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**May 4, 2020**



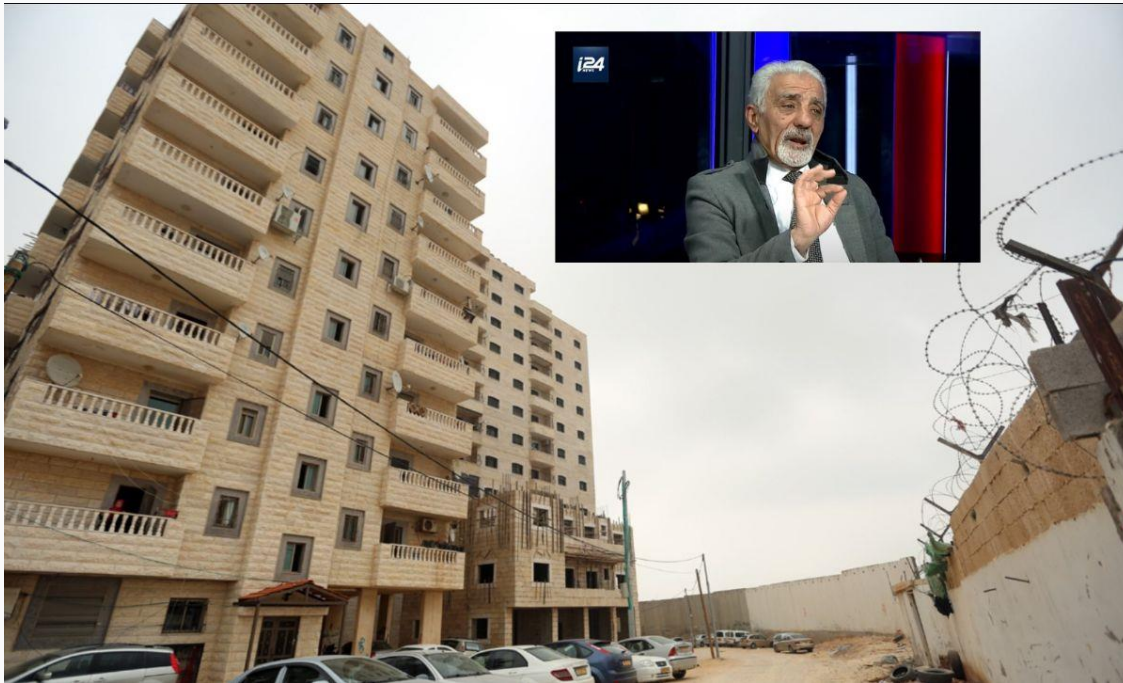
## **ADALAH'S NEWS**

### **April 2020**

Throughout April, Adalah staff worked intensively to assist Palestinians on coronavirus issues, undertaking more than 25 legal actions, some before the Israeli Supreme Court, to ensure access to healthcare, and to promote a dignified life and civil liberties' protections. In this issue, we highlight the voices of petitioners in our litigation, the beneficiaries of our work. Our aim is to provide insight into what Palestinian communities in Israel/OPT have been experiencing, as well as to show the impact of Adalah's work. Going forward, Adalah will continue to stand with the community and to promote and defend Palestinians' rights in the face of this unprecedented health, socioeconomic, and political crisis.

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### **Securing testing centers for Palestinians in Jerusalem neighborhoods behind the Separation Wall**



*Munir Zagier (photo: i24NEWS) featured inside a photo of Kufr Aqab (photo: DCIP/Elia Ghorbiah)*

**Mr. Munir Zagier, petitioner in Adalah's Supreme Court case:**

"I was brought up in Kufr Aqab and I have been the chairman of the Northern Neighborhoods Committee of Jerusalem for many years. Health services here were always terrible; the Jerusalem municipality provides us with close to zero services. We live in a heavily populated area, a factor that can significantly increase the threat of spreading the virus. We are very happy to have worked with Adalah, which helped answer all of our demands for testing centers, the last being a drive-in facility where we do not have to tiresomely cross the Qalandya checkpoint. But I'm afraid it might be somewhat late and not enough. We are extremely concerned for the lack of access to urgent medical services and hospitals. These health facilities are located on the other side of the Wall, beyond our immediate reach."

**More information and media highlights:**

- ◆ [Press Release 1](#) and [Press Release 2](#)
- ◆ [After Weeks of Warning, Coronavirus Spreading Among Palestinians in East Jerusalem](#), Haaretz, 14 April 2020
- ◆ [In Jerusalem, coronavirus gives Israelis and Palestinians something else to argue about](#), The Washington Post, 11 April 2020
- ◆ [East Jerusalem worries of healthcare collapse over coronavirus](#), Al Jazeera, 5 April 2020

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**Protecting rights of pregnant women dismissed from**

## work due to emergency regulations



*MK Aida Touma-Sliman chairing the Knesset's Special Committee on Welfare and Labor Affairs in a discussion on this case, 26 April 2020 (photo: Morad Jarjoura)*

### **MK Touma-Sliman (Joint List), petitioner in Adalah's Supreme Court case:**

"The Court's decision proves that the government is not above the law – not on ordinary days and not during an emergency. The Court clearly stated that the government cannot continue to issue emergency regulations without parliamentary oversight. We are extremely grateful to Adalah for the professional work, first in demanding to cancel the regulations harming pregnant women, and later in requesting that the authorities take care of those thousands of women who were already dismissed from their jobs. This work is so important, especially as it protects the most vulnerable women, those from minority groups. We have already convened a Knesset committee session (26 April) to examine the situation and to find solutions for the women who were harmed."

### **More information and media highlights:**

- ♦ [Press Release 1](#), [Press Release 2](#), and [Press Release 3](#)
- ♦ [Coronavirus: As court strikes down new rule, Israel's pregnant workers remain in limbo](#), Middle East Eye, 23 April 2020
- ♦ [Government Announces Pregnant Women Can't Be Put on Unpaid Leave](#), Haaretz, 19 April 2020

## Ensuring the right to education for Palestinian Bedouin children, citizens of Israel living in the Naqab



*Dr. Kayed Al-Athamen (Photo: Kul al-Arab newspaper)*

### **Dr. Al-Athamen, parent of student petitioner in Adalah's Supreme Court case:**

“During this crisis, numerous pupils from the Naqab are unable to study because they do not have the means to do so, while other students across the country can learn. Many Bedouin households lack internet infrastructure, and some, in the unrecognized villages, are not even connected to electricity. Add to that most families do not even have computers. These are basic services and our children have the right to access to education, as all others. This situation will unfavorably affect the already low achievements of Bedouin students. Adalah has worked hard on our behalf, writing letters to the Education Ministry and bringing our demands to the Supreme Court. Two months have passed, and students have lost precious time, but we wish to avoid them losing more education in the future.”



**More information and media highlights:**

- ♦ [Press Release](#)
  - ♦ [Fighting COVID-19 in the Bedouin community](#), *The Times of Israel*, 13 April 2020
  - ♦ ['Arab students will pay the price': Pandemic widens Israel's education gaps](#), +972 Mag., 7 April 2020
  - ♦ [Adalah: 'Over 50k students in the Negev lack access to online schooling'](#), *Jerusalem Post*, 5 April 2020
- 

**Demanding prisoners' right to counsel, communication with family members**



*Attorney Abeer Baker*

**Attorney Abeer Baker, petitioner in Adalah's Supreme Court case:**

"The new Emergency Regulations (ER) cause grave harm to Palestinian prisoners, depriving them of any human contact with the outside world. They cannot meet with their families at all, or consult with their lawyers by phone, unless there is an emergency hearing in their case. This makes them particularly vulnerable; there is no information published about them and the COVID-19 outbreak exposes them to additional threats due to severe overcrowding. The prison authorities must increase

their access to sanitary products and health care, and consider releasing the sick, the elderly and others. The ER can be misused in a very humiliating way. I had a phone call with a prisoner at Ofer prison, which was broadcast via loudspeakers for all to hear. Together with Adalah, we are fighting to defend the prisoners' basic rights to ensure their safety and their dignity.”

**More information media highlights:**

- ♦ [\*Press Release, Joint NGO Statement 1, Joint NGO Statement 2 on Palestinian Prisoners' Day \(17 April\)\*](#)
  - ♦ [\*Rights groups demand urgent Israeli preventive measures for released Palestinian prisoners, Wafa, 4 April 2020\*](#)
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**Protecting civil liberties: Challenging the Shin Bet's  
coronavirus cellphone surveillance**

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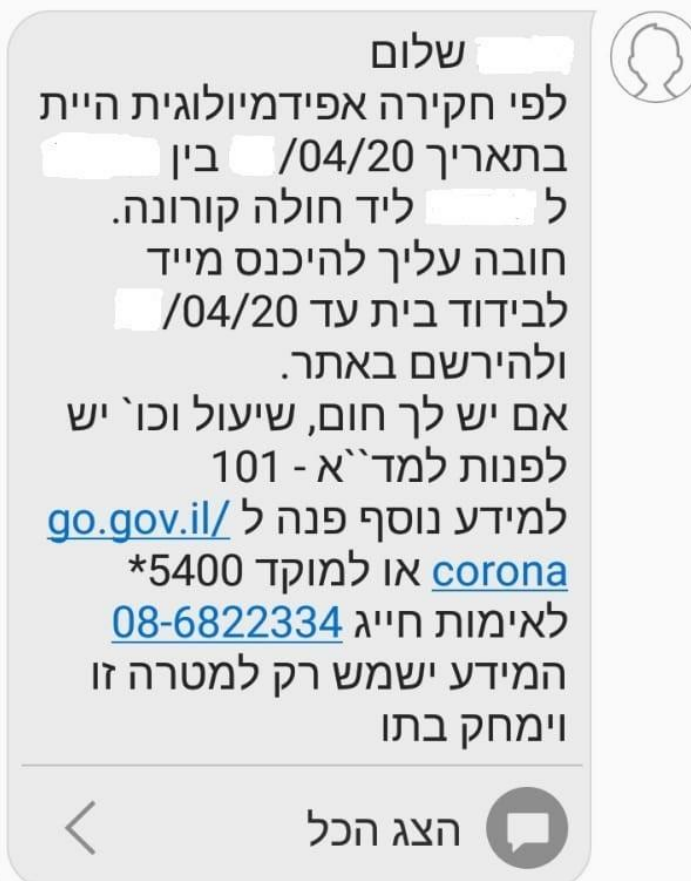
HEALTHGOV >

SMS/MMS

יום , באפריל 2020

**Right: Text message (Hebrew), sent by the Ministry of Health, informing a person she should go into quarantine. The cellphone was tracked by Israeli Security Services**

18:11



#### Adalah's Statement:

"The Supreme Court ruled that there is no legal authority for the government to use the Shabak to surveil citizens; both must be subject to law. The Court agreed that the fight against the coronavirus is a civilian struggle and has nothing to do with the Shabak's work, which should be strictly limited to security matters. As history has shown, the Shabak has often intervened in civilian issues, particularly regarding Palestinians, whose individual, cultural and political lives have been a constant target of surveillance and repression. Israel is the only state publicly utilizing its

secret services to violate its citizens' privacy. Despite the court's favorable ruling, we are gravely concerned about the lengthy time that the Court gave the government and the Knesset to legislate this practice. A Supreme Court decision that acknowledges this illegality but nevertheless allows it to continue severely harms the civil rights of all in Israel and has no constitutional basis."

♦ **READ: Adalah's paper analyzing this decision**

**More information and media Highlights:**

- ♦ [Press Release 1, Press Release 2, and Press Release 3](#)
- ♦ [Cell phone surveillance spreads with coronavirus epidemic](#), *The Washington Post*, 2 May 2020
- ♦ [Israeli Court Takes Step to Halt Phone Tracking Amid Virus](#), *New York Times* (Via AP), 26 April 2020
- ♦ [Israeli court orders halt on phone tracking without more legislation](#), *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 27 April 2020
- ♦ [Israel Secretly Sought to Expand Shin Bet Tracking of Coronavirus Patients Before Court Ruling](#), *Haaretz*, 26 April 2020

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**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

**[Adalah's Case List: Coronavirus and Human Rights Petitions pending before the Israeli Supreme Court – as of 4 May 2020](#)**

**Follow Adalah's [covid-19 updates website page](#) for all the news about our emergency coronavirus work**

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CORONAVIRUS HUMAN  
RIGHTS PROJECT



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TUESDAY



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5 May 2020

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