

《Israel bans men under 50 from disputed Jerusalem holy site》

Israel sent extra police into Jerusalem on Friday and said men under the age of 50 would be banned from the Old City's al-Aqsa Mosque for the day in anticipation of more mass protests.

Tensions have been high at the compound for two weeks, often erupting into clashes, after two Israeli police officers were killed there, prompting Israel to install metal detectors at the entrance to the site and a subsequent Muslim boycott.

Under immense diplomatic pressure Israel removed the metal detectors on Thursday, a move welcomed by the Arab world, but violence quickly returned when thousands of Muslim worshippers surged into the mosque.



Palestinian men pray as Israeli security forces secure the outside of the compound known to Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary and to Jews as the Temple Mount, in Jerusalem's Old City, July 26, 2017. /Reuters Photo

Before Israel removed the new security apparatus, Palestinian factions had called for a "day of rage" on Friday.

"Security assessments were made and there are indications that disturbances and demonstrations will take place today," police spokesman Micky Rosenfeld said.

"Extra police and border police are in and around the Old City and will respond to any disturbances."

He said women of all ages will be allowed into the site, referred to by Jews as the Temple Mount and by Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary.



Palestinians celebrate outside Lion's gate at the entrance to Jerusalem's Old City following Israel's removal of security measures, July 27, 2017. /Reuters Photo

Israel captured East Jerusalem, including the Old City and the holy compound, in the 1967 Middle East war. It annexed the area in a move that has never been recognised internationally.

Al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third holiest shrine, sits on a tree-lined marble plateau in the heart of the Old City. It is

also the holiest place in Judaism - the venue of two ancient temples, the last destroyed by the Romans. Jews pray under heavy security at the Western Wall at the foot of the elevated plaza.

The dispute, like many in the Holy Land, is about more than security devices, taking in issues of sovereignty, religious freedom, occupation and Palestinian nationalism.

(Source: Reuters)

