religious zealots and hawkish ideologues. His governing coalition holds a fragile majority, with 64 seats in the 120-seat parliament. Days after Hamas' surprise attack on October 7, some of Netanyahu's centrist rivals joined him to form a broader emergency government and bolster his small war cabinet. However, they did not sign any coalition agreements saying they would leave the government at their will. That means Netanyahu must keep them happy by continuing the war to stay in power. Meanwhile, he faced trials for fraud, bribery, and breach of trust in three cases filed in 2019. If he is convicted, these cases could result in up to 10 years in jail and/or a fine. It will be much more difficult for him to deal with these

without being in power.

When Netanyahu was mulling over his next move in Gaza in the face of global pressure to stop the indiscriminate attacks on civilians, Tehran made an unprecedented move. Until now using only proxies such as Hezbollah in Lebanon to attack Israeli interests, it launched more than 300 missiles and drones targeting Israel on April 13. It was a "retaliation" against an Israeli strike on the Iranian consulate in Syria that had killed two Iranian generals. Israel intercepted most of the missiles midair with US assistance, so no actual harm was done except wounding a Bedouin girl in Southern Israel.

But Tehran's move helped Netanyahu in several ways. First, it made it easier for him to seek more US military assistance. Second, it bolstered confidence in the Israeli Defence Force (IDF), which suffered serious damage to its reputation after the October 7 security breach. Third, its missile defence system proved effective in stalling such attacks. On the other hand, Iran's real capability to harm Israel in conventional warfare is put into question. All these have strengthened Netanyahu's political position.

Iran has done Bibi a big favour and the Gazans—who will remain collateral damage—a disservice. The possibility of a wider war is now more real.

A feminist approach to climate solutions



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Participation in climate and environmental decision-making is a human right, and the equal participation of people of all genders generates outcomes that are more effective and sustainable. Yet, women are under-represented in decision-making in the landscape of climate negotiations, recent data sheds light on the persistent challenge of achieving gender balance within the UNFCCC space. There are 132 UNFCCC decisions regarding gender, with 54 of them specifically referencing gender balance in decision-making processes. Still, gender balance in the UNFCCC sphere continues to fall short. At COP28, there were 34 percent of women across all national delegations, compared to 31 percent at COP14 in 2008. Only two percent of the delegations at COP28 had an equal number of men and women, while 79 percent of delegations had more men than women. These statistics underscore the ongoing disparity in women's participation in climate negotiations, emphasising the pressing need for more concerted efforts to promote gender balance and inclusivity within the UNFCCC framework.

Women, girls, and gender minorities often bear the brunt of climate change impacts, facing limited access to resources and decision-making power, carrying out caregiving duties during crises, and intersecting vulnerabilities with socioeconomic status. Women's empowerment in climate action involves ensuring their representation in decision-making structures, thus allowing them to contribute their unique knowledge and expertise on climate change. Women's participation in developing funding criteria, allocating resources, and shaping innovative technologies is vital for creating adaptive, appropriate, and sustainable solutions. It is essential to mainstream gender perspectives into national policies, sustainable development plans, and climate interventions to benefit all.

Integration of women's voices and recognising of their agency and leadership in climate governance at local and national levels should be promoted. This needs to happen at global climate discussions and within the private sector. The empowerment of Indigenous and local women in climate leadership roles needs to be supported. It will be a step in the direction of localisation. To enhance conservation efforts and achieve better climate outcomes,



ILLUSTRATION: BIPOLO CHAKRABORTY

It is crucial to promote locally led initiatives for adaptation, with women's participation ensured. It is essential to integrate gender into these operations, ensuring that the transitions in energy; agriculture, food, water, and land; cities; transport; and manufacturing benefit women and men. Women cannot start green businesses or get green jobs if they are tied down with care work. The lack of affordable childcare is also a hindrance. The gaps in ownership of assets and access to finance impact the efforts to boost resilience and adaptive capacity in gender-sensitive ways. Economic disparities intersect with climate injustices, with low-income communities lacking resources for adaptation while wealthier individuals can afford resilient infrastructure.

We need to prioritise resilience focusing on gender-sensitive approaches and initiatives. ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) involves women in disaster risk management efforts, such as the Women-led Emergency Group (WLEG), which has led responses during disasters since the late 1980s. AAB has supported women's access to Climate Resilience Sustainable Agriculture (CRSA) practices for climate resilience for decades. Bangladesh has created an example of women-led emergency response and adaptation by communities.

Intersectionality is a critical framework for understanding the multifaceted nature of social identities and power structures, recognising that individuals experience overlapping systems of oppression and privilege based on various aspects of their identity, such

as race, gender, class, sexuality, and ability. Applying intersectionality to climate activism reveals how environmental issues intersect with social injustices, highlighting the disproportionate impacts of climate change on marginalised communities. Environmental racism, for example, refers to the disproportionate siting of pollution and hazardous waste facilities in marginalised communities, where industrial plants and landfills are often located near low-income neighbourhoods inhabited by racial minorities, resulting in higher rates of pollution-related health issues and vulnerability to climate-related disasters, as seen in the Dalit community in Bangladesh.

Indigenous communities, deeply connected to the land, suffer disproportionate impacts, highlighting the importance of Indigenous knowledge and rights in conservation efforts amidst broader issues of colonisation and systemic injustice. Lastly, people with disabilities face unique challenges in climate-related disasters, necessitating inclusive emergency planning and infrastructure to address accessibility barriers and health conditions exacerbated by environmental changes.

Feminist approaches are put across the discussion on debt and tax from a feminist and climate justice perspective, funding at the nexus of climate and gender, alternatives to the extractive obsession with economic growth, and ways to advance the structural transformation of our economic and financial systems. Patriarchy, entrenched gender inequalities, and traditional power

structures inhibit the effectiveness of feminist approaches by limiting women's access to decision-making processes, resources, and opportunities to influence climate policies and interventions. Moreover, limited awareness of the gendered dimensions of climate change among policymakers, practitioners, and community members, coupled with insufficient capacity to implement feminist approaches effectively, further complicates efforts to address the differential impacts of climate change on various gender groups. Additionally, resistance to gender equality initiatives stemming from traditional attitudes and patriarchal norms presents a significant barrier to progress toward more inclusive and equitable climate solutions. Furthermore, limited data and research on the gendered impacts of climate change pose challenges to the development of evidence-based policies and interventions that effectively address the needs of diverse gender groups.

However, despite these challenges, feminist approaches offer significant opportunities for driving positive change. Empowering women and marginalised gender groups, enabling their meaningful participation in decision-making processes, and ensuring equitable access to resources

and opportunities are crucial steps toward enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts. By mainstreaming gender considerations into climate policies and frameworks, feminist approaches can promote synergies between gender equality, climate action, and sustainable development, leading to more integrated and effective policy responses. Moreover, feminist approaches have the potential to catalyse broader social transformation towards more equitable and sustainable societies by challenging patriarchal norms, promoting gender equality, and addressing systemic injustices.

Collaboration between government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and grassroots organisations are essential for advancing climate and gender justice. By investing in evidence-based policy advocacy, capacity building, and community engagement, NGOs can integrate feminist perspectives into climate change planning processes and empower marginalised voices in decision-making related to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Leveraging strong partnerships with governments, international organisations, and diverse stakeholders enables NGOs to promote women's leadership, foster

gender-responsive approaches to climate action, and advocate for the implementation of gender-sensitive policies and programs. Additionally, collaboration with grassroots and local organisations facilitates the implementation of context-specific, community-driven climate solutions, enhances local resilience, and ensures that climate action is inclusive and equitable.

We need policymakers, movers, and shakers (both nationally and globally) to consider funding locally-led Gender Just Climate Solutions; ensuring gender responsiveness of climate finance; understanding the imperative of financing SRHR for climate justice; prioritising the vision of economic justice by young women, indigenous communities, and address poverty in its multifaceted dimension; making the new Loss and Damage Fund gender-responsive; and decentralising and empowering local government as well as communities, especially women and youth.

By working together, governments, NGOs, and grassroots organisations can leverage their unique strengths, expertise, and resources to implement sustainable practices, raise awareness, and influence policy decisions effectively, ultimately contributing to a more just, equitable, and sustainable future for all.

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e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP system portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of works as mentioned in the following table:

| Tender ID No | Name of Work | Last Selling Date & Time | Tender Closing Date and Time |
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| 974610 | Supply & Installation Work of 2 Nos-150 KVA Automatic Voltage Regulators (AVR) to Solve The Voltage Fluctuation Problem of VRF AC Installed at Level-18 & 20 of Probashi Kallyan Bhaban Under The Wage Earners' Welfare Board. | 05-05-2024 5:00 PM | 06-05-2024 11:59AM |

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