

Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem

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

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September 3, 1999 📅

- An article appeared in 'Al-Hayyat Al-Jadeeda' daily stating that New York Jews are buying new plots at Abu Ghneim Mountain (Har Homa settlement), southeast of Jerusalem.
- A study conducted by the Palestinian Agriculture Directorate in Jerusalem showed that the settlers have developed their own ways to destroy the Palestinian environment, by cutting trees, land excavation and construction of by-pass roads. The study also revealed that the Israeli military apparatus helps the settlers in their offensive through seizing the land under the pretext of military exercises.
- The Jerusalem Municipality approved the construction of a technological garden in Pisgat Zeev settlement on 53,8 dunums of land.

September 5, 1999

- An article appeared in 'Al-Quds' daily citing the intensive colonization activities and excavation works in Ras Al-Amoud neighborhood and Abu Ghneim Mountain (Har Homa settlement).
- The Islamic Waqf (a Muslim charitable institute) has appealed to the world leaders to halt the Israeli digging and construction works near the southern wall of Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- A new Israeli plan was unveiled to connect the two settlements of Maale Adumim and Qedar with a settlement road.

September 6, 1999

- The Israeli occupation authorities stepped up their colonization policy by unearthing and uprooting scores of fruitful trees at Kafr Qaddum in Nablus District.
- The Israeli military forces in Hebron have issued a military order to close the Ibrahimi Mosque for Muslim worshippers for six days this month during the Jewish holidays. Access will only be granted to settlers and orthodox Jews.

September 7, 1999

- A report appeared in 'Al-Quds' daily remarking that Israel has seized 1,741 dunums of fertile land during Barak's tenure.

September 12, 1999

- In the Hebron District, the settlers of Karmeit Tsur, which is constructed at the expense of Halhul and Beit Ummar land, seized a piece of land owned by the Maddiya family from Halhul in order to open a new road, 400 meters in length.

September 16, 1999

- A recent study conducted by the Applied Research Institute-Jerusalem (ARIJ) estimated that the total area of Palestinian land seized by the Israeli government since the signing of the Wye Memorandum in 1998 through the end of July 1999 reached 167,264 dunums, representing 2.9% of the total area of the West Bank. Some 33,467 trees have been uprooted, and approximately 266 houses have been demolished.

September 17, 1999

- An article appeared in 'Al-Hayyat Al-Jadeeda' daily stating that the Israeli Housing Ministry recently endorsed a plan to construct a huge Israeli tourist settlement on thousands of seized land in the south of Bethlehem in the Etzion Block. The project will be called "The Small Switzerland", which aims at converting large stretches of land between Bethlehem and Hebron to tourist areas.
- The Israeli authorities have started constructing ten permanent housing units in Rachelim settlement near Yatma village, south of Nablus. Nearby, two settlement roads were opened at the eastern and southern part of Rachelim settlement.

- According to an article appeared in 'Al-Quds' daily, an Israeli real estate company intends to construct a Jewish neighborhood in El Shiekh Jarah neighborhood, East Jerusalem.

September 18, 1999

- A study conducted by the Alternative Information Center (BADIL) indicated that the Israeli authorities have confiscated approximately 11,184 Jerusalemite identity cards through the last four years. Up to April 1999, 127 IDs were confiscated from Palestinian Jerusalemites.
- The settlers of Susya have expanded its boundaries northwards and eastwards. They have moved the electricity poles outside the settlement's former fence, and installed 10 caravans on 4 dunums of land belonging to the Shreiteh family, which has lost approximately 150 dunums to the settlement.

September 20, 1999

- A new checkpoint is planned and currently being built between Jerusalem and Bethlehem. When completed, the new checkpoint will run parallel to the existing one and be used by Palestinians only. Palestinians with permits to enter Jerusalem will have to park their cars on the Bethlehem side, walk 650 meters along a fenced pathway, and then present their documents to Israeli military personnel.

September 21, 1999

- Israeli authorities prohibited the villagers of Kh. Beit Skariya from cultivating their 80-dunum land in an attempt to seize it under the pretext of being 'state-owned land'. The Israeli scheme is refuted by the landowners who have documents, dating back to the Ottoman Period, proving their ownership of the land.

September 23, 1999

- Jewish settlement leaders confirmed that they plan to block an internationally funded project to help Palestinian agriculture south of Bethlehem. The settlement leaders said that the project is located in an area under full Israeli control and which Barak has pledged would become part of Israel in a final status settlement. The agriculture project is located in the Etzion enclave between the settlements of Neve Daniel and Efrat.

The project is being funded by the United Nations and will be established on about 100 acres of land.

- In an attempt to seize more Palestinian land and expand existing settlements in Nablus District, the settlers of Rachel and Shvut Rahel attacked Palestinian land in Jalud and Qaryut villages, south of Nablus. Also, a group of Jewish settlers seized Sahl El Mubasher in the east of the area and cultivated it with dozens of olive nurslings.
- In the Hebron District, the settlers of Telem near Tarqumia village fenced around 40 dunums of land owned by El Muraqtan and Abu Sakur Palestinian families endeavoring to construct additional housing units to the settlement.

September 24, 1999

- The Israeli occupation authorities are considering a plan to relocate the Jerusalem's central vegetable market (El Hesba) in East Jerusalem, so as to build in its place a 200 Israeli bedroom hotel.
- According to 'Yeroshleim' newspaper, the Israeli "Logan Company" has bought a seven-dunum plot of land at the southern entrance to the city of Jerusalem in order to construct a new settlement neighborhood. The newspaper also pointed out that the Israeli company intends to demolish an old Palestinian building on the same plot in preparation for building the settlement neighborhood which will include 3- storey buildings.

September 26, 1999

- Israel's Housing and Construction Ministry has issued 2,600 new tenders for house constructions in the settlements of the West Bank. All those tenders were issued after the new government came to power in July and 1,000 of them were slated for the Maale Adumim settlement city and others for several Jewish settlements in the West Bank.
- Just after the Sharm El Shiekh Memorandum was signed, the Israeli military forces closed off 23,000 dunums of land belonging to the Palestinian villages of Beit Ula and Edna, west of Hebron.
- In the Jenin District, the Palestinian District Civil Liaison Offices (DCL) filed a legal complaint against Qaddim settlers who constructed a road through Palestinian land from Qabatiya village, and fenced it with barbed wire.

September 27, 1999

- An article appeared in 'Al-Quds' daily stating that a number of Israeli officials attended the ceremony of opening a large Jewish school in Otniel settlement , south of Hebron.

September 28, 1999

- More settlement provocation in Jerusalem as the Israeli authorities sent notices to demolish four Palestinian houses in Beit Duqqu village.

September 29, 1999

- The Israeli authorities issued 16 military orders to seal off large areas of fertile agricultural land in the West Bank. These orders included closing off land belonging to no fewer than 79 Palestinian villages. The land in question constitutes much more than the 7% of land that Israel is due to transfer from to Palestinian civil control according to the Sharm El Shiekh Memorandum.
- The Israeli military forces and Jewish settlers attacked Awarta village near Nablus, and prevented the inhabitants to reach their homes under the pretext of enabling the settlers to practice religious rituals at the three Islamic shrines.

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