

Day 18: Al-Aqsa Flood Operation in the city of Jerusalem

October 24, 2023



On the eighteenth day of the “Al-Aqsa Flood” Operation, the occupation municipality’s vehicles carried out demolition operations in the city of Jerusalem, and forced the people to remove the “minaret of a mosque,” while the forces continued their siege of Al-Aqsa Mosque and their deployment at the gates of the Old City, and also disrupted movement at the Qalandia and Shu’fat refugee camps checkpoints.

Demolition and displacement

Municipal bulldozers carried out a demolition of two homes and a commercial facility in the villages of Sur Baher and Jabal Al-Mukabber in the city of Jerusalem, under the pretext of building without a permit.

The Wadi Hilweh Information Center – Jerusalem, quoting the young man Fadi Ja’far, explained that bulldozers accompanied by forces stormed his house in the early morning hours, demanded that he leave it and take only the basic needs, and gave him 10 minutes to do so.

Ja’far added to the center that 7 individuals, including 5 children, lived in the house that has been in place for 7 years, and a building violation worth 35 thousand shekels was imposed on the family.

Ja’far pointed out that procedures were taken to license the house and freeze the demolition decision in the courts, and the demolition process today took place without prior warning.

Ja’far's family's furniture was scattered among the rubble of the house, while most of it was crushed under the destroyed stones of the house. The municipality crews did not remove the contents of the house and did not allow the family to do so...the family members' beds and children's toys, food (bread, milk, coffee, and canned goods), cleaning tools, the stove, and gas... Others appeared among the rubble, and the family was unable to remove them.

The trees were not spared from the demolition and bulldozing process, so the forces bulldozed all the trees and flowers planted in front of the family home.

In the village of Sur Baher, forces stormed the house of the young man Ahmed Hmeidat, after completely besieging the area, and carried out a demolition operation under the pretext of building without a permit.

Ahmed Hmeidat explained that his house had been established since 2014, and the municipality began pursuing him with demolition orders and building violation fees after two years of living in the house, and after freezing the decision for several years, and working on an attempt to license the house and a planning project throughout the region, the municipality returned in 2021 and issued the demolition decision. Since then, Hmeidat and his family have been living in a nightmare of “the demolition decision and the implementation date.”

Hmeidat pointed out that the house has an area of 36 square meters, and he lives in it with his pregnant wife and two children.

Hmeidat explained that the municipality imposed a building fine on him worth 28,000 shekels, and today threatened to impose “a demolition fee for the accompanying municipal forces, vehicles, and crews.”

In the early morning hours, municipal bulldozers demolished a commercial establishment, a “falafel shop,” in the village of Sur Baher, belonging to the Attoun family.

Removing a minaret

In the village of Issawiya, the occupation municipality forced the people of the village of Issawiya to remove the “minaret of the Al-Tawbah Mosque” in the village under the pretext of building without a permit.

Mohammad Abu Al-Hummos, a member of the follow-up committee in the village, explained that the people installed the minaret for the Al-Tawbah Mosque 3 weeks ago, and were surprised 3 days ago by a decision from the municipality demanding its removal, and threatened to demolish it if it was not removed.

Siege and restrictions

The occupation forces continued to impose the siege imposed on Al-Aqsa Mosque, preventing young people from entering it, deploying police at the gates, and conducting searches and identity checks for all those arriving there.

120 extremists carried out their incursions into Al-Aqsa Mosque, during the morning and afternoon periods, under the protection of the occupation forces.

The forces also continued to deploy at the gates of the Old City, and imposed restrictions on entry there. Around the clock, they stopped young men, checked their identities, and conducted field investigations with them.

In the morning hours, the occupation forces closed the Qalandia checkpoint, at the same time as the students were heading to their schools, and threw gas bombs towards them.

The measures imposed on the camp prevented students from reaching their schools in Jerusalem.

At the Shu'fat refugee camp checkpoint in Jerusalem, the forces disrupted movement by conducting careful and lengthy searches of vehicles and pedestrians, causing traffic jams in the camp.

In the evening hours, settlers shined lights bearing the “Israeli flag” and provocative phrases, “The people of Israel are alive,” on the homes and buildings of Jerusalemites in the Shu'fat refugee camp.

In the evening, the forces stormed the village of Issawiya, stopped a vehicle, and assaulted the young men by beating them and pepper-gassing them.

The forces continued their raids into towns and neighborhoods in the city of Jerusalem, carrying out arrests and handing out summonses, and the center monitored the following:

1. Adel Al-Sharif
2. Shahd Qasim
3. Iyad Al-Salaymeh
4. Saleh Hoshiya
5. Ahmed Abu Ter
6. Amir Mahmoud
7. Obada Saeed
8. Mohammad Mustafa
9. Qusai Dari "transferred to administrative detention for two months"
10. Ali Obaid "transferred to administrative detention for 3 months."