Suspected incendiary balloons cause 3 fires

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Three fires broke out on Monday afternoon, two of them near Israeli communities by the Gaza border. Firefighters, including KKL teams, gained control of the flames.

The first fire broke out near the Be'eri Forest, another in Sa'ad Junction and a third in the Shokeda Forest.

The fires are suspected to have been started by incendiary balloons flown from Gaza into Israel, and fire investigators are on the scene. Recent days saw a halt in incendiary balloon fires.

"It was likely a balloon, as the fire broke out at Sa'ad Junction within seconds and at this point there isn't anything else apart from an incendiary balloon that can be pointed to as the cause of the fire, but we're still examining the matter," said one of the security forces personnel on the scene.

The previous incendiary balloon-caused fire happened exactly a week ago. A day prior to that, on Sunday of last week, three fires broke out in the Gaza border area as a result of incendiary balloons.

Defense Minister Avigor Lieberman addressed the incendiary balloon threat last week, saying "You can't completely prevent all lone-wolf terror attacks, even balloons."

"I see in the media reports of 'There are balloons in the south.' I call the IDF, to the Southern Command. They tell me 'That's right, there were balloons, but it's just balloons, not incendiary balloons.' There's no doubt there's a drop in incidents, but it's not enough," he continued. "And so what's important is to create strong ties between security calm and economic benefits."