

Shin Bet, IDF thwart Islamic Jihad attack on navy boats off Gaza coast

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Security forces arrested a member of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad terror group off the Gaza coast suspected of planning to sink an Israeli naval patrol boat and kidnap any survivors last month, Israel revealed on Wednesday.

The plan was to use three boats to lure in a navy ship, fire a missile at it and then seize the wounded and slain soldiers, according to a joint statement by the Shin Bet security service and Israel Defense Forces. This plot was foiled on the night of March 12, when the navy's 916th Patrol Squadron stopped a Palestinian boat that had left the designated Gaza fishing zone.



The crew was brought into Israeli custody for questioning,

including Amin Saadi Muhammad Jumma'a, 24, a member of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad who told interrogators that he had received instructions from his commanders to prepare to carry out the attack on Israeli Navy ships, according to the Shin Bet and IDF.

The planned attack was meant to be a continuation of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad's vendetta against the IDF for the demolition of the group's tunnel on October 30, in which several of its members were killed.

Jumma'a, a resident of the southern Gaza city of Rafah, told interrogators that the plan was for one boat to act as a diversion by leaving the fishing zone so that a navy ship would approach it.

"A second boat would attack the ship, firing a Kornet (anti-tank) missile at it, with the intention of causing injury and death to the soldiers on board," the statement said. A third boat would then arrive on the scene and take the wounded soldiers hostage and steal the bodies of those killed, the security forces said.

Jumma'a was indicted in a Beersheba court on Wednesday on a litany of charges, including planning to conduct a terror attack, acquiring weapons and belonging to a terrorist organization.

The Shin Bet and IDF accused the Iran-backed Islamic Jihad of taking advantage of the "civilian comforts" granted by Israel to the residents of Gaza, specifically fishing rights, in order to "advance terror attacks." In addition to the planned naval attack, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad has already carried out at least two other acts of revenge on Israel for destroying its tunnel on October 30.