

## **Najib: Malaysia condemns Israel closing Al-Aqsa Mosque**

**Free Malaysia Today**

**July 16, 2017**

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**The provocative action by Israel is a flagrant violation of Muslims' rights to perform religious rituals in their holy places free from any restriction, says Wisma Putra.**

KUALA LUMPUR: Prime Minister Najib Razak said Malaysia strongly condemns Israel for closing the Al-Aqsa Mosque.

“Malaysia strongly condemns Israel for closing the Al-Aqsa mosque and denying the rights of the Muslims to perform Friday prayers there,” he said in his Twitter account today.

According to news reports, Israeli police closed and cancelled Friday prayers in the Al-Aqsa Mosque after three Palestinians and two Israeli police officers were killed in a gun battle in the mosque compound.

Al Jazeera, the independent news channel in the Arab world, reported that following the incident Israeli police cleared the Al-Aqsa Mosque and closed it to the public.

Meanwhile, Wisma Putra, in a statement today stressed that the action by the Israeli authorities was a violation of international laws and norms.

“This is the first time since 1969 that Muslim worshippers are banned from performing Friday prayers in the Al-Aqsa Mosque,” it said.

The foreign ministry further stressed that the provocative action by Israeli constitutes a flagrant violation of Muslims’ rights to perform their religious rituals in their holy places free from any restriction and that the freedom to worship was a right guaranteed under the international law.

Thus, the ministry said Malaysia demanded that Israel immediately re-open the Al-Aqsa Mosque to Muslim worshippers and cease any action that would change the status quo of the Islamic holy site.

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Source: <http://www.freemalysiatoday.com/category/nation/2017/07/16/najib-malaysia-condemns-israel-closing-al-aqsa-mosque/>