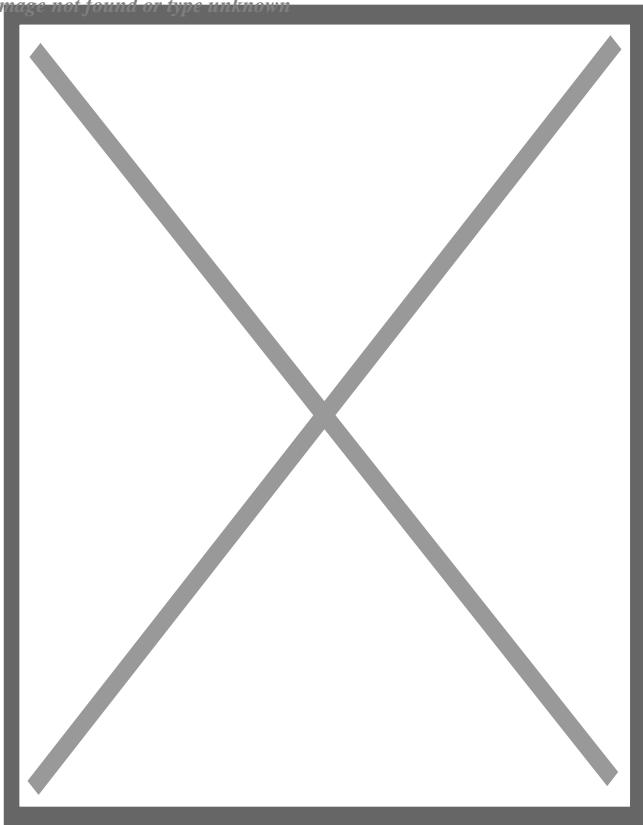


Israeli occupation forces intensify attacks, killing at least 40

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Rafah, June 29 (RHC)-- Gaza's Health Ministry says 40 Palestinians were killed and 224 wounded in the latest 24-hour reporting period. Israeli forces targeted a water distribution point in Gaza City, killing four members of the al-Ghazi family including a child.

The Israeli military had previously announced the beginning of a new military incursion in the densely populated Shujayea neighbourhood, trying to eliminate the remaining Hamas battalions there.

The military wing of Hamas has released statements saying that it continues to ambush and trap the Israeli forces on the ground by attacking them with different explosive devices alongside antitank missiles, which have been used to attack armoured vehicles.

The Israeli army has said they managed to militarily dismantle that area. But what we see are ongoing battles in the battered neighborhood.

Residents and families were forced to flee after receiving various Israeli military orders. But casualties amongst civilians continue to soar day by day. Since the early hours of this morning, dozens of Palestinians have been reported injured from the ongoing attacks on the Shujayea neighbourhood, where the level of destruction is absolutely beyond imagination.

In Taybeh, a town in the occupied West Bank, Palestinians are concerned about an Israeli decision to strip the Palestinian Authority of its civilian powers related to construction and zoning. The town is also one of many that will be affected by the Israeli government's decisions to officially recognize five illegal settler outposts.

The Israeli cabinet said the construction ruling was done to combat what it terms "illegal" Palestinian construction.

"The goal is for us to leave. But where will people go? We're rooted in this land. This town existed before Christ and will continue to exist, God willing," Sulaiman Khouriyeh, the mayor of Taybeh, told Al Jazeera.

Three illegal Israeli settlements and several outposts have already seized 14,000 sq km (5,400 sq miles) of Taybeh, reducing the town to a third of its size.

According to the official news agency Wafa, Israeli soldiers have carried out a raid in Silwad, a town located east of Ramallah. In the south of the occupied West Bank, in the village of Qalqas near Hebron, Israeli soldiers also detained at least two men following a shooting attack at a checkpoint located nearby.

Another military raid was carried out on the village of Qusra, near Nablus, but no injuries or detentions were reported.

In the neighbourhood of at-Tur in occupied East Jerusalem, Israeli authorities compelled a Palestinian citizen to demolish his own home. Abdullah Abu Sbeitan, Wafa reported, said the Israeli-run municipality in Jerusalem forced him to demolish his 85 square metres (915sq feet) house, home to five people, to avoid the hefty cost of having Israeli crews carry out the demolition.

On Thursday, we reported that Israel's cabinet approved a proposal by Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich to "legalise" settlement outposts in the occupied West Bank. And earlier today, the EU issued a statement condemning the Israeli announcement "in the strongest terms".

The plan includes measures against the Palestinian Authority (PA), the legalisation of five settlement outposts in the West Bank, and the issuance of tenders for thousands of new housing units in settlements. The outposts to be legalised are: Evyatar in the northern West Bank; Sde Efraim and Givat Asaf in the central West Bank; and Heletz and Adorayim in the south.

Settlement outposts are small communities – sometimes a cluster of caravans – established by Israelis living in illegal settlements on privately owned Palestinian land without approval from the Israeli government.

Furthermore, Smotrich's plan includes removing executive powers from the PA in the southern West Bank, namely "Area B" of the West Bank. "Area B" falls under Palestinian civil control and Israeli security control.

Smotrich's proposal specifically addresses the recognition and regularisation of five settlement outposts in response to five countries officially recognising Palestine as a state after October 7.

The countries are: Spain, Norway, Ireland, Slovenia, and Armenia.

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