

## Israel targets Syria's port city of Latakia – state tv

Tue, 2021-12-07 03:05

Several explosions heard in Syria's port city of Latakia, according to media.  
– more to follow..

The logo for ARAB NEWS, featuring a green vertical bar to the left of the text "ARAB NEWS" in a bold, black, serif font.

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## Palestinian teenager shot dead by Israeli guard

Author:  
Tue, 2021-12-07 01:06

RAMALLAH: A Palestinian teenager who drove his car into an Israeli security checkpoint in the occupied West Bank was shot dead on Monday by a security guard at the scene, officials said.

The car-ramming occurred after 1 a.m. at the Te'enim checkpoint near the Palestinian city of Tulkarem, an Israeli Defense Ministry statement said,

adding that the assailant had been “neutralized.”

It was not immediately clear if the alleged attacker was killed, but the official Palestinian news agency Wafa later reported that 15-year-old Mohammed Nidal Yunes died from injuries after being fired on at a checkpoint.

An Israeli security official confirmed to AFP that the driver of the vehicle was killed.

The Defense Ministry said that a security guard was “seriously injured” in the attack.

Israel’s Sheba Hospital said the guard’s injuries were not life threatening.

Israel has occupied the West Bank since 1967 and the Palestinian territory is now home to roughly 475,000 Jewish settlers living in communities widely considered illegal under international law.

Attacks on checkpoints are common, often carried out by individual Palestinians armed with knives, as well as attempted car-rammings and occasional shootings.

Monday’s incident came after a Palestinian assailant stabbed an Israeli civilian and attempted to attack police on Saturday near the Damascus Gate entry to the Old City in Israeli-annexed East Jerusalem.

The assailant was shot dead by officers who appeared to fire on the suspect after he was on the ground, stirring debate about excessive force.

Israeli authorities have insisted the officers acted appropriately.

## **BACKGROUND**

Israel has occupied the West Bank since 1967 and the Palestinian territory is now home to roughly 475,000 Jewish settlers living in communities widely considered illegal under international law.

On Sunday, Israeli authorities freed a prominent Palestinian prisoner, two weeks after striking a release deal that ended his marathon 131-day hunger strike.

Kayed Fasfous, 32, had remained in an Israeli hospital since ending his strike on Nov. 23.

He was the symbolic figurehead of six hunger strikers protesting Israel’s controversial policy of “administrative detention,” which allows suspects to be held indefinitely without charge.

Israel claims the policy is necessary to keep dangerous suspects locked away without disclosing sensitive information that could expose valuable sources.

Palestinians and rights groups say the practice denies the right of due process, allowing Israel to hold prisoners for months or even years without seeing the evidence against them. The law is rarely applied to Israelis.

The Palestinian Prisoners Club, a group representing former and current prisoners, confirmed Fasfous had returned home to the occupied West Bank through a military checkpoint near the southern city of Hebron on Sunday afternoon.

Online footage showed the former prisoner in a wheelchair celebrating his return to his southern hometown of Dura before being taken to a hospital in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

The plight of the six hunger strikers ignited solidarity demonstrations across the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza in November mounting pressure on Israel to release the detainees.

At least four of the five other hunger strikers have since ended their protests after reaching similar deals with Israeli authorities. They are expected to be released in the coming months.

Hunger strikes are common among Palestinian prisoners and have helped secure numerous concessions from Israeli authorities.

The nature of these strikes vary from individuals protesting detention without charge to groups calling for improved cell conditions.

Around 500 of the 4,600 Palestinians detained by Israel are held in administrative detention according to Addameer, a Palestinian prisoner rights group.



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Israel: Palestinian car-rammer wounds guard, is shot dead  
Palestinian seriously hurt after settlers hurl stones at car

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## [Iraqi forces, Kurdish Peshmerga retake northern village from Daesh](#)

Tue, 2021-12-07 00:59

BAGHDAD: Iraqi forces and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters have recaptured a village in northern Iraq on Monday after Daesh terrorists took it over the previous day, security and police sources said.

Elite Iraq Interior Ministry forces and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters managed early on Monday to control Luhaiban village, though the terrorists have left some houses booby-trapped with explosive devices, the sources said.

In a separate attack on Sunday, Daesh killed four Peshmerga soldiers and a civilian, and wounded six other people when they attacked Qara Salem village in northern Iraq, security sources said.

The Ministry of Peshmerga Affairs said in a statement that the attack caused casualties, but did not confirm the toll.

Peshmerga are the military forces of the autonomous region of Iraqi Kurdistan.

One Peshmerga colonel said Daesh was using hit-and-run tactics in night attacks on their positions.

### **FASTFACT**

Daesh killed four Peshmerga soldiers and a civilian, and wounded six other people when they attacked Qara Salem village in northern Iraq, security sources said.

“They avoid holding the ground for longer time ... More reinforcement forces were dispatched to the area to prevent further attacks,” the colonel said.

Iraqi forces and Kurdish Peshmerga fighters reinforced their troops in the area on Monday where the attacks had been carried out by militant group with

Iraqi military helicopters flying over to chase militants, two Iraqi security sources said.

The two villages are in remote territory claimed by the Iraqi government in Baghdad and the government of the autonomous northern Kurdish region in Irbil where there are regular attacks by Daesh.

But it is a rare incident of Daesh controlling a residential area near a main road, a highway that links Irbil to the city of Kirkuk.

Iraq declared victory over the hard-line group in December 2017.

Although the group has largely been defeated, it continues to carry out sporadic attacks and operate limited cells in the country, particularly in the north.



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Four Iraqi Kurdish fighters killed in attack blamed on DaeshDaesh attack on Iraqi village kills 10 soldiers, Kurdish government says

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# Israel stops plan for contentious east Jerusalem settlement

Tue, 2021-12-07 00:02

JERUSALEM: Jerusalem municipal officials on Monday froze plans to build a contentious large Jewish settlement at an abandoned airport in east Jerusalem.

The decision to halt the Atarot settlement plan came in the wake of heavy US opposition to the project.

Plans for the settlement called for building 9,000 housing units marketed to ultra-Orthodox Jews in an open area next to three densely populated Palestinian communities, one of which is behind Israel's controversial separation barrier.

The municipality's planning commission said that it had been favorably impressed with the plan but that an environmental impact survey should first be conducted before it could be approved.

Fleur Hassan-Nahoum, a deputy mayor, said the process is expected to take about a year.

The anti-settlement group Peace Now had waged a public campaign against the plan, citing the proposed settlement's problematic location.

"Let's hope they will use the time to understand how illogical this plan is for the development of Jerusalem and how much it damages the chances for peace," said Hagit Ofran, a Peace Now researcher who attended the meeting.

Earlier on Monday, Israel's foreign minister, Yair Lapid, indicated the Israeli government was in no hurry to approve the plan.

Speaking to reporters, Lapid said the plan ultimately requires approval by the national government, with "full consensus" of the various parties in the coalition.

"This will be dealt with at the national level and we know how to deal with it. It is a process and will make sure it doesn't turn into a conflict with the (US) administration," he said.

Israel captured east Jerusalem in the 1967 Mideast war and annexed it in a move not recognized internationally. The Palestinians want east Jerusalem to be the capital of a future state including the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, which Israel also seized in that war.

Israel views all of Jerusalem as its unified capital and says it needs to build housing to address the needs of a growing population.

The Palestinians view the continual expansion of Israeli settlements as a violation of international law and an obstacle to peace, a position with wide international support. The Atarot project is considered especially damaging because it lies in the heart of a Palestinian population center.

The Biden administration has repeatedly criticized settlement construction, saying it hinders the eventual resumption of the peace process, but Israel has continued to advance settlement plans.

More than 200,000 Israeli settlers live in east Jerusalem and nearly 500,000 live in settlements scattered across the occupied West Bank. Israel's current prime minister, Naftali Bennett, is a strong supporter of settlements and is opposed to Palestinian statehood.

There have been no substantive peace talks in more than a decade.



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[Yair Lapid](#)

Israel plans new east Jerusalem settlement  
Germany criticizes Israel's East Jerusalem settlement plans

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## [Mikati holds key meetings in effort to restore Arab trust in Lebanon](#)

Mon, 2021-12-06 23:24

BEIRUT: Lebanon's Prime Minister Najib Mikati on Monday held a number of meetings designed to help restore Arab trust in Lebanon, and the country's diplomatic and economic relationships with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states.

It followed an agreement, announced in Jeddah on Saturday, by French President Emmanuel Macron and Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to work together to help the people of Lebanon.

The participants in extended meetings at the Grand Serail, the prime

minister's headquarters, included Defense Minister Maurice Selim, Interior Minister Bassam Mawlawi, Foreign Affairs Minister Abdullah Bou Habib, Agriculture Minister Abbas Hajj Hassan and Industry Minister George Boujikian.

Other officials who took part included Acting Director-General of Lebanon Customs Raymond Al-Khoury, Mohammed Choucair, the head of the Lebanese Economic Organizations, and representatives of the Federation of Lebanese-Gulf Businessmen Councils.

Choucair, who is also a former minister, stressed the need for the organizations to work on resuming exports to Saudi Arabia and said: "We discussed new ways of doing that."

During the meeting, Mikati said that "Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are fed up of hearing slogans that are not implemented."

A number of people who were present told Arab News that Mikati stressed the "need to address the gaps," and that "some issues the Gulf states are complaining about are right. We must recommend measures to address them, such as the establishment of additional towers on the borders with Syria in order to control the border."

#### **FASTFACT**

Prime Minister Najib Mikati said that 'Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are fed up of hearing slogans that are not implemented.'

Mawlawi said that discussions had focused on the issue of exports to Saudi Arabia and concerns about smuggling.

He said: "We will take practical measures for anything that might pose a threat to our relations with the Arab states, and I will follow up on all judicial proceedings related to smuggling and combating drugs and captagon.

"We must all take prompt action to control the borders, airport, port and all crossing points, and we must (address) the smuggling happening through Lebanon. We do not disclose all smuggling operations we bust."

Mawlawi added: "We intercepted a captagon-smuggling operation on Saturday. We are following up on it, and the people involved have been arrested.

"We will give practical answers to the smuggling taking place, and what might pose a threat to our relations with Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states in this regard."

He also noted that "in the case of seized narcotic substances, even if they are manufactured outside of Lebanon and brought to Lebanon to change the manufacturing company's name and repackage them, the company's license will be revoked, its work discontinued and its name announced."

Regarding a call for the restriction of weapons to Lebanese state institutions as a condition for the restoration of Saudi-Lebanese relations, Mawlawi said: "We are implementing the Lebanese state's policy and highlighting its interests."

Nicolas Chammas, head of the Beirut Traders' Association, said that "the biggest problem remains contraband." He added: "We will work to make Lebanon, once again, a platform for the export of goods, not contraband. We are required to take swift, serious measures and we will take successive measures in this regard."

Fouad Siniora, a former president of Lebanon, described Saturday's Saudi-French statement as being "of exceptional importance in these delicate circumstances."

It "resolves the controversy regarding many issues raised in the Arab region, especially with regard to Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Lebanon," he added.



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IMF delegation arrives in Lebanon, to meet PM Mikati on Tuesday  
France's Macron says hoping for progress on Lebanon 'within next hours'