

'Significant Censorship' of Palestine on Social Media Sparks Outcry

DOHA (Dispatches) – At the end of last week, Thomas Maddens, a filmmaker and activist based in Belgium, noticed something strange. A video about Palestine that he posted to TikTok with the word “genocide” suddenly stopped getting engagement on the platform after an initial spike. “I thought I would have got millions of views,” Maddens told Al Jazeera, “but the engagement had stopped.”



People rally in Queens, New York, in solidarity with Palestine after the recent attacks on residents in Sheikh Jarrah.

Maddens is one of the hundreds of social media users who are accusing the world’s largest social media platforms – Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube and TikTok – of censoring accounts or actively reducing the reach of pro-Palestine content, a practice known as shadowbanning.

Authors, activists, journalists, filmmakers and regular users around the world have said posts containing hashtags like “FreePalestine” and “IStandWithPalestine” as well as messages expressing support for civilian

Palestinians killed by Zionist troops are being hidden by the platforms.

Some users have also accused Instagram, owned by Meta, of arbitrarily taking down posts that simply mention Palestine for violating “community guidelines”. Others said their Instagram Stories were hidden for sharing information about protests in support of Palestine in Los Angeles and the San Francisco Bay Area. Some also reportedly

complained about the word “terrorist” appearing near their Instagram biographies.

In a post on X on October 15, Meta spokesperson Andy Stone blamed the reduced reach of posts on a bug.

“This bug affected accounts equally around the globe and had nothing to do with the subject matter of the content – and we fixed it as quickly as possible,” Stone wrote.

When asked about the accusa-

tions of shadowbanning, Stone pointed Al Jazeera to a blog post that Meta published highlighting its latest efforts in tackling misinformation related to Israel’s war. The post said users who don’t agree with the company’s moderation decisions may appeal.

The BBC reported that Meta apologized for adding the word terrorist to pro-Palestinian accounts, saying the problem that “briefly caused inappropriate Arabic translations” has been fixed.

YouTube and X did not respond to Al Jazeera’s requests for comment.

Civil rights groups aren’t buying the platforms’ denials.

This month, 48 organizations, including 7amleh, the Arab Centre for Social Media Advancement, which advocates for digital rights of Palestinian and Arab civil society, issued a statement urging tech companies to respect Palestinian digital rights during the ongoing war.

U.S....

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occupying regime’s actions removes incentives for restraint, they argue.

Some warn that U.S. replenishment of bombs dropped on Gaza may fuel cycles of violence, hindering de-escalation. With two carrier groups nearby, the fear is that planning for the next war has already begun.

The massive arms influx has created an even more pronounced power imbalance, enabling the occupying regime of Israel to continue to act with impunity, say analysts. While Gaza lies in ruins, Israel enjoys limitless supplies from its superpower patron.

They urge greater scrutiny over whether U.S. actions serve regional security or purely Israeli interests. Platitudes about restraint and “self-defense” ring hollow to Palestinians, they note, when American planes rush to deliver massive stockpiles of bombs to the occupation state.

President...

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and official support of the United States and other Western countries.”

Raisi touched on U.S. resident Joe Biden’s remarking during his visit to the occupied territories earlier this month, when he said, “I have long said: If Israel didn’t exist, we would have to invent it.”

“These remarks mean that the Americans are prepared to trample upon the blood of women and children, and the rubble of the Palestinian people’s homes in order to meet their [own] interests,” Raisi said.

Lavrov laid emphasis on Moscow’s commitment to implementation of all of the country’s agreements with Iran in economic, commercial, transport, energy, and cultural fields.

He said his participation in the meeting of the 3+3 regional platform was a manifestation of growing regional cooperation between Iran and Russia.

Iran’s...

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assistance is Marine Corps Lieutenant General James Glynn, who previously helped lead special operations in Fallujah, Iraq, the official stated.

Glynn will also be advising on how to mitigate civilian casualties in urban warfare, added the official, who was not authorized to discuss Glynn’s role and spoke on condition of anonymity.

U.S. military officers who are advising Israel “have experience that is appropriate to the sorts of operations that Israel is conducting”, John Kirby, the White House spokesman, also told reporters on Monday.

“The al-Quds occupying regime is trying to eliminate the resistance from political equations in Gaza and they also seek forced displacement of the residents of Gaza,” Amir-Abdollahian said.

He confirmed that American officials have been sending messages to all parties involved in Palestine’s developments, including Iran, adding, “Their messages contain two main points. Firstly, they allege that they are not interested in further spread of the war, and secondly, they call on Iran to show self-restraint.”

“Despite their claims about being opposed to further spread of war, the Americans have been fanning the flames of war on Gaza during the past two weeks by sending thousands of arms consignments to Israel and supporting the regime,” Iran’s foreign minister said.

“Therefore, we warn all the countries that have been involved in the recent escalation in Gaza, including the United States and the Zionist regime, to stop the massacre of Palestinian people before it is too late,” Amir-Abdollahian concluded.

Iran’s Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kan’ani, in an X post on Tuesday, said that contrary to the United States, which is promoting war in the region through its support for Israel, the Islamic Republic is “the pillar and anchor of stability” in the region.

Kan’ani said that Tehran’s hosting of the second 3+3 regional platform meeting, as an example of Iran’s efforts towards collective security in the region.

“While the United States and some of its allies are escalating war-mongering, instability and insecurity in the region by lending unwavering support to the villain Zionist regime, Tehran was host to the second meeting of the 3+3 regional platform,” he wrote.

“Iran remains the pillar and anchor of stability and security in the region on the basis of indigenous collective security doctrine.”

While the United States and some of its allies are escalating the tension and mongering war, instability and insecurity in the region by lending unwavering support to the villain Zionist regime, Tehran was host to the meeting.

Kan’ani also noted that Iran believes that the regional countries have the power to resolve their problems and ensure sustainable security and stability in line with common interests and collective progress.

“Such a strategy could lead to more benefits and sustainable development for our region only when all our countries pursue a similar approach without the profit-seeking interference of trans-regional players,” he added.

Calls Grow for EU Chief to Resign Over Pro-Zionist Bias

BRUSSELS (Dispatches) – Calls have been mounting on European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen to step down over her expressions of support for the Zionist regime, which has been committing act of genocide against Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip.

The European Realistic Disobedience Front or MeRA25, a left-wing Greek political party, has launched an online petition calling for von der Leyen’s immediate resignation, saying she has supported the sealing off of civilians in Gaza and the bombing of the besieged enclave under the guise of “defense” without a mandate from EU member states.

“While EU member states, the UN and other international bod-

ies have acknowledged the dire humanitarian situation in Gaza..., President von der Leyen has explicitly expressed unilateral solidarity with Israel,” read the petition, which has so far garnered over 23,000 signatures.

“The president’s attitude towards Israel is in stark contrast to her condemnation of similar actions in the past... This is application of international law as it sees fit, which undermines the EU’s moral authority.”

It also noted that von der Leyen’s pro-Israel stance disregards international law and the democratic mandate of EU member states.

Among the signatories is Yanis Varoufakis, a Greek politician

who is also Secretary General of Democracy in Europe Movement 2025 (DiEM25).

“Mrs. von der Leyen, incompetence we can tolerate. But cheerleading, on behalf of Europeans, war crimes: that we shall not tolerate,” Varoufakis said in a video posted on his X account.

On October 13, von der Leyen traveled to the occupied territories and met with Zionist president Isaac Herzog.

“We are friends of Israel. When friends are under attack, we stand by them,” she wrote in an X post that day.

Meanwhile, more than 840 staff members of the European Union institutions have written a letter to von der Leyen, expressing fury

over her stance on the occupying regime’s onslaught on Gaza.

They criticized the European Commission for giving “a free hand to the acceleration and the legitimacy of a war crime in the Gaza Strip.”

The regime waged the war on Gaza on October 7 after the Palestinian resistance group Hamas launched the surprise Operation Al-Aqsa Flood against the occupying entity.

The Tel Aviv regime has killed over 5,087 Palestinians, including 2,055 children, and injured 15,273.

It has also blocked water, food and electricity to Gaza, plunging the coastal sliver into a humanitarian crisis.

Hezbollah Announces 3 Members Martyred

BEIRUT (Dispatches) – Lebanon’s Hezbollah in Lebanon Tuesday announced that three more members of the resistance movement were martyred in the fight against the Zionist regime’s army.

A statement by the group provided no more details.

Meanwhile, an Israeli military statement mentioned that it launched an attack on a cell located in the Sheba Farms in southern Lebanon, claiming that the cell

was attempting to launch rockets towards the occupied territories.

Lebanon’s official news agency NNA also reported that Zionist warplanes bombed the center of the “Green Without Borders,” affiliated with Hezbollah, in two regions in the southernmost part of the country.

Since Oct. 8, Hezbollah has been engaged in clashes with the occupying regime along the southern border of Lebanon.

Clashes between Hezbollah and Zionist troops followed the conflict in Gaza, which has been under the regime’s bombardment and a blockade since Oct. 7. The war began when the Palestinian resistance moment Hamas initiated Operation Al-Aqsa Flood, a multi-pronged surprise operation that included a barrage of rocket launches and infiltrations into the occupied territories by land, sea and air.

It said the incursion was in retali-

ation for the storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque and growing violence by settlers against Palestinians.

The Israeli military launched attacks on civilians in the Gaza Strip.

The Palestinian death toll from ongoing Zionist airstrikes on the Gaza Strip is near 6,000, the health ministry in the blockaded enclave said. “The fatalities include 2,055 children, 1,119 women and 217 elders,” the ministry said, adding 15,273 people were also injured.

Tropical Cyclone Kills 5 in Yemen

ADEN (Dispatches) – At least five people were killed as Tropical Cyclone Tej struck Yemen’s eastern province of al-Mahrah, displacing over a thousand families, a government official told Xinhua on Tuesday.

The local official, who asked to remain anonymous, said that large areas of al-Mahrah experienced heavy rain, flooding, and strong winds as a result of the cyclone since Monday morning.

The official said five people died when their homes collapsed in the Huswain district, while dozens more were injured from the collapse of ten other homes.

The cyclone also partially damaged many

other homes and swept away large agricultural areas across al-Mahrah. Hundreds of families have fled to schools and shelters, according to the source.

The Executive Unit for Managing Displaced Persons’ Camps in Yemen said over a thousand families were displaced by the cyclone, while the Yemen Red Crescent said its teams could not reach the affected areas like Ghaydah, Haswain, and other districts in al-Mahrah.

Yemeni officials arrived in al-Mahrah to closely monitor the emergency.

He has directed efforts to limit damage and provide care for evacuated citizens in shel-

ters across al-Mahrah, according to the state-run Saba news agency.

On Monday, the Yemeni Meteorological Center said that the tropical situation will continue during the upcoming hours with heavy rain across al-Mahrah and other eastern provinces, calling on local residents to take caution.

Yemen faces dire humanitarian conditions due to over nine years of Saudi-led war between government forces in the north and Saudi- and UAE-led mercenaries in the south. Natural disasters exacerbate the suffering of millions in the war-ravaged Arab country.