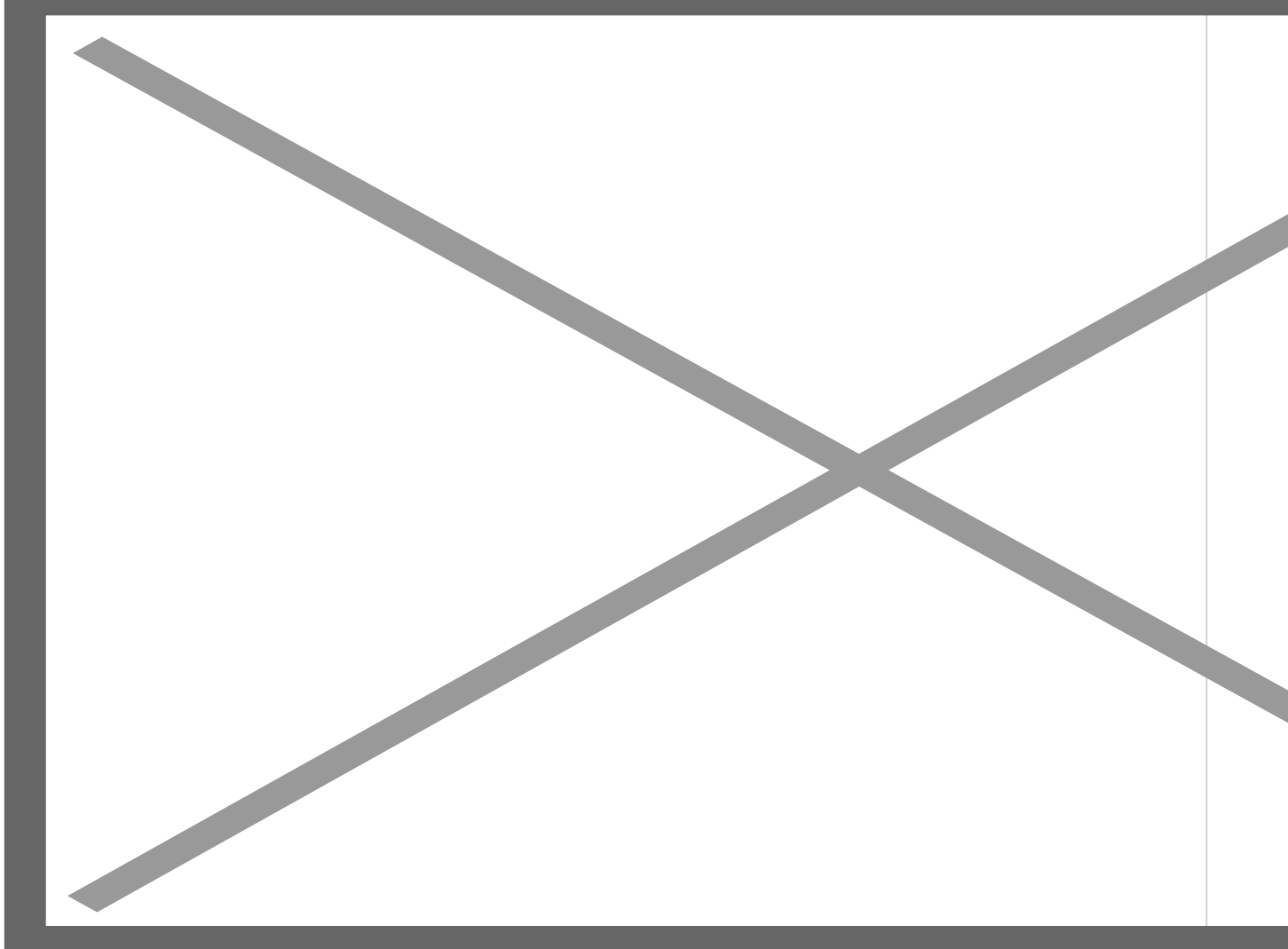


# *Extremist Israeli minister calls for Ramadan to be wiped out amid West Bank tensions*

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Israeli forces detain a Palestinian woman at the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the Old City of the occupied East al-Quds. (via Reuters)

Tel Aviv, March 5 (RHC)-- A far-right Israeli minister has called for the holy month of Ramadan to be "wiped out" as tensions are escalating across the occupied West Bank amid the regime's genocidal war in the Gaza Strip. The comment was made by Israeli heritage minister, Amichai Eliyahu, in an interview with the regime's Army Radio ahead of the Muslims' holy month, which will start around March 10.

"The so-called month of Ramadan must be wiped out, and our fear of this month must also be wiped out," Eliyahu said.

His remarks came as the latest Israeli security reports have indicated the regime's fears of an eruption of the situation in the occupied West Bank and East al-Quds during Ramadan as a result of the Israeli war on Gaza and the restrictions that the Tel Aviv regime intends to impose on al-Aqsa Mosque during the holy month.

The mosque is Islam's third holiest site and usually attracts hundreds of thousands of worshippers especially during Ramadan. Last month, Israel's Channel 13 reported that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has ordered restrictions on Palestinians' access to al-Aqsa Mosque during the month of Ramadan.

With access to the holy site already limited for prayers, especially on Fridays, since October 7th when the regime launched its genocidal military aggression against Gaza, the move to impose tougher restrictions in Ramadan has been deemed extremely provocative and dangerous by many observers and rights groups.

Eliyahu, however, said in his interview that potential tensions during the holy month in the war-ravaged Gaza and the West Bank should be disregarded by the regime. He is a member of the far-right, extremist Otzma Yehudit (Jewish Power) party, which has been described as fascist and anti-Arab. His party is headed by Itamar Ben-Gvir, the regime's far-right minister of national security. Ben-Gvir has called for the expulsion of Palestinians from Gaza and the building of Israeli settlements in the territory as well as the shooting of Palestinian women and children.

Eliyahu, for his part, has made similarly violent remarks, including in November when he said "using a nuclear weapon was an option" for the Israeli army during its onslaught on Gaza, claiming that the territory had "no right to exist."

The Council on Muslim-American Relations (CAIR) has slammed Eliyahu's remarks, urging U.S. President Joe Biden to condemn them as well. "Once again, an Israeli ... official has openly made genocidal remarks that the Biden administration has failed to condemn. Enough is enough," CAIR Deputy Executive Director Edward Ahmed Mitchel said in a statement.

The Israeli regime "keeps screaming to everyone that will listen that it is waging a war on the entire Palestinian population, as well as their cultural symbols, from churches to mosques to even Ramadan itself," he added while referring to past remarks made by Israeli politicians endorsing and encouraging attacks on civilians in Gaza.

Mitchell concluded by saying that it is time for Biden to condemn the Israeli regime "before it acts on its latest genocidal threats."

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