

Militancy/Terrorism



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Israel & Palestinian Territories Analysis: Terrorist threat within Israel, West Bank to rise ahead of confluence of religious, political, military events in September, October

Executive Summary:

- The IDF's counter-militancy campaign in the northern West Bank has contributed to a downtick in terrorist attacks in the region, reflecting the relative success of a shift in Israel's strategy.
- However, multiple incidents reiterate that Palestinian terrorists retain the desire and means to conduct militant attacks. This underscores Israel's failure to tackle the core roots of terrorism.
- The central West Bank, namely areas around Ramallah and Jerusalem, appears to be emerging as an arena for militant activity. This demonstrates terror groups' ability to pivot to new areas of the West Bank, which will prompt an intensification of IDF activity in these locales.
- Continued gaps along the security barrier and the extensive smuggling industry perpetuate the spillover threat from the West Bank to Israeli territory. This is compounded by the threat posed by fringe Arab-Israeli citizens and Palestinian East Jerusalemites.
- A confluence of events, including the Jewish holiday period, the second anniversary of the Israel-Hamas war, the IDF's Gaza City operation, and the recognition of a Palestinian state by multiple Western nations, will increase the terror threat in the region over the coming weeks.
- **MAX Security can provide online tactical monitoring and retains strong on-ground capabilities in Israel and the West Bank, including secure transportation and contingency consultation and planning. Contact us at operations@max-security.com or**

Current Situation:

Recent security developments:

- On September 16, the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) confirmed the formal commencement of “Operation Gideon’s Chariot II,” which will see the takeover of [Gaza City](#). Per the announcement, the campaign will expand in line with situational assessments.
- On September 15, IDF soldiers shot and killed a Palestinian attempting to infiltrate the security barrier near northern Jerusalem’s **al-Ram**, located less than two km from the Qalandiya Crossing.
- On [September 8](#), two Palestinians opened fire at a bus stop at the **Ramot Junction** in **northern Jerusalem**. Six individuals were killed and 12 were wounded. The suspects, from Qatanna and al-Qubeibah (south of Ramallah), reportedly infiltrated the security barrier around al-Ram.
- The Israel Police detained two Palestinians from the West Bank on August 13 and 25 who were illegally present in Israel and were suspected of plotting terrorist attacks in **Ra’anana** and **Tel Aviv**, respectively. Both incidents prompted a “Tequila” operation. These operations involve special Israel Security Agency (Shabak) teams and the Israel Police’s elite counter-terrorism unit (Yamam) to thwart imminent terrorist threats posed by individuals already inside Israeli territory.
- On [August 10](#), two Palestinian residents of **Kafr Aqab** (located within East Jerusalem but outside the security barrier) were arrested for plotting several terrorist attacks, including an attack on a central Israel nightclub. Weapons and explosive devices were seized in multiple apartments.
- On [September 18](#), a Jordanian driver killed two IDF soldiers in an attack at the Allenby border crossing.

Upcoming events:

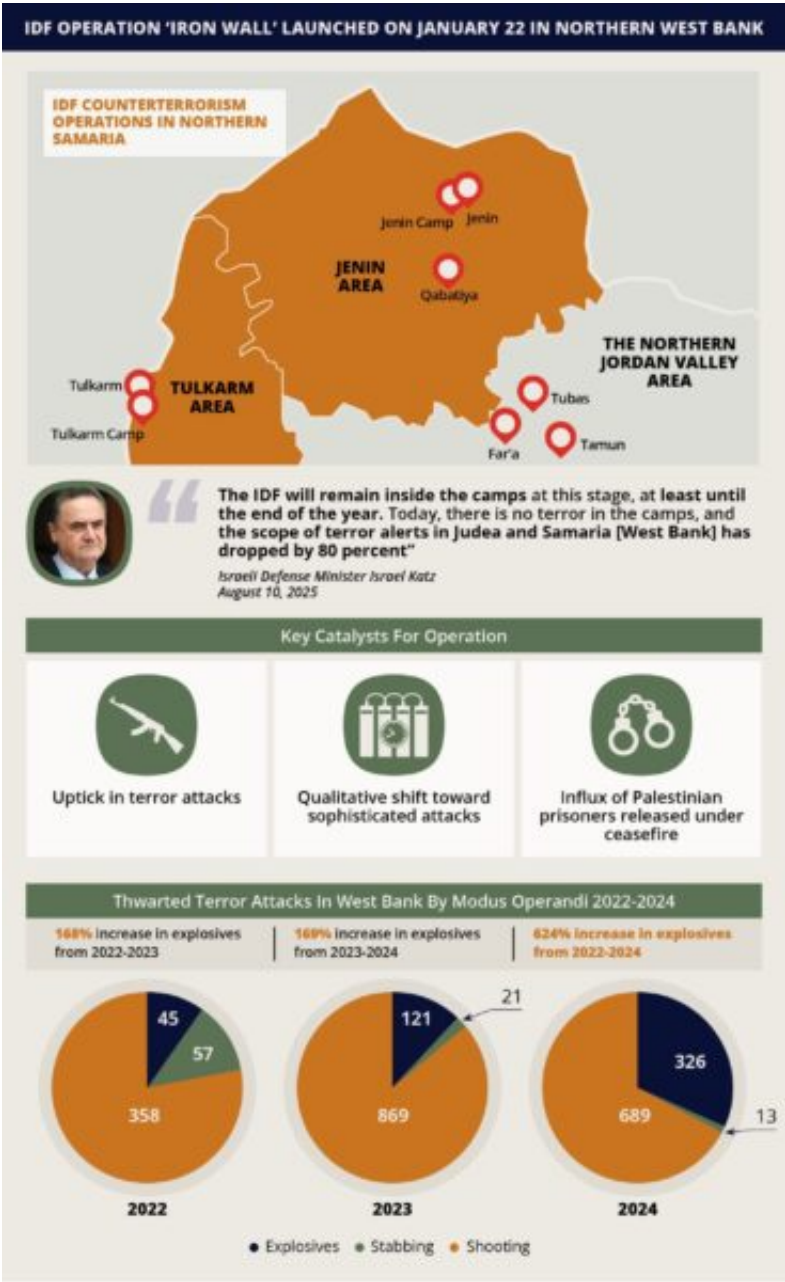
- In the coming month, the Jewish holidays will take place in Israel. This will include:
- Jewish New Year (Rosh HaShanah) from September 22-24.
- The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) from October 1-2.
- Sukkot from October 6-13.
- On [September 22](#), the UN General Assembly will hold a high-level summit where several states are expected to formally announce the recognition of a Palestinian state.
- October 7 will mark the two-year anniversary of Hamas’ unprecedented attack on Israel and the start of the Israel-Hamas war.

Assessments & Forecast:

Quantitative downtick, reduction of high-profile attacks reflects efficacy of unprecedented IDF counter-militancy campaign in northern West Bank

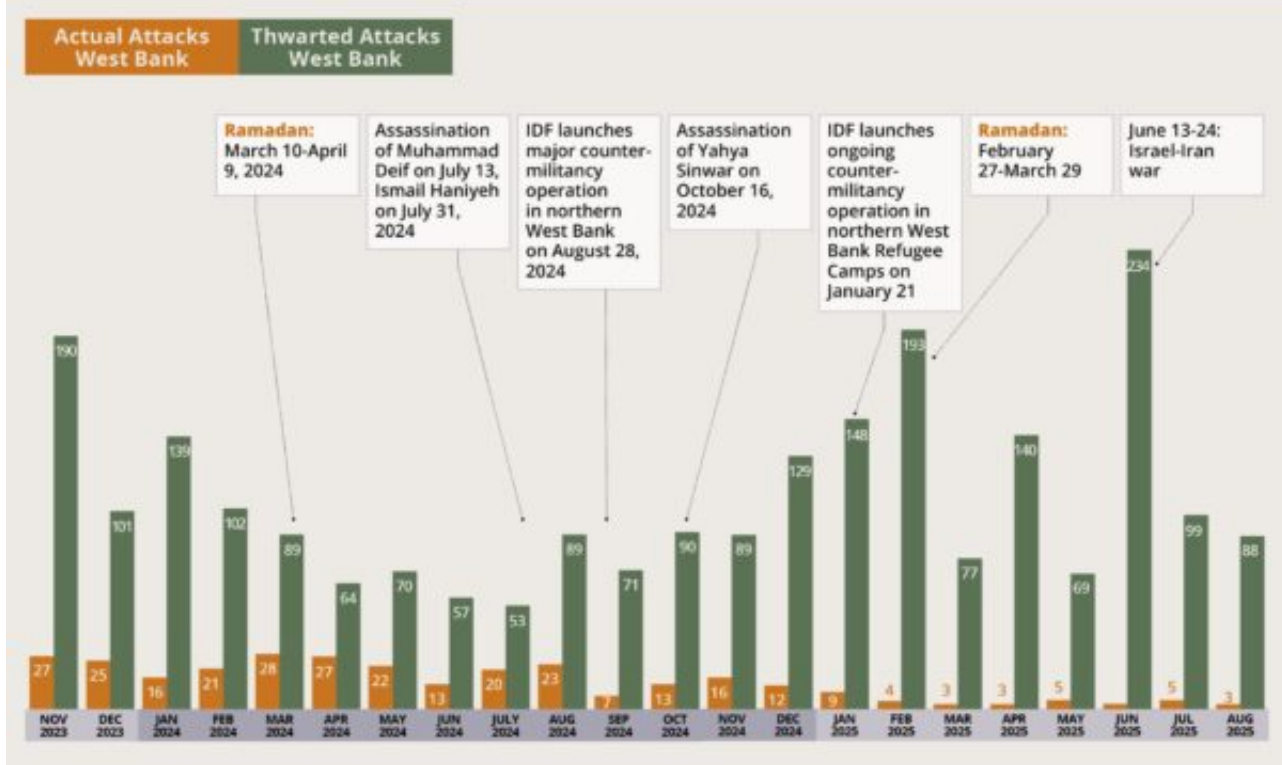
1. Following repeated indications of a quantitative and qualitative evolution in the terrorist threat in the region in [2024](#), including attempted vehicle-borne IED (VBIED) and other bombing attacks in the [West Bank](#) and [Israel](#), the IDF launched an unprecedented counter-militancy campaign in the northern West Bank on [January 22](#). This was likely influenced by the Israel-Hamas ceasefire, which took effect on [January 19](#), enabling the redirection of resources toward the West Bank, which was deemed a high-risk escalation arena. This is particularly in light of the anticipated influx of Palestinian prisoners under the ceasefire, 82 percent of whom are assessed to re-engage in terror offenses, and the assessment that Hamas would redirect efforts toward facilitating attacks in the region amid the temporary truce in Gaza.

2. The



3. Statistics released by the Israel Security Agency (Shabak) underscore the efficacy of the counter-militancy campaign so far. The number of successful terror attacks in the West Bank since January has decreased and remained below five each month since the onset of the operation, compared to consistent monthly tallies in the double figures in 2024 (except September – see below). Importantly, the continued significant difference between the number of thwarted attacks compared to successful attacks materializing each month since January indicates that the IDF campaign has somewhat curbed terrorists’ means to conduct terror acts, even if militants still seek to engage in such activity.

SUCCESSFUL & THWARTED TERRORIST ATTACKS IN WEST BANK SINCE ONSET OF ISRAEL-HAMAS WAR: NOVEMBER 2023-AUGUST 2025



- This has been accomplished in several ways. Firstly, the permanent presence of IDF troops in refugee camps has enabled quick operations based on actionable intelligence to thwart imminent threats. It has also enabled the enforcement of the IDF's initial operational successes in destroying terrorist infrastructure such as operational headquarters, explosive-making labs, and weapon lathes, by preventing reconstitution efforts. This has proved problematic in previous campaigns, in which the IDF has withdrawn from the locale, and terrorist activity has subsequently resumed. The deployment of two additional battalions to the region on [July 11](#) and the launch of its West Bank First Response unit on [July 9](#) have also contributed to the IDF's ability to strengthen its presence in the region.
- Another influential factor in facilitating IDF operational freedom, and the enforcement of its longer-term goals, has been physical alterations made by the IDF to these densely populated refugee camps, which have become strongholds for terrorist organizations in the northern West Bank. This is because militants could move freely and quickly in these densely populated streets, evading IDF detection, and fortifying their strongholds using IEDs. Through the demolition of buildings and the widening of roads (see below), the IDF substantially increased its direct access and visibility in these camps.
- The subsequent downtick in attacks in the immediate aftermath of the unprecedented Israeli campaign highlights that Palestinian refugee camps in the northern West Bank were the flashpoints for militant activity and a significant contributing factor to the terror threat in the region. This is because they constitute hotbeds for anti-Israel and anti-PA sentiment, which has facilitated militant entrenchment and the creation of strongholds for groups that have received [Iranian funding and arms](#) amid a lack of oversight in recent years.

Time-lapse of satellite imagery depicting changes in northern West Bank refugee camps (1- Jenin Camp, 2- Tulkarem Camp, 3- Nur Shams Camp): 2023-2024



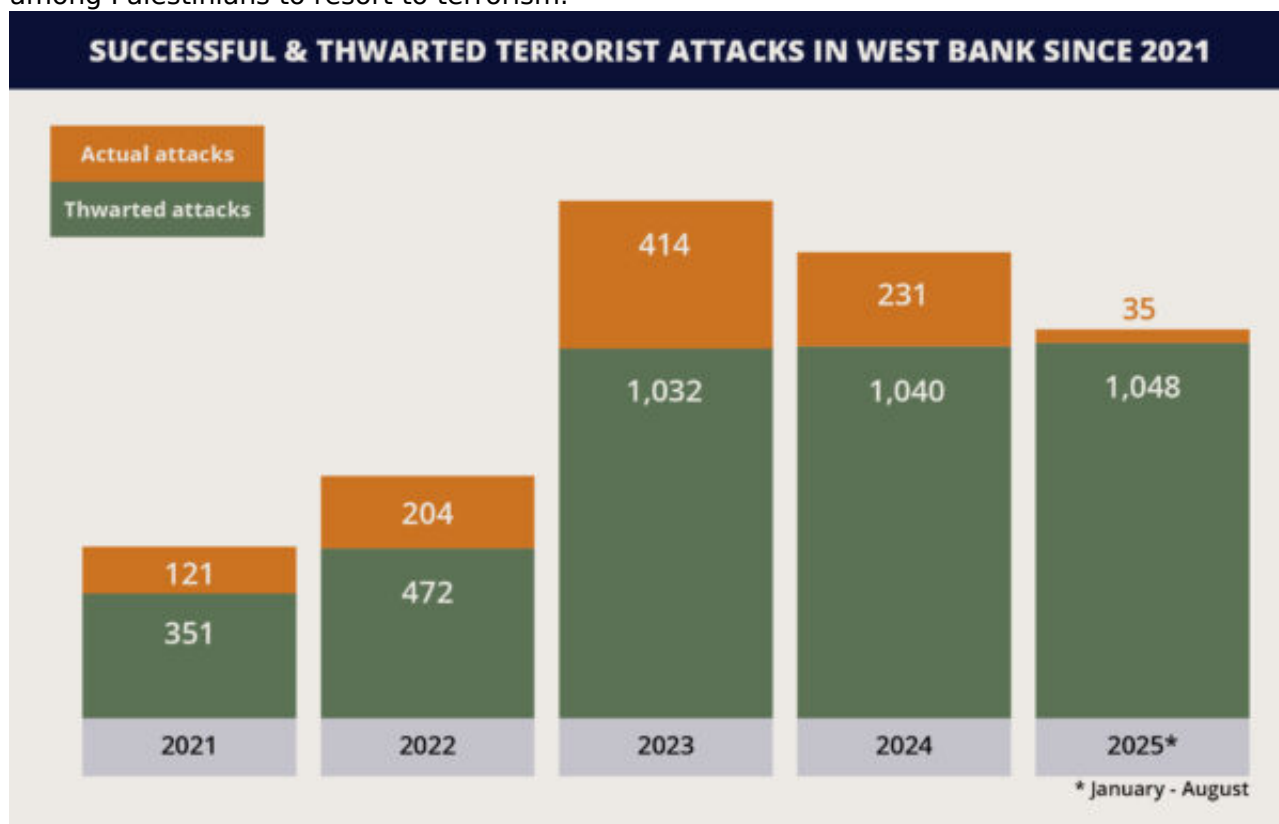




Terror threat in West Bank persists amid militants' sustained motivation, means to conduct attacks

1. Despite Defense Minister Israel Katz's statement on August 10 that terrorism in the West Bank has reduced by 80 percent since the IDF campaign began, several trends reiterate the persistent threat in the region. This is underpinned by militants' continued motivation and means to conduct attacks.
2. Firstly, the monthly Shabak statistics so far in 2025 depict significant fluctuations in the number of thwarted attacks since the start of the "Iron Wall" campaign, reiterating the sustained motivation among Palestinians in the West Bank to engage in militancy. For example, 234 terror attacks were thwarted in June, marking the highest number since the start of the Israel-Hamas war. This potentially reflected an increased motivation among militants to escalate attacks and increase pressure on Israel's security apparatus during the [Israel-Iran war](#), highlighting how regional factors can fuel domestic terrorism trends.
3. More broadly, a comparison of the yearly militant trends in the West Bank (see below) explicitly demonstrates a sustained and significant rise in militants' motivation since 2021. The number of thwarted attacks in the region in the first eight months of 2025 (1,048) has already exceeded the total recorded throughout 2024 (1,040). This constitutes a record high in four years, reflecting a nearly 200 percent increase from the number of thwarted attacks in 2021 (351). The upward trajectory is likely reflective of multiple factors, including several rounds of conflict between Gaza-

based militant groups and Israel, most notably the Israel-Hamas war since October 2023, anti-PA sentiments, the prolonged socioeconomic crisis in the region, and Iranian funding. It underscores the limitations of Israel's counter-militancy strategy overall, which fails to address the aforementioned root causes of terrorism in the West Bank, resulting in the continued desire among Palestinians to resort to terrorism.



4. Although the number of successful attacks is on track to reduce from the record high in 2023 (414), with only 35 attacks recorded so far in 2025, there is continued evidence that terrorists retain the means to advance terror activity, including in the northern West Bank. This has included producing and planting explosive devices. For example, militants in the Tulkarm area planted explosives near the Nitzanei Oz Crossing on [September 11](#) and on an IDF vehicle operating in the area on [September 15](#).
5. The central West Bank also appears to be an emerging arena for militant activity, including near the PA's administrative capital, Ramallah, as indicated by several incidents in recent months. This includes a major operation to dismantle Hamas financing networks in [late August](#), the discovery of an explosives laboratory in [June](#), and the arrest of a terrorist cell that procured an IED to conduct a bus bombing in Jerusalem in February. Most notably, Israel's security apparatus uncovered a terror cell in Ramallah that produced dozens of rudimentary rockets, two that were assembled but without warheads, multiple IEDs, and explosive materials, as revealed on [September 19](#). The cell was identified after a rudimentary rocket reportedly intending to target Route 443 was fired in the previous week from [Kafr Nima](#) and landed in Beit Ur al-Tahta, located approximately seven km northeast of Israel's Modiin and nine km west of Ramallah.

ROCKETS SEIZED BY IDF IN CENTRAL WEST BANK

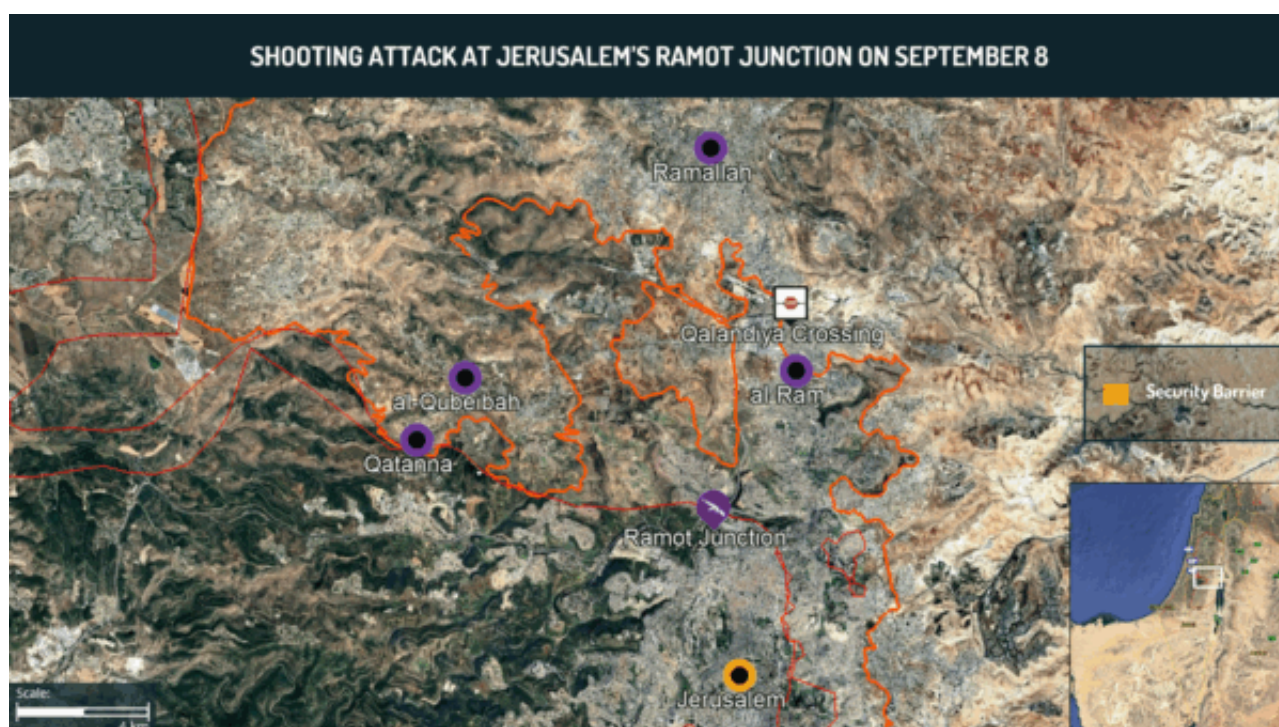
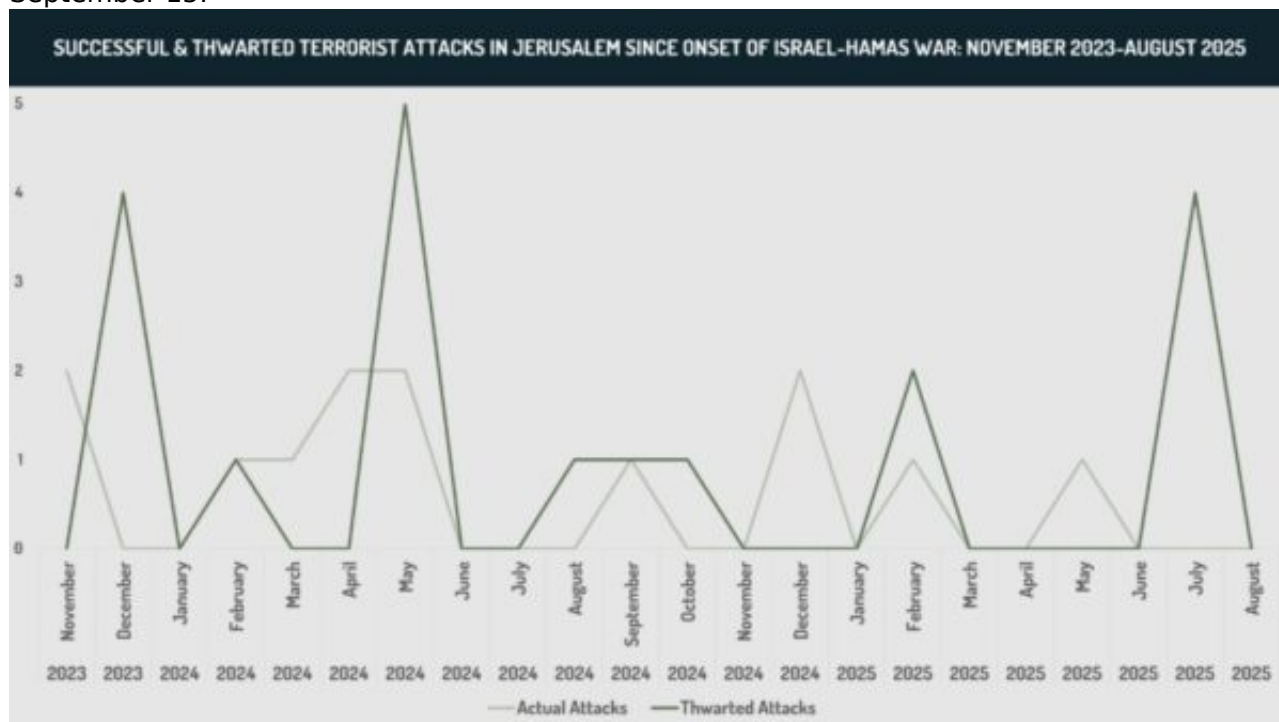


6. The procurement of multiple crude projectiles, explosive materials, and the launch of a rudimentary rocket that traveled approximately two km highlight considerable gaps in Israeli security protocols. It reflects progress among local cells outside strongholds in the northern West Bank in developing capabilities to launch status-quo-changing attacks in the West Bank. This includes advanced efforts to [produce rockets](#) on the ground in the West Bank, utilizing rocket lathes in strategic areas of the West Bank. This is particularly in light of Kafr Nima's location around 20 km northwest of Jerusalem and 20km southeast of the Ben Gurion International Airport.
7. The increased terror activity in the Ramallah area of the central West Bank is particularly notable given that the city is the PA's stronghold. It highlights that terrorist groups are able to operate in the area, likely due to significant shortcomings in the PA Security Forces (PASF) protocols and the broader erosion of its legitimacy on the Palestinian street, which has facilitated the rise of terrorist groups in the region. **FORECAST:** In this context, the IDF can be expected to increase its counter-militancy activity in the Ramallah area over the coming weeks and months to crack down on this emerging arena.

Continued security gaps perpetuate sustained terrorist threat emanating from West Bank, spillover risk to Israel

1. The persistent terrorist threat in the West Bank also poses a spillover risk to Israeli territory. This is most pertinently reflected by the Hamas-claimed multi-fatality shooting attack at the Ramot Junction in northern Jerusalem on September 8. Six individuals were killed in the attack carried out by two Palestinians from Qatanna and al-Qubeibah, both of which are located in the PA's Jerusalem governorate of the central West Bank. This points to the presence of Hamas operatives outside the northern West Bank, suggesting Palestinian militant groups' ability to pivot away from areas of intensified operations to advance attacks elsewhere under less scrutiny, including near the capital.
2. Despite the rarity of terror attacks in Jerusalem in recent months (see below), the September 8 attack highlights how militants' presence in the central West Bank undergirds the terrorist threat in the capital, given its proximity. This is due to persistent gaps along the security barrier, which consists of multiple fenced sections in some areas that can be more easily surmounted. A

particular area of vulnerability appears to be in northern Jerusalem's al-Ram, where the perpetrators of the September 8 attack infiltrated, in addition to another terrorist who was detained before he could conduct an attack on September 1, and the suspect neutralized on September 15.

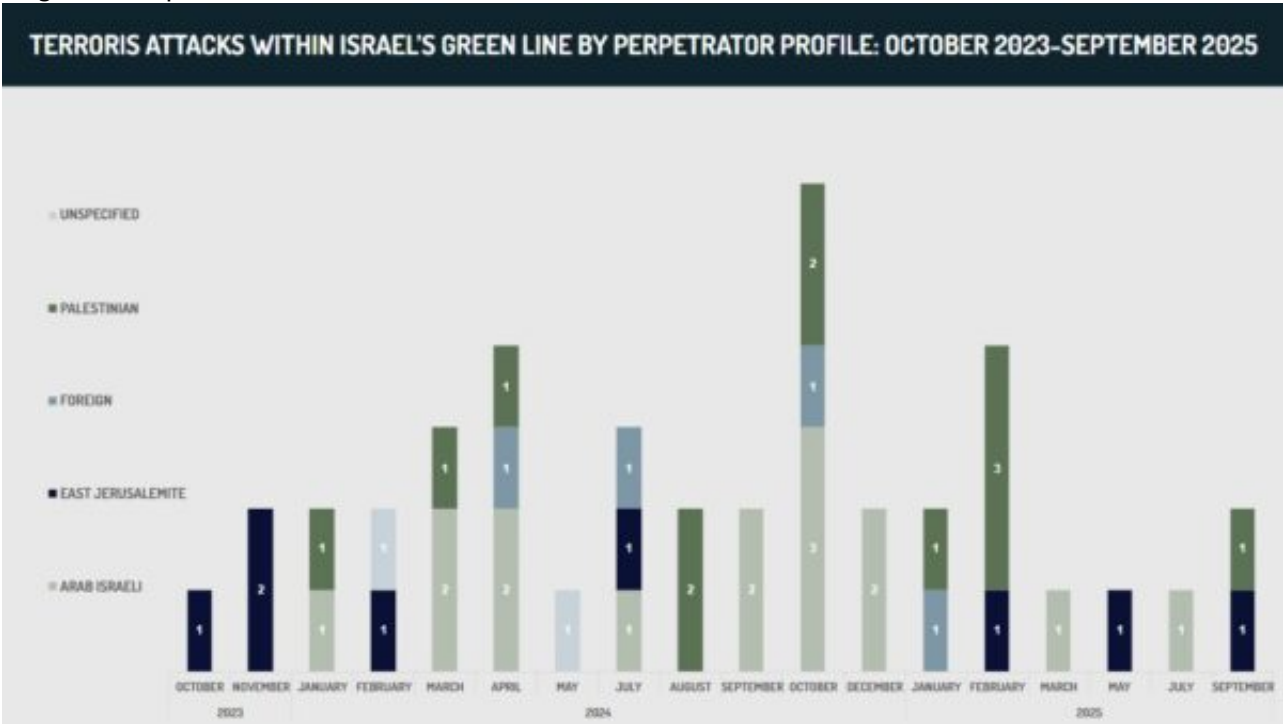


- However, this is not a localized susceptibility, and it represents a far broader phenomenon wherein gaps in the security barrier enable Palestinian West Bank militants to infiltrate Israel, undergirding the militant threat that exists across Israeli territory. This has resulted in multiple “Tequila” operations in recent months to thwart imminent threats inside Israel, as recently reported in central Israel’s Ra’anana and Tel Aviv in August. While neither suspect was armed in these incidents, it highlights militants’ ability to travel at distance undetected.

4. This is likely, in part, facilitated by the extensive smuggling industry to illegally transfer Palestinian workers from the West Bank into Israel, often using Israeli drivers who are subject to less security scrutiny and may even be unaware that they are transporting unlicensed Palestinians. The most notable example of this occurred on [February 20](#), when a driver from [Holon](#) transported a Palestinian from Nablus who planted IEDs on three buses in Bat Yam and Holon, which detonated prematurely in an attempted multi-location bus bombing attack. This attack was the watershed event that triggered the latest Israeli campaign in the northern West Bank's refugee camps. Nevertheless, it underscored the long-standing challenges emanating from Palestinians' capacity to infiltrate the security barrier.

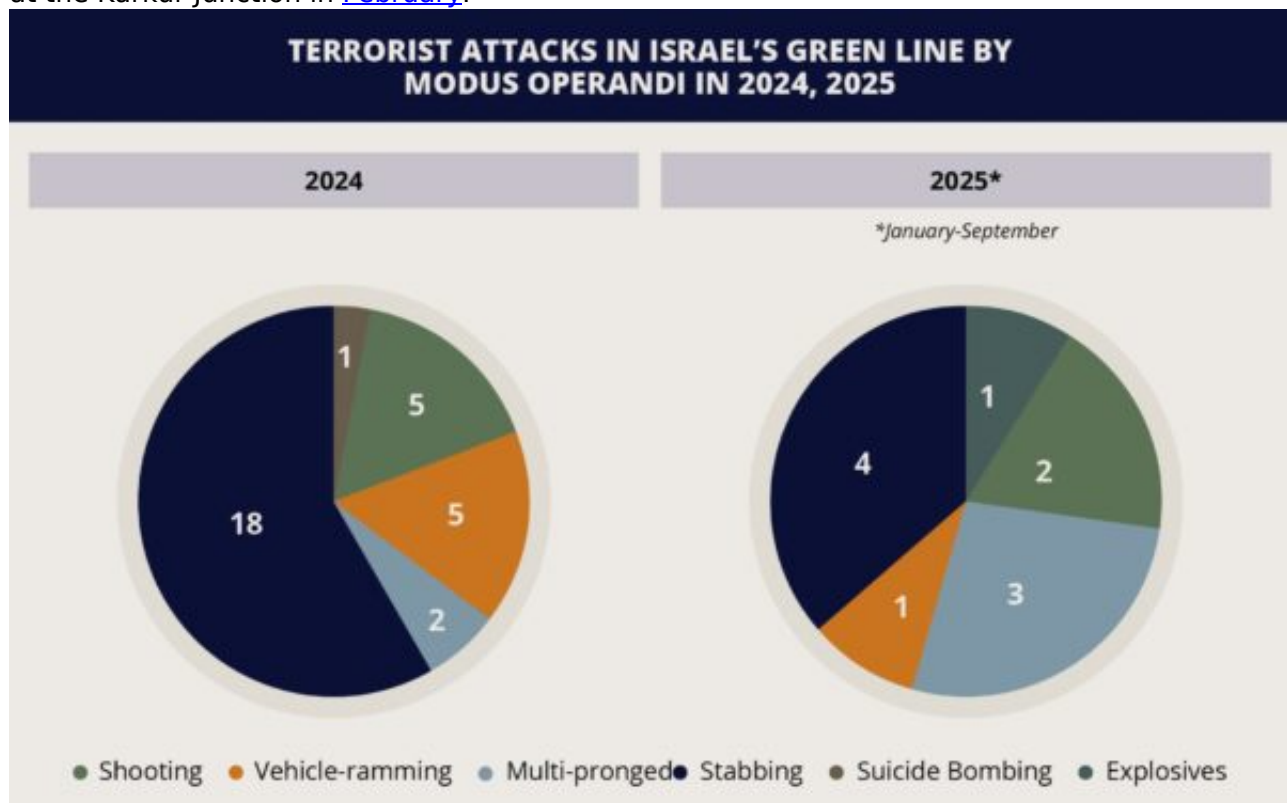
Terrorist threat in Israel perpetuated by radicalized Arab-Israelis, Palestinian East Jerusalemites

1. The terrorist threat in the region is multi-faceted and not solely perpetuated by Palestinians from the West Bank. Radicalized Arab-Israeli citizens and Palestinian East Jerusalemites constitute two major risk groups in this context that contribute to the threat. This is particularly given their presence within Israel's security barrier and freedom of movement within Israeli territory.
2. On the one hand, this enables such individuals to aid Palestinian militants in this region. This is demonstrated by the detention of an Israeli citizen and East Jerusalemite who transferred hundreds of tons of [dual-use materials](#) used to construct explosive devices that were deployed in previous terror attacks in the West Bank. On the other hand, their presence within Israel enables them to directly conduct attacks in the name of the Palestinian cause. This is underscored by the number of attacks perpetrated in Israel by Arab-Israelis (15) and Palestinian East Jerusalemites (eight), compared to West Bank Palestinians (12) since October 2023.



3. The majority of such attacks have been conducted by lone wolves, with no apparent affiliation to terrorist groups. Such actors are harder to intercept, given that they may not be in extensive communications with other actors or take time to procure more sophisticated arms, both of which are usually detected by Israel's intelligence agencies, enabling the thwarting of the plot. This is supported by the modus operandi seen in most recent lone wolf attacks, namely vehicular-rammings and stabbings, which can be planned at short notice using readily available materials. In

this context, a specific trend has emerged wherein lone wolves have identified and targeted groups of travelers congregated at bus stops, which have become a flashpoint for militant attacks. This is demonstrated by incidents at the Beit Lid Junction in [July](#), the Tishbi Junction in [March](#), and at the Karkur Junction in [February](#).



4. In contrast, the counter-militancy operation in Kafr Aqab on August 10 highlights that such actors also aspire to conduct more sophisticated attacks, as underscored by the plots against a range of targets using explosives procured by the cell. Notably, the individuals were in contact with an unspecified cell in central Israel and Palestinian militants in the northern West Bank. This may reveal another diversion tactic among West Bank terrorist groups to recruit individuals residing within the security barrier to conduct attacks in Israel. Overall, this highlights the multifaceted terrorist threat that will continue to strain Israel’s security apparatus, particularly in the coming weeks.



Terrorist threat in Israel, West Bank to increase amid upcoming confluence of events

1. Several factors are liable to further elevate the militancy risk in September and October. Firstly, the upcoming Jewish holiday period (beginning on September 22 with Rosh HaShanah) typically increases militants' resolve to conduct attacks during this time of heightened sensitivities. This period also usually involves large outdoor gatherings, especially on Yom Kippur and Sukkot, which constitute desirable targets for terrorists seeking to maximize the impact of their attacks.
2. **FORECAST:** Jerusalem will be a particular flashpoint for tensions and potential attacks given that many events marking the Jewish religious holidays are held in the city, which will attract an influx of Jewish worshippers in such periods. In this context, bolstered security protocols are likely throughout the holiday period, in Jerusalem and other major Israeli cities, particularly at flashpoints for attacks such as transportation hubs, border crossings, checkpoints, commercial centers, and hubs of social activity such as restaurants and bars.
3. Secondly, militants are likely to aspire to conduct attacks on the second anniversary of the Israel-Hamas war on October 7. This is supported by precedent, with three high-profile attacks recorded around this date in October 2024, including in [Jaffa](#), [Beer Sheva](#), and [Hadera](#). **FORECAST:** Terrorists' motivation will be further heightened this year, given Israel's Gaza City offensive, which will constitute a third factor fueling the terrorist threat. Palestinian terror groups and lone wolves will likely attempt to orchestrate attacks to set a price for Israel's campaign in the coastal enclave.
4. **FORECAST:** Finally, the UK's recognition of a Palestinian State on September 21, together with the upcoming UN General Assembly session in multiple other Western nations are expected to do so, will constitute another potentially destabilizing factor. While this symbolic move does not entail formal corresponding on-ground implications, it will nonetheless evoke strong reactions both within Israel and the Palestinian Territories.
5. **FORECAST:** The decision will push more hawkish members of the Prime Minister (PM) Benjamin Netanyahu-led coalition, such as National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir and Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich, to pursue countermeasures. These are likely to include the expedited construction of the [E1 settlement bloc](#), which would expand development around Ma'ale Adumim. This would effectively bisect the West Bank and prevent the connection of Ramallah and Bethlehem to East Jerusalem, which is envisioned as the basis of a future Palestinian state under the two-state solution. It will also increase pressure on PM Netanyahu to authorize the [annexation](#) of West Bank territory, which is under formal consideration. While significant international pressure on PM Netanyahu renders the enactment of these measures less likely, a scenario in which the Israeli government would move forward with such measures would significantly increase volatility. It would constitute another catalyst for friction in which the scenario of more direct confrontations between PA forces and the IDF would become more viable.
6. Meanwhile, the formal recognition of a Palestinian state, and the rest of the abovementioned catalysts for tension, is likely to embolden lone wolves within the PASF ranks to conduct attacks on Israeli targets. This has already been recorded on several occasions in [recent years](#), with such individuals posing a considerable threat given that they have received formal military training and have access to military-grade weapons. This radicalization effect will extend to Palestinian terror groups and lone wolves in the West Bank, in addition to fringe Arab-Israelis and Palestinian East Jerusalemites, who may seek to conduct attacks on these upcoming symbolic occasions.
7. **FORECAST:** While a significant coordinated eruption of violence remains less likely in the coming weeks, Israel's security apparatus will remain on heightened alert ahead of this confluence of events that will increase the terror threat in the region. Forceful IDF activity in the West Bank, especially around the Ramallah area, can be expected.

Recommendations:

MAX Security can provide online tactical monitoring and retains strong on-

ground capabilities in Israel and the West Bank, including secure transportation and contingency consultation and planning. Contact us at operations@max-security.com or +44 20-3540-0434.

Israel:

1. Travel to Israel may continue while adhering to all security precautions regarding armed conflict, militancy, and civil unrest.
2. In Israeli cities, particularly Jerusalem, remain vigilant in crowded commercial areas or near public transport facilities as these locations have been targeted by militants in the past. Alert authorities to suspicious behavior or unattended items.
3. Maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of Jerusalem's Old City, particularly near Damascus Gate, Herod's Gate, Lions' Gate, and the al-Aqsa Mosque/Temple Mount Compound, due to the risk of unrest and militant attacks.
4. Avoid nonessential travel to East Jerusalem neighborhoods, especially on Fridays and during Islamic religious holidays, due to the elevated risk of militancy and civil unrest. This includes Kafr Aqab, Sheikh Jarrah, Shuafat Refugee Camp, Silwan, Isawiya, and Jabel Mukaber.

Militancy:

1. In outdoor leisure activities at night, favor sitting in restaurants and bars' inner area rather than the open-air section, which are more vulnerable to attacks. Refrain from large gatherings outside major nightlife venues and renowned nightlife hubs, such as Tel Aviv's Dizengoff Street.
2. If an attack unfolds within your vicinity, immediately seek cover and try to safely disengage from the area as quickly as possible. This is given the risk of secondary attacks and shooting towards assailants by security forces and armed civilians, which could cause collateral damage.

West Bank:

1. Avoid all travel to the northern West Bank and Palestinian Refugee Camps in the region, given the entrenchment of terrorist organizations and the likelihood of Israeli counter-terrorism operations at these locales, which often devolve into armed clashes.
2. Avoid nonessential travel to the Jerusalem and Ramallah governorates in the West Bank and conduct risk assessments prior to any travel to these regions.