

Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem

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

Volume 12, July 1999 Issue

<http://www.arij.org>

July 1, 1999

- In Bethlehem District, Jewish colonists of Efrat continued to expand their colony at the expense of El Khader village. The colonists were building several housing units on 40 dunums of land owned by Khalil Abu Ghaliun from El Khader village).
- In Shoufa village of Tulkarm District, Israeli bulldozers uprooted dozens of olive trees owned by Palestinian villagers in order to expand the Avnei Heifetz colony.

July 2, 1999

- An article appeared in *Al-Quds* newspaper stating that a commercial center and an industrial zone are scheduled for construction in Pisgat Zeev colony, Jerusalem.
- In Nablus District, Itzhar colonists installed about 12 new caravans on hills overlooking Burin and Huwara villages.
- The Municipality of Jerusalem surveyed large tracts of land in Beit Hanina, Jerusalem. Meanwhile, dozens of Palestinian houses in the area are threatened with demolition for allegedly being built on a 'Green Area'.

July 3, 1999

- According to the Palestinian Land Defense Committee, plans are afoot by the Olmert Municipality and Israeli Ministry of Interior to demolish 2,410 Palestinian homes in Jerusalem.

- Israeli colonists have started to lay down foundations for a new Jewish neighborhood in Ras Al-Amoud in the heart of East Jerusalem. Jackhammers, two bulldozers and several trucks stood at the dusty building site where U.S. millionaire Irving Moscovitch is financing a 132-unit housing colony, a public garden, a mall, and a synagogue. Large stretches of rocky earth had been carved out for the foundations. The Palestinian Authority described work on the 1.5 hectares of land as a ‘provocation’ and called on Prime Minister-elect Barak to halt construction.

July 4, 1999

- Palestinians received dozens of notices from the Israeli occupation authorities to stop building in the Jawhar mountain area- a residential quarter of the City of Hebron.
- Several notices were dispatched to Palestinian families in Dila Hamlet, near Beit Ula, Hebron. The notices warned demolition of eight Palestinian houses and a school under the allegation that they had been built without a permit.
- A group of colonists from Bit Arye, a West Bank colony north of Ramallah, uprooted and confiscated trees from several plots of land near the villages of ‘Aboud and Lubban. Hanna Khoury from ‘Aboud had 128 trees uprooted from his land. Mohammad Ali Yousef Nasser from Lubban had 150 trees uprooted.

July 5, 1999

- Orthodox colonists from Ateret Cohanim occupied by force a Palestinian house in the Muslim quarter of the Old City under the alleged pretext that they had owned it in the past. Police cordoned off the streets around the house and closed the main gates of the city in order to avoid confrontation with Palestinians. The colonists also occupied two other houses alleging the same pretext.
- Colonists from Avnei Heifetz uprooted 60 olive trees in Kh. Esh Shiekh near Tulkarm, and transported them to their colony.

July 6, 1999

- The Orient House reported that since the beginning of this year at least 1,390 Palestinian citizens of Jerusalem have had their IDs confiscated forcing them to leave the city.

- In Bethlehem District, the Israeli military forces demolished a sheep pen and four storehouses owned by Bedouins from Kisan village under the pretext of being built without a permit. Meanwhile, the Israeli authorities delivered a demolition order to another Palestinian citizen from Kisan village.
- The Israeli authorities dispatched eviction orders to Palestinian citizens from Nahhalin village, west of Bethlehem to evacuate their land of 150 dunums under the pretext of being a “state-land”.

July 7, 1999

- Construction of Road 60 continued as the Israeli army bulldozers cleared large portions of fertile land belonging to Es Samu’ and Dura villages.

July 9, 1999

- *Al-Quds* and *Al-Ayyam* news papers quoted a report by the Israeli Peace Now group concerning the construction of 6,600 Israeli housing units in the Occupied Territories. The report confirmed the fact that around 3,700 units were vacant.

July 10, 1999

- The Palestinian National Authority has managed to prevent illegal land purchase of 300 dunums close to the confiscated Palestinian Mountain of Abu Ghneim. The Jewish land dealer, who maintained close links with Zionist American millionaire, Irving Moscovitch, used forged documents in his attempt to acquire the land.
- The Israeli authorities demolished a well and a greenhouse owned by Ibrahim Dadou from Wadi El Biar village near Efrat colony to the south of Bethlehem.
- Abdel Hadi Hantash of the Land Defense Committee reported that 19 stop work orders were issued by the Israeli military on construction, and over 1250 dunums of Palestinian land were either planned for confiscation or in the process of being confiscated in the Hebron District.

July 11, 1999

- The Israeli government claimed that large tracts of land between Neve Yacov and Adam colony are “state-owned land”, and revealed plans for

the building of 600 housing units in Beitar Illit colony, south-west of Jerusalem.

- The colonists of Elon-Moreh added another three mobile houses to a military post that was established two months ago in Salim village, east of Nablus.
- Colonists from Bracha (A), south of Nablus damaged a pool, a concrete mixer and other building equipment owned by Mohammad Qadous from Eraq Burin village in order to settle the new caravans of Bracha (B).

July 12, 1999

- The second phase of the withdrawal of the Israeli army from the West Bank will take place around the Ramallah – Nablus areas but will not involve the evacuation of any bases, only the removal of some checkpoints. The third phase will be centered in Hebron and will include the evacuation of the Adoraim base.
- *Haaretz* reported that a fourth Jewish family moved into Al-Shiekh Jarah neighborhood in the heart of East Jerusalem. The family moving in got the ninth apartment in the neighborhood. Located within Al- Shiekh Jarrah neighborhood, the area received special status from the last government. The new status means that the Housing Ministry is to give the area NIS 400,000 to pay for private security.
- In Um El Tut hamlet, near Jenin, Palestinian citizens appealed for the authorities to remove poisonous waste dumped on their land by a petrochemical factory situated in the nearby Ganim colony.

July 14, 1999

- In Bethlehem District, the Israeli Civil Administration of the West Bank demolished the first Palestinian house since the new Barak government was sworn in citing that it was built on “state-owned land.” It consisted of 5-rooms and belonged to Ibrahim Halase and his family of 10. The house is near the Israeli colonies of Kedar and Maale Adumim.
- Israeli troops stormed into the Coptic neighborhood in Al Ram area near Jerusalem, uprooted telephone poles and severed lines, leaving the local Palestinian population without a telephone service.

July 15, 1999

- In Nablus District, the Israeli authorities delivered a demolition order to the Palestinian journalist Romel Al Sweiti's house in Huwara village under the pretext of being built without a permit.

July 17, 1999

- The Israeli Peace Now group reported that construction at illegally built colonies continues despite a change in government. The report said new building works were carried out during the past few weeks in five colony spots built without permits from the Israeli government in the northern parts of the West Bank. PeaceNow accused the Labor party of adopting the same policy as the previous government despite pledges by Barak to stop building new colonies.

July 19, 1999

- Israeli bulldozers uprooted 150 olive trees at Kafr Qaddum village, west of Nablus in order to build an industrial zone near Kedumim colony.
- Jewish contractors demolished the northern part of a Muslim cemetery and its wall near a military checkpoint in Bethlehem. The cemetery lies adjacent to Bilal Ibn Rabah mosque.
- In a move which prepares for the fulfillment of the Wye Agreement and subsequent redeployment the Israeli military forces was reported to have started preparations a new base in the Jenin area of the West Bank. The new base located next to Shaked, a colony northwest of Jenin, will help take the place of a base closer to Palestinian Authority areas, near Dotan junction.

July 20, 1999

- David Levy, Israeli Minister for Foreign Affairs, called for more colonies in East Jerusalem, while a new colony is underway on the land of Shibteen village near Ramallah.

July 21, 1999

- Expansion work has commenced to expand Har Adar colony to outside the Green Line. About 750 new housing units are to be built in the Har Adar colony, located in the buffer zone between Israel and the West Bank.

July 23, 1999

- According to Israeli weekly press, *Kol Ha'ir*, the colonists in Hebron District decided to build a hotel consisting of 30 rooms and a commercial center near the Ibrahimi Mosque.
- According to Israeli weekly press, *Kol Ha'ir*, the Israeli Interior Ministry and the Jerusalem Municipality plan to move the Interior Ministry's office in East Jerusalem to a building which is used as a school (Al Mamouniah School for girls) in Wadi El Jouz neighborhood.
- In Hebron District, near Tel Rumeida colony, an Israeli Defense officer issued a military order to expropriate a piece of land and a rooftop owned by Mahmoud El Saheb for military purposes.

July 25, 1999

- The right-wing Jerusalem Mayor, Ehud Olmert, called on Barak to increase the building of affordable housing in the city. This came in the wake of an annual study conducted by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, reporting that Jerusalem's Arab population is increasing three times as fast as its Jewish population.

July 26, 1999

- The Israeli authorities demolished a Palestinian power station in Al-Aqaba village in the Jordan Valley alleging that it was built without permission. This act left more than 170 schoolchildren camping in the area without water and electricity.

July 27, 1999

- Palestinian officer Farouk Amin decided to stop joint patrols after Israeli army bulldozers unearthed the entrance of Bethlehem city under the pretext of rehabilitating the entrance of the city for the year 2000. This act comes against the spirit of all agreements that state that Rachel's Tomb site maintains a special status.

July 29, 1999

- Extremist Jewish colonists captured an old abandoned storehouse owned by Palestinian Ayed Castero in the Old City of Jerusalem.

July 30, 1999

- The Israeli Ministry of Housing invites new tender to build 45 housing units for ultra-orthodox Jewish colonists in Shu'fat, north of Jerusalem.
- The Israeli construction company "Jad" has started marketing 117 apartments, slated to be built in the new colony neighborhood of Abu Ghneim Mountain (Har Homa colony), to Jewish colonists.
- The Palestinian newspaper *Al-Ayyam* quoted the Israeli weekly *Kol Ha'ir* as confirming that the Israeli government has endorsed a plan to relocate the Israeli police headquarters 'Maskobeya', west of Jerusalem to Al-Shiekh Jarah neighborhood in East Jerusalem.
- The Israeli occupation forces announced that it intends to confiscate 1,080 dunums from Ya'bad village near Jenin in order to expand the Um El Rihan quarries. The quarries were built on land belonging to Palestinians from nearby villages.

July 31, 1999

- Israeli colonists have renewed their attempts to occupy and confiscate Palestinian houses and properties in downtown Hebron. Eyewitnesses mentioned that colonists from "Ramat Yeshai" stormed into the Palestinian citizens' houses and badly beat the dwellers.
- Colonists burnt more than 200 olive trees in Teqoa' village, west of Bethlehem.

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