

US citizen killed in the West Bank by Israeli forces

Kevin Reed
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Aysenur Ezgi Eygi, a 26-year-old Turkish-American political activist, was shot and killed by Israeli forces during a protest in the West Bank on Friday.

According to medical personnel, Eygi was shot in the head and died shortly after she was rushed to a hospital in Nablus. A report by the BBC said, “Dr Fouad Nafaa, head of Rafidia Hospital where Ms Eygi was admitted, confirmed that a US citizen in her mid-20s died from a ‘gunshot in the head.’”

A fellow protester told the BBC that the demonstration on Friday was the first time the young woman attended a protest with the International Solidarity Movement (ISM), a pro-Palestinian group. The organization of foreign solidarity activists have been involved in work to protect Palestinian farmers in the West Bank from attacks by Zionist settlers.

At 2:43 p.m., the Anadolu news agency reported via X, “Palestinian authorities informed Türkiye that Turkish-American activist Aysenur Ezgi Eygi might have been killed deliberately by snipers.”

The *Washington Post* reported that Eygi was attending a protest opposing a Jewish settlement expansion in the town of Beita in the Nablus Governate when she was shot. The *Post* report said, according to eyewitnesses, that when the ISM protesters arrived in Beita on Friday, Israeli soldiers were already deployed around a site where people were set to perform Friday prayers. As soon as the prayers were over, the soldiers fired tear gas and live ammunition.

The US State Department acknowledged Eygi’s death. Department spokesman Matthew Miller said Washington is, “urgently gathering more information about the circumstances of her death and will have more to say as we learn more.”

The White House did not assign blame for the killing and called on Israel to investigate. National Security

Council spokesperson Sean Savett said the US is, “deeply disturbed by the tragic death” in the West Bank. On a trip to the Caribbean, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken deplored the “tragic loss,” and said the government is “intensely focused on getting those facts.”

Copies of Eygi’s passport that have been circulated online said she was born in Turkey and the Turkish Foreign Ministry confirmed she was a Turkish citizen. Turkey’s foreign ministry said Eygi was “killed by Israeli occupation soldiers in the city of Nablus” and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan called the action “barbaric.”

Jonathan Pollak, an Israeli activist with ISM who was at the protest with Ms Eygi, said he heard “two separate shots of live ammunition, shot one after the other... and then I heard another shot.”

Speaking to AFP news agency, Pollak said, “I found her lying on the ground, beside the tree, bleeding from her head. I took her pulse, she had a very weak pulse, we called the ambulance. From there we evacuated her to the village’s medical centre, where the doctor came into the ambulance and continued into the hospital, where they tried to resuscitate her but failed.”

The ISM protester said after the tear gas and shooting started the activists retreated down a hill, about 200 yards from the town where the soldiers were stationed. “We stood there for about half an hour,” Pollak said.

The *Washington Post* reported, “The soldiers took over a rooftop in the town, he said, calling it ‘a controlling rooftop.’ Eygi was in an olive grove, according to Pollak and another ISM volunteer who spoke on the condition she be identified only by her first name, Mariam, for fear of retribution.”

Speaking to Al Jazeera, the same eyewitness said, “The army was on top of the hill and a sniper was on

top of the roof. We were clearly visible to the army and there was nothing happening next to us ... They just shot two live ammunitions. One hit something metal and one was directed to [Eygi's] head.”

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) have said it is, “looking into reports that a foreign national was killed as a result of shots fired in the area.” The IDF statement said that its forces were in the Beita area, in northern West Bank and, “responded with fire toward a main instigator of violent activity who hurled rocks at the forces and posed a threat to them.”

ISM has reported that 17 people have been killed at pro-Palestinian demonstrations in Beita since 2021 and Eygi, who arrived in the West Bank from Seattle, Washington, was the third volunteer killed since 2003.

Rachel Corrie, a 23-year-old ISM activist and student from Olympia, Washington, was killed in March 2003 when she was crushed by an Israeli military bulldozer during a protest against the destruction of Palestinian homes along the border between Gaza and Egypt.

While Corrie's brutal killing was condemned around the world, the Zionist regime defended it and, with backing from the US government, the Israeli courts ruled that the army was not responsible for her death.

The murder of Eygi took place in the context of an expanding assault on the West Bank being carried out by the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu that intensified ten days ago amid the ongoing genocide in Gaza.

As part of the genocidal Zionist drive to kill, uproot and expel Palestinians from the occupied territories, the Israeli regime is hell-bent on completing its mission of “total victory” in both the Gaza Strip and the West Bank.

Al Jazeera reported that a 13-year-old Palestinian girl was shot and killed in her home in the West Bank village of Qarout. She was identified by local news media as Bana Amjad Bakr. The report said, “Witnesses said dozens of Israeli settlers raided the village under the protection of Israeli soldiers, which led to clashes and troops firing live rounds at residents' homes. Bakr died of bullet wounds she sustained in the chest. She was in her bedroom with her sisters when she was shot, her father said.”

Israel reported that it pulled its forces out of the West Bank city of Jenin on Friday, after a nine-day operation. Thousands of residents were displaced from

their West Bank homes by the siege that focused on the Jenin refugee camp, home to 14,000 Palestinians.

Cleanup efforts began clearing piles of debris and rubble left by the Israeli operation, in which hundreds of troops and police backed by helicopters and drones entered all areas of the city and the refugee camp as well as surrounding villages. Jenin resident Samaher Abu Nassa told Al Jazeera, “When they entered, they used bulldozers and began destroying everything. They left nothing.”



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