

Birmingham University students triumph in misconduct case over pro-Palestine protests

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Mariyah Ali and Antonia Listrat (File photo by The Tab)

London, June 7 (RHC)-- The University of Birmingham has dismissed allegations against students Mariyah Ali and Antonia Listrat, following a year-long battle against racially charged accusations stemming from their Palestine solidarity protests.

The University of Birmingham's Misconduct and Fitness to Practise Committee found no evidence of wrongdoing against Ali and Listrat after a defense and legal support from the European Legal Support Centre (ELSC), ELSC reported on Saturday.

"For nearly a year, both faced distressing disciplinary proceedings solely for protesting the university's complicity in the ongoing genocide in Gaza," ELSC said.

It added that the allegations were rooted in Islamophobic and racialized stereotypes, unfairly portraying Palestine solidarity as "threatening" or "intimidating" dissent.

According to the ELSC, the current case reflected a "broader" and "well-documented" pattern of UK universities weaponizing disciplinary procedures to suppress Palestine solidarity, disproportionately targeting Muslim and racialized students.

"These institutions have increasingly aligned themselves with UK government policies that fund, arm, and politically support the mass killing of Palestinians," it highlighted.

ELSC noted that through investments, research partnerships, and political alliances, universities like Birmingham have become complicit in sustaining the siege and violence, turning campuses away from critical inquiry toward institutional repression and political compliance.

In a statement following the dismissal of allegations, Ali said the "unnecessarily distressing" and "drawn-out" process which lasted for 11 months has taken a serious toll on both her and Antonia's academic and personal wellbeing.

Despite the challenges faced, Ali affirmed that they remain committed to their activism and will not be deterred. "The University of Birmingham attempted to punish us for protesting its complicity in the genocide of Palestinians—yet, it lost. Every single allegation was found to be baseless and unproven.

"Your attempts to silence us have failed. The student movement for Palestine is growing stronger, and we will not stop until there is full disclosure, divestment, and the protection of our right to speak out," she noted.

Listrat also said protesting is "an integral part of campus life" that signifies a "healthy and progressive society."

"Enabling genocide and profiting from human rights violations is quite a violent stance that the University of Birmingham has taken. Funding genocide is violent; protesting genocide is peaceful," Listrat added.

The targeting of the students is part of a wider crackdown on pro-Palestine activism across the world in the wake of the Israeli regime's genocidal war in Gaza, where more than 54,700 Palestinians have been killed by the Israeli regime since the war began 20 months ago.

In the UK, at least 28 universities have reportedly disciplined more than 113 students for activism.



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