IS claims killing of 2 in Israel, 2nd rampage in a week

March 28, 2022

By Laurie Kellman | AP

The Washington Post

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/is-claims-killing-of-2-in-israel-2nd-rampage-in-a-week/2022/03/28/1ca09f0c-ae64-11ec-9dbd-0d4609d44c1c_story.html>

The militant Islamic State group claimed responsibility on Monday after a pair of Arab gunmen killed two Israeli police officers and wounded four others in central Israel before they were killed by police, authorities said.

Israeli leaders condemned the killings and pointed to the timing. Sunday’s attack came on the eve of a special meeting between the foreign ministers of four Arab nations and the United States in the Israeli Negev. It was the second deadly attack carried out by Arab assailants in an Israeli city in less than a week. Both attacks came ahead of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

“This was murder for the sake of murder and terror for the sake of terror,” Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid said, flanked by the minsters from the U.S., Baharain, Morocco, Egypt and the United Arab Emirates.

“The terrorist goal is to intimidate us,” Lapid added. “We will not let them.”

“Our presence here today is, I think, the best response to such attacks,” said Moroccan Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita.

On Tuesday, a lone attacker inspired by the Islamic State group killed four people in a stabbing rampage in southern Israel before he was killed by passersby, police said.

The Islamic State group in a posting on its Aamaq news agency claims responsibility for the attack, saying two IS members killed two Israeli security forces.

“The heart breaks” over the attacks, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett, said Monday. The Israeli premier issued the statement from home, after testing positive for the [coronavirus](https://www.washingtonpost.com/coronavirus/?itid=lk_inline_manual_11). He urged people to be vigilant. Police were expected to set up checkpoints on major roads Tuesday.

Ramadan is expected to begin on Saturday. Last year, clashes between Israeli police and Muslim protesters during the holy month boiled over into an 11-day war between Israel and Gaza’s Hamas rulers.

Condemnation for the attacks poured in from governments around the world.

“Such senseless acts of violence and murder have no place in society,” tweeted U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who attended the gathering in the Negev with the foreign ministers of four Arab countries and Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid.

Hamas, the Islamic militant group that rules Gaza, praised the attack as a “heroic operation.”

Security camera footage circulating on Israeli media showed two bearded men appearing to open fire in Hadera before they are shot. An Israeli official said two members of the Israeli Border Police counterterrorism unit were in a restaurant near the attack, ran out and killed the assailants.

The Israeli rescue service MADA confirmed the deaths of one man and one woman, and said four people were wounded, two seriously. It released videos showing large numbers of police cars and ambulances in the area.

Attacks by IS inside Israel are rare. The group operates mainly in Iraq and Syria, where it has recently stepped up attacks against security forces there carried out through sleeper cells, despite its territorial defeat more than three years ago. The extremist group has also claimed attacks against Israeli troops in the past and has branches in Afghanistan and in Asia and beyond.