Mother of six found dead in suspected West Bank terror attack

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The body of an Israeli mother of six was found in a West Bank forest early Monday in a suspected terror attack.

Esther Horgan, 52, left her home in the northern West Bank settlement of Tal Menashe on Sunday afternoon for a jog in the nearby Shaked Forest.

Her body was found early Monday with clear signs of a violent attack which police and the Shin Bet security agency suspect was an act of terror.

Security forces launched a manhunt Monday morning in an effort to find the perpetrator.

Paramedic Assaf Tapuhi, who arrived on the scene, said that the woman showed no signs of life and was pronounced dead.

The Samaria Regional Council said in a statement that Horgan's murder was an act of terror.

"Her husband alerted security forces after she failed to return home. She was found with her skull bashed in," the statement said.

"A dear woman so full of kindness goes out in the afternoon in the center of the State of Israel to exercise a minute away from her home, and is murdered by vile people in such a cruel way," said the head of the Samaria Regional Council, Yossi Dagan.

"I ask what barbarians, like those in the Middle Ages, what cruelty does it take to bash a 52-year-old woman in the face with a rock in cold blood? What evil are we facing?'"

Defense Minister Benny Gantz vowed that Israel would track down those responsible for her murder.

“I send my deepest sympathies to the Horgan family on the horrific murder of Esther, of blessed memory," said Gantz in a statement.

"Israel’s security forces are working to find the despicable murderer and take him promptly into custody. We will never accept a reality in which human life becomes dispensable.”

President Reuven Rivlin expressed his condolences to the Horgan family and said Israel would find the killer.

"This is a hard, heart-breaking morning with news of the cruel murder of Esther Horgan, who left her house yesterday and did not return," the president said in a statement released by his office.

"A full life of wonderful works, of home and family, of creativity and care have been cut short by a beast in human guise. I have full faith that our security forces will get to the despicable murders and that justice will be done. I embrace Esther's family, her children and their father. We are with you in this time of such deep grief."