

Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem

Report on the Israeli Colonization Activities in the West Bank & the Gaza Strip

Volume 13, August 1999 Issue

<http://www.arij.org>

August 1, 1999

- In Nablus District, the settlers of Itamar cut down 150 olive trees belonging to Moussa Hamed of Beit Furik in an attempt to grab Hamed's land, which lies near the settlement's road.

August 2, 1999

- The Israeli occupation authorities planned to establish a permanent Israeli military checkpoint (Erez 2) at the entrance of Bethlehem city. This will lead to the confiscation of dozens of Palestinian land, and the desecration of the Islamic cemetery near Bilal Ibn Rabah mosque.

August 4, 1999

- The Israeli occupation forces continued to impose a tightened siege around the city of Hebron, and posted roadblocks even in the nearby towns. At the same time, Israel has continued imposing a curfew on the old city of Hebron following the wounding of two settlers near the Ibrahimi Mosque. On the other hand, extremist settlers in Hebron attacked Palestinian houses with stones and empty bottles to create panic. They also chanted racial chants calling for the death and murder of Palestinians.
- In Ramallah District, the Israeli authorities delivered notification orders to demolish a clinic, three classrooms, and a multipurpose hall at Saffa Union High School for Boys.

August 5, 1999

- Deep in a pit, Israeli workers feverishly laid bricks, reinforcing the foundations of a contested Jewish settlement at the heart of Jerusalem’s traditionally Palestinian sector of Ras Al-Amoud.
- Bracha settlement is undergoing an expansion campaign at the expense of the nearby Palestinian land, where a number of olive trees belonging to Palestinians from Iraq Burin village were cut down and uprooted by the settlers.

August 6, 1999

- An article appeared in ‘Al-Quds’ daily stating that the Municipality of Jerusalem demanded the Vatican to pay a municipal tax on churches and monasteries called ‘Arnona’.
- According to official Israeli sources, a contract was signed to construct an additional 88 housing units to expand the settlement of Qidar which is located near Maale Adumim settlement, and houses 80 Jewish families.

August 8, 1999

- In Jenin District, the Israeli military army chopped down around 300 pine trees from Um El Rihan forest in an attempt to establish an Israeli military camp on an area of 400 dunums.

August 9, 1999

- The daily newspapers ‘Al-Quds’ and ‘Al-Ayyam’ wrote about the new crisis between the Israeli and Palestinian authorities that erupted near Joseph’s Tomb in Nablus. The Israeli settlers set up a new structure “Barracks” in the Tomb’s vicinity in contradiction with the Tomb’s special protocol. According to the protocol, no changes can be made without prior coordination with the Palestinian side. The Palestinian decision to prevent settlers from entering the area was taken after the Israeli settlers erected the Barracks near the Tomb.
- In Nablus District, the settlers of Shilo and Rachel uprooted 50 olive trees from Jalud village facilitating the way to create a new outpost at the expense of large stretches of Palestinian land.

August 10, 1999

- The Israeli bulldozers accompanied by Israeli border police raided El Nabi Samuel Palestinian village (northwest of Jerusalem), uprooted several fruit

trees and nurslings, destroyed the fences surrounding several pieces of Palestinian land in an attempt to expropriate the land, and evicted the original inhabitants from their rightful place.

- An article appeared in 'Al-Quds' newspaper stating that the Israeli authorities closed one of Al Khataniya School's windows by the southern side of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem.

August 11, 1999

- The Israeli occupation forces demolished two houses owned by Ahmad and Mohammad Khalifa, and sheltered 12 family members in El Walajeh village, Bethlehem. Ten Palestinians were reported wounded in clashes that erupted following the demolition.
- The Israeli settlers from the settlement enclaves in downtown Hebron, set fire to two Palestinian grocery shops, and other Palestinian carts used in the old produce market. Palestinian sources said that a big loss was incurred before the Hebron municipal fire brigade put off the fire.

August 13, 1999

- In Nablus District, Jewish settlers started the construction of 50 housing units at the Israeli military camp near Qabalan village.
- The Israeli occupation authority put a plan to confiscate large plots from Beit Ummar and Beit Fajjar villages near Bethlehem in order to establish an Israeli industrial zone.
- In response to the Mayor of Ariel's call which demands the settlers to break the bones of the Peace Now members if they visit the settlement, the Israeli settlers of Itamar settlement attacked activists from the Israeli Peace Now movement during their tour in the West Bank to monitor the new Jewish settlements created after the Wye agreement.

August 14, 1999

- In Nablus District, the Israeli occupation authorities intends to construct a new settlement road which will end up in the confiscation of wide areas of the Palestinian land in the villages of Turmus 'Ayya, Jalud and El Mugheir.
- In Nablus District, the settlers of Gadunim, which is constructed at the expense of Beit Furik land, cut down tens of 40-year-old olive trees using electric saws during night time.

- In Nablus District, an Israeli construction company has started bulldozing wide areas of Haris village near Barqan settlement in order to construct new Israeli industrial facilities.
- Abdel Hadi Hantash of the Palestinian Land Defense Committee reported that Migdal Oz settlement, in the north of the Hebron District, might expand by several dozen acres. Moreover, 13 buildings and nine caravans were added to Karme Tzur settlement, which lies north of Hebron between the Palestinian villages of Beit Ummar and Halhul.

August 16, 1999

- In its statement, the Palestinian Land Defense and settlement Confrontation's office stated that Israel confiscated 10,821 dunums during June and July, 1999, added 1,825 housing units to the settlements, and uprooted 1,540 fruit trees. On the other hand, the statement pointed to the Israeli by-pass road, especially Road 60 which endangers more than 20,000 dunums planted with fruitful trees, and many industrial structures in the area between Nablus, Jenin, and Tulkarm districts.
- Israeli "Peace Now" movement said that 44,000 settlers joined the other settlers in the West Bank in the period between 31-12-1996 to 31-12-1998.

August 18, 1999

- The Israeli occupation authorities ordered two Palestinian families to demolish their homes in the Kh. Ed Dirat hamlet near Yatta town or else the Israeli authorities will force them to pay the demolition expenses. According to Israeli officials, the two houses were built without permits by Adra family.
- The Israeli settlers confiscated about 100 dunums belonging to Palestinian citizens of Bani Na'im village near Hebron. The confiscated land is close to the Israeli "Bani Hever" settlement. On the other hand, the Israeli bulldozers damaged the Abu Arqa road in the Kh. Karma hamlet near Hebron. The damaged road was constructed two months ago by the Karma Palestinian Municipal Council.

August 20, 1999

- The Zionist Movement of 'Mishbi Tzion' group occupied a Palestinian house in Jerusalem's Musrara neighborhood endeavoring to create continuity between Musrara neighborhood and other Jewish neighborhoods in the vicinity.

August 21, 1999

- Jewish settlers of Rachel demolished two pen sheds and a retaining wall owned by Yousef Moussa from Qaryut village, and destroyed another two rooms in the same area.

August 22, 1999

- A survey conducted by the Alternative Information Center 'BADIL' shows that 8% of Palestinian Jerusalemites are forced to move to the West Bank every year because of complicated Israeli administrative and authoritative procedures.
- The Israeli settlers from the settlement enclaves in down town Hebron, uprooted around 30 olive trees from a Palestinian land under the Israeli control in Tel Rumeida area. Local sources informed that settlers from the settlement of "Ramat Yeshai", "Dabboya" and "Avraham Aveno" enclaves uprooted 30-year-old olive and almond trees. On the other hand, the Israeli occupation forces sealed several areas of Hebron's El Sahleh Avenue with huge cement block.

August 23, 1999

- Jewish army bulldozers destroyed scores of dunums of fertile land near Beit Ummar village in the Hebron District.

August 25, 1999

- The settlers of the newly established outpost constructed on Burin village land, south of Nablus, added several caravans to the existing wooden barracks in the area.
- According to eye witnesses, the settlers of Itzhar in Nablus opened a settlement road at the bottom of the mountain, which is near the by-pass road there, and set up a wooden caravan at the end of the road.
- In Nablus District, the Israeli authorities started to facilitate a new by-pass road starting from Mirda village, west of Za'tara military checkpoint. The road is located near Ariel settlement and penetrates Qira and Kafr Haris villages.

August 26, 1999

- The Christian Peacemakers Team (CPT) reported that Israeli heavy machinery was digging on the hill directly above the Abdel Jawad Jaber's family house. The family built their home over a cave in a hillside in the Baq'a valley, an area just east of the Hebron city limits where the family settled hundreds of years ago. Rock debris fallen from the cave roof due to the intense vibrations from the digging above can be seen obviously.
- Abdel Hadi Hantash of the Land Defense Committee reported that Jewish settlers had placed eight trailer homes on a hilltop near the Palestinian village of Jaba'a, and had constructed a series of roads around nearby hills.

August 27, 1999

- The Israeli Ministry of Housing started preparations to carry out a plan to expand Maale Adumim settlement, east of the occupied Jerusalem, where 2,000 housing settlement units will be built. The weekly Israeli 'Yeroshlein' newspaper detailed the Israeli plan, in which 70% of these units will be allocated to the Israeli settlers. The paper added that building works will start next winter. On the other hand, the paper further added that Mitzpe Yareho settlement built southwest of Jericho also plans to increase the number of housing units up to 1000.
- For its part, 'Kol Ha'ir' Israeli weekly newspaper uncovered that Extremist Orthodox Jewish Associations started recently a large campaign to sell new housing units in the so-called 'Tel Zion' settlement , south of Ramallah which accommodates 30,000 settlers .

August 28, 1999

- 'Al- Quds' daily newspaper published an article on the Israeli violation perpetrated against the mosque of Bilal Ibn Rabah in Bethlehem, located at the northern entrance of the city. The Israeli authorities also narrowed the entrance of the city, through erecting cement constructions beside the wall of the cemetery adjacent to the mosque.

August 29, 1999

- The daily newspaper 'Al-Quds' and 'Al-Ayyam' published an article about the settlement construction works at Abu Ghneim Mountain, south of the occupied Jerusalem, where the former Israeli PM Netanyahu has given the green light to build 6500 housing units.

- The settlers of Avnei Heifetz set fire to more than 500 olive trees belonging to the Hamdan, Hamed, and Al-Drubi families in Shoufa village, Tulkarm. It is of important weight to mention that the Israeli authorities are trying to expropriate these lands in an attempt to expand Avnei Heifetz enclave.
- According to Israeli sources, a plan was unveiled to expand Mevo Bitar and Tsur Hadassah settlements by constructing additional 5,160 housing units.

August 30, 1999

- The Israeli bulldozers demolished the 300 square-meter house of Bassam Taha, 31-year-old, in Et Tur neighborhood, Jerusalem under the pretext of being built without a permit.

This report is based on information compiled from local daily press & field verification.