

Three Israelis killed in West Bank shooting amid deadly Jenin raids

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Three police officers were killed at a checkpoint shooting near Tarqumiyah, south of Hebron. Israeli forces stand guard near a shooting scene, near Hebron in the Israeli-occupied West Bank [Yosri Aljamal/Reuters]

Tel Aviv, September 1 (RHC)-- Three Israeli security personnel have been killed in a shooting at a checkpoint in Hebron, as Israel brought reinforcements in the occupied West Bank city of Jenin as part of its ongoing deadly raids.

The shooting on Sunday took place as the Israeli army continued its deadly assault on Jenin for a fifth consecutive day killing at least 24 Palestinians. Israel has killed more than 500 people as it intensified operations in the West Bank since it launched war on Gaza on October 7th. More than 40,000 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza in the past 11 months.

The police confirmed three police officers were killed near the Tarqumiyah checkpoint, south of Hebron. Earlier on Sunday, the Israeli national emergency service Magen David Adom said two people, a man and a woman in their 30s, were declared deceased at the scene while a third man in his 50s was transferred to a hospital.

A little-known armed group calling itself the Khalil al-Rahman Brigade claimed responsibility. The Israeli army said it was conducting a raid on the Palestinian village of Idhna close to the scene of the shooting.

Akram Natsheh, a journalist in Hebron, told Al Jazeera that Israeli forces have closed off all roads leading in and out of the southern city while drones have been hovering above it. "There is nothing but tension and apprehension as Israeli forces are coming in and around the entire area – the situation is likely to escalate," he said.

According to the Palestinian news agency Wafa, six people, including three women, have been arrested in the Hebron area while raids have taken place in nearby Yatta and Halhul.

Meanwhile, the Israeli siege on the city of Jenin has left Palestinians with no food, water, electricity and internet access. Local authorities said 70 percent of roads in the Jenin area have been bulldozed.

Israeli forces stormed northern cities of Jenin, Tulkarem and Tubas backed by tankers, drones and bulldozers as part of its largest operations in the West Bank since the second Intifada in 2002.

The Israeli army maintains that its intent is to target armed groups there to prevent future attacks. Gun battles have been reported in several locations and Hamas said at least 10 of its fighters, including a top commander, were killed this week.

However, the trail of destruction the Israeli army left behind from areas it has withdrawn from, including Tulkarem and Tubas, have raised concerns among residents that the army's intent is to extend the war in Gaza into the West Bank and to push Palestinians out of their homes.

The Israeli army has severely destroyed infrastructures, water pipelines and the electricity system. "Palestinians say the main goal of this military operation, the largest in more than two decades, is destruction," Al Jazeera's Ibrahim said.

"They say this is not a security-related necessity. It is to remind Palestinians of the cost they will incur if they choose to resist the Israeli military's occupation," she added.

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