Yazur Massacre 1948: Palmach Attacks on a Village near Jaffa

Between December 1947 and February 1948, the Palmach and Haganah launched a series of attacks on the village of Yazur, southeast of Jaffa, throwing bombs at the village coffeehouse and its residents, blowing up homes and ambushing its workers' buses. The attacks peaked at dawn on 22 January 1948 in a surprise assault that blew up homes and buildings in the village and killed 15 of its people, most of them in their beds. [1] [2]

WAFA says the order came from Haganah operations officer Yigael Yadin to Palmach commander Yigal Allon, that Yitzhak Rabin led the attack himself, and that its details were not revealed until 1981. [1] All three later became among the most prominent leaders of the occupation state, some presented as "moderates."

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The Yazur massacre at a glance

Item	Details
Date	A series of attacks from December 1947 to February 1948, peaking at dawn on 22 January 1948 [2] [1]

Item	Details
Place	The village of Yazur, about 6 km southeast of Jaffa [2]
Perpetrator	The Palmach and the Givati Brigade; according to WAFA, Yitzhak Rabin led the attack on orders from Yigael Yadin to Yigal Allon [1]
Method	Blowing up homes, throwing bombs at the coffeehouse and residents, and attacking workers' buses [1] [2]
Victims	15 in the dawn attack according to WAFA, most of them in their beds, besides the victims of other attacks [1] [2]
Fate of the village	Occupied on 30 April/1 May 1948 during Operation "Hametz," and the settlement of "Azor" was built on its land [2]

Yazur

Yazur was a Palestinian village of the Jaffa district, on the central coastal plain about 6 kilometers from Jaffa, on the road between Jaffa and Jerusalem. It had 4,030 inhabitants in 1945, and its lands covered 11,807 dunums, most of them cultivable. [2]

The series of attacks: December 1947 – February 1948

After the Partition Resolution, Yazur, lying on the Jerusalem–Tel Aviv road, became a frequent target of Zionist attacks. According to WAFA, guards of Zionist convoys on the road repeatedly fired on and threw bombs at the village and its residents. [1] The Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question documents a series of these attacks: [2]

Date	Attack
11 December 1947	A vehicle sped through the village throwing bombs at the coffeehouse and a barber shop [2]
18 December 1947	Zionist gunmen disguised as British soldiers threw bombs at the village coffeehouse, killing six villagers [2]

Date	Attack
30 December 1947	A villagers' patrol discovered a party mining houses and drove it off [2]
8 January 1948	A raid on the village [2]
22 January 1948	The dawn attack; and an ambush of a truck carrying Yazur workers, killing three and wounding 12 [2] [1]
30 January 1948	A raid from the settlement of Moledet in which an elderly man died under the rubble of a demolished house [2]
20 February 1948	An attack that destroyed the village's ice factory [2]

The dawn attack: 22 January 1948

WAFA says that when an escort vehicle carrying seven Zionists hit a mine near Yazur, killing its passengers, Yigael Yadin ordered Palmach commander Yigal Allon to carry out a military operation against the village as soon as possible, blowing up and burning homes and killing residents. Palmach units and the Givati Brigade then organized a series of operations against homes and buses carrying unarmed Palestinians. [1]

About thirty days after the mine explosion, at dawn on 22 January 1948, Yitzhak Rabin, then Palmach operations officer, led a surprise and sweeping attack on the village; the attacking forces blew up a number of homes and buildings, and 15 Palestinians of Yazur were killed, most of them in their beds. [1]

The occupation of Yazur and the expulsion of its people

On 30 April or 1 May 1948, during Operation "Hametz," which overran the villages around Jaffa, the Haganah occupied Yazur, two days after an Arab Liberation Army unit withdrew from it; it was one of the last two strongholds in the Jaffa subdistrict. Its people were driven out. [2]

The settlement of "Azor" was built on Yazur's land in 1948, alongside "Mikveh

Israel," founded in 1870 on part of its land. The village's two shrines still stand, one of stone with a dozen domes clustered around a central dome, and some of its houses remain, some used commercially. [2]

Read about the Zionist massacres against the Palestinian people.

Conclusion

The Yazur massacre was not a single attack but a series of raids lasting months: bombs on the village coffeehouse, ambushes of its workers, and homes blown up over their occupants, until the dawn of 22 January 1948, when fifteen of its people were killed in their beds. Three months later the village was occupied and its people driven out. The Yazur massacre remains a testament that those who later became leaders of the occupation state, some presented as "moderates," oversaw massacres from the very beginning.

Frequently asked questions about the Yazur massacre

When did the Yazur massacre take place?

The series of attacks on Yazur peaked at dawn on 22 January 1948, after repeated attacks since December 1947.

Where is Yazur?

In the Jaffa district, about 6 kilometers southeast of Jaffa, on the road between Jaffa and Jerusalem.

How many people were killed in the Yazur massacre?

Fifteen were killed in the dawn attack according to WAFA, most in their beds, in addition to six in the attack of 18 December 1947 and three in an ambush of workers.

Who led the attack on Yazur?

WAFA says Yitzhak Rabin led it, on orders from Yigael Yadin to Yigal Allon, both of whom later became leaders of the occupation state.

What happened to the village of Yazur?

It was occupied on 30 April/1 May 1948 during Operation “Hametz,” its people were driven out, and the settlement of “Azor” was built on its land.

Sources and references

Arabic-language sources are listed with translated titles.

1. “Israeli Massacres,” Palestinian National Information Center (WAFA).
2. “Yazur,” Interactive Encyclopedia of the Palestine Question, Institute for Palestine Studies.