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Ananova:

Suicide bomber 'wanted to avenge Hamas HQ bombing'

A Palestinian suicide bomber who killed himself and 14 others in a Jerusalem pizzeria wanted to avenge a recent Israeli attack on Hamas headquarters.

Devout Muslim Izzedine al-Masri, 23, wandered into the packed Sbarro restaurant in downtown Jerusalem and detonated explosives strapped to his body.

His family said al-Masri, a member of the Islamic militant group Hamas, had been hinting that he would become a "martyr". The rocket attack on the Hamas headquarters in the West Bank town of Nablus killed eight people including two children.

Al-Masri's family have held a wake in the village of Aqaba on the outskirts of the West Bank town of Jenin. His father, Shaheel, flanked by his seven remaining sons, said he was proud of Izzedine.

Shaheel Al-Masri said Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon "is continuing the policy of killing our people and my son succeeded in carrying out a suitable response".

He added that his son was a devout Muslim who had participated in Hamas rallies and funeral marches during the last 10 months of Israeli-Palestinian fighting.

About a month, Izzedine had begun dropping hints that he was about to become a "martyr," as Islamic militants refer to suicide

bombers, the elder al-Masri said.

Israeli media reports said Izzedine al-Masri had tied the detonator string to his elbow to enable him to trigger the explosives even if apprehended.

The reports also said Israeli authorities had specific warnings about the impending attack and that it remained unclear why more was not done to try to stop the assailant.

Izzedine al-Masri left home on Wednesday, telling his family he was going to stay with friends in another West Bank town for a while. Before his death, al-Masri posed for a photo showing him wearing a green Hamas headband and holding an assault rifle.

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