Troops kill 3 Palestinian gunmen en route to carry out attack near Jenin – IDF

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Three Palestinian gunmen allegedly en route to carry out a terror attack were ambushed and killed by Israeli forces near the West Bank city of Jenin on Sunday afternoon, defense officials said.

According to a joint statement by the Israel Defense Forces, Border Police, and Shin Bet security service, the cell set out from the Jenin refugee camp before being ambushed by forces near the town of Arrabeh, south of Jenin.

Footage published by Palestinian media showed Israeli troops opening fire at a vehicle numerous times.

The Shin Bet named the head of the cell as Naif Abu Suias, 26, a resident of the Jenin refugee camp.

The agency said Suias was a “prominent military operative… who was involved in military activity against our forces and in advancing military activity directed by terror elements from the Gaza Strip.”

The other two gunmen were identified by Palestinian media as Lu’ayy Abu Na’asa and Baraa Ahmed Qurum.

In their car, Israeli troops found an assault rifle. Their bodies were being held by Israeli authorities.

IDF spokesman Rear Adm. Daniel Hagari said the cell was heading to carry out a drive-by shooting attack against Israeli civilians in the area of the West Bank settlement of Mevo Dotan, and that the forces had “removed a real and immediate threat.”

“The cell was on its way to an attack in order to kill Israeli civilians,” Hagari said, noting a [deadly drive-by shooting attack](https://www.timesofisrael.com/israeli-man-seriously-hurt-in-apparent-west-bank-terror-shooting/) in the West Bank in May.

“There was an alert, we were prepared and therefore we also achieved a quick result. This is a targeted and surgical operation in which intelligence is the main enabler, together with very fast flexibility of the IDF and the operational units,” Hagari told reporters.

The incident came as tensions have remained high across the region, amid a string of Palestinian terror attacks in Israel and the West Bank that have left 26 people dead and several others seriously wounded since the beginning of the year, the latest being on [Saturday evening in Tel Aviv](https://www.timesofisrael.com/terrorist-critically-wounds-security-guard-in-tel-aviv-is-shot-by-2nd-officer/).

According to a tally by The Times of Israel, 167 West Bank Palestinians have been killed since the beginning of the year — most of them during clashes with security forces or while carrying out attacks, but some were uninvolved civilians and others were killed under unclear circumstances, including in cases by Israeli settlers.