

Israeli troops kill 9 Palestinians in West Bank raid

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The Daily Morning Voice Online Desk: An Israeli raid on the occupied West Bank's Jenin refugee camp on Thursday killed nine Palestinians including an elderly woman, Palestinian officials said, also accusing the forces of using tear gas inside a hospital children's ward, reports AFP. The death toll rose to "nine martyrs including an elderly woman," the health ministry said, with multiple wounded.

In a separate statement, Palestinian health minister Mai al-Kaila charged that "occupation forces stormed Jenin Government Hospital and intentionally fired tear gas canisters at the paediatric department in the hospital". She described the situation in the refugee camp as "critical" and said Israeli forces were preventing ambulances from reaching the wounded. Israel's army declined to comment when asked by AFP about the health minister's tear gas allegation. The military has said only that its "forces are operating in Jenin".

Thursday's fatalities bring the number of Palestinians killed in the West Bank so far this year to 29, including fighters and civilians, most of whom were shot by Israeli forces. Jenin deputy governor Kamal Abu al-Rub told AFP that residents were living in a "real state of war". "The Israeli army is destroying everything and shooting at everything that moves," he told AFP. The mounting toll follows the deadliest year in the Palestinian territory since United Nations records began in 2005.

At least 26 Israelis and 200 Palestinians were killed across Israel and the Palestinian territories in 2022, the majority in the West Bank, according to an AFP tally from official sources. Israel has occupied the West Bank since the 1967 Six-Day War. The Palestinian presidency said Thursday's raid on Jenin was happening "under international silence".

"This is what encourages the occupation government to commit massacres against our people in full view of the world," said Nabil Abu Rudeinah, spokesman for Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas. The Palestinian health minister called for an urgent meeting with the World Health Organization and the International Committee of the Red Cross over the events in Jenin.

The latest violence comes a day after Israeli forces shot dead two Palestinians in separate incidents. A 22-year-old killed near the West Bank city of Qalqilya, after the Israeli army claimed he tried to stab soldiers. Israeli forces subsequently killed a 17-year-old boy who appeared to point a fake gun at police during a raid in the Shuafat refugee camp in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem. The teenager was the fifth Palestinian minor killed during operations by Israeli forces so far this month.