Israel launches largest West Bank assault in many years

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Israeli soldiers are seen in the old town of Nablus in the occupied West Bank.   One soldier points his U.S.-made rifle directly at photographer. (Photo: AP)

Nablus, June 11 (RHC)-- The Israeli regime has launched a large-scale military raid into the heart of the occupied West Bank city of Nablus, which has been described as the largest such incursion in years.

Media reported on Tuesday that the raid had begun shortly after midnight local time when a large number of military vehicles entered the city from multiple directions.
Israeli troops also brought fuel tanks for the vehicles, a measure that is not often taken during short-term incursions.

Israeli forces opened fire at Palestinians, including a paramedic, deployed tear gas, arrested several individuals, and violently raided homes during the incursion.

Footage shared by local media showed a Palestinian man with his hands raised approaching Israeli soldiers before a scuffle ensued and gunshots were heard in the background.

Israeli media reported that two Palestinians were killed after allegedly attempting to seize a soldier's weapon. A Palestinian journalist at the scene said the two men were shot while trying to return to their homes. Ambulances were blocked from reaching them.

The Palestinian Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in Nablus reported that at least 65 Palestinians were wounded. Fawaz al-Bitar, a PRCS operations officer, said some of the injured suffered gunshot wounds to the thigh, and some were the result of physical assault by soldiers.

There were also cases of tear gas inhalation as Israeli forces fired tear gas bombs at homes in the alleys of a densely populated area of the city. "Our work was obstructed several times, and we were prevented from reaching the two injured young men," Bitar said.

"An ambulance was also fired upon while in the city center, and one paramedic was shot."

Munadil Hanani, a member of the city's Factional Coordination Committee, said there were indications that the incursion could last for a long period.

Meanwhile, Israeli soldiers announced a curfew via loudspeakers, ordering residents to remain indoors until Wednesday morning. It has been the first such measure imposed in Nablus since the Second Intifada in 2000.

Soldiers raised their weapons at residents and arrested dozens of young men during the raids on homes, and arbitrarily confiscated the belongings of residents. Life in Nablus was completely paralyzed by the raid, with markets deserted and schools, universities, and public institutions closed until further notice.

Residents fear it may lead to a prolonged and devastating military assault similar to those taking place in Jenin and Tulkarm, where thousands of Palestinians have been forcibly displaced in recent months.

Attacks in the West Bank have included the demolition of tents and agricultural rooms, physical assaults on shepherds, and the seizure of livestock.

The regime has escalated its West Bank violence since October 7, 2023, when it launched its genocide in Gaza. Since then, Israeli forces and settlers have killed about 1,000 Palestinians in the occupied territory.

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