



In Israel's Negev desert, ethnic cleansing is once again rearing its ugly head.

The unrecognised Bedouin village of Umm Al Hiran faces demolition and replacement with a Jewish town, Hiran. Seven hundred villagers face displacement, and only because they are of the wrong ethnicity.

Umm Al Hiran is one of tens of unrecognised villages in the Negev, inhabited by descendants of the Abu al-Qian tribe. Located in the area of Wadi Attir, the village is divided into two areas: Umm Al Hiran and Attir.

Attir is also facing demolition in order to expand a Jewish National Fund (JNF) forest - in Israel, greenery is more important than Palestinians. Both these areas are in the master plan of the Be'er Sheva metropolitan area.

While the Israeli state has justified the demolition, by claiming the villagers are squatters on government land, the reality is that they were transferred to the Yattir Forest in 1956 by direct order of the military administration at the time. Villagers claim this was done to clear space for military use and that they were given guns to defend the border from West Bank infiltrators.

Umm al Hiran was founded by military order - yet it is 'unrecognised'

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