

Ayat

by Susanna Vilpponen

Palestine has suffered greatly due to the current wave of violence. It's affecting students greatly. They are afraid and do not have safe access to education. Increased violence from Israeli settlers and the Israeli military threatens the students' security. They are now experiencing violence and harassment from settlers on a regular basis on their way to and from school.

Ayat Jabari, age 30, is living with her family next to the illegal Israeli settlement. She is studying at the University of Hebron for her second degree. She is happy to have a chance to study again but everyday life is difficult and dangerous for her.

Ayat tells that she was once coming home from the university. Settlers were praying next to her home and when they saw Ayat they started to throw stones at her. She was hit on the head by a stone and knocked unconscious. Her family called an ambulance but it took two and a half hours to come because Israeli army had closed the checkpoint near to her home. It took over two hours for the ambulance personnel to negotiate the permission to enter the area. Ayat had problems after the incident; she couldn't see well and was suffering from headaches, which caused insomnia. While recovering from the incident, she couldn't study.

Even inside her house, Ayat is not safe. Settlers often throw stones and shout outside her house, sometimes all night long. "On Fridays, we only stay inside of the house. Nobody can sleep", Ayat says.

Settlers have also tried to enter the house, and soldiers have been throwing tear gas to the house when there have been pregnant women and children inside.

The family doesn't receive any visitors, because the house is deemed too dangerous. Ayat hopes that the situation will get better and there'll be a change soon.

"I am so afraid. I hope one day I could bring my brothers out from here to see something different. They only know this kind of life. They don't know of anything beautiful."