JERUSALEM: Palestinian girls stand in front of the Dome of the Rock as they attend the first Friday prayers of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan at the Al-Aqsa mosque compound in Jerusalem.

The area, annexed by Israel in a move never recognized by the international community, is a flashpoint between Israel and its Arab neighbors over its Arab identity and control of areas around the site. Before the occupation, the compound was divided into a mosque and a temple for Jewish use — the latter fenced off by Israeli authorities.

Israel's 1982 invasion, they were forced to "create a new" Israeli identity. According to historian Dominique Vidal, "It was this illusion that provided the basis for the whole Israeli political programme."

The war, which erupted in 1975, and after a crushing defeat of the Arab forces in June 1970, saw the collapse of the Arab nationalist movements - "Even political parties took calculated decisions," says Mahmoud Al-Husseini.

But there was also a psychological effect of the war, which had a profound impact on the Arab world. "The war was perceived as a psychological defeat," says Sharif Younes, a historian at the University of Cairo.

The war also had a political impact. "It was a turning point in the history of the Arab world," says Younis. "The war was perceived as a psychological defeat."