

Palestinians Pay \$10,000 Bribes to Egypt Officials to Exit Gaza



Gaza City, September 7 (RHC)-- Palestinians in Gaza pay up to \$10,000 USD in bribes to Egyptian officials at the Rafah border in order to cross into Egypt, brokers and travelers told Al-Jazeera, as Egypt continues to impose major restrictions on the only crossing for Gazans not controlled by the Israeli occupation.

Al-Jazeera spoke to two different Palestinian brokers who act as middlemen between the Palestinians and the Egyptian border officers. They said typically they charge \$3,000 per Palestinian wishing to enter Egypt.

However, when a Palestinian's name is on an Egyptian blacklist of those banned from entering Egypt, they charge \$10,000. The brokers receive 20 percent of the payment while the rest goes to the Egyptian officials involved.

One of the Palestinian brokers, known locally as the "King of the Border," told the Qatari news outlet the officials prefer the bribe in the form of products rather than money. "Sometimes, they want iPhones or even gold," the broker said.

A former high-ranking Hamas official, who worked at the Rafah border last year, told Al-Jazeera that "over the course of only two days last year nearly half a million dollars in bribes were paid by 150 Palestinians in exchange for permission to travel to Egypt."

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