

Israeli troops kill Palestinian in occupied West Bank



Settler violence against Palestinians in occupied West Bank has intensified in recent weeks
[File: Ahmad Gharabli/AFP]

Ramallah, January 1 (RHC)-- Israeli troops have shot dead a Palestinian who was allegedly running towards them with a knife at a bus station in the occupied West Bank, the army said. Citing an initial investigation, it said in a statement on Friday that the man had arrived at a junction near the Jewish settlement of Ariel in a car, got out and "armed with a knife, ran toward the bus station where civilians and IDF soldiers were standing."

The Palestinian health ministry identified the deceased as Amir Atef Reyan. It said he died from his wounds as a resident of Qarawet Bani Hassan, a village in Salfit in the West Bank. Members of the Palestinian Red Crescent said the Israeli forces prevented their paramedics from reaching the young man to treat him before he was transferred to a hospital.

Photos and videos published online showed the Palestinian man lying face down at a junction near an Israeli settlement before being taken away in an ambulance. The Israeli army said it was pursuing whoever else was in the vehicle, which had fled the scene.

The West Bank has seen sporadic violence since United States-sponsored talks on founding a Palestinian state alongside Israel stalled in 2014. Settler violence against Palestinians has intensified in recent weeks after a Jewish settler was shot dead by a Palestinian gunman in the northern parts of the West Bank.

The killing ignited a string of settler attacks that left at least four Palestinians wounded and sparked a series of confrontations between Palestinians and Israeli forces.

Israel in 1967 captured the West Bank, which the Palestinians want to form the main part of their future state. About 600,000 Jewish settlers live in more than 130 settlements scattered across the occupied territory, which is also home to more than 2.5 million Palestinians.

The Palestinians and the wider international community consider the growing Israeli settlements a violation of international law that threatens a two-state solution to the conflict.

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