

Israel kills two Palestinian minors amid raids across occupied West Bank



Israeli forces arrest three Palestinians during a raid on Halhul, Hebron, in the occupied West Bank [File: Wisam Hashlamoun/Anadolu]

Ramallah, July 25 (RHC)-- Two Palestinian teenage boys have been killed by Israeli forces in the town of al-Khader, south of Bethlehem in the occupied West Bank, according to the Wafa news agency, in the latest deadly violence in the territory continuing in tandem with Israel's genocidal war on Gaza.

The bodies of 15-year-old Ahmad Ali Asaad Ashira al-Salah and 17-year-old Muhammad Khaled Alian Issa, who were killed at dawn, were withheld by the Israeli army, the report said, adding that two more children were also injured in the gunfire.

The deadly incident came as Israeli forces arrested at least 25 Palestinians in multiple raids across the occupied West Bank, according to Wafa. The arrests include 10 Palestinians in the town of Beit Ummar, north of Hebron; two in the town of Idhna, west of Hebron; three in the town of Dura al-Qari, north of Ramallah; one in the city of Ramallah; five in the village of al-Mazraa ash-Sharqiya, east of Ramallah; and four in the city of Nablus.

Since the start of the war on Gaza, Israeli violence in the occupied West Bank has escalated dramatically, with near-daily reports of mass arrests, killings and Israeli settler attacks, often supported by Israeli soldiers. Settlers have been rampaging with impunity, attacking and killing Palestinian civilians and burning their properties and olive groves.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), at least 948 Palestinians have been killed in the territory by Israeli soldiers since October 7, 2023. Of that figure, at least 204 are children.

Meanwhile, from the beginning of 2024 until the end of June 2025, more than 2,200 Israeli settler attacks were reported, resulting in more than 5,200 Palestinian injuries, according to OCHA figures. In that same period, nearly 36,000 Palestinians were forcibly displaced across the occupied West Bank due to Israeli military operations, settler violence or home demolitions carried out by the Israeli government.

The Israeli settler violence in the occupied West Bank is part of the Israeli government's strategy for preventing the establishment of a Palestinian state, according to Amjad Abu El Ezz, a lecturer of international relations at the Arab American University.

The increased number of killings, and the destruction of Palestinian homes and vehicles by Israeli settlers in coordination with the Israeli army, aim to encourage Palestinians to leave their land, Abu El Ezz told Al Jazeera from Ramallah.

Israel is weakening the governing Palestinian Authority, "making Palestinian lives impossible", while at the same time "building Israeli facts on the ground" to prevent the Palestinians from building their own state, he added.

"We are talking about more than 700,000 Israeli settlers. They have weapons, they are acting as an army in parallel to the Israeli army," Abu El Ezz said.

On Wednesday, Israel's parliament approved a symbolic measure calling for the annexation of the occupied West Bank. Knesset lawmakers voted 71-13 in favour of the motion on Wednesday, a non-binding vote which calls for "applying Israeli sovereignty to Judea, Samaria and the Jordan Valley" – the Israeli terms for the area.

The motion, advanced by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's coalition, is declarative and has no direct legal implications, though it could place the issue of annexation on the agenda of future debates in the parliament.

The Palestinian Foreign Ministry on Thursday condemned the Israeli parliament's vote on the annexation of the occupied West Bank, calling it "colonial and racist".

The Palestinian Mujahideen Movement called it a “dangerous escalation”.

In a statement on Telegram, the group said the move was a “clear disregard for the international community” and a way for Israel to implement “its criminal plans targeting the land of Palestine and its people”.

The West Bank, along with the Gaza Strip and East Jerusalem, has been under Israeli occupation since 1967. Since then, Israeli settlements have expanded exponentially, despite being illegal under international law and, in the case of settlement outposts, Israeli law.

[SOURCE: PRESS TV and NEWS AGENCIES]

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