

CASE STUDY 17

Abd

Bus bomber

In April 2016 19-year-old Abdel Hamid Abu Srour, known as Abd, boarded the Egged number 12 bus. He had a bomb in a package, which covered the bus in flames when he detonated it, injuring 22 Israelis, one seriously. Abd died in hospital from injuries. By detonating a bomb on a bus, Abd had intentionally targeted civilians, breaching Additional Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions (Article 48).

“Everything was dark and smoky, I looked for my daughter and she was all burned... After the explosion I collapsed. Her face was all black, you couldn’t see her.”

Racheli Dadon



This was the only suicide bombing carried out in 2016, but they were more common during the Second Intifada. There were 47 suicide bombings in Israel in 2002 alone, killing 243 people.

Abd was from Aida Refugee Camp, which is in Bethlehem. Hamas said Abd was a member but did not claim responsibility for the bombing. A Facebook photo did show him waving a green Hamas scarf, and Israeli police arrested Hamas members in Bethlehem.

Abd was one of eight brothers from a prosperous family. Not the most successful student, he had wanted to retake his exams to get better grades. Tending to the family's goats and chickens, he had told his family he wanted to be a vet.



Periodically, the Israeli army has invaded the camp and clashed with Palestinians there. In 2015 soldiers in a military vehicle were filmed speaking on a loudspeaker: “Inhabitants of Aida, we are the Israeli army, if you throw stones we will hit you with gas until you die. The children, the youth, and the old people, all of you – we won’t spare any of you”.

Abd’s cousin had been shot by Israeli soldiers in January 2016 during a raid of Beit Jala, just outside Bethlehem.

The Washington Post reported Abd’s father as saying: “I never thought my son would do such an act. My son did not make me feel, even for one per cent, that he has feelings or thoughts like that. Never.”

The Post also reported Abd’s uncle as saying: “Everything is possible under these circumstances... We wanted to live in real peace.

“They are making a big mistake provoking these children”, he warned. “Kids today are uncontrollable.”

Like other Palestinians killed in acts of violence, Abd appeared on posters celebrating him as a martyr.

Egged – Israeli bus company

Second Intifada – Palestinian uprising in 2000

Hamas – a militant Palestinian organisation

Refugee camp – Palestinian refugee camps like Aida have existed since the war in 1948. Today they comprise concrete buildings rather than tents.

Case study compiled using information from the *Times of Israel*, *The Washington Post* and Ynetnews.