Beat: News

U.S. soldier kills 3, injures 16 in shooting at Fort Hood army base

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USPA News - A soldier being treated for mental health issues opened fire at the Fort Hood military base in the U.S. state of Texas on Wednesday afternoon, killing three people and injuring more than a dozen others before turning the gun on himself, officials said. The suspect, Ivan Lopez, a 34-year-old soldier assigned to 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), opened fire at about 4 p.m. local time on Wednesday in the 1st Medical Brigade area at Fort Hood, the Texas army base that is still reeling from a deadly massacre four years ago.

Lopez allegedly killed three people and injured 16 others before turning the gun on himself. Lt. Gen. Mark Milley, the Commander of Fort Hood, said Lopez was stationed at Fort Hood since February and previously served in Iraq for four months in 2011. He added that the exact motive of the shooting remained unclear but explained Lopez was being treated for a number of mental problems. "He was undergoing behavior health and psychiatric treatment for depression and anxiety and a variety of other psychological and psychiatric issues," Milley said at a news conference. "There are reports that he self-reported a traumatic brain injury, previously, coming back from Iraq." The base commander said Lopez first opened fire in one building before firing from a car while heading to a second building at the army base. "He was using a .45-caliber Smith & Wesson semi-automatic pistol that was purchased recently in the local area," said Milley. When the suspect was confronted by one of the military police officers, he took his own life. U.S. law enforcement agencies had earlier this week issued an alert which said they were looking for a recent Army recruit believed to be planning a "Fort Hood-inspired jihad against U.S. soldiers," but authorities said there was no connection and no indication that Wednesday`s shooting was linked to terrorism. "I`m not ruling out terrorism. All I`m saying is there`s no indication of it at this time," Milley said. Later on Wednesday evening, U.S. President Barack Obama offered his condolences and support to the victims` families, saying: "We`re heartbroken that something like this might have happened again. I want to just assure all of us that we`re going to get to the bottom of exactly what happened." Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel also offered his sympathies to the families of the victims. "Today`s shooting was a terrible tragedy for the Fort Hood community, the Department of Defense, and for the nation," he said. "We will closely monitor the situation at Fort Hood and stay informed by what investigators and law enforcement personnel learn about the shooting." In November 2009, Nidal Malik Hasan, a U.S. Army major and psychiatrist, also opened fire at Fort Hood, killing 13 people and injuring about 30 others in the worst mass shooting to ever take place on an American military base. He was later convicted and sentenced to death.

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