

Columbia University in New York City suspends more than 65 students after pro-Palestinian protest



Pro-Palestinian protesters are escorted out of Columbia University's Butler Library after being arrested by the police on May 7, 2025. (Photo by AFP)

New York, May 10 (RHC)-- Columbia University has suspended over 65 students following a pro-Palestinian protest that had unfolded at the seat of learning's Butler Library. The Wednesday demonstration had led to 80 arrests, university officials confirmed on Friday.

According to a university spokesperson, the 65-plus students involved in the protest were now under "interim suspension," while an ongoing investigation was taking place.

Furthermore, a total of 33 individuals from affiliated schools have been barred from the university's Morningside Heights campus. Alumni who had participated in the protest have also been restricted from returning to the campus.

The protest saw a group of activists enter Butler Library, the main library at the university. Eyewitnesses and social media videos showed security personnel strongly confronting the protesters, many of whom were wearing keffiyehs, a traditional headscarf associated with Palestinians. As the demonstration intensified, the library was reportedly occupied.

Various American universities have been witnessing such protests denouncing a war of genocide that has been waged against the Gaza Strip by the Israeli regime -- Washington's closest ally across the West Asia region -- since October 2023.

Participants have been voicing shock and resentment concerning the war that has so far claimed the lives of around 52,800 Palestinians, mostly women and children. They have also lambasted the unfaltering American support that the warfare has been receiving in the form of military aid and political patronage.

'University plays 'anti-Semitism' card'

American officials have, however, been trying to accuse the pro-Palestinian campaigners as "anti-Semites." Commenting on the suspensions, Acting President Claire Shipman rehashed the claim, saying the university "unequivocally rejects anti-Semitism and all other forms of," what she called, "harassment and discrimination."

As a means of cracking down harder on such demonstrations, Columbia has allowed federal immigration agents on campus. Columbia's administration has also claimed that such protest actions disrupted the university's "academic environment" and "violated university policies."

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