



News of Terrorism and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict (December 1-7, 2021)

Overview

► This past week three terrorist attacks were carried out, a vehicular ramming attack at the Te'enim Crossing and two stabbing attacks, one near the Damascus Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem and the other at the al-Jib border crossing. **Two Israelis were injured.** The Palestinians represent the terrorists who carried out the attacks as shaheeds executed by Israel, taking the events out of context. Hamas welcomed and praised the attacks and called on the Palestinians to carry out more. There has recently been an increase in terrorist attacks and seven have been carried out since the beginning of November 2021, three of them in the Old City of Jerusalem. In the meantime, Palestinians continue throwing rocks, Molotov cocktails and paint bottles at the vehicles on the roads in Judea and Samaria.

► On **December 1, 2021**, two Israeli civilians lost their way and drove into Palestinian Authority territory, arriving at Menara Square in the center of Ramallah. They were attacked by a Palestinian mob and their vehicle was torched. They were rescued by operatives of the Palestinian security forces and returned to Israel. **The Palestinian media**, which gave extensive coverage to the attack, **praised the mob and criticized the Palestinian security forces, claiming their job was to protect Palestinians and not help Israel.**

► **The Gaza Strip:** Several media outlets reported that according to " Hamas sources," in view of the Egyptian delay in activities for rebuilding the Gaza Strip, Hamas and other Palestinian organizations in the Gaza Strip informed Egypt it had until the end of the year to begin the process, threatening that otherwise they would gradually escalate their activities against Israel, beginning the following week. In the meantime, Hamas administrative employees began receiving their salaries. Hamas announced that the new arrangement [regarding the receipt of funds from Qatar] meant their salaries would be higher. Hamas' military-terrorist wing reported the death of one of its operatives in a "resistance" tunnel collapse.

► **The Palestinian Authority (PA):** Mahmoud Abbas paid a three-day visit to Algeria at the invitation of the Algerian president. The visit was part of the preparations being made for the Arab League conference planned for Algeria in March 2022, where the Palestinian cause is

expected to be the main topic of discussion. During the visit, Algeria promised to transfer \$1 million to the PA. The PA ministry of the treasury reported that since Israel transfers only part of the tax revenues it collects for the PA, deducting the salaries paid to the shaheeds and prisoners, administrative employees will not receive their full November salaries.

► **The coronavirus:** In Judea and Samaria there was a significance increase in the number of active cases, although so far no one has been found to be carrying the omicron variant.

Judea and Samaria

Attacks and attempted attacks

Vehicular ramming attack at the Te'enim Crossing (south of Tulkarm)

► Before dawn on **December 6, 2021**, a Palestinian car drove at high speed to the Te'enim vehicle border crossing south of Tulkarm and rammed into the check post at the entrance to the crossing. One of the guards was seriously injured. Other guards shot the driver of the vehicle, who later died in a hospital (the Israeli ministry of defense crossing authority, December 6, 2021).



The scene of the attack (the Israeli ministry of defense crossing authority, December 6, 2021).

► The Palestinian media reported that the Palestinian who carried out the attack was **Muhammad Nidal Yunis**, 15, from Nablus (al-Hayat al-Jadeeda, December 6, 2021). His uncle, Muhammad Yunis, told an interviewer that his nephew had worked with his father in an aluminum factory. He accused Israel of killing him (QudsN Twitter account, December 6, 2021).

► **Hamas** said in an announcement that the attack had been another in "a welcome string of heroic attacks." Hamas claimed Israel's activities and "crimes" against the Palestinians would only serve to increase their determination to "resist" [i.e., to attack Israelis] and work to attain their rights. Hamas called on Palestinians to escalate all forms of "resistance" activities [i.e., terrorist attacks]. **Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem** said Palestinian youth were

carrying out "resistance" [activities] to evict "Zionist colonialism" [sic] from Palestinian land (Shehab, December 6, 2021). **Hamas spokesman Abd al-Latif al-Qanua** said that the Palestinians were permanently at war with Israel and in such a situation it was legitimate to carry out stabbing and vehicular ramming and all other forms of "resistance" attacks (Hamas website, December 6, 2021).

► **The Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ)** claimed the attack was "a natural and legal [sic] response" to the killing of Muhammad Salima, who carried out a stabbing attack near the Damascus Gate in Jerusalem on December 4, 2021.



Muhammad Nidal Yunis (QudsN Twitter account, December 6, 2021).

Stabbing attack in east Jerusalem

► On **December 4, 2021**, a Palestinian armed with a knife went to the Damascus Gate area and attacked a young Orthodox Jewish man, who fought with him. The Palestinian then tried to stab two Border Police fighters who were at the scene, first the man and then the woman. They both opened fire and killed him. Dozens of Palestinians then surrounded the Israeli security forces in the area. A short time after the attack the Israeli police detained the taxi driver who had brought the Palestinian to the Damascus Gate in the Old City (Israel Police Force spokesman's unit. December 4, 2021).

► The Palestinian media reported that the Palestinian who carried out the attack was **Muhammad Shukat Salima**, 25, from Salfit in east Jerusalem (Palinfo, December 4, 2021). His old Facebook page has been inactive since 2019. While it was still active he often praised shaheeds and said of himself that he was "on the shaheed waiting list." He praised the escape of the six Palestinian terrorist prisoners from the Gilboa Prison on his new Facebook page. His death enraged Palestinians because the media reported he was shot to death while lying wounded on the ground, and alleged the police prevented medical personnel from approaching him

► **Mahmoud Abbas' office** condemned the "execution" of Muhammad Salima in Jerusalem, calling it a "crime" which continued Israel's [alleged] escalating actions against the Palestinian people. The office also claimed the international community was responsible for providing protection for the Palestinians and had to take immediate steps to stop Israel's actions. **PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh** condemned what he claimed was "the execution at close quarters [sic]" of Muhammad Salima. He called on the International Criminal Court to add the incident to the list of events it was investigating (Wafa, December 4, 2021).



Muhammad Shukat Salima (Twitter account of journalist Hassan Aslih, December 4, 2021).

► **Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem** welcomed and praised the attack, claiming it illustrated that Jerusalem ("the holy city") continued to fight to expel Israel ("the occupier and oppressor") and preserve its Palestinian identity. He said the battle with Israel was ongoing and would only end when the Palestinian people achieved its objectives. He said Hamas would continue its struggle with all necessary means to establish a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital (Hamas website, December 4, 2021).

Attempted stabbing attack at the al-Jib Crossing (north of Jerusalem)

► On **December 1, 2021**, a Palestinian vehicle drove to the al-Jib Crossing north of Jerusalem, where Border Police fighters were stationed. The fighters saw a Palestinian armed with knife inside the vehicle. They aimed their weapons at him and he threw the knife on the ground. The Palestinian, from the village of Judeira north of Jerusalem, was taken for questioning (Israel Police Force spokesman's unit, December 1, 2021).

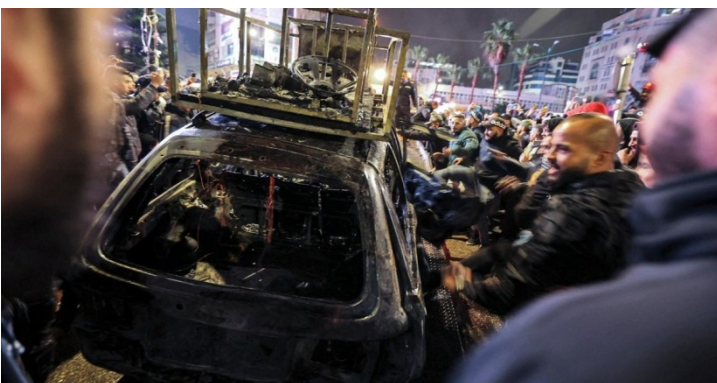


**The knife held by the Palestinian attacked
(Israel Police Force spokesman's unit, December 1, 2021).**

Since the beginning of November 2021 there have been seven terrorist attacks in Judea and Samaria, three of them in the Old City of Jerusalem. A "source in the Palestinian resistance" reported that the "resistance" [i.e., terrorist organization] leadership in the Gaza Strip was monitoring events in Jerusalem and studying the topic. The source warned Israel not to carry out acts of "stupidity" in Jerusalem, which would cause the situation to "explode" (al-Akhbar, December 1, 2021).

Two Israelis attacked in Ramallah

► On **December 1, 2021**, two Israeli civilians lost their way and drove into PA territory to Menara Square in the center of Ramallah. They were attacked by a Palestinian mob and the vehicle was torched. They were rescued by operatives of the Palestinian security forces and returned unharmed to the Israeli security forces. During interrogations they said they had gotten lost on their way to the Tomb of Matiyahu and His Sons, which lies north of Modi'in (Judea and Samaria police spokesman's unit, December 1, 2021).



**Palestinian mob in the center of Ramallah attacks and torches the Israelis' vehicle
(Khabar News, Saba Net, December 2, 2021).**

► The Palestinian media gave extensive coverage to the events in Ramallah and praised the heroism of the young Palestinians who attacked the Israelis. The media outlets uploaded videos of the Israelis who entered Ramallah, their burning vehicle and their rescue by the Palestinian security forces. **Hamas, the PIJ and the Popular Resistance Committees** praised the Palestinian attackers, stressing that their acts illustrated how they related to Israel. There were also calls to delete the recordings of the security cameras in Menara Square to prevent the IDF from taking steps against those who could be identified as participating in the attack and in setting fire to the vehicle.

► **The Palestinian security forces were condemned for rescuing the Israelis on the grounds that their job was to protect Palestinians and not help Israel.** The Hamas-affiliated website of al-Risalah claimed the Palestinian public was enraged and criticized the Palestinian security forces for protecting the "Israeli settlers" who "invaded Ramallah" at a time when the PA was unable to protect Palestinians from the settlers' "violence and terrorism" (al-Risalah website, December 1, 2021). Hamas praised the youth of Ramallah who "confronted" the Jews who had entered their city and called for the "resistance" to be extended to other regions of the West Bank. Hamas also condemned the Palestinian security forces for transferring the two civilians to the IDF, claiming it was their duty to defend Palestinians and not to secure Israelis. **Hamas spokesman Fawzi Barhoum** praised the youth of Ramallah who had burned the vehicle of the "settlers" who had entered Ramallah, adding that their action reflected the course of the Palestinian struggle against the "Zionist enemy" (al-Risalah website, December 1, 2021).

Rocks, Molotov cocktails and other events

► In Judea and Samaria Palestinians continued throwing rocks and Molotov cocktails at Israeli vehicles driving on the roads. The more prominent events were the following:¹

- ◆ **December 6, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle in northwestern Samaria between Reihan and Mevo Dotan. No casualties were reported. The vehicle was damaged.

- ◆ **December 6, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus east of Qalqilya near the village of Funduq. No casualties were reported. The bus was damaged.

¹ All information and reports are from Rescue Without Borders in Judea and Samaria unless otherwise noted.

- ◆ **December 6, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus northeast of Jerusalem near Hizma. No casualties were reported. The bus was damaged.
- ◆ **December 5, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at Israeli vehicles northeast of Ramallah near the village of Turmus Aya. The windshield of a bus was damaged.
- ◆ **December 5, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle southwest of Nablus between Ariel and Tapuah. No casualties were reported. The vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **December 4, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle southwest of Jerusalem between the villages of Jab'a and Surif, near Gush Etzion. No casualties or damage were reported.
- ◆ **December 4, 2021:** A Molotov cocktail was thrown at an Israeli vehicle south of Nablus in Hawwara. No casualties or damage were reported.
- ◆ **December 4, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle in northwestern Samaria near Mevo Dotan. No casualties or damage were reported.
- ◆ **December 2, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at two Israeli buses northeast of Jerusalem near Hizma. One bus driver was injured by flying glass.
- ◆ **December 2, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle north of Hebron near the Beit A'innon Junction. No casualties or damage were reported.
- ◆ **December 2, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at Israeli vehicles, including a bus, south of Jerusalem on the Gush Etzion-Hebron road. No casualties or damage were reported.
- ◆ **December 2, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle northeast of Hebron near western Tekoa. An Israeli woman was injured by flying glass. The vehicle was damaged.
- ◆ **December 2, 2021:** Rocks and a paint bottle were thrown at an Israeli vehicle north of Kiryat Arba. No casualties or damage were reported.
- ◆ **December 2, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli vehicle at the exit from Jericho. No casualties were reported. The vehicle was damaged.



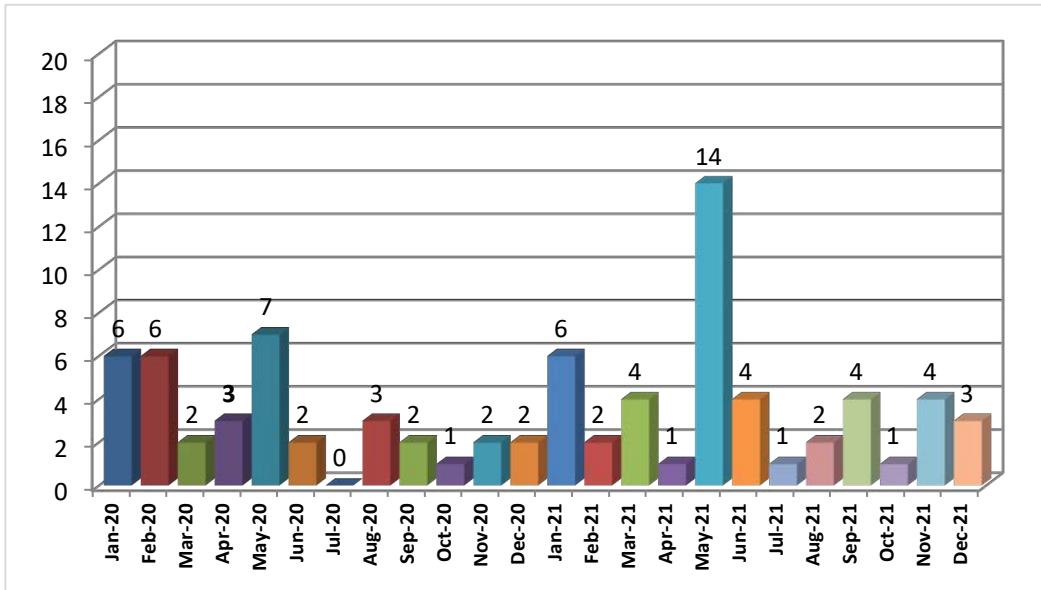
Rear windshield shattered by rocks (Jordan Valley regional council security department, December 2, 2021).

◆ **December 1, 2021:** Rocks were thrown at an Israeli bus south of Bethlehem between Ma'aleh Amos and Ibei Hanahal. The bus driver was injured by flying glass and evacuated to a hospital.



Front windshield damaged by rocks (Ma'aleh Amos security unit, December 1, 2021).

Significant Terrorist Attacks in Judea and Samaria since January 2020²

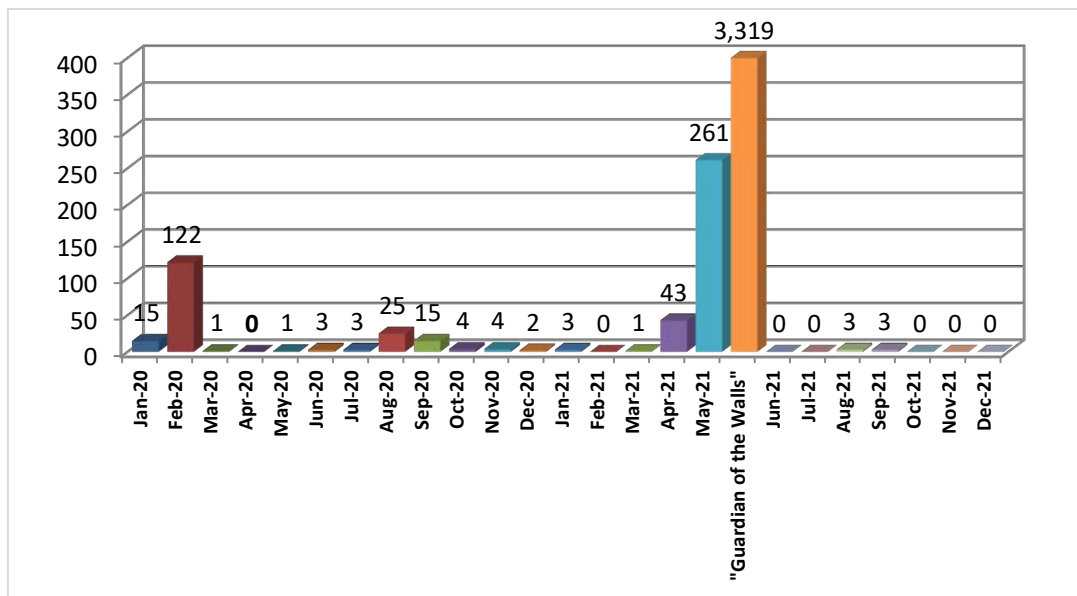


Israel's South

Rocket and mortar shell fire into Israel

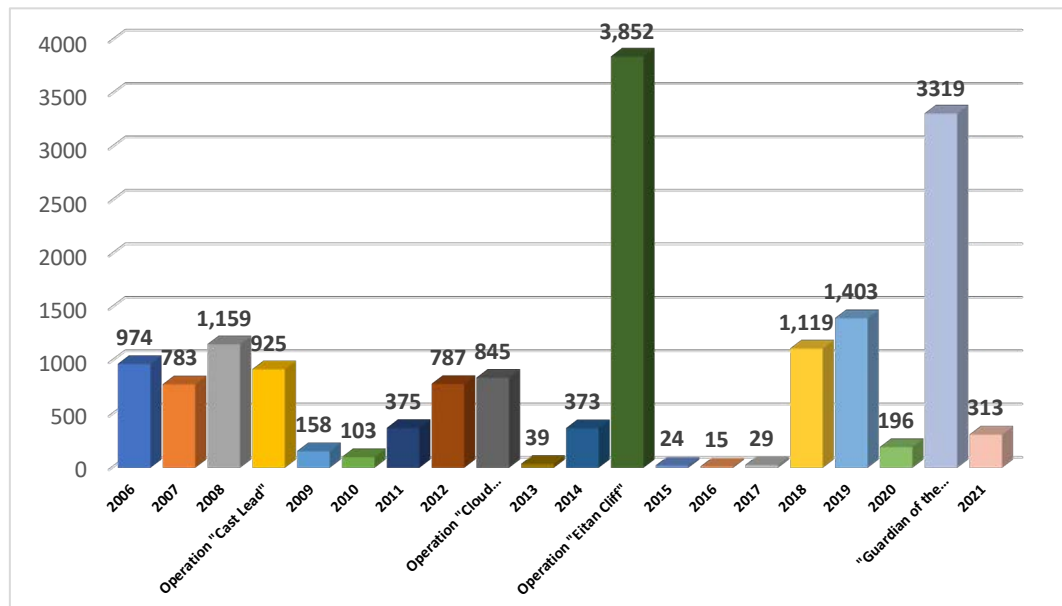
► This past week no rocket hits were identified in Israeli territory.

Monthly Distribution of Rocket and Mortar Shell Fire since January 2020



²A significant attack is defined by the ITIC as involving shooting, stabbing, a vehicular attack, the use of IEDs, or a combination of the above. Stones and Molotov cocktails thrown by Palestinians are not included.

Annual Distribution of Rocket Hits



Developments in the Gaza Strip

Rebuilding the Gaza Strip

► " Hamas sources " told several media outlets that in view of delays on the Egyptian side of rebuilding the Gaza Strip, **Hamas and the Palestinian organizations in the Gaza Strip had given Egypt until the beginning of the new year to begin the rebuilding process. Otherwise, Hamas claimed, they would gradually escalate their activities against Israel, beginning the following week.**

► According to a senior Hamas figure, the organization was very dissatisfied with the conduct of the Egyptian mediator and the lack of implementation of the promises [Egypt] made to the Gaza Strip. According to the figure, Egypt had not met its obligations to Hamas and the Palestinian organizations regarding the rebuilding of the Gaza Strip and easing the Gazans' daily life. Egypt continued to pose difficulties for Palestinians who wanted to enter the Gaza Strip and prevented thousands of Palestinians from leaving Gaza without giving a good reason. In addition, Egypt had not met its obligation to force Israel to do what it was supposed to in return for the organizations' adherence to the lull (al-Jazeera, December 6, 2021).

► A few hours later the Hezbollah-affiliated al-Mayadeen issued a similar report. Al-Mayadeen quoted "sources" accusing Egypt of deliberately delaying the rebuilding of the Gaza Strip,

claiming the Egyptians had no reason to delay keeping their promises to Gaza. **The threat to begin escalating activities against Israel was repeated** (al-Mayadeen, December 6, 2021).



Right: Hamas threat of escalation. The Arabic reads, "Lift the siege or [there will be] an explosion (Palestinian cartoonists' Facebook page, December 7, 2021). Left: Rebuilding the al-Johara Building in Gaza City, destroyed during Operation Guardian of the Walls (al-Risalah Twitter account, December 7, 2021).

► A "reliable Palestinian source" told al-Mayadeen that after Operation Guardian of the Walls Hamas had received many offers from international sources in return for a long-term cease fire. Among the offers were the lifting of the [so-called Israel] "siege," rebuilding the Gaza Strip, operating installations such as a airport and sea port, the construction of an industrial-tourist city on the Egyptian border and promises of giving employment opportunities to young people. The "reliable source" stressed that Hamas always refused to deal with that kind of international program because "it knew where it would lead" (al-Mayadeen, December 3, 2021).

Paying the salaries of Hamas administrative employees

► According to Hamas' information bureau, Hamas administrative employees' salaries will be improved as a result of the new payment method of the money from Qatar. Before the cash from Qatar was delivered to the Gaza Strip, Hamas' 51,000 employees received an average of about \$380 a month, which rose to about \$445 with the money from Qatar. Later their salaries were raised to about \$480. Now, with the new payment method in place, they will be paid about \$575 a month (Shehab, December 3, 2021).

Hamas terrorist operative killed in tunnel collapse

► Hamas' military-terrorist wing reported the death of **Hani Sami Salah**, 28, from the Tufah neighborhood of Gaza City, who was killed in a "resistance" tunnel collapse in an undisclosed location in the Gaza Strip. He was killed, according to the report, while deployed for a future military campaign with Israel (Filastin al-Yawm, December 6, 2021).



**Hani Sami Salah, killed in a tunnel collapse
(Muhammad al-Daiya's Twitter account, December 6, 2021).**

American field hospital in the northern Gaza Strip dismantled

► The American field hospital in the northern Gaza Strip recently began dismantling some of its tents and equipment in response to **Hamas' adamant refusal to cooperate with the hospital staff, which kept patients from coming for treatment.** Hamas claimed the hospital was capable of providing only limited medical services and demanded the hospital increase the variety of treatments it could provide as a condition for cooperation (al-Ayam, December 5, 2021).

The hospital was established by an American organization in October 2019 with the objective of providing medical services for the Gaza Strip for ten years. It was sharply criticized, especially by Fatah, while Hamas spokesmen justified it because it would provide Gazans with medical services and help overcome the acute health crisis. When the hospital was erected **Khalil al-Haya, a member of Hamas' political bureau,** claimed the arrival of the mobile hospital in the Gaza Strip was the direct result of the pressure Hamas had exerted with the return marches (Shehab, October 1, 2019.)



Right: Dismantling the field hospital (hadarat.net, December 5, 2021). Left: Trucks carrying equipment in 2019 for erecting the field hospital at the Kerem Shalom Crossing (Twitter account of journalist Hassan Aslih, September 24, 2019).

Preparations for marking the anniversary of Hamas' founding

► Hamas announced preparations had begun for marking the 34th anniversary of its founding on December 14. The theme of the events will be "defending Jerusalem and the path to liberation" (Shehab, December 1, 2021). The beginning of the activities was announced at a press conference held in front **of the house of the late Sheikh Ahmed Yassin, Hamas founder**, in Gaza City (Hamas website, December 5, 2021). Hamas said that unlike previous celebrations, this year there would be no main rally. Hamas planned to use the funds that would have been spent on the rally for "volunteer projects" (Ma'an, December 5, 2021). That may be the result of Hamas' concern that there would be public criticism of its spending money on a rally while Gazans suffered financial hardships.



Right: Press conference announcing the beginning of the activities. Left: the Hamas logo for the events marking the 34th anniversary of the organization's founding. The Arabic reads, "The defender of Jerusalem and the path to liberation" (Hamas website, December 1, 2021).

Hamas positive response to Kuwait's decision to prevent the entrance of ships carrying Israeli merchandise

► Hashem Qassem, head of the information department of Hamas' "external" leadership, congratulated Kuwait for preventing ships carrying Israeli merchandise from entering its port. He said Kuwait's decision clearly reflected its long-standing pro-Palestinian position and was in line with the decision made by the Arab League 50 years ago to boycott Israel. He called on other Arab-Muslim countries to follow Kuwait's lead (Hamas website, December 4, 2021).



The Arabic reads, "Kuwait prevents the entrance of ships carrying Israeli merchandise"
(Palestinian cartoonists' Facebook page, December 7, 2021).

The Palestinian Authority (PA)

Mahmoud Abbas visits Algeria

► On **December 5, 2021**, Mahmoud Abbas arrived in Algeria for a three-day visit, having been invited by **Algerian President Abdelmadjid Tebboune**. When he arrived he was given a formal reception. **Fayiz Abu Ita, Palestinian representative in Algeria**, said Mahmoud Abbas' visit was part of preparations being made for the Arab League conference planned for Algeria in March 2022, where the Palestinian cause is expected to be the main topic of discussion (Wafa, December 6, 2021).



Mahmoud Abbas meets with the Algerian president Abdelmadjid Tebboune
(Mahmoud Abbas' Facebook page, December 5, 2021).

► During the meeting, Abdelmadjid Tebboune promised Mahmoud Abbas Algeria would donate \$1 to the PA. He also said he was planning hold a meeting of all the Palestinian organizations in the coming months before the Arab League convened. **Senior Hamas figure Musa Abu Marzouq** praised Tebboune's initiative (Hamas website, December 7, 2021). Mahmoud Abbas and Tebboune held a joint press conference where they called for an international peace conference whose objective would be to end the [so-called Israeli] "occupation" (Wafa, December 6, 2021).

Salary cuts in the PA

► The PA ministry of the treasury reported that following "Israel's illegal actions" of deducting funds [from the tax revenues Israel collects for the PA] meant for the families of shaheeds and prisoners, they were reducing the salaries of PA administrative employees for the month of November 2021 by 25%. Employees who receive about \$527 a month or more will receive only 75% of their usual salaries. PA Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh said Israel's continuous deduction of funds from the tax revenues puts the PA in a difficult financial situation (Wafa, December 6, 2021).

Riots in Jenin over death of student in fight

► On December 4, 2021, a fight broke out between students in the American University in Jenin. A student named **Muharan Khalila**, from the village of Jab'a south of Jenin, was stabbed in the stomach and died on the way to the hospital. Three other students were wounded. The Palestinian security forces were reinforced in the area because of concerns of more fights. During the funeral clashes broke out between local residents and the Palestinian security forces who arrived to impose order. Local residents blocked the roads, threw rocks and other objects and closed entrances to the village (QudsN Twitter account, December 6 and 7, 2021). During the funeral the Palestinian security forces were loudly criticized for attacking students and denying them their freedom at the university, which led to students' being killed. They blamed the PA and its security forces for "security anarchy [sic]," and called for the criminals to be brought to trial. **Muhammad Shtayyeh** expressed sorrow over the events and said the PA would work to prevent a reoccurrence (Ma'an, December 5, 2021).



Right: Roads to the village of Jab'a blocked. Left: Dozens of masked, armed Palestinians at the funeral held in Jab'a for the murdered student (Jab'a Facebook page, December 6, 2021).

Christmas in the PA

► **Muhammad Shtayyeh** participated in the ceremony for lighting the Christmas tree, which marked the beginning of the holiday season. The ceremony was held in front of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. He said he welcomed the participants in the name of Mahmoud Abbas, and that everyone was united around the Christmas tree. He also said a prayer for the end of the "occupation" (Muhammad Shtayyeh's Facebook page, December 4, 2021). Two days later he participated in a similar ceremony in Menara Square in the center of Ramallah, where he said the Palestinians faced many challenges and their wish was to get rid of the "occupation" (Muhammad Shtayyeh's Facebook page, December 6, 2021).



Right: Muhammad Shtayyeh at the tree lighting ceremony in front of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem (Muhammad Shtayyeh's Facebook page, December 4, 2021). Left: Tree lighting ceremony in Menara Square in Ramallah (Muhammad Shtayyeh's Facebook page, December 6, 2021).

The coronavirus

Judea and Samaria

► According to the ministry of health in Ramallah, on **December 7, 2021**, there were 2,184 active cases in Judea and Samaria, up from 1,555 on November 29, 2021, and 58 Palestinians were hospitalized, 12 on them on ventilators. So far 2,899 Palestinians have died. There are 1,044,728 full vaccinated (two shots) Palestinians, up from 1,034,699 on November 29, 2021 (ministry of health in Ramallah Facebook page, December 7, 2021).

► **Mai al-Kayla, PA minister of health**, reported that 100 random Palestinians who recently returned from abroad were tested to rule out the entrance of the omicron variant into the PA.

On December 6, 2021, **Dr. Kamel al-Shehara, spokesman for the ministry of health in Ramallah**, reported that of 130 samples taken no one was found to be carrying the omicron variant (ministry of health in Ramallah Facebook page, December 6, 2021).

► **Mai al-Kayla** again called on Palestinians to be vaccinated, stressing that the ministry of health had a sufficient number of vaccine doses. She said that of all Palestinians living in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, 42% had been vaccinated, 60% of Palestinians in the West Bank and 27.3% in the Gaza Strip (ministry of health in Ramallah Facebook page, December 5, 2021).

The Gaza Strip

► On **December 7, 2021**, the ministry of health in Ramallah reported 1,444 active cases. Of 961 tests administrations between December 6 and 7, 2021, 114 new cases were found, a positive rate of 12%. So far 1,656 Gazans have died of coronavirus-related causes, up from 1,647 on November 30, 2021. There are 68 hospitalized Gazans, 42 of them in serious or critical condition. So far 515,206 Gazans have been vaccinated, up from 507,263 on November 30, 2021 (ministry of health in Gaza Facebook page, December 7, 2021).