

《Clashes between worshippers, Israeli police erupt outside Je》

ERUSALEM - Clashes erupted outside East Jerusalem's al-Aqsa mosque compound on Sunday as Israeli authorities implemented new security measures at the Mosque entrance.

Palestinian media reported that several Palestinians were injured during the clashes. A video footage broadcast on Israel's Channel 2 TV news showed anti-riots police beating and kicking demonstrators outside the compound.

A police statement said one person was arrested for rioting.

The Israeli measures, including CCTVs covering the entire compound, checkpoints and metal detectors at the entrances, were installed after three Palestinian Muslims with Israeli citizenship shot dead two Israel policemen on Friday morning.

The gunmen, all from the Arab city of Umm al-Fahm in central Israel, were subsequently shot and killed by the police.

Immediately after the incident, Israel shut down the compound, saying that security forces need to check the site for more militants or ammunition.

It was the first time in 50 years that Israel closed the compound, which is Islam's third holiest site.

On Sunday, Israel reopened the holy site but required all visitors to undergo security checks through metal detectors that were placed at two gates. Only Muslim residents of Jerusalem were allowed to enter.

The police said they plan to gradually open additional gates, after installing metal detectors.

The Waqf, a Muslim religious authority that administrates the compound, rejected the new measures and refused to hold prayers at the mosque. The Waqf said that the measures were a breach of the status quo.

Omar Kiswani, director of al-Aqsa Mosque, told reporters outside the site that "the closure, the occupation, and the prevention of the call for prayers are all unfair and unjust and constitute a violation of the United Nations resolutions and the international agreements."

"We hold the Israeli government responsible for the changes they have made in the al-Aqsa Mosque and taking its control away from us. We will stay outside the mosque until we get back the way it was taken from us," he said.

Dozens of worshippers stood outside the Lions' Gate in the Old City of Jerusalem and held a public prayer in protest of the new measures. Some women wailed and cried that al-Aqsa is in danger, while others chanted "with our spirit, we will redeem you al-Aqsa!"

Israel's Minister of Internal Security Gilad Erdan said that at least two more gates are planned to be opened on Monday. The police hope to allow also Jewish visitors to the site later this week, he said.

Israel seized East Jerusalem, where al-Aqsa is located, along with the rest of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip during the 1967 Middle East war. Israel subsequently annexed East Jerusalem, claiming it part of its "eternal and indivisible" capital, in a move never recognized internationally.

The compound site is holy to both Muslims, who revered it as the Noble Sanctuary, and to Jews, who know it as the Temple Mount. Jews revere the site as the place of their historic temples, the last of which was ruined by the Romans in 70 AD.

Due to the special sensitivity, the Muslim Waqf is responsible for the administration of the site. Israeli Jews are allowed to visit the site but not to pray there.

In recent months, far-right Israeli lawmakers renewed their calls to change the long-held status quo and to lift the restrictions on Jewish prayers, escalating the tensions in and around the compound.

