

Palestinian Official Says Israel to Seize West Bank Land for New Settlement Projects



Ramallah, March 31 (RHC-Agencies) -- The Israeli authorities have issued military orders to confiscate around 75 acres of Palestinian-owned land in the West Bank city of Nablus for new settlement projects, a Palestinian official said on Monday.

"The villagers were told that their lands will be used as a cemetery and a school for two neighboring Jewish settlements," said Ghassan Daghlas, a Palestinian official in charge of settlement issues in northern West Bank.

Daghlas said the villagers will turn to Israeli court to appeal against the orders.

The orders came as the ongoing U.S.-mediated Israeli- Palestinian peace talks are on the verge of collapse due to grave differences on core issues, including settlement activity.

The talks resumed last July after a three-year halt over Israeli settlement expansion.

The issue of Israeli settlements in the Palestinian territories is viewed by the international community as a hurdle to the Israeli-Palestinian peace process.

Since last July, Israel has planned to build more than 11,700 new settler units in its 137 West Bank and East Jerusalem settlements.

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