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Groundworks have begun for the separation fence construction in the Qalqiliya area

Eitan Rabin 21.12.1995

IDF engineering units and private contractors, using bulldozers, have yesterday begun the preliminary works to prepare the land and level the ground for the separation fence construction along an 11 km. route between Qalqiliya, Tulkarm and other Arab settlements in the area, and the Jewish seam-line settlements there, such as Kfar Sava, Alfe Menashe and others.

Qalqiliya residents in their hundreds responded to the Mosques' call announced on loudspeakers to come to the site and demonstrate against the erection of the fence, and to protest against the land seizures it entails. Recall, under the State Attorney General's directive lands must not be seized inside the Palestinian territory for the construction of security fences. The protesters disrupted the works, and the bulldozers operation was stopped until a solution is found.

The Coordinator of Government Activities in the Territories, Major General Oren Shachor, said yesterday: "in that part defined as vital for the construction of the fence, there will indeed be a fence". In the security establishment they are considering compensation for those Palestinians whose lands the IDF has seized.

The decision to erect the separation fence was also relayed to top officials of the Palestinian Authority, and it encountered no opposition on their part. The fence should be erected within 6 months, but it is estimated that its construction will be finished at an earlier date.