

*Israeli forces attack Palestinian worshippers, blocking their entry into al-Aqsa Mosque*

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Occupied East Jerusalem, March 11 (RHC)-- Israeli forces have attacked hundreds of Palestinian worshippers heading to the al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the occupied West Bank city of al-Quds to perform Taraweeh prayers, preventing their entry into the sacred site.

Eyewitnesses said the regime's forces detained Palestinian citizens at the gates of al-Aqsa Mosque during Sunday evening attack and impeded their access to it, the Palestinian Wafa news agency reported.

Israeli forces have also imposed restrictions on young men entering al-Aqsa Mosque to perform Taraweeh, only allowing women above the age of 40 to enter. The Tel Aviv regime has been imposing a strict siege on al-Aqsa Mosque and blocking Palestinians' access to it since five months ago, when it

started its war of genocide on the besieged Gaza Strip.

The regime has also issued dozens of deportation orders against Palestinian residents of al-Quds to prevent them from praying during the holy month of Ramadan.

Reacting to the regime's restrictions on the holy site, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad issued a statement on Sunday, warning that the regime is "playing with fire."

"The desecration of the blessed al-Aqsa Mosque by the occupation and the settler gangs, and their restriction of the movement and access of [Palestinian] worshippers to it is playing with fire," the movement said.

The Islamic Jihad added that the resistance movement and the Palestinian people will not remain silent in the face of the regime's measures. In a statement in late February, the Palestinian resistance movement Hamas had warned of a new escalation if the Israeli regime went ahead with its plan to restrict Muslims praying in the al-Aqsa Mosque during the holy month of Ramadan.

"Let our enemy know that souls are boiling ... [our] anger is imminent ... and an explosion is coming in response to any restrictions on the entry of Muslims to al-Aqsa Mosque during the month of Ramadan," the movement said.

Separately, the movement's representative in Lebanon warned that the planned restriction on Ramadan prayers was a further proof to the Israeli war cabinet's inclination toward a full assault on al-Aqsa Mosque. Osama Hamdan called on all Palestinians living in the occupied territories outside Gaza to stand up against Israel's restrictions.

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