Settlers attack Palestinian villages after West Bank killing

Israeli soldiers stand between Palestinians and Jewish settlers following a settler attack on the Israeli-occupied West Bank village of Burqa [Majdi Mohammed/AP Photo]

Ramallah, December 17 (RHC)-- Jewish settlers have burst into several villages in the occupied West Bank, smashing homes and cars and beating up at least two people, Palestinian officials have said.

Friday's attacks came a day after Palestinian gunmen killed an Israeli man in a shooting ambush in the territory. The death of settler Yehuda Dimentman, killed when gunmen opened fire on his car near an illegal settlement outpost in the occupied West Bank late on Thursday, threatened to ignite further

violence between Palestinian residents and Israeli settlers. Two other passengers in Dimentman's vehicle were lightly wounded on Thursday.

Ghassan Daghlas, a Palestinian Authority official who monitors settlement activities, said groups of settlers entered several Palestinian villages near the northern city of Nablus early on Friday, smashing up cars and homes. Two wounded Palestinians were taken to hospital.

In the Palestinian village of Qaryout, settlers broke into one house and tried to abduct a resident, Wael Miqbel, according to Daghlas. Photos shared on social media showed Miqbel with bruises and swelling across his face, while other videos and photos published online showed confrontations between armed settlers and Palestinian residents.

Speaking to Anadolu Agency, Jihad Salah, the head of Burqa village council in northwestern Nablus, said the settlers assaulted the village using firearms. He added that they set the village's barracks on fire and stoned a number of Palestinian homes.

The Palestinian Wafa news agency reported that settlers attacked Sebastia town, north Nablus, and smashed a number of Palestinian-owned vehicles and a car maintenance workshop. Israeli leaders have pledged to find the assailants behind Thursday's shooting and the army deployed additional forces to the area. According to Wafa, at least three men from Burqa were arrested in overnight raids.

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