

# 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.<sup>1</sup>

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. **1,925,186** individuals in the West Bank and Gaza Strip took the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine and **1,683,846** individuals are completely vaccinated.<sup>2</sup>

Global Level <sup>3</sup>			
# of COVID-19 Cases	# of Recoveries	# of Deaths	# of Active Cases
418,764,978	342,255,457	5,871,689	70,637,832

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

<sup>2</sup><http://www.corona.ps>

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

Local Level <sup>4</sup>				
Location	# of COVID-19 Cases	# of Recoveries	# of Deaths	# of Currently Infected Patients
West Bank (including Jerusalem)	388,561 <i>Including 62,300 in Jerusalem</i>	369,072 (54,846)	3,496 (269)	15,993 (7,185)
Gaza Strip	239,395	205,208	1,861	32,326

Today, 17.02.2022, the Palestinian Minister of Health, Dr. Mai Al-Kela, announced that there are **2,928** new people who have COVID-19, bringing the total cases to **627,956**. The Ministry further indicated that there are a total of **574,280** recoveries and **5,357** deaths, while **48,319** 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](#)

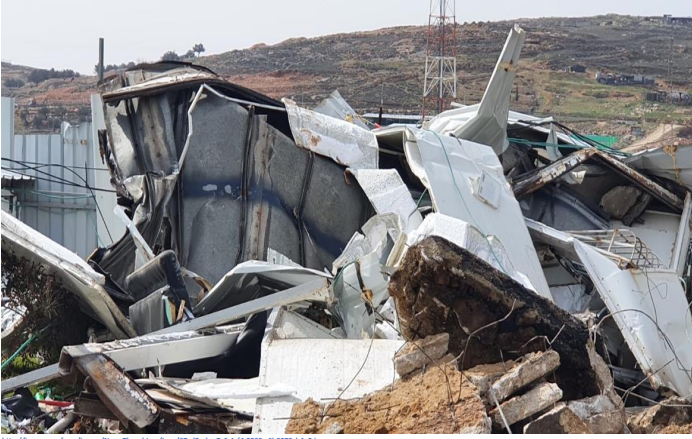
Today, the Palestinian Minister of Health, Dr. Mai Al-Kela, indicated that the recovery rate from the Coronavirus in Palestine reached 91.5%, while active cases reached 7.6%, and the death rate 0.9% of the total cases. [Sources: The Palestinian Ministry of Health's Website and Wafa News Agency](#)

The results of the Social and Economic Conditions and Food Security Survey, which provided an analysis of the latest developments in food security during 2020 and 2021, indicated that 60% of West Bank households were food secure, while 60% of households in the Gaza Strip suffer from moderate or severe food insecurity. [Sources: Raya News Network and Wafa News Agency](#)

The Palestinian Prime Minister, Dr. Mohammad Shtayyeh, indicated that there is a large amount of citizens who are taking the COVID-19 vaccination. He also called on citizens to adhere to the preventive measures and wear masks in public places. [Sources: The Palestinian Council of Ministers' Website, Raya News Network and Wafa News Agency](#)

The Central Elections Commission announced that the hours of receiving applications for candidacy in the local elections has been extended to 12:00 midnight, today. This is due to the result of the high turnout for the registration of electoral lists. The Commission confirmed in a statement that its offices in all the West Bank Governorates will remain open to receive candidacy applications, allowing all lists wishing to run to submit their applications to the Commission. [Sources: The Central Elections Commission's Website and Wafa News Agency](#)

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



1. Today, the village of Taqou, east of the Bethlehem Governorate, was invaded. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
2. Today, (6) Palestinian men were arrested across the West Bank, including the Governorates of Hebron, Ramallah and Al-Bireh, Bethlehem and Jenin, 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, video recordings were seized in the village of Shawawra, east of the Bethlehem Governorate. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)
5. Today, a commercial facility, belonging to a Palestinian, was demolished in the town of Beit Hanina, north of occupied Jerusalem. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Ma'an News Agency](#)
6. Today, the archaeological area in the town of Sebastia, north of the Nablus Governorate, was raided. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Ma'an News Agency](#)
7. Today, (2) agricultural rooms, belonging to Palestinians, were demolished in the town of Duma, south of the Nablus Governorate. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Ma'an News Agency](#)
8. Today, 3 Palestinian men were wounded and transferred to a hospital for treatment in the Jenin Governorate. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Ma'an News Agency](#)
9. Today, a poultry farm, belonging to a Palestinian, was raided in the town of Beit Lahia in the northern Gaza Strip. [Sources: Wafa News Agency and Raya News Network](#)

## Local and International Events

A four-day convention of the Palestinian Liberation Organization's (PLO) Central Council was held in Ramallah for the first time in four years based on the PA President Mahmoud Abbas' instructions. In the weeks ahead of this convention, Fatah leaders touted the council meeting as an effort to craft a new national vision in the wake of Israel's continued settlements expansion and mounting violations against the Palestinians. The meeting, according to them, was held to make crucial decisions with regards to the relationship with Israel, the suggestion that the PA will end its agreements with Israel. They stated: "The central council meeting was aimed at consolidating power in Abbas' hands within the PLO, and the only tangible result of the meeting was the appointment of Abbas' trusted advisers to senior positions in the PLO." [Source: Ma'an News Agency](#)

During a high level policy meeting, the first edition of the European Union – Palestine Investment Review was presented, outlining Team Europe investments at a remarkable amount of EUR 1.42 billion, which forms over 10% of the Palestinian gross domestic product. The European Union Representative, Sven Kühn von Burgsdorff, said: "Around one year ago, together the Palestinian Prime Minister we launched a new joint policy forum to foster European investment in Palestine, the EU – Palestine Investment Platform. Today we see a very positive trend of increasing volumes of quality investment by European partners through their development banks and financial institutions in cooperation with their Palestinian counterparts, working across different sectors of economy, contributing to job creation and tackling climate change, sustainable growth and welfare." [Sources: Ma'an News Agency and the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics' Website](#)

The UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has set up an ad hoc Conciliation Commission which will offer its good offices to both the State of Palestine and Israel with a view to resolving the dispute over allegations of racial discrimination amicably. Both Israel and the State of Palestine are parties to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which allows States to complain to the Committee about alleged violations of the treaty by another State party, in accordance with Article 11. A Conciliation Commission was set up in accordance with article 12(1) b of the Convention, and is composed of five human rights experts from the Committee. They are Verene Shepherd, Gün Kut, Pansy Tlakula, Chinsung Chung and Michał Balcerzak. The appointees are independent of any government or organization and serve in their individual capacities. The Conciliation Commission will review information and evidence, and prepare a report highlighting its findings and recommendations for the amicable solution of the dispute. [Sources: Ma'an News Agency and Wafa News Agency](#)

New York Congressman Jamaal Bowman withdrew his support for a bill that would help to expand the Abraham Accords, claiming that the agreement "isolates" Palestinians. In the letter, he said that some of the incentives of the Abraham Accords go against his values, such as the United Arab Emirates scoring the sale of advanced fighter jets and the U.S. recognizing Morocco's claim to Western Sahara. [Sources: Ma'an News Agency and Wafa News Agency](#)

## Miscellaneous

Today, the Israeli Ministry of Health confirmed that total number of COVID-19 cases is **3,491,965**, of which **9,687** died and **3,306,463** recovered. According to the Health Ministry's statistics, of the **175,815** active cases in Israel, **911** are in critical condition. Sources: Ma'an News Agency and <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries>.

- The number of new COVID-19 cases worldwide has dropped by 19% in the past week, while recorded deaths remain stable, according to the WHO's latest report on the Coronavirus pandemic.
- Israel's prime minister says the country's Coronavirus vaccination "green pass" system will be suspended as new daily cases of Covid continue to decline.
- The Hong Kong government plans to make up to 10,000 hotel rooms available for Covid patients as the city battles a surge in cases and local media reported the government will make testing compulsory from March.
- Police in the Canadian capital, Ottawa, have warned truck drivers blockading city's downtown to leave or face arrest in a crackdown seeking to end a three-week-long protest over Covid restrictions.
- Japan is to ease its strict border controls from next month, after criticism from students, workers and family members who have been in effect "locked out" of the country for up to two years.
- Moderna has applied for patents in South Africa relating to its Covid vaccine, prompting fears the company could eventually seek to prevent a new African vaccine manufacturing hub from making its own version of the mRNA shot.
- In the UK, cabinet splits have emerged over the government's "living with Covid" strategy, with Sajid Javid expected to push to retain some free testing and community surveillance of the virus in the face of a Treasury demand to slash the budget.
- Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Germany's 16 state leaders have agreed on a gradual plan to lift most Coronavirus restrictions by March 20. COVID infections are beginning to fall, and almost 75% of the population has been vaccinated at least twice.

### 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](https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1)
4. <https://www.moh.gov.ps/portal/en/>