



# ARIJ Daily Report

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## Israeli Violations' Activities in the oPt 25 February 2018

The daily report highlights the violations behind Israeli home demolitions and demolition threats in the occupied Palestinian territory, the confiscation and razing of lands, the uprooting and destruction of fruit trees, the expansion of settlements and erection of outposts, the brutality of the Israeli Occupation Army, the Israeli settlers violence against Palestinian civilians and properties, the erection of checkpoints, the construction of the Israeli segregation wall and the issuance of military orders for the various Israeli purposes.

*The Violations are based on reports provided by field workers and/or news sources.*

*The text is not quoted directly from the sources but is edited for clarity.*

*The daily report does not necessarily reflect ARIJ's opinion.*

### Brutality of the Israeli Occupation Army

- The Israeli navy shot dead, a Palestinian fishermen and wounded two others while they were fishing off the Gaza coast. The slain fisherman was identified as Ismael Saleh Abu Ryala, 18, from Shati' refugee camp, west of Gaza city. The wounded fishermen have been identified as Mahmoud Adel Aby Ryala, 18, and 'Aahed Hasan Abu Ali, 26, who were both abducted by the navy. The navy fired a barrage of live fire at

their boat, wounding the three, and later said one of them died from his wounds. (IMEMC 25 February 2018)

- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) shot a young Palestinian man in Burin village, south of the northern West Bank city of Nablus, after several army vehicles invaded it when locals stopped an attack by colonialist settlers. Dozens of Palestinians took off to the street, protesting the military invasion into their community, before the soldiers attacked them with live fire, rubber-coated steel bullets and gas bombs. The IOA shot a young man with a live round in the shoulder. Several Palestinians suffered the effects of teargas inhalation. The invasion took place after dozens of illegal Israeli settlers, living in Bracha settlements, invaded the village and attacked many homes, causing damage. (IMEMC 25 February 2018)
- Israeli invaded, Kufur Qaddoum town, near the northern West Bank city of Qalqilia and attacked nonviolent protesters, wounding a young man. The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) used live rounds, rubber-coated steel bullets and gas bombs against the protesters. The IOA shot a young man with a rubber-coated steel bullet and caused others to suffer the effects of teargas inhalation. (IMEMC 25 February 2018)

### **Israeli Arrests**

- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) invaded and searched homes in Teqoua' town, east of the city, and detained Mahmoud Thieb al-'Amour, 14, and Mohammad 'Adel ash-Sha'er, 16. The IOA summoned a child, identified as Saif Mohammad al-'Amour, only twelve years of age, for interrogation in Etzion military base and security center, south of Bethlehem. (IMEMC 25 February 2018)
- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) invaded a home, inhabited by college students in Tulkarem city, in northern West Bank, and detained Hilal Qamar Turki, who also holds a French citizenship. (IMEMC 25 February 2018)
- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) invaded many homes in the southern West Bank city of Hebron, in addition to nearby Halhoul, Beit Ila and Kharas towns, searched many homes and installed roadblocks.

The IOA stormed and ransacked many homes, in Hebron, and Halhoul town, north of the city, and interrogated several Palestinians while inspecting their ID cards. The IOA invaded many homes and neighborhoods in Beit Ola and Kharas and installed military roadblocks. During the violent searches, the IOA removed and destroyed tiles in some of the invaded homes, and caused damage to the furniture. (IMEMC 25 February 2018)

- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) detained two young men near the border fence, east of Khan Younis, in the southern part of the Gaza Strip, and fired many live rounds and flares in the area. The IOA stationed on military towers across the border fence, shot the two men, on Palestinian lands near the fence. The IOA detained the two wounded young men, who were on Palestinian agricultural lands, and took them to an unknown destination. The IOA also fired many live rounds into Palestinian farmlands in the area, in addition to firing dozens of flares. (IMEMC 25 February 2018)
- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) detained a Palestinian sixth grader in the town of al-Khader, south of Bethlehem, identified as the 12-year-old Yousif Ghnaim, after chasing him as he left Said Al-Ass elementary school in the town. The IOA intercepted students while they were on their way home from school and fired tear gas canisters and stun grenades towards them, spurring clashes with locals. (Wafa 25 February 2018)

## **Israeli Settler Violence**

- Israeli settlers have seized 120 dunams of land from Jalud village, south of Nablus, as Israeli authorities are constructing the settlement of Amihai on Palestinian lands. The settlers are taking advantage of the construction of the Amihai settlement to implement their ambitions in the land, and overtook 120 dunams of agricultural land in the village of Jalud. The settlers of the “Adei Ad” outpost, exploiting what is happening next to them in the construction of the new settlement and the seizure of more than 80 dunams of land in basin 16, the site of the plain Abu al-Rukh and Harika Jouda, adjacent to the settlement point, and plowed, and planted wheat and grapes, in collusion with the

army. Settlers of “Ahiyeh” outpost seized more than 40 dunams of land located in the area of the injection site, razed and cultivated it with grapes and erected large agricultural houses there. The lands seized by the settlers belonged to a number of citizens, including Hisham Ahmed Haj Muhammad, Mahmoud Fawzi Haj Mohammed and Ahmed Abdul Ghani Haj Mohammed. (IMEMC 25 February 2018)

- Dozens of Israeli settlers from Ma'on and Havat Ma'on settlements east Yatta town in the southern Hebron hills carried out provocative actions against residents of Khirbat al-Tuba nearby, threatened to kill them if they do not leave the area and chanted racist slogans against the Palestinian population. Settlers actions were carried out under the protection of the Israeli occupation army (IOA), (Wafa 25 February 2018)

### **Expansion of settlements**

- The government unanimously approved a building plan for the Netiv Ha'avot neighborhood in the West Bank, which will include the allocation of funds for the construction of 350 new housing units. The decision comes as part of the government's moves to regulate the Gush Etzion neighborhood, part of which was slated for evacuation next month in accordance with an order by the High Court of Justice (HCJ). ([YNETNEWS](#), [Haaretz](#), [ISRAELHAYOM](#) 25 February 2018)

### **Erection of Outposts**

- Late last week a few Israelis and a large herd of cows settled into an abandoned military base in the northern part of the Jordan Valley, according to Sami Tsadeq, head of the village of Al Aqabah, which lies just west of the abandoned base. He told Haaretz he believes these people are part of one family. They arrived on Wednesday, and on Thursday they built a fence to keep in their herd. Activists of the Machsom Watch NGO toured the area on Saturday and met a couple who were camping there in their tent. They said they had come to help the settlers. Two dogs were on guard. Tsadeq said that since their arrival, the newcomers had on several occasions flown drones over their flocks of sheep, which usually roam the area. The shepherds were scared and returned the flocks to their pens. So far the cows have not been let out to graze. The base, abandoned four years ago, used to be manned by an ultra-Orthodox army unit and is located near the Tayasir checkpoint. Tsadeq informed attorney Netta Amar-Shiff that

on Thursday he reported the outpost to the Palestinian Civilian Affairs Committee and that the (Israeli) District Coordination and Liaison (DCL) Office had promised that the Israelis would be evacuated forthwith. On Saturday night the office of the Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories (COGAT) said they knew nothing about the outpost and that this would be investigated on Sunday. A protest rally of Palestinians and Israelis on Sunday morning was dispersed with tear gas, fired by soldiers. Tsadeq told attorney Amar-Shiff that he was informed that the DCL had told the Palestinian committee that it would work to dislodge the Israeli settlers, but that no date had been set for removing them. Over the last 18 months [two other unauthorized outposts have been established](#) in the area, east of the Tayasir checkpoint. The method was the same – the arrival of one family with a large herd, assisted by Israeli youths and others. One outpost with a large flock of sheep was set up at al-Heima, as an extension of the outpost of Givat Sal'it, which is in the process of being authorized retroactively. Another outpost was set up in the nature reserve of Umm Zuka, close to a military base. That one has a large herd of cows. Although the Civil Administration has confirmed several times that these outposts are unauthorized and that stop-work orders had been issued, construction there continues unhindered. The outpost in Umm Zuka receives its water from the adjacent army base. Monitoring of these outposts over the last few months by Haaretz showed that residents of these outposts prevent Palestinians from grazing their herds in the area, which they've been using for decades. It is feared that this will also take place in the third outpost, affecting mainly the residents of al-Aqabah. A smaller outpost was established in the northern part of the Jordan Valley in 2016, near the settlement of Maskiot. Yet another outpost was built in 2008-9 east of the settlement of Rotem, but this one is usually unoccupied. A COGAT spokesman has responded by saying they have received calls from Palestinians in recent days about the people who moved into the abandoned base. This is under investigation and will be handled based on their findings, he said. Regarding the illegal construction at the other outposts, COGAT is aware of this and the issue is being taken care of, with stop-work orders issued. Enforcement will be carried out there based on priorities, according to the spokesman. ([Haaretz](#) 25 February 2018)

## **Israeli Closures**

- The Israeli occupation Army (IOA) closed Beit Iksa checkpoint, northwest of occupied Jerusalem, and isolated the village from its surroundings and prevented citizens from entering or leaving it. The

IOA detained the buses and vehicles coming to the village and prevented them from crossing, under vague pretexts. (Wafa 25 February 2018)

## Other

- Jerusalem's Christian leaders decided to close the [Church of the Holy Sepulcher](#), in the old City of Jerusalem, in protest of Israel's tax policy and a proposed land appropriation law. [Patriarch Theophilos III of Jerusalem](#), in the name of all of Jerusalem's Churches' leaders and Patriarchs, announced in a press conference that the Church is closed until further notice, saying the closure came in protest of Israel's policies against the churches. Israeli authorities have recently imposed a property tax (Anona) upon churches, worth up to millions of shekels. Patriarchs and heads of churches in Jerusalem said in a joint statement that imposing taxes on churches is a violation of all the agreements and international commitments that guarantees the rights and privileges of churches. ([Haaretz](#), [YNETNEWS](#), IMEMC 25 February 2018)
- A Knesset committee decided on Sunday that the government coalition will support a bill that denies the High Court of Justice the authority to hear some petitions filed by Palestinians in the West Bank. The bill would see the cases transferred to the Jerusalem District Court instead. The High Court of Justice is essentially the same as the Supreme Court, and justices of the Supreme Court hear cases submitted to the High Court of Justice, but they do so as a trial court rather than as an appeals court. The bill would reduce the High Court's heavy caseload and would not deprive petitioners from appealing their cases to the Supreme Court, but it would eliminate the Supreme Court's role as a trial court in some of their cases. The bill is being sponsored by Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked of the pro-settlement Habayit Hayehudi party. High Court justices have often criticized the government's repeated requests to postpone the destruction of unauthorized West Bank Jewish outposts, in an attempt to legalize construction there. In some cases, [the outposts have been built on privately owned Palestinian land](#). Last month, Shaked said: "The [Jerusalem District Court] is the address that allows for an examination of the facts rather than making do only with the offhanded claims of ownership that are not backed up by evidence." Because the coalition has a majority in the Knesset, a decision that it will support a bill generally ensures passage of it in some form, although it could be subject to changes in the legislative process. Speaking following the committee's vote, Shaked said: "The

Supreme Court's caseload has no counterpart in the world. My view is known, that the High Court of Justice, which handles about 2,000 petitions every year, needs to deny many of the petitions from the outset." The bill would lower the caseload by sending some cases to the district court. In an apparent reference to residents of Jewish settlements in the West Bank, Shaked added, "No less important is putting an end to the current discrimination against residents of Judea and Samaria [the West Bank]. Their rights need to be equal to those of any other citizen." Last week the Judicial Appointments Committee selected [Haya Sandberg to serve on the Jerusalem District Court](#). Sandberg was a senior official in the State Prosecutor's Office before being appointed to head the committee that reviews possible legalization of unauthorized West Bank outposts. She had been considered one of the lawyers in the prosecutor's office who was closest to Shaked, who pushed for her appointment as a judge. If Shaked's bill passes, the Jerusalem District Court will hear cases on administrative matters such as building and planning, permits to enter and leave the West Bank and Freedom of Information Law requests. The district court would also serve as the appeals court for certain orders issued by Israeli military courts in the West Bank, according to a draft of the legislation. Sandberg would most likely be one of the judges to hear petitions from West Bank Palestinians in her new position. Although the outpost legalization committee's discussions are not made public, Haaretz has learned that in at least two cases, Sandberg adopted a creative pro-settler legal position that contradicted the views of both the Justice Ministry and the Israel Defense Forces' legal adviser in the West Bank. Sandberg's colleagues describe her as honest and professional, but said she viewed her job in the prosecutor's office as "serving her client." Reacting to the committee's vote, Knesset member Yousef Jabareen of the primarily Arab Joint List called the bill "another proposal from the workshop of a pro-settler, right-wing government that is seeking to normalize the occupation and is promoting creeping annexation of West Bank territory and of the court system in the area." The High Court of Justice has never delivered justice to West Bank Palestinians, Jabareen claimed, "but even the little that it did do bothers the government." Jabareen called the committee vote "another Habayit Hayehudi goal attained on route to annexing the territories." Lawmaker Tamar Zandberg of the left-wing Meretz party called the proposed legislation an effort that blurs the pre-Six-Day-War border "contrary to the position of most of the public." Shaked, she claimed, "is prepared to endanger Israeli democracy to wave a few achievements at the settlers." ([Haaretz](#) 25 February 2018)

- Over 40 percent of the graves in West Bank settlements have been dug on privately owned Palestinian land, according to new research by a left-wing Israeli NGO. The comprehensive study claims that some 600 graves, situated in or near 10 settlements, are built on Palestinian land, including land that has been expropriated for public use or taken by Israel for what it describes as security needs. The research was undertaken by Dror Etkes from Kerem Navot, a nongovernmental organization concerned with Israeli settlement and the state's land policies beyond the Green Line (Israel's pre-1967 borders). Etkes used data from the Israeli Civil Administration's Geographical Information System, which he received following a Freedom of Information request. Until the mid-1980s, there were only two Jewish cemeteries in the West Bank – and these were both built on land purchased by Jews prior to 1948 (in Hebron and Kfar Etzion). However, Etkes says his mapping project – using aerial photography from different times, most recently June 2017 – shows that there are now 32 Jewish cemeteries containing at least two graves, scattered around the West Bank. There are also two sites featuring a single grave: one for the Jewish terrorist Baruch Goldstein in Kiryat Arba (Goldstein murdered 29 Muslim worshippers at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in 1994); and a separate one in Ariel for Ron Nachman, who founded that settlement in the 1980s and was its mayor for many years. Some cemeteries are tiny, serving small communities, while others are regional cemeteries with hundreds of graves that serve several settlements (like Barkan, west of Ariel, with some 300 graves). An estimated 1,370 Jews are buried in the West Bank cemeteries, Etkes believes (some of his figures for the larger cemeteries are guesstimates, based on the aerial photography). Most of the cemeteries – 14 – are built on territory the Israel authorities have declared as state lands. Some of the biggest of these are found in Ariel and Karnei Shomron (both 100 graves), and Kedumim (50 graves). However, at least 10 cemeteries are believed to be built on private Palestinian land. Five of these (containing 78 graves, as of June 2017) are situated on what is believed to be privately owned Palestinian land in or near these settlements: Kochav Hashahar; Psagot; Mehola; Hinanit Shaked; and Yitzhar. Three cemeteries, meanwhile, are built on land that was privately owned Palestinian land before Israel expropriated it for public usage (including by Palestinians): Ofra (40 graves); Barkan (300, as stated); and Mishor Adumim (100 graves). Two settlement cemeteries, at Beit El and Shavei Shomron, are on privately owned Palestinian land that was taken by Israel for what it termed “security needs” (70 and 10 graves, respectively). This method of land expropriation was often used for the establishment of settlements, until a Supreme Court decision on the Elon Moreh



settlement in 1979 ruled that the army only had the power to take land for actual military purposes and not for settlement-building. However, the seizure of lands by the army denies their original owners the right to make use of them until such time as the “security situation” passes. The most prominent recent grave to be dug on contested land (but not included in the data cited above) is that of Rabbi Raziel Shevach, who was murdered in a terror attack last month and buried in Havat Gilad, the illegal outpost where he lived. Shevach’s grave was seemingly dug on privately owned Palestinian land, situated a few hundred meters from the outpost’s homes. However, it should be noted that Pinhas Wallerstein – the former director general of the Yesha Council (the umbrella organization of settlements in the West Bank) – told Haaretz earlier this month that the land on which Shevach was buried had previously been purchased by Moshe Zar, a prolific buyer of Palestinian land in the West Bank. Etkes’ data show that the cemeteries are often situated hundreds of meters away from the homes of the actual settlements. For example, the Kochav Hashahar cemetery – which has about 35 graves dug on privately owned Palestinian land – lies some 470 meters (1,540 feet) from the settlement’s nearest homes. The Mehola cemetery, which has five graves, is about 300 meters from the nearest settlement homes. And Yitzhar’s eight-grave cemetery lies 650 meters away from the actual settlement homes. Etkes tells Haaretz he believes the choice of where the cemeteries are situated – particularly when they lie on private land some distance from the nearest homes – is not a coincidence. “I work on the assumption that there are always deliberate intentions afoot,” he says. The placement of a cemetery “is not chosen for no reason. It is a very long-term investment – and in Judaism, whoever buries people in a certain place does so on the understanding they will not be removed. “Obviously, there is deliberate intent lurking behind the location of these cemeteries,” Etkes continues, “and it may be assumed that whoever buries the dead on private Palestinian land knows exactly what he’s doing.” Etkes is fully aware that he’s raising an extremely sensitive subject, since Jewish custom holds that graves should not be exhumed and relocated. Since all of the West Bank settlements are on occupied territory, are the subject of international dispute and the chances of their being evacuated still exist, burial in the area is not a given. Etkes points out, for example, that “there are no cemeteries serving the ultra-Orthodox settlements in the territories – none at all.” The evacuation of Jewish graves from occupied territories became a real issue in Israel in 2005, with Israel’s disengagement from the Gaza Strip. At the time, Israel’s chief rabbis determined that the 48 graves situated in the regional cemetery serving the settlements (a bloc known as Gush Katif)

should be exhumed and brought back to Israel. Wallerstein, who has lived in Ofra for many years, says that in the past – but especially when the settlements were still in their infancy – settlers were concerned about being buried beyond the Green Line. They often expressed a desire to be buried within Israel proper, he notes. Both of Wallerstein's parents are buried in Ofra, but the decision to bury them there wasn't straightforward and was ultimately made by his mother. For his part, Wallerstein says he wants to be buried in Ofra and doesn't want his grave moved – even if the settlement itself is eventually evacuated. In the 2007 book "Lords of the Land: The War Over Israel's Settlements in the Occupied Territories, 1967-2007," Idith Zertal and Akiva Eldar wrote that the first intifada was the catalyst for cemetery-building in the settlements. "Death was political, and it was formulated and interpreted as a life-giving elixir," they stated. "The grave reinforced the foundations of the home and extended the roots farther into the ground. Life is mobile and can exist in many places. The finality of the grave, its being the terminal site, endows it with a numinous dimension that says 'Touch me not.'" Wallerstein concedes there's some truth to the notion that burial in a particular place is "an additional seal on the certainty that we will not be leaving here." When asked if it isn't somewhat cynical to dig graves on privately owned Palestinian lands, given that the evacuation of graves is such a sensitive matter and it's clear it will be more difficult to evacuate them than buildings, Wallerstein demurs. "I don't think too many people have invested much thought in this – after all, people are afraid of death," he says, adding, "I don't think the motivation is that you can evacuate [the settlements] or you can't evacuate." Fellow Ofra resident (and Haaretz columnist) Israel Harel says very few of his friends decided not to bury their dead in the settlement over concerns about what the future may bring. Most of them, he notes, didn't hesitate when it came to being buried in Ofra. Haaretz asked the Civil Administration a series of questions related to this article: Whether it had issued permits to build cemeteries on private land; how the Civil Administration has acted in the matter; and the status of the specific land upon which Rabbi Shevach is buried in Havat Gilad. At the Civil Administration's behest, Haaretz even provided the exact coordinates of all of the cemeteries built on private land. However, the Civil Administration did not respond to any of the specific questions. Instead it stated: "The Civil Administration acts to carry out enforcement in Area C, in accordance with the authorities and regulations, subject to operational considerations." Yesha Council Deputy Director Yigal Dilmoni called the data "inaccurate and biased. In any case, we invite Kerem Navot to come over and move the graves

to the places it chooses. It's time for these left-wing organizations to stop hounding the residents of Judea and Samaria even after their death." ([Haaretz](#) 25 February 2018)

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