Soldier killed in shooting attack while securing settler march in northern West Bank

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<https://www.timesofisrael.com/soldier-hurt-by-gunfire-while-securing-settler-march-in-northern-west-bank/>

An Israeli soldier was killed in a shooting near the settlement of Shavei Shomron in the northern West Bank on Tuesday, the military said.

The Israel Defense Forces said the soldier, later named as Staff Sgt. Ido Baruch, was seriously hurt and was taken by ambulance for medical treatment at the Meir Medical Center.

Baruch, 21, was from the central town of Gedera and of the military’s Givati infantry brigade, part of its reconnaissance unit.

His death was later declared by medical staff at the hospital in Kfar Saba.

A gunman apparently opened fire from a passing vehicle and fled the scene at a high speed, according to the IDF’s initial probe of the shooting. Security camera footage showed the car fleeing the area, passing by a military vehicle, toward the Palestinian town of Deir Sharaf.

The attack came as settlers held a march near the adjacent Palestinian town of Sebastia over a string of recent shootings in the West Bank. The soldier was part of a unit securing the march.

The organizers said the march continued as planned following the shooting, which it said occurred several kilometers away.

An armed Palestinian faction calling itself the Lion’s Den claimed responsibility for the shooting in a statement.

The group — based in Nablus’s old city — was established in recent months by members of various terror groups. Some of its members were apparently previously affiliated with the Al-Aqsa Martyrs’ Brigade and Palestinian Islamic Jihad.

It has claimed responsibility for numerous attacks in the northern West Bank in recent weeks, including one targeting another [demonstration](https://www.timesofisrael.com/soldier-lightly-hurt-in-west-bank-shooting-after-earlier-attack-nearby/) held by settlers near Nablus.

Amid searches for the alleged gunman, shooting was heard in the Deir Sharaf area.

Defense Minister Benny Gantz vowed that security forces would capture the Palestinian gunman.

“I would like to send my condolences to the family,” Gantz said on Twitter.
“The chase continues during these hours. We will put our hands on the terrorist and those who aided him.”

Gantz added that the military’s West Bank operations would “continue and intensify in order to provide security to the citizens of Israel.”

The West Bank has seen a surge in violence in recent months, particularly in its north. Palestinian gunmen have targeted military posts, troops operating along the West Bank security barrier, Israeli settlements and civilians on the roads.

In a shooting attack near Jerusalem on Saturday, an Israeli soldier, Sgt. Noa Lazar, 18, was killed. The gunman, thought to have fled into the Shuafat refugee camp, was still on the lam Tuesday.

A civilian security guard seriously wounded in the attack remained in a serious and unstable condition, the hospital said in a statement Tuesday morning.

David Morel, 30, an immigrant from Brazil, was in a medically induced coma and remained under intensive care at the Hadassah Ein Kerem hospital.

After immigrating from Brazil in 2017, Morel joined the IDF as a lone soldier, before becoming a security guard following his release from the army, according to his family.

Israeli security forces were still searching for the alleged gunman, Udai Tamimi, Tuesday morning in the Shuafat area.

As a result, police have heavily restricted access to the neighborhood, with videos on social media showing police units entering the house of the suspected attacker, apparently in order to map out the premises.

Israel maintains a policy of demolishing property belonging to attackers as a deterrent against future incidents.

Israel has been carrying out nightly arrest raids across the West Bank since a spate of terror attacks against Israelis in the spring killed 19 people.

In arrest raids across the West Bank early Tuesday, 10 wanted Palestinians were arrested and several firearms were seized, the IDF said.