

Applied Research Institute – Jerusalem

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

Volume 6, January 1999 Issue

<http://www.arij.org>

January 1, 1999

- Construction has begun on a new Jewish settlement in the West Bank north of Jerusalem that will be the site of some 7,000 housing units. Infrastructure work is already underway at the settlement, called "Tel Zion" and located near to Ramallah. Nearly 1,000 of the housing units had already been sold at "advantageous" prices. Construction tenders for 700 of the units are to be invited within a month.
- The Israeli military started bulldozing a new by-pass road which falls on land within El Bireh Municipality jurisdiction. That four kilometer long, 20-meter wide road will connect the settlement of Kokhav Yacob to Pesagot settlement several kilometers to the north.

January 2, 1999

- Eviction order by the Israeli authorities issued to Al-Ghazlan family to evacuate their home in Silwan was postponed to January 19.
- Jewish settlers uprooted 120 olive trees from Jalud village near Nablus.
- In Hebron, Israeli contractors started the construction of four more apartments in the Beit Hadassah settlement.

January 4, 1999

- An article appeared in *Al-Hayyat Al-Jadeeda* daily showing that Road 60 constructed by Israel in the Occupied Territories swallowed one third of El-Aroub Agriculture School and hundreds of acres.

- Abdel Hadi Hantash of the Hebron Land Defense Committee reported that an entire hilltop- several acres- belonging to the 'Aidi family had been bulldozed into a road for settlers. The family has the "Tabo", a deed to the land dating back to when the Turkish Ottomans ruled during the last century. The settlers also bulldozed a road to connect the hilltop to nearby Israeli settlement Givat Harsina.
- Armed settlers plowed a field belonging to a Hebronite family. The family uses the field only in summer, and would have waited another month until after the rains come to plow it, but "unused" land in winter may become subject to the possibility of becoming Israeli "state land" according to Ottoman laws from before the turn of the century. The owner of the field is seeking legal means to stop possible confiscation of the field.
- In Hebron City, across from the Ibrahimi Mosque, in a feverish attempt to occupy Palestinian houses in Hebron's old town, approximately 20 settlers had taken over an uninhabited Palestinian house.
- The Israeli parliament adopted in a first reading a law strengthening the conditions for any return of the Golan Heights to Syria or the hand over of East Jerusalem to the Palestinians.

January 6, 1999

- Israeli military occupation authorities demolished two homes and two barracks in the villages of 'Arrana and Jalama of Jenin. The properties were demolished under the pretext that they were built without permits. The demolition took place without prior warning from the occupiers. The two villages are adjacent to the Green Line, the 1967 borders, where Israel is working on expanding that limit further east towards Palestinian villages and towns in the area. A truck was also seized from one of the villagers.
- According to a report issued by Solidarity International for Human Rights about the Israeli campaigns of home demolition in the Palestinian Territories, 148 Palestinian residences were destroyed in 1998, one third of which were in the Jerusalem area.
- Jewish settlers of "Bracha" which was constructed on confiscated lands of Kafr Qalil and Burin villages, cut down tens of forest trees from nearby villages.
- A batch of Itamar settlers continued bulldozing Awarta's land, located to the south of the settlement. They also pitched several house trailers at the site.

January 7, 1999

- Construction on Abu Ghneim Mountain (Har Homa) is scheduled to begin in three months. A total of 679 residential units will be constructed in the newest Jerusalem settlement. In light of the success and the high demand in the current, a tender for another 346 units was issued this week.

January 8, 1999

- According to a ministry document obtained by *Haaretz* daily, the Housing Ministry is to market lots in the Palestinian Territories for building 3,729 housing units. Another 1,320 lots are to be made available at the controversial site of Abu Ghneim Mountain (Har Homa) in southern Jerusalem- on top of the 1,000 recently put on the market there after a year's freeze. The entire building program includes 19,800 units in Israel and across the Green Line, 13.9 percent fewer than the 1998 program of about 23,000 units. The tenders to be issued for lots in West Bank settlements (settlements) include 500 in Ariel, 500 in Alfei Menesheh and 400 in the ultra-Orthodox settlement of Emanuel. In the Jerusalem District, the program includes the construction of 811 homes in Givat Zeev, 636 in Beitar, 600 in Maale Adumim, 182 in Adam and 100 at Efrat. Another 404 apartment units are slated for the settlement of Sur Baher, near Bethlehem. Of the lots on the market in 1999, 19.3 percent are earmarked for the ultra-Orthodox communities, down from 21.7 percent in 1998.
- Jewish millionaire Irving Moskowitz claims holding properties in East Jerusalem estimated at approximately US \$20 million dollars.
- Radical Jewish settlers uprooted 40 olive trees in Kafr Qaddum village, west of Nablus.

January 9, 1999

- The Israeli government added 16 new housing units to Mihola settlement in the Jordan Valley.

January 10, 1999

- Jewish settlers uprooted 30 trees at Deir El Hatab near Nablus.

January 11, 1999

- An Israeli plan was unveiled to set up hundreds of barriers at strategic points separating Israel and the Palestinian Authority. These barriers would include iron railings, concrete blocks and deep trenches.
- The Israeli government warned four Palestinians to stop building their houses in Yatta village near Hebron.
- According to Israeli sources, a new colonization outpost is under construction in an area located between "Beit Hadassah" and "Beit Shniawarson" settlements (settlements) in Hebron District.

January 12, 1999

- Israeli bulldozers guarded by Israeli soldiers tore up 100 olive, almond and fig trees cultivated for several years near the village of 'Aboud in the West Bank. The orchard lay across a road from the Jewish settlement of Beit Ariye about five kilometers from the Israeli border in the central West Bank. The Israeli army routinely destroys Palestinian structures near roads used by Jewish settlers, claiming they represent security threats to Israelis circulating within the Occupied Territories.
- The Israeli police delivered a stop order for the emerging structure of a newly built mosque in El Walajeh village, located 10 kilometers southeast of Jerusalem. Two weeks later, a demolition order was issued claiming that the mosque was built without a permit on land zoned for agricultural use. In addition to the mosque, El Walajeh has received demolition orders for 37 homes under the pretext of building without proper authorization.

January 13, 1999

- Palestinian villagers from Kafr Salaf and 'Azoun intervened to stop bulldozers guarded by armed settlers - Ginnat Shomron, Imanuel and Kiryat Shomron settlements (settlements)- from leveling land and uprooting trees in an operation to appropriate several hundred hectares of land near the villages. There was no official permission to confiscate the land which falls in Area C of the West Bank where Israel has full control over civilian and military matters.
- Jewish millionaire Irving Moskowitz received the Israeli government's approval to construct a Jewish settlement in Ras Al-Amoud in East Jerusalem.
- Israeli bulldozers unearthed large areas of agricultural land at Artas village near Bethlehem to open a new by-pass road.

January 14, 1999

- Israeli bulldozers destroyed terraces reconstructed by Jawdi Jabber (brother to 'Atta Jabber) after they were razed last September 1998.
- In Bani Na'im, east of Hebron, a road is being widened for use by Jewish settlers, and a by-pass road about one kilometer long has been created through a Palestinian farmer's olive orchard. Jewish settlers had uprooted olive trees and buried them in a pit several kilometers away.
- In Wadi Qana, located 4 kilometers east of Kafr Thulth village, Israeli bulldozers were witnessed leveling a Palestinian-owned land cultivated with olive and fig trees.

January 20, 1999

- The Beit El District Planning Committee approved the plan for the northern part of the West Bank Route 80 which has appeared on government maps for years. It was Foreign Minister Ariel Sharon who insisted on adding Route 80 to the list of roads approved. Some people call it "Sharon's Allon Road". It plays an important role in Sharon's policy maps: He marks it as the eastern border of the Palestinian entity.

January 21, 1999

- An article appeared in *Haaretz* daily stated that the city of Jerusalem is making a bid to expand its jurisdiction westward and construct some 75,000 new housing units on the annexed land. The proposal, dubbed National Master Plan No.35, would put 9,000 new residential units in Mevasseret Tzion, 31,000 in Tzur Hadassah, and 4,000 in Har Eitan, a hilltop that was the tentative site of a museum devoted to the Israel Military Forces. The plan calls for Jerusalem's Jewish population to be raised to 758,000 by 2020, as opposed to 426,000 today.
- Abdel Hadi Hantash of the Land Defense Committee gave a summary of the Israeli military and settlement activities in the Hebron District over the last year. Thirty thousand dunums of land were confiscated, 48 homes were demolished, and in 73 cases, Israeli bulldozers tore open lands or roads. In addition settlers put caravans or house trailers in seven different locations and made new buildings in 17 new locations.

January 22, 1999

- An article published in *Al-Quds* daily revealed a Jewish businessman's intention to construct 400 housing units and a hotel between Silwan and the Palace of the High Commissioner in Jerusalem's outskirts.
- The Jerusalem Municipality decided to annex Bir 'Ouna neighborhood near Beit Jala a town adjoining Gilo settlement to its borders by providing it with municipal services and levying Arnona tax on its residents.

January 23, 1999

- The settlers of Rahel and Shilo, situated southeast of Nablus, started primary works to construct a new settlement near Jalud village.
- In an attempt to create a new settlement on Palestinian-owned land; Israeli bulldozers started leveling large tracts of land in Teqoa near Mount Herodion in Bethlehem District.

January 24, 1999

- Israeli bulldozers continued the construction of Highway 45 on confiscated Palestinian land near Ramallah.
- The village of Artas, located to the south of Bethlehem, witnessed excavation activity by radical Jewish settlers from the nearby Israeli settlement of Efrat. Several settlers showed up with bulldozers and began digging into Artas land in an attempt to open a new by-pass road linking the settlements (settlements) west of Artas to those in the east. They were heavily armed and threatened to shoot anyone who tried to stop them as they slashed into Palestinian soil, including the land of Artas' historic monastery. The Efrat settlers, under the protection of the Israeli military forces, demolished part of the monastery's stone wall and expropriated 30 dunums of its land.

January 25, 1999

- In Qalqiliya District, the Israeli forces bulldozed 4000 dunums of agricultural land owned by Palestinian farmers of Kafr Thulth and 'Azoun villages in an attempt to expand "Maale Shomron" settlement. They uprooted 600 olive and fig trees, and demolished a number of wells.

January 26, 1999

- The Israeli parliament adopted a draft bill annexing Jewish settlements (settlements) in the Occupied Territories to Israel.
- Two houses were demolished by the Israeli army in East Jerusalem. One of the houses situated in Souk Al Aktanin, in the Old City of Jerusalem that belonged to Omar Hamdan was demolished under the pretext that it was built without a permit. The second house was the home of the Abu Awais family in 'Issawiyeh village in East Jerusalem. In addition, the Israeli army demolished two tin barracks, and confiscated two caravans in 'Issawiyeh.
- Ultra-Orthodox Jewish settlers created a new settlement at Kissan village near Bethlehem. The settlers installed several mobile homes, brought a water tank, arranged for electricity and opened a special road, 2-kilometer long, for the fledgling settlement.

January 27, 1999

- The Israeli government is continuing its implementation of its settlement plans at Tel Rumeida in Hebron.
- Eleven ultimatums were served by the Israeli government to Palestinians in Hebron District to evict their confiscated land or stop building houses this month.

January 28, 1999

- The Israeli Authorities demolished the home of Ziad Fheidat in East Jerusalem's 'Anata village under the pretext of building without a permit. The home demolished was an additional construction to an existing house, only 25 meters away from by-pass road number # 70. The house covered an area of 80 square meters and sheltered a family of twelve.
- According to Hebron Land Defense Committee, five caravans were added to Nahal Nagashot (a military camp) settlement, west of Hebron.
- The Israeli military forces demolished the house (sheltering 14 people) of a Palestinian professor, Fahmi 'Abed El-Samad in Beit Hanina under the pretext of building without proper authorization.

January 29, 1999

- *Al-Quds* daily revealed an Israeli plan to dig a tunnel under the Jerusalem Wall.

- Orthodox Jewish extremists set up a new settlement enclave near El Aqsa Mosque in East Jerusalem.
- The Israeli government has threatened to demolish parts of a Palestinian school, The Hope Flowers, which is located in the village of El Khader south of Bethlehem in an area completely under Israel's jurisdiction. The number of elementary and secondary students fell from 350 to 160 because of harassment by the Israeli army and Jewish settlers living nearby.
- Eleven Palestinian houses received demolition orders in El Khader village, south of Bethlehem.
- A report on Israeli activities appeared in *Haaretz* daily indicating that Jewish settlers residing in Efrat have been making rapid progress in paving a road that will connect Efrat with Herodion to the east. The road will use the sole land reserves of several Palestinian villages, as well as Bethlehem's land reserves; however, the villages are forbidden to construct a hothouse or sheep-shed or even to plant a tree beyond the boundaries of the Area B land allotted to them.

January 30, 1999

- The Civil Administration uncovered plans to create a new by-pass road in Salfit threatening to damage 25% of the olive trees in the area.
- The Land Defense Committee in Bethlehem called for resisting the demolition of five houses at El Khader village, owners of which received demolition orders from the Israeli government.
- An International Child Organization revealed that 15 Palestinian children were hurt by Israeli soldiers and settlers during this month.

January 31, 1999

- In the north of the West Bank, the Israeli army declared a site near the village of Salim east of Nablus a closed military area after it was occupied by Jewish settlers from the nearby settlement of Elon-Moreh, two kilometers away. The settlers seized the land and set up three mobile homes and a water tank at the site.

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