

UK students occupy university campuses in protest over Israeli war on Gaza

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London, May 3 (RHC)-- Pro-Palestine students at campuses across the UK have set up encampments demanding that their academic institutions divest from companies involved in the arms trade to Israel,

which presses ahead with its savage military campaign in the Gaza Strip.

Media reports said on Thursday that students in Leeds, Newcastle and Bristol set up tents outside university buildings in protest against the Israeli war on the besieged Palestinian territory.

Images shared by organizers showed large groups of students gathering on campuses, alongside tents and banners in prominent areas of the universities.

“Today, students from Leeds, Newcastle, Bristol and Sheffield have joined Warwick – demanding that our universities stop investing in Israel’s genocide!” the Palestine Solidarity Campaign, a UK-based organization said.

One camp, at Warwick University, has been set up in the piazza for a week.

The students' key demand is that their institutions end investments in companies that supply arms to Israel, or are involved in business in illegal settlements in the occupied West Bank and East al-Quds.

They also want their institutions to end affiliations with Israeli universities, which they say are complicit in the plight of the Palestinians. The groups have called on their universities to divest from Israel in response to its ongoing invasion of the besieged Palestinian territory.

Bristol students said they staged the action “in protest of the university’s complicity in Israel’s genocide of Palestinians,” while Apartheid Off Campus Newcastle said its demonstration was to “highlight the institution’s investment strategy and its complicity in the Israeli military’s war crimes in Gaza and the West Bank.”

Demonstrations have been held at New York University, Harvard, MIT and other universities in Michigan, Minnesota and Colombia.

Similar protests have taken place at campuses across the U.S. and in France, with authorities in both countries deploying riot police to violently evict those taking part.

U.S. police have stormed a protest encampment at the University of California amid a similar crackdown on pro-Palestine sit-ins on other campuses in the country. The police made multiple arrests as the protesting students defied the warning that they either disperse or face detention.

The protest is part of a divestment movement in the US and other countries. Pro-Palestine students demand authorities in their respective universities stop financial ties with companies that have linked with the Israeli regime.

Clashes have also been reported at other American universities.

At the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) late on Tuesday, a pro-Israel mob armed with sticks and poles attacked pro-Palestinian students in an attempt to destroy their makeshift student encampment.

Witnesses complained that police appeared to do nothing to rein in the attackers, allowing the attack against peaceful protesters to continue for two hours before intervening.

At New York City's Columbia University, riot police evicted students from the Hamilton Hall, which had been occupied by pro-Palestine students.

They were inspired by similar demonstrations taking American and European campuses by storm.

Dozens of Iraqi university students and professors rally at a Baghdad campus in solidarity with Gaza and pro-Palestinian protests at U.S. universities on Thursday

Palestinians, mostly children and young people, have gathered in the central Gaza city of Deir al-Balah carrying banners to thank students worldwide, including in the U.S. for standing in their support.

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