

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2024



جامعة فلسطين الأهلية
Palestine Ahliya University



Continuation of Israeli violations against Palestine and higher education institutions

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Israeli Occupation Violations Against Education in Palestine

7 October 2023 - 24 September 2024

Students	West Bank			Gaza Strip		
	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested
Schools	79	445	217	10317 ⁺	19119 ⁺	-
Universities	34	123 ⁺	216 ⁺	660 ⁺	1389 ⁺	Unknown

Educational staff	West Bank			Gaza Strip		
	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested	Martyrs	Injured	Arrested
Schools	2	16	125 ⁺	416	2463	Unknown
Universities	-	Unknown	8	111	1212 ⁺	Unknown



Attacks on Schools & Universities

West Bank		Gaza Strip	
Schools	Universities	Schools	Universities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (72) schools were subject to vandalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (5) Universities were subject to repeated intrusions, vandalism and tampering with their possessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (124) Schools severely damaged in Gaza, and more than (62) Schools completely destroyed. ● (126) government schools/attacks & vandalism ● (65) UNRWA schools/attacks and vandalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (20) Higher Education Institutions severely damaged in Gaza ● More than (35) university buildings were completely destroyed. ● Partial destruction of (57) university buildings

In Gaza... Since the beginning of the aggression:

- (88) thousand students deprived to access to their universities.
- (630) thousand students deprived of access to their schools.
- Direct attacks by the Israeli occupation and its settlers on al-Kaabneh Primary school and Hares High School.

FinTech: A Digital Solution to the Shekel Accumulation Crisis in Palestinian Banks

The Shekel Accumulation Crisis in Palestinian Banks

The shekel accumulation crisis in Palestinian banks stands as one of the most pressing economic challenges currently facing the Palestinian financial system, with an estimated 22 billion shekels accumulating in these institutions. This multifaceted crisis intertwines political, economic, and social dimensions, all closely linked to the financial dynamics between Palestine and Israel. The root of this issue lies in the structural dependence of the Palestinian economy on Israel, as governed by the Paris Economic Protocol. This agreement mandates the Israeli shekel as a primary currency for daily transactions in Palestine, alongside the Jordanian dinar and the US dollar. As part of this arrangement, Palestinian banks are required to transfer surplus shekels to Israeli banks, which would either exchange them for foreign currencies or reinvest the funds. However, Israel frequently delays or outright refuses to accept these excess shekels, leading to severe backlog and storage challenges within Palestinian banks. Furthermore, Palestine's ability to manage its currency is extremely restricted, with no authority to issue a national currency or control key monetary tools like interest rates or cash reserves, thereby placing the Palestinian economy firmly under Israeli monetary control.



Dr. Mousa Ajouz
Head of Scientific
Research Department

Causes of the Crisis

A primary driver behind this crisis is the continuous inflow of shekels into the Palestinian economy particularly from Palestinian laborers working in Israel. Estimates suggest that between 145,000 and 220,000 Palestinian workers are employed in Israel, collectively injecting approximately 13 billion shekels annually into the local economy. This sustained influx of shekels adds to the growing cash reserves, which cannot be easily converted into other currencies such as the dinar or dollar due to structural limitations. Additionally, Israel collects clearance revenues on behalf of the Palestinian

Authority (PA), amounting to roughly 12 billion shekels in 2023 alone. The sheer volume of shekels flooding the Palestinian market places immense pressure on the banking system, as it far exceeds the capacity of local banks to convert or exchange the currency, exacerbated by Israeli-imposed restrictions.

The excessive accumulation of shekels also generates operational burdens for Palestinian banks. Managing large amounts of cash necessitates additional costs for security and insurance against theft or damage, increasing operational expenses. More critically, these accumulated funds remain “idle cash”—they cannot be reinvested or utilized within the local economy. Banks typically employ deposits in lending or investment strategies, but the surplus of shekels hampers these opportunities reducing profitability and placing an even greater financial strain on the Palestinian banking system. From a commercial standpoint, Palestinian traders face serious difficulties in importing goods due to the shekel crisis. The overabundance of shekels in banks, coupled with Israel’s refusal to accept them, prevents traders from converting shekels into necessary foreign currencies like the dollar or dinar to pay their overseas suppliers. This lack of currency diversity raises the cost of imports, driving up prices within Palestinian markets and worsening economic pressures for both consumers and traders. Furthermore, local banks struggle to finance these imports, as both the PA and Palestinian traders depend on the banking system to facilitate payments to Israeli suppliers. As the shekel crisis persists, banks are increasingly unable to efficiently provide these critical financial services.

The Role of FinTech in Solving the Crisis

FinTech has the potential to play a transformative role in addressing the shekel accumulation crisis, acting as a key pillar in a broader strategy aimed at improving financial efficiency and reducing dependency on physical cash. These digital solutions could revolutionize the Palestinian financial landscape by promoting technological innovation and expanding financial inclusion. The widespread adoption of electronic payment systems could fundamentally alter how transactions are conducted. Mobile payment platforms and digital wallets, for example, could replace the need for physical cash in everyday activities, such as wage disbursements, purchasing goods, and settling debts. This digital shift would significantly reduce the need to handle large amounts of physical shekels, thereby

alleviating the pressure on banks that are overwhelmed with excess cash. Electronic payments also allow banks to hold funds digitally, minimizing the costs associated with cash storage and security. In addition, FinTech presents a crucial opportunity to advance financial inclusion by offering affordable, user-friendly digital payment solutions. By integrating underserved populations into the digital banking system, the reliance on physical cash in daily transactions would be reduced. Successful international examples, such as “M-Pesa” in Kenya, highlight how digital financial inclusion can drastically decrease dependence on cash and foster greater financial stability. In the Palestinian context, FinTech can also support traders, who heavily rely on cash for both local and international transactions. By establishing digital payment networks through FinTech, Palestinian traders can conduct transactions entirely electronically, minimizing the need for physical currency handling, fostering a closed-loop digital financial system, and enhancing transparency in commercial activities. Such transparency would also bolster tax compliance and create a more streamlined regulatory environment.

Finally, FinTech could pave the way for broader adoption of digital or alternative currencies, offering new solutions to the shekel accumulation crisis. The introduction of digital currencies, potentially issued by the PA, or the expansion of existing alternative currencies such as the Jordanian dinar or US dollar, could present a viable alternative to the Israeli shekel. Digital currencies, when deployed through electronic systems, would reduce dependence on the shekel and mitigate the political and economic leverage that Israel exerts over the Palestinian financial system. This shift could lead to the establishment of a more independent, resilient, and flexible Palestinian financial infrastructure. The shekel accumulation crisis in Palestinian banks is a product of multiple, intertwined factors—including the inflow of shekels from labor in Israel, clearance revenues, and Israeli exploitation of the Paris Protocol—leaving the Palestinian economy heavily reliant on Israeli monetary policy. In this challenging context, FinTech offers a comprehensive and innovative solution to the shekel accumulation problem. The success of these digital solutions hinges on developing robust infrastructure fostering collaboration between public and private sectors, and implementing a flexible regulatory framework that supports the effective use of cutting-edge financial technologies.

Top News

Palestine Ahliya University welcomes His Excellency the Minister of Education and Higher Education, Dr. Amjad Barham, and briefs him on its preparations for the new academic year 2024/2025



Palestine Ahliya University welcomes its new students for the academic year 2024/2025.





Palestine Ahliya University continues to open its doors to welcome students from the Gaza Strip to complete their higher education online as visiting students for the first semester of the academic year 2024-2025.

Based on our national responsibility to support the resumption of the educational process in higher education institutions in the Gaza Strip, which aims to support the students of the region amid the ongoing brutal aggression.

The university is committed to providing the necessary support and the required assistance to the students from the Gaza Strip, ensuring that they will not bear any financial costs during their studies as visiting students. Additionally, all necessary facilities and support will be provided to guarantee a successful and fruitful educational experience for them.

This national initiative aims to continue supporting and assisting Palestinian people in the beloved Gaza Strip, helping them complete their higher education despite the current circumstances, with the hope that they will be able to return to their universities in the near future.

نضمد جراحنا... وبالعلم نقاوم



جَامِعَةُ فَدَسْطِينِ (الأهليّة)
Palestine Ahliya University

إعلان لإستقبال طلبة قطاع غزة
لاستكمال تعليمهم الجامعي إلكترونياً
كطلبة زائرين

الفصل الأول للعام الأكاديمي 2024 - 2025

Palestine Ahliya University holds its general academic meeting for the academic year 2024/2025.



International and Local Cooperation

Palestine Ahliya University explores avenues of cooperation with His Excellency the Ambassador for Palestinian Affairs and the Representative of Japan to Palestine, Mr. Yoichi Nakashima.



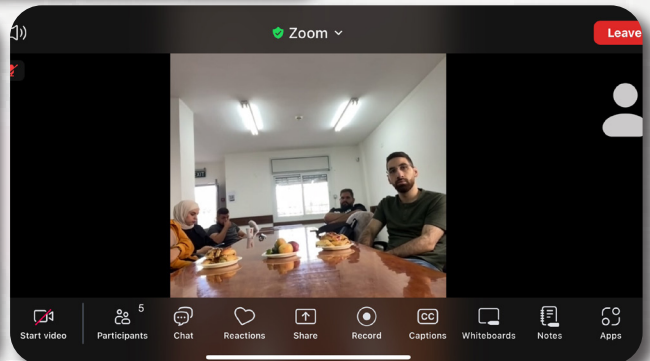
Student Activities and Events

- Students of the Community Entrepreneurship course at Palestine Ahliya University have launched the “Draw a Smile” initiative to distribute school bags and stationery, coinciding with the start of the new academic year. A total of 1,300 school bags were collected in collaboration with Palestinian businessmen, local institutions, and citizens from Hebron and Bethlehem governorates.

The initiative was launched in the presence of the University President, Dr. Imad Al-Zeer, the Academic Vice President, and the university’s presidential assistants, along with the Ayadi group which includes postgraduate students, under the supervision of Dr. Mahmoud Salahat, the instructor of the Community Entrepreneurship course in the Faculty of Postgraduate Studies.



- The Deanship of Student Affairs at Palestine Ahliya University implements a series of student activities in collaboration with various institutions in different fields, primarily focusing on first aid, disaster and crisis management, and organizing planning meetings to carry out student activities targeting Palestine Ahliya University students.



- The Deanship of Student Affairs and the Youth Friendly Health Center at Palestine Ahliya University, in partnership with the Medical Relief Society and in collaboration with the Palestinian Civil Defense, are implementing a training program for a second group of students in the field of 'Disaster and Crisis Management and Emergency Situations.'



- The Alumni and Training Unit at Palestine Ahliya University has launched a training program aimed at developing life skills for new students for the academic year 2024/2025. This program focuses on effective communication skills, self-marketing, time management, and presentation skills, specifically targeting first-year students, with the goal of empowering them to enhance their personal abilities and facilitate their integration into university life.



- The Ministry of Education and Higher Education honors the winning students in artistic and cultural competitions. Among those honored was Muhammad Anwar Al-Sheikh, a student from Palestine Ahliya University, for winning the short story competition, as well as Mr. Baha'a Arman, the Head of the Activities Department at the Deanship of Student Affairs, for his efforts in promoting culture among students through participation in competitions organized in this field.



- The Alumni and Training Unit at Palestine Ahliya University concludes the Education and Innovation Camp, which was implemented as part of the university's Positive Youth Engagement Program in collaboration with Mercy Corps through a partnership with the International Youth Foundation (IYF).

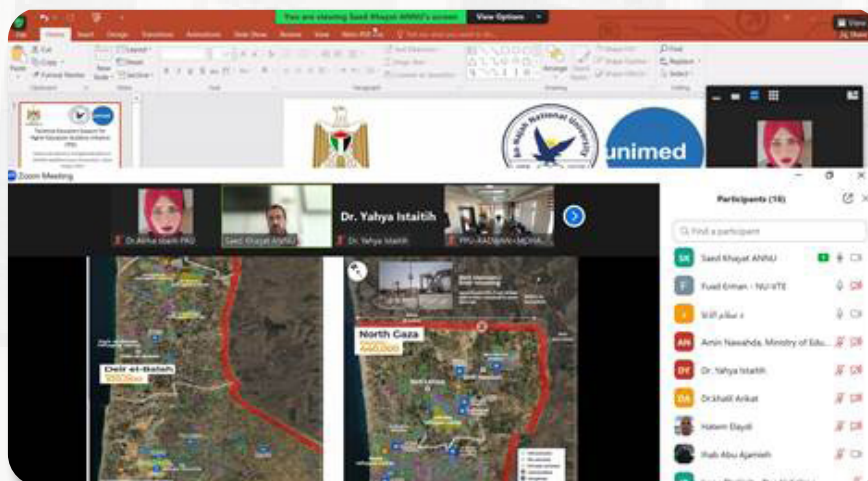


- The Deanship of Student Affairs and the Youth Friendly Health Center at Palestine Ahliya University, in collaboration with the Medical Relief Society, and coordinated by Dr. Heba Darras in partnership with the Ana Jawwal team, organizes a free medical day in the village of Kisan. The event includes a range of health services overseen by the medical relief staff and university students, including general medicine clinics, blood testing, and measurements of blood pressure and diabetes levels. The Ana Jawwal team also contributed to the coordination and organization of the medical day and provided free vouchers for the local residents.



- Palestine Ahliya University, in collaboration with the Palestinian Ministry of Health and Beit Jala Governmental Hospital (Al-Hussein), organizes a blood donation campaign for the people in the Gaza Strip.

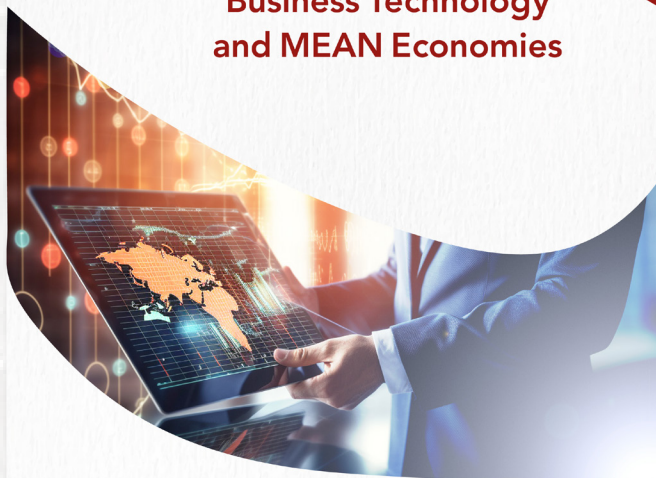
- Palestine Ahliya University and the Palestinian Ministry of Education and Higher Education hold a workshop on the Technical Education Support Initiative for higher education students (TESI). This initiative, held in collaboration with An-Najah National University and the Union of Mediterranean Universities (UNIMED), is part of the ministry's efforts to provide sustainable educational support for university students in Gaza. The challenges faced by students were discussed, along with ways to enhance resilience in education and ensure the continuity of learning.



Scientific Research Corner



Ahliya Journal of Business Technology and MEAN Economies



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We are excited to announce the launch of the inaugural issue of the

“Ahliya Journal of Business Technology and MEAN Economies”

proudly presented by the Research Department at Palestine Ahliya University. This distinguished journal marks a significant contribution to Scientific research in the MEAN, with a strong focus on the latest advancements in technology and business. It offers scholars and practitioners a unique platform to delve into the economic implications of these transformative innovations.

The first issue features a diverse selection of research articles, addressing key topics such as artificial intelligence, predictive systems, the digital economy, business technology, e-government, and electronic payment systems.

To explore the inaugural issue, please visit our journal's website:

<https://journal.paluniv.edu.ps/index.php/ajbte/index>

We also warmly invite researchers interested in joining our editorial board to reach out via email at:

ajbte@paluniv.edu.ps



Dr. Mu'taz Abu Sara participates in publishing a new research paper titled
"Message steganography using separate locations and blocks"



Dr. Majed Alshrouf participates in publishing a new research paper titled
"The Extent to Which Reserves and Provisions Were Affected in the Jordanian Financial Sector During the Corona Pandemic (Covid-19)"



Dr. Ahmad Batran participates in publishing a new research paper titled
"Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Toward Retinopathy of Prematurity Among Neonatal Intensive Care Nurses: A Cross-sectional Study"



Dr. Rasheed Arar participates in publishing a new research paper titled
"Exploring Jacques Lacan's Concept of the Unconscious and the Real"

Palestine Ahliya University is pleased to open its doors for productive research partnerships with academic institutions and distinguished researchers in various fields.

You can contact us via email at: research.clinic@paluniv.edu.ps



جَامِعَةُ فَدَسْطِينِ الْأَهْلِيَّةِ
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