

Christians also suffered from Israeli genocidal war on Gaza, says Palestinian artist

Rana Bishara says Israeli forces hit fabric of Palestinian society where Muslims, Christians, and Jews were peacefully living for decades

Qais Abu Samra | 27.12.2023 - Update : 28.12.2023



People gather as the Palestinian artist Rana Bishara places the baby Jesus sculpture inside an incubator on a blood-stained Palestinian shroud to show her solidarity with the Gazan children who died in front of the Church of the Nativity during the Israeli attacks on December 24, 2023 in Bethlehem, West Bank. (David Melero Pena - Anadolu Agency)



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RAMALLAH, Palestine



Palestinian artist Rana Bishara said Christians in Palestine are suffering like Muslims from the Israeli genocidal war on Gaza.

In an interview with Anadolu, Bishara said the Israeli occupation forces hit the fabric of the Palestinian society where Muslims, Christians, and Jews were peacefully living for decades.

Bishara, 52, hails from the Tarshiha town in the northern Galilee area, currently Israel, and names herself a Christian Arab Palestinian.

Her artistic works include paintings, sculptures, art installations, photography, and carvings. All her works address and represent the Palestinian cause and suffering.

She also displayed her work in art galleries abroad, including in Amman, Jordan, and New York.

"Before the occupation of 1948, we used to live together as Muslims, Christians, and Jews, but they (the Jews) turned towards Zionism and betrayed their religion," she added.

Christians also victims of Israeli aggression

Rana Bishara said the Palestinian Christians are suffering from the Israeli occupation in the same manner as the Palestinian Muslims suffer.

The Israeli army "struck Churches in Gaza and killed Christians, and in Jerusalem, Christian clerics are insulted by (Israeli) settlers," she said.

In the first days of the devastating Israeli onslaught on Gaza, the Greek Orthodox Saint Porphyrius Church was bombed by the Israeli army while people were sheltering inside, leaving dozens dead and injured, including at least 16 Palestinian Christians.

"The Christian world knows nothing about us, if they truly believe in Jesus, they won't back Israel with weapons, political statements, and colonial moral support," Bishara said.

On Monday, she embodied Christ in a baby incubator in Bethlehem City to pay tribute to Palestinian babies killed in Gaza in their incubators due to the deadly Israeli onslaught.

The piece of art, showcased in the Manger Square near the Nativity Church, showed the Christ Child lying in an incubator on a Palestinian keffiyeh scarf covered with blood.

Immediate halt to war

The Christ child lying in an incubator on Christmas in Bethlehem was a message to the Western world that is disregarding the Palestinian people's suffering for over 75 years, she said.

"Israel committed in 1948 massacres against my people, destroyed and expelled people from 531 Palestinian villages, and there was an ethnic cleansing, but our people withstood and rose again, and they never died," Bishara said.

"As an artist and a human, my message is: Stop the war now, immediately, and permanently," she urged.

She stressed that Israel is targeting all Palestinian people in Gaza, the West Bank, and even inside Israel, "and seeks to kill as more as possible and to expel the remaining."

"On Christmas, (Palestinian) children are killed in their homes, they are left hungry," Bishara added. "They are the next generation that are supposed to build our (Palestinian) future."

On Dec. 16, the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem said two Christian women – an elderly mother and her daughter – were shot dead by an Israeli soldier on the grounds of a Catholic church in Gaza City.

Christmas Eve celebrations in Bethlehem were halted due to Israel's devastating war on Gaza.

Christmas is observed annually on Dec. 25 by Western churches and Jan. 7 by Eastern churches.

Christians in the Gaza Strip attended a midnight mass on Monday, while a special religious service was held at midnight on Christmas Eve on Sunday at the Holy Family Church in Gaza's center to commemorate the birth of Christ.

However, this year's Christmas is marred by intense Israeli bombing, making the midnight mass one of the most violent nights of Israel's war on the Gaza Strip.

Israel has pounded the Gaza Strip since a cross-border attack by the Palestinian group Hamas on Oct. 7, killing at least 20,915 Palestinians, mostly women and children, and injuring 54,918 others, according to local health authorities.

Around 1,200 Israelis are believed to have been killed in the Hamas attack.

Israeli attacks have left Gaza in ruins, with half of the coastal territory's housing damaged or destroyed and nearly 2 million people displaced within the densely populated enclave amid acute shortages of food and clean

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