



STATE OF PALESTINE  
JERUSALEM GOVERNORATE

# Report Of Israeli Occupation Crimes In Jerusalem Governorate First Quarter - 2026

Jerusalem Governorate Statistics 2026





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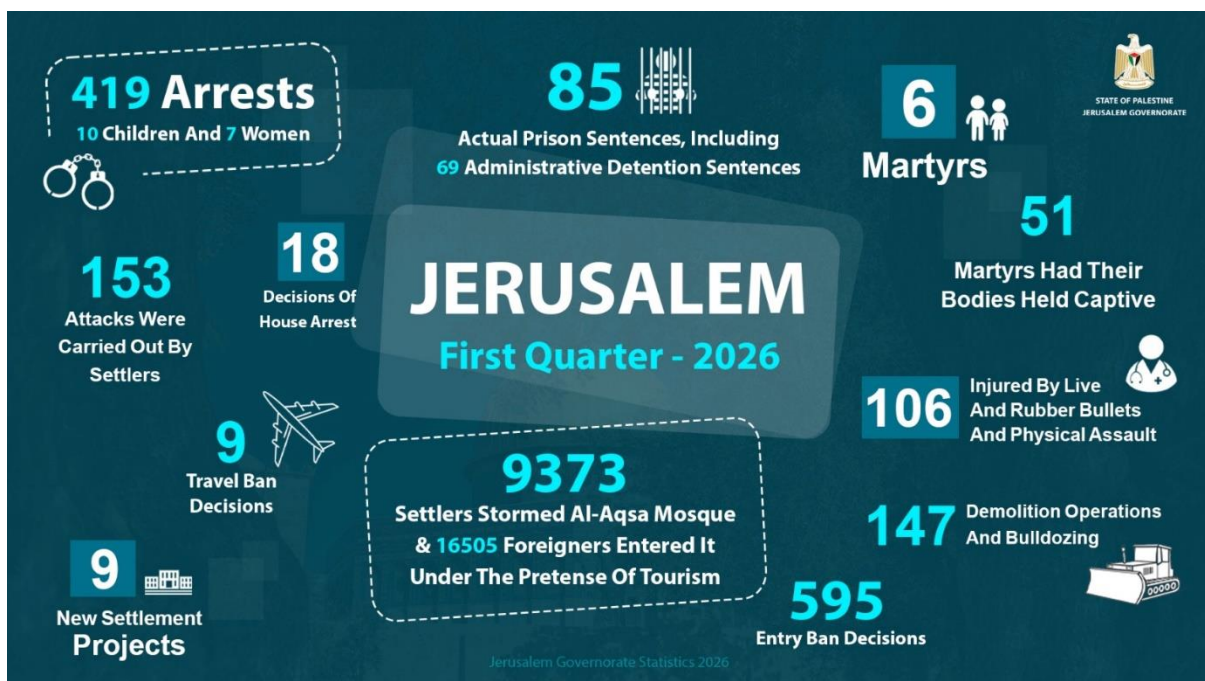


إعلام محافظة القدس



# Continuous closure of Al-Aqsa Mosque and Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and a systematic policy aimed at imposing a new reality in Jerusalem

(6) martyrs, (9,373) settlers stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque,  
(147) demolition and land-leveling operations, (419)  
arrests, and (595) expulsion orders  
during first quarter 2026



## CONTENTS

Introduction .....	4
Martyrs .....	5
Bodies of Martyrs Withheld by the Occupation .....	7
Crimes and Violations at Al-Aqsa Mosque .....	8
Closure of Al-Aqsa Mosque.....	9
Settler Attacks.....	14
Injuries.....	18
Arrests .....	22
Israeli Occupation Court Decisions.....	25
Actual Prison Sentences.....	25
House Arrest Orders .....	29
Expulsion Orders .....	32
Travel Ban Orders.....	35
Demolition, Excavation, and Property Confiscation .....	36
Demolition, Forced Eviction, and Land Confiscation Orders .....	40
Targeting of National and Religious Figures .....	41
Crimes and Violations Against Jerusalem’s Institutions and Landmarks .....	42
Violations Against Jerusalemite Prisoners .....	44
Colonial Projects .....	46
Submitted Plans: .....	46
Approved Plans:.....	48
Tenders:.....	49
Colonial Activities during the First Quarter of 2026: .....	49
Israeli Decision on Jerusalem Land Settlement: A Step to Cement Control and Threaten Palestinian Presence .....	52
Al-Bustan Neighborhood in Silwan: The Battle for Existence Just Meters from the Al-Aqsa Mosque .....	53
Prevention of Palm Sunday Mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.....	55
The “Hayy Shami” Settlement Plan: An Advanced Tool for Restructuring Bedouin Presence in the Jerusalem Governorate.....	55
Violations Against the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA).....	58
Escalation of Forced Displacement and Seizure Policies in Batn al-Hawa Neighborhood.....	61



## INTRODUCTION

During the first quarter of 2026, the Jerusalem Governorate witnessed what can be described as the most difficult and dangerous phase since the occupation of 1967. The occupying authorities have been waging an existential war aimed at undermining the steadfastness of our people and Judaizing our holy sites. We present this report to the embassies of the State of Palestine, diplomatic missions, international organizations, and all media outlets as a cry of truth in the face of distortion, and as a reminder that Jerusalem is passing through a historic turning point that requires mobilizing all national and international efforts to curb the occupation's aggression, which spares neither human nor stone.

The escalation has reached its peak at Al-Aqsa Mosque, through unprecedented repressive measures, including its complete closure and the denial of worshippers' access during the holy month of Ramadan up to this day. This marks the most dangerous step since the 1967 setback, aimed at entrenching occupation sovereignty and imposing Talmudic rituals.

In parallel, the occupation's violations have included the field execution of (6) martyrs, the demolition of (147) structures, a surge in expulsion orders and arrests, and a fierce targeting of the Batn al-Hawa neighborhood and institutions of UNRWA, as part of a broader plan to isolate the city from its Palestinian surroundings.

Based on its sovereign and national responsibility, the Jerusalem Governorate—through its Public Relations and Media Unit—continues to play its pivotal role as a key link at the heart of the occupied capital, and as a primary and trusted reference for accurate and documented information.

We place this systematic documentation effort in the hands of researchers, research centers, journalists, and human rights institutions, to serve as a reference material in exposing the occupation's crimes and pursuing legal accountability.

Safeguarding Jerusalem can no longer be confined to statements of condemnation; it requires urgent, tangible action to end the policy of impunity. Today, Jerusalem stands as a test of human conscience and unified national will.



## MARTYRS



STATE OF PALESTINE  
JERUSALEM GOVERNORATE

**Mohammed Al-Malhi**  
38 years - Jerusalem

**Qasim Shuqairat**  
21 years - Jerusalem

**Murad Shweiki**  
Jerusalem

**Nasrallah Abu Siam**  
19 years - Jerusalem

**Sufyan Abu Al-Layl**  
46 years - Jerusalem

**Mustafa Hamad**  
22 years - Jerusalem

**6 People Were Killed In Jerusalem Governorate**  
**First Quarter - 2026**

Jerusalem Governorate Statistics 2026

During the first quarter of 2026, six martyrs from the Jerusalem Governorate were killed amid an escalating pattern of organized violence carried out by Israeli occupation forces and settler militias, within a systematic environment of impunity and lack of accountability.

- On February 18, 2026, the young man Nasrallah Mohammad Jamal Abu Siam from the town of Mikhmas, northeast of Jerusalem, succumbed to wounds he sustained during an armed attack carried out by settlers on the town. He was directly targeted while in the vicinity of his home.
- On March 18, 2026, the Jerusalemite Murad Shweiki was killed after being shot by settlers while working as a bus driver inside the Green Line.
- On March 25, 2026, Qasem Amjad Abu Al-Amal Shqeirat (21 years old) was killed by Israeli occupation forces following the storming of his family home in the town of Jabal Mukaber, southeast of occupied Jerusalem, by a special unit of the Israeli army, including undercover units (“Mista’arvin”) and Border Police. According to his family, the forces directly shot him inside his bedroom in front of his relatives, in what constitutes an extrajudicial execution.
- On March 26, 2026, Mohammad Faraj Al-Malhi (38 years old), from the town of Sharafat near Beit Safafa, succumbed to wounds after being shot by settlers during an



attack on the Harmala area east of Bethlehem, an armed assault that also targeted members of his family.

- On March 27, 2026, Mustafa Asaad Mustafa Hamad was killed after being shot by Israeli occupation forces at the entrance of Qalandiya Refugee Camp, following the direct targeting of a group of الشباب during a raid on the camp.
- On the same day, Sufyan Ahmad Saleh Abu Lail (46 years old) was also killed after being shot by occupation forces during the raid on Qalandiya Refugee Camp, in the context of the excessive use of lethal force against civilians.

The data reveals that three of the victims were killed by settlers amid the absence of investigations, reinforcing a climate of impunity and reflecting the instrumentalization of settler violence as a tool of the occupation—serious violations that warrant international accountability and the protection of Palestinian civilians.



## BODIES OF MARTYRS WITHHELD BY THE OCCUPATION



Israeli occupation authorities continued, until the end of March 2026, to withhold the bodies of (51) martyrs from the Jerusalem Governorate, in a clear continuation of this punitive policy. Chronological tracking shows a notable rise in the number of withheld bodies, from (23) martyrs by the end of 2022, to (35) in 2023, (45) in 2024, and (51) by the end of 2025—the figure that remains to date—while cases of detention continue without release.

These figures reflect a systematic trend of using the withholding of bodies as a tool of collective punishment and pressure, by keeping them in morgues and the so-called "numbered cemeteries," depriving families of their natural right to bury their children according to religious and humanitarian rites. This practice constitutes a grave violation of international humanitarian law and rises to a compounded crime affecting the dignity of the deceased and the rights of their relatives, in the absence of any real accountability, thereby reinforcing the continuation of this policy and necessitating effective international intervention to stop it.



## CRIMES AND VIOLATIONS AT AL-AQSA MOSQUE



During the first quarter of 2026, Al-Aqsa Mosque witnessed a notable escalation in the frequency of Israeli incursions and violations, with a total of (9,373) settlers storming the mosque, in addition to (16,505) others entering under the guise of so-called “tourism,” all under tight protection by occupation police and with ongoing restrictions on worshippers’ access, especially during the month of Ramadan.

This rise in numbers reflects the occupation’s intensification of measures aimed at imposing a new reality inside the mosque and undermining its historical and legal status.

Throughout March 2026, the occupation authorities imposed a near-total closure of Al-Aqsa Mosque, beginning on February 28 and continuing until the preparation of this report—a dangerous precedent, the first of its kind since the occupation of Jerusalem in 1967 during this time of the year.

Access was restricted to a limited number of imams and waqf guards, with main prayer areas closed and prayers silenced across the Old City, reflecting an unprecedented escalation aimed at reducing Muslim presence in the mosque.

### Key Violations at Al-Aqsa Mosque during Q1 2026:

- **January 4, 2026:** A ceremony was held to inaugurate the new commander of occupation police in Jerusalem, Afshalom Peled, near the mosque at the site called by the occupation “the Western Tunnel,” in the presence of Israeli Minister of National



Security Itamar Ben-Gvir, indicating a clear intention to enforce stricter policies inside Al-Aqsa.

- **January 13, 2026:** Israeli Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir stormed Al-Aqsa Mosque unexpectedly, marking his fourteenth incursion since taking office.
- **January 21, 2026:** Occupation police allowed the introduction and distribution of Jewish prayer papers to settlers within the mosque courtyards, while settlers performed dances and prostrations inside the mosque.
- **January 29, 2026:** Settlers concluded their weekend incursion by performing public prayers, collective dances, and loud singing led by rabbis, under heavy police protection, along the Western Wall path to Bab al-Silsila, in the so-called “Welcoming Sabbath Prayer,” a scene that repeats weekly.
- **February 17, 2026:** Settlers distributed prayer papers and a special supplement for the “Hebrew New Month” during their incursion, continuing the escalation of public rituals inside the courtyards. Police had allowed the introduction of printed prayers the previous month, making this practice almost daily.
- **February 18, 2026:** The “Temple” groups announced extending incursion hours by one hour, from 6:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.
- **February 19, 2026:** Occupation authorities prohibited the entry of Iftar meals into the mosque and imposed restrictions on worshippers before Isha and Taraweeh prayers.
- **February 28, 2026:** Israeli occupation authorities fully closed the gates of Al-Aqsa Mosque, forcing worshippers to evacuate in the morning, coinciding with the declaration of a state of emergency due to military tensions with Iran, and the closure continued until the preparation of this report.

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## CLOSURE OF AL-AQSA MOSQUE

Since February 28, 2026, corresponding to the 10th of Ramadan, Al-Aqsa Mosque entered the most dangerous phase in its contemporary history. Israeli occupation authorities imposed a complete closure under the pretext of a “state of emergency” linked to regional developments. This is not a temporary security measure but a strategic and legal shift aimed at stripping the historic administrative authority from the Islamic Waqf, enforcing absolute occupation sovereignty, marginalizing the Jordanian Hashemite role, and subjecting the most sacred Muslim sites to the decisions of the occupation army’s “Home Front.”



The aggression escalated through age and administrative restrictions since the beginning of Ramadan, including the prevention of I'tikaf (spiritual retreat) and deployment of armed military patrols inside the courtyards in a blatant provocation to worshippers, culminating in total isolation during the last ten nights, depriving tens of thousands of Friday, Taraweeh, Tahajjud prayers, and the observance of Laylat al-Qadr.

The closure was accompanied by forced “structural modifications” to the mosque’s administration, reducing the number of allowed staff to only 25 under strict security oversight.

This systematic policy, capped by the extended closure until the report’s preparation, coincided with a silent campaign of ethnic cleansing, issuing more than 595 expulsion orders since the beginning of the year, targeting imams, guards, and Murabitin, in an attempt to empty the mosque of its protectors.

In contrast to this comprehensive Islamic ban, the occupation allowed fifty rabbis and settlers to perform Talmudic rituals in the Western Wall plaza during the Hebrew Passover, and thousands in “Purim” celebrations across Jerusalem, exposing the false security pretext and confirming that the “emergency” is merely a legal cover for altering the historical status quo.

Under international law, the closure of Al-Aqsa constitutes a serious violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice issued in July 2024, which affirmed the illegality of the occupation in Jerusalem. The occupation, as a de facto authority, has no sovereign right to apply emergency laws in occupied territory or interfere with freedom of worship. Therefore, obstructing access to places of worship and altering the religious administration constitutes a crime against human heritage and a breach of international obligations to respect the religious beliefs of populations under occupation.

The effects of this siege have extended to strike the economic and social lifeblood of Jerusalem, paralyzing commercial activity in the Old City and silencing Eid celebrations and Takbeers for the first time in decades, in an attempt to break the will of Jerusalemites and weaken their collective presence.

The occupation’s clear message, documented in provocative images of one of its soldiers inside prayer areas, signals its aim to impose a “sole decision-maker” reality and institutionalize temporal and spatial division as an irreversible fact.



The Jerusalem Governorate presents these documented facts to the international community and the embassies of the State of Palestine, emphasizing that silence in the face of this Israeli monopoly over Al-Aqsa gives the occupation a green light to eliminate the Islamic and Christian presence in the occupied capital.

Protecting Al-Aqsa today is not merely a religious issue—it is a test of the international system’s commitment to its resolutions and to safeguarding the legal status of Jerusalem from ideological and political encroachments that seek to transform a political conflict into a full-scale religious war.



Table (1): Distribution of Al-Aqsa Mosque Incursions during Q1 2026

Month	Number of Incursions
January	4,397 settlers, 7,868 under the label “tourism”
February	4,976 settlers, 8,637 under the label “tourism”
March	Al-Aqsa Mosque closed
Total	9,373 settlers, 16,505 under the label “tourism”

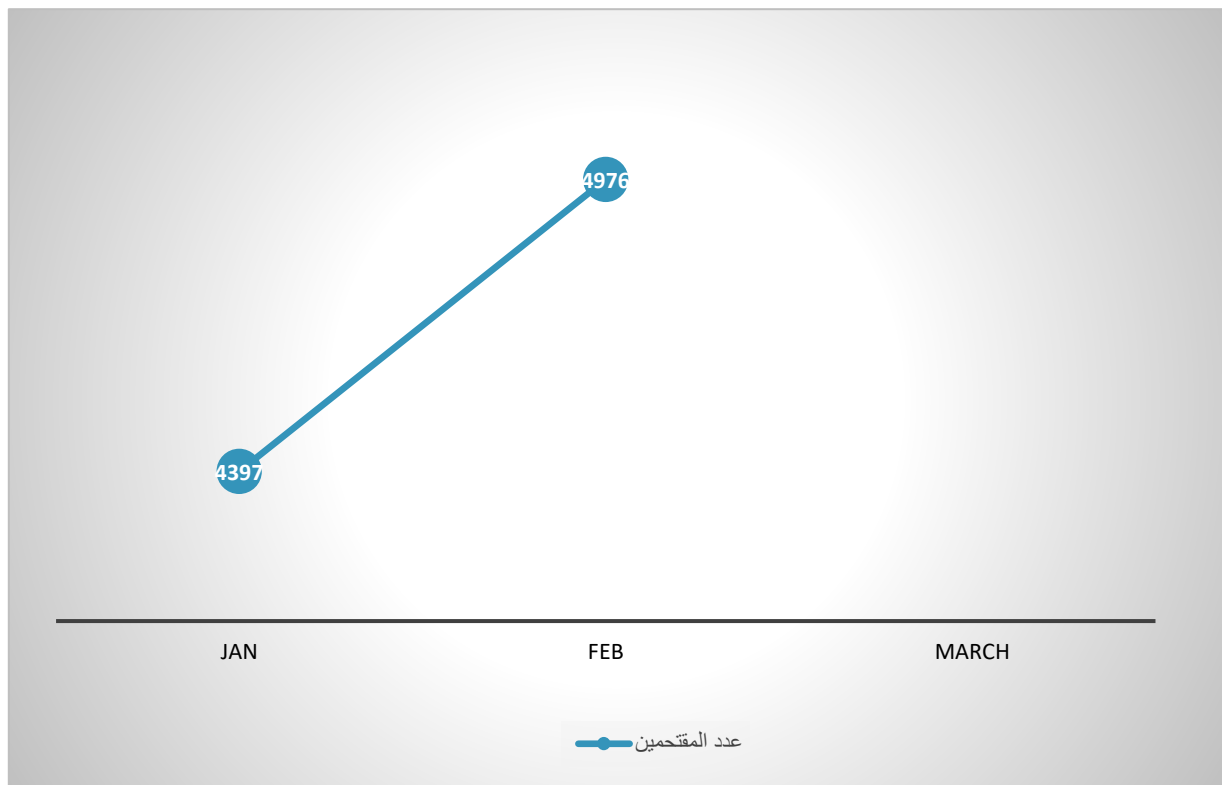
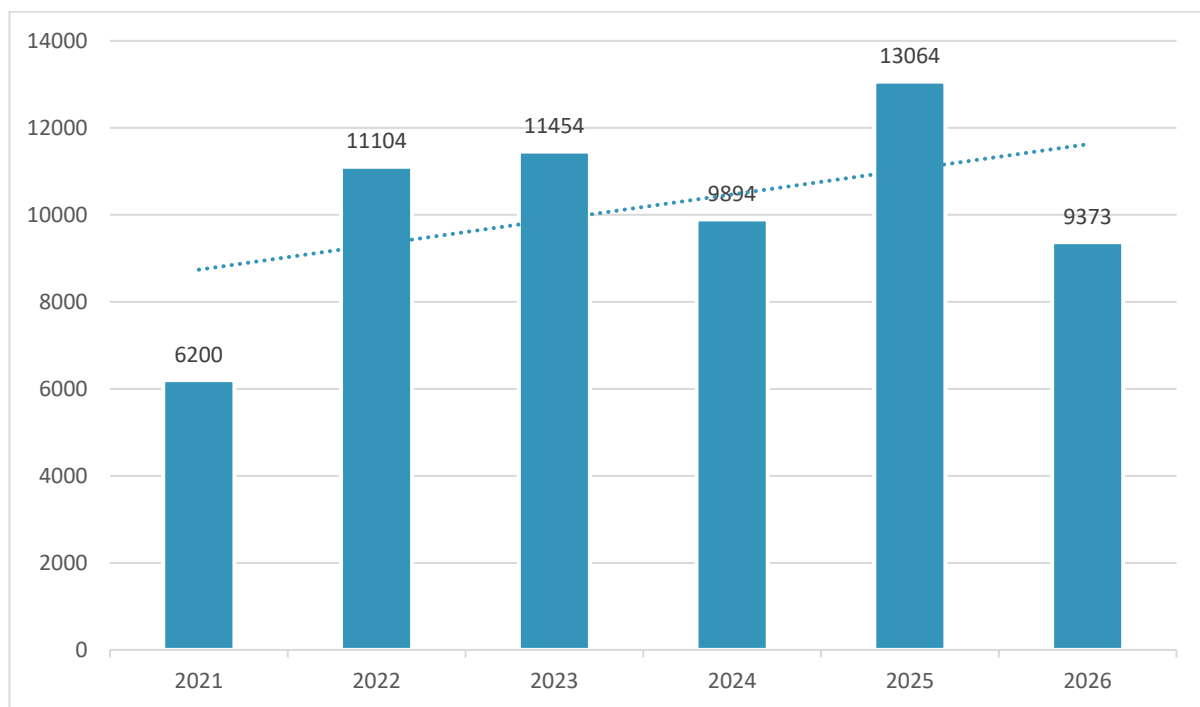


Table (2): Comparison of Settler Incursions during Q1 (2021–2026)

Year	Number of Settlers
2021	6,200 settlers
2022	11,104 settlers
2023	11,454 settlers
2024	9,894 settlers
2025	13,064 settlers
2026	9,373 settlers



## SETTLER ATTACKS



During the first quarter of 2026, the Jerusalem Governorate documented (153) attacks carried out by settlers, including (32) assaults causing bodily harm, resulting in the martyrdom of young men: Nasrallah Abu Siam from Mikhmas, Murad Shweiki from Al-Eizariya, and Mohammad Al-Malhi from Sharafat.

These attacks included shootings, physical assaults, arson, house takeovers, establishment of settlement outposts, property theft, road closures, harassment of shepherds, home raids, and property vandalism. They also targeted churches, involved attempts to introduce animal sacrifices into Al-Aqsa Mosque, and incited settlers to perform Talmudic rituals inside the mosque.

All of these violations occurred under the direct protection of occupation forces, as part of an organized, multi-level escalation targeting Al-Aqsa Mosque, Bedouin communities, property, and Islamic and Christian holy sites. This reflects the integrated role of settler groups and the far-right Israeli government in imposing new facts on the ground and undermining the existing status quo.

### Key Settler Attacks during Q1 2026:

- **January 17, 2026:** Dozens of settlers attacked the Khamat al-Sidra Bedouin gathering near Mikhmas, causing injuries and burning vehicles and homes.
- **January 29, 2026:** Spitting attack on the Church of the Sepulchre in the Old City, violating the sanctity of the holy site.



- **February 18, 2026:** Martyrdom of Nasrallah Abu Siam following injuries sustained in a settler attack on Mikhmas.
- **February 19, 2026:** Targeting of the Church of the Visitation in Ein Karem, with racist slogans painted on its walls.
- **March 7, 2026:** Injuries among citizens and a child, and the killing of sheep during a wide-scale attack on Bedouin communities in Mikhmas and Jaba’.
- **March 11, 2026:** Initiation of a new settlement outpost on the lands of Beit Ikse and road closures.
- **March 22, 2026:** Settlers seized residential apartments in Batn al-Hawa, assaulting residents and children.
- **March 26, 2026:** Several citizens were injured in an attack on the Khallet al-Sidra area, coinciding with house takeovers and the distribution of incitement materials targeting Al-Aqsa Mosque.
- **March 26, 2026:** Mohammad Faraj Al-Malhi (38) from Sharafat was martyred after being shot in the head by live ammunition during a settler attack on his family lands in the Harmala area, east of Bethlehem. Field reports indicate that settlers directly fired live rounds at family members on their land, critically injuring Al-Malhi, who later succumbed to his wounds, while his father and brother were also injured.
- **March 29, 2026:** Attempt to introduce animal sacrifices into the Old City of Jerusalem and incitement to perform rituals inside Al-Aqsa Mosque.

### **Legal Accountability:**

Under international law, the occupation authorities bear full responsibility for these violations as the occupying power. Their failure to prevent these attacks or prosecute the perpetrators, amid the direct protection provided by occupation forces, amounts to complicity and a severe breach of international obligations.



Table (3): Distribution of Settler Attacks during Q1 2026

Month	Number of Attacks
January	53 attacks, including 4 causing bodily harm
February	47 attacks, including 9 causing bodily harm
March	53 attacks, including 19 causing bodily harm
Total	153 attacks, including 32 causing bodily harm

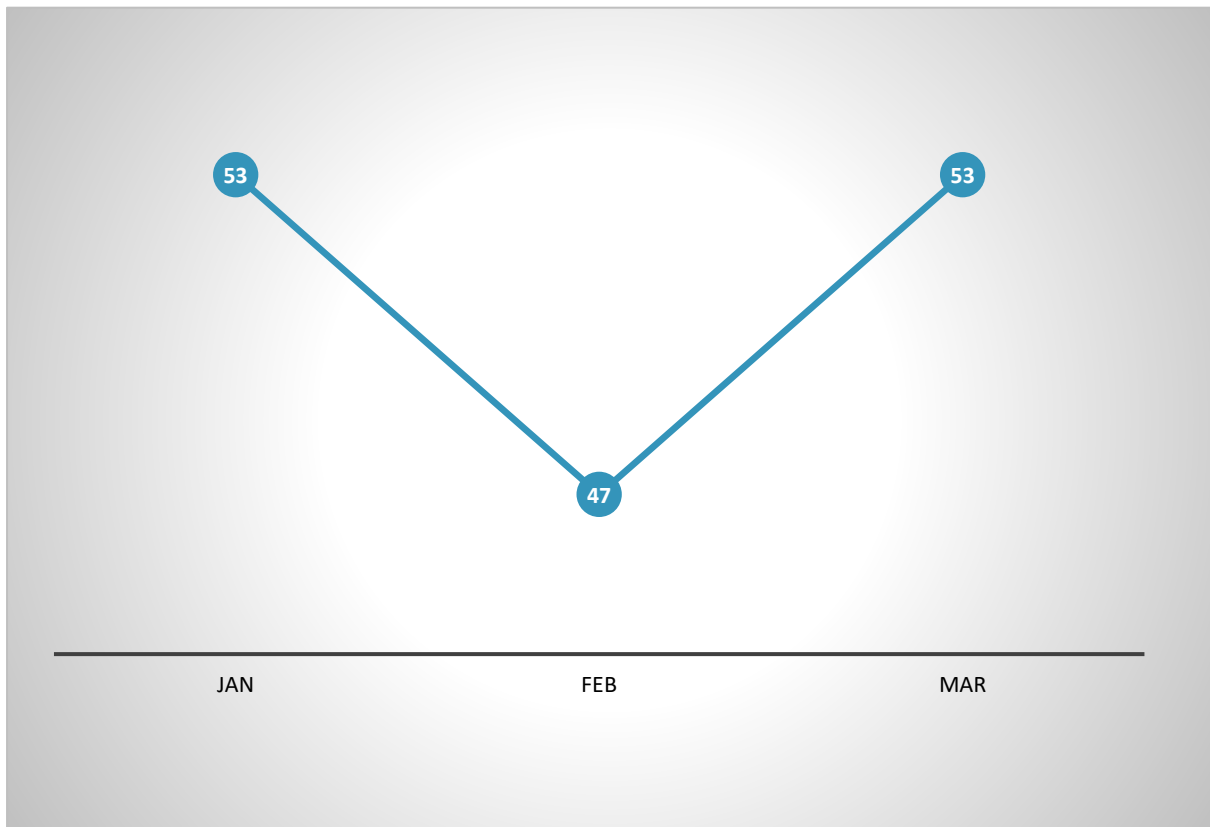
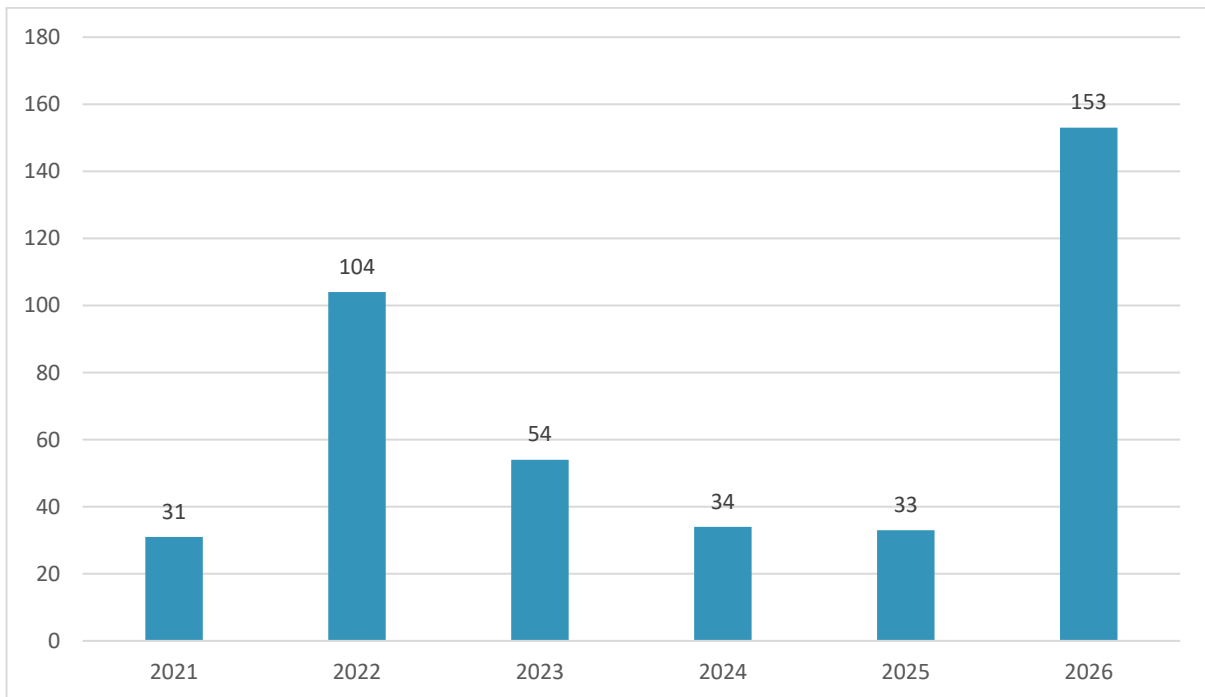
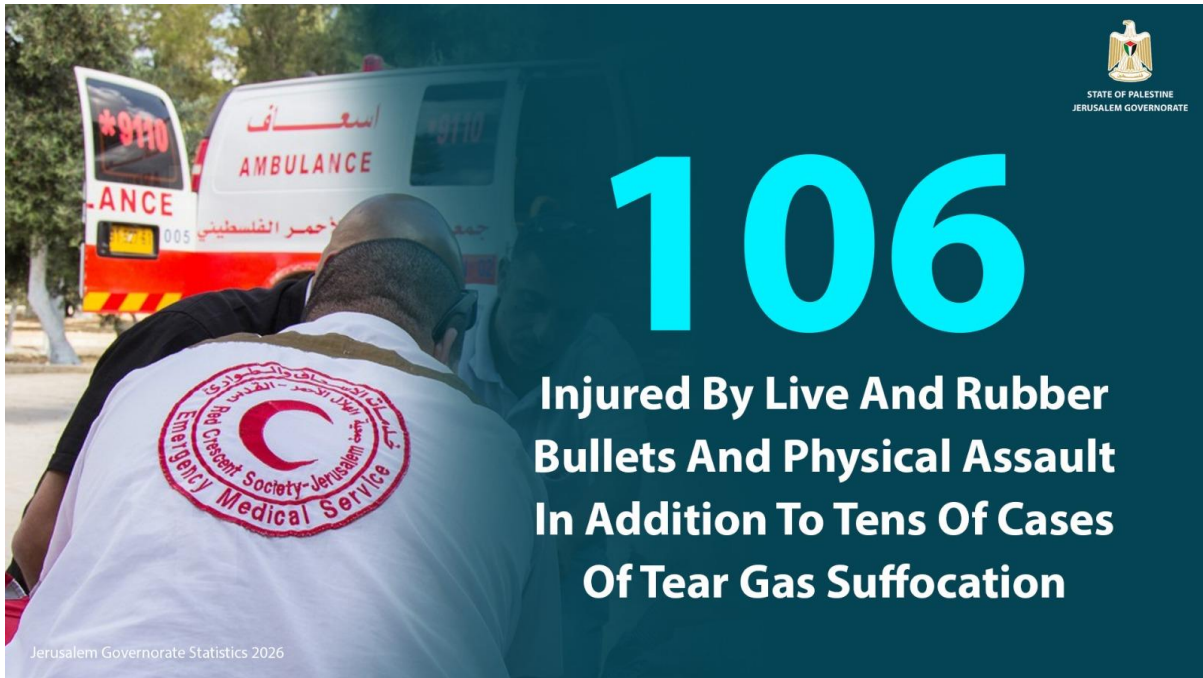


Table (4): Comparison of Settler Attacks during Q1 (2021–2026)

Year	Number of Attacks (Including Bodily Harm)
2021	31 attacks, including 13 causing bodily harm
2022	104 attacks, including 29 causing bodily harm
2023	54 attacks, including 6 causing bodily harm
2024	34 attacks, including 5 causing bodily harm
2025	33 attacks, including 1 causing bodily harm
2026	153 attacks, including 32 causing bodily harm



## INJURIES



During the first quarter of 2026, the Jerusalem Governorate documented a total of (106) injuries resulting from a continuous series of violations and attacks carried out by Israeli occupation forces and settlers against the residents of Jerusalem. These injuries ranged from live and rubber bullets, severe beatings, and tear gas exposure, to direct attacks by settlers, as part of a systematic field escalation.

Injuries were notably concentrated around the Separation Wall, especially in Al-Ram, Kafr Aqab, and Qalandiya Camp, where 25 injuries were recorded among workers and youths while attempting to cross the wall or being near it, either due to direct gunfire or during pursuits and arrests.

Other affected areas included Silwan, Anata, Bedouin communities, Beit Ikxa, Al-Eizariya, and Shuafat Camp. Repeated injuries were also recorded in Bedouin gatherings, especially in Mikhmas and Khan al-Ahmar, resulting from settler attacks.

Data indicate a clear rise in the pace of injuries caused by settler attacks, particularly during February and March, with mass injuries recorded, including five youths injured in Mikhmas in February and nine citizens in the Khallet al-Sidra gathering in March, reflecting direct targeting of fragile Palestinian communities and attempts to push them toward forced displacement.



### Key Injuries during Q1 2026:

- **January 3, 2026:** Four citizens injured by occupation gunfire near the Separation Wall in Al-Ram.
- **January 17, 2026:** Four injuries during a settler attack on the Khallet al-Sidra Bedouin gathering in Mikhmas.
- **February 18, 2026:** Five youths injured by settler gunfire in Mikhmas, in addition to injuries during the raid on Qalandiya Camp.
- **February 22, 2026:** Two injuries from live ammunition near the Separation Wall in Al-Ram, along with pepper spray injuries in the Al-Hathrura.
- **March 1, 2026:** Three citizens, including two children, injured during incursions into Qalandiya Camp and Kafr Aqab.
- **March 12, 2026:** Three youths injured by occupation gunfire during the raid on Silwan, one of them critically.
- **March 22, 2026:** Four injuries during simultaneous attacks by occupation forces and settlers in Silwan and near the Al-Ram Wall.
- **March 26, 2026:** Nine citizens injured during a large-scale settler attack on the Khallet al-Sidra gathering in Mikhmas.
- **March 27, 2026:** Four injuries during incursions into Qalandiya Camp and Beit Hanina.



Table (5): Distribution of Recorded Injuries during Q1 2026

Month	Number of Injuries
January	31 injuries
February	33 injuries
March	42 injuries
Total	106 injuries

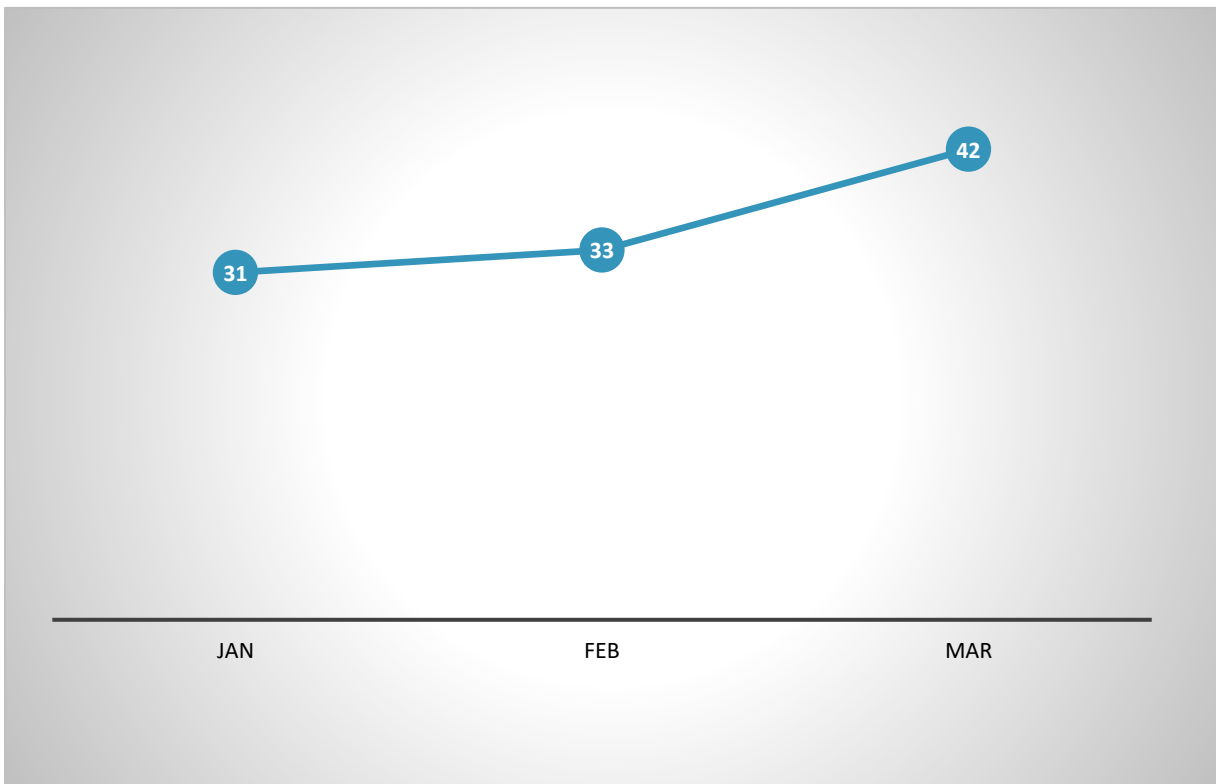
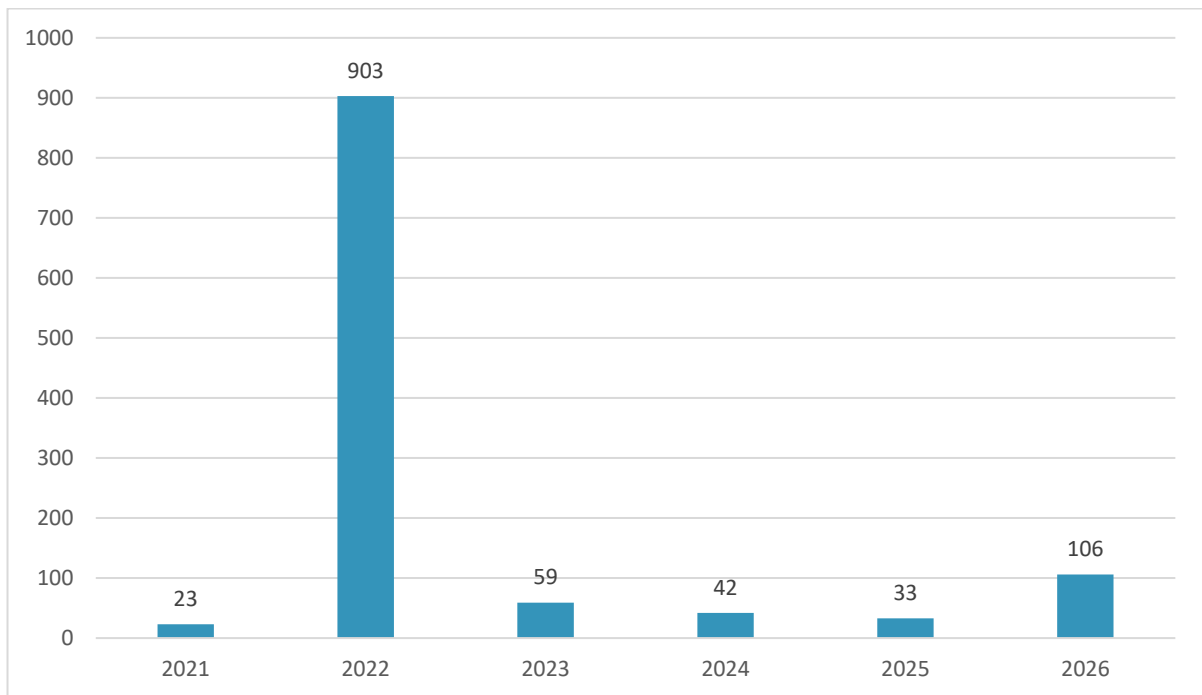


Table (6): Comparison of Recorded Injuries during Q1 (2021–2026)

Year	Number of Injuries
2021	23 injuries
2022	903 injuries
2023	59 injuries
2024	42 injuries
2025	33 injuries
2026	106 injuries



# 419 Arrests

## 10 Children And 7 Women

Jerusalem Governorate Statistics 2026

During the first quarter of 2026, the Jerusalem Governorate documented the arrest of (419) residents, including (10) children and (7) women, as part of a systematic campaign of repression carried out by Israeli occupation authorities against the people of Jerusalem.

These arrests involved raids on homes and neighborhoods, as well as field detentions at checkpoints and roads, accompanied by excessive use of force, beatings, and intimidation. This reflects the ongoing policy of impunity and the targeting of Palestinian identity and the holy sites of the city.

Arrests were distributed across various areas of Jerusalem, most notably: Qalandiya Camp, Al-Issawiya, Anata, Silwan, Kafr Aqab, Beit Duqqu, the Bab al-Amoud neighborhood, and areas surrounding Al-Aqsa Mosque.

The arrests also targeted activists, journalists, released prisoners, and a significant number of Palestinian workers coming from other governorates, highlighting the occupation's attempt to control various aspects of civil and professional life in Jerusalem through repression and intimidation.



Table (7): Distribution of Arrests during Q1 2026

Month	Number of Arrests
January	103 arrests
February	104 arrests
March	212 arrests
Total	419 arrests

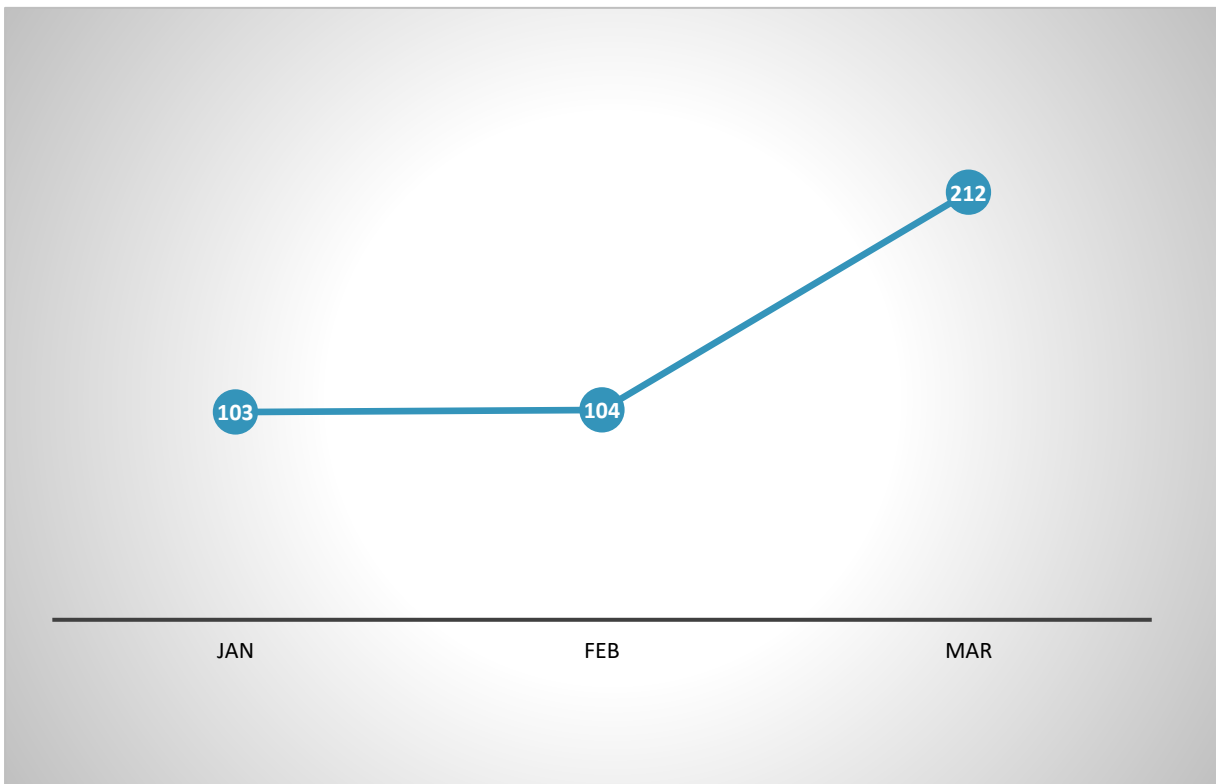
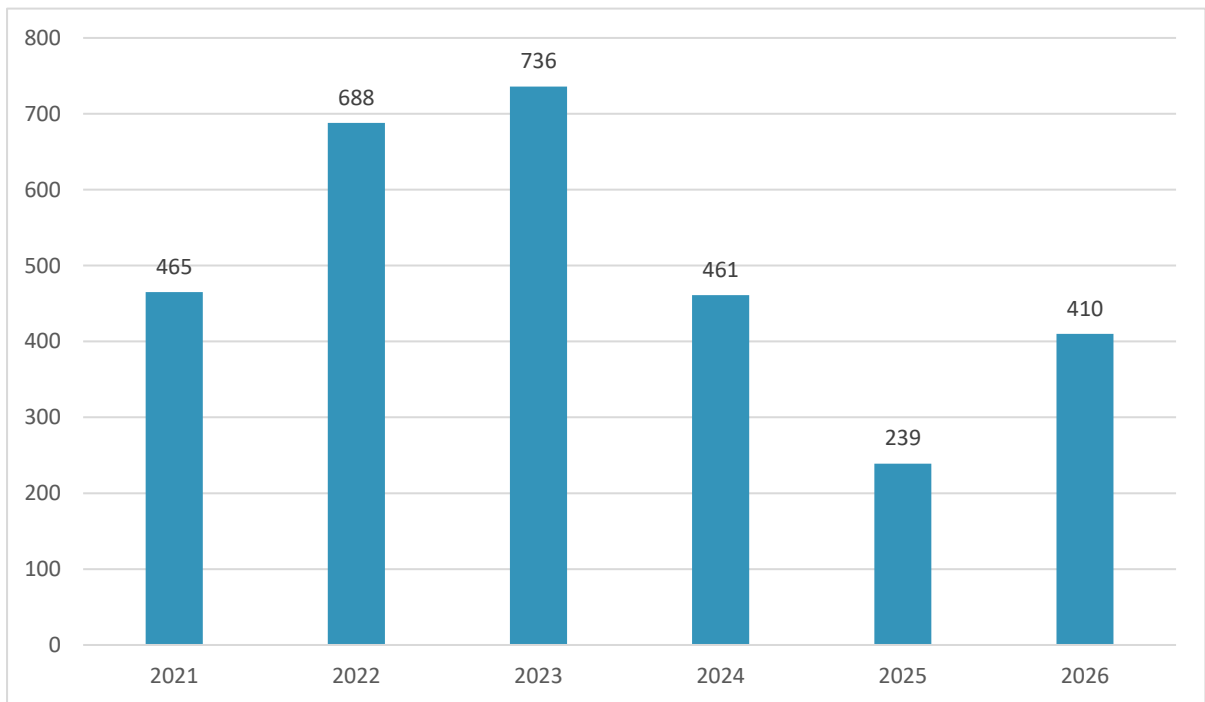


Table (8): Comparison of Arrests during Q1 (2021–2026)

Year	Number of Arrests (Including Women)
2021	465 arrests, including 24 women
2022	688 arrests, including 35 women
2023	736 arrests, including 26 women
2024	461 arrests, including 26 women
2025	239 arrests, including 22 women
2026	419 arrests, including 7 women



## ISRAELI OCCUPATION COURT DECISIONS

The Israeli occupation courts continue to issue arbitrary rulings against detained residents of Jerusalem, including prison sentences of varying lengths, mandatory house arrests, expulsion orders from places of residence or worship, and imposing heavy financial fines that burden families. These courts also continued to extend administrative detention for a number of prisoners without clear charges, in some cases for periods lasting years, in blatant violation of the principles of fair trial.

### ACTUAL PRISON SENTENCES

During the first quarter of 2026, the Jerusalem Governorate documented the issuance of (85) rulings and decisions against Jerusalemite detainees, including (69) administrative detention orders—meaning without formal charges—and (16) actual prison sentences, ranging from several months up to six years. This reflects the ongoing repressive and escalatory policy of the occupation targeting Jerusalemite detainees of all categories.



### Key Rulings and Decisions during Q1 2026:

- **January 6:** The occupation renewed the administrative detention of Jerusalemite prisoners Saif Al-Din Mazhar and Hamza Sahnoud for six months.
- **January 7:** Sentences of 9 months for Adam Ghaith and 5 months for Murad Abu Riyala, along with fines of 5,000 and 3,000 shekels, respectively.



- **January 20:** Prison sentences issued against Mohammad Ali Ubaid (30 months) and Amir Ubaid (24 months).
- **February 5:** Islamic Waqf employees Mahdi Al-Abbasi and Abdulrahman Al-Sharif were placed under administrative detention for 4 months.
- **February 11:** The occupation renewed administrative detention for Jerusalemite youth Ismail Nasser Muhailis for the fifth consecutive time.
- **February 15:** Jerusalemite youth Shadi Khoury sentenced to 2 years and 8 months in prison with a fine of 12,000 shekels, including a 6-month suspended sentence.
- **February 22:** Administrative detention orders issued against 7 residents, including children, from Jerusalem and its northern camps for 4 months.
- **March 23:** Reda Mohammad Ubaid sentenced to 2 years and 11 months after being released under a prisoner exchange deal.
- **March 26:** Sentences of 36 months issued against Mohammad Alaa Ubaid, along with multiple renewals of administrative detention for youths from Qalandiya Camp and Bedou.
- **March 29:** Prison sentences issued against Basil Abdul Mahmoud (30 months) and Mahmoud Abdul Hafiz Atiya (25 months), alongside a 6-month administrative detention renewal for Areib Abu Khdeir.



**Table (9): Distribution of Actual Prison Sentences Recorded during Q1 2026**

Month	Number of Sentences (Including Administrative Detention)
<b>January</b>	29 sentences, including 19 administrative detention
<b>February</b>	16 sentences, including 14 administrative detention
<b>March</b>	40 sentences, including 36 administrative detention
<b>Total</b>	85 sentences, including 69 administrative detention

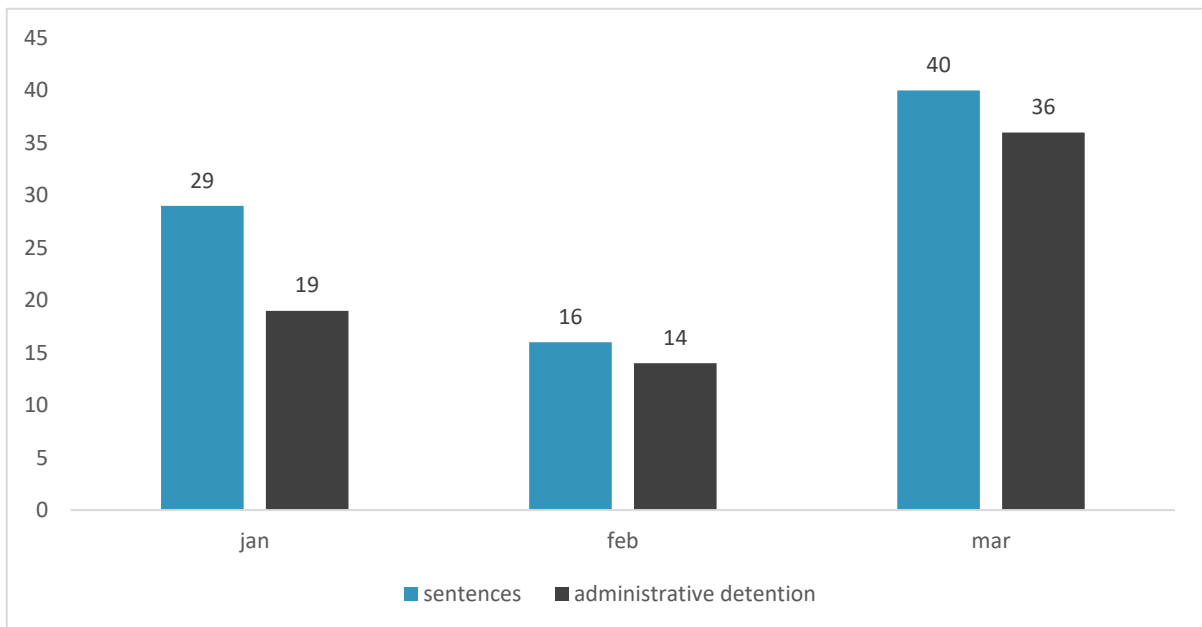
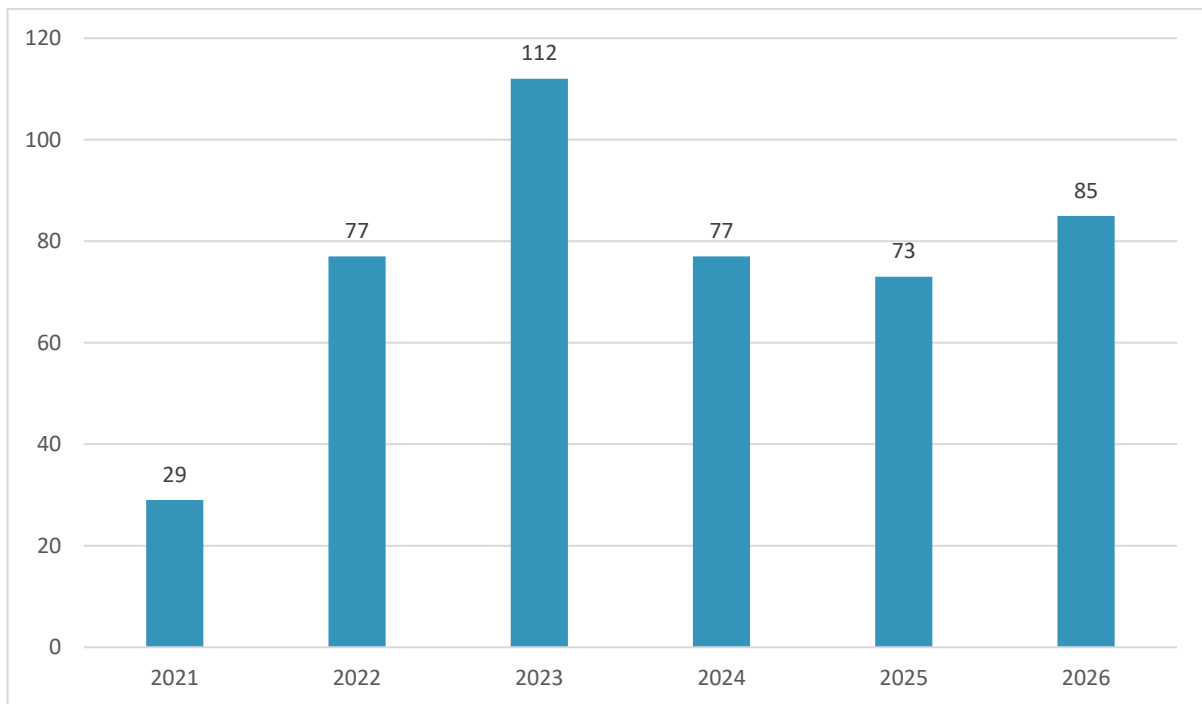


Table (10): Comparison of Actual Prison Sentences during Q1 (2021–2026)

Year	Number of Sentences (Including Administrative Detention)
2021	29 sentences
2022	77 sentences, including 14 administrative detention
2023	112 sentences, including 36 administrative detention
2024	77 sentences, including 58 administrative detention
2025	73 sentences, including 32 administrative detention
2026	85 sentences, including 69 administrative detention



## HOUSE ARREST ORDERS

During the first quarter of 2026, the Jerusalem Governorate documented the continued use by Israeli occupation authorities of house arrest as a coercive measure targeting Jerusalemite residents. Detainees are forced to remain confined to their homes for varying periods, accompanied by strict conditions, including restrictions on entering certain areas, limitations on communication methods, and the imposition of bail or financial fines.



During this period, the Governorate recorded the issuance of at least (18) house arrest orders, reflecting a clear escalation in targeting specific groups, particularly youth and journalists. These orders included the conditional release of detainees under house arrest for several days, expulsion orders from the Old City of Jerusalem, and additional restrictions on movement and work.

Journalists were also affected, with strict limitations imposed, including bans on using phones and social media throughout the period of house arrest.

The Jerusalem Governorate emphasizes that this policy represents a tool of collective pressure and punishment, used to control the daily lives of Jerusalemites and restrict their basic freedoms, in blatant violation of international humanitarian law and human rights principles.



Table (11): House Arrest Orders Recorded during Q1 2026

Month	Number of Orders
January	4 orders
February	12 orders
March	2 orders
Total	18 orders

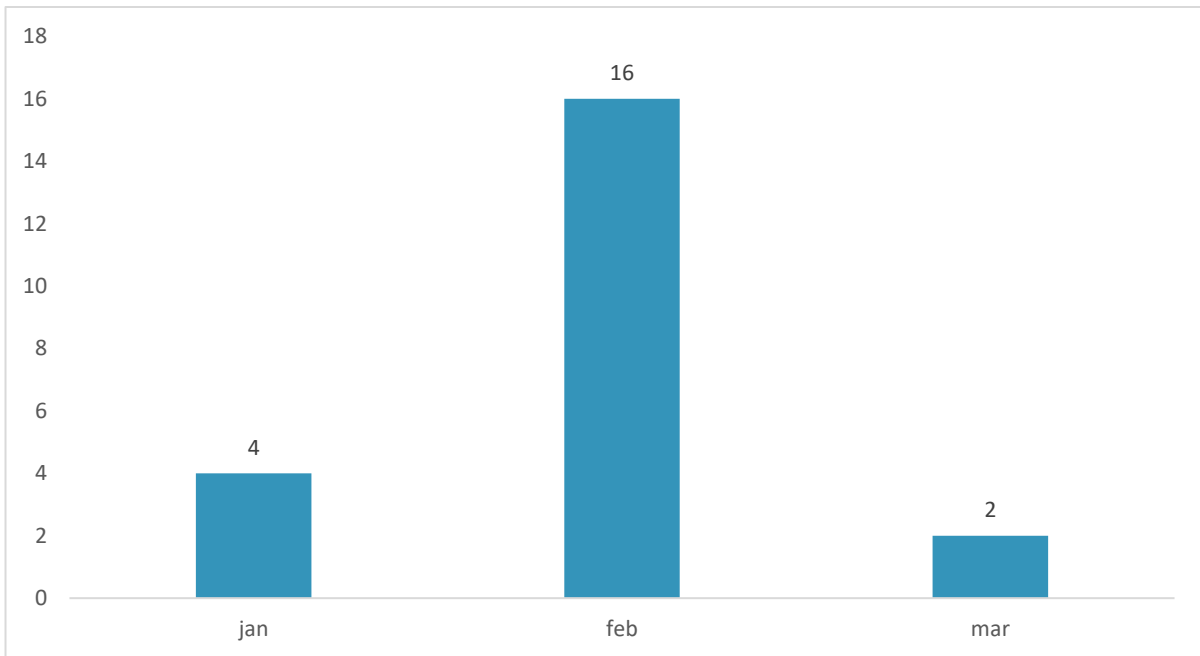
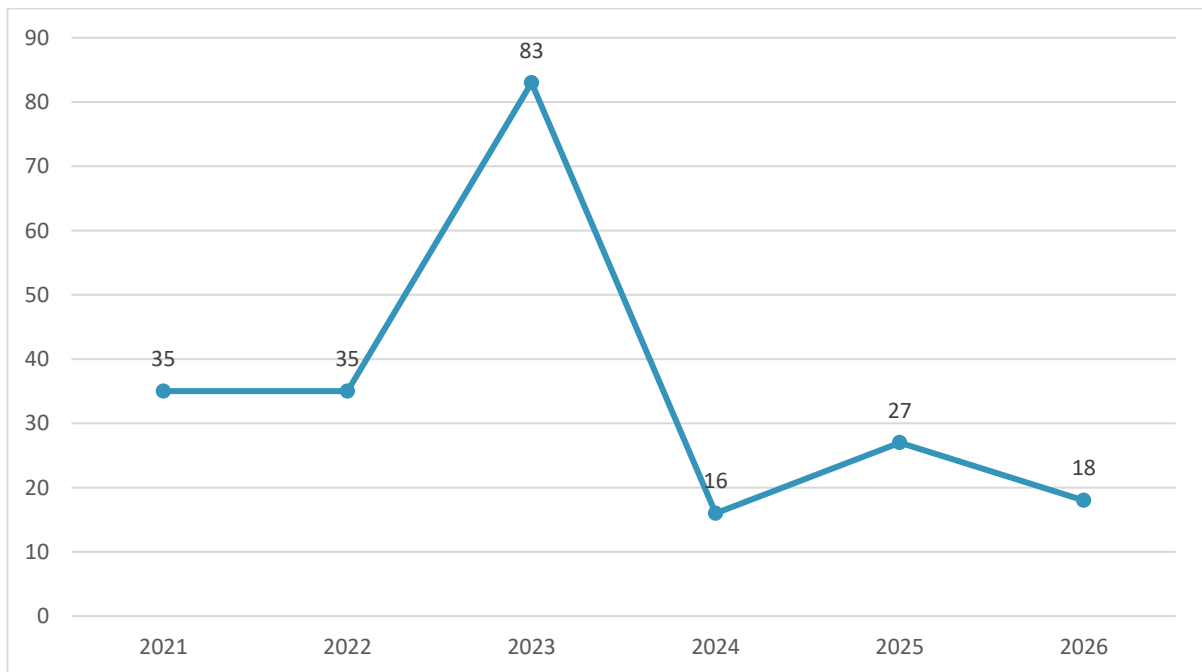


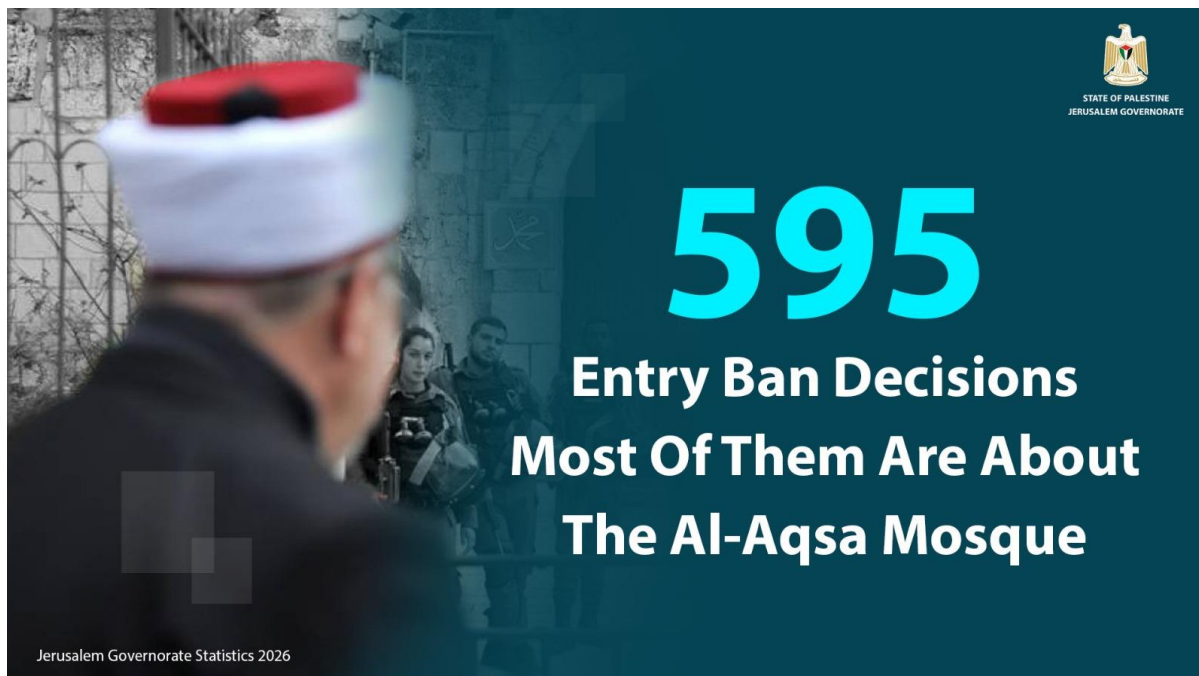
Table (12): Comparison of House Arrest Orders during Q1 (2021–2026)

Year	Number of Orders
2021	35 orders
2022	35 orders
2023	83 orders
2024	16 orders
2025	27 orders
2026	18 orders



## EXPULSION ORDERS

During the first quarter of 2026, Israeli occupation authorities continued their policy of arbitrary and coercive expulsion against Palestinians in the Jerusalem Governorate at an escalating and alarming pace. The Governorate documented a total of (595) expulsion orders, marking a significant and unprecedented increase compared to previous years.



The main reason for this statistical surge is the overlap of the first quarter with the holy month of Ramadan, during which the occupation used expulsions as a preemptive tool to empty the Al-Aqsa Mosque and the Old City of Palestinian presence, enforcing temporal and spatial segregation. This coincided with a comprehensive and unprecedented closure of Al-Aqsa Mosque—the first of its kind since 1967.

These orders systematically targeted religious guards (Murabitin), mosque caretakers, released prisoners, journalists, and activists, aiming to undermine religious and national presence and isolate influential Jerusalemite figures.

It is also noted that the actual number of expulsion orders may be higher than documented, as the occupation authorities have increasingly relied on modern intimidation methods, such as using the



WhatsApp application to deliver orders and threatening the expelled individuals with media bans. This reflects a shift toward “digital repression” to impose a silent Judaization reality, away from international human rights monitoring.

Table (13): Distribution of Expulsion Orders Recorded during Q1 2026

Month	Number of Expulsion Orders
January	135 orders
February	400 orders
March	60 orders
Total	595 orders

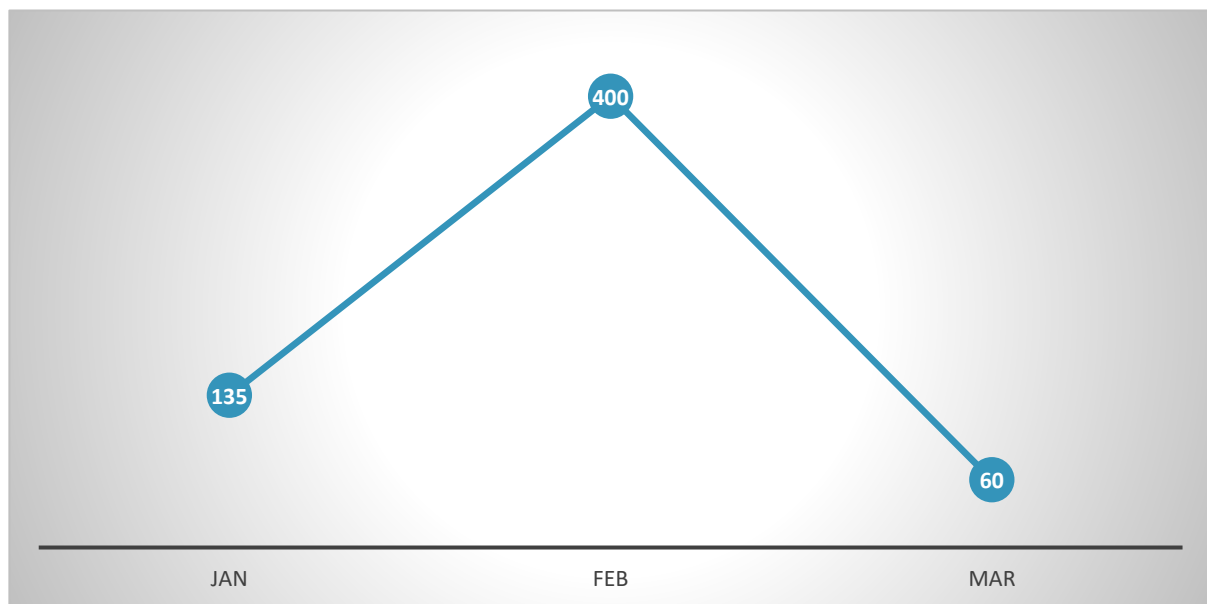
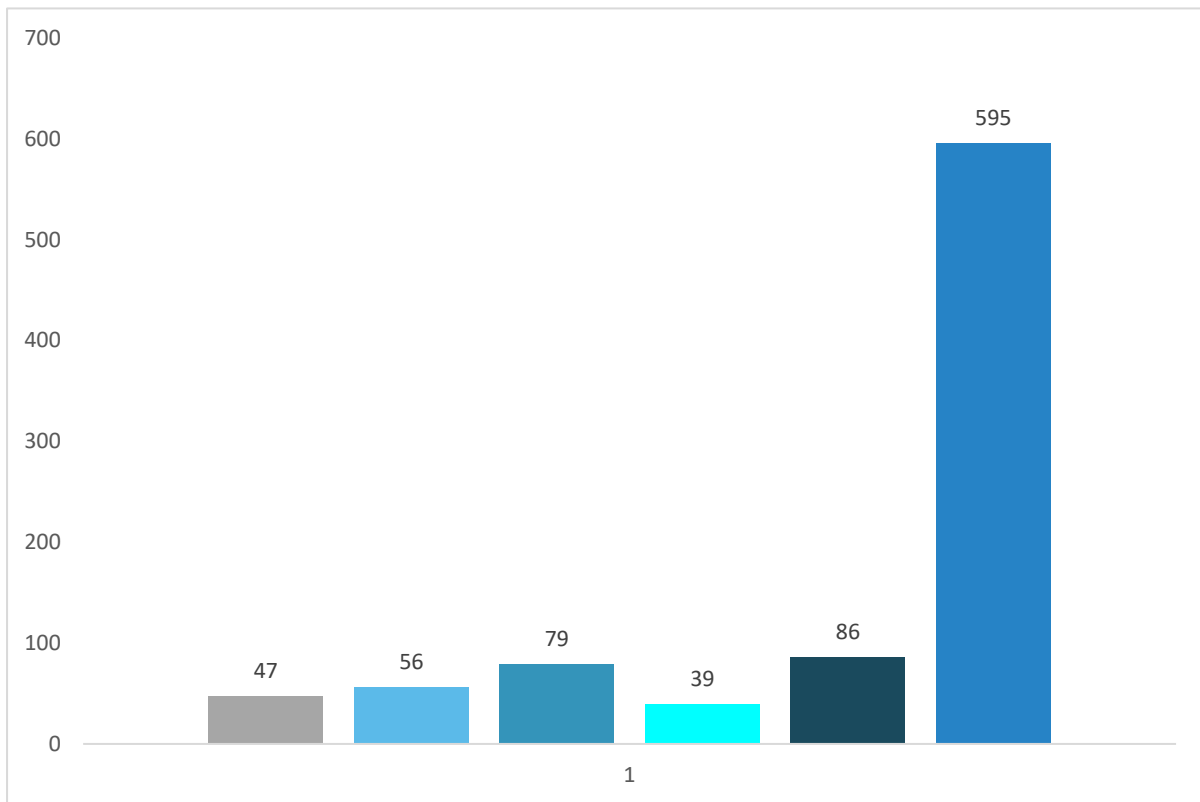


Table (14): Comparison of Expulsion Orders during Q1 (2021–2026)

Year	Number of Expulsion Orders
2021	47 orders
2022	56 orders
2023	79 orders
2024	39 orders
2025	86 orders
2026	595 orders



## TRAVEL BAN ORDERS

In the context of continued restrictions on the people of Jerusalem, Israeli occupation authorities escalated their use of travel bans as a punitive measure during the first quarter of 2026. This policy targets prominent Palestinian figures, including activists and religious guards (Murabitin), in an attempt to impose further isolation and control over the Jerusalemite community.



During this quarter, the Jerusalem Governorate documented the issuance of **9 travel ban orders**. These orders primarily targeted prominent Jerusalemite figures. On **March 4, 2026**, two orders were issued prohibiting travel for Khadija Khuweis and Hanadi Halwani, signed by the Israeli Prime Minister. Additionally, on **March 25, 2026**, Khadija Khuweis received an additional order preventing her from traveling until August 2026. These measures reflect the ongoing policy of the occupation to use travel bans as a tool of pressure and harassment, particularly against influential figures in Jerusalem, constituting a clear violation of freedom of movement and an attempt to undermine the societal and national role of these individuals.





Israeli occupation authorities continue the policy of demolishing Palestinian homes in Jerusalem as part of a forced displacement and ethnic cleansing plan, aiming to impose a new demographic reality that serves Judaization and Israelization projects. During the first quarter of 2026, the Jerusalem Governorate recorded **147 demolition and excavation operations**, distributed as follows:

- **23 cases of forced self-demolition**, where Jerusalemite residents were compelled to demolish their own homes.
- **113 demolitions carried out by occupation machinery.**
- **11 excavation operations** targeting agricultural lands and Palestinian property, justified under various pretexts, most commonly “construction without a permit,” within a discriminatory planning system that makes obtaining permits nearly impossible for Palestinians.

Demolitions and excavations continued during Ramadan, including Eid al-Fitr, in a dangerous precedent reflecting a sharp escalation against Jerusalemites and their property, including forcing families to demolish their own homes, as occurred in Beit Hanina, Sur Baher, and Umm Tuba.



## Key demolition and excavation operations during Q1 2026:

- **January 26–27, 2026:** The occupation carried out one of the largest mass demolitions, destroying **70 structures in Kafr ‘Aqab and around Qalandiya Camp** as part of the so-called “Capital Shield” operation, targeting the Airport Road area, causing destruction of property and disruption of vital services.
- **January 20, 2026:** Mobile offices of **UNRWA** were demolished in Sheikh Jarrah before the site was seized and converted into a military post.
- **February 1, 2026:** The municipal authorities forced brothers Kamal and Karam Abu Swei to self-demolish their homes in Wadi Qaddum, Silwan, under the pretext of unauthorized construction.
- **February 2, 2026:** Occupation machinery demolished **6 shops and a horse stable** in Wadi al-Jaher, while a resident in Jabal al-Mukaber was forced to self-demolish his home.
- **February 18, 2026:** Ahmad Khader Nimer was compelled to self-demolish his home in Sur Baher, southeast of Jerusalem.
- **March 6, 2026:** Occupation forces excavated agricultural lands and uprooted olive trees in Badu, northwest of Jerusalem, causing damage to crops.
- **March 9, 2026:** Hundreds of trees were removed in Wadi al-Hummus, Sur Baher, alongside the separation wall, as part of ongoing colonial projects.
- **March 20, 2026:** Ahmad Bakirat was forced to partially demolish his home in Sur Baher during Eid al-Fitr.
- **March 23, 2026:** The occupation demolished the Martyrs’ monument in Shufat Camp, northeast of Jerusalem.
- **March 30, 2026:** Occupation machinery demolished **5 homes in Al-Bustan, Silwan**, south of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, after raiding the area without prior notice, displacing the resident families.



Table 15: Distribution of Demolition and Excavation Operations in Q1 2026

Month	by Occupation Machinery	Self-Demolitions	Excavation/Grading	Total
January	79	5	2	86
February	27	15	7	49
March	7	3	2	12
Total	113	23	11	147

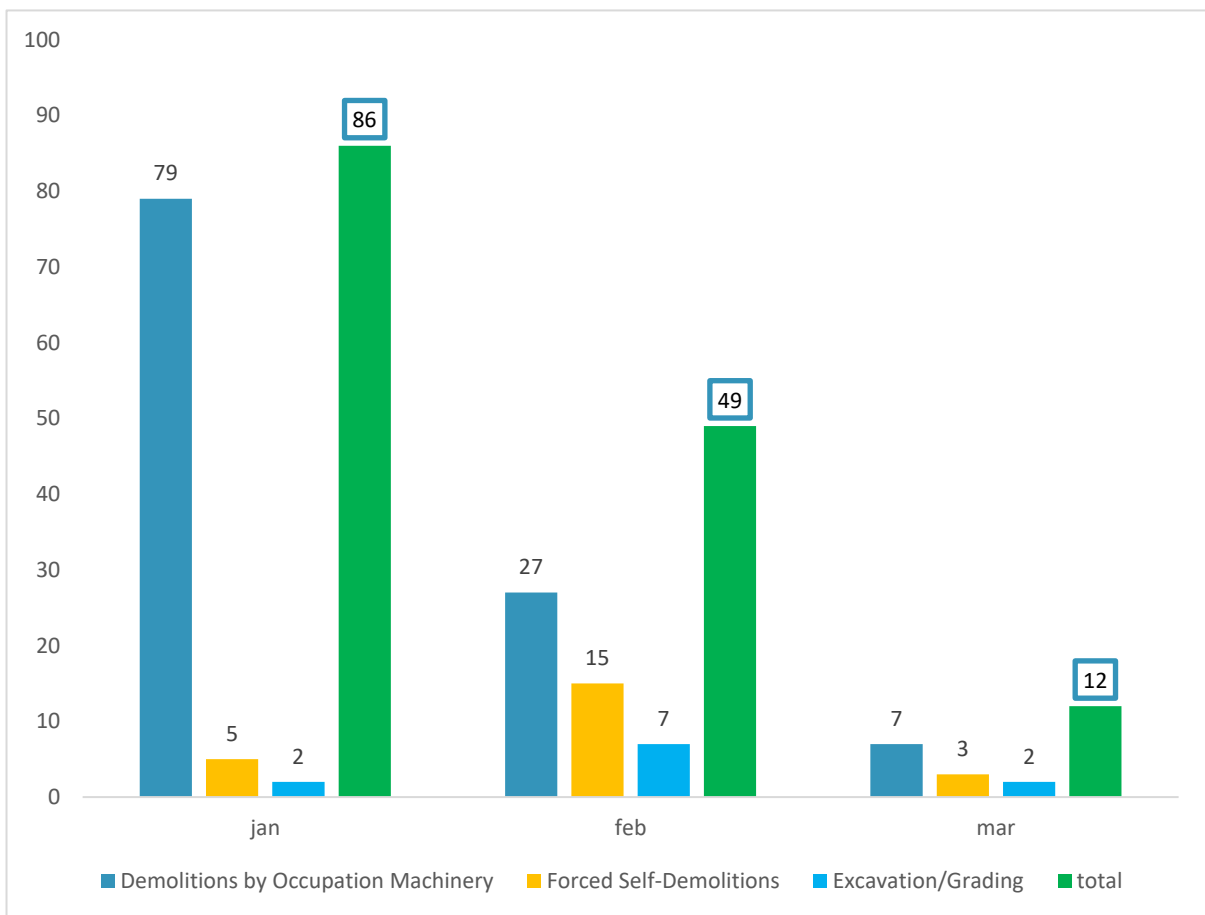
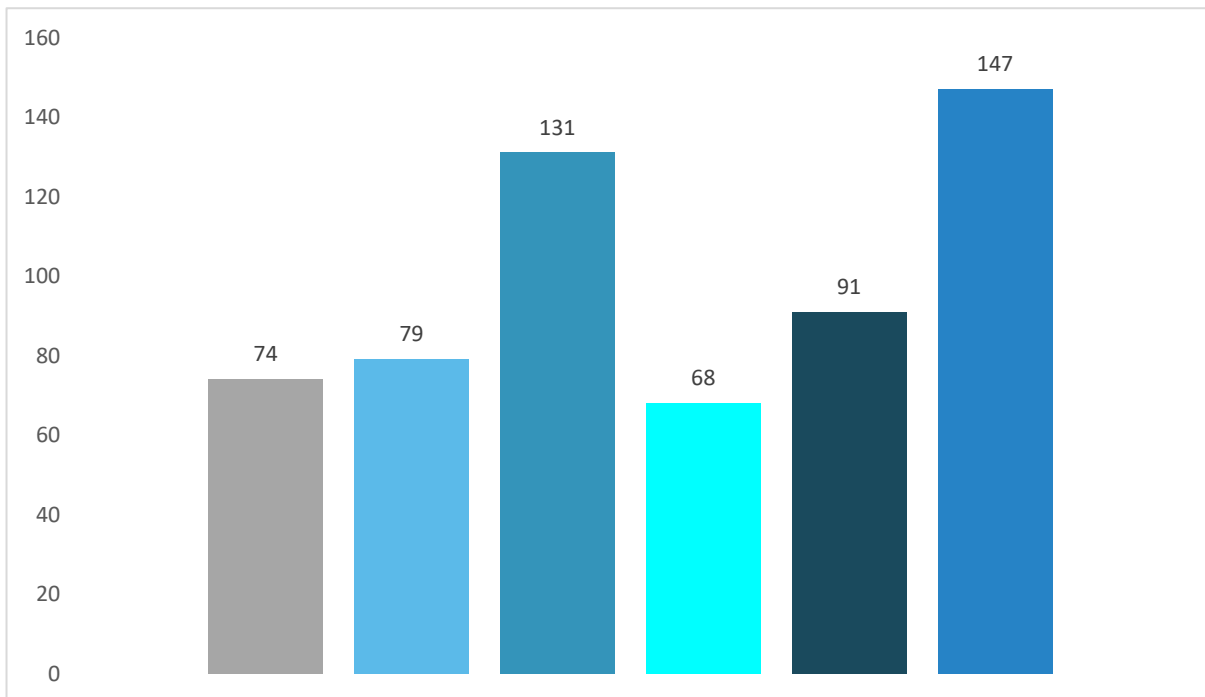


Table 16: Comparison of Demolition and Excavation Operations in Q1 (2021–2026)

Year	Number of Operations
2021	74
2022	79
2023	131
2024	68
2025	91
2026	147



## DEMOLITION, FORCED EVICTION, AND LAND CONFISCATION ORDERS

During the first quarter of 2026, the occupied Jerusalem Governorate witnessed an unprecedented escalation in Israeli occupation policies concerning demolition, eviction, and confiscation orders, aimed at reshaping the demographic and geographic reality of Jerusalem, particularly in Palestinian-populated neighborhoods such as Silwan, Batn al-Hawa, and Anata.

During this period, the Jerusalem Governorate documented **214 notifications**, distributed as follows: **146 demolition orders, 62 eviction orders, and 6 confiscation orders**, reflecting a severe intensification of these violations, especially the forced evictions that heavily targeted Batn al-Hawa neighborhood in Silwan for the benefit of settlement associations.

- On **1 January 2026**, the Israeli High Court upheld eviction orders against the Zuheir Al-Rajabi family and his siblings in Batn al-Hawa, affecting **7 residential apartments housing around 50 residents**, in favor of the “Ataret Cohanim” settlement association, as part of the ongoing targeting of families in the area. In the same month, settlers seized the Basbous family home after forced eviction, alongside the opening of eviction files for dozens of other homes in preparation for mass displacement.
- During **February 2026**, the occupation authorities significantly escalated notifications, distributing dozens of demolition orders in Anata and other areas, including **60 notifications in Wadi al-Bik**, along with final eviction orders for the Rajabi families in Batn al-Hawa, with imminent implementation deadlines threatening dozens of families with displacement. Additionally, confiscation orders were issued for lands in Beit Hanina, and notifications targeted residential and agricultural structures in Abu Dis.
- In **March 2026**, **9 new notifications** were documented: **7 demolition orders and 2 eviction orders**. On **22 March**, occupation forces raided and delivered final eviction orders for two Basbous family homes in Batn al-Hawa, Silwan. On **24 March**, demolition and eviction notifications were served for **7 inhabited homes in the village of Qalandiya**, north of Jerusalem, despite these homes having been established for many years.



## TARGETING OF NATIONAL AND RELIGIOUS FIGURES



During the first quarter of 2026, the Jerusalem Governorate witnessed an escalation in the targeting of religious and national leaders through measures including travel bans, expulsions, and judicial harassment:

- **Adnan Gheith, Governor of Jerusalem:** Israeli authorities continued legal harassment by repeatedly postponing his court sessions in January, as part of a legal exhaustion policy aimed at limiting his official role.
- **Sheikh Ikrima Sabri:** The occupation authorities intensified measures against him, extending his travel ban in January, summoning him for interrogation in March, and banning him from the Old City of Jerusalem for 15 days.
- **Ashraf Al-Awar, Minister of Jerusalem Affairs:** Prevented from entering the West Bank since January, with the decision confirmed in February, obstructing his governmental duties.
- **Sheikh Muhammad Ali Al-Abbasi:** Arrested in February inside the courtyards of Al-Aqsa Mosque and served with an expulsion order.
- **Sheikh Iyad Al-Abbasi:** His expulsion from Al-Aqsa Mosque was renewed in February for six months via electronic notification.



## CRIMES AND VIOLATIONS AGAINST JERUSALEM'S INSTITUTIONS AND LANDMARKS

During the first quarter of 2026, the occupied Jerusalem Governorate witnessed a notable escalation in Israeli crimes and violations targeting religious, educational, cultural, and media institutions, as part of a systematic policy aimed at undermining Palestinian presence and imposing a Judaization agenda on the city.

These violations included the closure of places of worship, notably Al-Aqsa Mosque, raids on educational and cultural institutions, targeting community centers, restricting media work, and assaults on Islamic and Christian holy sites, including the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. These practices reflect an ongoing strategy to reshape the city's religious and institutional landscape in line with Israeli control and sovereignty projects.

### Key Violations During Q1 2026:

- **4 Jan 2026:** Settler attacks on Islamic cemeteries in Jerusalem, including the destruction of tombstones, violating the sanctity of religious sites.
- **12 Jan 2026:** Occupation authorities cut water and electricity to UNRWA facilities in Sheikh Jarrah, including schools, clinics, and administrative offices, targeting essential services.
- **13 Jan 2026:** Closure notice issued for Al-Zawiya Clinic inside Bab al-Sahira, with threats to cut services, violating the right to healthcare.
- **20 Jan 2026:** Demolitions within UNRWA headquarters in Sheikh Jarrah, raising the Israeli flag over the site, violating international protections for UN institutions.
- **21 Jan 2026:** Closure of UNRWA office in Shuafat Camp, part of a policy to eliminate the agency's institutional presence in Jerusalem.
- **22 Jan 2026:** Raid on Yabous Cultural Center and prevention of a film screening; simultaneous raid on Khan al-Ahmar school facilities.
- **25 Jan 2026:** Raid on Al-Hakawati Theatre to prevent cultural events, aiming to stifle Jerusalem's cultural space.
- **26 Jan 2026:** Escalated attacks on journalists, closure of Al-Jazeera office, and raid on Al-Kamanjati Center.
- **28 Jan 2026:** Imposition of heavy fines on institutions in Shuafat Camp, cutting services and threatening closure.



- **6 Feb 2026:** Ban on religious gatherings in the Qibli prayer area of Al-Aqsa Mosque, violating freedom of worship.
- **8 Feb 2026:** Repeated attacks at the entrance to the Armenian Church in the Old City, including spitting, targeting Christian holy sites.
- **12 Feb 2026:** Raids on the homes and offices of prominent cultural institutions, issuing investigation summonses.
- **17 Feb 2026:** Closure of Burj Al-Laqlak Community Center after raid and confinement of those present.
- **18 Feb 2026:** Ban on distributing Iftar meals and restrictions on Awqaf employees; targeting UNRWA educational institutions.
- **19 Feb 2026:** Attacks on Church of the Visitation in Ein Karem with racist graffiti.
- **21 Feb 2026:** Raid on a mosque in Beit Safafa, citing violation for raising the call to prayer.
- **23 Feb 2026:** Classification of five Palestinian media platforms as “terrorist,” restricting media work.
- **27 Feb 2026:** Raid on Bab al-Rahma cemetery, using it as a military post.
- **28 Feb 2026:** Full closure of Al-Aqsa Mosque, banning worshippers, and closure of Old City shops, causing economic and religious paralysis (ongoing at report preparation).
- **3 Mar 2026:** Promotion of Israeli products under Palestinian labels, e.g., “Jerusalem Dates,” exploiting the city’s identity.
- **10 Mar 2026:** Modification of Silwan plans, reducing land areas for settlement projects, especially in Wadi Hilweh.
- **16 Mar 2026:** Threat to close a restaurant in Khan al-Zeit market and ban Iftar meal distribution, targeting community initiatives.
- **29 Mar 2026:** Demolition order for Burj Al-Laqlak sports hall, raids on UNRWA schools in Shuafat Camp, and engineering measurements for future actions.
- **30 Mar 2026:** Opening of the Western Wall for rabbinical rituals alongside raid on Bab al-Rahma cemetery, enforcing religious discrimination and a new reality in the city.

These data indicate that the events in Jerusalem during Q1 2026 are not isolated incidents but a systematic policy aimed at dismantling Palestinian religious and institutional structures and



imposing facts on the ground, in blatant violation of international law and freedom of worship, demanding urgent international intervention to stop these crimes and protect the city's identity.

## VIOLATIONS AGAINST JERUSALEMITE PRISONERS

Violations against Jerusalemite prisoners during the first quarter of 2026 escalated sharply and systematically under the Israeli occupation, targeting all categories of prisoners, including former detainees, children, and patients, as part of a comprehensive policy aimed at breaking the prisoners' will, increasing pressure on the Jerusalemite community, and imposing coercive measures that pave the way for further marginalization and displacement.

During **January**, the occupation authorities continued their oppressive policies against prisoners both inside and outside the prisons. Prisoners were subjected to direct physical assaults, such as the case of prisoner Nasser Al-Faqih, who lost hearing in one ear due to beatings inside Ofer Prison. The occupation also intensified its policy of forced deportation by transferring a number of Jerusalemite prisoners abroad, in clear violation of international law. Similarly, Israeli intelligence forced dozens of former prisoners to undergo humiliating procedures, including being photographed with the Israeli flag, alongside home raids, arrests of family members, and strict movement restrictions, including expulsion orders from Al-Aqsa Mosque.

In **February**, the scope of targeting expanded to include intensive surveillance of former prisoners, with repeated summons for interrogation, home raids, assaults on families, and property vandalism. This policy aimed to instill fear in the Jerusalemite community. A particularly dangerous escalation was reflected in decisions to revoke IDs and enforce deportation, setting a dangerous legal precedent for potential displacement of released prisoners.

During **March**, the escalation reached its peak. Occupation authorities continued pursuing former prisoners immediately after their release. For example, former prisoner Muhammad Abu Nab's home was raided one day after his release, and he was summoned for interrogation, sending a clear message that freedom does not end the pursuit. Additionally, the occupation revoked the Jerusalemite ID of former prisoner Rasheed Al-Rashaq, reflecting a rising trend of using legal instruments to strip civil rights and enforce forced deportation.

In a highly alarming development, the occupation approved racist legislative projects directly targeting prisoners, including a draft law for the execution of prisoners, representing a dangerous shift toward legalizing the killing of prisoners under a legislative framework, in blatant violation of international humanitarian law, and marking an unprecedented escalation against the Palestinian prison movement.



Similarly, occupation forces committed an extrajudicial execution against 21-year-old Jerusalemite Qasim Shaqirat from Jabal Mukaber, who was shot during a raid and arrest operation, left injured without medical care, and later declared dead. This crime exemplifies the occupation's policy of extrajudicial killings, increasingly applied during arrest operations, directly targeting Palestinian youth and turning arrests into a tool for murder.


Inside the prisons, prisoners continued to suffer from deliberate medical neglect, poor nutrition, and restrictions on basic human rights, including denial of religious practice and knowledge of prayer times. During this period, the number of Palestinian prisoners exceeded 9,500, including dozens of female prisoners and hundreds of children, alongside an unprecedented increase in administrative detainees.

Overall, these violations confirm that the occupation authorities are intensifying their policies against Jerusalemite prisoners through a combination of field repression and racist legislation, forming a comprehensive system aimed at suppressing the prisoners' cause and undermining their human and national existence, in grave violation of all international conventions.



## COLONIAL PROJECTS

Based on daily monitoring of official announcements issued by the so-called “Civil Administration” and the Israeli municipal authorities in Jerusalem, as well as documentation by the Beit Al-Sharq Center, the Jerusalem Governorate recorded a total of **53 colonial plans** during the first quarter of 2026, indicating a clear acceleration in settlement expansion.



The infographic features a dark teal background with white and light blue text. In the top right corner, there is a logo for the State of Palestine, Jerusalem Governorate, which includes a map of the region and the text "STATE OF PALESTINE" and "JERUSALEM GOVERNORATE". The main text is centered and reads: "The Jerusalem Governorate documented (53) settlement plans, including the deposit of (17) plans for the construction of (2592) units on an area of (1256.978) dunams, The approval of (9) plans for (860) units on an area of (82.407) dunams, And the tendering of (5) additional plans." At the bottom left of the infographic, it says "Jerusalem Governorate Statistics 2026".

Data show that among these plans, **17 plans were submitted**, including the construction of **2,592 settlement units** on a total area of approximately **1,256.978 dunams**. Additionally, **9 settlement plans were approved** for the construction of **860 units** on an area of about **82.407 dunams**, alongside **5 tenders and bidding plans** that include thousands of settlement units, in addition to economic projects such as employment and commercial complexes.

During **March 2026**, the Jerusalem Governorate monitored **13 colonial plans**, which included the submission of three new projects for **1,408 settlement units** on an area of **210 dunams**, as well as the approval of one plan for **2 settlement units** on an area of **4.517 dunams**. The month also saw the launch of **two tenders** to establish three employment complexes and one commercial complex in the Ma'ale Adumim settlement.

### SUBMITTED PLANS:

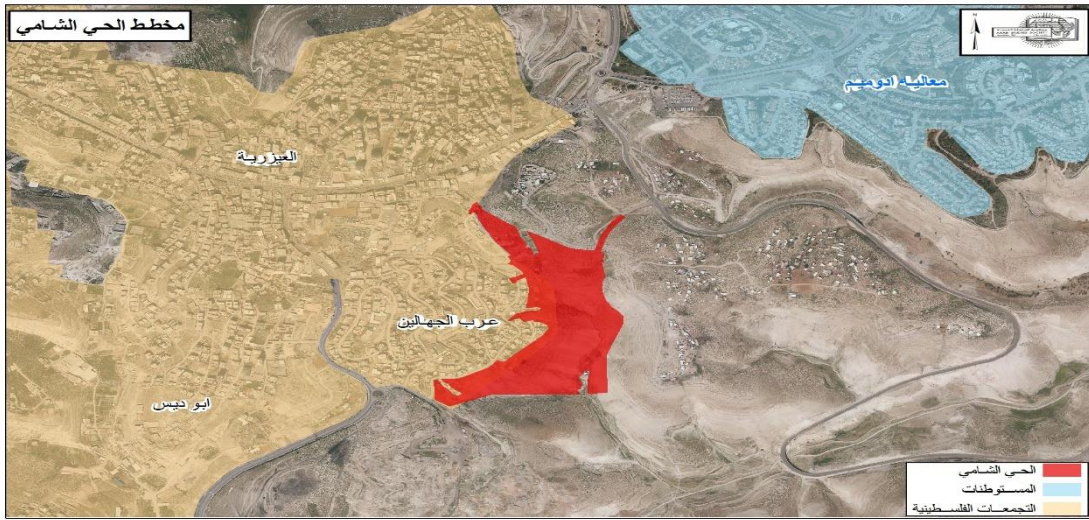
- **30/01/2026:** Plan 101/0892588 in Gilo settlement was re-submitted after modifications. It aims to implement urban renewal by demolishing existing buildings and constructing towers up to 35 floors, comprising **466 settlement units** on **18.36 dunams**.



- **30/01/2026:** Plan 101/1374503 in Gilo settlement aims to add floors to existing buildings, increasing the total units to **31 settlement units** on **0.742 dunams**.
- **01/02/2026:** Plan 101/1293349 in Givat Hamatos settlement aims to build two seven-story residential buildings comprising **26 settlement units** on **1.328 dunams**.
- **05/02/2026:** Plan 57/600/3 for a wastewater treatment complex “OJG 3” on Nabi Musa lands, covering **647.084 dunams**.
- **13/02/2026:** Plan 101/1122241 in Givat Haskid settlement aims to unify and subdivide land for **120 settlement units** on **39.095 dunams**.
- **13/02/2026:** Plan 101/1450774 in Gilo settlement aims to add a basement for storage on **1.579 dunams**.
- **13/02/2026:** Infrastructure map “T.T.L 209” for Atarot industrial area (power generation station), covering **252 dunams**.
- **13/02/2026:** Plan 101/1106863 in Talpiot settlement aims to build public buildings and facilities on **12.562 dunams**.
- **13/02/2026:** Plan 101/1305804 in Nof Zion settlement aims to expand the neighborhood by adding **400 settlement units**, along with sports, commercial, and public facilities on **46.231 dunams**.
- **13/02/2026:** Plan 101/1381391 in Talpiot settlement aims to add a new building with a kindergarten and synagogue on **1.331 dunams**.
- **13/02/2026:** Plan 101/1235712 in Talpiot settlement aims to build a conference center on **15.78 dunams**.
- **13/02/2026:** Plan 101/1258045 in Givat Hamatos settlement aims to build a residential building with **40 settlement units** and a kindergarten on **4.819 dunams**.
- **13/02/2026:** Plan 1411420/101 in Neve Ya’akov settlement aims to add **19 settlement units** along with a kindergarten and commercial facilities on **1.685 dunams**.
- **13/02/2026:** Plan 220/26/2/1 in Givat Zeev settlement aims to construct **112 settlement units** on **4.382 dunams**.
- **20/03/2026:** Plan 101/1413459 in Pisgat Zeev settlement aims to add **3 units** to an existing building and expand existing units on **0.675 dunams**.
- **20/03/2026:** Plan 101/1141290 in Neve Ya’akov aims for urban renewal including demolition of existing buildings and construction of **9 residential buildings** with **588 settlement units**, along with an 18-story employment building on **39.418 dunams**.



- **20/03/2026:** Organizational Plan 1627/7 east of Al-Eizariya town aims to create a new settlement neighborhood known as “Shami Neighborhood” on Abu Dis lands, with **807 settlement units**, public and economic facilities, and infrastructure, covering approximately **169.9 dunams**, as part of the E1 settlement project.



#### APPROVED PLANS:

- **06/02/2026:** Approval of Plan 101/1326313 in Givat Hamatos settlement for the construction of **45 settlement units** and public buildings on **2.396 dunams**. The plan was initially submitted on 07/11/2025.
- **13/02/2026:** Approval of Plan 101/1337161 in Givat Hamatos settlement for **5 settlement units** on **0.708 dunams**. The plan was submitted on 24/10/2025.
- **13/02/2026:** Approval of Plan 101/1410588 to expand a junction east of Al-Issawiya on **0.244 dunams**. Submitted on 24/10/2025.
- **13/02/2026:** Approval of Plan 220/7/12 in Givat Zeev settlement to add **1 settlement unit** to an existing building on **0.728 dunams**. Submitted on 15/10/2025.
- **23/02/2026:** Approval of Plan 225/3/3 in Ma’aleh Michmas settlement for the construction of a cemetery, roads, streets, and open areas on **36.092 dunams**. Submitted on 31/03/2024.
- **20/03/2026:** Approval of Plan 101/1313196 in Ramat Shlomo settlement to add **2 settlement units** to an existing building (raising the total from 9 to 11) on **4.517 dunams**. Submitted on 26/10/2025.



- **January 2026:** Approval of Plan 101/1308501 in Ramot settlement for the renewal of the “Frankfurt 2-4” neighborhood through demolition of the existing building and construction of **164 settlement units**, including commercial areas and public spaces on the ground floor, on **4.798 dunams**.
- **January 2026:** Approval of Plan 101/0921239 in Ramot settlement to construct a new residential complex with **642 settlement units**, commercial and public buildings, and open public areas on **32.254 dunams**.
- **January 2026:** Approval of Plan 101/1226166 in Gilo settlement to add **1 settlement unit** and storage facilities to an existing building on **0.67 dunams**.

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#### TENDERS:

- **January 2026:** Tender No. 14/2026 for the construction of **350 settlement units** within a senior care facility in Ma’aleh Adumim settlement.
- **January 2026:** The so-called Israeli Ministry of Construction and Housing issued a tender for the construction of **3,401 settlement units** within the E1 area east of occupied Jerusalem.
- **February 2026:** Tender No. 11/2026 in Ma’aleh Adumim settlement for **231 settlement units** within two complexes on **24.434 dunams**, as part of Structural Plan 420/1/7/59/2 (dated 03/02/2026).
- **March 2026:** Tender No. 65/2026 to establish two employment complexes in Ma’aleh Adumim settlement, within Structural Plans 420/1/7/59/3 and 420/1/7/59/1.
- **March 2026:** Tender No. 68/2026 to establish a commercial and employment complex in Ma’aleh Adumim settlement, within Structural Plan 420/4/2.

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#### COLONIAL ACTIVITIES DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2026:

- **01/01/2026** – The occupation municipality in Jerusalem notified residents of Al-Bustan neighborhood in Silwan, south of Al-Aqsa Mosque, of its intention to seize approximately **5.7 dunams** of land under the pretext of implementing a “gardens and parking lots” project on land described by the occupation as vacant, while the land actually consists of plots where Palestinian homes were demolished in the previous year. The municipality claimed the use would be “temporary” for five years, although previous experience indicates these pretexts are used for long-term seizure and to prevent future Palestinian development.



- **07/01/2026** – The Israeli Ministry of Construction and Housing issued a tender to build **3,401 settlement units** within the plans in the E1 area east of Jerusalem, accelerating the implementation of the colonial project.
- **12/01/2026** – The occupation authorities discussed two colonial plans in Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood and the area of Jerusalem International Airport:
  - **Plan 1:** Construction of about **9,000 settlement units** north of Jerusalem on **1,243 dunams**.
  - **Plan 2:** The “Nahlat Shimon” plan in Sheikh Jarrah, in the An-Nuqaa area, on **17 dunams**, including **316 settlement units** and the demolition of homes of approximately **40 Palestinian families**.
- **14/01/2026** – The “Civil Administration” and other occupation authorities stormed eastern areas of Al-Za’im town, where the previous week a tender was issued to build **3,401 settlement units** under the E1 project.
- **16/01/2026** – Israel Gantz, head of the Binyamin Regional Council, announced the official start of the **45 Colonial Road** project with a budget of **400 million NIS**, linking settlements north of Jerusalem and east of Ramallah to the city. The project connects settlements to Route 443, from the vicinity of Michmas settlement in the east to the Qalandiya checkpoint tunnel in the west.
- **18/01/2026** – The municipality notified Al-Bustan residents of the seizure of **1 dunam and 100 square meters** under the pretext of a “gardens and parking lots” project.
- **19/01/2026** – Palestinians noticed night lighting in abandoned houses in Lifta village west of Jerusalem, evacuated in 1948. Settlers restored some houses in preparation for settlement, as part of a plan including **250 housing units** and facilities for settlers.
- **21/01/2026** – Settlers established a new outpost near the Khan al-Ahmar Bedouin community southeast of Jerusalem, as part of a plan to control new lands in northern and eastern Jerusalem and prevent natural expansion of Bedouin communities and grazing activities.
- The occupation army issued **Order 26/06** to remove wild plants and relocate olive trees from a **56.161-dunam** land in Sur Baher, Jerusalem.
- **Order 26/22** to seize **0.286 dunams** in Dhahiyat al-Barid neighborhood, Beit Hanina, including street closures and placement of concrete blocks.
- **03/02/2026** – Jerusalem Governorate warned of an occupation decision to register all city lands in the Israeli land registry (Tabu) by 2029, increasing the risk of demolition and eviction orders.



- **04/02/2026** – Israeli Ministry of Construction and Housing announced an expansion plan for Adam settlement north of Jerusalem, including **2,780 settlement units**, road construction, and infrastructure for settlers.
- **05/02/2026** – President of the occupation state, Yitzhak Herzog, inaugurated the “Pilgrims’ Road” for settlers and tourists, **600 meters** from Wadi Hilweh under Jerusalem’s walls to the foundations of the Western Wall. Construction of **45 Colonial Road** began, **5 km** in length, affecting **280 dunams** of Palestinian land in Michmas, Jaba’, Al-Ram, and Kafr Aqab, at a cost of 400 million NIS.
- **16/02/2026** – Hebrew media reported a plan to expand Na’aleh Ya’akov settlement and link it with Adam settlement, including hundreds of housing units for Haredi settlers.
- **19/02/2026** – Settlers established a new outpost in Nabi Musa area, north of Jerusalem.
- During the month, the government approved a land settlement law in the West Bank (Area C) worth **244 million NIS**, allowing settlers to buy land without governmental oversight.
- Israeli Land Authority registered lands in Beit Safafa, Jerusalem, in plots **31987, 31777, 30808**, requiring owners to submit ownership documents.
- The occupation continued targeting Al-Bustan neighborhood with demolitions and establishing “Torah gardens,” issuing demolition notices for **14 homes**.
- **10/03/2026** – Maps published on the municipality’s website showed changes to Silwan’s boundaries, reducing the neighborhood’s area and annexing parts to “City of David,” making the new area **333.76 dunams**.
- **11/03/2026** – Settlers established an outpost in lands of Beit Iksa, northwest of Jerusalem, accompanied by army and police. About **40 settlers** stormed Ras Frij, Al-Gharabah, and Al-Mattah areas with four trucks and a bulldozer, starting excavation and construction.
- **12/03/2026** – Video footage showed construction near Qalandiya checkpoint, connecting the new checkpoint to **Colonial Road 45**, extending from Michmas to Qalandiya checkpoint toward Route 443 and Atarot settlement road.
- **10–12/03/2026** – The Civil Administration issued “temporary use” licenses for **6.83 dunams** of grazing land in Al-Jeeb village, Plot No. 3, known as “Qit’at Bido.”
- Several military orders were issued in the West Bank to seize lands for military purposes, including:
  - **Jaba’**: 2,803 dunams (Order 26/04/Urgent)



- **Beit Ijza/Bedouin:** 5,002 dunams (Order 26/65/Seizure)
- **Nabi Musa:** 4,333 dunams (Order 26/16/Urgent)

## ISRAELI DECISION ON JERUSALEM LAND SETTLEMENT: A STEP TO CEMENT CONTROL AND THREATEN PALESTINIAN PRESENCE

At the beginning of February 2026, the Israeli organization **Ir Amim** revealed a new government decision to complete the settlement and registration of all occupied Jerusalem lands in the **Land Registry (Tabu) by the end of 2029**, aiming to register **100% of the city's lands within four years**. This represents a serious shift in the land file and poses a direct threat to the Palestinian presence in East Jerusalem.

**Government Decision No. 3792** stipulates expanding budgets, authorities, and human resources for the land settlement mechanism in place since 2018, while enhancing cooperation between the **Land Registration Department** and the **Custodian of Absentee Property**, the body responsible for transferring lands to Israeli state ownership. According to the organization, settlement operations since 2018 covered around **50 plots totaling nearly 2,000 dunams**, of which **85% were registered in favor of the state or settlement bodies**, while only **about 1%** were registered in the names of Palestinian owners.

The danger of this decision lies in granting Israeli authorities the power to determine the “legal owner” definitively, potentially leading to the **expropriation of extensive Palestinian lands**, especially given the complex ownership situation after the registration process was halted following the occupation of East Jerusalem in 1967. Most lands lack updated registration documents in the Tabu and rely on old financial restrictions or scattered inheritance papers inside and outside Jerusalem, making proof of ownership before Israeli authorities extremely difficult.

Experts consider this measure **politically motivated**, aiming to cement the application of Israeli law in East Jerusalem, despite its status as **occupied territory under international law**. They also warn that the **Absentee Property Law** could be used to transfer lands whose owners cannot prove ownership to the so-called **Custodian of Absentee Property**, effectively turning residents from owners into tenants on their own lands.



## AL-BUSTAN NEIGHBORHOOD IN SILWAN: THE BATTLE FOR EXISTENCE JUST METERS FROM THE AL-AQSA MOSQUE



In the town of **Silwan**, adjacent to the southern wall of the **Al-Aqsa Mosque**, approximately **59,000 Jerusalemites** reside across **12 neighborhoods**, six of which face the threat of forced displacement. This threat manifests through two parallel tracks: demolition orders under the pretext of “unlicensed construction” and eviction orders favoring settlement associations claiming Jewish ownership of the land.

Among these neighborhoods, **Al-Bustan** stands out as the clearest frontline in the battle for existence. Residents live in constant anxiety, feeling like temporary guests in their own homes—not because they are strangers, but because the specter of demolition precedes them to the walls and beds, threatening to erase memories and futures in an instant. In early February 2026, occupation municipality crews delivered **demolition orders for 14 homes**, giving owners **21 days** to vacate, demolish their homes themselves, and leave.

The northern edge of Al-Bustan lies just **300 meters from the southern wall of Al-Aqsa**, covering an area of approximately **70 dunams** and inhabited by around **1,500 people**. Israeli authorities claim the site was the “Garden of King David” and aim to integrate its homes into the “**National Park**” established in the neighboring **Wadi Hilweh** area, managed by the **Elad settlement association** under the name “City of David.” Since the 1990s, the association has overseen the site, while over the past two years, demolition and confiscation operations have escalated in preparation to fully annex Al-Bustan.



Originally, Al-Bustan had **120 homes**, but only **61 remain** after **59 were demolished**, including **42 demolished since October 7, 2023**, as the settlement campaign intensified during the years of conflict. The most recent demolitions on **March 30, 2026**, affected apartments of the **Shhadeh family**, parts of **Salah Abu Shafe' apartment**, **Maher Awad**, and **Ahmed Al-Abbasi**, along with a **50-meter wall for Muhammad Rwaidi**, gates and fences for the **Sarhan family**, and two rooms of the **Badran family** (bathroom and kitchen). The demolitions also damaged neighboring homes of the **Zidani and Abu Ramouz families**, as well as neighborhood roads.



All homes in the neighborhood were served **demolition orders under the 2017 “Kaminetz Law”**, marketed as a tool to combat unlicensed construction, but practically used to tighten the noose on Palestinian building by stripping courts of the power to delay demolitions and granting municipal inspectors authority to impose heavy fines and carry out administrative demolitions.

In January, the municipality notified landowners of the **confiscation of 6 dunams and 900 square meters** under the pretext of “landscaping and parking projects” on land deemed “vacant,” although it consisted of plots whose homes had been previously demolished. Despite claims of a “temporary use” for five years, residents understand that the confiscation is a step toward permanent uprooting.

These policies are part of a **broader plan to alter the demographic reality in favor of settlers and tighten geographic control around Al-Aqsa Mosque**. Silwan forms the southern protective belt of its walls, and targeting it effectively encircles the Old City from the south, alongside similar plans in **Sheikh Jarrah, Wadi Al-Joz, and Mount of Olives**, completing the siege around Old Jerusalem and imposing a new settlement reality at the expense of its original residents.



## PREVENTION OF PALM SUNDAY MASS AT THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

On **March 29, 2026**, for the first time in centuries, Israeli occupation authorities prevented the **Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa**, accompanied by the Custodian of the Holy Land, **Father Francesco Elbo**, from entering the **Church of the Holy Sepulchre** in the Old City to hold the Palm Sunday Mass, which falls on the last Sunday before Easter according to the Western calendar. Occupation forces stopped the Patriarch and his accompanying staff upon arrival and forced them to turn back, despite the absence of any public celebrations. The Patriarchate considered this a serious step and a clear violation of the freedom of worship.

The ban was justified under the pretext of a **state of emergency and directives from the Home Front Command of the Israeli army**, in the context of the Israeli-American aggression against Iran since February 28, 2026. This rationale was used to prevent Christians from accessing holy sites, including the **Al-Aqsa Mosque**, depriving hundreds of thousands of people of the observances of Ashura and Eid al-Fitr.

As a result, the **annual Palm Sunday procession**, which begins from the **Mount of Olives** with thousands of Christian participants carrying palm fronds and olive branches—a key traditional religious ritual in Jerusalem—was canceled. Interference with this traditional ritual was viewed as a threat to the continuity of these historical practices.

The incident triggered widespread international reactions. Several world leaders described the prevention of the Patriarch and four priests from entering the church as a regrettable overreach and a threat to the status quo of the holy sites. Subsequently, the occupation authorities allowed the Patriarch to enter, while restrictions on other holy sites in the Old City remained in place under the guise of public safety, highlighting ongoing risks to freedom of worship and reflecting a repeated pattern of pressure on Christians in Jerusalem.

It should be noted that restrictions were not limited to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre but also included denying worshippers access to the **Al-Aqsa Mosque**, clearly targeting Jerusalem as a center of religious sanctities.

## THE “HAYY SHAMI” SETTLEMENT PLAN: AN ADVANCED TOOL FOR RESTRUCTURING BEDOUIN PRESENCE IN THE JERUSALEM GOVERNORATE

The settlement plan **No. 1627/7**, known as “**Hayy Shami**”, represents an advanced stage within a cumulative system of Israeli policies aimed at reshaping the **geographic and demographic landscape of the Jerusalem Governorate**, particularly in the eastern Jerusalem desert. This plan cannot be understood outside the historical context of forced displacement policies that targeted Bedouin communities since the late 1990s, evolving from direct transfer methods to more complex forms described as “**coercive planning engineering.**”



On **March 25, 2026**, the Israeli occupation authorities, through the Subcommittee for Planning and Licensing of the so-called “Civil Administration” under the Higher Planning Council, submitted this plan targeting the lands of **Abu Dis town** east of Jerusalem, within **Plot No. 4**, at sites including **Zahr Al-Raghibaneh, Ali’s Houses, Batin Bishara, Umm Al-Shkhalib, and Zahr Al-Qararit**. The plan aims to create a **structural transformation in land use**, converting agricultural lands, open areas, and existing service sites into an urban residential neighborhood classified as “Category B Housing” by the occupation, including public buildings, roads, and supporting infrastructure.

The plan covers approximately **169.9 dunams**, with **79 dunams allocated for residential purposes**, over **35 dunams for road networks**, imposing a **density of 12 housing units per dunam** with building heights up to six floors. A **60-day legal objection period** was opened, under formal procedures that lack genuine procedural justice, amid the reality of coercive control and evidentiary restrictions imposed on Palestinians.

### **Planning Engineering as a Tool of Forced Displacement**

This plan is not merely an organizational project; it reflects a **qualitative shift in colonial control tools**, using urban planning as a mechanism to produce a “**coercive environment**” that pressures original residents to leave or accept forced relocation. This policy is part of a systematic approach applied in **Area C**, characterized by:

- Intensifying demolitions and preventing Palestinian construction.
- Restricting access to resources.
- Imposing alternative planning realities serving settlement objectives.

The plan directly targets **Bedouin communities in the Jerusalem desert**, including **Khan al-Ahmar, Abu Nuwwar, Wadi Jamal, Jabal al-Baba, Wadi Snisil, and Bir al-Maskub 1 & 2**, as well as **Arabs of Al-Jahalin**, relocating them from open pastoral lands to a closed urban neighborhood. This constitutes a **forced dismantling of their lifestyle, social, and economic structure**.

### **Extension of Displacement Policies Since 1997**

The “Hayy Shami” plan continues policies initiated in **1997**, when groups from the Al-Jahalin Bedouin were forcibly relocated to the outskirts of **Al-Eizariya**, clearing the way for settlement expansion. Since then, occupation authorities have pursued projects to resettle thousands of Bedouins as part of a **strategic vision to depopulate the area east of Jerusalem**, particularly within the **E1 project**.

The development of this plan represents a **reproduction of the same policy using institutional tools**, presenting the project as a planning alternative while functioning as **forced urbanization**, leading to:

- Destruction of the pastoral economy.
- Impoverishment of Bedouin communities.



- Breakdown of social cohesion.
- Subjugation of residents to strict spatial control.

Repeated UN reports confirm that such plans do not serve the residents' interests but **deepen marginalization and expose them to compounded violations**.

### **Lack of Genuine Consent**

Occupation authorities claim there is “consent” from Bedouin representatives; however, this contradicts reality. Targeted communities **firmly reject any forced relocation** and insist on remaining in their lands and grazing areas. Past experiences show that consultation processes used in these plans **lack genuine, free, and prior consent**, stripping them of any legal legitimacy.

### **Critical Link to the E1 Project**

The “Hayy Shami” plan is organically linked to the **E1 project**, one of the most dangerous settlement initiatives due to its geopolitical impact, aiming to:

- Connect **Ma’ale Adumim settlement** to Jerusalem.
- Separate northern and southern West Bank.
- Undermine the possibility of a contiguous Palestinian state.

In this context, **Bedouin presence is a spatial obstacle** to the project, explaining the targeting through dismantling and removal policies, whether via direct demolition or coercive planning tools.

### **Forced Relocation and Colonial Policy**

This plan constitutes **serious violations of international humanitarian law**, specifically:

- The absolute prohibition on forced transfer of populations under occupation (**Fourth Geneva Convention**).
- The prohibition of settlements and transfer of the occupier’s population to occupied territories.
- Violation of the right to adequate housing and livelihoods.

The absence of any genuine public interest for Palestinians, and the plan’s reliance on coercive population redistribution, **confirms its colonial nature** aimed at reshaping geography to serve settlement objectives.



## Strategic Summary

Plan 1627/7 – “Hayy Shami” cannot be considered an urban project. It is a **complex tool targeting both land and people**, within a strategy to assert control over the eastern Jerusalem Governorate by depopulating Bedouin communities and imposing a settlement reality that serves the E1 project.

Addressing this plan requires a **comprehensive approach** beyond planning considerations, focusing on:

- Framing it as a **forced displacement issue** in international forums.
- Activating **legal accountability mechanisms**.
- Supporting **Bedouin community resilience on the ground**.
- Rebuilding the **international narrative** of the plan as part of a systematic colonial project.

## VIOLATIONS AGAINST THE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINE REFUGEES (UNRWA)

On the morning of **Tuesday, January 20, 2026**, Israeli occupation authorities, with the direct involvement of far-right **Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir**, began demolition operations within the main headquarters complex of the **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)** in the **Sheikh Jarrah** neighborhood of occupied Jerusalem. The demolitions targeted offices and mobile structures within the compound, which is an official UN facility overseeing the agency’s operations in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem.

The demolition operation was accompanied by a heavy raid, during which the occupation forces lowered the **United Nations flag** and raised the **Israeli flag** over the agency buildings, an aggressive act constituting a blatant violation of the **UN Convention on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations (1946)**. Ben-Gvir described the demolition as a “historic day and a holiday for Israeli sovereignty in Jerusalem,” openly acknowledging the political and provocative nature of the act. Subsequently, the headquarters suffered fire damage and theft by settlers.

The UNRWA headquarters in Sheikh Jarrah occupies approximately **40 dunams** and is one of the largest and most important UN complexes in Jerusalem. It houses the main administrative offices for UNRWA operations in the West Bank, including administrative offices, service buildings, mobile structures, warehouses, and archives containing official documents and records concerning Palestinian refugees.



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## ISRAELI PLAN TO BUILD 1,400 SETTLER UNITS ON UNRWA LAND IN JERUSALEM

On **January 20, 2026**, the Israeli newspaper **Haaretz** revealed an Israeli plan to build approximately **1,400 settler units** on the land of UNRWA's main headquarters in Sheikh Jarrah, East Jerusalem. This marks a shift from political and legislative targeting of the agency to **direct land seizure**.

This plan follows a long-term escalation, reaching a critical stage after the **Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Security Committee** approved, at the end of 2024, a bill to cut relations between Israel and UNRWA. Concurrently, the **Israel Lands Authority** announced its intention to construct 1,440 housing units on the agency's site, according to Hebrew media reports.

The UNRWA land in Sheikh Jarrah holds **strategic significance**, as it sits directly on the **Green Line**, the 1948–1967 armistice line, making it a politically and legally sensitive point. Historically, the land was confiscated during the British Mandate from the **Ja'uni family** under the pretext of “public interest” and used as a police center. After 1948, it remained classified as state property under Jordanian administration until UNRWA took it over in 1950 to serve as its headquarters in Jerusalem. This history refutes any Israeli legal claim to the land.

Strategically, the plan to build 1,440 settler units in Sheikh Jarrah is part of an Israeli policy to **solidify a Jewish demographic majority in Jerusalem**, encircle Palestinian neighborhoods, and connect settlement blocs. Seizing UNRWA headquarters is **not an isolated measure** but part of a broader chain of settlements extending from **Ma'alot Dafna** through **Ramat Eshkol** to **Givat Hamftar**, creating a continuous urban belt that erases the Green Line and eliminates any geographical separation between the city's eastern and western parts.

A central goal of this construction along the armistice line is to **politically and physically nullify the line**, imposing a new urban reality that merges East and West Jerusalem as the “unified capital of Israel.”

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## CUTTING ELECTRICITY AND WATER TO UNRWA FACILITIES IN JERUSALEM

As part of Israeli laws targeting UNRWA, the agency was **officially notified in early January 2026** of a decision to cut electricity and water services to all its facilities in **East Jerusalem**. This follows the Knesset's final approval at the end of 2025 of a law allowing the use of essential services as leverage to prevent the agency from operating.

According to a notice from the **Mekorot Water Company (Jichon)**, water services would be cut within 15 days, citing that the registered consumer was UNRWA. The **Jerusalem District Electricity Company** also notified the agency of electricity service suspension for 10 facilities and the removal of its name from utility accounts.



The decision affects the administration headquarters in **Shu’afat Camp**, three schools, a health clinic, a waste compacting site, the **Old City health clinic**, two schools in **Silwan** and **Sur Baher**, the **Sheikh Jarrah headquarters**, and the **Qalandia Vocational Training Center**, with the deadline for compliance already passed.

This measure has **direct humanitarian consequences**, impacting tens of thousands of Palestinian refugees. UNRWA serves approximately **192,000 refugees in the Jerusalem Governorate**, including **16,419 refugees in Shu’afat Camp alone**, where **120–150 patients daily** rely on the agency’s health clinics in the camp and the Old City. It also affects **4,741 children** registered with UNRWA schools in the camp, including roughly **1,000 receiving vaccinations**, **600 students in three UNRWA schools** closed last year, and **800 elderly people** deprived of medical services.

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## CLOSURE OF “AL-ZAWIYA” CLINIC AND SHU’AFAT CAMP FACILITIES

On **January 13, 2026**, the occupation authorities notified UNRWA of the closure of the **Al-Zawiya Health Center** inside Bab al-Sahera in the Old City until **February 11**.

In a new escalation targeting UN presence in the city, the Israeli authorities announced on **January 21, 2025**, the closure of the **Shu’afat Camp health center**, confirmed by the Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, **Aryeh King**, as part of measures aimed at **dismantling UNRWA institutions**.

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## QALANDIA VOCATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE AT RISK OF CLOSURE

On **February 18, 2025**, Israeli forces raided the **Qalandia Vocational Training Institute** north of occupied Jerusalem and delivered an **evacuation order** to its administration. During the raid, tear gas and sound grenades were fired while **approximately 340 students and 70 staff** were present. Authorities claimed the institute sits on **85 dunams** allegedly owned by a fund dedicated to Jewish settlement development in Jerusalem.

The institute offers **14 vocational programs** aligned with labor market needs, along with essential student services, including dormitories for students from outside Ramallah, health and psychological counseling, and career guidance. Annually, **250–300 graduates** complete training in various fields, making the institute vital for empowering refugee youth economically and socially.

Currently, the institute faces the threat of **forced closure** due to escalating Israeli laws and procedures targeting UNRWA in Jerusalem. Notable measures include a **demand for retroactive payment of 17 million shekels** on January 14, 2024, citing “unlicensed construction or use.” Hundreds of students risk losing access to education and vocational training.



On **January 28, 2026**, Israeli authorities cut electricity to the **Qalandia Vocational Training Institute** and UNRWA facilities in Shu'afat Camp.

## ESCALATION OF FORCED DISPLACEMENT AND SEIZURE POLICIES IN BATN AL-HAWA NEIGHBORHOOD



Policies of **forced displacement and seizure of Palestinian homes** in occupied Jerusalem, particularly in the **Silwan** neighborhood, are escalating as part of a systematic colonial plan led by Israeli occupation authorities through their judicial arms and settler organizations. These policies aim to **empty Jerusalem neighborhoods of their original residents** and impose new demographic realities that serve Judaization projects, especially around the **Al-Aqsa Mosque**.

The **Batn al-Hawa neighborhood** is a striking example of this policy, involving severe violations of **international humanitarian law and human rights**, posing a direct threat to Palestinian presence. The town is witnessing a dangerous escalation in evictions and home seizures through a chain of judicial and executive decisions targeting dozens of families—from court rulings to eviction notices, followed by execution and transfer of homes to settler organizations—reflecting clear mechanisms of **systematic forced displacement**.



## Eviction Orders Threaten 17 Families in Batn al-Hawa

On **January 1, 2026**, the **Israeli High Court** issued a ruling confirming eviction orders against **Zuhair al-Rajabi and his six siblings**, covering seven apartments inhabited by approximately **50 people**, including women and children, in favor of the settler organization **Ateret Cohanim**, granting the Execution Office **21 days** to implement the decision.

Previously, on **December 29, 2025**, the court had confirmed eviction orders against the homes of **Abdel Fattah al-Rajabi**, encompassing two families totaling 16 individuals in four apartments, in addition to two apartments of the **Jabr al-Rajabi** family and four apartments of the **Yasin al-Rajabi** family. This brings the total number of families at risk of eviction to **17 families** at any moment.



## Forced Evictions and Settler Control Over Homes

- On **March 25, 2026**, Israeli occupation forces raided Batn al-Hawa and **forcibly evicted 11 occupied homes** of the al-Rajabi family, housing about **65 residents**, including the **Ya'qub family** (4 apartments), the **Rizq Salah apartment**, five apartments of **Nidal al-Rajabi and siblings**, and the **Fathi al-Rajabi apartment**, to transfer them to settler organizations.
- On the same day, forces also evicted **Yousef Basbous and his family** from their homes in the same neighborhood. The homes belonged to **Yousef Muhammad Ibrahim al-Basbous** and his three sons—Raed, Ra'fat, and Muhammad—totaling about **20 individuals**. The building contained four units, two of which settlers had seized on **March 22** by changing locks and adding wires to windows before taking control of the remaining two units.
- On **January 5, 2026**, settlers seized two homes of the **Basbous family** (Khalil Basbous and his son Bilal) in Batn al-Hawa after forcibly evicting the residents. The settlers began renovation work on the property, which housed **13 people** across two apartments.
- On **December 14, 2025**, occupation authorities forced the elderly **Najah al-Rajabi (Umm Nasser)** and her two sons, **A'ed and Nasser**, to vacate three homes to be handed over to **Ateret Cohanim**, which immediately began extensive renovations in preparation for resettling three settler families.
- On **November 9, 2025**, **Umm Zuhri Al-Shweiki**, along with her son's home and the home of **Jumaa Odeh**, were evacuated. Settlers entered the vacated homes and raised the **Israeli flag**, imposing a new reality under military and judicial protection.



Over the years, **Umm Nasser** attempted to repair her dilapidated rooms, but occupation authorities prevented her, including in cases of **sewage leaks from nearby settler outposts**. Once homes were evacuated, the settler organization began **intensive renovations**, highlighting the discriminatory and racist nature of these policies.

On **December 18, 2025**, settlers imposed **Judaization symbols** on the seized properties, including a **large Israeli flag** and placing a **mezuzah** on a door, symbolically altering the Arab-Islamic character of the neighborhood.



## Settler Claims and the Legal Context

The claims of **Ateret Cohanim** are based on alleged ownership by **Yemeni Jews since 1881** over approximately **5 dunams and 200 square meters** in Batn al-Hawa. These claims intensified since 2015, putting more than **84 Palestinian families** (around 700 people) in a legal limbo in Israeli courts, relying on the **Legal and Administrative Matters Law of 1970**, which allows Jews to reclaim pre-1948 property while preventing Palestinians from restoring their property—a **discriminatory legal system**.

This has resulted in the eviction of **39 families**, with settlers taking over their homes, including five properties in the past year and a half: the **Shahadeh, Abu Nab, Ghaith, Odeh, and Shweiki families**, as well as **Umm Nasser Rajabi and Basbous homes**, and others belonging to the al-Rajabi family.

## Batn al-Hawa: Location and Strategic Importance

Batn al-Hawa is located in **Silwan**, about **400 meters from Al-Aqsa Mosque**, with a population of approximately **10,000 Palestinians**. Settler organizations aim to control large areas of its land and properties, linking **Silwan outposts** to **Ras al-Amud** in the east and **Wadi Hilweh** in the west, consolidating settler control around Al-Aqsa and imposing a **demographic ring**.

## Transforming Properties into Settler Centers

**Ateret Cohanim** has converted several seized properties into settler centers. In **2017**, it opened a “heritage center” in the Abu Nab family property, named “**Beit al-Asal**”, falsely claiming it was a **Yemeni Jewish synagogue** in the late 19th century. In **2024**, settlers seized about **2.5 dunams** of neighborhood land under claims of **Yemeni Jewish endowment**, despite **official ownership documents** held by the Abu Diab, Rajabi, and Shaloudi families.

## International Legal Characterization

The actions of the **Israeli occupation authority in East Jerusalem**, via settler organizations and discriminatory courts, constitute a **blatant violation of international humanitarian law**, particularly the **Fourth Geneva Convention** and the **Rome Statute**. These policies constitute **forced displacement** and are part of a systematic **ethnic cleansing policy**. The **United Nations** has affirmed that such practices violate international law, which **prohibits the expulsion of residents**, discriminatory laws, and the imposition of occupation laws on occupied territories.



In an **advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in The Hague on July 19, 2024**, the court confirmed that Israel's settlement policy in East Jerusalem, including the application of discriminatory legal systems, results in the eviction of Palestinians for the benefit of settlers, representing a clear violation of international law and reaffirming the need to respect the rights of indigenous residents.

In a case brought before the **Israeli Supreme Court**, a group of prominent Israeli international law experts ("Friends of the Court") argued that Palestinians have a **right to housing**, i.e., the right to remain in their homes where they have lived for decades while preserving ownership rights. The opinion also emphasizes that international human rights law gives special attention to marginalized groups, granting the **right to housing priority over restitution** in certain circumstances.

According to this legal opinion, even if the court recognizes settler ownership, it does **not automatically justify forced eviction** of Palestinian families. Compensation could be provided by the state instead of eviction, protecting Palestinian residents' rights and respecting international law. Despite reviewing the opinion, the court did not address it directly, returning the ownership issue to the **Magistrate Court**, reflecting ongoing legal complexities over housing and property rights in East Jerusalem.

### **Legal Options Available to the Occupation Government in Batn al-Hawa**

According to the Israeli movement **Peace Now**, the occupation government has several **legal and political options** regarding Batn al-Hawa, including:

- Presenting a **legal position in court** affirming Palestinians' right to remain in their homes, even if formal ownership belongs to settlers, based on **international law provisions**.
- Confiscating land for **public benefit** while compensating settlers, a measure previously used after 1967, when Israel confiscated about **one-third of East Jerusalem lands** to build **55,000 settler units**; this could be applied to **approximately 5 dunams** for Batn al-Hawa residents.
- Amending or repealing **discriminatory legislation**, particularly the **Legal and Administrative Matters Law of 1970**.
- **Preventing eviction execution immediately** by refraining from sending police to enforce the evictions, as no eviction can occur without police assistance. Similar measures have been previously adopted with approval from the **Government Legal Advisor**.

