

# *Israeli forces assault journalists and worshipers at al-Aqsa Mosque compound*

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Ramallah, October 6 (RHC)-- Israeli occupying forces have attacked Palestinian worshippers and reporters as hundreds of extremist settlers forced their way into the flashpoint al-Aqsa Mosque complex in

occupied East al-Quds.

Earlier this week, hundreds of Israeli settlers once again broke into al-Aqsa under the protection of the regime's forces and carried out provocative actions in the holy site.

In a statement released in Ramallah, the Jordan-run Islamic Waqf Department, which is in charge of al-Aqsa Mosque affairs said Israeli forces closed the Moroccan Gate, also known as the Mughrabi Gate, "after allowing 602 Jewish extremists" into the site.

According to witnesses, Israeli settlers entered the holy site in groups. The al-Quds Governorate published a video on its Facebook account of Jewish settlers trying to enter animal sacrifices inside the complex. Citing local sources, Palestinian media reported that the occupation soldiers beat up worshipers and journalists who were covering events in and around the holy compound in East al-Quds.

Calls for the regular presence of Jewish extremists in the al-Aqsa Mosque have increased in recent days concurrent with holidays marking a Jewish festival.

Israeli police began allowing the settler incursions into the Al-Aqsa Mosque complex in recent years, despite repeated condemnations from Palestinians. Israeli settler incursions into al-Aqsa Mosque and violence against Palestinians have been on the rise since the far-right extremist 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.

This is while non-Muslim worship at the al-Aqsa Mosque compound is prohibited according to an agreement between the occupying Israeli regime and the Jordanian government following the regime's illegal seizure of East al-Quds in 1967.

The Palestinian resistance movement Hamas on Sunday condemned Israel's continued desecration and attacks on the al-Aqsa Mosque Compound, saying the Tel Aviv regime has launched "a religious war" against the holy site to implement its plan of dividing it by any means.

Israeli army targets journalists across occupied territories with impunity The occupied Palestinian territory has seen many journalists killed in the line of duty in recent years. Israel targets non-combatants frequently, especially journalists and medics.

Tel Aviv regime forces recently targeted Palestinian photojournalist Ashraf Abu Amra while he was covering similar protests.

In 2018, volunteer medic Razan Al-Najjar, 21, was shot and killed while tending to Palestinians wounded during the Great March of Return protests in Gaza.

In May 2022, the Israeli army shot dead Al Jazeera correspondent Shireen Abu Akleh.

Israel says it will not cooperate with any external probe into the killing of veteran Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh. Several reports and human rights groups concluded that slain Al Jazeera reporter Abu Akleh was intentionally targeted by Israeli troops, dismissing the Israeli regime's account that the killing was unintentional.

Abu Akleh was shot in the head and killed by the Israeli army forces on May 11 of that year while she was covering their raid in the Jenin refugee camp in the occupied West Bank. At the time of her killing, the 51-year-old journalist was wearing easily recognizable press attire.

The Israeli army has killed in cold blood more than 55 journalists in the occupied Palestinian territory since 2000.

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