

# NEWS LETTER

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We know too well that our freedom is incomplete without the freedom of the Palestinians.

Nelson Mandela

**Editor in Chief:** Dr. M. Ejaz Sandhu

**Editor:** Muhammad Firas Shams

**Designer:** Tabinda Naz

## Highlights

➤ From the Desk of Chairman

## Focus Areas

- Think Tank Wing
- Research and Consultancy Wing
- Education and Learning Wing
- Knowledge Management Wing
- Finance and Administrative Wing



**Shahid Javed Burki**  
**Chairman**

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute  
of Public Policy at NetSol

## The Ongoing Hamas-Israel Conflict and its Impact on the Muslim World

On October 7, 2023, fighters allied with the group called Hamas that runs Gaza attacked several places in Israel. They were able to break through the barrier Israel had erected which was believed to be impregnable. Some penetrated Israel using paragliders. The attacks left some 1,200 Israelis dead. As they withdrew to Gaza, the Hamas

soldiers took more than 200 hostages with them, some of them Americans. Israel promised reprisal, it started an intense bombing that killed thousands of Palestinians.

That the restless citizens of Gaza were desperate to find relief for their deteriorating situation had begun to be recognized by the leaders of the Arab world. Addressing the U.N. General Assembly, King Abdullah II of Jordan, said, "Without clarity on where the Palestinians' future lies, it will be impossible to converge on a political solution to this conflict. Five million Palestinians live under occupation – no civil rights; no freedom of mobility; no say in their lives." And recently, Egyptian intelligence had warned that something would give unless there was hope from which the Palestinians could draw some comfort.

"Pro-Palestinians demonstrations reverberated across the globe and in the United States on Friday (October 13), after a former Hamas leader called for a worldwide 'day of rage' in the wake of a Hamas attack and in Israel that sparked the worst conflict in the region in 50 years," wrote Tim Craig and his colleagues in a report published by the Washington Post on October 14, 2023.

The Center on Extremism at the Jewish organization, Anti-Defamation League, said that at least 140 protests were counted around the United States. The United Nations described a ground evacuation as a potentially "calamitous" human rights crisis amid the deteriorating security situation in the area. The United States and world economies were likely to feel the consequences of the Hamas-Israeli conflict. According to JPMorgan chief executive Jamie Dimon, "this may be the most dangerous time the world has seen in decades." He issued a statement accompanying the bank's report on quarterly earnings. He warned of "far reaching impacts on energy and food markets, global

trade and geopolitical relationships" if the war intensified.

Globalization or world connectivity has meant that what happens in one part of the world affects in one way or the other several other parts. This may be the case for the current conflict between Israelis and the Palestinians. It is very likely that some countries in the Muslim world might be drawn into the conflict. This was the fear that made the Biden administration to undertake high level missions to several Middle Eastern countries. Secretary of State Antony Blinken went to Egypt and Saudi Arabia and then spent seven hours with the members of the Israeli cabinet. In Jerusalem, he reminded his hosts of his Jewish ancestry. President Biden followed his Secretary of States to Israel.

According to Paul Krugman, the Nobel Prize winning economist, domestic political turmoil in the United States has negatively affected its ability to weigh in on international affairs. "Given this political reality, how much can any nation trust U.S. assurances? How can we expect foreign enemies of democracy to fear America when they know that there are powerful forces here that share their disdain. Yes, the Pax Americana is in decline. But the problem isn't lack of toughness at the top. It's the enemy within." The enemy within that Krugman had in mind was the sharp political divisions in the United States. These divisions are reflected in the way the Americans are looking at the Israeli-Hamas conflict.

Although the Muslims have about the same number as the Jews in America, their political and economic influence is not significant. This difference has not attracted the attention of analysts who study how various ethnic and religious groups impact the American society.



**Shahid Najam**  
**Vice Chairman**

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute  
of Public Policy at NetSol

## War on Gaza

The historical structural deficit in the decision-making process of UN, susceptible to the manipulation of the five veto exercising countries in the Security Council, has once again exposed the ineffectiveness of UN. The UN General Assembly, 19 days into the brutal massacre, passed a resolution on 26 Oct 2023, calling for an "immediate, durable and sustained humanitarian truce leading to cessation of hostilities" with a thumping majority of 120 votes in favor, 14 against and 45 abstentions. The UN Security Council, was stalled by the US and finally adopted a resolution 2712 (2023) on 15 Nov by a vote of 12 in favor to none against, with 3 abstentions (Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States) for urgent and extended humanitarian pauses and corridors through the Gaza Strip to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Israel, however, continued with air, ground and sea assaults against Hamas killing innocent civilians (more than 15,000) including women and children (more than 10,000). A ceasefire agreement between Israeli government and Hamas was, thereafter effected through primarily the mediation of Qatari government and Egypt to allow for a prisoners' exchange and delivery of humanitarian assistance on November 24, extended till Friday 1 Dec morning. More than 300 Palestinians out of thousands incarcerated by Israel without fair trial and 100

hostages out of 240 held by Hamas on 7 Oct, have been exchanged during the seven-day truce. Israel resumed its deadly aerial bombardment and collective punishment of the civilians immediately on expiry of the truce.

The lack of an effective response of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) and the Arab countries has been deplorable. It took 10 days for OIC to "strongly condemn" Israel. OIC subsequently held a summit on 13 Nov as late as 5 weeks into the war to reject Israel's brutal actions on the pretext of self-defense and condemn "Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip, war crimes and barbaric and inhumane massacres by the occupation government". The summit presented just a semblance of unity and issued a watered-down communique reflecting the huge differences among the key players. These countries could have undertaken at least the following measures to stop Israel and its allies from the genocide of the Palestinians:

- Saudi Arabia and Gulf states should have used their significant soft leverage on the USA including the petro-power to dissuade it from the whole-hearted support to Israel;
- A more vehement denunciation of Israeli aggression and its abandonment of Oslo accord, together with strong advocacy of Palestinian cause should have been pursued at all UN, multi-lateral and bi-lateral forums;
- 14 Muslim countries out of 57 who have their embassies in Israel should have withdrawn their ambassadors as was done by Jordan and Turkey.
- Around 27 Muslim countries have trading relations with Israel. The trade volume in

2023 is estimated to be around \$5 billion. These countries could have suspended the trade relations with Israel;

- The energy flow between Arab countries and Israel has undergone a significant transformation since the Abraham Accord (2020) with a growing network of partnerships e.g., natural gas exports from Egypt to Israel, joint energy projects with Jordan etc. Natural gas exports from UAE to Israel and energy cooperation with Saudi Arabia are under active consideration. These should have been discarded forthwith.

Little the Arab countries realize that the ultimate aim of the Jewish state is to reclaim their holy home land of more than 3,700 years promised by God to their ancestor Abraham and his descendants in the ancient scripture. After Gaza, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria and Sinai could be their next target.



**Tariq Hussain**  
**Advisor to Chairman**  
The Shahid Javed Burki Institute  
of Public Policy at NetSol

## History of Israel

The history of Israel covers an area known as Canaan, Palestine or the Holy Land which is the geographical location of the modern states of Israel and Palestine. The kingdoms of Israel and Judah were central to the origins of the Jewish and Samaritan peoples as well as the Abrahamic faith tradition. Throughout its history that region has come under the sway of various polities and has historically hosted many ethnic groups.

The late 19th century saw the development

and consolidation of a nationalistic movement called Zionism. During the First World War, the Sinai campaign of the Allied Powers led to the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Britain acquired control of the Region by a League of Nations Mandate, also known as the Palestine Mandate. During the war period alliances Britain had promised liberation of the Arabs from the Turks; and promised separately the creation of a Jewish State in the region. Arabs opposed this proposal. This led to increased Arab-Jewish tensions which grew after the British Administration departed and continued for decades continuing during the Second World War. And the creation of the United Nations which was dominated by Allied powers. With Allied support the State of Israel was created and was admitted to the United Nations on May 15, 1948. But a Palestinian state was not established at the same time. The remaining territories of pre-1948 Palestine, the West Bank, including East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip were administered from 1948 till 1967 by Jordan and Egypt respectively.

Israel gained control of and occupied the West Bank and Gaza Strip following its victory in the 1967 six-day war against its two neighbors. Today about 45 % of the Jewish population resides in Israel. In 1979, the Egypt-Israel Treaty was signed, based on the Camp-David Accords. In 1993, Israel signed the Oslo Accord with the Palestine Liberation Organization which was followed by the formation of the Palestinian National Authority. In 1994, the Israel-Jordan Treaty was signed.

In 1994, Israel began a phased transfer of governmental authority in the Gaza strip to the Palestinian Authority under the terms of the Oslo-Accords signed by Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Despite



efforts to finalize the Peace Agreement, the conflict continues to play a major role in Israeli and international political, social and economic life.



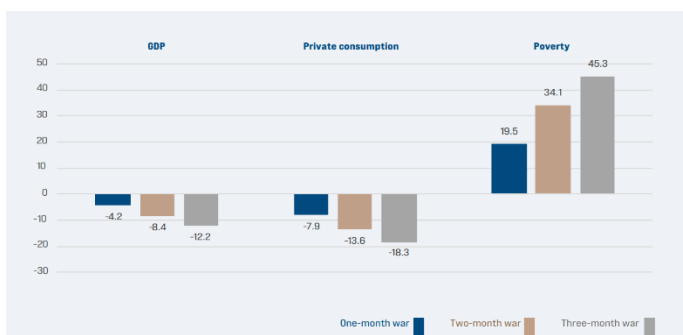
**Socrat Aman Rana**  
**Sr. Research Fellow**  
The Shahid Javed Burki Institute  
of Public Policy at NetSol

## Gaza: The Graveyard of SDGs

*"The average annual precipitation in the region will fall from 10% to 30% by 2100, temperatures will increase by 3 to 5 degrees Celsius, and it will affect the regions agricultural productivity and food supply, causing price instability and food shortages" <sup>1</sup>*

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted at the United Nations, were formed to ensure that by 2030, there would be prosperity and peace for all people. These goals have been made a mockery of in the wake of atrocities being carried out by Israel in Gaza. The havoc and devastation wreaked at Gaza has buried the debate of sustainability and development.

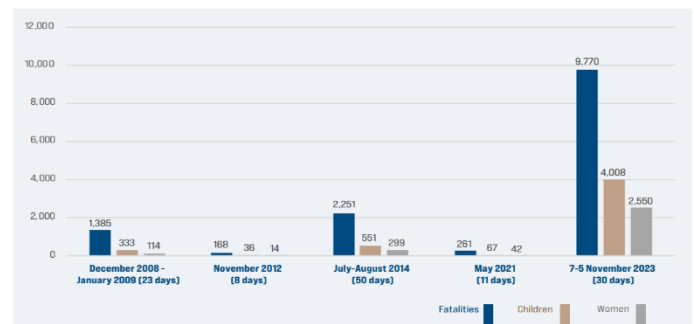
The pushback to the **SDG 1: No Poverty** and **SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth**, is an abysmal loss of 390,000 jobs, leaving approximately 96% of Gaza's population deemed as multi-dimensionally poor<sup>2</sup>.



Amidst the bombing, gunfire and blockades run by Israel, Gaza's one million children are dying of hunger. More than 105,000 breastfeeding mothers in Gaza are now struggling to feed themselves and their babies. Resultantly, it is projected that in the next few weeks, the increase of child wasting by 30% would have engulfed any hope of keeping **SDG 2, No Hunger**, afloat.

Consequently, **SDG 3: Good Health and Well Being**, **SDG 6: Clean Drinking Water and Sanitation** and **SDGs 14 & 15: Life below water and on land** have also fared the same. By the start of November, the WHO had documented 101 health facilities being attacked directly, shutting down of nearly two thirds of the hospitals. The State of Palestine, already ranked 4th and 3rd highest of all Arab countries in terms of stress and depression respectively, decreased by 10 percentile points each. About 6.8% of the total population in Gaza are categorized as persons with disabilities — higher than the country average estimated at 5.8%.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the average water consumption in Gaza is now at 8% of pre-war daily levels, indicating a severe shortage of clean drinking water<sup>4</sup>.

Figure 2. Total fatalities in Gaza by age and sex during major escalations, 2008-2023



**SDG 4: Quality Education**, **SDG 5: Gender Equality**, **SDG 8: Decent and Economic growth**, **SDG 9: Industry and Infrastructure** and **SDG 13: Climate Action** are no different in their fates. By 3 November 2023, at least 35,000 housing units had reportedly been destroyed, as well as the

damaging of over 40% of education facilities.

The use of phosphorus by Israeli forces is believed to have a long-lasting impact on agricultural productivity and soil resilience. Owing to the aforesaid destruction, the GDP loss in 2023 could go to 12%, compared with pre-war estimates depending on the duration of the war<sup>6</sup>.

Gaza's water is contaminated with 10 times more nitrate than WHO standards allow, yet 2.3 million residents are forced to drink it.<sup>7</sup>

The silence of the International Community to the Israeli bombings of hospitals, schools, refugee camps and basic life supporting facilities continues to push back the SDGs and our dream of leaving a prosperous, sustainable and inclusive future for the future generations.

### References:

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/middle-east/israeli-attacks-worsen-gazas-vulnerability-amid-climate-change/3036966>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-11/2301926E-Policybrief-GazaWAR-ESCWA-UNDP-English-4pm.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-11/2301926E-Policybrief-GazaWAR-ESCWA-UNDP-English-4pm.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-11/2301926E-Policybrief-GazaWAR-ESCWA-UNDP-English-4pm.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-11/2301926E-Policybrief-GazaWAR-ESCWA-UNDP-English-4pm.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2023-11/2301926E-Policybrief-GazaWAR-ESCWA-UNDP-English-4pm.pdf> (page 2)

<sup>7</sup> <https://twitter.com/trtworld/status/1719750471718404395>



**Muhammad Firas Shams**  
**Research Associate**

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy at NetSol

## Symbols of Resistance

Movements and ideologies often introduce certain quotidian symbols that are popularized over time to immortalize a cause or a figure. These are symbols that might otherwise not have evoked a sentiment of revolution or self-determination, transfigure into a reminder of a crossroads or a struggle that has outlived its founder. In the same vein, a few appurtenances have become synonymous with the Palestinian struggle. The most notable and indigenous is the olive, followed by the watermelon and the most in vogue these days is the *keffiyeh*. Each of these objects encapsulate a deeper meaning and message for the world about the defining ethos of the Palestinian self-determination. For the Palestinian diaspora, it is reminiscent of the land of their ancestors and the decades of generational trauma dating back to the *Nakba* of 1948.

The olive is much more than a Mediterranean fruit, it symbolizes the identity, rootedness and resistance of the Palestinian people. This fruit is said to have an average lifespan of 300 to 600 years and its tree is resilient to high as well as sub-zero temperatures and water stress/arid conditions. Many Palestinian households have been dependent on olive farming for several decades. For the Palestinian diaspora and Palestinians subjected to apartheid along with settler onslaught, olive is a humble reminder of their story and resilience in the face of ethnic displacement and erasure of their people.

Moreover, the watermelon emoji is featuring in X handles' of Pro-Palestinian accounts nowadays; one user asked whether this is a fad of generation Z or is there a narrative of resistance behind it? During the six-day Arab-Israeli war in 1967, Israel not only vanquished its Arab adversaries, but also seized control Gaza, erstwhile administered by Egypt and the West Bank including East Jerusalem, erstwhile controlled by Jordan. Subsequent to war, the Israeli government banned the display of the Palestinian flag in newly annexed regions. To circumvent being frog marched by Israeli cops, Palestinian protestors began holding slices of watermelon during processions, since the refreshing fruit had similar color scheme to the Palestinian flag, transforming into a "stand-in" flag until 1993, when the ban was lifted as a of the Oslo Accords.

The *keffiyeh*, a chequered black and white scarf or a headdress, transcends border and continents as it is donned internationally to express solidarity with the Palestinian self-determination. Also known as *Hatta* and *Shemagh*, it is said to have its roots in the Kufa region of Mesopotamia (modern day Iraq), dating back to 3100BC. The *Keffiyeh* was worn by rural workers and in particular farmers, as it protected their head from the scorching sun and sandstorms. The distinct patterns on it characterize an undertone of self-determination and regional history; the "olive leaves" design signify the perseverance, resilience and steadfastness the people of Palestine, "the fishnet" pattern captures the centuries old bond between the Mediterranean Sea and Palestinian sailors, while the bold lines are reminiscent of the trade routes that stretched through the heart of Palestine, enriching the land with cultural exchange and prosperity. In contemporary times, the *keffiyeh* a unifying sight in the

menagerie of protestors, clamoring for ceasefire and a separate state for the Palestinians.



**Muhammad Waqas**  
**Research Assistant**

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy at NetSol

## Hamas: A Journey from Pursuing Peace to Escalating Conflict

The origins of Hamas can be traced back to the displacement of its founder, Ahmed Yassin, in 1948. Yassin's early efforts were focused on establishing an Islamic charity in Gaza in 1973, primarily engaged in education, social services cultural activities. However, in the 1980s, Israel pursued a "divide and rule" policy, providing support to the Islamic charity to undermine the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The turning point occurred during the First Intifada in 1987, triggered by the killing of four Palestinians by an Israeli truck driver. Despite initial non-violent resistance, Hamas faced radicalization due to Israel's disproportionate response, leading to a shift in their approach. During this time, Hamas leaders, including Mahmoud al-Zahar, proposed peaceful resolutions, but Israel's reluctance to acknowledge the rights of Palestinian refugees hindered progress.

As tensions escalated, provocations from Israel continued, including attempts to eradicate Hamas in 1989 and the violent suppression of a Jerusalem demonstration in 1990. The pivotal

moment came in 1994 with the Hebron massacre, when a Jewish settler killed 29 praying Muslims, prompting Hamas to fully embrace attacks on civilians. Subsequently, from 2000 to 2005, the Second Intifada witnessed a surge in violence, with Hamas and other militant groups carrying out numerous suicide attacks. Despite indications of moderation by 2006, with Hamas winning legislative elections, Israel's reluctance to engage in constructive peace talks persisted.

In 2012, indirect peace talks between Hamas's military commander Jabari and Israel were disrupted when Israel assassinated Jabari, signaling a preference for military force over dialogue. The historical journey of Hamas reflects a complex interplay of peace initiatives, provocations from Israel shifts in response to escalating conflicts.

So, the recent attack by Hamas started another debate at international level mainly propagated by the Israel and Western countries to ban it, just to seek international permissiveness for their disproportionate use of force to displace further Palestinians and build settlements, the reflection Ben Gurionist Doctrine. The debate revolves around whether civilians residing in Israeli settler colonies in Palestine can be strictly classified as civilians, as per established international conventions on human rights. This ethical dilemma not only challenges traditional definitions but also has profound implications for the designation of Hamas as a terrorist organization. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres's acknowledgment that Hamas's attacks are a continuum of the broader conflict initiated by Israeli occupation adds a layer of complexity, urging the global community to reassess labels, grapple with historical nuances seek a more nuanced understanding of the multifaceted dynamics at play in the region.



**Areeb Khan**  
**IT Assistant**

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute  
of Public Policy at NetSol

## The Environmental Impact of War: A Silent Devastation

War is a tragedy that shatters lives and communities, but its destructive reach extends far beyond the battlefield. The environmental impact of war is often overlooked, but there are significant and long-lasting consequences of an armed conflict. From rampant pollution to the destruction of ecosystems as well as biodiversity, war inflicts a lasting damage on the natural world, leaving scars that endure long after the guns have fallen silent. War can pollute air, water, and soil, and contribute to climate change. These environmental impacts have a ripple effect, affecting human health, livelihoods, food security, displacement and migration, weakening of environmental institutions and increased vulnerability to natural disasters.

The ongoing conflict between Israel and Gaza has had a devastating impact on the environment in both regions. By November 1, Israel had dropped 18,000 tons of explosives on Gaza, equivalent to about 1.5 times the disastrous force unleashed on Hiroshima by the United States during World War II. The environmental disaster brought about by relentless Israeli bombings will have a disastrous impact on Palestinians in years to come. The cleanup of contaminated soil and water will take years, and the damage to ecosystems will take even longer to repair.



The war has also exacerbated the existing environmental problems in Gaza, such as water scarcity and air pollution. The international community has a responsibility to help Gaza recover from the environmental damage caused by the war. This includes providing financial assistance for cleanup efforts, supporting sustainable development projects, and promoting environmental education and awareness.

The environmental impact of war is a stark reminder of the interconnectedness of all life on Earth. We must recognize that wars are not merely human tragedies but also assaults on the natural world. Protecting the environment from the ravages of war requires a concerted effort from the international community. Moreover, strengthening international laws and norms that protect the environment during conflict is essential. Promoting sustainable practices and environmental awareness within militaries can help reduce their environmental footprint. Investing in environmental cleanup and restoration in post-conflict societies is crucial for long-term recovery and resilience. Lastly, addressing the root causes of war, such as poverty, inequality, and resource scarcity, is critical for preventing future conflicts and minimizing their environmental impact. By promoting peace, diplomacy, and sustainable development, we can create a world where the environment is not collateral damage in the pursuit of power but a shared legacy to protect and cherish.



**Abdul Rafay**  
**Research Intern**

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute  
of Public Policy at NetSol

## Palestine's Olive Economy in Peril

In the West Bank, the longstanding tradition of olive harvesting is currently facing significant challenges, as Palestinian farmers encounter restrictions and violence from Israeli forces and settlers. The region has witnessed a surge in human rights abuses, resulting in a tragic toll of at least 14,532 lives lost, including around 6,000 children, and approximately 600,000 injuries since October 7 (UNRWA). These attacks have disrupted the traditional olive harvest season, causing economic losses as farmers are impeded from reaching their olive trees due to the fear of violence.

The West Bank has experienced heightened restrictions on freedom of movement, marked by closed checkpoints and stringent lockdowns, significantly impacting daily life, employment, education, and healthcare facilities. Settler attacks and the displacement of communities have intensified, exacerbating the emotional and economic strain on Palestinians.

In Palestine, the symbolic olive harvesting season, representing steadfastness and resistance against Israeli occupation, has taken a somber turn. Olive cultivation, a vital industry for over 100,000 Palestinian families, faces challenges in both Gaza and the West Bank. The olive sector, valued at \$160-191 million, produces essential items for

Palestinian households, including olive oil, soap, pickles, and table olives (Al-Jazeera). However, this year's unconducive atmosphere prevails as the ongoing conflict disrupts festivities and hampers olive processing, impacting the sector.

This challenging situation is compounded by the geopolitical landscape, with Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu rejecting and delaying calls for a ceasefire until it was brokered with Qatar's involvement, contributing to a devastating cycle of violence in Gaza. In the West Bank, although not governed by Hamas, almost 222 Palestinians, including 55 children, have lost their lives, accompanied by settler violence and attacks on farmers, raising concerns on an international scale. (UNRWA)

The aftermath of October 7 witnessed an escalation in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, characterized by airstrikes, bombings, and a refusal to adhere to UN resolutions for a humanitarian truce in Gaza. This conflict has shifted global attention to the Middle East, with disturbing scenes unfolding in Gaza, and diplomatic efforts proving ineffective in quelling the violence. Moreover, Netanyahu's biblical references in speeches suggest an attempt to frame the longstanding territorial conflict as a holy war, in order to keep support of the American Evangelicals intact.

In Gaza, the militant group Hamas engages in conflicts with Israeli forces, utilizing tunnels in a bid for survival. The West Bank faces its own challenges, with settler violence escalating and leading to the vandalism of thousands of olive trees, contributing to what is described as an environmental genocide or ecocide. The international response to these crises, particularly in Gaza, is marked by a UN

official's resignation, citing a failure to prevent what he termed a "text-book case of genocide." Meanwhile, environmental devastation in the West Bank continues under the watchful eyes of the UN and the US.



**Tabinda Naz**  
**Assistant Manager IT/Knowledge Management**

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy at NetSol

## BIPP's Round Up

On 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023, Mr. Babar Yaqoob, Vice Chairman, Operations, Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy (BIPP), was invited as a keynote speaker in a discussion centered around "CPEC Phase II, Opportunities and Challenges", organized by Lahore Garrison University. The event drew together a dynamic cohort of experts from both academia and industry. It provided a platform to delve deep into the pivotal issues and complexities that surround this transformative phase and to initiate a constructive, insightful debate that can drive growth and prosperity. Notably, the event was attended by esteemed guests and a delegation from China.



On 6<sup>th</sup> November 2023, BIPP awarded academic scholarships to 9 students at Khaldunia Institute of Technology and Applied Sciences (KITAAS) - 7 recipients were from the Department of Physical Therapy, while 2 were from the Computer Sciences department. The ceremony commenced with gratitude remarks by KITAAS Chairman, Prof. Dr. Mohammad Nizamuddin, who thanked BIPP for its support. BIPP Director of Operations, Dr. Ejaz Sandhu, distributed the scholarship certificates amongst the students. Through scholarships, BIPP invests in developing talent and empowering youth to catalyze positive change. The funding aims to alleviate financial barriers to education, allowing female students to fully nurture their potential.



On 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023, BIPP distributed certificates amongst Research Interns following the completion of their internship. BIPP imparted to them its core values of integrity and commitment, pursuit of excellence, expanding horizons of competence and knowledge, working as a highly motivated and dedicated team. They were acquainted with how rational policy making in Pakistan can bring about much-needed sustainable development.



On the 21st of November 2023, BIPP was represented by Dr. Ejaz Sandhu (Director Operations), Muhammad Waqas (Research Assistant), and Abdur Rafay (Research Intern) at a Validation Workshop on the Mapping Study on the Formalization of SMEs. The event took place at Avari Hotel Lahore and was jointly organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO – Pakistan) and the Small and Medium Enterprise Development Authority (SMEDA). The aim of this workshop was to share the research findings, engage in open discussion and receive feedback from various stakeholders who are actively involved in promoting SME growth and formality.





On 30<sup>th</sup> November 2023, BIPP also started off research training of syndicate two of Common Training Program (CTP) 51st, at BIPP. These probationary officers from the Civil Services Academy (CSA) will be acquainted with and advised on rational, evidence-based and people centric policy research by BIPP's brass led by Vice Chairman, Mr. Shahid Najam. The topic for this 14-session training is "The Implications of Industrial Revolution 5.0 (IR 5.0) and Society 5.0 (S 5.0) on public sector management in Pakistan." Equipped with knowledge around emerging technologies and social structures, these leaders can pioneer policies and public services fit for the future. BIPP remains committed to strengthening governance capacity, and the CSA Training Program represents the latest effort to empower officials confronting new challenges. With the right preparation, civil servants have the potential to lead Pakistan smoothly into the next era of innovation.



On 4<sup>th</sup> December 2023, BIPP in its ongoing commitment to empower deserving female students, awarded scholarships to five students from the Department of Economics at the University of Punjab. Mr. Shahid Najam (Vice Chairman of BIPP), Dr. Ejaz Sandhu (Director of Operations at BIPP), and Prof. Dr. Mumtaz Anwar (Head of the Economics Department) presented the certificates to the recipients. This initiative underscores BIPP's recognition of the transformative power of education and its dedication to Pakistan's future. These scholarships are a testament to BIPP's effort to foster talent and support academic endeavors.



Senior Management Staff of Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy at Netsol (BIPP) is immensely proud to acknowledge the outstanding academic achievement of Research Associate, Mr. Muhammad Firas Shams. Mr. Shams has distinguished himself by securing the gold medal and achieving first place in the MPhil Public Policy. This accomplishment not only highlights his dedication and excellence but also underscores the rigorous and competitive standards BIPP upholds in recruiting its professional staff, embodying our core values of integrity, commitment, excellence, competence, knowledge, and teamwork. We extend our heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Shams for this significant academic milestone.



His exemplary performance and professional conduct since joining BIPP on August 7, 2023, have been noteworthy. We are confident that his passion, commitment, and skill will greatly contribute to advancing and implementing the vision and objectives of BIPP. We eagerly anticipate his future contributions and wish him continued success in all his endeavors.



verification, highlighting the daily circulation of misleading narratives to tarnish adversaries and support allies.

Amid the Al-Ahil hospital massacre, conflicting social media narratives emerged about an Israeli military bombing on October 17th. The Israeli prime minister's social media advisor initially celebrated the incident, but a later tweet with a one-hour timestamp difference in CCTV footage altered the narrative. This incident highlights the complexity of information dissemination in conflict zones, underscoring the importance of critical evaluation amid media frenzy, showcasing the potential for misinformation in heated situations.

Israeli media utilizes meticulously crafted, high-budget propaganda, while authentic visuals from Palestinian sources depict the human toll of the conflict. In this dynamic, Israeli news is considered information, contrasting with Hamas, labeled as propaganda due to its contested terrorist label in the West. The United States allocates significant funds for influencing public perception, with approximately \$37 million invested in YouTube ads, influencer support, and propaganda in children's content, specifically concerning the Israel-Palestine conflict. This helps to maintain Israel in a good light.

Palestinian journalists on social media expose the harsh realities of war, unveiling Israel's misinformation tactics. The Israel Defense Force (IDF) increased surveillance on Gaza journalists has led to fatalities, prompting some to abandon press identification for safety.

In the Israel-Palestine conflict, the American president's media manipulation favors Israel, overlooking Palestinian well-being. This bias is evident in double standards regarding the rule



**Zahra Khan**  
**Assistant Finance Manager**  
The Shahid Javed Burki Institute  
of Public Policy at NetSol

## The Battle of Narratives: Media Manipulation in the Israel-Palestine Conflict

The Israel-Palestine conflict extends beyond battles, waged by military forces and fighters on the ground; it also encompasses the clash of media narratives in the airwaves. Reports of 40 infants allegedly beheaded by Hamas militants, Joe Biden publicly shared the horrifying news, triggering a media frenzy. Subsequent investigations revealed no

law, as the US supports Ukraine's right to self-defence against Russian aggression while denying Palestinians the same right. This stance is often parroted by the media in the West.

The media must prioritize journalism over stenography, conducting thorough investigations and presenting both perspectives to prevent false scenarios, bias, and the manipulation of civilians through brainwashing. The conflict unfolds three arenas: on-ground military actions, media narratives, and endeavors by both sides to shape public discourse, especially in higher education and public advocacy. Given the influential role of media, closer monitoring is imperative, recognizing social media's dual role in revealing truths and contributing to false manipulation. The widespread dissemination of fake news through social media has caused significant damage, influencing millions globally and deepening existing ideological and cultural divisions.



## Mission Statement

BIPP's mission is to improve the welfare of the citizenry with particular emphasis on identifying policy measures that will lead to inclusive, people-centered growth with equity, political stability and sustainable development besides fully harnessing the potential for regional and global integration of the country. BIPP primary areas of interest encompass social, economic, environmental and political development and security, trade and foreign policy-related issues.

<http://www.sjbipp.org/>

[admin@sjbipp.org](mailto:admin@sjbipp.org)

+92-42-35913304

138, Abubakar Block, New Garden Town, Lahore