

# In South Africa, Israel Falsely Accused of Withholding Coronavirus Information from Israeli Arabs

by Hugh Fitzgerald



Israel-haters have accused that country of, among other crimes, of deliberately creating and spreading the coronavirus, in order to harm Muslims. It does not matter that the coronavirus first appeared in Wuhan China, nor that the two countries most affected so far have been China and Italy, neither a Muslim country. The latest charge, by BDSers in South Africa, is that the Israeli government has deliberately withheld information about the coronavirus from its Muslim citizens.

The story is [here](#).

*Anti-Zionist agitators in South Africa are pushing the false claim that Israel has not published Arabic-language guidelines for dealing with the coronavirus out of contempt for its Arab citizens – despite the fact that these materials, including a video in Arabic, are readily accessible on the Israeli Health Ministry’s website.*

*Writing in the Daily Maverick news outlet on Tuesday, Ronnie Kasrils – a leader of the BDS movement in South Africa and a veteran of the country’s Communist Party – alleged that coronavirus advice in Israel had only been issued in Hebrew, echoing similar claims made by BDS activists over the weekend.*

*“Israel by contrast only delivers its coronavirus advice in Hebrew, ignoring the Arab mother tongue of 20 percent of Palestinians living within the Zionist state,” Kasrils asserted.*

*Among those responding to Kasril’s falsehood was the South African Zionist Federation, in a tweet that accused Kasrils of spreading “lies” and linked to the Arabic section of the Israeli Health Ministry’s website.*

*Antisemitic and “anti-Zionist” interpretations of the coronavirus crisis have mushroomed as the situation globally has deteriorated over the last month.*

*Islamist media outlets in Iran, the Arab world and Europe have accused Israel of developing and spreading the coronavirus.*

*In a speech last Sunday, the former Soviet refusenik and Jewish Agency chief Natan Sharansky spoke out against this surge of antisemitic propaganda.*

*He noted there was “nothing new in it,” citing the Black Death of the 14th century as a precedent for today’s woes.*

*Kasril's false claim notwithstanding, Israel's Health Ministry has provided detailed and comprehensive advice on coronavirus for the country's Arab citizens.*

*Different sections of its website include guidelines on the effects of the virus on pregnancy and breastfeeding, contact with the elderly, travel restrictions and domestic quarantine protocols.*

*In addition, a video fronted by Israeli-Arab medical professional Dr. Zahi Said offers a simple overview of the key precautionary measures for the virus.*

Israel has gone all out to furnish Arab citizens with exactly the same information as has been prepared for Jewish Israelis. The government has not only disseminated information about the coronavirus, in Arabic, in written materials and on radio and television, but most importantly, has created an Arabic-language website which includes information about how the virus spreads, what precautions to take, including social distancing, repeated hand-washing, limiting contact with the elderly, explains the effects of the virus on those who are pregnant or breastfeeding, and defines those, even if not elderly, whose immune systems have already been compromised and therefore need to be especially wary of contact with others. Travel restrictions and quarantine protocols are also explained. Hotlines are available in Arabic to answer questions. Whatever is available in Hebrew is also available in Arabic.

All of this can be discovered by a few minutes of searching the Internet. But apparently Ronnie Kasrils, a Communist and BDSer in South Africa, could not take the time to discover this truth or, rather, he was uninterested in finding out that Israel supplies exactly the same information, and offers the same level of excellent care, to its Arab as to its Jewish citizens. That does not fit the fable that ronnie-kasrils of

this world, mired in the miasma of their antisemitic swamp, wish to spread.

Ronnie Kasrils is a bizarre figure. He is Jewish, and for all of his adult life – he is now 81 – he has been denouncing Israel. During Israel's 2008 incursion into Lebanon to suppress terror attacks from Hezbollah, Kasrils called Israelis "baby killers" and likened the Israelis to Nazis: "we must call baby killers 'baby killers' and declare that those using methods reminiscent of the Nazis be told that they are behaving like Nazis."

Meanwhile, back in the real world, Israeli health officials continue to move heaven and earth to supply all of the country's citizens with the same information, to provide Jews and Arabs with the same protocols, offer the same diagnostic tests, disseminate the same advice for avoiding the disease, supply the same masks to those requiring them, and provide the same treatments for all those with the coronavirus – Arab or Jew – who need to be admitted to hospitals. None of this matters to the antisemitic Jewish "activist" Ronnie Kasrils. He has been denouncing Israel for many years. He made up his story – or was it supplied to him by Arab propagandists? – about Israel withholding information about the coronavirus from its Arab citizens, and he will keep repeating this charge no matter what mountain of contradictory evidence is presented to him. He's a fool in his folly, and all sensible people – including you and I – have had enough of him.

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