

*Israel continues to target
journalists in southern Lebanon
to mask atrocities*



A policeman checks a destroyed vehicle, at the site where an Israeli airstrike hit a compound housing journalists, killing three media staffers from two different news agencies according to Lebanon's state-run National News Agency, in Hasbaya village, southeast Lebanon, Friday, Oct. 25, 2024. (AP Photo/Mohammed Zaatari)

Beirut, November 5 (RHC)-- The targeted killing of three media workers following a recent Israeli airstrike in southern Lebanon has renewed calls for ending impunity for Israel's abuses, with advocates stating that the regime is practicing such behavior to obscure the truth about its atrocities and war crimes.

An Israeli attack on October 25 on a compound housing media workers in southern Lebanon killed at least three journalists and wounded several others as they slept in guesthouses in Hasbaya town.

At the time, local media aired footage from the scene, showing collapsed buildings and cars marked “press” covered in dust and rubble.

The victims were identified as cameraman Ghassan Najjar and engineer Mohamed Reda, who worked for the Lebanese television news channel al-Mayadeen. The Hezbollah-linked al-Manar television network said its camera operator Wissam Qassim was also killed.

“It is fairly obvious that al-Mayadeen has drawn their (Israelis’) ire. The weapon of images has hurt the Zionist enemy; especially after the regime’s military staged a ground invasion of Lebanon at the start of October and unfolding developments are being reported by our correspondents who are present in different areas of the battle fronts,” Hussein al-Bazzi, a cameraman for the Lebanese news channel, told Tasnim news agency on Monday.

Advocates say the mounting death toll of journalists killed by the Israeli military in the expanding conflict is a result of the failure of the international community to hold the regime accountable.

The killing of media workers in Lebanon came days after Israel baselessly accused several al-Jazeera journalists in Gaza of being combatants and members of resistance groups, raising concerns about their safety.

“We are telling the Zionists that we will return to our homes and resettle in southern Lebanon once again just as we liberated the territory back in 2000 and 2006. “God willing, with the blessing of the blood of these victims and young martyrs, we will return to Aita al-Shaab and border villages,” Qassim’s father said.

Lebanon lodged a complaint with the UN Security Council on October 28 over Israel’s deliberate attacks on journalists, paramedics, and civilians. A Foreign Ministry statement at the time said Israel’s repeated attacks on media personnel “constitute war crimes that require Israel to be held accountable and punished for them, as they undermine the foundations of a free press.”

“The attack on journalists constitutes an attempt to terrorize and intimidate all journalists covering the Israeli aggression on Lebanon following the success of the free press in conveying the truth about the crimes, massacres, and flagrant violations of international law, international humanitarian law, and human rights committed by Israel,” the ministry said.

It called on the UN Security Council members “to adopt efficient measures to achieve an immediate cease-fire and a halt of Israel’s continuous attacks on Lebanon and its people, including civilians, journalists and paramedics.”

Ibrahim Moussawi, a Lebanese parliament member from the “Loyalty to the Resistance Bloc,” Hezbollah’s political arm, said the Israeli enemy continues to target anyone who wants to expose its crimes.

“This is a full-scale war crime being committed by the Zionist entity. We would not have reached this point should the international community, international legal institutions and relevant parties, like UNESCO, the United Nations and the Security Council, had played their role in establishment of peace and made the enemy pay the price,” he commented.

Nearly 3,000 people have been killed and more than 13,300 injured in Lebanon as a result of Israeli attacks since October 2023, according to Lebanese health authorities.

Israel expanded the conflict by launching an incursion into southern Lebanon on October 1st this year.

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