

100 DAYS

Palestinian-Arab Citizens in Israel During the War on Gaza

A special report by the Mossawa Center



مركز مساواة
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Background

For over five decades, Israel's military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip has perpetuated a humanitarian, political, and economic crisis, exacerbated by a lack of adherence to international law. Furthermore, the intra-Palestinian divide between Hamas and the Palestinian Authority has played into the Israeli extreme right-wing government's hand.

Over the years, successive Israeli governments, particularly those led by Benjamin Netanyahu, adopted a strategy that emphasized dividing power between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. This approach significantly weakened the Palestinian Authority while simultaneously bolstering Hamas. The objective was to hinder the PA and any others within its West Bank government from progressing towards the creation of a Palestinian state. As such, the Israeli government allowed for the development and growth of Hamas as a political and militant force to counter the PA and PLO.

The Israeli government allowed for regular cash transfers from Qatar into Gaza for years. Israeli policy often portrayed the PA as a liability and Hamas as a beneficial entity. This perspective was openly stated by the current far-right Finance Minister, Bezalel Smotrich, in 2015. Netanyahu echoed similar sentiments in 2019, claiming that hindering the unity between the PA in the West Bank and Hamas in Gaza could prevent the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Instead of reconciliation, Netanyahu's and other Israeli governments over the past decade have sought to manage the conflict.

The rise of Hamas militarily and politically, coupled with the suffocating blockade on Gaza was clearly a recipe that made the horrible events of October 7, 2023, and the subsequent brutal war on Gaza an inevitable outcome. While the Israeli and international media covered the events of October 7th extensively, a notable absence from their coverage was what happened to Palestinian-Arab civilians within Israel. On the day of the attack, 20 Palestinian-Bedouin citizens from the Naqab (Negev) were killed, dozens injured, and 8 were taken hostage.

As the war dragged on, Palestinian-Bedouin residents in the Naqab were left abandoned, with no proper shelters or infrastructure to protect them. This deliberate neglect by the government has led to Palestinian-Bedouin residents in the south being significantly more likely to be injured by rockets than their Jewish counterparts.

From the very beginning, leaders of the Palestinian-Arab community expressed their opposition to targeting civilians. **Mr. Mohamad Barakeh, Chair of the High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens**, issued a statement reaffirming the unity of the Palestinian-Arab community against further escalation and calling for a ceasefire and the exchange of prisoners.

Emergency Network

In response to the escalating crisis, the lack of protection for the Palestinian-Arab, and its impact on Palestinian-Arab communities, Palestinian-Arab civil society organizations in Israel have established a joint emergency network. This initiative, led by the Mossawa Center, is a

collaborative effort by various entities, including, the Arab Center for Alternative Planning, the Higher Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens of Israel, the National Committee of the Heads of Arab Localities (NCALC), and the emergency network of Naqab organizations.

The primary focus of this network is to address the immediate and emerging needs of the Palestinian-Arab community, especially in mixed cities and unrecognized villages in the Naqab, where the crisis has significantly affected Palestinian-Arab citizens. Another key objective was to counteract the plans of Ben-Gvir and Smotrich of tackling the so-called "fourth front" Israel is fighting - the Palestinian-Arab citizens. These plans aimed to provoke the Palestinian-Arab community, potentially leading to violent confrontations.

Central to the network's efforts are dealing with arrests of young Palestinian Arabs, dismissals from workplaces, targeting and harassment of college and university students, distributing emergency information in Arabic, coordinating volunteers for support services like psychological aid and first aid, and facilitating evacuations. Special attention is given to the challenges faced by residents of unrecognized villages, including demanding from the state to provide shelters and safe rooms and alleviating shortages of food and medicine.

The network also focuses on the healthcare needs of the Palestinian-Arab community, addressing concerns about the availability of emergency medical services and preparing Nazareth hospitals for incoming casualties. It encourages medically trained volunteers to assist, especially in northern areas and in the Palestinian-Bedouin community in the south.

Furthermore, the network is actively engaged in countering socio-economic impacts and media misinformation. Efforts include challenging fake news and media incitement to prevent violence in mixed towns, a crucial step in maintaining accurate reporting and preventing misinformation-driven crises. This comprehensive approach by Palestinian-Arab civil society organizations reflects a proactive stance in safeguarding community welfare and rights amid ongoing challenges.

This most recent escalation has deeply affected the Palestinian-Arab community in Israel. There has been a noticeable pattern of systemic discrimination and selective law enforcement against Palestinian-Arab citizens, with a striking contrast in the handling of similar cases involving Jewish citizens. Moreover, the disturbing trend of racial discrimination, incitement, and unequal treatment, particularly in higher education institutions and workplaces, has only accelerated. Most importantly, the transferring of prosecutorial powers from the State Attorney to the police, usage of counter-terrorism laws, and introduction of new discriminatory and repressive bills have unleashed a systematic campaign of persecution of the Palestinian-Arab community, targeting their democratic and civil rights, particularly their rights to freedom of speech and dissent.

Introduction

The Palestinian-Arab public has lost its sense of citizenship, trust in the police, confidence in the prosecution, and in the judicial system. In this report, prepared by the Mossawa Center in January 2024 to mark 100 days of the war, we provide a detailed analysis of the status of Palestinian-Arab citizens of Israel amidst the backdrop of the ongoing war on Gaza. Our inquiry reveals a concerning trend of systemic discrimination and selective enforcement of laws against Palestinian-Arab citizens, juxtaposed with the handling of similar cases involving Jewish citizens. This report is designed to inform government officials, foreign embassies, diplomats, civil and human rights organizations, various government bodies, and the international community about these critical issues.

Since May 2021, the escalation of the conflict has markedly influenced the human and civil rights and daily lives of Palestinian-Arab citizens. The Mossawa Center has diligently gathered data and documented instances that point to a growing mistrust among the Palestinian-Arab public toward law enforcement and judicial institutions. This erosion of trust stems from a perceivable pattern of inadequate responses by the police to complaints filed by Palestinian-Arab citizens, especially those pertaining to incidents of racism and acts of terrorism by Jewish citizens.

A significant aspect of this report is the shift in prosecutorial powers to the police, a change that has led to widespread and indiscriminate arrests of Palestinian-Arab citizens for actions such as expressing their opinions against the war, expressing solidarity with innocent victims, or quoting religious texts. This transfer of authority has raised serious concerns about the infringement on freedom of expression and the potential misuse of power by law enforcement agencies.

Another focal point of our analysis is the impact of these discriminatory practices on higher education institutions, where we have observed an increase in racial discrimination and incitement against Palestinian-Arab students and faculty members. The report will also discuss the response of the Department of Internal Police Investigations (DIPI) to complaints of police violence, which has been criticized for its lack of adequate action.

We examine the substantial governmental budget cuts to the Palestinian-Arab community, which have been significantly steeper compared to other sectors. These cuts, totaling ILS 4.7 billion (\$1.26 billion) for the years 2023-2024, span multiple sectors including education, health, social welfare, higher education, infrastructure, and employment. Such reductions have severe implications for the community, limiting access to essential services, hindering educational and employment opportunities, and exacerbating existing socioeconomic disparities. These cuts reflect a form of systemic discrimination and punishment against the Palestinian-Arab community, undermining its rights and development.

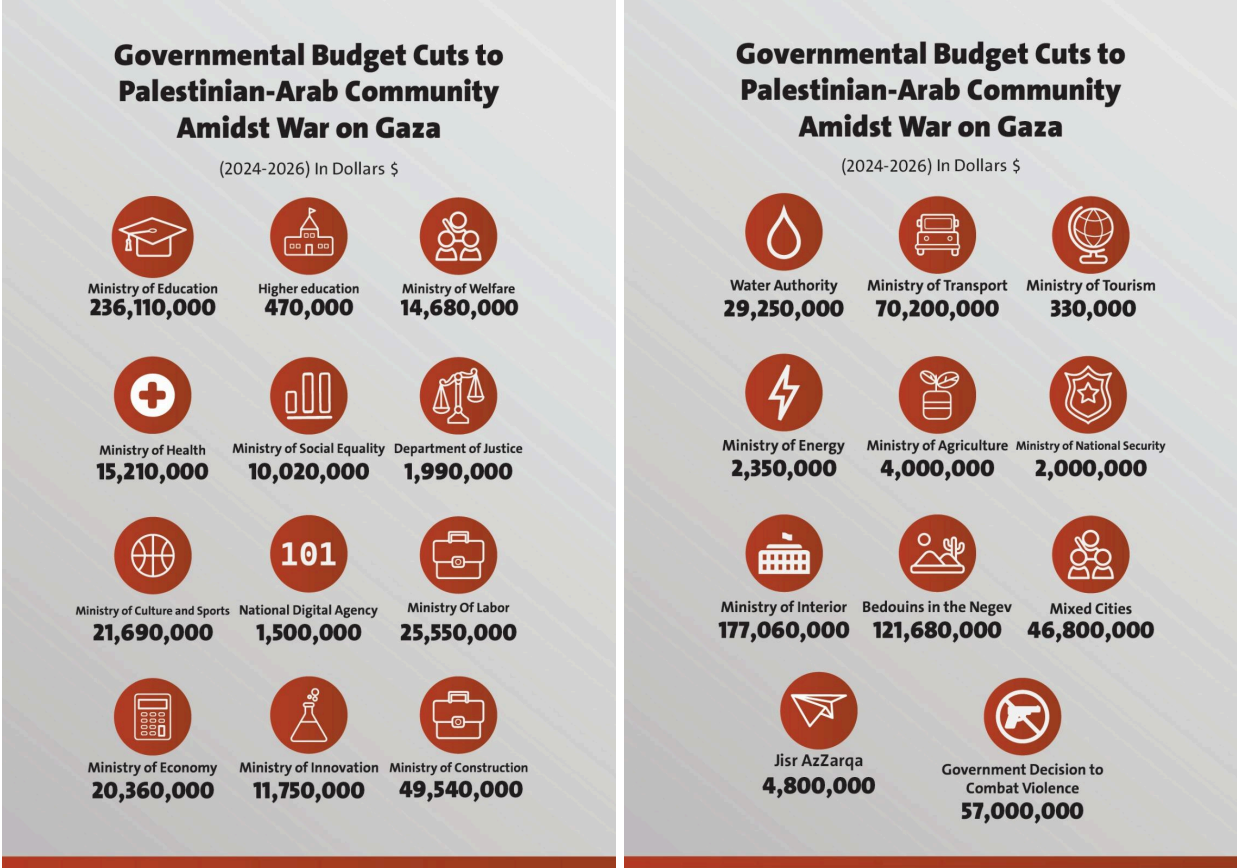
Furthermore, the report will highlight instances of workplace discrimination and arrests, detentions, and indictments under the Counter-Terrorism Law of 2016, which disproportionately affect Palestinian-Arab citizens. The report also highlights the disturbing practice of detaining young Palestinian-Arab females for potential prisoner exchanges.

Our objective is to shed light on the systemic challenges and human rights issues faced by Palestinian-Arab citizens of Israel. By providing this insight, the Mossawa Center seeks to foster a deeper understanding among international and national stakeholders, with the ultimate aim of engaging with and pressuring the Israeli government to uphold the human, civil, and democratic rights of Palestinian-Arab citizens of Israel.

In this report, certain names have been withheld or presented solely through initials to safeguard the identities of the individuals concerned, thereby preventing any potential for further persecution and incitement against them.

Governmental Budget Cuts to the Palestinian-Arab Community

The Mossawa Center's analysis of the 2024 budget reveals significant cuts in funding allocated to the Palestinian-Arab community. While a **5% reduction** is observed **across all governmental offices**, the cuts impacting the Palestinian-Arab community are **notably steeper**, amounting to **15%**. These cuts reflect a concerning trend in the reduction of governmental support for various sectors critical to the community's well-being and development.



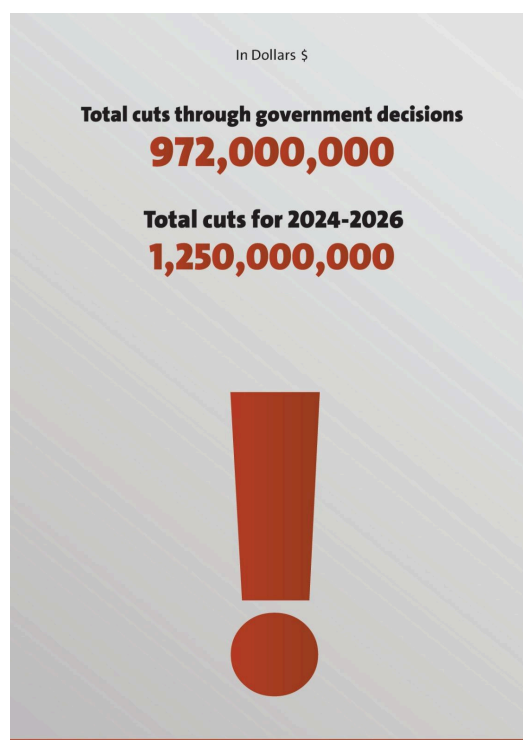
In total, a whopping **ILS 4.7 billion (\$1.25 billion)** in funding will be cut by the government for the Palestinian-Arab community for the years 2024-2026. **ILS 1.2 billion (\$320 million)** was cut

through government decisions alone. The following are annually cuts that will be made for key sectors in the next three years:

- **ILS 700 million (\$187 million)** from Palestinian-Arabs in the north and center.
- **ILS 156 million (\$42 million)** from the Palestinian-Bedouin community in the Naqab.
- **ILS 60 million (\$16 million)** from mixed cities.
- **ILS 302 million (\$80 million)** from the Ministry of Education.
- **ILS 227 million (\$61 million)** from the Ministry of Interior.
- **ILS 63.5 million (\$17 million)** from the Ministry of Construction and Housing.
- **ILS 26 million (\$7 million)** from the Ministry of Economy and Industry.
- **ILS 19.5 million (\$5 million)** from the Ministry of Health.

The budget cuts span multiple sectors including education, health, social welfare, higher education, national infrastructure, and employment. Each of these sectors faces significant reductions in funding, amounting to hundreds of millions of shekels. More importantly, these cuts are **in addition** to cuts from previous years, pushing funding into an even more critical condition in the Palestinian-Arab community. The following are the total cuts for key sectors for the years **2024-2026**:

- **ILS 2.1 billion (\$560 million)** from Palestinian-Arabs in the north and center.
- **ILS 468 million (\$124 million)** from the Palestinian-Bedouin community in the Naqab.
- **ILS 180 million (\$47 million)** from mixed cities.
- **ILS 908 million (\$236 million)** from the Ministry of Education.
- **ILS 681 million (\$177 million)** from the Ministry of Interior.
- **ILS 190 million (\$49 million)** from the Ministry of Construction and Housing.
- **ILS 78 million (\$20 million)** from the Ministry of Economy and Industry.
- **ILS 58.5 million (\$15 million)** from the Ministry of Health.



These budgetary reductions have severe implications for the Palestinian-Arab community. The cuts limit access to essential services, hinder educational and employment opportunities, and exacerbate existing socioeconomic disparities. They are a form of systemic discrimination and punishment against the Palestinian-Arab community, undermining its rights and development.

Systemic Neglect and Repression by Law Enforcement

In the current socio-political climate post-October 7, 2023, Palestinian-Arab citizens of Israel are facing a multifaceted crisis marked by systemic police neglect, selective enforcement of laws, and a blatant disregard for basic civil liberties. Incidents of unaddressed violence against Palestinian-Arabs, mass arrests under dubious allegations, and the stifling of peaceful protests illustrate a disturbing pattern of discrimination and suppression. This situation is exacerbated by the transfer of critical prosecutorial powers to the police, further eroding the already fragile trust between the Palestinian-Arab community and state institutions. The culmination of these issues paints a grim picture of institutionalized bias and an alarming erosion of democratic principles in Israel.

Persistent Neglect by Law Enforcement in Addressing Targeted Incitement and Harassment of Palestinian-Arab Citizens

Dalal Abu Amneh, a prominent artist living in Afula, faces ongoing racist protests and harassment following her arrest due to a post on her social media that said: "لا غالب الا الله" (There is no victor but God). The protests include daily demonstrations outside her home, yelling and screaming, verbal abuse, cutting off the water supply, and preventing and harassing friends and family from visiting her. The demonstrators, led by the city mayor, also hung racist slogans around her home, further intimidating her husband (who is the deputy head of the Emek Medical Center in Afula) and her family.

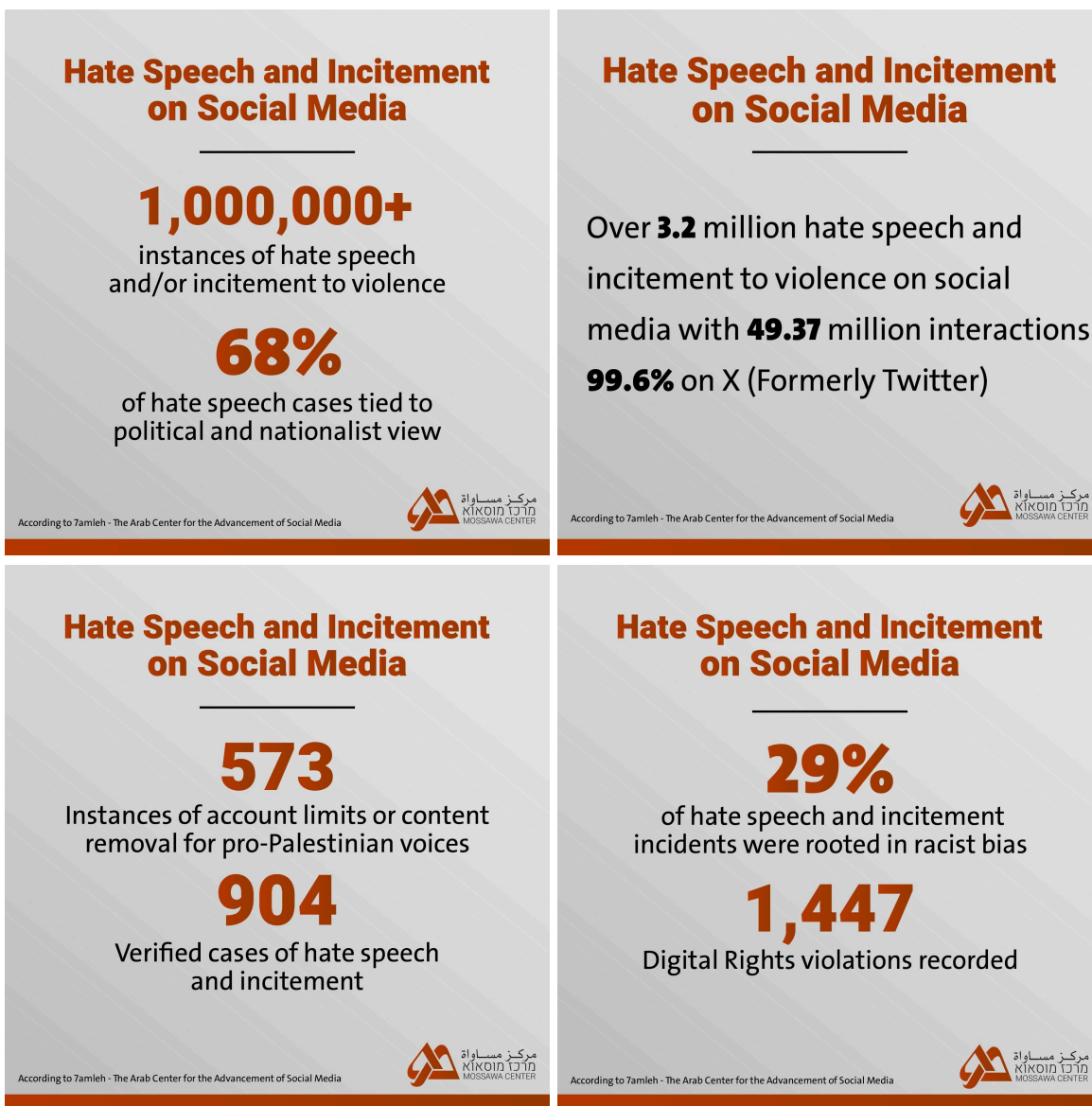
In another case, members of the "[La Familia](#)" organization attempted to forcibly enter a department at the **Sheba Medical Center at Tel Hashomer**, intending to assault Palestinian-Arab patients and medical teams. Their actions caused riots on hospital grounds and attempts to break into departments, raising serious concerns for the safety of hospitalized Palestinian-Arab patients. Despite the gravity of these actions, there were no subsequent arrests, investigations, or charges against these individuals.

During a Torah lesson at the Mosayoff synagogue, [Rabbi Meir Shmueli made](#) highly inciting remarks against Palestinian-Arab medical staff. He accused them of intentionally harming and murdering Jewish patients, a baseless and dangerous accusation. His statements were disseminated online, gaining significant viewership. These comments not only spread hate but also potentially endanger lives by discouraging people from seeking medical care based on the ethnicity of the healthcare provider.

In response, the Mossawa Center has requested the State Prosecutor's Office to initiate a criminal investigation under specific sections of the Israeli Penal Law and the Counter-Terrorism Law. However, as of now, there has been no response to this request.

In response to these provocative statements, human rights organization Checkpoint Watch (Machsom Watch) reached out to Police Commissioner Yaakov Shabtai and Deputy State Attorney Alon Altman, urging them to initiate an investigation against MK Nissim Vaturi for his inflammatory remarks. However, as of now, there has been no response to Checkpoint Watch's request for investigation, leaving the matter unresolved and unaddressed.

Hate Speech and Incitement on Social Media



According to a [report](#) by 7amleh - The Arab Center for the Advancement of Social Media, within just a month of the war, there have been:

- 1,000,000+ instances of **hate speech and/or incitement to violence** in Hebrew targeting Palestinians and advocates for Palestinian rights on social media.
- **68%** of the documented instances of hate speech and incitement were **based on political affiliations and nationalist sentiments**.
 - **29%** of these instances were rooted in **racist bias**.

In the same time frame, the **Palestinian Observatory of Digital Rights Violations (7or)** recorded **1,447 digital rights violations** across social media platforms, encompassing:

- **573** cases of **account restrictions or content takedowns** affecting Palestinian users or supporters of Palestinian rights.
- **904** manually verified cases of **hate speech and incitement to violence**.

Since the start of the war, 7or's [Violence Indicator](#) has tracked **3,200,000+** cases of **hate speech and incitement to violence** on social media, with **49,370,000+** **engagements** on such posts. It also notes that **99.6%** of posts were on **X (formerly Twitter)**.

Free Speech Suppression

Since the onset of the war on Gaza, there has been a concerning surge in the arrests and detentions of Palestinian individuals spanning the occupied Palestinian territories and Israel. These detentions have indiscriminately targeted a broad spectrum of the Palestinian population, including but not limited to journalists, political figures, artists, students, legal professionals, healthcare workers, and other civilians. Alarming, this group also encompasses women and children, highlighting the extensive nature of these arrests.

In conjunction with these detentions, there has been a marked increase in **criminal investigations for speech-related offenses** within Israel. Since October 7, **over 350 such investigations** have been initiated, predominantly under the allegations of supporting terrorism. A significant portion of these arrests is attributed to social media activity. This crackdown on free speech, particularly on digital platforms, raises serious concerns about the erosion of fundamental human rights and freedoms. It reflects a troubling trend where expressions of opinion, especially those dissenting or critical, are being criminalized.

Selective Enforcement by the Police

Data gathered by the Mossawa Center since May 2021 indicates a pattern in which the police inadequately address complaints lodged by Palestinian-Arab citizens of Israel against Jewish citizens. These complaints specifically pertain to incidents of incitement to racism and calls for actions that meet the criteria for being classified as "terrorism."

The following are some key cases documented by the Mossawa Center

- **A.A.G.**, after being assaulted and threatened by Jewish citizens, submitted a complaint, only to be informed days later that the case had been closed without prosecution of the suspects.
- **H.S.** from Tira, facing incitement at the **University of Beer Sheva**, also saw his complaint dismissed.
- Journalist **Hanaa Mahamid** reported life-threatening threats but has not received any response.
- **M.A.**, a victim of an attack by security guards at **Hadassah Hospital**, filed a police complaint that remains pending.
- Palestinian-Arab students at the **Technion and Netanya College** facing threats have seen their complaints go unaddressed.

This pattern of selective enforcement intensified noticeably following the initiation of "**Operation Guardian of the Walls**" in May 2021. The operation was characterized by mass arrests, predominantly of Palestinian-Arab citizens, many of whom faced disproportionately severe punishments for their alleged offenses. In stark contrast, similar or more severe offenses by Jewish citizens often concluded with case closures, highlighting an alarming inequity in the justice system.

The disparity is evident in the arrest and indictment statistics. During the operation, approximately **3,600 Palestinian-Arabs and 150 Jews were arrested**. Of the **397 indictments** filed against **616 defendants**, **89% were Palestinian-Arab citizens**, as reported in the 2022 State Prosecution report.

Post-October 7, 2023, this discriminatory trend has only intensified. Palestinian-Arab citizens have been frequently arrested for actions such as quoting the Quran or expressing opinions, which are then construed as incitement or support for "terrorism." These arrests have been significantly disruptive to their daily lives.

Noteworthy cases documented by the Mossawa Center include:

**Selective Enforcement
by the Police**

3,600 Palestinian-Arabs and **150** Jews were arrested during "Operation Guardian of the Walls" in 2021.

397 indictments filed against **616 defendants**, **89%** of which were against Palestinian-Arab citizens

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- **Dr. Aamer Alhaziel**, a political science and urban planning expert and **former Mayor of Rahat**, the largest Palestinian-Bedouin city in the Naqab, analyzed the ground attack on Gaza in an article. He was subsequently arrested and released.
- **Maisa Abd Elhadi**, an actress, was charged by Israeli authorities with "inciting terrorism" after expressing solidarity with the people of Gaza. Elhadi was released from house arrest but the Nazareth prosecutor requested that she remains under arrest until the completion of legal proceedings. The prosecutor's office also sought to confiscate her phone, which they described as "the tool used for incitement."
- Former **Knesset Member Mohammad Barakeh**, chair of the High Follow-Up Committee for Arab Citizens, and other former MKs including **Sami Abu Shahadeh**, **Hanin Zoabi**, and **Dr. Mtanes Shihadeh**, were detained on suspicions of planning to attend a peaceful rally in Nazareth. They were all arrested and later released.
- **L.M.**, a nurse at **Bnai Zion Hospital**, experienced arrest, interrogation, and extended detention. Her arrest was widely publicized, yet she was released due to a lack of prosecutable evidence. Following the publicized arrest, she was terminated from her job of 33 years, causing her irreparable harm.
- **Dr. Abed Samara**, the **head of the Intensive Cardiac Care Unit at Sharon Hospital in Petah Tikva**, was suspended from his position after 15 years at the hospital following allegations that he published a post supporting terrorism on his Facebook page. Nevertheless, the hospital administration merely verified that it was his page, immediately sent him a suspension letter, and even contacted the police. A subsequent investigation revealed that the post was old and unrelated to the war. Dr. Samara was exonerated but decided to leave the hospital.

This clear bias in law enforcement and judicial processes disproportionately and unjustly targets Palestinian-Arab citizens. These practices not only contravene principles of equality and justice but also foster an environment of fear and discrimination.

Transfer of Prosecution Powers to the Police

The transfer of investigation powers to the police in cases of freedom of speech since the outbreak of the war marked a significant shift in handling offenses related to the publication of opinions. The prosecution, despite being aware that police officers lack the authority to decide on special offenses as outlined in Prosecution Guideline 14.12, delegated its investigative responsibilities to the police. These offenses, due to their sensitive nature and the fine line between incitement and freedom of expression, traditionally required the discernment and expertise of the prosecution. This change led to indiscriminate mass arrests by the police for acts such as publishing, protesting, or criticizing government policies.

Police Violence and the Department of Internal Police Investigations

The Department of Internal Police Investigations (DIPI) within the Ministry of Justice has for years been criticized for its inadequate response to complaints against police violence. Numerous complaints detailing violent behavior by police officers during arrests and detentions have been lodged with DIPI but have not received attention. For instance, **Muhammad Jamal Aluki** from Tur'an, who filed a complaint against two officers for assault, has yet to receive a response.

Mass Arrests, Detentions, and Indictments Under Counter-Terrorism Law

The mass arrest campaign initiated on October 7th starkly reflects a discriminatory policy disproportionately targeting Palestinian-Arabs. This operation has led to the **detention of 300 Palestinian-Arabs** in Israel, presenting a glaring discrepancy in indictments: **over 132 against Palestinian-Arabs compared to a mere 3 against Jewish citizens**. This significant disparity exemplifies discriminatory practices and a bias in law enforcement.

A closer examination of the indictments reveals a troubling uniformity in their formulation, which overlooks the linguistic and substantive nuances in the content of the accused publications. Many of these include Quranic verses or viewpoints divergent from government policy. While some statements may be irritating, they do not necessarily violate the legal bounds of permissible expression. Nonetheless, these cases are processed under the **Counter-Terrorism Law of 2016**, raising serious concerns about the misuse of this law. Alarming, a considerable number of these detainees are young students, still in the process of shaping their political views.

The conditions faced by these detainees are deeply concerning and violate basic human rights standards. They have endured severe hardships, such as the closure of bank accounts, canceling car insurance, and credit cards, disrupting their daily lives and financial stability. The inhumane conditions of their detention include overcrowded cells, lack of proper bedding or mattresses, substandard and uncooked food, inadequate clothing, absence of basic hygiene facilities, and insufficient medical care. Reports highlight particularly alarming conditions for female detainees, with up to **12 women confined in cells designed for four**, enduring harsh winter conditions without proper heating or bedding, and being completely isolated from the outside world, including denial of legal counsel or family visits.

Mass Arrests, Detentions, and Indictments Under Counter-Terrorism Law

300 Palestinian-Arabs citizens detained on October 7th.

with **132** indictments against Palestinian-Arabs compared to only **3** against Jewish citizens.



Furthermore, the detainees have been subjected to humiliating treatment, including being photographed or filmed by police during detention, with these images often being publicly circulated. This has led to personal attacks and further victimization, exacerbating their situations, particularly in cases where charges were eventually dropped or convictions not secured.

Prohibition of Demonstrations in Palestinian-Arab Localities

The prohibition of protest events in Palestinian-Arab localities has been marked by threats against community leaders, party representatives, and activists. The prosecution's stance in these matters, as presented in court, has raised questions. For instance, following a demonstration in Umm al-Fahm on October 19, the prosecution continued to extend the detention of two demonstration organizers, **Adv. Ahmad Kalifa** and **Muhammad Taha Jabarin**. Their continued detention persists even after indictments have been filed, not for investigative purposes but seemingly as a punitive measure.

On November 7th, a significant incident occurred in Umm al-Fahm, highlighting the ongoing complexities surrounding civil liberties and the right to peaceful assembly in Israel, particularly for Palestinian-Arab citizens. A planned peaceful protest in the city was not granted a permit by the police, a decision that was later reinforced by the Israeli Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court's ruling to support the police's decision not to issue a permit is particularly noteworthy. It reflects a judicial stance that seemingly gives precedence to specific concerns related to security or public order over the fundamental rights to freedom of assembly and expression. Such a stance is emblematic of a broader trend within Israel, where Palestinian-Arab citizens often encounter significant hurdles in exercising their civil liberties.

This incident in Umm al-Fahm is not just an isolated case but rather a microcosm of the larger challenges faced by minority groups in asserting their rights within the Israeli societal and legal framework.

However, somewhat positively, the Supreme Court issued a ruling banning Itamar Ben-Gvir, the far-right National Security Minister, from issuing operational orders to the police concerning their handling of demonstrations and the use of force during protests.

Nevertheless, the police continue to deny permits for demonstrations. In striking contrast to their approach towards protests by Palestinian-Arab citizens and those against the war on Gaza, Israeli police have shown a markedly different stance when it comes to demonstrations organized by Jewish organizations and families of the abducted.

While demonstrations in Haifa by Palestinian-Arab citizens against the Gaza conflict have been denied permits, similar requests by Jewish groups in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem have been approved. This is a clear case of the police intervening politically in the right to freedom of protest. They have not only exerted a considerable influence on public discourse but have also curtailed the ability to voice dissenting opinions, especially among Palestinian-Arab citizens.

“Nazi Hunters” Telegram Channel

The "**Nazi Hunters**" Telegram channel represents a dangerous example of incitement against Palestinian-Arabs citizens in Israel. This channel is used for disseminating personal details of Palestinian-Arab activists and leaders, including photographs, residential addresses, and other sensitive personal information. The content posted not only vilifies these individuals by associating them with negative rhetoric but also encourages and incites violent actions against them, including arrests and potential physical harm.

The channel has been particularly focused on targeting prominent figures in the Palestinian-Arab community, with instances like the case of **Issa Fayed** from Yafa an-Naseriyye, who was arrested and subsequently released under stringent conditions, exemplifying the direct impact of such targeted digital campaigns. This use of social media to systematically track and incite against Palestinian-Arabs is a serious escalation in incitement, intimidation, suppression of freedom of expression, and violation of privacy rights.

Arrest of Young Females for Prisoner Exchange Purposes

In an unprecedented move, the Israeli government has initiated a policy of conducting prisoner exchanges involving detainees who have not faced legal convictions. This approach, as evidenced in the prosecution's efforts, involves extending the detention of Palestinian-Arab women, **many of whom are under 20 and include a pregnant woman**. Their extended detention, lacking clear legal justification, is purportedly for potential prisoner exchanges with Hamas.

In the notable cases of **Sh.S.** and **R.M.**, students at the **Technion**, the legal system has taken a concerning turn. The prosecution's explicit intention to prolong their detention for the purpose of exchanging them with Israeli prisoners held by Hamas marks a dangerous precedent. These actions reflect a grave situation where individuals, detained merely for expressing their political views and without any legal convictions, are being used as bargaining chips in prisoner swap negotiations with Hamas. This situation not only undermines the legal process but also indelibly marks these individuals' lives with the stigma of being part of a deal with Hamas.

The impact of this policy extends beyond the individual detainees. Young women find themselves arrested for their political expressions, held under extended detentions, and listed for prisoner exchange negotiations, sometimes against their and their families' wishes, and despite advice from their legal representation. Some of these women have successfully challenged their inclusion in these exchanges. However, despite eventual releases, the legal charges against them often remain unresolved, causing lasting reputational harm.

Currently, at least nine female citizens remain detained under severe conditions, apparently in anticipation of future exchanges. The harshness of their detention is exacerbated by delayed legal proceedings, with courts extending a security restriction that bars their physical presence in courtrooms until January 23, 2024. This delay hinders their ability to defend themselves, testify in their own cases, or even participate in hearings via video conference, further entrenching the injustice of their situation.

Persecution of Palestinian-Arab Leadership

The systematic and aggressive repression of Palestinian-Arab leadership in Israel marks a troubling trend in the nation's political landscape. Palestinian-Arab Members of the Knesset, namely those from Hadash and the United Arab List, face unprecedented sanctions and potential expulsion for their legitimate political expressions and criticisms. This pattern of suppression extends beyond the legislative arena, as seen in the detainment of former Palestinian-Arab MKs en route to a peaceful protest. These actions collectively signify a deliberate effort to stifle and marginalize Palestinian-Arab voices, challenging the core values of democratic governance and political freedom.

Palestinian-Arab Parties in the Knesset

In a brazen act of political suppression and a clear violation of democratic principles, Israeli Knesset members from various coalition parties have orchestrated punitive measures against Palestinian-Arab MKs, exemplifying a systematic effort to silence and marginalize the Palestinian-Arab voice within Israel's political landscape. **MK Aida Touma-Suleiman of Hadash** and **MK Iman Khatib Yassin of the United Arab List** have been subjected to severe sanctions, including a two-month ban from Knesset hearings and votes, coupled with unjust salary deductions, solely for their legitimate criticism of the government's actions in Gaza.

MK Ofer Cassif, also of Hadash, faced suspension and salary revocation for exercising his right to free speech. These actions are not only repressive but also represent a flagrant attempt to stifle the Palestinian-Arab community's political representation and activism, undermining the very essence of democratic governance and the right to dissent.

More recently, **MK Oded Forer of Yisrael Beytenu** has successfully gathered the requisite 85 signatures to commence impeachment proceedings against MK Cassif. This move, aimed at expelling Cassif from the Knesset, is predicated on his public endorsement of South Africa's motion that accuses Israel of genocide before the International Court of Justice, coupled with his criticisms of the Israeli government's conduct in Gaza. This action signifies a drastic escalation in efforts to suppress Palestinian-Arab representation within the Israeli legislative body. It underscores a disturbing trend of using parliamentary mechanisms to silence dissent and voices critical of government policies, particularly those representing Palestinian-Arab interests and perspectives.

These actions are not only repressive but also represent a flagrant attempt to stifle the Palestinian-Arab community's political representation and activism, undermining the very essence of democratic governance and the right to dissent. This approach, if successful, would set a concerning precedent for the expulsion of Knesset members based on their political statements, further marginalizing Palestinian-Arab perspectives in the Israeli political landscape.

Palestinian-Arab Public Figures

In another troubling event, four former Palestinian-Arab Knesset Members were detained by Israeli police while en route to an anti-war protest. The detained individuals included prominent figures such as:

- **Mohammad Barakeh:** Chair of the High Follow-Up Committee for Arab citizens of Israel and former Hadash MK
- **Sami Abu Shehadeh:** Balad chair and former MK
- **Hanin Zoabi:** former Balad MK
- **Mtanes Shihadeh.:** former Balad chair and MK

The police's rationale for the detention centered around concerns that the planned protest could incite violence and disrupt public order. This preemptive action against the former MKs raises serious questions about the state of political freedom and expression, especially for Arab leaders in Israel. The protest, which was characterized as an anti-war event, indicates a peaceful intent, yet the response from the authorities was one of apprehension and control.

The detention of these leaders, particularly in the context of attending a peaceful protest, is indicative of a troubling intensification of the suppression of political dissent and the targeting of Palestinian-Arab voices in the Israeli political arena.

This episode not only highlights the challenges Arab leaders face in exercising their political rights but also underscores the importance of vigilance in protecting democratic values and the right to peaceful protest.

Persecution in Higher Education and the Workplace

This shift in enforcement has profoundly impacted various institutions, notably in higher education, the Israeli Bar Association, and in the workplace. There has been a marked increase in racial discrimination and incitement against Palestinian-Arab citizens in these areas, leading to collective punishments.

Higher Education Institutions

This shift in enforcement has profoundly impacted various institutions, notably in higher education. Palestinian-Arab students constitute **18%** of all students in Israel, totaling approximately **60,600 students**. There has been a marked increase in racial discrimination and incitement against Palestinian-Arabs within these institutions, leading to collective punishments.



There have been about **160 disciplinary proceedings** throughout Israel's colleges and universities against Palestinian-Arab and left-wing Jewish students since the outbreak of the war. Proceedings were initiated against students for various expressions ranging from solidarity with Gaza residents to non-war related posts, underscoring a disproportionate pattern of targeting and punishment for Palestinian-Arab students.

The persecution is not confined to students; faculty members have also been subjected to punitive actions, including termination, for expressing political opinions. The range of disciplinary outcomes, including complete acquittals, educational punishments, temporary removals, and terminations of studies, further highlights the arbitrary and inconsistent nature of these proceedings. Approximately more than **130 Palestinian-Arab students and lecturers** from **33 higher education institutions** were summoned to disciplinary hearings and suspended or expelled through expedited and improper procedures.

A [survey](#) conducted among 809 Palestinian-Arab students across various institutions highlighted several issues:

- **88%** report a **sharp increase in incitement** against them.
- **86%** feel a "**very hostile**" atmosphere towards them on campuses and social networks.
- **86%** believe their academic institution has been **unfair** to Palestinian-Arab students since October 7th.
- **77%** do not feel represented at all by the **National Students Association**.
 - **21%** feel only **moderately represented**.
 - Only **2%** feel **significantly represented**.
- **76%** have **no trust** in their academic institutions to protect them from incitement and racism.
- **72%** feel they are **under surveillance and pursuit** regarding their social media activities.

- **64%** are considering **dropping out** due to the **financial impact** since October 7th.
- **61%** consider **discontinuing** their studies due to personal safety concerns.
 - **43%** are considering this "to a high degree."
- Over **60% do not feel safe** in the cities where their academic institutions are located.
- Only **12% feel safe in student housing**
 - **51%** report feeling "**very low**" safety.
 - **37%** report feeling "**moderate**" safety.

University of Haifa

The University of Haifa, with around **40% Palestinian-Arab students**, has been a focal point of tensions. Its disciplinary committee suspended **8 Palestinian-Arab students**, under the guise of preventing "extreme situations" and protecting the university community, for making social media posts interpreted as expressing support for Hamas. The disciplinary actions, initiated by the university's rector, **Professor Gur Alroey**, exemplify a troubling trend of silencing and targeting Palestinian-Arab voices in academic settings. The decision to suspend these students even before the conclusion of the proceedings against them is not only premature but also severely impacts their academic progress.

Furthermore, the reversal of the initial decision to cancel the suspensions until the end of the investigation by the disciplinary committee, under the pretext of responsibility towards the university community, is a clear indication of the arbitrary and prejudiced nature of these proceedings. The justification, which prioritizes a vague and unverified argument of potential harm over the tangible detriment to the students, is deeply flawed and discriminatory.

The University of Haifa's stance only exacerbates the stigmatization of Palestinian-Arab students as potentially hostile elements. This approach not only violates the students' rights but also stifles critical discourse and dissent, essential components of a healthy academic environment. In response to the persecution and war on Gaza, Palestinian-Arab and left-wing student groups on university campuses staged protests.

Technion

Jewish students created presentations featuring posts from **19 Palestinian-Arab students' private social media accounts**. These led to police complaints, resulting in the arrest, suspension, and expulsion of the Palestinian-Arab students involved. In contrast, Jewish students formed groups on platforms like WhatsApp and Instagram, promoting incitement against Palestinian-Arab students and advocating for their expulsion from educational establishments. They urged Jewish students to arm themselves and bring weapons to campuses to intimidate Palestinian-Arab students. **Two female Palestinian-Arab students were expelled permanently**, and discussions regarding other students are ongoing.

This situation, including slogans like "Death to Arabs," represents a severe threat to human life. Despite complaints and reports filed by the Mossawa Center to the Technion administration, these incidents of racist incitement have not been adequately addressed, and enforcement actions have been lacking.

Netanya College

On October 28, 2023, a disturbing incident occurred in Netanya, where Jewish extremists called for a gathering to **target Palestinian-Arab students at Netanya College's dormitories**. The protesters accused the students of disrupting a nearby Shabbat prayer service at a Chabad synagogue by throwing eggs at worshipers and playing loud Arabic music. In response, a mob of several hundred Jewish protesters, some of whom were armed, attacked the dormitory building, trying to harm the Palestinian-Arab students inside, with many chanting "**Death to Arabs.**"

The police's intervention, escorting the Palestinian-Arab students out through the building's back gate, potentially averted a more tragic outcome. However, following this incident, the city's mayor, **Miriam Feirberg-Ikar**, requested the college's administrators to evacuate the dorms and identify those responsible for the alleged harassment of Jewish worshipers. The **students were expelled from the dormitories** by the ESTA company and Netanya Academic College, citing concerns for their safety. Some of these students sought legal recourse to return to their residences. Notably, no suspects involved in this attack were arrested. After a lawsuit filed by **attorney Nayef Zidani and the Mossawa Center**, it was decided to reinstate the students. In early January, a group of **female Palestinian-Arab students** in the dormitories was **again threatened** by a racist group, and once again, no arrests were made.

Bezalel Academy of Arts and Design

Bezalel Academy launched disciplinary actions against 14 students, who were suspended without a hearing. The students and the administration were in a serious confrontation, with claims of a **fascist student group (Tzvi Cell)** heavily connected with the administration and targeting Palestinian-Arab students, who feel isolated.

Kay College

Cases at Kay College include the termination of Palestinian-Arab faculty members for their online posts and expressions against the war and sympathy with Palestinians in Gaza. **Dr. Warda Sada** and **Dr. Faten Masarwa** faced serious consequences for their social media activities. Dr. Sada was dismissed from her position after **28 years**. No legal charges were filed against her.

Kibbutzim Seminar College

A Jewish student at the Kibbutzim Seminar College claimed that the college "embraces supporters of terror" and was permanently expelled for **spreading misinformation about Palestinian-Arab female students**, whom he accused of expressing support for the attack on October 7.

Hebrew and Tel Aviv Universities

Hebrew and Tel Aviv Universities issued guidelines following the October 7 events, implicitly **restricting** expressions of support for Palestinians and equating them with support for Hamas.

The Israeli Bar Association

The climate of incitement and racism has also permeated the Israeli Bar Association. There have been instances where lawyers were arrested and humiliated, with lawyers representing detainees being summoned to the disciplinary court of the Bar Association. Palestinian-Arab lawyers faced harassment in courtrooms and contemptuous treatment from police officers, with some even being arrested. This appears to be an attempt to deter them from representing detainees.

Veteran lawyer and advocate Sari Khourieh, a candidate for municipal elections in Shefa-'Amr and the secretary of the Hadash party, was one such lawyer who was arrested for **11 days**. Despite being released without restrictive conditions or indictment, he was dismissed from his position as the chairman of the Shefa-'Amr Center on behalf of the Bar Association. During his arrest, he witnessed the abuse of a prisoner in Megiddo prison who was later found dead.

In a pivotal meeting convened by the Mossawa Center, **over 100 lawyers and activists** gathered to address the increasing challenges faced by Palestinian-Arab legal professionals. The forum, aimed at formulating effective strategies to counter the intensifying incitement and targeting of Arab lawyers, focused on enhancing advocacy and collaboration with the Bar Association. This assembly underscored the necessity of solidifying support networks within the legal community and highlighted the importance of collective action in defending the rights of Palestinian-Arab lawyers against discriminatory practices in a complex socio-political environment.

Incitement and Dismissals in Workplaces

The climate of incitement and racism against Palestinian-Arabs has extended into the workplace, impacting employer-employee relations and leading to **400 dismissals** under questionable circumstances. The Mossawa Center handled a large number of cases involving employees who were summoned to hearings, and in many of these cases, it was found that the complaints were false, lodged by colleagues at their workplaces.

In certain cases, employees were terminated from their jobs. Currently, attorneys are taking legal action against these workplaces, alleging employment discrimination. Notably, Jewish employees who engaged in incitement against Palestinian-Arab colleagues were not subject to suspension or summoned for disciplinary hearings.

Incitement and Dismissals in Workplaces

400

dismissals under
questionable circumstances



Examples include:

- Nurses from the **Bnai Zion and Nahariah Hospitals** were arrested due to **fabricated allegations by a colleague**. After their release and case closure, they were still **fired** following a hearing by their employer.
- A religious engineer from Jerusalem, employed for **12 years** in a company under **Clalit Health Services**, was **dismissed for posting a Quran verse** - as was his custom over the years - that was misinterpreted as incitement.
- A genetic counselor at the **Western Galilee Hospital** was **fired for liking a news article** about the October 7th events and reinstated only after suing the **Nahariya Medical Center**.
- A chef from Ramla, working in Tel Aviv, was fired for missing work when his uncle was kidnapped and murdered on the day of a massacre. **His absence was considered identification with the attackers**.
- Six cashiers at a **Va Va Voom** retail store were terminated.
- A **special education teacher and a dietitian** faced **life-threatening threats** from students' parents, **fueled by incitement from a Jewish colleague**. With the assistance of the Mossawa Center, she approached the court and obtained a restraining order against the kindergarten teacher who slandered her.
- Numerous **lecturers and staff members** at **academic institutions** were fired after many years of service.
- A **school teacher** in Harish was **escorted out of the school by the police** after **right-wing racist activists** demonstrated at the entrance to the school and **threatened her life**.

Civilian Militias

In recent developments, the Israeli government has increasingly delegated the responsibility for citizens' security and safety to private civilian militias. This shift is markedly apparent in areas such as the occupied West Bank and in mixed cities, where far-right settler-soldier militias have intensified their operations. These militias, in collaboration with the Israeli army, have been perpetrating acts of harassment, intimidation, and violence against Palestinian residents in the West Bank and, separately, against Palestinian-Arab citizens.

A significant incident [reported by +972 Magazine](#) illustrates the severity of this escalation. On October 28, two masked settlers, dressed in army uniforms, forcibly entered a Palestinian home in Susiya, destroying belongings and issuing threats. The situation escalated further when a group of five uniformed men, including masked individuals, returned later, repeating their acts of

intimidation and destruction, and explicitly threatened the homeowners with violence if they did not vacate their property.

In a separate but related account, Basel Adra, an activist and journalist, recounts a harrowing episode in Khamat al-Daba'. Here, armed Israeli settlers, left unopposed by the departing Israeli military forces, launched a violent attack on Palestinian residents. The settlers, armed with guns and batons, inflicted gunshot wounds and physical harm on the residents, leading to hospitalizations. This episode underscores the increasingly unchecked power and aggression of these settler militias, which operate with impunity and in some cases, direct or tacit support from the Israeli military.

The Israeli government's decision to distribute **20,000 rifles** to these so-called “**alert squad**” **militias**, some of which were distributed by far-right National Security Minister Ben-Gvir himself, signals a concerning escalation and formalization of this trend. This move indicates a governmental endorsement of the militarization of civilian groups, raising serious concerns about the safety, rights, and well-being of Palestinian-Arab communities who find themselves in the crosshairs of these increasingly empowered and armed militias. Although Speaker of the Knesset Amir Ohana ordered the shutdown of Ben-Gvir’s operations room in the Knesset tasked with expediting the processing of firearms permits, a similar operations room remains functional within the office of the National Security Minister.

In Haifa, a group of immigrants from Russia and Ukraine organized a cell that prepared Molotov cocktails and trained with weapons to attack Palestinian-Arab citizens. The Haifa District Attorney filed an indictment against **Miroslav Torok** from Haifa and **Natanel Cohen** from Kiryat Haim after they produced dozens of Molotov cocktails.

These developments represent a worrying shift in the dynamics of security and civilian protection in the region. The militarization of civilian groups, particularly those with a history of aggression towards Palestinian-Arab communities, points to a deepening of the conflict and a further erosion of the prospects for reconciliation.

Safe Zones in the Naqab and Resumption of Demolition Orders

The Mossawa Center, in collaboration with the **Follow-up Committee for Health Issues**, the **Association of Arab Physicians in the Naqab**, and the **Hayan Medical Institution**, has launched a critical initiative to strengthen medical emergency response in the Naqab region. Recognizing the urgent need for medical preparedness amidst wartime and conflict, these organizations have developed a specialized training course for volunteers with medical backgrounds. This program is meticulously designed to impart essential skills required for managing injuries in war conditions, thereby addressing a significant gap in emergency medical response where governmental solutions are lacking.

In parallel, the Mossawa Center called to establish the **Naqab Emergency Room**, a pivotal healthcare facility considering the acute shortage of public shelters in the region's unrecognized villages. This emergency room operates in synergy with the **Arab Community Emergency**

Coalition, focusing its efforts on providing comprehensive support to families affected by the conflict. Their work includes the distribution of emergency kits and conducting crucial first-aid training, thereby enhancing the community's resilience in the face of adversity.

The Mossawa Center's efforts extend to advocating for the protection and safety of these vulnerable communities. Recognizing the dire need for basic safety infrastructure, they are actively engaging with the Home Front Command to urge the installation of protective shelters in unrecognized Arab villages throughout the Naqab. This advocacy is vital for safeguarding the thousands of residents who, during times of conflict, face heightened risks due to the lack of permanent housing and adequate shelters. Through these multifaceted efforts, the Mossawa Center and its partners are making significant strides in ensuring medical preparedness and advocating for the fundamental safety needs of the Naqab's residents.

On January 12, there was a resumption of demolition orders in the Naqab in the unrecognized Palestinian-Bedouin villages. In **Al-Za'arura**, an unrecognized village near Arad, authorities deployed bulldozers to dismantle a house and a warehouse, additionally **uprooting 60 olive trees**, which hold significant livelihood and cultural importance. In a similar vein, the recognized village of **Bir Hadaj** in the northern Naqab witnessed the demolition of two homes, including that of an 80-year-old resident, a move that significantly affected her primary means of livelihood.

These activities only further exacerbate the socio-economic situation of the Palestinian-Bedouins in the Naqab, especially amidst the ongoing war, and are yet another escalation on the part of the Israeli government against the Arab minority in Israel.

New Laws Proposed During the War

Prohibiting Viewing Content Supporting Terrorism

A new legislative proposal, **Amendment No. 9 to the Anti-Terrorism Law**, has been approved, focusing on the prohibition of viewing content that supports terrorism. This proposal has been expedited through the parliamentary legislation committee to the second and third readings, limiting the opportunity for comprehensive debate and opposition from Knesset members and human rights bodies.

Key Aspects of the Amendment:

1. **Urgency and Validity:** The amendment is classified as an "urgent matter" and is set to be in effect for a two-year period from its publication date.
2. **Criminalization of Specific Content Viewing:** The amendment stipulates a one-year prison sentence for individuals who systematically and continuously view publications that:
 - Incite, call for, or promote the execution of terrorist acts.

- Express praise, support, or encouragement for such acts.
 - Include documentation of the execution of terrorist activities.
3. **Ministerial Authority:** The Minister of Justice is empowered to add organizations to the list of designated terrorist groups under this law.

Implications and Concerns:

- The amendment raises significant concerns regarding freedom of speech and information access.
- The definition of "systematic and continuous" consumption is vague, potentially leading to arbitrary or unjust applications of the law.
- The rapid progression of the amendment through legislative processes has curtailed essential discussions and critiques vital for legislation with such far-reaching consequences.

Emergency Regulations on Detention Hearings

The Israeli government fast-tracked a contentious legislative proposal, impacting the rights of suspects and detainees. This proposal swiftly moved through parliamentary processes, bypassing the thorough debate and scrutiny typically warranted for such significant legal changes. **The law was extended on January 23, 2024.**

Key Aspects of the Legislation:

1. **Modification of Detention Hearing Procedures:** The core of the legislation involves altering the traditional procedures for detention hearings. It allows for these hearings to be conducted virtually (or telephonically in exceptional circumstances) instead of in-person appearances in court.
2. **Expedited Legislative Process:** The rapid movement of this proposal through the legislative stages has limited the involvement and opposition from Knesset members and human rights organizations.

Implications and Concerns:

- **Potential Infringement on Rights of Detainees:** The legislation could infringe on the rights of detainees, particularly Palestinian-Arab citizens, by potentially prolonging their detention without adequate judicial oversight.
- **Vagueness and Risks of Misapplication:** The terms and conditions under which virtual hearings are to be conducted lack specificity, raising the risk of arbitrary or unjust application of the law.
- **Impact on Legal Standards:** The shift to virtual hearings may affect the standard legal practice and the ability of judges to make informed decisions, as physical presence in court plays a crucial role in the judicial process.

- **Inadequate Legislative Process:** The expedited legislative process for such a crucial law, which directly impacts fundamental human rights and the principles of democratic justice, has not allowed for the necessary and comprehensive debate or consideration by various stakeholders.

Revocation of Citizenship or Residency in Terrorism Cases

This bill is set to establish a framework for revoking citizenship or residency status from individuals convicted of terrorist activities. This law represents a significant shift in Israel's approach to national security and counter-terrorism measures, using citizenship laws as a tool for legal action against supposed terrorism cases. There's a real danger that this law will be wielded as a tool for systematic discrimination against Palestinian-Arab citizens, infringing upon their basic rights and freedoms.

Key Aspects and Implications:

1. **Targeted Legal Action:** The law aims to create a legal mechanism specifically for withdrawing citizenship or residency from those found guilty of terrorism-related offenses.
2. **Specific Targeting:** Activities as benign as expressing dissent against government actions or showing sympathy towards Palestinians in Gaza could be unjustly classified as supporting terrorism under this law.
3. **Broad Interpretation of Terrorism:** The legislation's nebulous terms open the door to subjective and potentially exploitative interpretations of terrorism. This can lead to the criminalization of legitimate political expression and opposition.

Denial of Academic Degrees for “Terrorism Supporters”

The proposed legislative amendment, titled "**Higher Education Council Law (Amendment - Denial of the Right to an Academic Degree due to Support for Terrorism) 2023**," is set to amend the **Higher Education Council Law of 1958**. This amendment seeks to empower academic institutions to withhold academic degrees from individuals identified with terrorist activities or expressing support for terrorism.

Key Aspects of the Amendment:

- **Criteria for Denial of Degrees:** The bill proposes that academic institutions should not confer degrees on individuals who:
 - Are declared as terror activists under specific sections of the Counter-Terrorism Law.
 - Have been convicted of terrorism offenses or treason.
 - Are identified by institutional disciplinary committees as supporters of terrorism, even without a criminal conviction.

- **Broad Definitions:** The amendment includes broad terms like "support for terrorism," leading to potential subjectivity in its application.
- **Institutional Responsibility:** Emphasizes the duty of academic institutions to uphold public standards by denying degrees to those associated with terrorist activities.
- **Freedom of Academia:** Asserts non-infringement on academic freedom, a claim that has been a central point of contention.

Implications and Concerns:

- **Vagueness and Subjectivity:** The amendment's vague criteria, especially the reliance on institutional committees' judgments, will lead to subjective and arbitrary application.
- **Academic Freedom and Free Speech:** This amendment will encroach upon academic freedom and stifle free speech within educational settings, deterring critical discourse.
- **Legal and Ethical Questions:** The proposal's reliance on non-criminal judgments for denying academic credentials violates the principles of due process and legal fairness.
- **Potential for Discrimination:** Given its broad terms, the law will be disproportionately applied against Palestinian-Arab citizens, who have expressed more critical views of the war and sympathy for Palestinians in Gaza.

Mandatory Death Penalty for "Terrorists"

The legislative proposal titled "**Criminal Law (Amendment - Death Penalty for Terrorists) 2023**" introduces a drastic change in the Israeli legal system. This proposal, which seeks to amend the **Penal Law of 1977**, explicitly mandates the death penalty for individuals convicted of terrorism-related offenses under certain circumstances.

Key Aspects of the Amendment:

- **Mandatory Death Penalty:** The proposal mandates the death penalty for individuals who intentionally or indifferently cause the death of an Israeli citizen, motivated by racism or hostility towards a specific community, with the intention of harming the State of Israel and the reestablishment of the Jewish people in their land.
- **Application in Military Courts:** It includes provisions that allow military courts in specific regions to impose the death penalty **without the unanimous consent of the judges**, a significant deviation from the current legal standard.
- **Irrevocability of Sentence:** The amendment stipulates that once a final death sentence is issued by a military court, it **cannot be mitigated**.

Implications and Concerns:

- **Violation of Human Rights:** The proposal directly violates fundamental human rights principles, particularly the right to life. The death penalty is widely considered a cruel

and inhuman punishment and is condemned by numerous international human rights organizations.

- **Undermines Legal Ethics:** The mandatory nature of the death penalty, without judicial discretion, undermines the core principles of legal ethics and justice. It eliminates the consideration of mitigating circumstances and individual assessment of each case.
- **Potential for Miscarriages of Justice:** The irreversible nature of the death penalty raises the grave risk of miscarriages of justice. In the event of wrongful convictions, the consequences are irreversible and catastrophic.\

Conclusion

The ongoing challenges faced by Palestinian-Arab citizens in Israel, as detailed in this report, highlight a dangerous trend in the violation of their political, socio-economic, and civil rights. Despite some progress, the Israeli state budget allocations and coalition agreements continue not only a lack of sufficient commitment to addressing the needs of Palestinian-Arab society, but also a concentrated effort to undermine and reverse development in the community. The status quo not only perpetuates inequality but also undermines the broader efforts towards achieving a just and equitable society for all citizens, regardless of ethnicity or religion. The current situation, exacerbated by the far-right government's policies and practices against Palestinian-Arab citizens, calls for an urgent and concerted response from both national and international actors.