

The birthplace dilemma

Fight over occupied Jerusalem extends to passports

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Dubai: It is a predicament facing many people who were born in various Palestinian cities, towns and villages that became part of Israel after the 1948 war.

Where were they born exactly?

Were they born in Haifa, Palestine, or Haifa, Israel? Should their place of birth registered as Nazareth, Palestine, or Nazareth, Israel? The same question applies to Jaffa and other places in Israel.

The Palestinians, especially those who were born before 1948, refuse to be referred as born in Israel.

Those who were born after the creation of Israel, and are born in Israel, don't face such a situation and are registered as born in Israel.

The Arab-Israeli conflict runs deep in several aspects of peoples' lives, not just the political or the security angles of the nearly 65-year-old conflict.

The fight over occupied Jerusalem, which both sides claim as their capital, has also extended to passports and place of birth.

Jerusalem is the only city in the world where its name stands alone in any passport.

The Palestinians refuse the Israeli version of adding Israel to the name of Jerusalem.

They argue that it can't be followed by Israel because it is still a disputed land that they insist it will eventually be part of the Palestinian state.

Israel already says east Jerusalem is part of its eternal capital.

Under international law, east Jerusalem is an occupied city and until the issue is resolved, Jerusalem is regarded worldwide as just Jerusalem.