[Khalid Bhatti](https://www.thenews.com.pk/writer/khalid-bhatti)

May 18, 2021

**Palestine under attack**

Israeli war planes continued to bomb different residential areas of Gaza on the first day of Eidul Fitr, while in different Israeli cities, extreme rightwing racist mobs continued to attack Palestinian people and their businesses with the help of the local police.

It all started from Al-Aqsa Mosque attacks. More than 380 Palestinians were injured in three days when Israeli police violently attacked people praying inside the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The world has been watching silently as Israel continues to take more Palestinian lands, while willfully violating agreements and laws. Palestinians have been facing bullets, bombs, repression, humiliation and discrimination on a daily basis. Their lives have been made miserable by the continued occupation and oppression.

Tensions spread from East Jerusalem to Gaza after Palestinian resistance groups in Gaza vowed to retaliate for Israeli assaults on Al-Aqsa and Jerusalem’s Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood. Israel used the rocket attacks fired by Hamas as an excuse to punish the Palestinian population.

The 'free media and leaders' of the 'free Western world' continue to call Israeli aggression as ‘escalating violence’ or ‘clashes’ between Palestinian people and the Israeli Army. The Western corporate media gives the impression that Israel is retaliating to attacks carried out by Palestinian militants.

American President Biden has said that Israel has the right to defend itself. Other Western leaders and analysts and commentators are also saying the same.

The fact is that Palestine is under constant Israeli attack and aggression. According to a 2020 Human Rights Watch report: “The Israeli government continued to enforce severe and discriminatory restrictions on Palestinians’ human rights; restrict the movement of people and goods into and out of the Gaza Strip; and facilitate the transfer of Israeli citizens to settlements in the occupied West Bank, an illegal practice under international humanitarian law.

“Israel’s twelve-year closure of Gaza, exacerbated by Egyptian restrictions on its border with Gaza, limits access to educational, economic and other opportunities, medical care, clean water and electricity for the nearly 2 million Palestinians who live there. Eighty percent of Gaza’s population depend on humanitarian aid.

“Israeli forces stationed on the Israeli side of fences separating Gaza and Israel continued to fire live ammunition at demonstrators inside Gaza who posed no imminent threat to life, pursuant to open-fire orders from senior officials that contravene international human rights standards.”

The Western corporate media and most of the Western governments try to hide the fact that Israel is occupying the Palestine lands. The main purpose of such biased reporting is to cover up Israeli aggression and excesses and its crimes against humanity.

It is not Palestinian people who are using violence against Israel but Israel using violence against Palestinian people to kill their resistance. Palestinians are resisting the assault on their homes, lives and livelihood. They are resisting the daily abuse, humiliation and suffering meted out to them by the Israeli occupation forces.

Israel has occupied Palestine’s territories and continued to grab more Palestine lands for Jewish settlers. It is Israel which is using force to continue the occupation. It has one of the most modern war machines and military in the world, with the most modern war planes, bombers, tanks, guns and missiles. And what Palestinian people have, stones, some rockets and guns. There is no comparison between the two sides. How can any sane person compare a battle between F-16s and human bodies and call it a ‘clash’?

As Faisal Hanif pointed out (in ‘Al-Aqsa attacks: How the media gives Israel a free pass’, May 12): “The media’s language around this latest use of force by Israel in its forever war against Palestinians takes a familiar pattern, adding to a dictionary of distortion. The word ‘Palestine’ has long since fallen out of use, while occupiers and religious zealots are marketed as “settlers” engaged in the act of “bringing to life” parched and empty land. Language has become as effective a tool as land grabs and military force in erasing the aspirations and legitimate national identity of Palestinians.

“Now, as they forcibly expel Palestinian families with the help of state forces, it is being packaged as a real estate or legal dispute. As the Israeli propaganda machine gives birth to these new terms, their adoption by the international media allows for the omission of other inconvenient facts, such as the expulsion of Sheikh Jarrah residents being predicated on a law of Jewish supremacy.

“The words ‘clashes’ and ‘scuffles’ are an injustice to those attacked by a heavily armed, technologically advanced force that assists racist Zionist mobs in provoking a civilian population before launching attacks on them.”

According to a Human Rights Watch report released on April 27, 2021: “Israeli authorities methodically privilege Jewish Israelis and discriminate against Palestinians. Laws, policies, and statements by leading Israeli officials make plain that the objective of maintaining Jewish Israeli control over demographics, political power, and land has long guided government policy.

“In pursuit of this goal, authorities have dispossessed, confined, forcibly separated, and subjugated Palestinians by virtue of their identity to varying degrees of intensity. In certain areas, as described in this report, these deprivations are so severe that they amount to the crimes against humanity of apartheid and persecution.”

International criminal law has developed two crimes against humanity for situations of systematic discrimination and repression: apartheid and persecution. Crimes against humanity stand among the most odious crimes in international law.

The crime against humanity of persecution, also set out in the Rome Statute, the intentional and severe deprivation of fundamental rights on racial, ethnic, and other grounds, grew out of the post-World War II trials and constitutes one of the most serious international crimes, of the same gravity as apartheid.”

The writer is a freelance journalist.