Shin Bet prevented Hamas suicide attack on election day

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The Shin Bet (Israel Security Agency) foiled a Hamas terror attack planned to take place around the elections, the agency announced on Sunday morning.

According to the statement, the Shin Bet, along with the IDF, had uncovered a terror cell in the West Bank that had been recruited by senior Hamas operatives from the Gaza Strip to carry out a car bombing attack near the West Bank settlement of Ma’aleh Adumim outside Jerusalem.

Authorities arrested a cell activist and Hamas activist, 23-year-old Yahya Abu Dia, from the village of az-Za’ayyem on March 31. During his investigation, authorities uncovered that he had been recruited by senior Hamas operatives in the Gaza Strip that he had been in contact with online and that he had agreed to act as a suicide bomber.

As part of his ties with Hamas operatives in the Strip, Abu Dia was asked to buy a car and rent a storage room to prepare a car bomb. He was also asked to monitor locations in the Ma’aleh Adumim area, where there was a high concentration of buses, civilians and soldiers to carry out the attack.

“Abu Dia followed the instructions of the cell, carried out observations on civilian sites, and reported to the cell about the best location to carry out the attack, while sending instructions to carry out the attack quickly,” read the statement from the agency.

The agency said that as part of preparations for the suicide attack, Abu Dia was asked by Hamas activists to film a will that he carried out the attack in the name of Hamas’s military wing. He planned to film the will before he left for the attack, wearing a Hamas military wing bandanna.

The Shin Bet said that he purchased a tripod to film the video.

“Hamas in the Gaza Strip is constantly recruiting Hamas operatives from the West Bank region to carry out murderous terror attacks in order to undermine security stability in the region,” said a senior Shin Bet source. “This activity of the Hamas military wing joins a long list of attempted terrorist attacks directed by Hamas which recruited activists in the West Bank and that have been thwarted by the Shin Bet in recent years and have thus far led to the arrest of many individuals. The Shin Bet security service and other security agencies will continue to act to prevent terrorist attacks by Hamas.”

An indictment will be filed in the coming days against Abu Dia.