



3 - 16 March 2020

### Latest on COVID-19 in the oPt

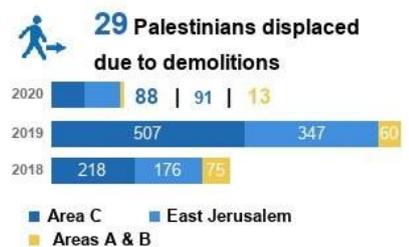
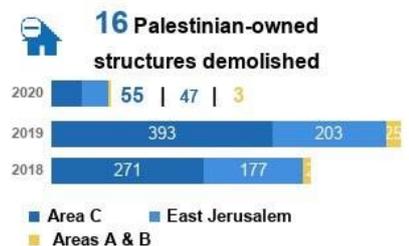
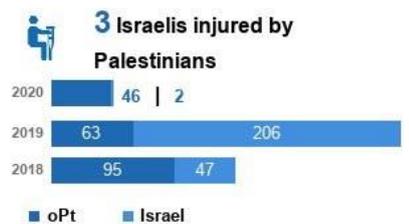
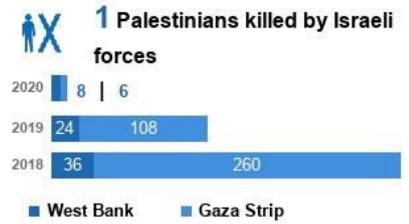
On 5 March, the Palestinian Prime Minister declared a state of emergency across the oPt to contain the spread of COVID-19. As of 19 March, there are 47 confirmed cases in the West Bank, all but six in Bethlehem city and two adjacent towns, and none in the Gaza Strip, and about 6,900 people are in home quarantine.

The Palestinian authorities have declared a curfew in the three affected localities in the Bethlehem area, and prohibited all non-essential travel between cities in the West Bank, with several checkpoints being erected to enforce this measure. All educational institutions in the oPt have been closed. Public gatherings, including prayers, are not allowed. People entering the oPt from Egypt or Jordan, as well as those who were exposed to people who contracted the virus, must place themselves under quarantine for 14 days.

The Israeli authorities have banned the entry of Palestinian workers 50 years of age and older into Israel, as well as the entry of East Jerusalem Palestinians and all residents of Israel, into areas A and B of the West Bank. In Gaza, the Erez crossing with Israel is closed except for urgent humanitarian cases, primarily permit holders referred to medical treatment at hospitals in East Jerusalem and Israel; movement of patients from the West Bank to these hospitals also continued.

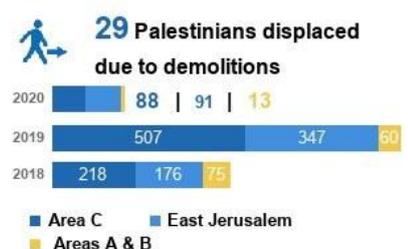
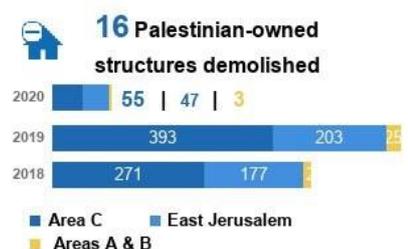
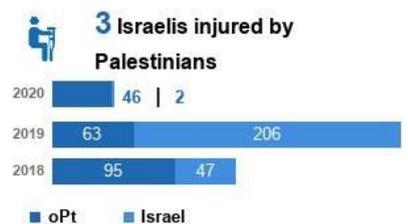
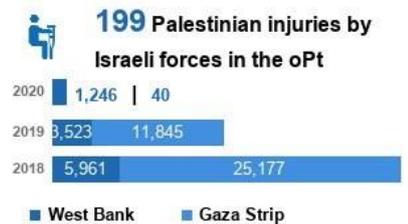
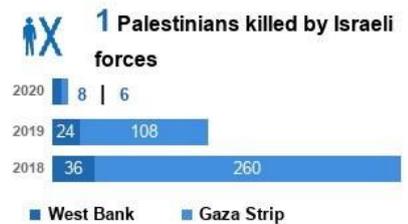
The UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, supported by the Health Cluster, developed a 90-day inter-agency response plan aimed at supporting the Palestinian authorities in preventing the spread of the epidemic, and requested the international community US\$ 6.3 million to implement the plan.

- On 11 March, Israeli forces shot and killed a 16-year-old Palestinian boy and injured another 132 Palestinians, including 17 children, during clashes south of Nablus. The clashes erupted during a protest in Beita village against ongoing attempts by Israeli settlers to take over a hill near the village located in Area B. The boy killed was hit with live ammunition in the head. The Israeli authorities announced the opening of an investigation. The protests are ongoing since 28 February and



have resulted so far in one fatality and 386 injuries, including 183 by rubber bullets, seven by live ammunition and the rest by tear gas inhalation or physical assault. All protests involved stone-throwing at Israeli forces, however no Israeli injuries were reported. On 15 January 2019, following a ruling by the Israeli Supreme Court, the Israeli authorities demolished a settlement outpost in Area B south of Nablus city.

- Another 67 Palestinians, including 20 children, were injured by Israeli forces in multiple clashes across the West Bank.** Some half of these injuries (33) were recorded near 'Araqa village (Jenin) during Palestinian attempts to cut sections of the fence and cross into the closed area behind the Barrier. Twenty-two Palestinians were injured in the weekly demonstrations against settlement expansion and access restrictions in Kafr Qaddum (Qalqiliya). Two children, aged 9 and 14, were shot with rubber bullets and injured during clashes in Al 'Isawiya neighborhood of East Jerusalem, where regular police operations and related tensions have been ongoing since mid-2019; on 15 February, a 9-year-old child was shot with a rubber bullet on his way back from school and lost an eye. Another two boys (16 and 17 years old) were injured near Qalqiliya city, in a protest against the US plan for the Middle East.
- Overall, Israeli forces carried out 78 search and arrest operations across the West Bank, and arrested 110 Palestinians, including 16 children.** This is a decline compared to an average of over 100 operations that have occurred on a bi-weekly basis since the beginning of the year. Most of the operations were conducted in East Jerusalem (22) and Ramallah villages (20).
- In the Gaza Strip, on at least 28 occasions, Israeli forces opened warning fire in the areas adjacent to Israel's perimeter fence and off the coast of Gaza while enforcing access restrictions; no injuries or damage was recorded.** On three occasions, Israeli forces entered Gaza and carried out a land-levelling and excavation operation near the perimeter fence, east of Gaza city. In addition, Israeli forces arrested two Palestinians, including a child, when they were reportedly attempting to infiltrate the perimeter fence into Israel, and another two on their way out of Gaza through the Erez crossing.
- On 5 March, Israeli forces punitively demolished two homes, displacing six Palestinians, including a child.** The targeted homes, located in At Tira and Birzeit towns (Ramallah), in Areas A and B, belonged to the families of two Palestinians accused of killing an Israeli girl and injuring her brother and father in August 2019. One of the incidents triggered clashes with Israeli forces, during which one Palestinian was injured.



- **An additional 14 Palestinian-owned structures were demolished or seized on grounds of lack of building permits, displacing 29 people and affecting around 60 others.** Ten of these structures were located in Area C, five of which had been provided as humanitarian aid. The latter included two residential tents in 'Ein ar Rashash herding community (Ramallah) and a residential tent, a mobile latrine and a solar panel system next to Beit Jala (Bethlehem). The other four structures were in East Jerusalem, including two demolished by their owners. Since the beginning of the year, 47 structures have been demolished in East Jerusalem, around 60 per cent of those by their owners, following orders to do so by the Israeli authorities.
- **Israeli forces bulldozed a section of a dirt road connecting five herding communities in southern Hebron to their main service center.** The communities, home to some 700 people, are located in 'firing zone', closed for Israeli military training (Massafer Yatta). As a result, residents must use a long detour to access their main service center and market in Yatta town. All the 1,300 residents in this firing zone face a coercive environment that places them at risk of forcible transfer.
- **Three Palestinians were injured, and at least 385 trees and 15 vehicles were vandalized, by assailants believed to be Israeli settlers.** In three separate incidents in Al Auja town (Jericho) and the Israeli-controlled area of Hebron city (H2), Israeli settlers physically assaulted and injured three Palestinians, including a woman. Additional settler attacks not resulting in injuries or damage were reported in the H2 area on 10 and 11 March, during celebrations of a Jewish holiday (Purim). In another three incidents, Israeli settlers reportedly cut down or uprooted 200 olive trees and 150 grape vines belonging to farmers from Al Khader and Khamat Sakariya villages that are planted next to the Gush Etzion settlement area (Bethlehem), and 35 olive trees next to Bruchin settlement (Salfit). These incidents bring to nearly 1,600 the number of trees reportedly vandalized by settlers since the start of 2020. Five additional incidents in the Nablus governorate, involved slashing the tires of 11 vehicles in Huwwara town, stoning and damaging two houses and four vehicles in 'Einabus village, and vandalizing an uninhabited house in Burin village. Residents of the 'Ein ar Rashash herding community (Ramallah) reported that 25 lambs were stolen by a settler residing in an adjacent settlement outpost.
- **Three Israelis, including a boy and two women, were injured, and at least 30 vehicles were damaged in stone-throwing incidents in West Bank roads, according to an Israeli NGO.**