

Al-Haq Field Report on Human Rights Violations in May 2021

Israeli violations

Killings

In May 2021, 276 Palestinians were killed by the Israeli occupying forces (IOF), these included 240 Palestinians killed in the Gaza Strip. In addition to two inside the Green Line, 34 Palestinians were killed in the West Bank, including a Palestinian who died in early June of injuries sustained earlier.

A Palestinian young man was killed by members of the Israel Police Special Patrol Unit (Yasam) in the [city of Um al-Fahm](#). In the city of Lod, an Israeli settler opened intensive fire on Palestinian youths during a protest against Israeli practices, [killing another young man](#).

Between the evening of 10 May and dawn of May 2021, the Israeli occupying authorities launched a military aggression against the Gaza Strip, killed 240 Palestinians including 151 civilians and 59 children.



Figure 1: Al-Shurouq Tower destroyed, 13 May 2021, Gaza city.

During the Israeli offensive, large-scale bombing and killing operations targeted civilians in particular neighbourhoods and areas across the Gaza Strip, including Al-Rimal neighbourhood in the Gaza city. On 16 May 2021, the neighbourhood suffered heavy aerial bombardment, resulting in the killing of 44 Palestinians. Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, and Al-Haq documented and presented

an extensive report on the Israeli aggression on Gaza. Please see footnote for the final report.¹



Figure 2: Karni Industrial Zone bombed, east of Gaza city, 20 May 2021

¹ https://www.alhaq.org/cached_uploads/download/2022/02/07/gaza-report-english-1-page-view-light-1644233950.pdf



Figure 3: Kuheil building, opposite Al-Shuja'iyah Park, east of Gaza city, destroyed by Israeli warplanes, 20 May 2021

In the West Bank, including Jerusalem, 34 Palestinians were killed, 14 during demonstrations in support of Jerusalem and in protest against the Israeli aggression on Gaza. Three Palestinians were killed while they were confronting Israeli settler assaults. Many others were killed in the context of IOF raids on Palestinian cities and towns and at Israeli checkpoints.

In May 2021, the Israeli occupying authorities withheld the dead bodies of eight Palestinians. Dozens of Palestinian bodies have already been withheld since April 2016. This brings the number of bodies held by the Israeli occupying authorities to 78.

Of all killings, Israeli settlers killed three Palestinian young men in the governorates of Hebron, Salfit, and Nablus. The rest were killed by IOF personnel. In the Al-Rihiya village, southern Hebron, on 14 May, Israeli settlers killed Ismail al-Toubasi, who joined other youths to put out a fire, which settlers had set to Palestinian fields. As Israeli settlers opened fire, Al-Toubasi sustained a bullet wound in the back of the head. After they had arrived, Israeli settlers and IOF soldiers abused and severely beat Al-Toubasi while he was injured

and lying on the ground. Though hampered by settlers, Palestinian paramedics and youths managed to free and transport him to hospital where he was declared dead.



Figure 4: Ismail al-Toubasi

On the same day, in the presence of IOF personnel, Israeli settlers killed Husam Asayrah in the Asira al-Qibliya village, Nablus. Together with other youths, Asayrah went out to confront Israeli settlers who attacked Palestinian homes. Confrontations took place between Palestinian youths on one hand, and Israeli settlers and IOF on the other. Meantime, a settler opened fire and injured two Palestinian young men. Asayrah died after sustaining a bullet wound in the back.



Figure 5: Husam Asayrah

Also on 14 May, Awadh Harb was killed by Israeli settlers who attacked the Iskaka village, Salfit. Palestinian youths were out to prevent settler attacks. During confrontations with

Israeli settlers and IOF, IOF soldiers fired tear gas canisters and opened fire. According to eyewitnesses, an Israeli settler took a sniper position and opened fire on Harb, while he was seeking protection behind a concrete wall. The IOF obstructed a Palestinian ambulance, delaying access to Harb for 30 minutes.



Figure 6: Awadh Harb

Demolition of private structures

The Israeli occupying authorities demolished three Palestinian privately owned structures, including an agricultural holding, mechanic's workshop, and barracks for vehicle spare parts. Two structures were located in the Al-Khadr town and the other in Sabastiya village. According to the Oslo designation, all three structures were in Area C. While the barracks was dismantled and confiscated, the other two structures were demolished by bulldozers.

With an estimated total cost of NIS 326,000, demolished private structures covered a surface area of 362 square metres. These used to provide main sources of livelihoods to affected families. All targeted structures were located in the vicinity of settler bypass roads, probably accounting for the cause of demolitions. Of note, all three structures had been demolished several times earlier, but were reconstructed. The fact that they were pulled down again indicates that the Israeli occupying authorities are targeting affected areas.

Other violations²

² Albeit incomprehensive, all forms of violations are documented.

Israeli violations and assaults continued at an intense pace throughout May 2021. In addition to the aggression against the Gaza Strip, the IOF systematically repressed Palestinian protests inside the Green Line as well as in the West Bank, including Jerusalem.

Besides systematic policies of killing, home demolitions and destruction of property, the Israeli occupying authorities deliberately targeted Palestinian ambulances and paramedics when they attempted to evacuate injured Palestinians. Also, the IOF intentionally fired live ammunition, rubber-coated steel bullets, tear gas canisters, and stun grenades on Palestinian demonstrators, injuring hundreds. Al-Haq documented many of these incidents.

Additionally, on a massive scale, the IOF committed various forms of physical assaults against Palestinians, particularly in key areas of friction with IOF personnel in Jerusalem and inside the Green Line. Dozens of Palestinians were physically assaulted, including children, journalists, paramedics, boys and girls.



Figure 7: Fire opened on an ambulance while transporting an injured Palestinian during confrontations near Al-Jalama crossing point, Jenin

During May 2021, Israeli settler attacks on Palestinians intensified. Israeli settlers attacked entire villages and towns, committed massive physical assaults against Palestinians inside the Green Line and Jerusalem, and set fire to crops. These and other assaults were perpetrated while Israeli settlers were accompanied and protected by IOF personnel.

Violations by the Palestinian Authority and de facto authority in the Gaza Strip³

Deaths in peculiar circumstances

On 2 May 2021, J. A., 41 years old and a resident of the Al-Maghazi refugee camp, died at the Deir al-Balah Correction and Rehabilitation Centre. Investigations demonstrated that J. A. died of natural causes due to an infection with COVID-19, compounded by other chronic diseases.

It was not shown that J. A. died as a result of ineffective prevention measures. He had been infected with the virus on a home leave before he returned to prison.

Other violations

Palestinian security forces carried out raids, detained persons on arbitrary grounds, and served summonses to over 20 Palestinian young people for acts of expression on social media platforms and criticism of the Palestinian Authority's performance. Others were summoned against the background of their electoral activity.

Some detained persons were released after they have been physically assaulted. However, others are being tried on charges of "defamation of persons of high rank" and "instigation of bigotry". Al-Haq documented instances of ill-treatment and torture against a number of persons detained on political grounds or accused of setting fire to police stations in Biddu and Huwwara.

Special Focus of the month

During the popular uprising of May 2021, the Israeli occupying authorities carried out a policy of mass arrests throughout Palestine. Arrest campaigns often involved house raid and search operations, physical assaults, and sabotage in an attempt to deter Palestinian protestors and create an intimidating environment to prevent participation in protests.

According to the [Palestinian Prisoner's Society](#), from the Damascus Gate events in mid-April up to 26 May 2021, the Israeli occupying authorities arrested 2,650 Palestinians, including more than 550 in the city of Jerusalem, more than 550 in the West Bank as well, and 1,550 in cities inside the Green Line.

Those arrested included young men and women as well as minors. Detention measures in the Palestinian territory occupied in 1967 were no different from those implemented in

³ Incomprehensive documentation.

cities inside the Green Line. Many testimonies indicate that a number of detained persons were arrested on an indiscriminate basis in the context of suppressing Palestinian protests. Others were arrested deliberately during raid and search operations.

During arrests, many detained persons were physically assaulted, subjected to psychological distress, and harshly handcuffed. Oftentimes, access to hospital and medical treatment were denied for those injured as a result of physical assaults.

L. Gh., who was detained in the city of Jerusalem, provides a detailed account of how he was arrested and physically assaulted:

I was sweeping the street in front of my vendor stall. Meanwhile, an Israeli Border Guard officer in dark green uniform pushed me. As I tried to get away, he pushed once more. He did so again when I tried to keep away from him. On the last occasion, he physically assaulted and punched me in the face near my left eye. Then, several officers assaulted me. They punched and kicked me for about two minutes. When I fell down on my back, they continued to be beat, punch, and kick me. They also hit me with batons. While I was trying to protect my face with my arms, they put my hands in metal handcuffs behind my back. Later, they transported me to the Israeli police station near the Lions Gate. At the door of the station, an Israeli police officer in dark blue uniform caused me to stumble, so I fell down on my face. Then, several police officers started to assault me. I could not see them. They continued to beat me for about 10 minutes, after which I passed out. I partially regained consciousness when the ambulance arrived. At that time, a Border Guard officer hit me with his knee on my teeth. Another punched me on the head. Later, the officer who had hit me with his knee spat on my face. A police officer lifted me off the ground by pulling the handcuffs. Meantime, another officer kicked me four times on the chest. He said in Hebrew which I master: "Until you die."⁴

⁴ Affidavit I234/2021.