

Israeli Forces Storm al-Aqsa Mosque for Third Consecutive Day



Ramallah, June 28 (RHC)-- Israeli military forces have once again raided the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the Israeli-occupied Old City of Jerusalem and engaged in scuffles with a group of Palestinians there.

On Tuesday morning, Israeli forces stormed the mosque for a third consecutive day as a large number of Palestinian worshippers were performing prayers at Islam's third-holiest site during the holy fasting month of Ramadan, al-Aqsa television network reported.

Violence broke out when Israeli troopers attacked Palestinians, and fired rubber-coated steel bullets as well as stun grenades to disperse the crowd. There were no immediate reports of casualties.

The development came only a day after Sheikh Omar al-Kiswani, the director of al-Aqsa Mosque, said at least 35 Palestinian sustained injuries on Monday when nearly 250 Israeli soldiers, escorting a crowd of illegal settlers, stormed the holy site and clashed with worshipers.

He added that Israeli forces chased Palestinian worshippers and beat them with batons, shut the doors of the al-Qibli Chapel, and fired rubber bullets as well as tear gas canisters to scatter the people who were

protesting the desecration of the mosque.

Meanwhile, Israeli authorities have prevented settlers and non-Muslims from entering the al-Aqsa Mosque until the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

Scores of Israeli security forces have reportedly encircled the al-Aqsa Mosque compound and are closely monitoring the entry of Palestinians into and their departure from the holy site.

The occupied Palestinian territories have been the scene of heightened tensions since August 2015, when Israel imposed restrictions on the entry of Palestinian worshippers into the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in East Jerusalem.

Palestinians are angry at increasing violence by Israeli settlers at the al-Aqsa Mosque compound, saying the Tel Aviv regime seeks to change the status quo of the sacred site. Nearly 220 Palestinians have lost their lives at the hands of Israeli forces since the beginning of last October.

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