

CURRENT EVENTS IN LIGHT OF COVID-19

The Palestinian Association for Empowerment and Local Development - REFORM



https://scontent.fir25-1.fna.fbcdn.net/v/h39.30808.5/296619052_5886849547991790_3141354472648658869_n.jpg?nc_cat=103&ccb=1-7&nc_sid=730e14&nc_ohc=7bGIPAd5exoAX-F9x0E&tn=QIHMykAnU7r4l9d&nc_ht=scontent.fir25-1.fna&oh=00_AT8E6vQ00r1BsJlo2vF3VV6rIADtUv8AI0Nd8o6RcCw&oe=62F58515

*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. **2,009,535** individuals in the West Bank and Gaza Strip took the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and **1,773,298** individuals are completely vaccinated.²

Global Level³

of COVID-19 Cases

of Recoveries

of Deaths

of Active Cases

589,673,022

561,196,441

6,437,065

22,039,516

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)	426,048 <i>Including 81,150 in Jerusalem</i>	418,120 (80,026)	3,694 (304)	4,233 (820)
Gaza Strip	262,430	248,061	1,987	12,383
Total	688,478	666,181	5,681	16,616

The fact-finding committee on the exchange of Pfizer vaccines, which was formed by a decision of the Council of Ministers on June 21, 2021, headed by the Director General of the Independent Commission for Human Rights, Dr. Ammar Dweik, disclosed the final results of the committee. The fact-finding committee indicated its satisfaction and welcomed the follow-up carried out by the Minister of Health, Dr. Mai Al-Kela, stressing that no sums will be deducted from the Palestinian treasury to return the 93,600 doses that were received from the Israeli side and then returned. The committee added that it confirmed that there were no direct financial transactions in the exchange deal, as well as the return of all doses, and thus no harm to public health occurred. In the same context, and based on the results of the committee, the Council of Ministers decided to close the investigation file in accordance with the results received by the Council. [Sources: The Palestinian Ministry of Health's Website, Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

The Palestinian Prime Minister, Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh, discussed the results of the three-day Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip, which resulted in the death of 44 citizens, and the deterioration in the health and service sectors. He said: "This aggression against the Gaza Strip, which is accompanied by the invasions to Al-Aqsa Mosque and the repeated invasions of Palestinian cities, is not only electoral propaganda in Israel, but it is a systematic act of aggression carried out with the aim to strike our cohesion, sow despair in the hearts of our people and strike our liberation, ending the occupation. But we will remain loyal to Palestine and our liberation. Today, the Security Council is holding a special session on Palestine, which we hope will rise to the level of the suffering of the Palestinian people and reach an implementable decision based on providing international protection for our people." [Sources: The Palestinian Prime Minister's Website, Raya News Network, Ma'an News Agency and Wafa News Agency.](#)

The Special Rapporteur for human rights in Palestine, Francesca Elbanese, condemned the Israeli air strikes on Gaza. "The recent air strikes are illegal, immoral and irresponsible because the humanitarian situation in Gaza is on the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe as it has been for decades, and the situation is urgent and requires urgent humanitarian assistance," Albanese said in a press interview. She called for lifting the siege, returning to normal life and ending the occupation, and that the United Nations and the international community shoulder their responsibilities to ensure that Israel does not go unpunished. [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, a demolition notice was issued for an agricultural pond, under construction, north of Jericho. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
3. Today, (9) barracks, belonging to Palestinians, were demolished in Al-Kaabneh Bedouin community, northeast of occupied Jerusalem. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
4. Today, lands planted with olive trees, belonging to Palestinians, were bulldozed, in the Khallet Salameh area, east of Tarqumiya town, northwest of Hebron. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
5. Today, the Federation of Arab Journalists condemned the Israeli aggression on the Gaza Strip, which lasted for three days, and resulted in the death of 44 citizens, including 15 children and 4 women, and 360 injuries. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
6. Today, lands, belonging to Palestinians, in the town of Sa'ir, north of Hebron, were seized. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
7. Today, (16) Palestinians were arrested across several Governorates in the West Bank, including: Hebron, Nablus, Salfit, Jenin, Bethlehem and Ramallah. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
8. Today, the village of Rummana, west of Jenin, was invaded, tear gas canisters were thrown at its residents and (2) Palestinian homes were demolished. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

Local and International Events

Saudi Arabia late Saturday condemned the ongoing Israeli airstrikes on the Gaza Strip, which left at least 29 Palestinians dead and dozens injured. A statement by the Saudi Foreign Ministry said the kingdom stands by the Palestinian people, calling on the international community to "shoulder its responsibility to end the escalation, provide the necessary protection to civilians and exert all efforts to end this conflict." Israel launched a military offensive in the Gaza Strip on Friday citing an "imminent threat of attack" by the Islamic Jihad group. [Sources: Ma'an News Agency, Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has hailed the truce that ended days of fighting between Israel and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad armed group in the Gaza Strip, saying it was a result of concerted "active diplomacy". The truce, brokered on Sunday by Egypt with help from the United Nations and Qatar, has so far been held after three days of Israeli bombardment killed at least 44 Palestinians, including 15 children. [Sources: Ma'an News Agency, Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

The United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres welcomed the ceasefire agreement that ended three days of Israeli bombardment of the besieged Gaza Strip that killed 44 Palestinians, including 15 children and four women, and wounded 360 others in addition to the destruction of a large number of homes, adding that the hostilities have contributed to a humanitarian emergency. Stephane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General, said in a statement that the Secretary-General "is deeply saddened by the loss of life and injuries, including children, from airstrikes in Gaza," extending "his deepest condolences to the victims of the violence and their loved ones." "The hostilities have contributed to a humanitarian emergency. Crossings into Gaza have been closed and power shortages are affecting essential facilities and supplies. Hundreds of buildings and homes have been destroyed or damaged, leaving thousands of Palestinians homeless," said the spokesperson. [Sources: Ma'an News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

The occupying forces reopened its two crossings into the Gaza Strip for humanitarian purposes, in an additional signal that its violent flareup with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad known as Operation Breaking Dawn is now over. Among the humanitarian items that entered Gaza was fuel for Gaza's sole power plant, which was forced to cease its operations on Saturday leaving the two million Palestinians in the Strip with only four hours of electricity a day. The occupying forces, however, has yet to decide to fully restore the operations at the crossings. [Sources: Ma'an News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

Sinn Féin spokesperson on Foreign Affairs and Defence John Brady TD has welcomed the introduction of a ceasefire which has ended Israeli attacks on Gaza, which were ongoing since the end of last week and resulted in deaths of dozens of civilians, including at least 15 children; with hundreds more being injured in the Israeli military retaliatory bombing campaign. [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 **4,598,476**, of which **11,433** died and **4,550,603** recovered. According to the Health Ministry's statistics, of the **36,440** active cases in Israel, **310** are in critical condition.

Sources: Ma'an News Agency and <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries>.

- ❖ Israel has arrested about 150 Palestinians in the occupied West Bank since the start of this month, the Palestinian Prisoners' Club (PPC) said.
- ❖ Turkey condemned attempts by hundreds of Israeli settlers to force their way into the flashpoint Al-Aqsa Mosque complex in occupied Jerusalem, as well as ongoing Israeli attacks that have caused the deaths of Palestinian civilians.
- ❖ Biden said that over last 72 hours, the United States has worked with officials from Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Egypt, Qatar, Jordan, and others throughout the region to encourage a swift resolution to the conflict. "I thank Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi and the senior Egyptian officials who played a central role in this diplomacy as well as Amir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani of Qatar and his team for helping to bring these hostilities to an end," Biden said in a White House statement.
- ❖ The United States, United Kingdom, France and the European Union have called for "restraint" following the launch by Israel on Friday of "Operation Breaking Dawn" against Palestinian Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip. The U.N. Security Council is scheduled to hold an emergency, closed-door meeting on Monday to discuss the matter.
- ❖ An Israeli Arab politician slammed Prime Minister Yair Lapid on Sunday, claiming he launched the operation in Gaza in an attempt to win the upcoming Knesset election "at the expense of Palestinian blood" and criticizing the Israeli public, which he claimed had "lost its humanity." In a statement, Joint List MK Sami Abou Shehadeh of the opposition said that "recent election polls have upset Lapid and Gantz," adding that "they are trying to pave their way back to power at the expense of Palestinian blood."

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/>