

Palestinians Deface Obama Poster with Swastikas

Palestinian demonstrations against U.S. President Barack Obama's upcoming regional visit intensified on Monday, with activists in Bethlehem spray painting swastikas over a poster emblazoned with a blue and white portrait of Obama.

Hundreds of demonstrators gathered in Bethlehem to stage a protest against the U.S. president, who will visit the city later this week. According to protesters, Obama is persona non grata in Palestinian territories because of his "bias in favor of Israel." The Palestinians have long felt aggrieved by the U.S., accusing it of favoring Israel over the Palestinians.

Palestinians in Bethlehem tore down a banner of the U.S. president, hurled shoes at it and spray painted it with swastikas. Footage of the incident showed a taxi driving over the banner before it was set on fire.

The banner with Obama's picture is among many hung by activists, seeking to raise the American president's awareness of the lack of 3G frequencies in the West Bank. Israeli authorities control cellular networks there and they have not granted Palestinian telecommunication companies 3G.

Obama is scheduled to meet with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas on Thursday and travel to Bethlehem on Friday.

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