

Over 170 Israeli settlers intrude into al-Aqsa Mosque in latest act of provocation

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Ramallah, August 28 (RHC)-- More than 170 Israeli settlers, under heavy protection by the regime forces, have broken into the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the occupied Old City of al-Quds in the latest act of provocation against the sacred site.

Palestine's Shehab news agency said the settlers entered the courtyards of the holy site through the Moroccan Gate, also known as the Mughrabi Gate, and made a provocative tour of the premises on Sunday. The regime had since morning deployed soldiers inside and around the mosque to secure the intrusion.

The Islamic Endowment Department in al-Quds was cited by Palestine's Safa News Agency as saying that 173 settlers provocatively performed rituals and Talmudic prayers at Bab al-Rahma (Gate of Mercy) area, in violation of the site's status quo.

Israeli forces prevented Palestinian worshipers from entering the mosque.

Israeli settler incursions into al-Aqsa Mosque and violence against Palestinians have been on the rise since the cabinet of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu took office last December.

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, leading to daily confrontations with Palestinians at the mosque, with many injured, arrested and killed.

Non-Muslim worship at the compound is prohibited according to an agreement between Israel and Jordan following the regime's seizure of East al-Quds in 1967.

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