

# Data Collection Concept

## Insights into suicide bombing events for Risk Prediction Project

### Case 6: 22 februari 2004 – Liberty Bell park, Bus attack on line 14a.

#### **General information:**

The Liberty Bell Park bus bombing was the suicide bombing of Egged bus #14a in Jerusalem, Israel, during morning rush hour (8.30 AM on Sunday: begin of the work week) February 22, 2004. Eight passengers were killed in the attack and over 60 people were injured, many of them children on their way to school. [1]

The suicide bomber had an explosive device of 5 kilograms hidden in a backpack which was stuffed with metal scraps to maximize casualties and was traveling to downtown Jerusalem. Police believe he boarded the bus in the Talpiot industrial zone. [1] Two security guards who boarded the bus failed to identify the terrorist seated with the explosive device concealed in his lap. The bomber apparently decided to chance being discovered in order to wait for the bus to fill with passengers, so as to increase the number of casualties. [3] At approximately 8:30 am, as the bus passed a street light outside the Liberty Bell park on the edge of Emek Refaim (near the Sonol gas station) the main street of the German Colony, he detonated the explosive device. [1,4]

The attack took place one day before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague is scheduled to begin hearings over the West Bank security fence, Army Radio reported. [4]

#### **Fatalities [1]**

Israel Ilan Avisidris, 41, of Jerusalem  
Lior Azulai, 18, of Jerusalem  
Yaffa Ben-Shimol, 57, of Jerusalem  
Rahamim Doga, 38, of Mevasseret Zion  
Yehuda Haim, 48, of Givat Ze'ev  
Netanel Havshush, 20, of Jerusalem  
Yuval Ozana, 32, of Jerusalem  
Benaya Yehonatan Zuckerman, 18, of Jerusalem



#### **Picture**

reference:

<http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFA-Archive/2004/Pages/Suicide%20bombing%20of%20Egged%20bus%20no.%2014A%20in%20Jerusalem%20-%2022-Feb-2004.aspx>

#### **The perpetrators**

The Fatah Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades claimed responsibility for the attack and stated that the attacker was 23-year-old Mohammed Zaul from the village of Husan in the West Bank (Bethlehem area). After the attack a video of the suicide bomber was released in which Zaul claimed he carried out the attack in revenge "for the massacre perpetrated by Israel against the Palestinians." [1]

#### **Primary interest for the Risk Prediction Project:**

- **Why was the target site selected (see next section of questions on site selection)?**  
Suicide bomber on Bus #14 at north end of Emek Rafaim Street, German Colony neighborhood. There was no specific reason to target this bus in this location.
- **What planning (preparation and staging) went into the attack?**  
No known information.
- **What triggered the attack to take place? Was there a political or social trigger? Was timing significant?**  
The attack took place one day before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague is scheduled to begin hearings over the West Bank security fence, Army Radio reported. [4]
- **In what ways can the target site be characterized (e.g. many people/gathering site, political area, financial area, religious, monuments, etc.)?**  
Many people on the bus.
- **It what ways did the attack fit a pattern? Location of attack? How attack was carried out? Characteristics of bomb?**  
No pattern was recognized. The suicide bomber had an explosive device of 5 kilograms hidden in a backpack which was stuffed with metal scraps to maximize casualties.
- **What has been done to mitigate risk of attacks? Where are they adding protection measures? Where do they expect future attacks and why?**  
No known information.
- **We would like to better understand any specific tactics (e.g. attacking public transportation)? What has been learned? What has been done to protect? What is expected in the future?**  
No known information.

#### Questions on target site selection

- **Was it a group decision or individual decision on the site selection? What was the process of making the decision?**  
No known information.
- **What were the considerations of site selection? Were there any regional factors or social/political factors involved in the decision?**  
No regional, social or political factors were involved.
- **How far did one travel to the site at the day of the event, and did the person choose a particular route to get to the site?**  
No known information.

- **Did one scout the site prior to the event? If so, how far ago before the event? How many times? What did the person look for at the site? Did one look for different things each time when one scouted the site? What was the site scouting strategy? Were there any sites dropped after scouting and considerations? If so, what were these sites and what were the reasons or rationale?**

No known information.

- **How did the person decide a particular spot at the site to trigger the event?**

No known information.

- **How important is choosing the time of triggering the event? How is the time factor considered? How was the site selection influenced by recent news or political situations?**

The attack was performed at 8.30AM on Sunday: rush hour at the beginning of the workweek which would maximized the number of victims.

The attack took place one day before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague is scheduled to begin hearings over the West Bank security fence, Army Radio reported.

- **How did one travel to the site? Did one detour en route to the site? If so, where did the person stop? How far was the site from one's origin location (i.e. where did the person start the journey to the site on the day of the event?)?**

No known information.

- **What did the person see on the way to the site?**

No known information.

#### **Site Specific Questions (why that bus, store or café?):**

- **What is special about the site?**

No special details, only minor observation is the nearby Sonol Gas Station.

- **Was the site or bus known for tourists or locals? Workers or students? Soldiers?**

Due to the fact that the bus was blown up during rush hour, most victims would have been on their way to work.

- **What time was the event to as much detail as possible?**

8.30 AM on Sunday: begin of the work week, February 22, 2004

- **How did the bomber arrive at the site (e.g. walk from a local apartment, take the bus, from a taxi)?**

The bomber boarded the bus in the Talpiot industrial zone, but there is no information available on how he got there.

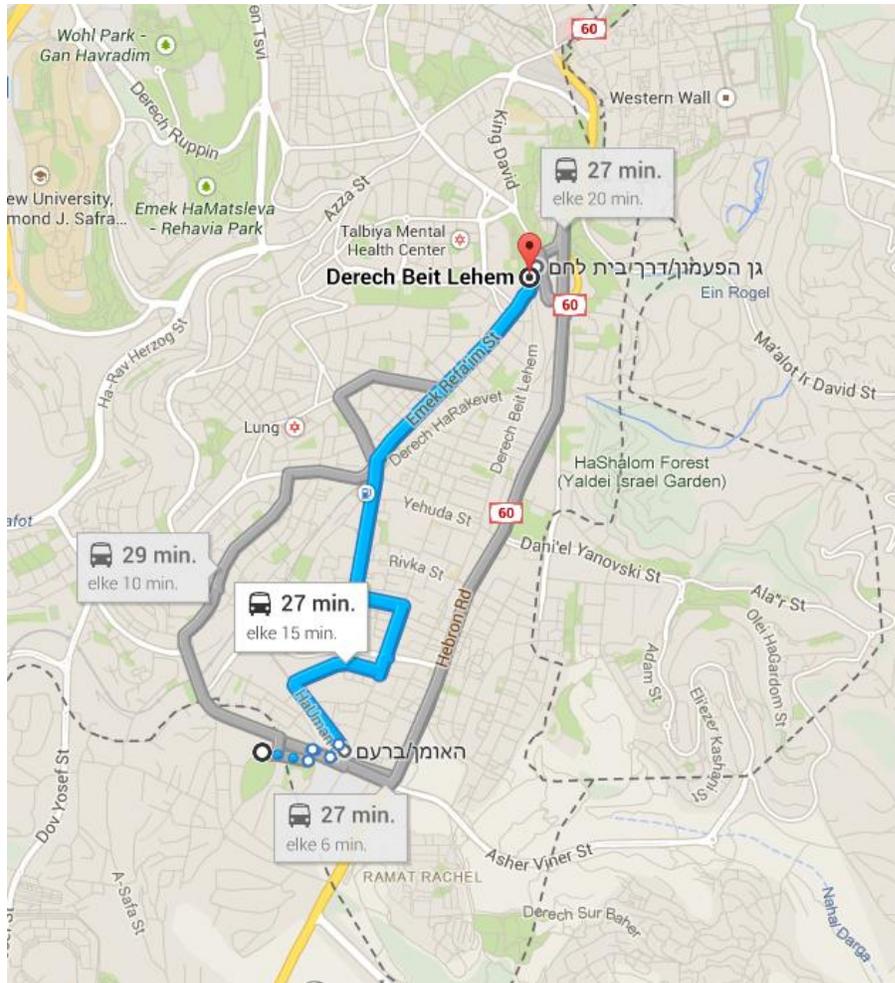
- **Get a description of the site if it was not a bus. Was it a bus stop, inside a building, a common area between shops or cafes, at a checkpoint (checkpoint was around what)?**

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- **If it was a bus, did the bomber get on the bus and detonate quickly or ride the bus for an amount of time. Do they think the intention was the bus or the location of the bus or both?**  
The bomber apparently decided to chance being discovered in order to wait for the bus to fill with passengers, so as to increase the number of casualties. He drove from the Talpiot industrial zone to downtown Jerusalem.

The bus drive would have taken around 30 minutes and about 4 kilometers.



- **Anything special about the site related to time of year? Holiday shoppers, sports events, local festivals**  
No, the bombing happened during morning rush hour (8.30 AM on Sunday: beginning of the work week).
- **If the event was on a bus, what are the details of the bus line? To & From what areas and what is special about the areas. The bus was taking people to work, shopping, tourist areas?**  
Egged bus #14a, travelling from the Talpiot industrial zone to downtown Jerusalem. Due to the rush hour most people on the bus were most likely on their way to work.



- **Any info on where the bomber was outfitted with the device?**  
No
- **Was site chosen for a specific reason? Did the site symbolize something?**  
No. There is the possible attempt to use the nearby Sonol Gas Station to make more victims (with a secondary explosion).

**Cultural insight relating to bus attacks:**

- **Is there a demographic divide in who typically rides particular bus routes?**  
No known information.
- **Was there anything unique about the suicide bombings that occurred on buses, aside from the assumed desire to maximize casualties (i.e. certain bus-routes, time of day, passengers, choice of targeting a moving bus in terms of a tactic)**  
No
- **What measures were taken by the transit authorities or companies to counter bombers targeting buses? Were they effective?**  
No known information

**Neighborhood Questions:**

- **What is special about the neighborhood? Business, residential, tourist?**  
As the bus passed a street light outside the Liberty Bell park on the edge of Emek Refaim (near the Sonol gas station) the main street of the German Colony, he detonated the explosive device.
- **What do they think was the neighborhood social composition? Primarily Israelis or other ethnicity? Did it border similar areas?**  
Primarily Israeli
- **Is there any info on the bomber's residence? Where multiple bombers from the same area, same school, same church?**  
Mohammed Zaul was from the village of Husan in the West Bank (Bethlehem area). There is not enough information to determine possible other perpetrators and whether or not they had a similar background.
- **Did any bombers live and bomb in the same area?**  
No
- **Any info to suggest bombers scouted multiple sites?**  
No
- **Any info to suggest the bomber was familiar with the area?**  
No

### City/General Questions:

- **Is there any significance to the order or simply to appear it could happen anywhere at any time?**  
Appear like it can happen anywhere, anytime.
  
- **Was there a trigger event to the first bombing? Where any bombings in response to actions by security officials?**  
The attack took place one day before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) at The Hague is scheduled to begin hearings over the West Bank security fence, Army Radio reported. [4]
  
- **How were bombers recruited? Did most volunteer?**  
No known information.
  
- **Were the devices assembled in Israel?**  
No known information.
  
- **What was happening prior to the suicide bombings? Other types for organized violence?**  
There is no direct link with previous events.
  
- **At the time, how was terror organization organized? Once central group or a few dispersed cells/cliques?**  
The Fatah Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades claimed responsibility, a well organized organization.

### **References:**

- 1) <http://edition.cnn.com/TRANSCRIPTS/0402/22/sm.03.html>
- 2) [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty\\_Bell\\_Park\\_bus\\_bombing](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty_Bell_Park_bus_bombing)
- 3) <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/MFA-Archive/2004/Pages/Suicide%20bombing%20of%20Egged%20bus%20no.%2014A%20in%20Jerusalem%20-%2022-Feb-2004.aspx>
- 4) <http://zioanecon.blogspot.be/2004/02/seven-eight-people-killed-in-jerusalem.html>