

Israel denies attacking own kibbutz

by UPI

JERUSALEM -- The Israeli military denied Tuesday it had accidentally fired on a Gaza Strip kibbutz during an offensive against Palestinian Hamas sites. Before sunrise Tuesday, kibbutz members complained to the military shells came through the roof of a house and 20 mm shell casings were found, a type commonly used by Israeli helicopter gunships, the Jerusalem Post reported. Military investigators examined the casings and said they were not of Israeli origin, officials said. No one was injured in the house although the fighting nearby in the coastal town of Deir el-Balah killed three Hamas militants and wounded a fourth, Palestinian sources said. The Israeli military said the attack was in response to a Hamas mortar attack in the western Negev desert on Monday, Israel Radio said. Three Israelis were killed in the attack, the report said. The Post reported militants fired three mortars into the same region Tuesday afternoon but no injuries were reported.

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