

# War on Gaza: Some of the Prominent Palestinian Academics and Scientists Killed by Israel

Israel's war on Gaza has completely disrupted the educational system, with at least 94 professors killed so far

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*After more than 130 days of [war on Gaza](#), many of the coastal enclave's universities and educational institutions lie in ruins.*

At least 28,700 [Palestinians](#) have been killed by Israeli forces since the start of the war on 7 October and around 70 percent of the Strip's buildings have been damaged or destroyed.

Palestine has one of the [highest literacy rates](#) in the world, but the war on Gaza has devastated the education sector, killing thousands of students, and leaving hundreds of thousands out of school for almost five months.

According to the [Euro-Med Monitor](#), Israel's army has so far killed 94 university professors, along with hundreds of teachers, in what the rights group describes as "deliberate and specific air raids" on the homes of academic, scientific or intellectual figures.

"The targeted academics studied and taught across a variety of academic disciplines, and many of their ideas served as cornerstones of academic research in the Gaza Strip's universities," the rights group said.

Here, Middle East Eye looks at some of the academics and scientists killed in the war on Gaza.

## 1. Amin al-Bahiti, al-Azhar University

Amin al-Bahiti, a 24-year-old from Gaza, was a dentist and assistant lecturer at al-Azhar

University.

Al-Bahiti was killed on 5 November, after leaving his home to find food for his mother and nine siblings.

Israel cut off all supplies from the besieged enclave, including food, water, electricity, fuel and aid [on 9 October](#), forcing many Palestinians to leave their homes amidst heavy bombardment to find food.

Al-Bahiti's body was found two days after he left his home.

He graduated from university in 2021 and one of his biggest ambitions was to open his own dental surgery.

Dr. Amin Al-Bahtiti, 24 years old,

A dentist and an assistant lecturer at Al-Azhar University, beloved by all students for his high morals. He had a smiling face, laughing from the depths of his heart. He dreamt of opening his own dental clinic.

Extremely humble with a good... [pic.twitter.com/r20xmeezN7](https://pic.twitter.com/r20xmeezN7)

— Martyrs of Gaza (@GazaMartyrs) [December 10, 2023](#)

Tributes online [described him](#) as “talented, smart and hardworking”.

## 2. Adham Hassouna, professor at Gaza and al-Aqsa universities

Adham Hassouna was a professor at the Gaza and al-Aqsa Universities, as well as a freelance journalist.

Journalist Adham Hassouna and his entire family have just been killed in an Israeli strike.

That's the third journalist to be killed today after Abdallah Darwish and Montasser al-Sawwaf. [pic.twitter.com/O9PRyF2YQ2](https://pic.twitter.com/O9PRyF2YQ2)

— Maha Hussaini (@MahaGaza) [December 1, 2023](#)

Hassouna was killed alongside several members of his family in an Israeli air strike, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

The air strike targeted his home on 1 December.

## 3. Jihad al-Masri, al-Quds Open University

Jihad al-Masri was a historian and university professor, as well as the director of al-Quds Open University's Khan Younis branch.

He was killed on 17 October, after succumbing to wounds sustained in Israeli shelling on

Khan Younis.

According [to reports](#), he was on the way to join his wife and daughter when the attack happened.

Al-Masri was known for publishing research papers on Islamic history and Palestinian oral traditions in both regional and international journals.

#### 4. Tariq Thabet, University College of Applied Sciences

Tariq Thabet was a fellow at Michigan State University in the US as well as a professor in Gaza.

He was a Fulbright scholar, studying economic development and entrepreneurship in developing countries as part of the Humphrey Fellowship Program in Michigan.

He [was killed](#) in November in Gaza, along with 15 members of his extended family.

Thabet's research focused on empowering small business owners in places like Gaza, where he was born.

According to Kyle Hess, the programme manager for the Humphrey Program, Thabet hoped to take what he learnt in the US and bring it back home to Gaza to help improve the local economy.

His fellowship programme issued a statement saying: "While at MSU, he built on his extensive experience in the nonprofit sector and entrepreneurship by taking courses in finance and marketing, networking extensively with his local counterparts, and speaking to local community groups and youth."

Engineer Tariq Thabet, one of the kindest and most incredible persons I've ever met in my life, a creative, persevering, energetic, intelligent and dedicated.

A few months ago, he was in the United States in a program supported by the United States.

He returned to [#Gaza](#) and was... [pic.twitter.com/I1TUxLVviE](https://pic.twitter.com/I1TUxLVviE)

— عاصم النبيه (@AsemAlnabeh) [November 2, 2023](#)

The community in East Lansing, Michigan, where he spent a year while studying, mourned his loss, remembering his positive impact.

"For a person coming from a territory which is effectively under siege by Israel, he had a very positive and upbeat attitude to life," said Thasin Sardar, a member of the board of trustees at the Islamic Centre of East Lansing.

"He came here with a mission to learn, and he was trying to make use of his time very effectively and give back to his country," he added.

According to Sardar, multiple generations of his family were killed in the bombing.

Thabet was remembered as a “warm and bright” person who regularly attended Friday prayers at the Islamic Centre of East Lansing.

## 5. Sufyan Tayeh, scientist

Sufian Tayeh, the president of the Islamic University of Gaza, was a leading researcher in physics and applied mathematics.

He was killed in an Israeli air strike on the al-Faluja neighbourhood northeast of Gaza City on 2 December.

His death was announced by the Palestinian Higher Education Ministry. The air strike also killed several members of his family.

Tayeh was born in 1971 in Gaza’s Jabalia refugee camp, going on to gain a bachelor’s degree in physics from the Islamic University of Gaza.

He won the Palestine Islamic Bank Award for Scientific Research for the years 2019 and 2020, among many other awards.

BREAKING: Dr. Sufyan Tayeh, the President of the Islamic University of Gaza, was killed today in the Israeli massacre in Jabalia, north of the Gaza Strip, according to medical sources. [#GazaGenocide pic.twitter.com/tp77g6UB0m](https://twitter.com/tp77g6UB0m)

— Quds News Network (@QudsNen) [December 2, 2023](#)

[According to reports](#), Tayeh was considered to be in the top two percent of scientific researchers worldwide in 2021.

He had also been appointed Unesco’s chair for physics and space sciences in Palestine.

## 6. Sirin Mohammed al-Attar, Islamic University of Gaza

Born in 1984, Sirin Mohammed al-Attar was a gynaecologist working for the UN agency Unrwa as well as a professor at the Islamic University of Gaza.

She [was killed](#) in an Israeli air strike on the al-Bureij camp on 11 October.

According to Unrwa, she was a highly accomplished medical professional, holding Arab, Jordanian, and Palestinian board certifications in obstetrics and gynaecology.

Al-Attar graduated from al-Quds University’s Faculty of Medicine and was the mother of three daughters.

Unrwa remembered her for her “generosity, deep love for her work and the care and affection she extended to her patients, offering unwavering support to them”.

“She was one of the best, most wonderful and most humane doctors I have met and dealt with,” said Ghada al-Jadba, chief of the agency’s field health programme in Gaza.

## 7. Raed Qaddoura, academic

Raed Qaddoura, who held a PhD from the National University of Malaysia, was killed on 19 November alongside 29 other members of his family.

According to reports, his twin children were born two weeks before he died. Qaddoura was described as a “smart and talented writer and thinker”.

In 2022, he published an [article in Mondoweiss](#) on his grandfather’s expulsion from the city of Jaffa in 1948.

Dr. Raed Qaddoura was killed along with his family in [#Gaza](#) last night, 29 members of his extended family including his parents, wife and children. His twin girls were born two weeks ago. All gone. Raed holds an MA from [@unimalaya](#) and a PhD from [@ukm\\_my](#) in political science . [pic.twitter.com/9xSrmdzqOD](#)

— Yousef Aljamal 🇵🇸 (@YousefAljamal) [November 20, 2023](#)

“For my grandfather, Jaffa was his first love before Israel deprived him of that bride by forcing him to move out along with hundreds of thousands of other Palestinians, in search of a safer place and escape from the criminality of the Zionist gangs,” he wrote.

“Then, as soon as my grandfather arrived in Gaza, he swore to return again and not to leave his beloved to anyone else.”

## 8. Saher Yaghi, psychologist

Shaher Yaghi, a professor and renowned psychologist, worked for Gaza’s education ministry and was found dead after an Israeli air strike on the Jabalia refugee camp in December.

He was killed alongside his wife and children, a neighbour and family friend [announced on social media](#) on 10 December.

Yaghi worked with several non-profit organisations and was a school quality assurance coordinator for over nine years.

He also worked with Unrwa as a special educational needs supervisor as well as a mental health counsellor.

He graduated from the University of Calgary in 1994 with a bachelor’s degree in rehabilitation, and then went onto study at the Islamic University of Gaza, where he achieved a master’s degree in psychology in 2006.

## 9. Ibrahim al-Astal, Islamic University of Gaza

Ibrahim al-Astal was a professor and dean of the Islamic University of Gaza.

Born in 1961, he was an educational theorist and researcher, who spent many years writing and editing publications on educational and psychological studies.

Al-Astal was killed in an Israeli attack on 23 October, along with his wife, daughters and a number of family members. According to some reports, a total of 87 members of his family were killed in the air strikes.

He was known for working on programmes related to improving the quality of technological education in universities and colleges in Gaza.

In 2005, he co-wrote a book called *The Teaching Profession and the Roles of Teachers in the School of the Future*.

## 10. Saeed al-Dahshan, international law expert

Saeed Talal al-Dahshan was an expert in international law as well as an author.

He was killed, along with his family in Gaza, on 11 October.

In his book, *The International Prosecution of Israel and its Leaders for Their Crimes Against the Palestinians*, he outlines the legal path to hold Israel accountable for breaking international laws.

Ismail Thawbta, head of the government media office in Gaza, [said that al-Dahsan](#), like many other academics in Gaza, was intentionally targeted.

“Israel is systematically selecting top Palestinian academics to inflict maximum damage on the Palestinian community and obstruct scientific and technological development in the future,” he said.

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*Featured image: Dr. Amin Al-Bahtiti was killed on 5 November, after leaving his home to find food for his mother and nine siblings (Screengrab/X)*

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