

Beat: News

Israeli troops kill 2 Palestinian youths in West Bank raids

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USPA News - Two Palestinian youths were killed by Israeli troops on Friday as a massive search for three abducted Israeli teenagers entered its second week, Palestinian officials said. More than 330 people have been detained in the West Bank during the week-long crackdown.

The first victim was a 14-year-old boy, identified as Mahmoud Jihad Muhammad Dudeen, who was shot dead by Israeli troops in the southern West Bank town of Dura. The shooting took place when local youths threw rocks and Molotov cocktails at Israeli soldiers which were carrying out an early morning raid to detain a suspected militant. Around the same time, before dawn on Friday, Israeli forces carried out a raid at the Qalandia refugee camp south of Ramallah. Three Palestinians were shot after youths threw rocks and bottles at the Israeli soldiers, which prompted them to open fire. Mustafa Hosni Aslan, 22, was shot in the head and died hours later. Lieutenant Colonel Peter Lerner, a spokesman for the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), did not comment on the deaths but said 25 suspects were arrested during the search of more than 200 locations overnight. The massive raids are part of Israel's search for three Israeli teenagers who went missing in the West Bank on June 12. "Since the beginning of the operation, IDF has detained 330 suspects and searched 1,150 locations," Lerner said. Also on Friday, Ravina Shamdasani, a spokeswoman for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, expressed concern over the high number of arrests by Israeli troops. "We urge all actors to ensure respect for international human rights and international humanitarian law, including by avoiding punishing individuals for offenses they have not personally committed or by imposing collective penalties," she said. Eyal Yifrah, 19, Gilad Shaar, 16, and Naftali Frenkel, 16, were last seen on the evening of June 12 near the Israeli settlement of Gush Etzion in the West Bank. The Israeli government has accused members of Hamas, the Islamic group which rules the Gaza Strip, of carrying out the kidnappings, but Hamas has denied its involvement. "These teenagers were kidnapped and the kidnapping was carried out by Hamas members. Hamas denials do not change this fact," Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Sunday. "This attack should surprise no one because Hamas makes no secret of its agenda. Hamas is committed to the destruction of Israel and to carrying out terrorist attacks against Israeli civilians - including children." Violence occurs regularly in Israel and Gaza, but there has been little large-scale violence since November 2012, when an Israeli offensive set off eight days of fierce cross-border fighting. At least 174 Palestinians and 6 Israelis were killed while hundreds more were injured until an Egyptian-brokered truce was reached with Palestinian militants.

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