

Israelis Celebrate 46th Jerusalem Day

Israel marked its 46th Jerusalem Day on Wednesday, commemorating the reunification of the city following the 1967 Six-Day War.

The holiday was marked by the traditional Jerusalem Day flag march around the Old City, as well as several ceremonies.

Some 2,500 disabled Israel Defense Forces veterans and their families participated in the march as well. Haim Bar, head of the Disabled IDF Veterans' Association, urged Finance Minister Yair Lapid to refrain from revising the agreements signed between the organization and the Finance Ministry under the last government saying, "I expect the leaders in Jerusalem to remember that without these soldiers, who gave life and limb for Jerusalem and Israel, we would not be celebrating Jerusalem Day."

Data released on Tuesday by the Central Bureau of Statistics ahead of the festivities, confirmed that the Israeli capital was experiencing a revival, after some 15 years of consecutive decline.

The Data indicated that Jerusalem is home to 804,400 residents, making it the largest city in Israel. In 2011, of the city's population, 62 percent (499,400) were Jews, 35 percent (281,000) were Muslim and 2 percent (14,100) were Christian.

The report said that between 2009 and 2011, 30,000 new jobs were created in the capital, and some 3 million tourists visited the city. The sites most frequented by tourists were the Western Wall, the Jewish Quarter of the Old City, the Via Dolorosa and the Mount of Olives.

In an effort to further boost the city's upswing, the Prime Minister's Office, the Jerusalem Municipality and the Jerusalem Development Authority announced the appropriation of hundreds of millions of shekels for cultural projects in the city.

"The goal is to create an attractive cultural scene in Jerusalem, which will appeal to both the residents and tourists," said Moti Hazan, CEO of the Jerusalem Development Authority.

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