8-year-old boy critically hurt in Jerusalem attack dies, a day after younger brother

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An eight-year-old boy critically wounded in a car-ramming attack near East Jerusalem’s Ramot neighborhood on Friday succumbed to his wounds Saturday, bringing the toll of the attack to three, medical officials said.

Asher Menahem Paley, the older brother of six-year-old Yaakov Yisrael Paley who was also killed in the attack, died at Shaare Zedek Medical Center, the hospital said in a statement.

“The boy arrived in critical condition while being resuscitated, and many teams from the trauma unit, from the ER, pediatric intensive care, pediatric surgery and neurosurgery fought for many hours for his life, but unfortunately they had to declare his death,” Shaare Zedek said Saturday evening.

The six-year-old Yaakov was quickly buried Friday afternoon before the start of Shabbat, in accordance with Jewish law which regards unnecessary delays in burial as disrespect toward the dead.

The slain children’s brother, Moshie, 10, was lightly hurt in the attack and released from Hadassah Medical Center over the weekend. The boys’ father, 42, remains hospitalized in moderate condition.

The other casualties included two men in their 20s in serious condition, according to medical officials.

The third fatality in the attack was Alter Shlomo Lederman, a 20-year-old yeshiva student who had gotten married two months ago. He and his wife had been on their way to his parents’ home for Shabbat. Lederman was rushed to Shaare Zedek Medical Center in critical condition, where he succumbed to his wounds.

Funerals were held for Asher Menahem Paley and for Lederman on Saturday night in Jerusalem, and they were both buried at the capital’s Har HaMenuchot Cemetery.

Paley’s six living siblings mourned their two slain brothers, with 16-year-old Tzviki Paley saying: “I was with you during your last moments, you are at a high place. May God give us strength to go on.”

Their grandfather Amos Gruner said: “These kids were sacred, so spiritual. A terrible tragedy.”

Meanwhile at Lederman’s funeral, the head of the yeshiva in which he had studied, Rabbi Tzvi Katz, said: “God has plucked the most beautiful lily in the garden.”

“He was always talked about in the family as something special, a prodigy,” said a relative.

The attacker was identified as Hussein Qaraqa, 31, an Israeli citizen and resident of the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Issawiya. Eyewitnesses said he accelerated into the group of Israelis waiting at the bus stop. A senior Israeli official said it is believed he was mentally ill, and was released from a psychiatric hospital in northern Israel only days ago.

Police designated the incident as a terror attack.

Police said officers detained 10 relatives of the terrorist in Issawiya and A-Tur, including his parents, his brother, his wife, and his landlord.

Qaraqa’s Facebook page included posts hailing attacks against Israeli soldiers and civilians. In a post last August, Qaraqa hailed the leader of Palestinian Islamic Jihad Ziad Nakhaleh. In a more recent post last December, Qaraqaa memorialized the members of the northern West Bank’s Lions Den after several were killed in an IDF operation. Lions Den has been responsible for numerous shooting attacks beyond the Green Line over the past year.

Qaraqa also published many posts glorifying attacks and wrote “Glory to the pure souls” while referring to attackers.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s office said the premier had decided to seal the home of the attacker. Qaraqa lived in a rented apartment, and it remained unclear if it was legally possible to seal his home.

As a matter of policy, Israel demolishes the homes of Palestinians accused of carrying out deadly terror attacks. Sealing the homes of attackers is often a replacement or stopgap for demolishing them. Last month, police welded the doors and windows shut of the home of a Palestinian terrorist who killed seven in Jerusalem, as a temporary move ahead of its full demolition.