

**Death of Jordanian Policeman Killed Guarding Israelis Fuels Threats**  
**By Adam Nicky, the Media Line**  
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AMMAN-- The death of a Jordanian tourism policeman killed while guarding visiting Israelis have evoked threats by members of the victim's tribe to abduct or kill Israeli tourists unless the government opens an independent probe into the incident.

"Any Israeli could find himself the target of a kidnapping or other measures," Mohammed Jarah, brother of Sgt. Ibrahim Jarah, told The Media Line by telephone from his home in the town of Mazar, 110 miles south of Amman. "We want to know what happened to my brother. The government must open an independent investigation and announce the result in public," he threatened.

Jarah warned that his tribe will kill ten Israelis in retaliation for his brother's death.

Jordanian police have determined that Jarah drowned in a pool at the Maeen Hot Springs in Madaba in the south of Jordan, where he visited with the Israeli tourists earlier this month. His family, though, is accusing the authorities of a cover up, insisting the cause of death was not drowning but rather that he was killed by the Israelis.

"New evidence points to the fact that my brother was killed. He did not drown, but the government cannot handle the political repercussions of bringing Israeli citizens to justice," Mohammed Jarah charged. He insisted that, "Ibrahim was a good swimmer. They teach them in the police how to rescue people from water."

Due to the involvement of Israelis, contact with whom is problematic because of rejection of "normalization" with the Jewish state, a point evident from the text of the statement issued by the Jarahs' tribe. In part, it said, "This is not a normal killing; the dignity of a nation is at stake. We need the support of all human rights groups and parties to support our cause," before setting a deadline of week's end for the government to begin its investigation.

The ultimatum followed several days of clashes between protesters and police which erupted in Mazar immediately after Jarah's death was announced.

According to Mohammed Jarah, suspicions of family and friends that the true facts were not revealed became aroused by the behavior of the government when it released the Israeli tourists prior to the announcement of Ibrahim's death; and by what they saw as inconsistencies in the medical reports. Citing a report attributed to a civil defense source, they believe that Mohammed was killed and dumped into the water, their "proof" being that because "his lung was full of air, [it means] he died outside the water," according to Jarah.

The police, however, declared the death to be accidental, ruling out any criminal charges against the tourists. A police source not authorized to speak to media confirmed to The Media Line that the autopsy report indicated the policeman died after drowning in the pool.

"We only released the tourists after it was evident to investigators that he died of natural causes. We cannot hold foreigners unless they are officially indicted," the source explained.

The Israeli media reported that the tourists were only briefly held by Jordanian police after showing up at King Hussein Bridge without their police escort. The tourists, according to reports, said the police officer was left behind "after a visit to the falls."

The dispute over the circumstances of Jarah's death touched a sensitive nerve in Jordan, where anti-Israeli sentiment runs high, despite the fact that there are officially diplomatic and trade relations between the two countries. Many organizations including trade unions and professional

associations rigorously oppose “normalization” with the neighboring Jewish state despite the existence of the historic 1994 peace treaty. Dozens of such anti-normalization activists who advocate ending Jordanian-Israeli diplomatic relations altogether attended a meeting about the incident held by the tribal alliance.

The chorus of condemnation of the government’s handling of the incident was also joined by members of parliament and opposition leaders from left-wing and Islamic groups; while Deputy Mohammad Salim Sharman of the legislature’s lower house has threatened to bring the matter to the attention of the prime minister on the floor of the parliament.

“I will question the prime minister under the parliament dome. The truth must come out and justice must be achieved,” Sharman told The Media Line. “The government has not been clear about the circumstances of the death; they announced it two days after it happened. Why?”

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