Three soldiers injured in West Bank ramming attack, IDF says; assailant shot dead

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The Times of Israel

<https://www.timesofisrael.com/three-injured-in-suspected-ramming-attack-in-west-bank/>

A Palestinian assailant hit three Israeli soldiers south of Bethlehem Saturday night in a ramming attack, the military said.

The driver accelerated toward the soldiers and hit them near the West Bank village of Beit Ummar, as they were operating to secure roads in the area from rock-throwers and other attacks.

Other soldiers shot the attacker dead.

One of the three wounded soldiers was in serious condition, another was moderately hurt and a third suffered light injuries. They were treated at the scene by paramedics and rushed to a hospital.

Palestinian media identified the attacker as Mohammed Baradiyah, a 23-year-old officer in the Palestinian Authority security services.

Opposition Leader Yair Lapid, writing on Twitter, said terror needed to be dealt with using “a strong hand and with persistence,” adding that he had faith in security forces “who continue to act resolutely against terror and restore peace to residents.”

Shlomo Ne’eman, chief of the Yesha council representing West Bank settlements, said “the enemy is once again raising its head and trying to murder Jews just because they are Jews, reminding us of the tangible threats against us.”

Ne’eman said it was “hard to see” how the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, currently underway, is turned “into a holiday of attacks.”

Israeli security forces are on high alert amid the holy month, which usually sees heightened tensions and unrest, and following a string of recent terror attacks.

“Apparently, we as Jews will never understand this. We will continue to build, develop and move forward on the roads of Israel without fear,” Ne’eman declared.

Avigdor Liberman wished the three injured men a speedy recovery and praised soldiers for eliminating the “despicable terrorist,” a description also used by National Unity MK Matan Kahana in a post on Twitter following the attack.

Another National Unity party MK, Gideon Sa’ar, shared similar sentiments, calling for the public to “stand together, with determination and strength.”

The Israel Defense Forces on Friday announced it was imposing a closure on the West Bank, with crossing points closed to Palestinians on the first and last days of the upcoming Passover holiday. Gaza border crossings will also close.

The closure is set to begin on Wednesday, April 5, at 5 p.m. and last until Saturday, April 8, at 11:59 p.m. A second closure will begin on April 11, at 5 p.m., and last until April 12, at 11:59 p.m.

Tensions have spiked in the region over the past year as Israeli forces have ratcheted up arrest raids and other counterterror efforts in the West Bank following a series of terror attacks.

Palestinian terror attacks in Israel and the West Bank in recent months have left 15 Israelis dead and several more seriously hurt.

At least 86 Palestinians have been killed since the beginning of the year, most of them while carrying out attacks or during clashes with security forces, though some were uninvolved civilians and others were killed under circumstances that are being investigated.

There has also been a rise in settler violence toward Palestinians in recent months.

The attack came hours after police in Jerusalem shot dead a man they said grabbed the gun of an officer and fired it twice at other servicemembers.

Police have [described the incident](https://www.timesofisrael.com/ex-police-officials-hard-to-believe-disputed-deadly-jerusalem-shooting-not-on-cctv/) as a “terror attack,” while eyewitnesses and the man’s relatives have denied the official account. Police said Saturday afternoon that the shooting was in an area not covered by security cameras, a claim Channel 13 news described as “puzzling.”

Police also said that “unfortunately the terror attack itself was not recorded on the body cameras of the officers involved.” It issued several testimonies from officers involved who all said the man stole a gun and opened fire at officers before being shot.

The Justice Ministry’s Police Internal Investigations Department was looking into the incident, and would decide whether it warranted an investigation.