

Israeli court rejects appeal against demolition of 58 Palestinian homes in Silwan

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A girl takes pictures of the rubble of a store that was demolished in the Silwan neighborhood near al-Quds. (File photo by AFP)

Tel Aviv, November 30 (RHC)-- Israeli authorities have given the green light to demolition of 58 Palestinian homes in the Silwan neighborhood of occupied East al-Quds to make way for enlarging a national park in the area, as Tel Aviv continues with its illegal settlement expansion activities and land grab policies across the Palestinian territories despite international outcry.

The Palestinian Information Center, citing local sources, reported on Monday that an Israeli court has rejected an appeal filed by Palestinian residents against the demolition of their homes in Wadi Yasoul neighborhood, southwest of Silwan, under the pretext of "unlicensed construction."

It further noted that the decision will allow the Israeli municipality to raze 58 out of 84 homes which are threatened with demolition in the neighborhood, adding that about 60 people, including children, patients and elderly, will be displaced should the measure be carried out.

According to local official Khaled Shuweiki, Israel seeks to demolish this neighborhood and displace its residents in order to establish what it calls "the peace forest" in the area.

Wadi Yasoul residents have been trying to license their homes since 2004, but to no avail. Some 1,050 Palestinians live in this neighborhood. The Silwan neighborhood has for years been targeted by illegal Israeli settler organizations. Some of the Palestinian families in Silwan have been living there for more than 50 years since they were displaced from the Old City in the 1960s. The Palestinian property in the area is claimed by Israeli extremists backed by Ateret Cohanim, a right-wing foundation that works to strengthen Jewish presence in East al-Quds.

The Tel Aviv regime also plans to force out Palestinian families from Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in an attempt to replace them with settlers. That plan sparked days of fighting between Gaza-based Hamas and the Israeli regime in May.

Israel orders halt on construction of 22 houses in Nablus In a separate development, Israeli authorities ordered a halt on the construction of 22 houses in the village of Qusra, south of Nablus in the occupied West Bank.

Imad Jamil, deputy head of the village council, said Israeli forces delivered stop-construction orders against 22 houses in addition to a demolition order against an agricultural shed in the village, Palestine's Wafa news agency reported.

The Israeli regime routinely demolishes Palestinian houses in the West Bank, claiming that the structures have been built without the so-called permits, which are almost impossible to obtain. They also sometimes order Palestinian owners to demolish their own houses or pay the costs of the demolition if they do not.

More than 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East Jerusalem al-Quds.

All Israeli settlements are illegal under international law. The UN Security Council has condemned Israel's settlement activities in the occupied territories in several resolutions.

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