Battle of Shu'fat 1948: The Holy Jihad Destroys the Neve Yaakov Convoy North of Jerusalem



The battle of Shu’fat was an ambush laid on 24 March 1948 by Holy Jihad fighters and fighters from Jerusalem and the nearby villages for a Zionist convoy carrying supplies from Jerusalem to the settlements of Neve Yaakov and Atarot north of the city, escorted by two armoured cars. The fighters stopped the convoy, stormed its vehicles and set the two armoured cars ablaze; 14 of its men were killed and 10 wounded, while only two of the fighters were wounded. [1][2]

The battle was overseen by the commander Abd al-Qadir al-Husseini, two weeks before his martyrdom at al-Qastal, and ended with the intervention of the British

commander; the fighters spared the convoy’s surviving men and allowed the wounded to be evacuated. [1]

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At a glance

Item	Details
Date	24 March 1948
Place	Shu’fat north of Jerusalem, on the road to the settlements of Neve Yaakov and Atarot
Arab forces	Holy Jihad fighters, with fighters from Jerusalem and the nearby villages
Commander	Abd al-Qadir al-Husseini, with three commanders of the 1936–1939 revolt
Target	A Zionist supply convoy escorted by two armoured cars
Enemy losses	14 killed and 10 wounded; both armoured cars burned
Arab losses	Two wounded
Outcome	The convoy destroyed and the armoured cars’ weapons captured

Sources: [1][2]

The road to the northern settlements

The settlements of Neve Yaakov and Atarot north of Jerusalem depended on convoys coming from the city through Shu’fat, so the road became a target for the Holy Jihad fighters, who that same month had driven Zionist gunmen out of the Atarot quarries and besieged the settlement. [1][2]

24 March: the ambush

On 24 March 1948 Holy Jihad fighters attacked a Zionist convoy carrying supplies from Jerusalem to Neve Yaakov, escorted by two armoured cars, and brought it to a halt. Then fighters poured in from Jerusalem and the nearby villages, stormed the vehicles, set the two armoured cars ablaze and seized the weapons inside them. Abd al-Qadir al-Husseini oversaw the battle, and three commanders of the Great Palestinian Revolt took part. [1]

During the battle General MacMillan, commander of the British forces in Palestine, passed by, accompanied by Glubb Pasha, commander of the Jordanian army, and Ahmad Sidqi al-Jundi; they intervened to stop the fighting, and the fighters spared the six surviving men of the convoy and allowed the wounded to be evacuated. [1]

Results

The battle left 14 of the convoy’s men dead and 10 wounded, with only six escaping unhurt; the two armoured cars were burned and their weapons captured, while only two of the fighters were wounded. It was part of the Holy Jihad’s campaign to cut the supply routes to the settlements around Jerusalem, stretching from Bab al-Wad in the west to the Ramallah road in the north. [1][2]

Differences between the accounts

WAFA and Metras agree on 14 of the convoy’s men killed and two armoured cars destroyed; WAFA gives the convoy’s destination as Neve Yaakov, while Metras

names both Neve Yaakov and Atarot. The available sources do not name the three commanders of the 1936 revolt who took part. [1][2]

Timeline

Date	Event
15 March 1948	The battle of the Atarot quarries and the siege of the settlement [1]
24 March	The Shu’fat ambush; the convoy destroyed [1]
24 March	The British commander intervenes; the wounded evacuated [1]
8 April	Abd al-Qadir al-Husseini martyred at al-Qastal [1]

Frequently asked questions about the Battle of Shu’fat

When was the Battle of Shu’fat?

On 24 March 1948. [1][2]

What did the fighters target?

A Zionist supply convoy from Jerusalem to Neve Yaakov, escorted by two armoured cars. [1]

Who oversaw the battle?

The commander Abd al-Qadir al-Husseini, with three commanders of the 1936 revolt. [1]

What were the results?

14 of the convoy’s men killed and 10 wounded and both armoured cars burned, against two fighters wounded. [1][2]

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Sources and references

1. WAFA – Palestinian National Information Centre, “Battles of the Nakba”: “The Battle of Shu’fat” (in Arabic).
2. “The Main Battles of the Nakba: A Timeline,” Metras (in Arabic).