Three seriously wounded in terror stabbing spree at Gan Yavne mall

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Three people were seriously wounded in a terror knifing at a mall in the southern Israeli city of Gan Yavne late Sunday, authorities said, as concern mounted that a relatively calm Ramadan period could give way to a fresh outburst of violence.

The attack at the city’s Friendly mall was the second of the day, after an off-duty soldier was stabbed and lightly injured at Beersheba’s main bus station.

The three victims, identified by the Magen David Adom ambulance service as two men aged 25 and 20, and a 17-year-old boy, were all rushed to Assuta Hospital in nearby Ashdod with multiple stab wounds.

The rescue group said all three were transported in serious condition and that medics had fought to save the 25-year-old man from dying of his wounds on the way to the hospital.

On Monday morning, the Assuta Medical Center in Ashdod, which had received the wounded, said two of the victims were transferred to Ichilov Hospital in Tel Aviv and Beilinson Hospital Petah Tikva for neurosurgery.

According to Assuta, the victims, both males in their 20s, suffer from very serious head injuries.

The third victim arrived at Assuta in moderate condition and was in surgery.

Police described the incident as a terror attack.

The attacker, identified as a 19-year-old Palestinian, was shot dead by security officers who responded to the scene. Security camera footage published by police overnight showed two officers arrive in a police car, with one looking over a man seen bleeding from his back as the second enters an outdoor portion of the shopping center.

As the knifeman sprints in his direction, the officer begins to run away. Just as the stabber jumps on the officer, the second cop runs up and shoots the assailant, killing him.

A police statement identified the two as a police officer and city municipal enforcement officer who rushed to the scene after hearing a commotion.

In [a second video](https://t.me/admma_news/123471), the stabber can be seen running through a weight room and repeatedly stabbing a man as the two scuffle. The victim eventually manages to get away.

According to police, the assailant used two knives in the attack.

Reports in Hebrew and Arabic-language media identified the suspected attacker as a 19-year-old from the town of Dura, outside of Hebron, in the southern West Bank.

Southern district police commander Amir Cohen said the suspected attacker had entered Israel from the southern West Bank via a hole in the security barrier, though authorities were investigating if he may have been employed illegally in the mall.

Cohen said the suspect had been issued a work permit in the past. According to various reports in Hebrew-language media, he had not met the criteria for a permit allowing him to work in Israel, but rather the permit had only been valid for a West Bank industrial zone run by Israel. It had expired in August reports said.

Medics said the victims were found in different parts of the shopping center, indicating the breadth of the rampage.

“It was a tough scene,” first responder Shiri Barlev said in a statement provided by MDA.

Visiting the mall following the attack, National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir said an increased police presence and continued programs arming civilian quick response squads were needed to bolster the fight on terror.

“We’re at war, and certainly the enemy has more motivation to harm us,” he said.

Earlier Sunday, an off-duty Israel Defense Forces officer was stabbed and lightly wounded in a terror attack at Beersheba’s central bus station.

According to police and the IDF, after stabbing the victim at a bus platform, the terrorist was shot by another soldier, and was later pronounced dead.

The stabber was identified by defense sources as Naji Abu Freh, 28, a resident of the nearby Bedouin city of Rahat.

That attack came weeks after another Rahat resident originally from the Gaza Strip fatally stabbed an IDF noncommissioned officer at a gas station north of Beersheba in a terror attack.

Tensions in Israel and the West Bank have been high since October 7, when some 3,000 terrorists burst through the Gaza border into Israel in a Hamas-led attack, killing at least 1,200 people, most of them civilians, and seizing 253 hostages.

Authorities have expressed worries that violence could ratchet upward during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, though the last three weeks have not seen any major uptick in attacks.

Following the Gan Yavne attack, the Hamas terror group released a statement praising it as a “heroic operation,” and calling on Palestinians to “escalate” attacks on Israelis, an oft-repeated message that has largely gone unheeded, according to Israeli analysts.