

Jerusalem Chronology

(August - December 2004)

6 August

Israel freezes the construction of 145 out of 600 housing units slated to be built in Ma'ale Adumim settlement, east of Jerusalem. Meanwhile, work continues on a road through adjoining mountainous areas connecting Ma'ale Adumim to the city center. (ARIJ)

The Israeli housing ministry plans to build a new settlement containing 1,500 housing units, three hotels and an industrial zone on a hilltop near 'Esawiya and Hebrew University. The settlement will connect east Jerusalem with Ma'ale Adumim as called for by the E1 project, a massive development plan to close off the last existing door for Palestinian development in the city of Jerusalem. (ARIJ)

10 August

The Jerusalem municipality demolished three Palestinian houses in al-Ashqariya neighborhood in Beit Hanina, two houses and a gas station in al-Sal'a neighborhood in Jabal al-Mukabbir, and two other houses in Shu'fat refugee camp under the pretext that they were built without permits. In addition, residents of Silwan were handed 35 demolition orders; residents of at-Tur were also informed that 13 homes in the area are under threat of being demolished for illegal building. (*al-Quds*)

12 August

Israeli authorities demolished without notice the two-story house of Amjad Muhammad

al-Ra'oud in Wad al-Dam in Beit Hanina for being constructed without the legal permits. (*al-Quds*)

15 August

Israeli contractors began razing land and constructing tunnels in Beit Ikxa village west of Jerusalem to facilitate the construction of a railway connecting Jerusalem with Tel Aviv. The railway will pass through a number of villages located northwest of Jerusalem, particularly Beit Ikxa and Beit Surik. (*Wafa*)

17 August

Israeli authorities demolished a house belonging to Na'im Gheith in al-Ashqariya neighborhood in Beit Hanina to the north of Jerusalem for construction without a building permit. (*Wafa*)

21 August

The Israeli company, Moreh, is planning to construct a new settlement to the west of Bat-Gilo in Beit Safafa. The new neighborhood will be comprised of 200 new housing units, each unit composed of seven floors. (*al-Quds*)

22 August

The Israeli High Court issued a decision canceling the temporary stop-work order on construction of the wall running down the main Ramallah-Jerusalem road, particularly the stretch between Dahiet al-Barid and Qalandiya, and the Wadi 'Ayad area between Dahiet al-Barid and the outskirts of ar-Ram. It is rumored that Israel plans to construct a more extensive crossing facility in place of the current Qalandiya checkpoint at the entrance of Ramallah. As a result, the area between ar-Ram and the outskirts of Dahiet al-Barid will be the only remaining West Bank access to Ramallah city, while the area between ar-Ram and Bir Nabala will be connected by a road. (ARIJ)

26 August

The Israeli military adds electrically-operated turnstile metal gates to the Qalandiya checkpoint connecting Jerusalem with Ramallah. These gates are barely wide enough for a pregnant woman to pass through them, much less to allow the various goods and commodities that are brought in and out of Ramallah every day. According to various reports, the major West Bank checkpoints have all been outfitted with the new gates. (ARIJ)

The Israeli central court in Jerusalem issues an order to freeze construction on the settlement Nof Zahav [Golden View], comprised of 400 housing units in Jabal al-Mukabbir and as-Sawahira a-Sharqiya to the east of Jerusalem. The court found that that Jewish project owner was unable to prove ownership of 75% of the land, as previously claimed. (*al-Ayyam*)

30 August

Israeli forces demolish the home of ‘Adnan Isma’il Abu Kaf in Sur Bahir southeast of Jerusalem under the pretext of construction without a license. Eight residents were displaced. (ARIJ)

13 September

Israeli forces shut down six Palestinian voter registration centers in Jerusalem, arresting numerous employees of the Central Elections Commission. Electoral materials and registration forms were confiscated from the centers. (Palestinian Electoral Commission)

21-22 September

Passia hosted a two-day conference in Ramallah on “Islam in Contemporary Palestine”, featuring Sheikh Ekrima Sabri, Mufti of Jerusalem; Sheikh Jamil Hamami, Al-Quds University; Abd Al-Sattar Qassim, An-Najah National University; Abdul Malek Dahamsheh, Israeli Knesset

Member; Muhammad Hussein, Director of Al-Aqsa Mosque; Fr. Maroun Laham, Latin Theological Seminary; Iffat Al-Ja’ bari , Dir., Young Women’s Muslim Association; Maysoun Al-Ramahi, Head, Al-Khansa’ Women’s Association; Dr. Ahmad Al-Khalidi, An-Najah National University and others. The conference covered a wide range of topics from interfaith relations to Islam and the Palestinian constitution to women and Islam in Palestine.(PASSIA)

22 September

A Palestinian suicide bomber blew herself up in Jerusalem on Wednesday, killing two Israeli policemen who had stopped her as she approached a crowded bus stop. At least 16 people were wounded. The bomber was apparently stopped by a security guard as she approached a French Hill bus stop, and then blew herself up. The al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigades claimed responsibility for the attack, the first in Jerusalem since Feb. 22. The group identified the bomber as Zainab Abu Salem, a woman from the Askar refugee camp near Nablus. Relatives said she was 19 years old. (CBS News)

Residents of al-Issawiya village in Jerusalem were taken by surprise when a group of Israeli Land Authority employees placed a number of signs on a 250-dunum piece of land, declaring the area “state land.” The area, currently inaccessible to the villagers, is located north of the Shufat-Jericho road, which also leads to the settlement of Ma’ale Adumim east of Jerusalem. A week later, Israeli bulldozers dug a sandy road around the area as a means of further demarking it. (ARIJ)

7 October

Israeli forces commenced construction on Palestinian lands in Jerusalem for the benefit of Hebrew University. The location, al-Orwa al-Wouthwqa in al-Shurafa Mountain [Mount Scopus] in East Jerusalem, exceeds

50 dunums and belongs to more than 250 Palestinians, mostly from Lifta village. Lifta was emptied of its inhabitants during the 1948 war. The parcel of land sits just between and behind the English Cemetery and Haddassah Hospital. The university has long sought to develop the land to build new dormitories, however demonstrations from students and the residents' refusal to evacuate has previously held up construction. (ARIJ, News reports)

17 November

Israeli Border Police verbally notified 17 Palestinian families last week that they would be expelled from their homes in the East Jerusalem suburb of Abu Dis. The Border Police informed the residents that their homes and property were located on lands claimed by the State of Israel and that the families were required to leave the area. Although Abu Dis is completely within the West Bank, the properties are located in an area that Israel unilaterally annexed as part of the expanded municipal boundaries of Jerusalem. The affected families have been living in their houses for decades; some of them lived on the land prior to the emergence of Israel in 1948. (ARIJ)

29 November

Israeli forces demolished two Palestinian homes in the village of 'Anata. The homes were located on the southern flank of the village near the planned path of the wall Israel is building between itself and Palestinian population centers. Israel has appropriated 12,450 dunums of 'Anata's territory. The village is now left with a tiny enclave of 1,300 dunums, less than four percent of the original village. (ARIJ)

1 December

In defiance of a Jerusalem Municipality stop-work order, the Jerusalem offices of UNRWA on Wednesday continued to carry out construction inside the UNRWA West

Bank Field Office. The unusual stop-work order issued by the chief city engineer Uri Sheetrit against the construction follows six months of complaints lodged by local residents against the ongoing construction, and a four-month-old letter-writing campaign spearheaded by Jerusalem city councilman David Hadari of the National Religious Party. As part of decades-old diplomatic agreements, UN compounds have legal immunity to Israeli law and as such the UNRWA office in Jerusalem is off-limits to municipal inspectors without the UN's consent. (*Jerusalem Post*)

14 December

The Turkish Cultural Center opened the doors to the annual Palestinian-Turkish charitable bazaar in Jerusalem. The exhibition included traditional Turkish and Palestinian handwork, clothes, artifacts, historical documents, pictures and jewelry in addition to Quranic calligraphy. There was also a food corner at the bazaar in which Palestinian and Turkish foods were sold. (*Palestine Report*)

16 December

The Israeli parliament's finance committee approved the allocation of NIS 90 million for a road between Anata camp and Ezzariyeh, north of Jerusalem. The road is part of Israel's plan to sever Palestinian population centers from the city and the cost for building it comprises 10 percent of the overall amount budgeted for roads in east Jerusalem in 2005. (*Al-Quds*)