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## Bomb shatters Tel Aviv

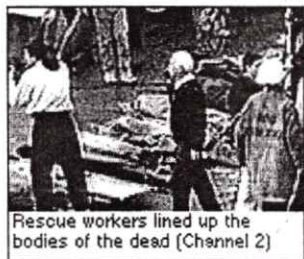
### Hamas reportedly claims responsibility

March 4, 1996

Web posted at: 11:05 a.m. EST (1605 GMT)



1 TEL AVIV, Israel (CNN) -- A suicide bomber killed at least 10 people and wounded at least 35 others Monday afternoon in the main downtown shopping area of Tel Aviv, Israeli authorities said. Some said the death toll could reach 20. The extremist group Hamas reportedly has claimed responsibility. (553K QuickTime movie)



2 It was the fourth terrorist blast to hit Israel in nine days. No one had yet claimed responsibility for Monday's attack.

3 Israeli Army radio said the bomber, with explosives either strapped to his body or in a car, blew himself up in the street about 4 p.m. local time near the indoor mall known as Dizengoff Center. Witnesses said the suicide bomber was next to a line of people waiting at a cash machine.

4 Children in costumes for the Purim holiday, which starts Monday night, were among the victims.

5 "I saw children here in costumes bleeding profusely. It's a heart-rending sight," said Yigal Raviv, a reporter for Israel radio.

### Previous bombings

6 The blast came a day after a suicide bomber killed himself and 18 other people aboard a bus in Jerusalem. The first two attacks were on February 25 -- one in the coastal city of Ashkelon and the other on a bus traveling the same route as the one bombed Sunday.



7 A total of 48 people, including three suicide bombers, died in those earlier attacks. The Islamic militant group Hamas assumed blame for the explosions.



8 Sunday's Jerusalem bombing led Prime Minister Shimon Peres to declare "total war" on the Hamas. Prior to the Tel Aviv bombing, Israeli troops rounded up hundreds of Palestinians and arrested dozens suspected of being terrorist sympathizers.

9 Responding to Monday's attack, Israeli government spokesman Uri Dromi told CNN that terrorists "cannot be

spokesman Uri Dromi told CNN that terrorists "cannot be defeated overnight ... (but) ... we have no intention of losing this battle." (213K AIFF sound or 213K WAV sound)

Dromi said Israel would like to see Palestinian President Yasser Arafat condemn and "delegitimize" terrorists. (213K AIFF sound or 213K WAV sound)

### Clinton deplores violence

A White House statement released as President Clinton flew to an appearance in Michigan deplored Monday's "senseless act of violence against innocent people."

The president's top national security advisors were scheduled to meet at the White House later Monday to discuss ways the United States can help Israel and the Palestinian Authority deal with the latest wave of terrorism directed against Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts.



Secretary of State Warren Christopher was expected to cut short a Latin American trip to participate in the meetings.

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