**Soldier lightly injured in Ashkelon stabbing**

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By Judah Ari Gross

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A soldier was stabbed and lightly injured in Ashkelon Sunday morning, in an apparent nationalistic attack, police said.

The attack occurred near the southern coastal city’s central bus station.

The soldier, 20, was taken to a local hospital with light wounds to his upper body, a spokesperson from the Magen David Adom rescue service said.

The stabber managed to get away after knifing the soldier. However, another soldier, who saw the incident transpire, took the victim’s gun and chased after the attacker.

The soldier ran after the attacker for nearly 1.5 kilometers (one mile) before getting close enough to shoot and subdue him, police said.

The assailant suffered moderate to serious wounds on the scene and died a few hours later in Ashkelon’s Barzilai Medical Center, a spokesperson for the hospital said.

The identity of the assailant was not immediately known, but according to police he was a Sudanese national.

After speaking with witnesses and a quick investigation, police determined the attack was likely nationalistic in nature.

“We are almost certain,” Shimon Portal, head of the Ashkelon District Police, told reporters after the attack.

Stabbings, shootings and car bombings linked to the criminal underworld have been known to take place in the working-class seaside city, but the targeting of the soldier raised fears the attack was terror-related.

Bus and train stations in Israel are often crowded with soldiers on Sunday morning as troops return to base after weekend leave.

Paramedic Ariel Plaut said the victim was conscious and speaking during the trip to the hospital.

“We were driving when suddenly some civilians signaled us to stop. We saw an approximately 20-year-old man sitting on a bench. He was fully conscious with stab wounds to the upper body,” Plaut said.

The stabbing came as forces have been searching for a suspect who stabbed a Jewish grandmother in the city of Rahat Saturday before escaping.

The woman sustained moderate injuries to her neck and was hospitalized for treatment, where her injuries were later defined as light.

The stabbings come during an upsurge in Palestinian attacks on Israeli targets, some deadly and many involving knives.

The last several days have also seen a number of attacks by Israeli Arabs.

On Thursday, two 13-year-old Arab girls stabbed and lightly wounded a security guard in their hometown of Ramle in central Israel.