

CURRENT EVENTS IN LIGHT OF COVID-19

The Palestinian Association for Empowerment and Local Development - REFORM



As the highly contagious Coronavirus, COVID-19, is affecting **223 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 **3,095,778** 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. **1,892,024** individuals in the West Bank and Gaza Strip took the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and **1,655,631** individuals are completely vaccinated.²

Global Level³

# of COVID-19 Cases	# of Recoveries	# of Deaths	# of Active Cases
396,460,207	315,238,297	5,760,329	75,461,581

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)	364,513 <i>Including 50,635 in Jerusalem</i>	321,878 (38,216)	3,388 (269)	39,247 (12,150)
Gaza Strip	221,842	191,703	1,793	28,346

Today, 07.02.2022, the Palestinian Minister of Health, Dr. Mai Al-Kela, announced that there are **7,931** new people who have COVID-19, bringing the total cases to **586,355**. Since Thursday, 03.02.2022, there has been an overall increase of **21,871** cases in Palestine. The Ministry further indicated that there are a total of **513,581** recoveries and **5,181** deaths, while **67,593** remain active across the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, including occupied Jerusalem. Sources: [The Palestinian Ministry of Health's Website](#), [Ma'an News Agency](#) and [Wafa News Agency](#)

Today, the Minister of Health, Dr. May Al-Kaila, that the recovery rate from the Coronavirus in Palestine reached 87.6%, while the percentage of active infections was 11.5%, and the death rate was 0.9% of the total infections. Sources: [The Palestinian Ministry of Health's Website](#) and [Wafa News Agency](#)

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in the occupied Palestinian territories, the World Bank announced its supplementary contribution to the Palestinian Authority for essential health services. "COVID-19 continues to pose a high risk of morbidity and mortality, as well as a burden to healthcare systems. Due to low capacity of testing in the Palestinian territories, the number of COVID-19 cases are underestimated. Still, the numbers of new infections reported daily continue to reach new highs. The additional financing will support the original project by providing immediate response to COVID-19, but also contributing to long-term resilience," Kanthan Shankar, World Bank Country Director for West Bank and Gaza stated. Sources: [Raya News Network](#) and [Wafa News Agency](#)

Yesterday, the Palestinian Ministry of Health received protective clothing for medical staff working in the health sector from the Palestinian Police to confront the COVID-19 pandemic. Major General Youssef El-Helou stated: "This support is part of the community cooperation and support between the various national institutions and the local community. We all work hand in hand to provide security, safety and the necessary services for our people." Sources: [The Palestinian Ministry of Health's Website](#), [Raya News Network](#) and [Wafa News Agency](#)

The Palestinian Minister of Health, Dr. Mai Al-Kela, stated: "We are going through a difficult time, as the number of COVID cases exceeded the expected peak, and accordingly, schools were closed until the beginning of next week because it was found to be a source of infection." The Minister of Health added that the majority of Coronavirus infections are Omicron, and their symptoms are less severe for those who received the first, second and third doses, while those who did not receive the doses have more severe symptoms and a number of them are on artificial respirators in hospitals. Sources: [The Palestinian Ministry of Health's Website](#) and [Wafa News Agency](#)

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



1. Today, the town of Bazaria, north of the Nablus Governorate, was invaded and homes, belonging to Palestinians, were searched. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
2. Today, (6) Palestinian men, including a 15-year-old boy, were arrested from several Governorates across the West Bank, including: Bethlehem, Jenin and Hebron, in addition to occupied Jerusalem. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
3. Today, dozens of settlers invaded Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied Jerusalem. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
4. Today marks the 38th consecutive day that administrative prisoners continue to boycott the Israeli occupation courts. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
5. Today, settlers tried to burn down a house, belonging to a Palestinian, in Tel Rumeida, in the center of the Hebron Governorate. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Ma'an News Agency](#)
6. Today, a barracks, belonging to a Palestinian, was demolished in the village of Al-Rashaida, east of the Bethlehem Governorate. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Ma'an News Agency](#)
7. Yesterday, lands, belonging to Palestinians, were bulldozed south of the Nablus Governorate. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Ma'an News Agency](#)
8. Yesterday, the occupying forces notified the suspension of work on residential facilities, belonging to Palestinians, in the northern Jordan Valley. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Ma'an News Agency](#)

Local and International Events

Israel is edging towards stripping Amnesty International of its tax-exempt status following its historic finding that Israel was perpetrating apartheid against Palestinians. The global rights group made the determination in a report released on Tuesday, which crucially found apartheid existed even within Israel's own borders. Israel is also seeking to limit Amnesty's access to platforms within the country by using a law that targets those who boycott or have made statements urging others to boycott Israel. [Source: Ma'an News Agency and Wafa News Agency](#)

Deputy Ministry of Health in Gaza, Dr. Youssef Abu Al-Rish, submitted a letter to the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, Mrs. Lynn Hastings, to pressure the Israeli occupation to enter the diagnostic medical devices in order to enhance the Ministry's abilities to confront the fourth wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Abu Al-Rish calls on all concerned parties to pressure the Israeli occupation to bring the diagnostic medical devices that have been withheld for months into the Gaza Strip. [Source: Ma'an News Agency](#)

Yesterday, the Central Council of the Palestine Liberation Organization kicked off its 31st session in Ramallah. The two-day Central Council meeting, held under the title "Developing and activating the PLO, protecting the national project and popular resistance," discussed Israeli settlement activity, especially in occupied Jerusalem, as well as the deadlocked peace process and other political and domestic issues. "We pay great attention to the reform process, which is a continuous process, and we are ready to do what is necessary to make it successful," Abbas said. [Source: Ma'an News Agency](#)

The African Union unanimously adopted a decision to suspend granting Israel observer status in the Union. Press reports said the summit of the African Union's heads of state and governments suspended the AU's former chairperson Moussa Faki Mahamat's decision on July 22 to grant Israel observer status in the AU. The summit also agreed to establish a committee comprised of the new chairman of the AU, Macky Sall of Senegal, along with six other heads of state including Algeria, South Africa, Congo, Nigeria, Rwanda and Cameroon, to present recommendations to the next summit meeting on whether to revoke Israel's status as an observer or not. [Source: Ma'an News Agency and Wafa News Agency](#)

Jeremy Corbyn, a British politician, called upon world leaders and governments to hold the Israeli government to account for its 'despicable' treatment of Palestinians. Corbyn said in a series of tweets, "This week, Amnesty released its comprehensive report into the Israeli government's treatment of Palestinian people in Israel and the occupied territories, as well as refugees displaced by conflict and violence across the Middle East." There must be an urgent effort from world leaders and governments to hold the Israeli government to account for their despicable treatment of Palestinians, to end the apartheid and bring peace to the region, with justice, dignity and the guarantee of equal human rights for all," stressed the UK politician. [Source: Ma'an News Agency and Wafa News Agency](#)

Miscellaneous

Today, the Israeli Ministry of Health confirmed that total number of COVID-19 cases is **3,196,548**, of which **9,180** died and **2,839,623** recovered. According to the Health Ministry's statistics, of the **347,745** active cases in Israel, **1,255** are in critical condition. Sources: Ma'an News Agency and <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries>.

- The World Health Organization (WHO) has warned that it is starting to see a worrying increase in deaths in most regions of the world, and that it was premature for any country to give up attempts to halt transmission.
- Austria will introduce the European Union's strictest COVID-19 vaccine mandate this week, making it compulsory for anyone over the age of 18 to get the shot.
- Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands are lifting their remaining Covid rules in spite of surging cases.
- The US now ranks fourth globally for per capita COVID-19 deaths, according to Johns Hopkins University. The only large European country to exceed the US toll is Poland.
- The US has suffered 900,000 deaths from COVID-19, the highest figure of any nation.
- The mayor of Canada's capital has declared a state of emergency as protesters opposed to COVID-19 restrictions continued to paralyse central Ottawa.
- More than 17 million Vietnamese students are due to return to school for the first time in about a year, the health ministry has said, as authorities announced plans to start vaccinating children from as young as five against COVID-19.
- Australia will reopen its borders to fully vaccinated tourists from February 21, Prime Minister Scott Morrison has announced, ending some of the world's strictest and longest-running pandemic travel restrictions.

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/>