**SHIN BET ARRESTS HAMAS EXPLOSIVE EXPERT IN ISRAEL WITH HUMANITARIAN PERMIT**

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Israel’s Shin Bet foiled a series of attempts by the military wing of Hamas to establish terror cells in the West Bank and arrested an explosives expert who entered Israel with a humanitarian permit for medical treatment.

The agency cleared for release on Wednesday that Hamas had attempted to establish terror cells in order to carry out simultaneous deadly attacks in Israel and had tried to smuggle in an individual who had been trained by the group for a year to set up a laboratory in the West Bank in order to manufacture explosive devices to be used in the attacks.

Fadi Abu al-Sabah, a 35 year-old resident of the Nuseirat refugee camp in the Gaza Strip, was arrested in Taibeh by the Shin Bet and the Israel Police on May 18, 2019.

According to the Shin Bet he was recruited to set up an explosive manufacturing laboratory in July 2018 by Ashraf Sabah, a 37-year-old Hamas activist from the Gaza Strip who had been released from prison in Israel in 2015 after serving 12 years in prison for his involvement in attacks against IDF forces along the Gaza Strip border and planning other terrorist attacks.

The agency said that he was first approached after Sabah heard that he was in the process of getting a humanitarian permit for medical treatment in the West Bank.

Fadi Sabah then secretly met with operatives from Hamas’ Izz al-Din al-Qassam brigades and underwent “intensive military training” including training in how to manufacture explosives and explosive charges which he could then teach to Hamas operatives in the West Bank.

He was instructed to deny his acquaintance with his recruits and supporters in the Gaza Strip and was also briefed on how to act during interrogations at the Erez Crossing and by the Shin Bet.

The Shin Bet said that prior to leaving the Strip for his medical treatment Fadi received a coat

With a piece of hidden piece of cloth that contained code words for the purpose of encrypted communication between the Hamas military wing in the Gaza Strip and recruits in the West Bank in order to plan and carry out attacks against Israeli targets.

Fadi was asked to transfer the coat with the piece of cloth in September 2018 when he crossed through the Erez crossing when he went to Jordan to get medical treatment but he but failed to do so.

In early May 2019 he contacted a doctor in Gaza and paid her to falsify medical documents to show that he could not receive proper treatment for his injury in the Gaza Strip in order to ensure that he would receive a permit to be treated in Israel. Once he got the permit he once again underwent training in manufacturing explosives “in order to ensure that he was skilled enough” to train operatives in the West Bank, the Shin Bet said.

On May 15, he arrived at the Erez crossing carrying the bag containing the coat with the hidden piece of cloth that he had received with code words.

Fadi “took advantage of the humanitarian permit he received from Israel to enter for medical treatment in Hebron but in practice did not arrive at the hospital but joined forces with elements in Hebron in order to promote terrorist activities and carry out his mission,” the Shin Bet statement said.

He was arrested in a joint Shin Bet-Israel Police operation three days later on May 18 shortly after he entered the Taibeh area in Israel. He was interrogated and a serious indictment was filed against him.

“The Hamas terrorist organization is constantly recruiting activists from the West Bank for military activity, transferring funds for this activity, preparing explosive devices and weapons, and setting up terror infrastructures,” the Shin Bet said.

In addition to his arrest the Shin Bet said that another 11 Hamas operatives who operated near Qalqilya were arrested between March-May.

According to the agency the suspects were asked by Hamas operatives in Gaza to prepare an explosive device for a suicide attack in Israel. During the investigation the agency confiscated a number of weapons which were to be used in shooting attacks as well as a written manual for the manufacturing of explosives.

Another four Palestinians were arrested by the agency in the West Bank village of Arabeh in the northern West Bank for promoting Hamas suicide attacks.

"The thwarting of terror cells exposed the constant effort by Hamas’ military wing in establishing terrorist infrastructures in the West Bank to carry out attacks against Israeli citizens,” said a senior Shin Bet official adding that “this is a systematic and wide-ranging activity waged by the military wing against the West Bank and testifies to the strategy that the Hamas leadership continues to lead in order to destabilize the entire region.”