

Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem

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

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March 1, 1999

- Five ultra-orthodox settlers (settlers) were accused of infiltrating to Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound in Jerusalem, but were acquitted by an Israeli court.
- A report appeared in *Haaretz* Israeli daily press stating that the Interior Ministry issued 201 house demolition orders for Palestinian houses that were as the Israelis claim built “illegally” in East Jerusalem during 1998. The Municipality of Jerusalem threatens to demolish more Palestinian houses in East Jerusalem. It has issued 30 demolition orders and stop-construction orders in the last two weeks alone.
- Karnei Tsur settlers (settlers) bulldozed a road around their settlement (settlement). The road is 500 to 800 feet below the existing boundary of the settlement (settlement). It is intended to increase the perimeter of the settlement (settlement) greatly. The settlers (settlers) installed electric poles along the road as a first step to confiscate the land.

March 2, 1999

- According to Israeli figures, the number of ID cards confiscated in 1988 marks a high record since the 1996. Within the framework of its quiet transfer policy practiced against Palestinian Jerusalemites, the Interior Ministry claimed that it stripped 788 Palestinian Jerusalemites of their residency in 1998, with more than half the cases- 441- coming in the last five months of the year.(For more details on ID confiscation.

March 3, 1999

- Telem and Adora settlers (settlers) in the Hebron District opened a new settlement (settlement) road near Tarqumya village.

March 6, 1999

- A report appeared in *Haaretz* daily press disclosing an Israeli plan to construct an electric-powered train system in Jerusalem due to be inaugurated in 2005 and completed in 2020. The train system will comprise eight lines running along Jerusalem's main thoroughfares and serving its principal points of interest. The final length of each line will be 50 kilometers and will run primarily along existing thoroughfares. The project cost of the train network is \$ 850 million, not including the trains. Notices have already been sent to the Palestinian owners of land affected by the plans over land appropriation in Shu'fat.
- Jewish settlers (settlers) of Tene Omarim at the southern part of Hebron District erected seven caravans and a water tank on a hilltop owned by a Palestinian family in El Thahiriya town in a bid to grab more West Bank land.

March 7, 1999

- Jewish settlers (settlers) bulldozed fields planted with vine, almond and olive trees at Wadi Rahal near El Khader village in Bethlehem District to construct a cemetery to be annexed to Efrat settlement (settlement).
- A report appeared in the Israeli daily press *Haaretz* unveiling a document prepared by the planning team of National Construction and Development Master Plan 35 (NMP35) which gives a picture of discrimination in land allocation. Most of the land in Arab villages is designated for housing, with few reserves for development or industry. In rural Jewish cities, the Plan 35 designates 49.6 percent of the land for housing, 8.35 percent for industry, 3.6 percent for public institutions, 21.7 percent for parks and the remaining 16.75 % for what it calls "other" purposes. But, for Arab towns, only one percent is planned for industry and the vast majority-more than 80 percent-is designated for housing.

March 8, 1999

- Israeli soldiers sprayed with toxic materials 20 dunums planted with wheat, barley, and vegetables owned by 'Awad family in Edna village near Hebron, while Jewish settlers (settlers) uprooted trees in the Qizon area south of Hebron.

March 9, 1999

- Israeli army bulldozers unearthed and damaged Palestinian land in 'Aboud in order to install water pipes for the settlement (settlement) of Ofarim.
- Large tracts of Palestinian land in Rantis, Lubban El Gharbiya, west of Ramallah were bulldozed damaging hundreds of olive trees.
- An Israeli plan was unveiled to create a new settlement (settlement) outpost on Palestinian confiscated land from Deir Ballut village.
- In El Jib village just north-west of Jerusalem, a Palestinian house belonging to Issa Abed Rahim Assaf was demolished for allegedly being built without a permit.
- In the village of Jaba' in Ramallah District, a livestock shed valued at 3,500 NIS was destroyed by the Israeli military forces.
- In the Um Adalil area near Jiftlik, five livestock sheds and two homes belonging to Abdil Mahdi Assalamine and his sons were destroyed by Israeli soldiers for being built without proper authorization. The Israeli forces refused to allow the family to remove their belongings before the demolition took place. This is the second time the enclosures have been torn down in the past three months. A water tank, the main source of drinking water for the family, was also damaged during the demolition.
- In the Um Safa village on the outskirts of Ramallah, two houses belonging to the brothers Ussama and Ghassan Hamad were torn down.
- In Beit Hanina, a retaining wall owned by Kamal Abu Jaber was demolished because he had not issued a license for its construction.

March 10, 1999

- Israel expanded a military camp at Jerseem Mountain overlooking Nablus city while more than 20 Jewish settlers (settlers) continued to grab more Palestinian plots to their settlements (settlements) near Bracha and Itamar.
- Israeli officials sent notices to demolish a house and two barracks for two Palestinian families at El Zababdeh village, near Jenin.
- Jewish settlers (settlers) erected a fence around new plots annexed to Avnei Hefetz settlement (settlement) from Shoufa village near Tulkarm.

March 11, 1999

- A heavy-duty bulldozer accompanied by military forces jack-hammered out a road that will eventually encircle a hilltop north of Harsina settlement (settlement) as a first step in seizing the land for the settlement

(settlement). The road just skirts above the lower Palestinian terraces, claiming the “undeveloped” top of the hill. Moreover, a Palestinian family living just east of Harsina settlement (settlement) received a stop-work order delivered by Israeli soldiers. They confiscated cement mixers which were being used to build a huge below-ground-level cistern that would provide three families with water.

March 12, 1999

- Road no.45 will encircle East Jerusalem, isolate many Palestinian villages in the Jerusalem District, and ruin 7,000 dunums of Palestinian land in addition to causing environmental hazards.
- An article appeared in the Israeli newspaper *Yeroshleim* claiming that a Jewish consortium bought 24 dunums of ‘Green area’ at El Mukabber Mountain, south of Jerusalem at US \$42,000 per dunum.
- Jewish settlers (settlers) from Astov Rachel erected mobile houses on Hashim el Husseini Mountain near El Mughayir village in Ramallah District.
- The Israeli authorities is expanding Homesh settlement (settlement) near Burqa village in Nablus, and Tarsala Israeli military camp near Jaba’ and Hajja village, south of Jenin.

March 13, 1999

- The settlers (settlers) of Elon-Moreh settlement (settlement) uprooted 1,500 olive trees and stole thousands of acres from Deir El Hatab village, east of Nablus to expand the area of their settlement (settlement). They also moved the gateway of their settlement (settlement) one kilometer inside Palestinian lands.

March 14, 1999

- A one-day strike was observed by Palestinians in East Jerusalem to protest the convening of the 5th International Cities Cultural Conference in Jerusalem as the city is not the capital of Israel and its future to be decided in the final status negotiations according to the Oslo Accords.
- The Israeli Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, promised to turn the settlement (settlement) of Maale Ephreim, constructed in the Jordan Valley, into a high-tech center and exsettlements (settlements) throughout the area. The proposed structural plan for Maale Ephreim seeks to double the population in the existing settlement (settlement) as it currently

comprises 400 housing units in which 1,730 settlers (settlers) live. The new plan will set up 1,600 new housing units.

- The Israeli government announced its intention to build 765 new housing units in the Na'ale settlement (settlement) that was created on lands belonging to Deir Qiddis village to the west of Ramallah.
- The Israeli authorities are continuing the pavement of a new by-pass road which damaged thousands of dunums of Burin land. The newly constructed road will connect Itzhar settlement (settlement) with the main road between Nablus and Ramallah.

March 15, 1999

- The Municipality of Jerusalem endorsed a settlement (settlement) project in Silwan and El Mukabber Mountain in East Jerusalem for building more than 200 housing units, a hotel, and tourist facilities on 115 dunums. This land was confiscated from Palestinians in the early seventies, within the framework of plan bearing serial no.4559.
- Palestinian villagers of El Walajeh lying between Jerusalem and Bethlehem accused the Jerusalem Municipality of creeping annexation by a policy of harassment. Furthermore, a 450 meter long street built by donor nation's money to serve the village will be bulldozed by Jerusalem Municipality on the grounds of being opened and paved without an Israeli permit.

March 16, 1999

- Five pre-fabricated houses were transported to Tel Rumeida settlement (settlement) in Hebron. The new units have been placed on top of steel frames that had previously been built around the existing caravans. (for more details on Tel Rumeida .

March 17, 1999

- An Israeli Housing Committee recommended the construction of 77-120 thousand housing units over the next 20 years for Jewish settlers (settlers) in Jerusalem.
- Extremists Jewish groups belonging to the so-called "Guardian of the Temple Mount" and "Qaemhaye" called for confiscating Islamic Waqf property near Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound.
- A new Israeli plan was revealed to annex scores of dunums owned by Palestinian families, who have deeds proving their ownership dating back

to the Ottoman period, to Shima settlement (settlement) near El Thahiriya town

- Two Palestinian citizens from Beit Marsam near Hebron received two notices from Israeli authorities to stop building their houses.
- Palestinian farmers staged a sit-in strike at Shoufa and Kafr El Labad villages to protest the plundering of their land by Jewish settlers (settlers) expanding of their illegal settlements (settlements) built in the West Bank.
- In the village of Jit near Qalqiliya, Israeli bulldozers prepared infrastructure for a new Jewish neighborhood. The Israeli authorities seized 25 acres of agricultural land and planned to destroy the olive trees planted on their land, a move which would ruin Palestinian livelihood.
- The Israeli government announced its intention to construct 120 housing units after announcing another plan to build 380 housing units in the same settlement (settlement) of Gilo, south of Jerusalem.
- The Israeli cabinet approved a \$68 million development plan for Jerusalem. About \$50 million was already allocated in the 1999 budget. The Cabinet also approved the annexation of 8,750 acres that environmentalists said will destroy the forests and pasture land of the slopes leading up to the city.

March 20, 1999

- The Israeli government established a permanent military outpost near the Ibrahimi Mosque in Hebron.
- The Israeli authorities delivered notices to confiscate 50 dunums from 'Abba El Sharqiya village near Jenin.

March 21, 1999

- Students from an ultra-nationalist Israeli religious institution occupied two Palestinian houses in East Jerusalem under the pretext that they were owned by Jews before the creation of the state of Israel in 1948.
- Israeli military forces sealed El Shuhada street in Hebron under security pretexts.

March 22, 1999

- Dozens of Israeli militaries plucked 170 olive tree saplings from a plot near the village of Beit Dajan, east of Nablus. In another incident, another bunch of Israeli forces uprooted more than 500 olive trees owned by Palestinian families from the same village.

- In Husan village, west of Bethlehem, Israeli bulldozers guarded by a troop of military forces damaged large areas of agricultural land in order to be annexed to a nearby Jewish settlement (settlement) of Beitar Illit.
- A dozen of mobile homes, a tent, two partially-constructed houses, and a water tank crowded a hilltop, one kilometer west of **Bat Ayin** settlement (settlement) in the Gush Etzion bloc near Bethlehem city, trying to prevent the land from becoming part of a future Palestinian state.
- The Israeli authorities are planning to open a new police station near St. Stephens's Gate (El-Asbat Gate) in the Old City of Jerusalem.

March 23, 1999

- The Israeli authorities laid the foundations for a new industrial city comprising one hundred factories over 650 dunums near Adam settlement (settlement), north of Jerusalem.
- The Israeli soldiers bulldozed hundreds of dunums planted with olive trees at the Palestinian villages of Sanniriya, Beit Amin, and 'Azzoun 'Atmeh in the Tulkarm District in an attempt to be annexed to nearby Jewish settlements (settlements).
- Jewish settlers (settlers) bulldozed hundreds of dunums and uprooted 200 olive trees in Deir Istiya village near Salfit.

March 25, 1999

- The Israeli military forces started bulldozing and without prior notification an area of about 2,000 dunums from Deir Qiddis village, west of Ramallah to expand Na'ale settlement (settlement) which was constructed on its land.
- The Israeli authorities installed 20 caravans in Avnei Hefets settlement (settlement) which was constructed on Shoufa and Kafr El Labad land in Tulkarm District.

March 29, 1999

- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu ordered the closure of three Palestinian offices in East Jerusalem which as he claimed were illegal and an affront to Israel's sovereignty in the city. Israeli police delivered warnings to the local bureau of the official Palestinian news agency, Wafa, the office of the Palestinian leader's advisor for Christian affairs, and a center run by a prisoners' support group.

March 30, 1999

- Another Palestinian house in Al-Shiekh Jarah neighborhood in Jerusalem is threatened of confiscation.
- Mihola settlement (settlement) in the Jordan Valley expands at the expense of thousands of acres, confiscated from the Palestinian homeland. Palestinian witnesses reported that more than 20 residential units for ultra-orthodox Jews are under construction.
- Jewish settlers (settlers) uprooted more than 500 olive and almond trees from Palestinian land located near Israeli settlements (settlements) and by-pass roads. Near Ma'on settlement (settlement), east of Yatta, Jewish settlers (settlers) uprooted 250 olive trees, while 210 olive and almond trees owned by El Rajabi family were uprooted near Road 60, north of Yatta. In addition to 70 olive trees which were uprooted from Dura village near Atnael settlement (settlement). Another 18 dunums are being bulldozed by the Israeli authorities for military purposes.
- Israeli bulldozers were witnessed damaging Palestinian land near El Beira village in Hebron District in order to lay the foundation for 200 housing units. The new planned settlement (settlement) is located near Road 60, to the north of Harsina settlement (settlement) which is expanding since 6 months at the expense of nearby lands owned by Palestinian families of Jaber and Al Bakri.
- The Finance Committee in the Israeli Knesset approved the appropriation of NIS 550 million for religious groups and Jewish settlements (settlements) illegally built in the Occupied Territories.

March 31, 1999

- Jewish settlement (settlement) expansion threatens 'Abba village in Jenin District. The Israeli military forces started to deliver warnings to more than 20 Palestinian villagers to evacuate their land under the pretext of being 'state-land'. More than 500 dunums of land planted with olive trees are threatened to be confiscated despite the fact that the villagers have documents proving their ownership dating back to the Ottoman period.

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