Two Israeli brothers shot dead in West Bank terror attack — IDF

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<https://www.timesofisrael.com/two-israelis-shot-dead-in-west-bank-suspected-terror-attack/>

Two Israeli brothers were shot dead in a terror attack in the northern West Bank town of Huwara on Sunday, the military and medics said.

The Israel Defense Forces said a Palestinian gunman opened fire from close range at an Israeli-owned car on the Route 60 highway, then fled the scene, apparently on foot.

The two were named as brothers Hallel Yaniv, 21 and Yagel Yaniv, 19, residents of the West Bank settlement of Har Bracha.

Graphic footage from the attack in Huwara showed the victims’ car riddled with bullets. Troops at the scene found 12 nine-millimeter shell casings, indicting the attacker used a handgun or makeshift submachine gun.

An initial probe of the shooting suggested the gunman took advantage of a traffic jam on the highway to carry out the attack.

The Magen David Adom ambulance service initially said its medics were treating two men who were critically hurt and were taking them by helicopter to a hospital. However, they were later announced to have died.

The IDF said it had launched a manhunt for the gunman, closing off several roads in the area.

On Sunday evening, after holding a situation assessment with top defense officials, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant ordered the military to ramp up operations in the West Bank to locate the gunman.

“Gallant directed the security forces to focus operational and intelligence efforts to capture the terrorists, while taking any necessary action, including offensive actions, to prevent further attacks,” his office said in a statement.

Gallant also approved a bolstering of military forces in the West Bank, “with the aim of expanding defense operations in the settlements and on the roads,” his office added.

Huwara has long been a flashpoint in the West Bank as it is just about the only Palestinian town through which Israelis regularly travel in order to reach settlements in the northern West Bank.

There have been [several shooting attacks](https://www.timesofisrael.com/shots-fired-at-israeli-vehicle-driving-through-palestinian-town-no-injuries/) against Israeli motorists on Route 60 in Huwara.

In recent months, Palestinian gunmen have repeatedly targeted military posts, troops operating along the West Bank security barrier, Israeli settlements and civilians on the roads.

Tensions between Israel and the Palestinians have been high for the past year, with the IDF conducting near-nightly raids in the West Bank amid a series of deadly Palestinian terror attacks.

A string of Palestinian terror attacks in Jerusalem in recent weeks left 11 people dead and several more seriously hurt.

Over 60 Palestinians have been killed since the beginning of the year, most of them while carrying out attacks or during clashes with security forces, but some were uninvolved civilians and others were killed under circumstances that are being investigated.

The attack on Sunday came as Israeli and Palestinian officials sat down for a meeting in [Jordan](https://www.timesofisrael.com/jordan-to-host-israel-palestinians-for-sunday-summit-in-bid-to-restore-calm/) in a bid to restore calm to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip amid deadly violence.