

# Surrounded by Foes, Israel Preps for Bioterror

From suicide bombers to rockets to the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran, Israel is surrounded by enemies.

Those prospects keep the Jewish state alert to whatever may come against its citizens, including biological terrorism.

"We are now at the start of a drill of a bioterrorism event. This is a part of a series of events we are conducting in the last five years," Res. Brigadier General Ze'ev Snir, assistant minister of defense for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, told CBN News.

Col. Avi Abergil, medical commander of the Home Front Command, calls it a silent event, where terrorists would secretly attack a populated area like a shopping mall.

"They are silently spreading some kind of germ that might infect people, that might infect other people and cause some illness in the population. And that's how bio-terrorism works," Abergil explained.

Emek Hospital officials in Afula, Israel, have treated terror victims in the past. Today, they're training for biological terrorism.

"We are giving them a scenario that would have to make them deal with all kinds of questions: What to do with hospitals. Do we quarantine? Do we not quarantine? Do we close shops? What about transportation?" Lt. Col. Dr. Bella Azaria, with the Home Front Command, told CBN News.

Emergency room manager Dr. Aziz Darawsha said the pain of the past helps prepare them for what might strike in the future.

"Because of so many mass casualty events, we are more

experienced and maybe better than others to manage and treat mass casualty events,” Darawsha said.

Four hospitals in northern Israel took part in operation “Orange Flame Six” under the guidance of the Health and Defense Ministries.

One American, Col. Alicia Tate-Nadeau, National Guard Bureau liaison officer to the Israeli Home Front Command, also kept a close watch over the operation.

“Many of the things that the National Guard Bureau does in preparedness and response to an incident such as this are the same as the Home Front Command,” Tate-Nadeau told CBN News.

“The coordination that’s going on here today is fantastic,” she said. “Any time you can coordinate and exercise a plan prior to an event, you can be sure you’ll be better prepared should you actually have to implement.”