

Funeral Held for Palestinian Teen Shot Dead by Israeli Troops



Ramallah, June 24 (RHC)-- Several thousand Palestinian mourners have taken part in the funeral of a teenager shot dead by the Israeli military, which later claimed to have mistaken him for a stone-thrower amid simmering outrage over the crime.

The funeral procession was held Thursday in Beit Ur-Tahta village near Ramallah in the occupied West Bank, where the family home of 15-year-old victim Mahmoud Rafat Badran is located. During the ceremony, Badran's mother rejected Israeli military claims that the shooting to death of her son had been a mistake, saying the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

The young victim lost his life on Tuesday when Israeli police opened fire on his car while he was returning from a visit to a water park. Four of his teenage cousins were also wounded in the assault.

The incident sparked outrage among Palestinian public and officials, prompting the Israeli military to launch an investigation into the case. The army had initially said its troops targeted stone-throwers, but it later revised the account saying Badran and his companions were shot by mistake.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) roundly condemned the shooting, saying Badran had been "murdered" and calling it a "cold-blooded assassination."

Israeli rights group B'Tselem also said its research indicated that Israeli “soldiers arbitrarily fired at the car, having no indication that any of its passengers had been involved in stone or Molotov cocktail throwing.”

“This shooting incident is a direct result of military policy which enables, despite the official prohibition in the open-fire regulations, to use deadly fire even in cases where there is no threat to life and even when the soldiers have other, non-lethal, means at their disposal,” the rights body said.

At least 217 Palestinians have lost their lives at the hands of Israeli forces since last October, when a fresh wave of tensions broke out between Tel Aviv’s troops and Palestinian protesters in the occupied West Bank.

In March, Palestinian officials called on the United Nations to launch a probe into the Israeli regime’s extrajudicial killing of Palestinians in the occupied lands.

Saeb Erekat, the PLO secretary general, said at the time that history shows Israeli investigations have failed to “serve justice.”

The request came after an Israeli soldier was caught on camera in March fatally shooting unarmed Palestinian Abed al-Fattah al-Sharif in the head in the occupied West Bank city of Hebron.

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