Overview

- **Events in east Jerusalem**: This past week hostilities in east Jerusalem escalated, peaking on May 10, 2021, when Israel celebrated Jerusalem Day. Once the violence and rioting had begun, the Palestinian terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip started firing massive barrages of rockets at Israel.

- **Terrorist attacks**: This past week Border Police fighters prevented a shooting attack at the Salem Crossing (west of Jenin), planned by three armed, shooting Palestinians. The fighters shot the terrorists, killing two and seriously wounding the third, who was evacuated to a hospital. There were also several incidents of rock-throwing, the most serious of which occurred near the Lion Gate in east Jerusalem, when a Palestinian mob attacked an Israeli driver who lost control of his vehicle.

- **The Israeli security forces** exposed a Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) network in Judea and Samaria which financed terrorist activities with funds sent by humanitarian aid agencies and NGOs operating mainly in Europe.

- **The international arena**: This past week Palestinian foreign minister Riyad al-Maliki visited Moscow and Ankara and met with the foreign ministers. PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh met in Ramallah with foreign representatives and took them on a tour of the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood in east Jerusalem.

- **Coronavirus**: This past week there was a decrease in the extent of Covid-19 cases in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip.

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1 Next week the bulletin will not appear because of Passover. We wish all our readers a happy holiday.

For further information about escalation from the Gaza Strip and Operation Guardian of the Walls, see the daily updated bulletins from May 11 and 12, 2021.
Judea and Samaria

**Events in east Jerusalem**

- This past week hostilities escalated between rioting Palestinians and Israeli police in east Jerusalem. The confrontations were mainly at al-Aqsa mosque and in the east Jerusalem neighborhood of Sheikh Jarrah. The worst rioting was on May 10, 2021, when Israeli celebrated Jerusalem Day, and thousands of Palestinians who had barricaded themselves on the Temple Mount confronted police. The riots triggered the massive rocket fire strikes from the Gaza Strip.

- On the evening of May 10, 2021, after the rocket fire from the Gaza Strip, the rioting was renewed, although it was smaller in scale. During the riots a tree near al-Aqsa was set on fire and caused a larger fire which could be seen from a distance. The fire was quickly put out. The social networks posted claims that the fire was caused by stun grenades used by the Israeli police, while the police said it was started by a Molotov cocktail thrown by one of the rioters.

- During the night the riots spread to Nablus, Bethlehem, Ramallah and other locations in Judea and Samaria. The Palestinian Red Crescent reported that two hundred Palestinians had been injured. Israeli Arabs also rioted in some of Israel's mixed cities.

- A solidarity demonstration was held in the city of Lod, during which a local Arab resident was murdered. Palestinian spokesman related to his death. Hamas spokesman Hazem Qasem praised "our people in Lod" who rose up to defend Jerusalem. He added that the uprising emphasized the unity of the Palestinian people in every location in "historical Palestine," and he called on all Palestinians in all the cities in Judea and Samaria and Israel [sic] to continue.

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For further information, see the May 10, 2021, bulletin, "Riots in east Jerusalem, updated to May 10, 2021."
confronting Israel (Palinfo Twitter account, May 11, 2021). The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ) also praised the residents of Lod (Dunia al-Watan, May 11, 2021).

**Shooting attack**

➤ On May 7, 2021, Border Police fighters and the IDF prevented a shooting attack at the Salem Crossing (west of Jenin). Three Palestinians driving from the prayers in al-Aqsa mosque exited the vehicle, which had halted for a security check. Armed with guns and knives and firing their weapons, they advanced towards the gate of the Border Police base at the site. Border Police fighters shot at them, killing two and critically wounding the third, who was evacuated to a hospital.

➤ Hamas praised the attempted terrorist attack, claiming Israel’s ongoing aggression against the Palestinian people demanded a comprehensive national stance on the friction between Palestinians and settlers in the West Bank (Sawa, May 8, 2021).

**Terrorist operative who carried out the shooting attack at the Tapuah Junction captured**

➤ One of the yeshiva students shot and mortally wounded in the terrorist attack at the Tapuah Junction on May 2, 2021, succumbed to his wounds.

➤ On May 5, 2021, three days after the attack, the terrorist who perpetrated it was captured near the village of Silwad (north of Ramallah). He was Muntaser Shalabi, 44, from the village of Turmus Aya (northeast of Ramallah). IDF forces raided his house, during which local Palestinian villagers rioted.

![Muntaser Shalabi after his capture](Twitter account of journalist Hassan Aslih, May 6, 2021).
In response to the capture of the terrorist, Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum said that it was only a matter of time before the "sweeping revolution explodes in Israel's face." He said the Palestinian who carried out the attack at the Tapuah Junction had become a symbol and an example of the capabilities of the "resistance" [i.e., Palestinian terrorism] (Filastin al-Yawm, May 6, 2021). Senior PIJ figure Muhammad al-Hindi said in an interview that the Palestinians would continue the path of Muntaser Shalabi and that the battle was ongoing. He said they called on "everyone" to unite around Jerusalem and that people like Muntaser Shalabi had to be encouraged (al-Mayadeen, May 6, 2021).

Rocks Molotov cocktails and events

In the meantime, in Judea and Samaria Palestinians continued throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails at Israeli civilians and vehicles driving on the roads, with a significant increase in events, probably the result of recent tensions. On May 10, 2021, rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle on the Jericho Road near the Lion Gate in east Jerusalem. The driver lost control of the vehicle and was attacked by a mob of Palestinians. He was saved by a policeman. Two people were superficially wounded (Rescue Without Borders in Judea and Samaria, May 10, 2021).
On May 5, 2021, Sayid Yusuf Awada, 16, from the village of Awadla, south of Nablus, was shot and killed, and two other Palestinians were wounded when an IDF force opened fire at Palestinians throwing Molotov cocktails. The Palestinian media strongly condemned the killing. Mahmoud Abbas spoke with the boy’s father (Wafa, May 7, 2021). According to Nabil Abu Rudeineh, spokesman for Mahmoud Abbas, the Israel government (“the occupation”) continues its [alleged] policy of “killing and executing” Palestinians and imposing “collective punishment.” He called on the international community to defend the Palestinians in Judea, Samaria, Jerusalem and Sheikh Jarrah from Israel (Wafa, May 6, 2021). The PIJ condemned the killing of the boy, saying his death will not have been in vain (Filastin al-Yawm, May 6, 2021).

Other prominent events were the following:

- **May 10, 2021**: Palestinians placed rocks and tires near the Israeli community of Migdalim (southwest of Nablus) and threw rocks at the civilian security force that arrived at the location. One man was superficially injured.
- **May 10, 2021**: Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle near Luban al-Sharqia (northeast of Ramallah). The vehicle, which was damaged, belonged to an Israeli Arab, who was superficially injured.
- **May 10, 2021**: Molotov cocktails were thrown at the western fence of Kiryat Arba, causing a fire. No casualties were reported.

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4 All information and reports are from Rescue Without Borders in Judea and Samaria unless otherwise noted.
May 10, 2021: Molotov cocktails were thrown at an Israeli vehicle south of Gush Etzion. No casualties were reported. The vehicle was damaged.

May 9, 2021: An Israeli civilian mistakenly drove into Qalqilya (east of Nablus), and was attacked by Palestinians who stole his vehicle. He said several suspicious Palestinians halted the vehicle, threatened him with a knife and yanked him out of the driver’s seat, stole the vehicle and drove off.

May 7, 2021: The Israeli security forces stationed at a roadblock near the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron detained a Palestinian woman after finding a knife in her bag. She was taken for interrogation.
May 6, 2021: Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle southeast of Nablus. The driver was superficially injured.

Money from Europe for humanitarian activity used to fund terrorist activity

The Israeli security forces exposed a network in Judea and Samaria that used funding from humanitarian aid agencies and NGOs operating in Europe to finance the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP). The agencies and organizations operated in many European countries and collections millions of euros for humanitarian aid. Investigation revealed that PFLP institutions fooled the European humanitarian aid organizations by reporting on fictitious projects, providing false documents, forging and inflating bills, falsifying tenders, forging documents and bank stamps, and reporting inflated salaries.

Four PFLP "activists" were taken for interrogation (Israeli Security Agency website, May 6, 2021).

Taysir Abu Sharbak, 47, from Ramallah, accountant for the health committees.
Sayid Abedat, 46, from Ramallah, formerly accountant for the health committees, fired in 2019 for embezzlement.
Amro Hamouda, 46, from al-Bireh, former director of the health committees' purchasing department.
Huwani Mashrawi, 63, from Beit Sahour, who had Spanish citizenship. She worked for the health committees for many years, in charge of for receiving donations from European countries.
Rocket and mortar shell fire into Israel

The events in east Jerusalem triggered a serious escalation of rocket fire from the Gaza Strip. Between May 4 and 9 six rockets were fired into Israel. However, beginning on May 10, 2021, after a Hamas ultimatum to Israel, the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip, primarily Hamas and the PIJ, initiated massive rocket strikes against Israel which continued as of noon, May 11, 2021.

On May 9, 2021, two rockets were fired at the southern coastal city of Ashqelon and at the Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip border. One rocket was intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system. Another fell into the sea. Two more rockets were fired and fell inside the Gaza Strip.

On the night of May 8, 2021, a rocket was fired into Israeli territory, falling in an open area. In response IDF aircraft attacked a Hamas military post in the southern Gaza Strip (IDF spokesman, May 9, 2021). The Palestinian media reported that two "resistance" posts were attacked east of Deir al-Balah in the central Gaza Strip (Wafa, Filastin al-Yawm, May 9, 2021).

On the morning of May 10, 2021, three rockets were fired into Israeli territory. One was intercepted by the Iron Dome aerial defense system (IDF spokesman, May 10, 2021). Two civilians were injured as they ran to take cover (Barzilai Hospital spokesman's unit, May 10, 2021). In response IDF tanks attacked four Hamas posts near the border security fence (IDF spokesman, May 10, 2021).

At 18:00 in the evening on May 10, 2021, seven rockets were fired at the area around Jerusalem. Immediately thereafter the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip began firing massive barrages of rockets into Israeli territory, especially at the southern coastal city of Ashqelon, the western Negev city of Sderot and the Israeli communities near the Gaza Strip border. By 12:00 noon on May 11 more than 250 rockets had been fired at Israel (reported in a separate ITIC bulletin).

Other events

Following the events in Jerusalem, the IED and incendiary balloon-launching units in the Gaza Strip called for a general mobilization and renewal of their activity. During the past few days dozens of incendiary balloons have been launched into Israeli territory, causing fires in the communities near the Gaza Strip and disrupting train service, causing roads to be closed and...
damaging crops and nature reserves. On May 10, 2021, a large balloon with an IED attached was found near a community in the western Negev, while a cluster of balloons was found in another community with two hand grenades attached (western Negev spokesman’s unit, May 10, 2021). The night harassment units also renewed their activities, with operatives bussed in from various locations in the Gaza Strip.

IED balloon found near an Israeli community in the western Negev (western Negev security, May 10, 2021).

Developments in the Gaza Strip

Distribution of the funds from Qatar

Mohammed al-Emadi, chairman of Qatar’s National Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza, announced the distribution of another $100 million in humanitarian aid for needy families in the Gaza Strip. The distribution began on May 7, 2021, each family receiving $100. The funds were distributed through the Hamas post office bank branches (Dunia al-Watan, May 8, 2021).

Funds from Qatar distributed through the Hamas post office bank branches (Qatar’s National Committee for the Reconstruction of Gaza Facebook page, May 7, 2021)
Statements from senior Hamas figures for Iran's World Jerusalem Day

For World Jerusalem Day (an event initiated by Iran and marked by Muslims around the globe on the last Friday of Ramadan) a forum was held with the participation of the leaders of the terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip. Some of the statements made were the following (al-Mayadeen, May 5, 2021):

Isma'il Haniyeh, head of Hamas' political bureau, praised Iran while relating to the events in east Jerusalem. He said the Palestinian people would be victorious over the "occupation" and its soldiers, police, and settlers as it had been victorious in its battle against the metal detectors and [the barriers Israel erected at] the Damascus Gate. He said it proved the Palestinian people would not surrender but would defend al-Aqsa mosque and Jerusalem, and they all shouted "With our souls and blood we will redeem you, al-Aqsa," and "Prepare your swords, we are all men of Muhammad Deif." He also said the battle for Jerusalem was open and the Palestinians were still in danger, especially when settlers threatened to break into al-Aqsa mosque on Jerusalem Day. He called for Palestinians to take a strong position to defend al-Aqsa mosque and to support the firm stance of the Palestinians in Jerusalem.

PIJ leader Ziyad al-Nakhalah said Israel had occupied Jerusalem, calling the city its capital to symbolize its control of Palestine. He said Israel was working to remove the Palestinian presence through "ongoing destruction" and using force to take control of the houses of the original residents with the objective of Judaizing the holy Islamic city.

Abu Ahmed Fuad, deputy PFLP secretary general, said he was speaking on behalf of Ahmed Saadat, the organization's secretary general, who was imprisoned in Israel. He said the significance of World Jerusalem Day was that Israel had to disappear. He stressed that the PFLP would continue its struggle until all "Palestine" had been liberated by the "resistance." He added that the PFLP was an ally of the "resistance axis" and promised they would continue the path of [the late] Qassem Soleimani, [former] commander of the Iranian Revolutionary Guards Corps' Qods Force, and would devote all their energy to the "resistance" and an armed struggle.
The Palestinian Authority (PA)

Shtayyeh meets with representatives of foreign countries

PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh reported he had met in Ramallah with representatives of foreign countries. He asked them for immediate intervention to stop Israel’s activities in Jerusalem and the holy sites, and to keep Israel from expropriating houses and expelling residents from their homes in east Jerusalem. He said Israel’s legal system was politically directed against a Palestinian presence in the city and that an uprising of east Jerusalemites would restore the Palestinian cause to top of the world’s list of priorities (Muhammad Shtayyeh’s Facebook page, May 11, 2021).

On May 11, 2021, the consuls and representatives of European countries visited Sheikh Jarrah, met with local families and heard their side of the story about the current situation. According to the Palestinian media the representatives said what was happening was not legal and would lead to tension (Wafa, May 11, 2021).

PA foreign minister visits Moscow and Ankara

On May 5, 2021, Palestinian foreign minister Riyad al-Maliki arrived in Moscow as part of a series of visit to discuss developments related to the Palestinian cause. He met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and gave him a message from Mahmoud Abbas for Putin, thanking Russia for its support and for the coronavirus vaccines it sent to the PA. He informed Lavrov of the circumstances which had forced the PA to postpone the elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC), adding that it was out of the question to hold elections without the participation of east Jerusalem. He claimed Israel did not honor the agreements it
had signed with the Palestinians and called on Russia to exert pressure on Israel to allow the elections to be held (TASS, Dunia al-Watan, May 6, 2021).

From Russia al-Maliki went to Ankara, where he met with the Turkish foreign minister. Al-Maliki told him that Israel's attack on al-Aqsa mosque demanded a rapid response from the international community and measures that would prevent [Israel's] continued aggression and defend the Palestinian people in Jerusalem (Wafa, May 8, 2021).

PA elections postponed

"Fatah sources" reported that Mahmoud Abbas wanted to hold elections by the end of the year or by the middle of 2022, even if Israel allows them to be held in east Jerusalem now. According to the sources, Mahmoud Abbas does not want to deal with internal Fatah tensions, and wants to impose sanctions on all Fatah members who expressed support for independent slates for the PLC elections. The sources also said that Mahmoud Abbas would continue exerting pressure on Hamas in the West Bank to prevent an escalation and would ask PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh to freeze limiting some of the sanctions on the Gaza Strip (al-Akhbar, May 5, 2021).

Mahmoud al-Zahar, a member of Hamas political bureau, said the PLC agreed to form a government or a national community, which could legally be done. He said it was currently preferable to say goodbye to PA Chairman Mahmoud Abbas and build the Palestinian house on a genuine national foundation (Dunia al-Watan, May 4, 2021).

Ahmed Bahar, deputy PLC speaker, said Mahmoud Abbas' decision to postpone the elections was a blow to democracy and the efforts to reach an internal Palestinian reconciliation. He said postponement meant the current PLC would continue to function as the Palestinian legislative
branch until elections were held. He called for the PLC to be reactivated and to impose its authority on Judea, Samaria and the Gaza Strip (Dunia al-Watan, May 5, 2021).

The Spread of Covid-19

The Gaza Strip

The decrease in the extent of coronavirus in the Gaza Strip continues. During the past week 1,387 new active cases were detected, down from 3,645 a week ago. During the 24 hours between May 10 and 11, 345 new active cases were detected and 1,378 tests were administered with a positive rate of 25%. There are currently 7,306 active cases in the Gaza Strip, down from 11,418 on May 4, 2021, 178 of them in ICUs, 121 in serious or critical condition. This past week 46 Gazans died, bringing the number of deaths from coronavirus-related conditions to 967. So far 38,793 Gazans have been vaccinated out of 120,000 doses of vaccine in the Gaza Strip, sufficient for 60,000 people.

The overall situation

Iyad al-Buzum, spokesman for the ministry of the interior in Gaza, announced the loosening of several coronavirus restrictions in the Gaza Strip, including cancelling the curfew at night and the limitations on movement and commerce. He also said that the mosques would open after having operated with partial attendance. The limitations on gatherings in homes and public places will remain in force until May 14, 2021.

Judea and Samaria

The decrease in the rate of the spread of the coronavirus continues. During the past week 1,387 new active cases were detected in Judea and Samaria, down from 1,778 on May 4, 2021. During the 24 hours between May 10 and 11, 142 new active cases were detected and 1,635 tests were administered with a positive rate of 9%. There are currently 4,155 active cases (down from 8,073 a week ago), 75 in ICUs, 26 of whom are on ventilators. This past week 51 Palestinians died of coronavirus-related conditions, bringing the number of fatalities to 2,426. So far 232,551 Palestinians in Judea and Samaria have been vaccinated (ministry of health in Ramallah Facebook page, May 11, 2021).
Coronavirus-Related Mortality in Judea and Samaria

(According to the ministry of health in Ramallah)

The situation in the hospitals

The doctors’ union announced the immediate closing of clinics following the detention of Shuki Sabha, union chairman, and two members of the council. They were detained by the General Prosecution in Ramallah. Following the move all private and government hospitals were evacuated (Dunia al-Watan, May 9, 2021).