



Israeli bulldozers destroyed six buildings, including at least three homes, in contested east Jerusalem on Tuesday, resuming the demolition of Palestinian property after a halt aimed at encouraging peace talks.

Jerusalem house demolitions are a volatile issue because of conflicting Israeli and Palestinian claims to the city's eastern sector. Israel sees it as part of its capital city, while Palestinians want it for their own future capital.

The municipality said none of the structures razed were homes, and that all had been illegally built and were not populated. The demolitions were carried out by a court order, the municipality said in a statement.

But Palestinians disputed those claims, saying three of the demolished structures were homes and one was a warehouse. Two daybeds and bags crammed with children's clothing and kitchen utensils were strewn outside one of the buildings.

Basem Isawi, 48, an unemployed contractor, stood stony-faced amid the rubble of his unfinished home, forbidding his six children to come out of the nearby house where they currently live to see what had happened to it.

Isawi said he built the almost-finished home illegally for about \$25,000 because he was convinced the municipality would deny him a permit. He had been notified of the impending demolition but did not know when it was slated to happen, he said.

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