

Who Killed the Al Jazeera Journalist?



Shireen Abu Akleh, a 51 year-old Palestinian-American journalist for Al Jazeera in the West Bank, who was killed during an IDF raid on the Jenin refugee camp seeking terrorists. Photo: YouTube generated.

By Henry Levy

If only the time spent investigating who is the better liar is spent determining if the Palestinians will ever agree to live side by side in a cold peace with Israel, maybe the world wouldn't have to be consumed by another round of "Who's the Killer".

Either both sides should be looking at ways to tamp down the terror attacks and guaranteed in-kind responses or the world should finally understand, and begrudgingly accept, that this is just one more case of people who will be killing each other for years on end.

Do we have to root for an alien invasion to bring people together? Or maybe a meteor hurling towards earth ready to slam us back to the stone age? It sure as heck doesn't seem like both Israelis and Palestinians have an adequate supply of "better angels" to change

anything anytime soon.

A pity for the common folk and a boon to the media.

In any event, the Arab world's darling and Israel's bane, Shireen Abu Akleh, a 51 year-old Palestinian-American journalist for Al Jazeera was at the wrong place at the wrong time and now is residing in her final resting place in a Nablus cemetery.

What do we know?

It depends on who you ask but the more you hear the more you are reliving the film Rashomon. Let's take a crack at it anyway.

Israel has been the target of numerous terror attacks over these last weeks. Soldiers have been stabbed, citizens have been attacked by enemies wielding axes, no one in the country felt safe. Many of these incidents were carried out by Arabs living in Jenin. The IDF was certainly feeling the pressure to get things under control. On Wednesday morning, May 11th an elite IDF unit entered the Jenin refugee camp to arrest a member of the Islamic Jihad who was supposedly planning an imminent act of terror from that site. According to an IDF spokesperson, during the operation Israeli forces came under heavy fire and were targeted by IEDs. Abu Akleh and about four other journalists, all wearing vests that identified themselves as PRESS in large letters, entered Jenin that same morning where the Israeli forces were battling militants at three separate locations. The journalists were said to be several hundred feet

away from Israeli forces and watching the aforementioned raid on the Palestinian home in question. As gunshots rang out the journalists sought cover but Abu Akleh appeared to be already shot. Videos from the scene didn't show the exact moment when the bullet hit Akleh or who fired it. During an autopsy performed at a Palestinian forensic institute a fragment of the bullet was removed from her head but there has been no way to identify who fired it. To complicate matters further both sides were using M16 rifles but without testing individual rifles an ID could not likely be made.

Israelis asked to be present at the autopsy and they were denied.

They asked to examine the bullet and were denied.

The IDF called for a joint investigation and were refused.

Without both sides having equal access to critical evidence, both sides mistrusting each other, and no compromise in sight, the search for clues as to what really happened is at a standstill. For now the real doctors are shedding no light on the situation but the spin doctors seem to be in full control.

By the way, both Palestinians and Israelis expressed their sorrow and regret that Ms. Akleh was killed.

The IDF released a video and according to its Arabic-language spokesman Avichay Adraee who tweeted, "It seems- according to initial assessments - that she was hit by Palestinian gunfire and not IDF fire." Five frames are shown below with the following translation.



Shots from video in which Palestinian screaming were intercepted. From left: Photo #1- "The moment the Palestinian shoots into the alley where the two journalists were." Photo #2- "On the other side of the alley another Palestinian identifies the journalists, yells and alerts his comrades." Photo #3- "Here the slain journalist's colleague weeping for the one who got shot." Photo #4- "Here we see and hear the 2nd journalist screaming at the Palestinians at the other side of the alley, 'You killed her. It wasn't an Israeli soldier'." Photo #5- "Here you can listen to the Palestinian in the background explaining to the shooters in the other side of the alley what they have just done and that they've just killed the journalist." Photos: YouTube.