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Carjacking Incident in Puerto Rico Leaves 3 Police Officers Dead

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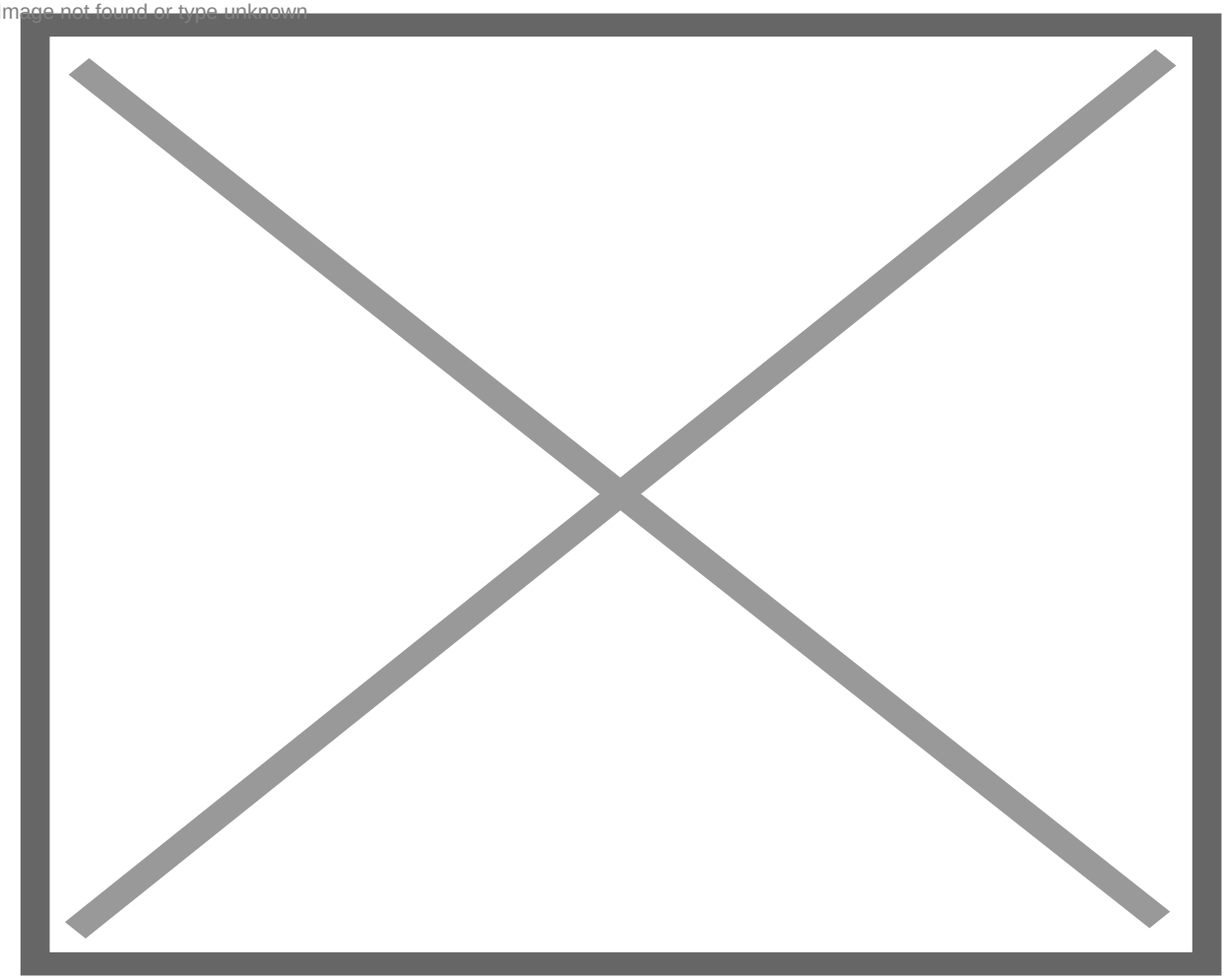

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Three police officers were killed and a fourth was injured Monday near Puerto Rico's capital following a carjacking, authorities said.

Two of the dead officers were shot and the third was run over, Agent José Catalano told The Associated Press.

The incident occurred in the popular tourist district of Isla Verde on one of the U.S. territory's busiest highways near the island's main international airport, causing a severe traffic jam.

It was the first time in recent history that so many Puerto Rico police officers were slain in one incident.

“I’ve never had a scene like this,” Capt. José González told AP.

The man allegedly responsible for the deaths was still at large, although authorities seized his car, Catalano said. He said he did not immediately have further details.

A high-ranking official who was not authorized to speak to the media told AP that the suspect was involved in a carjacking in the northern city of Carolina, where he stole a car from a woman and then opened fire on officers when he was stopped in Isla Verde following a lengthy chase. Catalano had said earlier that it was a routine traffic stop.

The officers’ names were not released. Two were municipal officers and the third was a state officer, Catalano said.

FBI spokeswoman Limary Cruz told AP that the agency was collaborating with local police but had no plans at present to take jurisdiction of the case.

Gov. Pedro Pierluisi, who was sworn in earlier this month, said he visited the wounded officer at the hospital and lamented the deaths of the other three.

“This loss of life has to stop now,” he wrote in a Facebook post. “There will be an investigation to identify the guilty, and they will be tried to the fullest extent of the law.”

Written by AP's Danica Cotto

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