

OCHA Weekly Humanitarian Update Occupied Palestinian Territories 20-26 July 2002

25 Palestinians were killed during the reporting period and another 263 injured. One Israeli was killed and another five injured in the same period. According to the Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS), the total number of Palestinian casualties in the West Bank and Gaza Strip is 1677 fatalities and 19,943 injuries, since 29 September 2000.



OVERVIEW:

Tension in the oPt increased markedly this week, following the assassination in Gaza of Hamas military leader, Salah Shehadeh in Gaza on 23 July. Shehadeh was assassinated in an Israeli air strike on the Daraj residential area of Gaza city which killed 14 others, mostly children, and wounded over one hundred. The attack was strongly condemned by the international community. The total number of fatalities is now 681 in the Gaza Strip since the beginning of the current uprising, with 9,580 wounded.

The Israeli Defense Force's (IDF) operation "Determined Path" is now entering its sixth week. The major West Bank urban centers and their adjoining refugee camps are still re-occupied, with the exception of Jericho, which continues to be sealed off by roadblocks, trenches and checkpoints. Curfews were this week temporarily lifted for a few hours to allow residents to obtain essential supplies. However, days and opening hours remain sporadic and are not announced adequately in advance, significantly impacting on employment, health services and daily life for the population and making it impossible for humanitarian agencies to plan ahead.

The money shortage due to lack of work possibilities because of curfew and closure is severe; people are increasingly selling assets and relying on friends and family for economic support. Furthermore, preliminary reports indicate that household coping mechanisms such as credit networks allowing people to buy water and food are no longer sustainable.

Curfew lifting's	Sat. 20	Sun. 21	Mon. 22	Tues. 23	Wed. 24	Thurs. 25	Fri. 26
Jenin	Lifted		Lifted	Lifted		Lifted	
Nablus	Lifted						
Tulkarm	Lifted		Lifted		Lifted		Lifted
Qalqilya	Lifted		Lifted		Lifted		
Ramallah	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	
Bethlehem	Lifted				Lifted	Lifted	
Hebron	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	Lifted	

Lifted = Curfew has been lifted for a minimum three hours, maximum 12 hours.

The curfew regime was eased in Ramallah and Hebron with daily curfew liftings every day except Friday. In Tulkarm the curfew was lifted every second day. In Bethlehem, the curfew was lifted three times this week, making a total of 96 hours since the re-occupation began on 21 June. In Nablus, curfew has not been lifted since Saturday 20 July.

In addition to the main cities, approximately 25 villages are currently under curfew. For those areas not under curfew, movement for Palestinians remains severely restricted, with people using dirt roads to avoid main roads and IDF checkpoints. Even when the curfew is lifted in the major cities movement in and out of the cities are extremely difficult. On 20 July in Qalqilya, Palestinians waited for more than seven hours to cross the checkpoint by foot.

The IDF this week informed the UN that they will issue a limited number of permits for West Bank ID holders, allowing them to enter Jerusalem to work for international organizations. Furthermore, a small quota of permits will be issued to truck drivers with East-Jerusalem IDs to allow them to drive trucks for international organizations from Jerusalem into the West Bank. Permits will also be obtainable for West Bank ID holders working for international organizations, allowing them to move within the West Bank. This recent development do not, however, fulfill the necessary requirements needed for the humanitarian relief and development community to enable them to effectively reach populations in immediate need of basic assistance.

In Gaza, vehicular movement remains highly restricted. The crossing between Road No. 4 south of Gaza city and the by-pass road to Netzarim settlement has been closed since early May, with traffic diverted through the coastal road. Traffic between the central and southern parts of the Strip is channeled through Abu Houli checkpoint, all other roads being closed. Traffic through the checkpoint has improved recently, although it often remains difficult to cross as priority is given to the IDF and settlers.

The number of workers allowed into Israel on a daily basis increased last week, from approximately 1300 to over 1700, mainly in agriculture, but including some 300 in the construction sector. Male workers must be over 30 years of age with a family: women, over 25 years old and also with a family. The number of workers at the Erez industrial zone has been stable at around 2,800 per day.

In the northern enclave of Seafa between the settlement of Dugit and Eli Sinai, entry through the gate - normally opened every day from 6.30 to 8.30am and from 2 to 4pm - has been erratic this week. Searching procedures for those entering the area have also been increased. Access to nearby agricultural land has been denied to local farmers, and equipment has been prevented from entering. A Medecins Sans Frontieres team was denied entry to the enclave on 25 July, despite prior coordination.

Restrictions remain especially tight for the 12,000 residents of the Mawassi area in the southern Gaza Strip with those under 45 years of age forbidden to leave the area. A curfew was imposed on all residents of the area on 23 July, after which only women were allowed to leave

West Bank localities currently under curfew see www.reliefweb.int/hic-opt/mapcentre.

SECTORAL UPDATES:

Food:

UNWRA Field Office in Jerusalem reports that their operations in the West Bank continue to be hampered due to curfews, closures and permits restrictions. UNRWA Field Office in Jerusalem delivered 13.5 tons of milk and oil to Balata warehouse and 50 tons of wheat flour to Hebron warehouse. In addition, UNRWA delivered 1014 food parcels and 663 bags of wheat flour to Balata camp and 160 bags of wheat flour and 306 food parcels to Camp No. 1.

In Jericho, Aqabat Jabr camp, Ein Sultan, Beit Ur, Tireh and Amari camp, UNRWA Field Office in Jerusalem was able to deliver in total 2800 food parcels to pregnant and nursing women, in addition to a total of 3993 emergency food rations delivered to Dura, Jaba, Kalandia, Camp No. 1 and Amari camp.

WFP is currently working through three implementing partners, Catholic Relief Service (CRS), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee (PARC). WFP delivers the food to warehouses in the West Bank, the food is then delivered to the villages by CRS and PARC: in the case of ICRC, the food is delivered by ICRC directly. The selection of beneficiaries is done in cooperation with the village councils.

This week, WFP delivered 217 tons of rice to Gaza town, 88 tons to Khan Younis and 107 tons to Rafah. In addition, WFP delivered 93 tons of oil to Jerusalem and 4.5 tons of oil to Tulkarm. WFP also delivered 96 tons of wheat flour to Bethlehem and 43 tons of wheat flour to Tulkarm.

Health:

The Ministry of Health (MoH) is still facing severe difficulties distributing medical supplies due to the closure regime. The ICRC is assisting by distributing medical supplies every 2 months from the MoH Central Store in Ramallah to the districts, and from 25-27 July will send convoys to relocate some medical supplies from the districts to certain clinics located in villages. This will increase the MoH's ability to distribute to other clinics in these localities.

UNRWA Field Office in Jerusalem delivered medical supplies to the hospital in Qalqilya.

Infrastructure

The Palestinian Hydrology Group (PHG) and E-WaSH water monitoring project is now in its second week. The West Bank has been divided into 9 main areas and Gaza Strip into 3 main areas. Due to the current difficulties in movement between localities,

PHG has been forced to increase the number of monitors in order to cover the West Bank and Gaza Strip properly.

Main areas will be covered by the following institutions/organization: Five areas will be covered by PHG staff, including: Northern Gaza, Qalqilia, Nablus, Salfit, Jerusalem, Jericho and Ramallah. In coordination with Palestinian Environmental NGO Network (PENGON), the rest of the West Bank and Gaza Strip will be covered by specific members of PENGON. The first preliminary report is expected to be released by the end of July.

In Jenin, the progress of removing rubble from the devastated central area of the camp is being hampered due to curfews

OCHA, oPT, 26 July 2002.