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Middle East/North Africa - Palestine

Media deaths mount

Two journalists among 17 killed in Israeli raid on Gaza market

31 July 2014

Two Palestinian journalists were killed yesterday in an Israeli air raid on a crowded market in the Shijaiyah neighbourhood, east of Gaza City.

Rami Rayan, a photographer for the local news agency the *Palestinian Network for Journalism and Media*, was killed instantly as he was taking pictures of people buying essential supplies in the market during a brief humanitarian truce called by Israeli forces when it was hit in the strike. **Sameh Al-Aryan**, a presenter with Hamas-affiliated *Al-Aqsa TV*, was severely injured and died several hours later.

Mahmoud Al-Khassas, the editor of the *Palestinian Network for Journalism and Media* who was accompanying Rayan, was taken to hospital with serious head injuries. A total of 17 people were killed and 210 injured in the raid, which took place on the 23rd day of the Israeli military operation in the Gaza Strip.

The Israeli Defence Forces called the truce between 3 pm and 7 pm but said it would not apply to areas "in which IDF soldiers are currently operating".

The latest deaths bring to nine the number of Palestinians working in the media who have been killed since the start of Israel's "Operation Protective Edge" in Gaza on 8 July, four of them in the course of their work.

Mohamed Daher, a journalist with the newspaper *Al-Resalah*, died today from injuries he suffered when his home in Shijaiyah was hit in an Israeli raid on 20 July.

On 20 July, **Khalid Hamad**, a news cameraman for the *Continue TV* production company, was killed while he was preparing a report on attacks by Israeli troops on paramedics assisting wounded Palestinians. Wearing a helmet and a bullet-proof vest marked "press", he was standing near an ambulance when it was hit by a tank shell and set on fire. Hamad was badly injured but could not be evacuated and died of his wounds several hours later.

On 9 July, **Hamdi Shehab**, a driver for the *Media 24 news agency*, was killed in an Israeli air raid while he was on his way back to his firm's office after the Ramadan iftar, the evening fast-breaking meal. He was driving a car marked "TV".

Since the start of "Operation Protective Edge", more than 1,306 Palestinians have been killed and 7,200 wounded, while 56 Israeli solders and three civilians have been killed.