

《Remains of Christian site found in Gaza during construction》

Construction workers in the Gaza Strip have reportedly discovered what they believe to be a Christian religious site from the Byzantine era. The Palestine Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities says the discoveries include remnants of marble Corinthian pillars, foundations and crowns and some of them bearing the Greek cross.

A cross is the defining feature of this stone block, unearthed from a construction pit in Gaza City. The columns, and various stone blocks, decorated with elaborate engravings, have become a big point of interest for Palestinian locals.



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While people gather to one side of the construction site, frenetic work continues in the pit below. Some of the blocks appear to have been recently damaged while being moved.

“These columns and capitals belong to a building, but I can’t confirm it was originally on the same site. There might be a structure nearby that had existed in the Byzantine era and it might have been a big important church. But the columns we found in the digging are broken and not complete as a whole, some of them are nearly complete and

some broken probably due to one of the earthquakes that hit Gaza through its history,” said Heyam Al-Bitar, research director of Palestine Tourism & Antiquities Ministry.

The research director says the ruins likely belong to a church-like structure that existed in what is now Gaza City.

“I affirm they go back to the sixth century, particularly in Emperor Justinian’s time, which saw large buildings rich in ornamentation,” Heyam Al-Bitar said.

Dr. Jamal Abu Reda, is the director of the Antiquities and Heritage department in the Tourism and Antiquities ministry.

“What was found will be moved at the end of this week to the Al-Basha Palace Museum to clean it and read everything written on it, such as scripts, to record the details of what has been found in this place,” Dr. Jamal Abu Reda said.

The items were discovered during the construction of a shopping center. Today, the Gaza Strip is made up of mostly Muslims, but is still home to a small Christian community.

