

TIMES ONLINE



“ Anyone into 'vanilla' sex is seen as a trifle, well, repressed ” Caitlin Moran

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From Times Online

April 17, 2008

Video: final footage of Reuters journalist killed in Gaza

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(Warning: the video footage above contains images of a graphic nature)

The editor-in-chief of Reuters demanded that Israel launches a "thorough and immediate investigation" into the killing of one of its cameramen in the Gaza Strip yesterday (David Byers writes).

Footage of Fadel Shana, 23, being killed by a tank shell in the Gaza Strip has been released by the news agency, which said that the cameraman was hit despite clear markings that showed him to be a journalist.

After medical examinations of Shana's body, Reuters said that Israel had used a controversial type of tank shell which scatters metal darts, or flechettes, around the surrounding area after exploding, risking civilian casualties. Israel refused to comment on the report, but stated that the weapons were not illegal.

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Footage released by Reuters shows Mr Shana filming a tank positioned a few hundred yards away in the distance, over the Israeli border.

The film shows a tank firing its shell, which explodes causing the picture to go blank as the camera

is thrown from Mr Shana's hand.

It then cuts away to a film made by another cameraman positioned nearby, which shows the devastation left by the shell, including two youths who had been passing the scene lying dead in the road.

Mr Shana, who was from Gaza and had covered the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians for the last three years, died instantly. He had been covering events in Gaza for Reuters on a day of intense violence when 16 other Palestinians and three Israeli soldiers were also killed.

In a highly unusual appeal to camera after the footage of his death, David Schlesinger, editor-in-chief of Reuters News, appealed for Israel to launch an investigation into the incident.

"It is clear to me that we need a thorough and immediate investigation by the Israeli defence forces into what happened "

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professionals do their job without fear of death."

He added: "The markings on Fadel Shana's vehicle showed clearly and unambiguously that he was a professional journalist doing his duty. We and the military must work together urgently to understand why this tragedy took place and how similar incidents can be avoided in the future."

Reuters said that an X-ray conducted at Gaza City's Shifa Hospital last night had found numerous metal darts had wounded him, landing in his chest and legs, which the organisation said showed that flechettes had been used.

Asked about the weaponry used, an Israeli army spokeswoman said: "The Israel Defence Forces do not, as a rule, comment on the weapons they use. But its weapons are legal under international law.

"Flechettes are legal under international law and a petition filed in the Supreme Court against their use was rejected."

The petition, filed in 2003 jointly by Israel's Physicians for Human Rights and the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, claimed that the weapon should be classified as one which causes excessive injury under United Nations rules. The Israeli Supreme Court turned the request down.

The spokeswoman added: "We wish to express sorrow for the death of the Palestinian cameraman. It should be emphasised that the area in which the cameraman was hurt is an area in which ongoing fighting against armed, extreme and dangerous terrorist organisations occurs on a daily basis.

"The presence of media, photographers and other uninvolved individuals in areas of warfare is extremely dangerous and poses a threat to their lives."

Several hundred people, including local journalists, attended Mr Shana's funeral procession early today. His body was draped in a Palestinian flag and his shattered camera and flak jacket were borne aloft on a separate stretcher.

Israeli forces have been fighting running battles with militants from a range of Islamist splinter groups in Gaza over the last few months, with a particular upsurge since the Islamist Hamas took control of the territory in a military coup last summer.



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It matters little whether or not the vehicle or Mr Shana was identified as press. This is another death you can actually attribute to Islamic fundamentalists. If they didn't disregard the rules of armed conflict and hide themselves in ambulances marked as Red Cross and on occasion in press vehicles then armies would not be faced with a situation where they have to suspect and potentially target what previously were always known to be 'neutral' vehicles and people.

Israel is often criticised because few understand what they face...an entire nation of people who wish to see the Israeli state destroyed and as they have said on many occasions 'the Jews pushed into the sea' The world is in actual fact too forgiving of Arab rhetoric and their calls for the murders of Jews and infidels. Israel is the only country who walks with their eyes wide open when it comes to Islamic fundamentalism.

David: When you are a soldier in that kind of situation then you will have the knowledge to comment

Claire , London, UK

Jonathon, its not the "rockets being fired" that are making the Israelis kill innocent people. Remember they shelled the UN headquarters in QANA, in Lebanon where all innocent people took refuge in 1996? at least one hundred civilians were martyred. We are asking too much from the UN which unfortunately lost its credibility and efficiency, in the favour of Israel.

maya ammar, Beirut, Lebanon

Sadly, this is par for the course when confronted with the naked aggression of Israel.

Is anyone, much less the U.S., going to do anything about it?...Nope.

And why?...Everyone knows why.

I say, Silent No More

Anthony, Grens, Suisse

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