

London police under fire for banning pro-Palestine march outside BBC



Pro-Palestinian protesters holding banners in support of Palestine gather in front of the BBC Portland Place London, United Kingdom on February 03, 2024. (Photo by Anadolu)

London, January 12 (RHC)-- Britain's pro-Palestinian groups have condemned London's Metropolitan police for preventing a pro-Palestine rally outside the BBC headquarters from going ahead as scheduled on January 18th.

Six pro-Palestinian groups organizing the national Palestine marches, and supported by at least 150 high-profile individuals and organizations, including Liberty, Amnesty International UK, and Greenpeace, took the Metropolitan to task.

In a joint statement issued on Friday, they said the agency is misusing public order powers to shield the BBC from public scrutiny over fake news published about the ongoing Israeli genocidal war against the Gaza Strip.

The BBC's coverage of Gaza has failed to portray Palestinian suffering adequately, according to the protest organizers who view the marches as an important opportunity to hold the British broadcasters accountable for their pro-Israeli bias.

"The route for the march was confirmed with the police nearly two months ago and as agreed with them, was publicly announced on November 30 ... With just over a week to go, the Metropolitan Police is?reneging on the agreement and has stated its intention to prevent the protest from going ahead as planned.

"The BBC is a major institution?– it is a publicly-funded state broadcaster?and is rightly accountable to the public. The police should not be misusing public order powers to shield the BBC from democratic scrutiny," the statement said.

The statement was signed by dozens of British parliamentarians, and cultural figures, including actors, academics and trade union activists. Labour, Independent, Green, Plaid Cymru, Sinn Fein and SNP lawmakers signed the statement.

Jeremy Corbyn, Diane Abbott, musician Brian Eno, and actors Mark Rylance and Maxine Peake were among the signatories of the statement, in addition to PCS general secretary Fran Heathcote, RMT General Secretary Mick Lynch, the NEU's Daniel Kebede, FBU leader Matt Wrack, and trade union leader Dave Ward.

The statement condemned attempts to link the pro-Palestinian protests to anti-Jewish sentiment as "false and dangerous."

Right-wing news channels and right-wing British publications have been making efforts to portray pro-Palestinian protesters as anti-Semitic, according to a study finding significant distortions in the Western coverage of the Gaza war.

The study reports pro-Palestinian voices facing misrepresentation and vilification by UK media outlets, with allegations of anti-Semitism and terrorism applied to discredit legitimate advocacy efforts. "Muslim opposition to Israel has been framed as anti-Semitic by some publications and commentators," the study has said.

Since October 2023, the Israeli regime forces have cut off water, food, medicine, and electricity to Gaza while pounding the blockaded Palestinians from the air, ground, and sea, relentlessly targeting homes, tents and hospitals.

According to Gaza's health ministry, more than 46,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, have been killed since the beginning of the war on October 7, 2023.

[SOURCE: PRESS TV and NEWS AGENCIES]

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