

Settlers Shoot Palestinians, Torch Cars in West Bank

RAMALLAH (Dispatches) -- Israeli settlers attacked Palestinians on Friday, wounding at least five people, setting fire to at least three cars and a house and destroying agricultural land across the occupied West Bank.

In the town of Mazraa al-Sharqiya, east of Ramallah, a group of settlers launched an assault that led to confrontations. Three Palestinians were wounded by Israeli live fire and transferred to the Palestine Medical Complex in Ramallah for treatment.

Thought for Today

Aid (from Allah) is in proportion to the trouble. He who practices moderation and frugality will never be threatened with poverty.

Amir al-Momeneen Ali (AS)

Israeli PM's Threat to Annex Arab Lands Sparks Outrage

CAIRO (Dispatches) -- Arab countries have strongly condemned recent remarks by Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu endorsing the concept of an expanded "Greater Israel," describing the comments as provocative and a threat to regional sovereignty.

Jordan's Foreign Ministry called Netanyahu's statements "dangerous and inflammatory," emphasizing that they will not undermine the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. A spokesperson labeled the remarks "delusional" and warned they represent a serious escalation.

Egypt sought clarification from Israel, viewing the comments as a rejection of peace efforts in the region. Iraq denounced Netanyahu's remarks as "clear provocations" reflecting Israel's "expansionist ambitions." Qatar also criticized the statements as "absurd" and inflammatory.

Saudi Arabia issued a firm rejection of what it described as "colonization and expansion" policies by Israeli authorities, reaffirming the Palestinians' historic and legal right to establish an independent state.

Netanyahu made the remarks in an interview with Israeli news network i24 earlier this week, express-



Israeli prime minister Binyamin Netanyahu stands before a map showing West Asia during a press conference in Occupied Al-Quds, on September 4, 2024.

ing his commitment to the "Greater Israel" vision and describing himself as engaged in a "historic and spiritual mission." He stated, "If you ask me what I think, we're there," referring to the expansionist ideology.

The backlash comes amid Israel's ongoing military aggression in Gaza, which has resulted in widespread destruction and a dire humanitarian crisis due to airstrikes and a blockade. Israel is also advancing plans for the illegal annexation of occupied West Bank

territories.

Netanyahu's latest comments follow previous controversial statements, including his suggestion in February that Saudi Arabia should establish a Palestinian state on its own land—rejected by many as an affront to Palestinian statehood.

Israel's expansionist rhetoric is echoed by the Zionist regime's officials such as extremist finance minister Bezalel Smotrich, who last year declared ambitions extending beyond Palestine to Damascus and parts of Iraq and Saudi

Arabia.

Meanwhile, Israeli forces have increased their military aggression around the Syrian capital following the collapse of Bashar al-Assad's government and maintain control over parts of southern Lebanon, territories that settler groups also claim.

Earlier this year, Israeli official social media accounts released maps including Palestinian, Jordanian, Syrian, and Lebanese lands as part of Israel, further fueling regional tensions.

Hamas said Netanyahu's comments reflect the "madness and delirium" that govern his behavior and his extremist ruling gang.

"These statements clearly confirm the danger posed by this fascist entity to all countries and peoples of the region, and its expansionist plans that spare no country," Hamas said.

It stressed the need for Arab countries to take serious steps to support the Palestinian people's steadfastness, particularly in Gaza, sever ties and recall ambassadors from this fascist entity, halt all normalization bids, and unite behind confronting the occupation and thwarting its plans.

Palestinian Hopes Shattered With Massive E1 Settlement Expansion

TEL AVIV (Dispatches) -- Israel appears poised to grant formal approval to a highly contentious settlement project for over 3,400 new settler units in the occupied West Bank, a move widely condemned by the international community.

The long-delayed "E1" plan, which critics say would effectively split the West Bank in two, aims to extend the Jewish settlement of Ma'ale Adumim towards Al-Quds, further isolating East Al-Quds from Palestinian territories.

The so-called supreme planning council is expected to approve the project next week after rejecting objections from Israeli NGOs. Extremist finance minister Bezalel Smotrich, an outspoken supporter of Israeli annexation of the West Bank and the E1 plan, hailed the decision as a "historic" step that would "bury the idea of a Palestinian state."

Smotrich, who also holds a role in Israel's war ministry overseeing settlement planning, was sanctioned in June by the UK, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand for "incitements of violence" against Palestinians.

Speaking at the Ma'ale Adumim site, Smotrich claimed Israeli prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu and U.S. President Donald Trump had agreed to revive the project.

The approval of E1 would mark a significant escalation in Israel's settlement expansion, further fragmenting the occupied West Bank and severely undermining the prospects for a two-state solution.

The European Union reaffirmed its rejection of unilateral territorial changes, labeling annexation attempts "illegal under international law." Germany's Foreign Ministry called for an immediate halt to settlement expansion, while Norway's Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide criticized the plan as a deliberate effort to appropriate Palestinian land and sabotage peace efforts.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) denounced the settlement project as a "blatant violation" of international law and UN resolutions. The OIC urged the international community to take legal and moral action, including sanctions, against Israel to halt what it described as "systematic crimes" aimed at imposing a new status quo in the occupied territories.

The Muslim World League also condemned the plan, with Secretary General Muhammad bin Abdulkarim al-Issa denouncing Israel's "extremist government" for violating Palestinian rights and international law. He warned that Israel's policies pose a serious threat to regional stability and called for global efforts to end the humanitarian crisis and support Palestinian self-determination.

Since Israel's occupation of the West Bank and East Jerusalem in 1967, more than 700,000 settlers have moved into over 230 settlements deemed illegal by the international community under the Geneva Conventions. The UN Security Council has repeatedly condemned settlement activities.

In July 2024, the International Court of Justice ruled Israel's presence in Palestinian territories unlawful and described its policies as de facto annexation of large parts of the West Bank and East Al-Quds.

The E1 plan, initially proposed in the 1990s under Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, has remained frozen for decades amid international pressure. However, recent moves by Israel's far-right factions and the tacit approval of the Trump administration have reignited fears of accelerated annexation and further fragmentation of Palestinian lands.

Israeli NGO Peace Now warned that the government's actions deepen annexation, diminish hopes for peace, and prolong violence. The group urged recognition of Palestinian statehood as the only viable path to resolving the conflict.

Houthi Warns Over Israel's 'Genocidal Campaign' in Gaza

SANAA (Dispatches) -- Yemen's Houthi leader, Abdul-Malik al-Houthi, sharply condemned Israel's systematic atrocities in Gaza, saying the regime is deliberately targeting journalists to conceal brutal realities from the international community.

"This week alone, more than 3,500 Palestinian women, children, and displaced civilians were killed or injured in the Zionist regime's offensives with U.S. support," he said in a televised address Thursday night.

He called the deliberate starvation of Gaza residents "one of the most reprehensible crimes," saying Israel is withholding aid and distrib-

uting expired food to further erode the well-being of Palestinian children. "Children in Gaza suffer immense hardship due to hunger and malnutrition," al-Houthi said.

Describing the ongoing bombardment as a "genocidal campaign," al-Houthi said that Israeli and U.S. forces placed deadly traps—targeting civilians, including those queuing for food—and that a generation of Gazan youth is being systematically annihilated. He named these acts "genocide."

Al-Houthi also said journalists are being attacked intentionally. "The Israeli regime kills journalists so that the truth does not reach people around the world," he said.

Speaking further, he decried Israeli attempts to Judaize Al-Quds, stating that raising the Israeli flag in the Al-Aqsa compound is part of a broader strategy to erase Palestinian religious heritage. He also warned of forced displacement and aggressions against residents of the West Bank, including camps such as Jenin, Tulkarem, and Nuseirat.

Al-Houthi condemned Lebanon's government for considering a U.S.-backed plan that he said undermines the country's sovereignty. He praised the ongoing resistance capabilities as Lebanon's main safeguard and deemed any move to weaken them as betrayal.

He emphasized that despite alleged agreements between Syria's leadership and Israel, the aggressor persistently occupies southern Syria. Meanwhile, he accused the Palestinian Authority of publicly cooperating with Israel against the Palestinian people.

Addressing broader regional solidarity, al-Houthi lauded coordinated resistance operations by Gaza groups, including Al-Qassam and Al-Quds Brigades, as vital to Palestinian unity. He underscored that Yemen stands in full support of Gaza and called on the Islamic world to protect the sanctity of Al-Aqsa and resist all forms of occupation.

British MPs Demand Immediate Expulsion of Israeli Ambassador

LONDON (Dispatches) -- A cross-party group of British MPs has called on Prime Minister Keir Starmer to immediately expel Israel's ambassador to the UK, Tzipi Hotovely, amid growing outrage over Israel's actions in the Gaza Strip.

In a letter sent to Downing Street on Thursday, the MPs said Israel is committing genocide in Gaza and urged the UK government to act in accordance with its obligations under the Genocide Convention.

The letter was led by Independent MP Adnan Hussain and signed by members of the Independent Alliance, as well as lawmakers from the Green Party, Scottish National Party, and Labor MP Abtisam Mohamed, a member of the

Foreign Affairs Committee.

The signatories demanded that the UK expel Hotovely "as a signal that the UK will not tolerate the continued defiance of international law and the perpetuation of mass atrocities."

Hotovely, a hardline figure, has publicly denied the Nakba and strongly opposes the creation of a Palestinian state.

The MPs also urged the British government to support international sanctions on Israel, facilitate immediate humanitarian aid into Gaza, and back the International Criminal Court's investigation into war crimes.

The letter comes amid revelations by Declassified UK that Hotovely met with influential

Labor donors and pro-Israel lobbyists during the course of Israel's military campaign in Gaza.

Her disclosed meetings included figures such as Stuart Roden, a major donor to Labor, and Jonathan Goldstein, a former head of the Jewish Leadership Council.

"We are horrified by the Israeli regime's declared intention to fully occupy Gaza," the MPs wrote. "The near-total destruction of the Strip cannot be ignored. Continued British support amounts to complicity."

The letter concluded with a call for moral clarity: "Our silence in the face of genocide is not neutrality — it is complicity."

Ben Gvir Threatens Palestinian Icon With 'Obliteration'

TEL AVIV (Dispatches) -- Israel's extremist minister Itamar Ben Gvir was filmed during a rare prison visit confronting prominent Palestinian political figure Marwan Barghouti, warning that Israel would "obliterate" those who oppose it.

The footage, circulated on social media late Thursday, marks the first public appearance of Barghouti in years. The 66-year-old, appearing visibly gaunt and wearing a white undershirt, has been imprisoned since 2004 over his role in the Second Intifada. He is currently serving multiple life sentences.

"Whoever murders our children, whoever murders our women, we will obliterate them. You will not defeat us," Ben Gvir said in the video, addressing Barghouti directly at Gannot prison in Tel Aviv.

Barghouti, a senior Fatah official, is widely regarded by Palestinians as a symbol of resistance and unity. Opinion polls have consistently shown he would be a leading candidate in any Palestinian presidential election, though

he has long been held in solitary confinement.

Barghouti's son, Qassem, told media that the family fears for his safety following the Zionist minister's remarks. "There is a real danger to his life," he said, citing past assaults and ongoing threats.

Ben Gvir, a far-right figure with a history of inflammatory statements, visited the prison with Israel's so-called prisons service commissioner Kobi Yaakobi. Israeli media reported the purpose was to monitor conditions of what Ben Gvir referred to as "imprisoned terrorists."

Since the onset of Israel's war in Gaza in October 2023, rights groups have documented a sharp deterioration in conditions for Palestinian detainees. Barghouti has reportedly faced repeated abuse, including a violent incident in September 2024.

Regional actors, including Egypt, Qatar, and Hamas, have sought Barghouti's release in ceasefire negotiations, though internal Palestinian political divisions have complicated the matter.