Terror victim succumbs to injuries 8 months after Independence Day attack

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<https://www.timesofisrael.com/terror-victim-succumbs-to-injuries-8-months-after-independence-day-attack>

Eight months after he was seriously injured from an axe blow to his head during a terror attack on Independence Day, Shimon Maatuf, 75, died overnight Wednesday.

Maatuf’s death brought to four the number of people killed in the May 5 rampage by two Palestinian terrorists in the central city of Elad as celebrations were held for the founding of the Jewish State.

His death came days after a Palestinian gunman shot dead seven Israelis outside a synagogue in Jerusalem.

Maatuf’s daughter Aviva Hallel told media her father’s health slowly ebbed due to an infections. She said he had “suffered for the past eight months” and never recovered from the attack.

Maatuf was working as an armed security guard at an Independence Day event when he heard screams from the direction of where the attack began. He rushed to the scene and encountered the two terrorists, who attacked him as well. Eyewitnesses said at the time that Msatuf managed to fire one shot at the assailants before they wounded him, Ynet reported.

For several months after the attack, Maatuf was treated at the Reuth Tel Aviv rehabilitation hospital, but three months ago his condition deteriorated and he was moved to the city’s Ichilov Hospital. At the time Hallel told the Israel Hayom newspaper that since being injured Maatuf was not responding beyond some eye movements, but that he was aware that his family was by his side.

Maatuf’s funeral was scheduled for the early afternoon on Thursday and he was to be buried in the Moshav Bareket cemetery. He is survived by a brother, six children, and 13 grandchildren.

In the attack, Palestinians As’ad Yousef As’ad al-Rifa’i, 19, and Subhi Emad Sbeihat, 20, hacked three people to death with an axe and severely wounded several others. A knife was also believed to have been used in the attack. The pair was arrested in a forested area about a kilometer from the scene of the attack, after a 60-hour manhunt.

A week after the attack, Israeli troops arrested two other Palestinians who were suspected of aiding the terrorists.

In August the IDF razed the homes of both terrorists in the West Bank town of Rummanah, near Jenin.

Al-Rifa’i and Sbeihat were [indicted in June](https://www.timesofisrael.com/2-palestinians-indicted-for-carrying-out-deadly-elad-terror-attack/), and were charged with three counts of murder under aggravated circumstances in an act of terror, five counts of attempted murder in an act of terror, and entering Israel illegally, among other charges.

Al-Rifa’i confessed to security forces that he committed the axe attack with Sbeihat, killing Oren Ben Yiftah, a 35-year-old driver from Lod, and Elad residents Yonatan Havakuk and Boaz Gol, both in their 40s.

Over the course of the manhunt, troops followed bloodstains believed to have been from injuries the pair sustained during the attack. Several of the victims fought with the terrorists, according to medical and security officials.