**Independence Day terror attack said foiled as troops find hidden bomb**

April 18, 2018

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Times of Israel

https://www.timesofisrael.com/independence-day-terror-attack-said-foiled-as-troops-find-hidden-bomb/

Officials said a large-scale terror attack planned for Independence Day had been averted after security officials arrested a Palestinian at a checkpoint in the northern West Bank on Wednesday with a “powerful explosive device” stashed in his truck.

The truck was stopped at the Reihan crossing by security inspectors, who found it also carried merchandise intended for use in Israeli settlements, with the bomb hidden “in its roof,” the Defense Ministry said in a statement.

Police sappers were dispatched to defuse the bomb, the statement said.

Defense Minister Avigdor Liberman praised the “vigilance and professionalism” of the Crossings Authority personnel, which “led to the exposure of an explosive device and to the thwarting of a large-scale terror attack on our 70th Independence Day.”

“We will chase down the bastards who planned to harm our celebration,” he wrote on Twitter, vowing to quickly lay hands on those responsible and bring them to justice.

Erez Zidon, head of the Defense Ministry’s Crossings Authority, said he was “proud of the inspectors who acted exactly as we would expect, first identifying the suspicious truck and then identifying the smuggling attempt, which turned to be an explosive device — probably meant for a terror attack during Independence Day.”

Earlier Wednesday, police arrested a Palestinian man at the Qalandiya checkpoint north of Jerusalem after a search uncovered a knife on his person. The man, 32, a resident of Gaza who appeared to have been living in the West Bank, was interrogated by police. According to officials, in his initial questioning, he admitted that he had planned to carry out a stabbing attack.

Large parts of the West Bank are under closure until Thursday at midnight as Israel marks Memorial Day and celebrates its 70th Independence Day.