

## Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem

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

Volume 7, February 1999 Issue

<http://www.arij.org>

#### February 1, 1999

- In Jerusalem District, the 'Ajaj family received notice from the Ministry of Interior that their house was slated for demolition within 30 days for allegedly being built without a license.
- An Israeli plan was unveiled to demolish 37 Palestinian homes in El Walajeh village, 10 kilometers south-east of Jerusalem, to construct an industrial zone and provide additional 400 housing units for "Gilo" settlement (settlement).
- In the south of the West Bank, settlers from the "Efrat" enclave near Bethlehem set up three caravans on a nearby Palestinian hill in the Wadi Rahal village.
- According to an article appeared in the Israeli daily *Haaretz*, the Labor Party leader Ehud Barak assured settlers in Alfei Menesheh that their settlement (settlement) and many others (Gush Etzion, Ariel, Nirit, and the Jordan Valley settlements will remain under Israeli sovereignty in any permanent status agreement with the Palestinians.
- In Jerusalem District, the Palestinian people of Beit Duqqu staged a sit-in strike for the confiscation of hundreds of dunums of their land and Bitunia's village land by the Israeli authorities in an attempt to create a new settlement (settlement) between Givat Zeev and Beit Horon. The people have deeds proving their ownership of the land which is 6 kilometers away from the Jewish settlement (settlement) of Givat Zeev.

#### February 2, 1999

- The Municipality of Jerusalem gave a demolition order to a Palestinian house in Shu'fat refugee camp.
- Shilo settlers vandalized 180 dunums planted with olive nurslings at Turmus 'Ayya village in Ramallah District.
- In Tulkarm District, Israeli surveyors started surveying land located to the south of Avnei Hefets settlement (settlement) which is constructed on confiscated land of two Palestinian villages of Kafr El Labad and Shoufa.
- In Bethlehem District, the residents of Wadi Rahal, west of Bethlehem, staged a sit-in strike for the inevitable determination of Efrat settlers to bulldoze approximately 5,000 dunums in order to open a new by-pass road linking their settlement (settlement) to Jewish settlements (settlements) in the east.

### **February 3, 1999**

- The Papal mission in Jerusalem lodged a strong protest to the Israeli Foreign Minister, following the confiscation by Efrat settlers of a plot of land owned by Artas Latin Church, south of Bethlehem.
- Israeli army cut down 500 olive and fig trees in Yatma village near Nablus to open a new settlement road.
- Elon-Moreh settlers uprooted 100 olive trees and leveled additional land for expanding their settlement (settlement) in Deir El Hatab village near Nablus.
- In Jericho District, the Israeli authorities demolished a barracks and a shed in El Khan El Ahmar area owned by Muhammad Melihat.

### **February 4, 1999**

- In Hebron District, the Israeli bulldozers demolished the house of Fayeze Jaber in the Baq'a Valley, east of Hebron city. Soldiers forced Fayeze Jaber, 22, and members of his family out of their home near a road used by Jewish settlers. The Israeli authorities said the house had been built without proper authorization. The family has documents for their land dating back to the Ottoman period, and the British Mandate. This was the fourth time this family has had its home demolished. The first was in 1982, then 89, then 96, and now.
- In Beit Ummar village north of Hebron, a second house was demolished by Israeli military forces. The owner of the house had received a stop work order two months ago, but continued to build. The house is located in the area where a by-pass road around El Arroub refugee camp is planned.

- In Bethlehem District, the Israeli authorities issued a stop- work order to a clinic in Za'tara village in Area B under the pretext that the clinic is located near a planned by-pass road.

### **February 5, 1999**

- A fourth Jewish family has occupied a Palestinian house in Ras Al-Amoud in East Jerusalem claiming that it is owned by Irving Moskowitz, the famous Jewish millionaire.
- The Palestinian landowners of Bethlehem strongly refuted an article appeared in the Israeli weekly *Yerosheleim* stating that an Israeli private company has completed the purchase of more than 1,000 dunums of land in an area located between Bethlehem and Jerusalem.
- Jewish settlers and Israeli army uprooted and confiscated 1,200 olive trees planted on 75 dunums at 'Anin village near Nablus owned by Ahmed Milhem and Mahmoud Yasin.
- An article appeared in *Al-Hayyat Al-Jadeeda* daily stated that in a demographic war against Palestinian Jerusalemites, the Israeli Ministry of Interior is confiscating their Ids, and the National Insurance Corporation is denying their right to medication.
- A Jewish conference held in Jerusalem under the slogan "Building in the Jerusalem Corridor" reveals a new colonization plan to construct a city west of Jerusalem temporarily called "Beit Harim" or "the House of Mountains". It will be created in a race with time to Judaize Jerusalem and obliterate its Arab character prior to starting final status negotiations on the city.

### **February 6, 1999**

- The Palestinian residents of Khas village in Bethlehem organized a sit-in protest against the confiscation by the Israeli authorities of real-estate property owned by the church, for the purpose of expanding nearby Jewish settlements (settlements).
- The Israeli daily *Kol Ha'ir* reported that Jerusalem Mayor ordered that the demolition of "illegally built" Palestinian structures in East Jerusalem be stepped up.

### **February 7, 1999**

- Israeli soldiers gave a Palestinian farmer in the Yatta area south of Hebron an order not to go to his land near Ma'on settlement (settlement) again or they would seize all his 300 goats. He has the

- Tabo (land deed) from the Ottoman times a century ago, but the soldiers claimed that the land is a closed "state land".
- According to 1998 Hebron Statistics released by Abdel Hadi Hantash of the Hebron Land Defense Committee,
    - 30,000 dunums of land were confiscated by the Israeli Civil Administration (CA), (the military offices administering the Occupied Territories)
    - 78 stop work orders were issued to Palestinians building homes,
    - 41 home demolition orders were issued to Palestinians,
    - 48 Palestinian homes were demolished,
    - 3 frames of Palestinian houses were demolished,
    - 6 cases of multiple tents burned,
    - 18 cases of homes being attacked (several homes in some cases) by Jewish settlers ,
    - 1 case of a burned Palestinian house,
    - 115 evacuation orders were given to Palestinians by the Israeli military forces to leave land, houses or both,
    - 6 cases of orders given to Palestinians to destroy terraces,
    - 9 cases of chemical destruction of Palestinian fields of wheat and other grains by settlers ,
    - 15 new roads were opened through or on Palestinian land by the Israeli military forces or settlers ,
    - 32 cases of Palestinian land being bulldozed by the Israeli military forces,
    - 16 cases of uprooted trees (in one ca, more than 200 trees, olives, grapes and figs, were uprooted in an area of more than 500 dunums) by settlers ,
    - 18 cases of Palestinian farmers being attacked in their fields by the Israeli military forces or settlers ,
    - 5 cases of Palestinian farmers being prevented from working their land by the Israeli military forces or settlers ,
    - 10 cases of Palestinian wheat, building materials, or other items being confiscated,
    - 2 cases of Palestinian goats being confiscated (50 were confiscated in one case),
    - 4 cases of Palestinian farmers' land being planted by settlers ,
    - 23 cases of Palestinians arrested for defending their land,
    - Plans to expand 4 quarries (under Israeli control) announced,
    - 5 cases of Palestinian or Israeli newspaper announcements by the CA to expand settlements (settlements) across the

'Green- Line' (the border between Israel and the Occupied Territories as set in 1967),

- 6 cases of settlement (settlement) expansion,
- 17 cases of settlers erecting new buildings (multiple buildings each case),
- 7 cases of settlers putting mobile homes on land ( multiple mobile homes each time),
- 6 cases of Palestinian land being surveyed by colonist,
- 2 cases of electric poles being destroyed in the city of Hebron by settlers.

### **February 8, 1999**

- The settlers of Elon-Moreh near Nablus started opening a 3.5 km long road for which fertile meadows were confiscated from Deir El Hatab village, west of Nablus.
- The Israeli authorities dispatched notices to confiscate hundreds of dunums from Hizma and Jaba', and notified 25 families of the Jahalin El Hathaqlin, and El Saray'a Bedouin clan to evacuate their land which is located between Mukhmas and Jaba' in order to enlarge and facilitate new by-pass roads leading to "Adam" settlement (settlement).
- The El Fakhir family, part of the Jahalin El Saray'a Bedouin clan, received a demolition order from the Israeli Civil Administration informing them that their eight modest homes and tents as well as seven small sheep and chicken pens must be destroyed. The homes of the 39 member family are located east of Jerusalem in a part of 'Anata , on 25 dunums of land owned by a friend of the family. The land is currently classified under Israeli controlled Area C.
- Edna Sabarneh and her husband had received a demolition order for the new house that they are building. Her husband was also told by settlers that he could not prune his fruit trees on the family's land outside of Beit Ummar village in Hebron.

### **February 9, 1999**

- Israeli bulldozers demolished a Palestinian house in Beit Hanina which lies to the north of Jerusalem, bringing the number of demolished Palestinian houses in Jerusalem area to four since the beginning of this year. The demolition was undertaken because the house had been built without a license on the family-owned land which spans an area of 700 square meters. The residents of Beit Hanina were awakened by roaring bulldozers to see themselves besieged by a large force of Israeli soldiers

and security police heading to the house owned by Taleb Al-Kiswani, ordering residents to keep away from the place. Without prior notice, the house accommodating a family of 10 persons was demolished. A 250-meter long wall surrounding the house was also demolished.

- Due to ongoing excavations by Jerusalem Municipality, three Palestinian houses are threatened to collapse in Jerusalem.
- An article appeared in *Haaretz* daily stating that Interior Minister Eli Suissa is expected to appoint a commission soon to consider expanding Jerusalem's borders under the pretext that the city has run out of land for new building. The commission will not consider the annexation of Jewish settlements (settlements) outside Jerusalem. Instead, they will focus on adjacent undeveloped areas, particularly those west of the capital.

### **February 10, 1999**

- A Palestinian survey put the number of Jewish settlements (settlements) in the West Bank and Gaza Strip at 205 settlements (settlements) distributed as follows:
  1. 73 in Nablus, Tulkarm, Qalqiliya, and Jenin areas.
  2. 29 in the Jerusalem area.
  3. 28 in the Ramallah area
  4. 27 in the Hebron area
  5. 21 in the Gaza area
  6. 17 in the Bethlehem area
  7. 10 in the Jericho area
- The "Settlers of Zion" association under the sponsorship of MK Rabbi Benny Elon and in East Jerusalem has illegally acquired six new homes in Shiekh Jarah neighborhood of the city. Members of the association moved into the buildings, not far from the American Consulate. Unmarried students are temporarily living in the homes- which were acquired as they claim in video-taped transactions-and families and married couples are scheduled to move in soon.

### **February 11, 1999**

- In Nablus District, a Jewish colonist called Yehuda Tselim, guarded by Israeli militaries, installed a mobile home and constructed a sheep pen on more than 4,000 dunums of Deir Istiya village land.

## **February 12, 1999**

- A new Israeli tender was issued to build 3,346 housing units for Jewish settlers on Abu Ghneim Mountain (Har Homa), southeast of Jerusalem.
- Palestinian families of the Yemen neighborhood in Jerusalem are facing Israeli attempts to confiscate their homes.
- A vicious Israeli scheme was unveiled, designed to falsely expropriating 1,050 dunums of Senneria village land to construct hundreds of housing units near the Jewish settlement (settlement) of "El Kana" in Ramallah District.

## **February 13, 1999**

- Israel dumps internationally prohibited chemical materials at Um El Tut village near Jenin.
- Settlers of Elon-Moreh near Nablus uprooted thousands of olive trees from land belonging to Deir El Hatab village.
- Israeli forces demolished three Palestinian workshops at Deir Ballut village, near Salfit.

## **February 15, 1999**

- In a presumed step towards expanding the Ganim settlement (settlement), the Israeli forces notified Palestinian farmers near Jenin for the confiscation of 50 dunums of their land.
- The Israeli forces aided settlers in vandalizing farms near Nablus after uprooting and stealing hundreds of trees.
- The Israeli army uprooted more than 400 olive trees belonging to Palestinians from Beit Dajan village under the pretext that it is a 'state-land'.
- The Israeli army demolished three Palestinian houses in Nablus District and the central West Bank areas claiming that the owners lacked building permits. Demolition equipment guarded by army razed one home being built by Suleiman Bilawny, a farmer and a father of six, in 'Ein Shibli, a small village 17 kilometers east of Nablus. Two other structures were demolished in Luban Esh Sharqiya, 15 kilometers south of Nablus, and in Beit Furik, four kilometers south of the city.
- Mrs. Munira Siam from Silwan in East Jerusalem retained her house which Israeli settlers from Al'ad movement have presented forged documents and used land dealers to claim ownership of her home.

- An Israeli plane sprayed the town of 'Anin near Jenin and the surrounding fields with unknown substances believed to be toxic. It is known among Palestinians that spraying these substances are deliberate to turn the land infertile in preparation for its confiscation.
- Experts say that Huwara, the Israeli military camp, constitutes an environmental hazard in their area. The Israeli military camp is converting wood into coal emitting in the process huge amounts of smoke into the air.
- 'Atta Jaber reported that several more families in the Baq'a Valley received stop work or demolition orders, bringing the total number of such orders to 21.
- The Israeli military forces demolished a barracks owned by a Palestinian in Beit Furik, Nablus under the pretext that it was constructed near a by-pass road which leads to Elon-Moreh settlement (settlement).

### **February 16, 1999**

- A new Israeli scheme was disclosed to construct 60,000 housing units in "Modein" city, to the south-west of Ramallah near the 'Green- Line'. 9,000 units have already been constructed out of 25,000 units which represent the first stage.
- Israel prepares to cancel the Jerusalem Identity of many Jerusalemite families. Laws and regulations applicable to new immigrant Jews are different from those applied to authentic Palestinian citizens of Jerusalem. The Jews have the "right of return" while Palestinians are considered temporary residents of the city. Over the years, Israel used this imposed assumption to empty East Jerusalem from its Palestinian inhabitants.
- According to a study conducted by the Peace Now group which monitors settlement construction, the population in the 10 largest Jewish settlements (settlements) in the West Bank has increased by 5.9 percent in the first nine months of 1998. The 10 largest settlements (settlements) are home to 50 percent of the settler population. The increase is three times the Israeli natural growth rate.
- Abdel Hadi Hantash of the Hebron Land Defense Committee reported that the Israeli military confiscated 18 dunums of land near Halhul, a town north of Hebron.
- The military forces issued two orders to take over Palestinian rooftops in Hebron's old city by the Avraham Avinu settlement (settlement). Although the orders gave the families 10 days to protest, they were delivered just three days before the end of the protest period.



- The military forces gave an order to confiscate 1000 dunums of land for a new stone quarry between the settlements (settlements) of Tene and Shima in south-west Hebron District. Much of the "Jerusalem stone" used to face buildings in Israeli towns and settlements (settlements) comes from quarries in the West Bank. The confiscation order gave 60 days for the owners of the land to object.

### **February 17, 1999**

- Jewish settlers bulldozed more than 40 dunums planted with vegetables in Jiftlik in the Jordan Valley.
- Ultra-nationalists from a religious seminary, the Beit Orot yeshiva, located in East Jerusalem occupied an Arab house which they claim had been purchased from a Palestinian family in Shiekh Jarah's neighborhood in East Jerusalem.
- A new Israeli plan was unveiled to appropriate hundreds of dunums south of El Thahiriya town in Hebron, for constructing new Jewish settlements (settlements) and expanding others.
- In Nahalin village, located to the west of Bethlehem, Jewish settlers of Beitar uprooted 200 olive and vine trees.

### **February 19, 1999**

- Within the framework of a systematic Jewish settlement campaign to forcibly dislodge Palestinian families from their houses, an Israeli court has fined two Palestinian families from Jerusalem's Shiekh Jarah neighborhood to pay an accumulated rent of NIS 160,000 or be dislodged. The houses are two of 27 others in Shiekh Jarah neighborhood claimed to be owned by Jewish societies according to forged documents which were accepted by the Israeli court as property evidence. From a position of power and sheer force, the settlers supported by the current Israeli right-wing government are forging their way into East Jerusalem.
- Kedumim settlement council urged settlers to capture 2,000 dunums slated as they claim as 'state-land' at Wadi El Teen area, near the settlement (settlement).
- According to Israeli official sources, the Israeli Ministry of Infrastructure in cooperation with other colonizing associations started a campaign to establish Jewish farms in southern Hebron. Within the next six months, they will start to construct tens of Jewish farms in Yattir area in the desert of the West Bank. This project will be

established on strategic hilltops in Area C, to create more facts on the ground before the final negotiations.

- Within the framework of escalating the Jewish settlement campaign against Palestinian land, the settlers of Bracha, built on confiscated land from Kafr Qalil and Burin villages near Nablus, transported new caravans to nearby hilltops and prevented farmers from cultivating their fields.

### **February 20, 1999**

- A Palestinian inhabitant from 'Azoun village in Qalqiliya restored his 500 dunums captured by the Israeli Hamanota real-estate company which claimed ownership to the land lying west of Alfei Menesheh settlement (settlement).

### **February 21, 1999**

- The Israeli army issued a military order to confiscate a roof in a Palestinian house opposite to Qiryat Arba settlement.
- The news published about forming a staff of specialists in the Israeli Ministry of Interior to discuss taking more measures against Palestinian citizens of Jerusalem, including depriving them of their rights, and confiscating their identity cards, arouse feelings of concern because it means that Israel is going ahead with implementing plans of Judaizing East Jerusalem through expelling Palestinian Jerusalemites and bringing more Jewish settlers to live in the city.

### **February 23, 1999**

- Israeli officials handed notices to Palestinian farmers in 'Abba, Jenin for the confiscation of 400 dunums in the village within forty days.
- As a serious escalation and act of incitement against the peace process, the Knesset legalized the settlers radio station Arutz 7 which is run by fanatic Jewish settlers .
- The Israeli government published a tender for building 80 housing units for Jewish settlers on a hilltop spreading over 400 dunums owned by El Khader villagers in an attempt to create a new settlement (settlement).
- An article appeared in *Al Quds* daily revealing a new settlement scheme to disconnect Ramallah and Nablus Districts by constructing a belt of settlements (settlements). It is planned that this belt would start at Salfit, extended to the east near Ariel settlement (settlement), passing

through Sinjel, Turmus 'Ayya, Qaryut, Jalud, and El Mughayir land, confiscating thousands of dunums, chopping down hundreds of trees, and threatening tens of houses.

- In Nablus District, the Israeli army dispatched notices to confiscate 500 dunums planted with olive and almond trees from the village of Burin near Itzhar settlement (settlement).

### **February 24, 1999**

- According to official Israeli sources at the Ministry of Trade and Industry, it appropriated medium and small size plots to build factories at a number of Jewish settlements (settlements) in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.
- In Hebron District, Palestinian citizens in Halhul clashed with Karmeit Tsur settlers who tried to capture 60 dunums to annex to their settlement (settlement).
- Israeli army stopped four Palestinians near Tarqumya , west of Hebron for planting olive trees in their owned land under the pretext that it is a 'state land'.

### **February 25, 1999**

- A group of Ateret Cohanim, a Jewish religious institute dedicated to increase the Jewish presence in Jerusalem, appealed to the Municipality of Jerusalem to construct a 20-meter long, and 5- meter high bridge in order to link two colonization outposts.
- Jewish settlers began to put house trailers on land confiscated from Palestinians, one kilometer from the settlement (settlement) of Ma'on, in the southern part of Hebron District.
- The Israeli authorities confiscated 104 dunums owned by Ahmad Falah, and 150 dunums owned by Hamzeh Mustafa, in addition to hundreds of dunums owned by other villagers of Burin in order to construct two new settlement (settlement) outposts, namely Har Bracha and Bracha/B.

### **February 26, 1999**

- In an attempt to expand their settlement (settlement) boundary, the settlers of Maale Mukhmas installed several new caravans on a nearby Palestinian-owned land.
- Beit Iksa community council refuted claims published by an Israeli newspaper *Yerosheleim*, on selling 396 dunums from the Palestinian

village of Beit Iksa lying between Ramot and Har Adar settlement (settlement) to an Israeli real estate company, describing it as a false report, and feared that publishing this report could be a pretext to seize the Arab land which is owned by many families.

- Israeli settlers and military forces cut down 30 olive trees owned by Palestinians at Es Sawiya on the Nablus-Ramallah highway.

### **February 27, 1999**

- The Israeli authorities clamped a total closure on the West Bank and Gaza Strip for Purim feast. Palestinians were confined to their villages and towns- under siege as Israelis celebrate the Purim holiday. On such occasions, the West Bank and Gaza Strip are subjected to strict closures under the label of "security". It is such unjust and absurd collective punishment. 46,000 Palestinian laborers were banned to join work in Israel as a result of closure.
- The Israeli authorities sent notices to 25 Palestinian families in Deir Jarir, Ramallah for the confiscation of 150 dunums of the village land for military purposes.
- The Palestinian inhabitants of Shoufa village, Tulkarm staged a sit-in strike over their land threatened by confiscation to expand Avnei Hefets settlement (settlement).

### **February 28, 1999**

- Near Salfit, Bruqin villagers staged a sit-in protest strike against the confiscation of their land, near Barkan settlement (settlement) where three Israeli bulldozers were witnessed leveling and uprooting trees at the site.
- The Israeli authorities illegally held three bulldozers at Kedumim settlement (settlement) owned by Palestinian contractors from Jenin just for working at area C, while keeping their bulldozers working free to bulldoze Palestinian property to expand settlements (settlements) constructed in the Occupied Territory.
- Jewish settlers of Astov Rachel raided El Mughayir village near Ramallah, and uprooted 400 trees in fruit.

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