

Israel's Palestinian Arab Minority Amid the Pandemic

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Please join us on Thursday, June 11, at 12:30pm EDT for a Zoom conversation between Dr. Hadil Alsana, MD, activist and board member for the Arab Medical Association in the Negev, and Dr. Thabet Abu Ras, Co-Executive Director of The Abraham Initiatives, on how the coronavirus pandemic has been impacting Israel's Palestinian Arab citizens.

The discussion will be moderated by Dr. Anwar Mhajne of Stonehill College, and there will be ample time for Q&A. We hope you can tune in.

Compared to the United States, Israel has navigated the pandemic with a relatively limited loss of life (at least so far), and that's been true within the Arab sector as well. But the government's public health response revealed, yet again, the preference it gives to the country's Jewish citizens. And the Arab community has also been particularly hard-hit by the economic fallout from the crisis. These and other aspects of how coronavirus has uniquely affected Israel's Arab citizens will be covered during this important hour-long discussion.

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Dr. Thabet Abu Ras joined the Abraham Initiatives in April 2014, with a rich background in civil society organizations. Thabet is a political geographer and an expert in land and planning; he obtained a PhD in the field of Geography and Regional Development from the University of Arizona in the United States in 1997. He has been teaching courses at Ben-Gurion University and Sapir College such as political geography, land and planning and regional development of the Palestinian community in Israel. He served on Adalah's Board of Directors from 2006 to 2008, and joined the staff in October 2010 as the director of Adalah's office in the Negev. He is considered one of the prominent experts of the Arab community in general and the Bedouin community in the Negev in particular. He was a member of the Board of Directors of several environmental and Jewish-Arab educational organizations. He has been the co-chair of the board of Hand In Hand, the bilingual schools in Israel, and is the co-founder of AEJI, the Association of Environmental Justice in Israel.

MD Hadil Alsana was born and raised in the Bedouin township of Laqiya, located in the Negev/Naqab region. From a young age, Hadil volunteered with the Women Laqiya organization, where she taught women how to read and write. Today, she continues to promote the participation of Arab Bedouin women in

higher education. Hadil completed her medical studies, *summa cum laude*, at Debrecen University, Hungary, in 2016. By 2017, she began her internship as an MD in the Internal Ward at Soroka Hospital, Be'er Sheva. Hadil is also a faculty member at the School of Medicine in Ben-Gurion University, teaching the next generation of doctors. In 2018, Hadil joined the Arab Medical Association in the Negev and soon became a Member of the Board. During the COVID-19 crisis, Hadil has led the Association's campaign to raise awareness in Bedouin society on the pandemic, providing the population with accurate and culture-sensitive information, as well as advocating for the provision of testing, isolation centers, and the establishment of medical clinics in Arab Bedouin communities. Hadil is passionate about promoting health services for everyone, regardless of location, socio-economic status, or national affiliation. She is currently promoting the establishment of health clinics in the unrecognized Arab Bedouin villages in the Negev/Naqab. **Dr. Anwar Mhajne** is currently an Assistant Professor at Stonehill College. She is a political scientist specializing in international relations and comparative politics with a focus on gender and politics. Her current research is at the intersection of gender, religion, and Middle Eastern politics. Dr. Mhajne's work has been featured in *The International Feminist Journal of Politics*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *The Conversation*, *Times of Israel*, *Haaretz*, *Middle East Eye*, *+972 Magazine*, *Quartz*, *The Defense Post*, and *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. Currently, she serves as a Member-at-Large on the executive committee of the International Studies Association Women's Caucus (WCIS) and the Feminist Theory and Gender Studies Section (FTGS).

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