# 1 Israeli killed, 2 critically injured in West Bank terror shootings

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One Israeli was killed and two were critically injured in a pair of shooting attacks in the northern West Bank on Sunday, the military said.

The attack began at around 9:45 a.m. near the Ariel Junction, where the terrorist assaulted a soldier with a knife and managed to gain control of his weapon, IDF spokesman Lt. Col. Jonathan Conricus said.

The attacker then fired at passing vehicles, hitting a civilian in the first vehicle. A second vehicle was hit, but managed to flee the scene. A third car stopped, and the attacker, whom Conricus said “appears to be a Palestinian,” took it and fled the scene.

“I saw the terrorist. He fired at my vehicle and I ran away while it was still running. The terrorist then stole the car, and I saw him continue driving in the direction of Tel Aviv,” the driver of the third vehicle told the Ynet news site.

Conricus said that the suspect then continued to the nearby Gitai Junction, where he shot at a soldier standing at a hitchhiking post, injuring him.

An eyewitness at the second junction said she and her friend were waiting at the bus stop when the vehicle approached. “We think it was a blue car with two people inside,” the unnamed witness told Channel 13. “They fired about three bullets and hit one of the soldiers.”

According to Conricus, the attacker then drove to the nearby Palestinian village of Bruqin, leaving the vehicle near the entrance before fleeing inside the village where Israeli security forces are currently in pursuit of him.

Additional forces have been deployed to the scene in a manhunt that is being coordinated with the Shin Bet security service and the Israel Police, Conricus said. He added that it was not immediately clear whether the suspect was affiliated with any terror groups or if he was acting alone.

The two injured men, one 19 and one 47, were taken to Beilinson Hospital in Petah Tikva, the Magen David Adom Emergency service said. The younger victim sustained abdominal and spinal injuries and was being prepped for surgery.

The older victim’s condition deteriorated to critical by the time he arrived at the hospital with head injuries and doctors were fighting to keep him alive. He was identified as Rabbi Achiad Ettinger, a father of 12 from the Eli settlement.

Medics attempted to resuscitate the third victim, but were forced to declare him dead at the Ariel Junction.

As a precaution, the army briefly ordered the closing of the nearby Barkan industrial zone as well as the surrounding northern West Bank settlements. The Palestinian villages of Jamma’in, Kifl Haris and Deir Istiya near Nablus were also sealed, the IDF said.

Palestinian media reported heavy gunfire in the village of Bruqin.

In a video statement from the scene of the attack, Ariel Mayor Eli Shaviro said he had complete faith that Israel’s security forces “will do everything in their power to prevent the next attack and to capture the murderers.”

“We are building in Ariel and this will be the real answer to what has happened [here] and to everything that will happen in the future,” Shaviro added.

Ariel Junction was the site of a fatal stabbing attack just over a year ago, when a Palestinian terrorist killed Itamar Ben Gal, an Israeli father of four, as he waited at a hitchhiking post.