Shin Bet says stabbing in Jerusalem’s Gilo was terror, 3 Palestinians arrested

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The Shin Bet said Saturday that a stabbing earlier in the week, in which a man was seriously injured in East Jerusalem’s Gilo neighborhood, was a terror attack.

Three Palestinian teens aged 17-19 from the West Bank city of Bethlehem were arrested on suspicion of involvement in the attack, the Shin Bet said.

The three were detained in a joint operation between the security agency and the Israel Defense Forces.

Authorities had previously said they believed the Thursday incident was terror, but had not yet confirmed the motive.

The family of 25-year-old Or Sayer said Friday that they were sure it was a terror attack, despite the apparent delay by officials in declaring it as such.

Sayer’s uncle Boaz Weiner told Channel 12 news on Friday that his nephew was stable but not out of danger after he was brought to a Jerusalem hospital with a knife still embedded in his back.

“We have no doubt that it was an attack. Three people attacked him and he arrived at the emergency room with a knife stuck in his back,” Weiner said.

“The surgery was complex and they brought in a neurologist to pull the knife out of him,” he said. “We are entering two critical days, we will spend Shabbat at Shaare Tzedek Medical Center. We are praying for his life and hope to hear good news after the initial assessment of the situation.”

“Or is an outstanding student of chemistry and biology at the Hebrew University, a gifted child who worked in the laboratories at the university. He helps everyone, he volunteered with Holocaust survivors,” Weiner told the Ynet news site.

“Before the attack, he had gone to his grandparents’ house to help them tidy up, he went there after a test,” Weiner said.

Paramedics brought Sayer, who was conscious but in serious condition, to Shaare Zedek Medical Center in the capital for treatment.

The hospital said that upon arrival, the man was in a very serious and unstable condition, and was taken to surgery. It later said he was stable but still in serious condition, sedated and ventilated, in the intensive care ward.

Police said in a statement that they arrested one suspect, and were investigating if he was involved in the incident. According to reports, he has since been released.

The attack came as tensions between Israelis and Palestinians have been high across the region for the past year and a half, with the military carrying out near-nightly raids in the West Bank amid a series of deadly Palestinian terror attacks.