



# ARIJ Daily Report

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## Israeli Violations' Activities in the oPt 14 December 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 Occupation Army (IOA) opened fired at a Palestinian ambulance, transporting a patient to a hospital, just as the driver approached an Israeli military roadblock, north of al-Biereh, in central West Bank. The Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) ambulance was approaching the military roadblock, installed at the entrance of Beitin Palestinian village, north of al-Biereh, while transporting a patient from Deir Dibwan village, to a hospital in Ramallah. The IOA

instantly opened fire at the ambulance, forcing the medics to turn away and try to find another road. (IMEMC 14 December 2018)

- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) raided the headquarters of the Palestine Olympic Committee (POC), in the occupied West Bank city of al-Bireh. The IOA raided the headquarters in an attempt to retrieve the tapes of the surveillance cameras. The IOA forced the Committee's employees into a single room and physically assaulted some of them, according to a statement by the Committee. (IMEMC 14 December 2018)
- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) has killed Hamdan Tawfiq Arda, 60, after initially claiming that he had deliberately tried to ram his vehicle into IOA, in the Industrial Zone in al-Biereh city, in central West Bank. The IOA fired a barrage of live rounds at the car, fatally wounding the driver, who suffered gunshot wounds mainly to the head. His brain and fragments of his skull were on the car seat after he was removed by the medics, before they were collected for proper burial with his body later on. (IMEMC 14 December 2018)

### **Israeli Arrests**

- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) detained at least 48 Palestinians, including a woman, who is also a former political prisoner, in addition to two elected legislators from the Occupied West Bank. The detained Palestinians were identified as Sabah Far'un, (former political prisoner), al-'Ezariyya – Jerusalem. Mohammad Mteir, Qalandia refugee camp – Jerusalem. Shadi al-Hanash, Abu Dis – Jerusalem. Shukri al-Hanash, Abu Dis Jerusalem, 'Arin Za'anin, Jerusalem. Nour Shalabi, Jerusalem. Rawhi al-Kilghassi, Jerusalem. Ahmad Jaber, Jerusalem. Yasser Mansour, (legislator), Nablus. Mustafa Shonnar, Nablus. Abdul-Karim Halabi, Nablus. Mohammad Zaher Qet, Madama – Nablus. Yousef Dweikat, Nablus. Samer Hamayel, Beita – Nablus. Ahmad Najib Mafarja, (former political prisoner), Beit Liqya – Ramallah. Moath Dahadha, al-Masayef – Ramallah. Mohammad al-Qadi – Ramallah. Ahmad Najib Mafarja, Ramallah. Mousa Salah (Journalist), Ramallah. Mohammad Hashayka, Ramallah. Osama Taher Rimawi, 15, Ramallah. Mohammad Ismael at-Till, (legislator), ath-

Thaheriyya – Hebron. Amjad Abdul-Razeq Rajabi, Hebron. Mohammad Abu Omar, Hebron. Mo'taz Abu Zeina, Hebron. Sa'id Asafra, Beit Kahil – Hebron. Bilal Salim Salhab, (former political prisoner), Hebron. Hasan Jamal Natsha, (former political prisoner), Hebron. Ma'moun Hussein Natsha, Hebron. Mohammad Hussein Natsha, Hebron. Mazen Natsha, Hebron. Moath Abu Jheisha, (former political prisoner), Ethna – Hebron. Motawakkel Abu Jheisha, (former political prisoner), Ethna – Hebron. Ra'fat Raed Abu Jheisha, (former political prisoner), Ethna – Hebron. Rauf Raed Abu Jheisha, (former political prisoner), Ethna – Hebron. Yasser Khaled Najjar, Yatta – Hebron. Mohammad Jouda Omar, Hebron. Bader Mreish, Hebron. Yassin Bodeir, Aida refugee camp – Bethlehem. Jamal Radi, Aida refugee camp – Bethlehem. Hamza Abu Srouf, Aida refugee camp – Bethlehem. Mohammad Omar Badawna, Aida refugee camp – Bethlehem. Ja'far 'Orooj, Janata – Bethlehem. Issa Mustafa 'Orooj, Janata – Bethlehem. Mohammad Atallah, Harmala – Bethlehem. Ibrahim al-Adawein, al-Azza refugee camp – Bethlehem. Yahia Sa'ada, Bethlehem. Odai Abu Mfarreh, Teqoua' – Bethlehem. (IMEMC 14 December 2018)

### **Israeli Settler Violence**

- A Palestinian was shot and injured after an Israeli settler shot him with live rounds at the Nablus-Ramallah road, near the al-Jalazoun refugee camp, north of Ramallah, in central West Bank. The young man was shot in his leg, after a group of settlers invaded the area surrounding the Education Ministry, and attacked dozens of residents, cars and buildings. Palestinians intercepted the settlers, and clashed with them to force them out, before the Israeli settlers fired many live rounds at them, wounding the young man. Settlers also hurled stones at Palestinian cars, causing damage. (IMEMC 14 December 2018)
- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) injured dozens of Palestinians in the al-Mughayyir Palestinian town, northeast of the central West Bank city of Ramallah. dozens of Palestinians held a procession in the town, after performing noon prayers on their lands, in the eastern meadow area. The IOA resorted to the excessive use of force against the nonviolent protesters, and fired many gas bombs, concussion grenades

and rubber-coated steel bullets. Many Palestinians were shot with rubber-coated steel bullets; others suffered the effects of teargas inhalation, while several residents suffered various cuts and bruises. (IMEMC 14 December 2018)

- A group of Israeli settlers continued to attack Palestinians, and their cars, in several parts of the occupied West Bank, especially near Ramallah, Nablus and Hebron. Many Palestinian cars sustained serious damage, after the settlers hurled stones at them near the al-Jalazoun refugee camp, north of the central West Bank city of Ramallah. Similar attacks took place near the northern West Bank city of Nablus, especially in the area of Yitzhar road, in addition to Hebron, in the southern part of the West Bank. Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) were seen standing not far from the settlers, who were attacking the Palestinian cars, but did not attempt to stop them. (IMEMC 14 December 2018)
- A group of Israeli settlers opened a road connecting the Israeli settlement of Kiryat Arba, in eastern Hebron, to a Palestinian-owned building belonging to the al-Rajabi family. (IMEMC 14 December 2018)
- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) closed all main military roadblocks leading to Nablus, in northern West Bank, to facilitate a protest by Israeli settlers, before many of them started throwing stones at Palestinian car in the area, causing damage. The IOA closed all military roadblocks to Palestinian traffic, including Yitzhar settlement road, to facilitate and enable a procession by dozens of fanatic settlers, illegally living on Palestinian lands. The IOA closed Huwwara roadblock, Awarta roadblock, along with the roadblock near Yitzhar Settlement, in addition to many roads used by the Palestinians in the area. Dozens of Palestinian cars were forced to stop and were not allowed through during the provocative procession of the colonists, who were chanting and hurling racist slurs against the Palestinians, including calling for assassinating Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. Several settlers then started throwing rocks at Palestinian cars, causing damage to many of them, while the IOA stood and watched without intervening. (IMEMC 14 December 2018)

- A group of armed Israeli settlers invaded Beitin Palestinian village, north of the al-Biereh city, in the Ramallah and al-Biereh Governorate in central West Bank, and shot a young man. The settlers invaded the village, fired many live rounds and hurled stones at home and cars. Dozens of locals tried to fend the attack off, before one of the armed settlers shot a young man with live fire. The young man, identified as Raed Hamed, was shot with a live round in the arm, and suffered a moderate injury. The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) also invaded the village after the settlers infiltrated into it, and fired many live rounds, and gas bombs, at Palestinians protesting the invasion. (IMEMC 14 December 2018)

### Expansion of settlements

- Israeli archeological excavations have led to gaping cracks in a parking lot owned by the Greek Orthodox Church in Silwan. Two large cracks between four and six meters deep surfaced in the parking lot on December 8 and 9, 2018. The parking lot abuts the City of David, an archeological site run by the Israel Nature and Parks Authority and settler organization Elad who aspires to seize the damaged parking lot and set up a guard post on it. (IMEMC 14 December 2018)
- In the 1980s, when the West Bank settlement enterprise took off, the leading slogan to attract home buyers was “five minutes from Kfar Sava.” The ads promised spacious single-family homes in a rural setting for a low price. In addition to towns such as Ariel, Betar Ilit, Efrat, Immanuel, Ma’aleh Adumim and Modi’in Ilit, small communities were established in which each buyer received a half-dunam (around 5,450 square feet) plot on which to build their dream home. There’s a new slogan now, “East Gush Dan.” The Yesha Council of [Settlements](#) has for some years been marketing the settlements of the West Bank as being near major roads and transportation arteries and job hubs — 10 minutes from Route 6 and not too far from both [Jerusalem](#) and the [Tel Aviv](#) area. Now, large apartment complexes are being built to attract new residents across the [Green Line](#). One example of this trend can be seen in Kedem. Harei Zahav, a developer with projects in 20 [West Bank](#) settlements, is aggressively marketing a 900-unit project here. Ads for the project, aimed primarily at young religious families, describe Kedem as a new community. But Kedem is not really a separate community; it is a new densely-built neighborhood of Avnei Hefetz, a settlement of 500 families in private

homes, 4 kilometers southeast of Tul Karm and 15 kilometers from Tzur Yitzhak. When the new neighborhood is fully occupied, it will change the character of the entire community. “The city plan that was suitable 20 or 30 years ago included one- and two-family homes. That won’t work anymore,” says Harei Zahav CEO Shlomi Vermstein. “There isn’t a lot of land for building, and people understand the need for high-quality, high-density housing. This is also what draws new residents to the area.” Some [Palestinian](#) communities, contending with the expansion of the Jewish settlements and outposts, have also begun to build higher. “Boundaries were set for the village beyond which you can’t build, so we’re building up,” says A. of Al-Luban, a village near Beit Arye, where three-story buildings are visible. “We’re farmers, we like to live on the ground, but there’s no other choice.” The Kedem project is one of several high-density construction projects in the West Bank that have gained broad support from the Yesha Council, the administrative body for Jewish communities in the West Bank. It also receives massive aid from Amana, the Gush Emunim settlement movement, which has similar construction projects of its own. The two organizations shifted their focus after the [2005 disengagement](#) and the evacuation of settlements in the Gaza Strip and in northern Samaria. A year later, Yesha Council leaders began putting together an alternative plan and new vision: 1 million residents in Judea and Samaria. Building in the West Bank often comes up against problems, such as the government’s construction freeze policy and legal battles over homes built on Palestinian-owned land, that led to the evacuation of [Amona](#) and of buildings in [Netiv Ha’avot](#) and [Beit El](#) and led the Yesha Council to seek to comply with approved master plans and to maximize construction possibilities. Once this vision was consolidated, the Yesha Council set out to convince two audiences, the government and the Israeli public. In June 2017, the Knesset Interior and Environment Committee held a special session [marking the 50th anniversary of the Six-Day War](#) and of settlement in Judea and Samaria. Only a very small number of MKs attended: then-committee chairman David Amsalem ([Likud](#)), Eitan Broshi ([Zionist Union](#)) and Housing Minister Yoav Galant ([Kulanu](#)). Present in much greater numbers were Yesha Council officials and the heads of West Bank communities, who came prepared with new thesis: Rather than talk of territories and settlements, talk about the new Gush Dan. Gush Dan East. The plan was backed up with economic data. The Yesha officials commissioned a study based on the average price of a four-room apartment in Greater Tel Aviv at the time, 1.7 million shekels (\$451,500). The average price of a four-room apartment in the area bounded by Karnei Shomron, Ariel and Modi’in Ilit was 1.3 million shekels. According to the Yesha

Council's calculations, 67,000 new housing units, for 340,000 people, could be built in a belt east of the Sharon, Gush Dan and Modi'in. "If we just look eastward, we'll find the solution just a 10-minute drive from Gush Dan," Yesha Council deputy head Yigal Dilmoni said after the meeting. "Western Samaria has a diverse population and is suitable for religious, secular and ultra-Orthodox Jews, and without any special effort, but just by advancing building plans, tens of thousands of housing units could be built. An eastward-looking planning approach is what the government needs to adopt." **Opposition at home:** Early signs of this change in approach can be seen in Leshem, a religious community next to Alei Zahav, an old and largely secular settlement in southwestern Samaria near the Palestinian village of Deir Balut. Leshem has some one-family homes, but consists mainly of terraced apartment buildings, unlike Alei Zahav and Peduel. Ariel is about 15 kilometers to the east, approximately the distance between Herzliya and Tel Aviv. "There's great momentum here," says Vermstein. His company, Harei Zahav, is also in charge of this project. "People are moving to Leshem for the quality of life, and because it's just 10 minutes from the main traffic arteries. Other communities in Samaria are also not far from Route 6. Kedem is 10 minutes from Route 6 and even Mevo Dotan, which is considered more isolated, is just a 20-minute drive from Route 6." Leshem is filling up fast, as are other towns and communities between Leshem and Ariel to the north and around Modi'in Illit, which are all in the process of shifting to high-density building. One of these places is Beit Arye-Ofarim, where the high-rise construction was not warmly welcomed. In September, signs were posted at the entrance to Beit Arye and on the roads to it announcing the construction of a new neighborhood, Nofei Dan. Some 515 housing units are planned for this new neighborhood, south of Ofarim, including one-family homes and terraced apartments. The project is slated for inclusion in an upcoming Mehir Lamishtaken lottery, with 20% of the apartments earmarked for young people from settlements in the area. The project was one of the main campaign issues in November's mayoral election in Beit Arye. The winner, Yehuda Elbaum, who unseated Avi Na'im, promised to change the mix of the project and not allow high-density construction that would change the community's character. The change in community character is a significant challenge for the Yesha Council. It launched an information campaign in settlements and media outlets associated with the right and the settlers. In a column in the newspaper Makor Rishon in February, Yesha Council Chairman Hananel Dorani wrote: "Looking ahead, the patterns of thinking and action in the settlement movement need to be changed in two main areas: high-rise construction and

doing away with admission committees. The available land for building is not plentiful. Until now, we've been used to rural communities with a one-family home on a half-dunam plot, but the goal from now on should be to build as many housing units as possible on that same land. High-density construction — building up or in a terraced fashion, depending on topography — will change the balance in the area and also require a new approach to infrastructure development to suit the number of residents in the future." The Yesha Council wants to eliminate the admission committees, believing they slow down building projects. "We're trying to convince communities to accept everyone," says one council member, who asked to remain anonymous. "It's not easy, and there's opposition, but settlements need not be limited to religious and right-wing [people]. It should be opened up to all." Vermstein agrees. "Most of the people who buy a home in a settlement ... live between Hadera and Gedera," he says, referring to the towns that traditionally marked the northern and southern boundaries, respectively, of central Israel. They "are looking for a place with a high quality of life and good prices. They're looking for a community. A small portion are from Judea and Samaria. We sold 150 three-room apartments at 690,000 shekels. These are apartments that have the potential for the addition of two rooms, so young couples can break walls and enlarge the apartment. The sales were very successful." According to the Yesha Council, the Jewish population in the West Bank is 435,000, with a large portion in the big towns. There was 3.4% growth in 2017 — down 0.5% from 2016, but significantly above the 2% growth of Israel as a whole. In the past decade, the Jewish population in the West Bank rose 4.5%. Some of this growth is attributable to the ultra-Orthodox population in places like Immanuel, Betar Ilit and Modi'in Ilit. A smaller part comes from families joining new projects. **Infrastructure problems and traffic:** The developers, community heads and Yesha Council officials want to guarantee that the high-density construction is accompanied by open spaces and large parks. Yet, as with communities within Israel proper with accelerated development (such as Rosh Ha'ayin, where traffic became a serious problem before Route 444 was widened), infrastructure is also a problem in the West Bank. The main issue is traffic. The vast majority of Israelis living in the West Bank work in Jerusalem, Greater Tel Aviv or the Sharon, just north of Tel Aviv. At peak traffic hours, they join the tens of thousands of others all headed for these places. By 6:30 A.M., the major roads in the West Bank are pretty clogged. Yesha Council officials say they are working with the government on the infrastructure problems, adding that there are plans to build "bypass roads," such as a detour around the Palestinian town of Hawara, and



to widen the “tunnel road” from Gush Etzion to Jerusalem. “It will take time of course, but we certainly won’t be able to get far without major attention to infrastructure.” ([Haaretz](#) 14 December 2018)

- Dozens of settlers have illegally entered the area of former West Bank outpost Amona, which was evacuated nearly two years ago, and set up two new structures. The [outpost](#), built on private [Palestinian](#) land and never authorized by the Israeli authorities, was ordered evacuated by the [High Court of Justice](#) in 2014, but dates for the eviction were pushed back until a [final date was set](#) for February 2017. The group of settlers this week included right-wing MK Bezalel Smotrich (Habayit Hayehudi), Mateh Binyamin Regional Council chief Israel Gantz and Samaria Regional Council head Yossi Dagan. Smotrich said in a tweet that the land had been purchased legally, though this claim has not been verified and Smotrich has not presented any documents to support it. Following Amona's evacuation, a closed-military-zone decree prevented Palestinians from entering the area. Such decrees theoretically apply to Israelis as well, but they have been enforced only against Palestinians. Following several attacks on Israeli forces and civilians in the [West Bank](#) over the past week, [Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said he would legalize thousands of Jewish homes in the area](#). The Prime Minister's Office said it would promote the construction of 82 new housing units in the settlement of Ofra near Amona, as well as two new industrial zones near the settlements of Avnei Hefetz and Betar Ilit. After Netanyahu's statement, Attorney General Avichai Mendelblit approved the so-called market amendment that is expected to lead to the legalization of some 2,000 housing units in the West Bank. Mendelblit was also responding to pressure from Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked, the No. 2 in the Habayit Hayehudi party behind Education Minister Naftali Bennett. The amendment is based on an order pertaining to government property in the West Bank. It says "a transaction made in good faith between the custodian of government property in the territories and another person, regarding a property the custodian believed at the time to be government property," is valid, even if the land did not belong to the state. This principle was the basis for a [Jerusalem District Court ruling in August](#), which stated that the Mitzpeh Kramim outpost must be legalized. Although this was an exceptional case, experts in property law in Israel and the West Bank believe that courts can interpret the ruling to allow a mass legalization of homes in the settlements. On Sunday, the Ministerial Committee for Legislation is expected to discuss a bill proposed by Smotrich to legalize a series of outposts and settlements. The proposal seeks to supply settlements whose status has yet to be confirmed with services that would prevent their demolition

until they receive official status. The committee, headed by a former head of the Yesha Council of settlements, Pinchas Wallerstein, was set up last year but has yet to meet. ([Haaretz](#) 14 December 2018)

### **Israeli Closures**

- The Israeli Occupation Army (IOA) sealed off the main entrance of the al-Arroub refugee camp in Hebron, in the southern occupied West Bank. The IOA sealed off the entrance to the camp, in addition to setting up several flying checkpoints on a number of roads in Hebron. (MEMC 14 December 2018)
- The Israeli military imposed total closure on Ramallah and al-Bireh cities. The army closed all checkpoints leading to Ramallah and al-Bireh from all sides, while army jeeps entered the northern sections of al-Bireh, in apparent pursuit of wanted Palestinians. (MEMC 14 December 2018)