

Israeli troops go on looting, vandalism spree amid genocide in Gaza

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Footage shared on social media shows Israeli soldiers setting fire to scarce food and water supplies in the Gaza Strip.

Ramallah, December 19 (RHC)-- Israeli troops have stepped up their destruction of businesses and properties, vandalism, and the installation of Israeli and Jewish symbols across Gaza's neighborhoods in what analysts believe is a part of "psychological warfare."

Footage has emerged of troops carrying out violent and provocative acts that appear to have little to do with their stated aim of "destroying" Hamas. In one example of theft, a soldier bragged about stealing a silver necklace from Gaza to take back to his girlfriend in Israel. Another troop stole a rug from a Palestinian home.

In a post on Facebook, an Israeli officer was seen gloating about seizing a host of sealed makeup items to take to Tel Aviv as "gifts from Gaza."

Elsewhere, footage emerged of a Palestinian gift shop being completely destroyed, with an Israeli soldier rummaging through a woman's underwear and using derogatory remarks about her.

"There is a long history of Israeli soldiers vandalizing the homes of Palestinians they invade," Laleh Khalili, an academic and researcher at the University of Exeter, told London-based Middle East outlet. "During the Nakba and successive wars of conquest in the historic lands of Palestine, in Lebanon in the early 1980s, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories during successive invasions, such behavior has been rife," she added.

"Israeli soldiers have left graffiti - often using quite violent, even genocidal, language; defecated in kitchens; looted valuable personal items; destroyed everyday objects and belongings; and taken trophy photographs of themselves."

The academic said the ranks of the officers of the Israeli military were populated with some of the "most fanatical" settler types who have always been drawn to militaries and other coercive institutions.

Stressing that the idea of a disciplined Israeli military was "a myth," Khalili said: "The military is made of conscripts, most of them committed Zionists who believe in their right to settle anywhere between the River Jordan and the Mediterranean Sea."

Khalili underlined that, "The vandalism and looting we see is likely both a result of indiscipline and an element of psychological warfare."

The news website also quoted journalist Murtaza Hussain as saying that the viral clips were aimed at demoralizing Gaza residents. "The videos of Israeli soldiers stripping Palestinians and looting shops seem to be deliberately leaked to demoralize Gazans and bolster morale domestically," Hussain said.

"But they send a negative signal internationally where it's promoted the IDF is a highly professional Western-style military."

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