

Israeli forces clash with Palestinian worshipers at al-Aqsa on Eid al-Adha

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Jerusalem, June 28 (RHC)-- Israeli forces have clashed with Palestinians in the al-Aqsa Mosque compound as tens of thousands of worshippers performed Eid al-Adha prayers at the holy site in occupied East al-Quds.

More than 100,000 Muslim worshippers gathered at al-Aqsa Mosque, the third holiest site for Muslims, on Wednesday to attend prayers to mark Eid al-Adha, or the Feast of Sacrifice. They came from all over the occupied territories, despite the Israeli police's roadblocks and searches that prevented many from entering the holy site, according to the Palestinian Wafa news agency.

Violence broke out when Israeli forces stormed the holy compound, forced worshippers out of the Bab al-Rahma prayer area, and arrested at least 18 Palestinian worshippers inside.

Bab al-Rahma, also known as the Gate of Mercy or Golden Gate, is one of the gates leading to the al-Aqsa Mosque. The Israeli authorities intend to turn it into a prayer area for the Jewish settlers and have been keeping Muslims out of the site.

Palestinian, Arab, and Muslim officials have warned that any change in the decades-long status quo at the holy compound could spark violence and religious conflict.

Palestinians believe that the Israeli regime is systematically working to Judaize al-Quds, where al-Aqsa Mosque is located, and erase its Arab and Islamic identity.

In one of the latest plans, a Keenest member proposed earlier this month to divide time and space at the mosque, drawing condemnation from Palestinians and Muslims worldwide.

A coalition of Palestinian resistance groups in the besieged Gaza Strip denounced the plot, calling it a declaration of war. They also held the far-right Israeli administration led by prime minister Benjamin Netanyahu fully responsible for the grave consequences of implementing the controversial plan. The groups urged the entire Muslim nation to fulfill their duties and resist the Tel Aviv regime's plots against al-Quds and al-Aqsa Mosque.

The al-Aqsa Mosque compound is located above the Western Wall plaza and contains both the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa Mosque. According to an agreement signed between Israel and the Jordanian government after Israel's occupation of East al-Quds in 1967, non-Muslim worship at al-Aqsa Mosque is prohibited.

Many of the Israeli Knesset members are right-wing extremists who support destroying the Islamic site and building a Jewish temple instead.

The Islamic Jihad resistance movement slams Israeli troops' incursion into a prayer area in the al-Aqsa Mosque compound.

Netanyahu's current Israeli cabinet is the most extremist ever in the occupying regime's history. Since its formation last year, it has introduced several apartheid laws affecting Arabs in the occupied territories and Palestinians and encouraged illegal settlement.

Palestinians want the occupied West Bank as part of their future independent state and view al-Quds' eastern sector as their capital.

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