

Israeli settlers attack Palestinian school in West Bank, set fire to classroom

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The photo shows a school classroom attacked by Israeli settlers at the village of Urif, south of the occupied West Bank city of Nablus, on October 16, 2022. (Photo by Wafa news agency)

Ramallah, October 16 (RHC)-- In a new act of provocation, a group of extremist Israeli settlers have attacked a school at a village near the occupied West Bank city of Nablus, setting ablaze a classroom. Palestine's Wafa news agency, citing local sources, reported on Sunday that the raid by Israeli settlers took place at the village of Urif, south of Nablus in the middle of the night.

Ghassan Daghlis, a local Palestinian activist, said settlers from the nearby notorious settlement of Yitzhar entered the village and shattered some of the school's windows, as they vandalized the equipment there.

This comes amid heightened Israeli military restrictions and shutdown of several roads in the occupied territories, coupled by a noticeable increase in attacks by extremist Israeli settlers on vulnerable Palestinian communities in the region.

Acts of sabotage and settler violence against Palestinians and their property are commonplace throughout the occupied territories, particularly in the West Bank. However, Israeli authorities rarely prosecute the settlers and the majority of the files are closed due to deliberate police failure to investigate properly.

Settler violence includes property and mosque arson attacks, stone-throwing, uprooting of crops and olive trees, attacks on vulnerable homes, among others.

Israeli settlers have noticeably escalated attacks against Palestinians in the occupied West Bank in recent months. The United Nations has already warned of a surge in Israeli settler violence against Palestinians, mostly in the areas of al-Khalil, al-Quds, Nablus and Ramallah.

More than 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 settlements built since the 1967 Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories of the West Bank and East al-Quds.

All the settlements are illegal under international law. The UN Security Council has condemned Israel's settlement activities in the occupied territories in several resolutions. Separately on Sunday, scores of Israeli settlers once again intruded into the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the occupied Old City of al-Quds under the protection of the regime's forces, and performed rituals across its courtyards.

The Islamic Waqf department, which is in charge of al-Aqsa Mosque, said nearly 250 Israeli settlers broke into the site through the Moroccan Gate on the western side of the compound, which has been under the Israeli regime's control since the beginning of the occupation of East al-Quds and the West Bank in 1967, and performed Talmudic rituals.

Over the past couple of weeks, hundreds of settlers, escorted by the Israeli forces, have made incursions into the holy site on a daily basis and provocatively performed rituals during the Jewish holidays.

Israeli right-wing groups have called for the storming of the al-Aqsa Mosque compound so as to increase Jewish presence there on the seventh and final day of the Jewish Sukkot holiday. The extremist right-wing groups openly call for turning the holy site into a Jewish worship area and tearing down the Islamic shrines in order to build a Jewish temple on the location.

Hardline Israeli legislators and settlers regularly storm the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the occupied city, a provocative move that infuriates Palestinians. Such mass settler break-ins almost always take place at the behest of Tel Aviv-backed temple groups and under the auspices of the Israeli police in al-Quds.

The al-Aqsa Mosque compound, which sits just above the Western Wall plaza, houses both the Dome of the Rock and al-Aqsa Mosque.

The Israeli regime enables the Jewish visitation of al-Aqsa despite the fact that an agreement signed between Israel and the Jordanian government in the wake of Israel's occupation of East al-Quds in 1967 prohibits non-Muslim worship at the compound.



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