

CURRENT EVENTS IN LIGHT OF COVID-19

The Palestinian Association for Empowerment and Local Development - REFORM



<https://images.waifa.org/album/Details/43166>

*As the highly contagious Coronavirus, COVID-19, is affecting **228 countries and territories** around the world, Palestine attempts to contain a local outbreak that has effectively halted daily life and led to tens of thousands of people entering quarantine.¹*

Although **3,078,533** individuals in the West Bank and Gaza Strip have been tested for COVID-19, there remains a deficiency in the amount of testing kits, as there is an increase in the number of individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19. **2,009,161** individuals in the West Bank and Gaza Strip took the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and **1,774,238** individuals are completely vaccinated.²

Global Level³

of COVID-19 Cases

of Recoveries

of Deaths

of Active Cases

564,330,105

536,351,568

6,379,950

21,598,587

¹<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

²<http://www.corona.ps>

³<https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

Local Level ⁴				
Location	# of COVID-19 Cases	# of Recoveries	# of Deaths	# of Currently Infected Patients
West Bank (including Jerusalem)	412,862 <i>Including 76,530 in Jerusalem</i>	406,497 (75,286)	3,683 (304)	2,682 (940)
Gaza Strip	249,726	247,709	1,979	38
Total	662,588	654,206	5,662	2,720

The Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs demanded that a neutral medical delegation be sent to the Israeli occupation prisons to see the nature of the prisoners' health conditions. The Commission added in a statement today, that sending an international medical delegation to the occupation prisons has become a necessity, and that providing medical humanitarian protection has become an urgent and important matter. The Head of the Commission stated: "Despite the international and regional demands and campaigns launched by prisoners' institutions to release sick prisoners, the occupation authorities did not care, did not respond and refused to release any prisoners, but rather increased their repressive measures, and continued to disregard their health conditions." [Sources: The Commission of Detainees and Ex-Detainees Affairs' Website, Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

The overall Consumer Price Index (CPI) for Palestine during June 2022 increased by 0.38%, according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS). PCBS said in a press statement that the increase in the CPI resulted from the increase in the prices of fuel, eggs, chicken and bread, despite the decrease in the prices of fresh vegetables and fruits during the same month. It added that the overall CPI during June 2022 recorded an increase by 0.38% compared with May 2022 (0.41% in the West Bank, 0.31% in Gaza Strip, and by 0.31% in Jerusalem J1). [Sources: The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics' Website, Ma'an News Agency and Wafa News Agency](#)

The Head of the Ramallah Court of First Instance, Mr. Wissam Al-Salaymeh, announced that it was decided to close the court building as of Wednesday, July 13, 2022. Al-Salaymeh said in a statement that this came in light of the inability of the administrative staff to reach the court building due to the impossibility of holding court sessions after the Palestine Bar Association's decision to suspend work and organize a central sit-in. He added: "With all due respect to any union protest, such behavior is inconsistent with the conditions of the court building, due to the presence of files, documents and in-kind and cash deposits belonging to citizens. It was decided to close it because of the fear that these documents will be damaged or lost if the building remains open. [Sources: Raya News Network, Ma'an News Agency and Wafa News Agency](#)

Several attacks and arrests by the Israeli occupying forces took place across Palestine:



1. Today, dozens of settlers invaded the courtyards Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
2. Today, about 400 olive trees, belonging to Palestinians, were uprooted from Deir Sharaf lands, west of Nablus. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
3. Yesterday, the 83-year-old prisoner, Fouad Al-Shobaki, who is the oldest prisoner in Israeli prisons, tested positive for COVID-19, bringing the number of prisoners who were infected with the virus in Asqalan prison to 17, including 6 suffering from chronic diseases. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
4. Yesterday, Ras Al-Amoud neighborhood in Silwan, south of Al-Aqsa Mosque, was invaded. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
5. Yesterday, about 1,480 dunums of lands, belonging to Palestinians, were seized in the villages of Jalud and Qaryut, south of Nablus, and Turmusaya and Al-Mughayyir, north of Ramallah. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
6. Yesterday, house arrest was imposed on Jerusalemites, including a 17-year-old boy. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
7. Yesterday, a number of Palestinian homes in the city of Hebron were searched. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
8. Yesterday, military checkpoints were set up at the northern entrances to Hebron, and at the entrances to the towns of Al-Zahiriya, Sa'ir and Halhul. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
9. Yesterday, a Palestinian worker was shot near the apartheid wall on the lands of Anin village, west of Jenin. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

Local and International Events

U.S. President Joe Biden landed in Israel on Wednesday afternoon, opening his first visit to the Middle East as president, during which he will hold talks with officials of Israel, Palestine, and Saudi Arabia. Biden was welcomed in an official ceremony at the Ben Gurion Airport outside Tel Aviv by Israeli President Issac Herzog, Prime Minister Yair Lapid, ministers and lawmakers. For his part, Biden said the connection between Israel and the United States "is bone-deep," adding that he will work during his trip to advance Israel's integration in the region. "I realize that I had the great honor of living part of the great history" of this nation, stated Biden. "And I did say, I say again, you need not be a Jew to be a Zionist." [Sources: Ma'an News Agency, Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

Israeli Defense Minister Benny Gantz on Tuesday approved a series of "confidence-building" measures between Israel and the Palestinian Authority ahead of U.S. President Joe Biden's arrival in Israel on Wednesday. The measures were approved after a meeting last week between Gantz and P.A. leader Mahmoud Abbas, and additional steps are under consideration. Among steps approved by Gantz are the approval of six outlines for Palestinian construction in Judea and Samaria, and allowing an additional 1,500 workers into Israel from the Gaza Strip. A new crossing between Israel and the Palestinian territories will also be opened in northern Judea and Samaria to allow Israeli Arabs access to Jenin, according to the report. [Sources: Ma'an News Agency, Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

Guterres "reported that Israeli security forces killed 78 Palestinian children and injured 982 in 2021, more casualties [than] caused by any other armed force or group in the 21 conflict countries covered in his review," Human Rights Watch observed Tuesday. "Despite this, Guterres failed to include Israeli forces in his annual 'list of shame' for violations against children in armed conflict," the group added. "For years, Guterres has employed a double standard by listing some parties on his 'list of shame' while omitting others that have often committed far more violations," Human Rights Watch said. "Israel has never appeared on the list, even though the UN has found its forces responsible for killing or injuring more than 7,000 Palestinian children since 2015." [Sources: Ma'an News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

A joint statement by the spokespersons of the foreign ministries of France, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Sweden stated: "On 22 October 2021, Israel designated six Palestinian civil society organizations as terrorist organizations. Accusations of terrorism or links to terrorist groups must always be treated with the utmost seriousness. The designations needed therefore to be assessed carefully and extensively. No substantial information was received from Israel that would justify reviewing our policy towards the six Palestinian NGOs on the basis of the Israeli decision to designate these NGOs as 'terrorist organizations'. Should evidence be made available to the contrary, we would act accordingly. In the absence of such evidence we will continue our cooperation and strong support for the civil society in the OPT. A free and strong civil society is indispensable for promoting democratic values and for the two-state solution." [Sources: Ma'an News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

Miscellaneous

Today, the Israeli Ministry of Health confirmed that total number of COVID-19 cases is **4,482,095**, of which **11,101** died and **4,399,889** recovered. According to the Health Ministry's statistics, of the **71,105** active cases in Israel, **310** are in critical condition. Sources: Ma'an News Agency and <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries>.

- ❖ US President Joe Biden will be announcing that Palestinian cellular companies in the West Bank and Gaza will be allowed to connect to fourth-generation networks by the end of 2023, a senior administration official said Wednesday.
- ❖ As U.S. President Joe Biden arrived in Israel on Wednesday for his first Middle East trip as president, some Palestinian political factions have voiced their rejection of the visit, and called for protests in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.
- ❖ The European Union's Foreign Relations Committee Wednesday adopted a set of recommendations in favor of the Palestinian question. The Committee called on the European Commission to continue providing financial support to the Palestinian Authority in a timely manner in order not to obstruct the work of its institutions.
- ❖ The United States called on Wednesday for accountability over the death of Palestinian-American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh, whose killing during an Israeli West Bank raid is expected to be a major issue during President Joe Biden's Middle East visit.
- ❖ The Biden administration has invited Shireen Abu Akleh's family to Washington to "engage directly" with the slain Palestinian-American reporter's relatives, who have expressed outrage over the US determination that she was not intentionally killed by the IDF during a raid in the West Bank.
- ❖ US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan on Wednesday said the US would like a consulate in East Jerusalem, during a briefing with members of the press in Israel. "Obviously", he explained, reopening the consulate would require a "discussion with the Israeli government and the Palestinian leadership". He added that the administration would continue to work in this direction during the trip.

Following are links of useful resources for information and updates on COVID-19:

1. <http://www.corona.ps/details>
2. <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>
3. https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1
4. <https://www.moh.gov.ps/portal/en/>