A FACE FROM JERUSALEM

Dr. Mahdi Abdul Hadi

(1944-2025)



Guardian of Jerusalem's History and Current Affairs

Dr. Mahdi Abdul Hadi departed on January 15, 2025, yet one year later, his voice continues to resonate throughout Jerusalem. The man is gone but his legacy endures, echoing through every scholar who sought guidance, every diplomat who entered his office located in Wadi al-Joz, and every Palestinian who found in PASSIA a trusted source of reliable information and knowledge.

Born in Nablus in 1944, Dr. Mahdi chose Jerusalem as his life's mission and eternal home. In 1987, he founded the Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA) that over nearly four decades grew into one of the most essential repositories of knowledge on Jerusalem, covering its history, politics, society, and the evolving landscape around it.

Hundreds of studies, detailed maps, archival documents, seminars, training programs, and research initiatives stand as testimony to a man who built an institution unlike any other: an institution that guards the Palestinian narrative and affirms that knowledge itself is a form of resistance.

Dr. Mahdi loved Jerusalem fiercely, with the devotion of a guardian, not the rigidity of the fanatic. He defended its identity in every forum, countered attempts to erase it with documentation and scholarship, and carried himself with an integrity that earned respect across borders. His office became a meeting ground for diplomats, UN officials, researchers, and the youth of the city, a place of dialogue, listening, and insight. He was a walking encyclopedia; a national reference point whose presence cannot be replaced.

On the first anniversary of his passing, Jerusalem commemorates one of its most faithful custodians, and the research community loses a voice of clarity and conviction. Yet PASSIA continues to stand, a living testament to his vision and dedication. Human beings pass on, but honest knowledge endures.

Peace to your soul, Dr. Mahdi. Peace to the legacy you left behind, and to Jerusalem, which has lost one of its devoted guardians.