

Brother of Manchester bomber convicted after fleeing UK

The elder brother of the Manchester Arena bomber has been convicted in his absence of failing to give evidence at the public inquiry into the attack.

Ismail Abedi, 28, whose whereabouts are unknown, had refused to co-operate with the inquiry but was ordered by the chairman, Sir John Saunders, to attend to give evidence.



He was listed for trial at Manchester Magistrates' Court on Thursday under another name he has used, Ishmale Ben Romdhan, but did not attend.

Ismail Abedi is not thought to be in the UK | CREDIT: Picture Courtesy of BBC News

He was found guilty by District Judge Jack McGarva of failing without reasonable excuse to do something required by a Section 21 notice.

The judge adjourned the case to August 2 and said if Abedi did not attend that hearing a warrant would be issued for his arrest.

He said: "The court is bound to consider passing a custodial sentence. There is a very high level of public interest in ensuring people co-operate with public inquiries."

The IT worker was described as a key witness for the inquiry, able to answer questions about the radicalisation of his younger brothers, Salman, who carried out the suicide attack which killed 22 people on May 22 2017, and Hashem, who has been jailed for his part in the bomb plot.

He also had potential evidence to give, the inquiry heard, on the preparation of the bomb, given his DNA was found on a hammer in a car used to store the explosives.

Bereaved families labelled Ismail Abedi a “coward” for refusing to answer questions.

The court heard that [Abedi was stopped by police at Manchester Airport on August 28](#) last year and told them he was planning to return to the country the following month. He left the country the following day and is not believed to have returned.

[Telegraph reader comments](#)~ Probably didn't want to arrest him
in case it was racist

We'd rather see little girls bombed than risk offending this
type of scum, unfortunately.

His father, Ramadan Abedi, was associated with the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, a militia that had links with terror organisation al-Qaeda, the public inquiry heard. He lives in Libya, has also not co-operated with the inquiry, and police want to question him as a suspect.