Israeli Man Shot by Palestinian While in Sukkah: ‘Miracle’ Things Didn’t End Differently

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An Israeli man who was hit by Palestinian gunfire while sitting at a Sukkah near his home in the West Bank on Friday recounted the ordeal to Israel media, saying it was a “miracle” there were no fatalities within the crowded holiday dwelling.

Jonathan Nizri, 25, was enjoying the “great atmosphere” with his wife, baby son, and more than a dozen others in his Sukkah — a temporary hut erected by Jews during the holiday of Sukkot — in Beit El before suddenly hearing gunfire.

“We saw smoke from the corner of the Sukkah and I very quickly understood that it’s a shooting attack,” he [told](https://www.ynet.co.il/news/article/sku88t00qo#autoplay) *Yediot Achronot* on Saturday.

“I felt a blow to my jaw and immediately grabbed my wife and son and we went to our house,” said Nizri, who sustained an upper body injury from shrapnel and was treated by a local first responder, before being evacuated to a Jerusalem hospital.

The Palestinian gunman, identified by the Israeli military as Hamas operative Kays Shajaia, 23, was killed by returning fire from Israeli troops. Shajaia was previously imprisoned due to his involvement in terrorist activities, according to the IDF.

A second suspected assailant, 19, was arrested hours later in the Palestinian town of Dayr Jarir, located northeast of Beir El, along with two other suspected accomplices. His home contained weapons and uniforms, the military said.

“It’s a difficult feeling, the transition from a holiday atmosphere to that of a terrorist attack within one second is difficult to digest,” said Nizri. “It could have ended differently, it’s a definite miracle. There are bullet marks on the chair I sat, and if the bullet had been slightly skewed, it could have ended completely differently.”

“I was a fighter in an elite [military] unit and I had the feeling in the IDF that I gave [others] a sense of security,” he continued. “I would return home with a lot of satisfaction.”

“After experiencing such an event in the Sukkah in your home and feeling that your child and your wife were in mortal danger, you ask questions,” Nizri said. “I understand that these terrorists were in the scope of our snipers, and ask if it was possible to stop them beforehand.”

The attack was among the latest in an ongoing surge of Palestinian and Arab violence that has left more than 100 people killed or injured since March.