

30 hurt, 10 arrested in Umm el-Fahm march

by UPI

UMM EL-FAHM, Israel -- Nearly 30 people were injured Tuesday in clashes between residents of Israel's largest Arab community and right-wing Israeli marchers, police said.

About 100 people marched for about 45 minutes in the predominantly Muslim city of Umm el-Fahm, prompting Arab demonstrations that left nearly 30 people injured and 10 arrested, CNN reported.

Deputy Israeli Police Commissioner Shahar Ayalon and 15 other police officers were wounded in the fracas, as were 12 residents. Police said Israeli leftist lawmaker Ilan Ghilon was slightly injured by a tear gas grenade.

The Jewish group, led by right-wing activist Baruch Marzel, asked Israel's High Court of Justice for permission to stage the march, with the activists arguing that they were exercising their right to march under Israeli law as Arabs and Muslims have in cities such as Tel Aviv.

The marchers at Umm el-Fahm that pushed a demand that Israeli Arabs be loyal to the Jewish state, a stance many Israeli Arabs consider an insult, CNN said.

City officials declared a general strike Tuesday to protest the march by right-wing Israelis, The Jerusalem Post reported. Tension has been building since the town's mayor, Sheik Khaled Hamadan, pledged Monday to prevent Itamar Ben-Gvir and Baruch Marzel -- both right-wing Israeli politicians -- and their followers from entering Umm el-Fahm.

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