

Man guilty of IS-inspired knife plan

A man has been convicted of preparing to carry out a knife attack in London, inspired by so-called Islamic State.

Nadir Syed, 22, from Southall in west London, was arrested hours after buying a chef's knife in November 2014, days before Remembrance Sunday.

Woolwich Crown Court heard how he had been inspired by IS leaders urging attacks on Western targets, including police and soldiers.

The jury could not reach verdicts on two other men on trial.

Haseeb Hamayoon, 29, from Hayes, west London and Yousaf Syed, 20, from High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, denied planning acts of terrorism. They will be retried.

Syria attempt

The jury returned a majority verdict on Syed after more than 50 hours' deliberation.

The court heard how he had expressed admiration for the killers of soldier Lee Rigby and how he shared violent footage of beheadings from Syria and Iraq on social media.



Syed was arrested in November 2014

Some of his conversations were made on encrypted applications, the jury was told.

The court heard that Syed had also tried to travel to Syria to fight with IS militants but had been stopped from leaving the country in January 2014.

In September 2014, IS militants issued a fatwa or decree calling on its followers in the West to carry out attacks at home, jurors were told.

'Stamped on poppy'

In the weeks that followed, Syed's behaviour became increasingly worrying to MI5 and police intelligence officers who were watching him.

The court also heard how Syed had appeared in a video in which he stamped on a poppy and kicked

it towards a drain, which prosecutor Max Hill QC said was demonstrative of his “attitude to the poppy as the remembrance image in this country”.

By November last year he was actively searching for knives of “sufficient quality to source an attack”, the court heard, and he was eventually arrested on 6 November shortly after buying a 30cm chef’s knife.

Commander Richard Walton, head of the Metropolitan Police’s Counter Terrorism Command, said: “This was an intense and lengthy operation by my officers, supported by the intelligence agencies, and I have no doubt that London is a safer place today with this conviction.”

Syed will be sentenced at a later date.

[News Source](#)

41 police killed in Argentina bus crash

At least 41 Argentine police members were killed Monday after a bus they were traveling in flipped and fell off a bridge in the northern part of the South American nation.

Authorities say the crash happened early Monday while a convoy of three buses with gendarmes officers was traveling near Salta, a city about 932 miles north of Buenos Aires.

‘Between 50 and 60 border patrol officers were on board. Some are still trapped,’ provincial emergency director Ernesto Flores told the La Red radio station, reports Fox News.

Angel Marinaro, civil defense director for the province, told local station TN that for unknown reasons the driver of one of the buses lost control as the convoy was crossing a bridge.

The vehicle flipped and fell off the bridge, landing about 65 feet below. Local television images show an overturned bus and rescue crews working the scene.

Gustavo Solis, the mayor of Rosario de la Frontera – a city in the area – told the media that the road where the accident happened is known to be in poor condition.

Authorities say survivors are being taken to a nearby hospital.

Police said in a statement that visibility was good at the time of the accident and they are considering mechanical failure as a possible cause, according to Sky News.

20 women win seats in Saudi municipal poll

Twenty women have won seats in municipal councils in Saudi Arabia as the ultraconservative Muslim kingdom allowed females to vote and run as candidates for the first time in history in an election on Saturday.

The 20 elected females represent just under one percent of the roughly 2,100 municipal council seats that were contested in the election, reports the rt.com.

It was also only the third ever election in Saudi Arabia. Just men participated in the 2005 and 2011 polls.

The development is viewed as historic for Saudi Arabia where women have fewer rights than men, being forbidden to drive cars and making major life decisions without consent from male relatives, among other restrictions.

"I deeply believe in the importance of voting in order to be part of my country's drive to empower women and elevate their status. The turnout was good and the voting proceeded smoothly. I personally voted based on the candidates' programs and plans," says one of the female first-time votes.

However, the election was only for two thirds of municipal council seats which have no legislative or national powers but are rather limited to local affairs.

The turnout was also quite low, with just 25 per cent of the voters casting ballots due to election still being a new thing for the Saudis.

Salma bint Hazab al-Otaibi, who won a seat in the Madrika district of Mecca, was hailed as first woman councilor in Saudi Arabia on social media.

Huda al-Jeraisy, a daughter of a former head of the chamber of commerce, was elected in the country's capital, Riyadh.

Two women were elected in Saudi Arabia's most conservative region, Qassim, but their names were not released as well as the name of another female councillor from al-Babtain.

The late King Abdullah announced that the women would vote in 2015 as he had been looking to increase the public role of females in the country.

[News Source](#)

SA gets 3rd Finance Minister in a week

South African President Jacob Zuma has replaced newly appointed Finance Minister David van Rooyen with the more experienced Pravin Gordhan in a surprise Sunday night announcement.

On Wednesday, the president sacked Nhlanhla Nene in a move that sent the rand to record lows and sparked a sell-off in bank shares, reports the BBC.

His replacement for less than a week, van Rooyen, is a little-known MP.

The latest move sent the rand up almost 5% on Sunday night.

Gordhan was widely respected when he served as South Africa's finance minister from 2009 until 2014.

Indian Sikh pilgrims arrive in Pakistan

Over 2,500 Sikh pilgrims from India have arrived in Lahore to participate in religious rituals to mark the 547th birth anniversary of Guru Nanak Dev.

From Lahore the pilgrims left for Hasan Abdal town in Attock district to visit the temple of Panja Sahib under strict security arrangements, Dawn online reported.

“We respect Pakistan, in general, and Punjab, in particular, as it is the soil of our gurus (spiritual leaders),” group leader Rumeet Singh said at Wagah railway station.

“Our top spiritual leader Guru Nanak Dev Ji has given a message about humanity, peace and love,” he added.

The pilgrims thanked Pakistani government for the arrangements during their 10-day tour to the country.

“It reflects pilgrims’ satisfaction on Pakistan’s arrangements,” Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB) Chairman Siddiqui Farooq said while receiving the pilgrims at Wagah station.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif wants to have good relations with India, Farooq added.

Rumeet Singh said he was grateful to the Pakistan high commissioner to India and the Indian high commissioner to Pakistan for ensuring the arrival of Sikhs.

“On Thursday, the Pakistan high commission in New Delhi had issued visas to 3,000 pilgrims. Of them over 2,500 arrived in the country,” he said.

The pilgrims will stay in Hasan Abdal till November 22 and will depart for Nankana Sahib on the same day.

On November 24, they will proceed for Farooqabad (Sacha Soda) and will return back to Nankana Sahib on November 25.

On November 26 and 27, they will stay in Lahore at the temple of Dera Nawab Sahib. On Nov 28, the pilgrims will visit Darbar Sahib temple in Narowal and will return back to India on November 29.

Pakistan wants durable peace in Afghanistan: Sartaj Aziz

Pakistan desires durable peace in Afghanistan and instability in the region is not in the interest of the country, Pakistan prime minister’s advisor on foreign affairs Sartaj Aziz said on Tuesday.

While addressing a meeting prior to the Heart of Asia conference here, Aziz said Pakistan will continue to support all endeavours aimed at strengthening peace and security in Afghanistan.

Aziz said the Heart of Asia conference is an effective platform for promoting regional economic cooperation and connectivity, with Afghanistan at its centre.

It provides an opportunity for a peaceful and stable Afghanistan, and a secure and prosperous region as a whole.

Aziz said that as the process matures, “our focus should be on strengthening engagements and collaboration to effectively combat challenges in the field of security and promoting regional economic collaboration”.

Afghanistan deputy foreign minister Hikmat Khalil Karzai called for a united and collective approach to counter the menace of terrorism and violent extremism.

He said the conference was taking place at a critical juncture when the region was confronted by many challenges, including terrorism.

He also said that his country attaches importance to having strong relations with all the regional countries for promotion of economic relations and meeting the challenges.

Pakistan, Afghanistan, US discuss stalled Afghan peace talks

Afghanistan, Pakistan and the US began deliberations here on Wednesday on the resumption of the stalled Afghan peace process.

The deliberations, on the sidelines of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process conference, saw Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani leading their respective country’s delegations while Deputy Secretary of State Tony Blinken led the US delegation at the meeting, the Daily Pakistan Urdu newspaper reported.

The trilateral meeting was being held in the aftermath of a brief dialogue between the leaders of Afghanistan and Pakistan in which they took up several issues of mutual interest, including the resumption of talks with the Afghan Taliban.

Ghani is on a daylong visit to Pakistan for the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process conference which aims to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan and strengthen regional economic cooperation and connectivity. Nawaz and Ghani jointly inaugurated the process in Islamabad.

The trip follows a trilateral meeting between Sharif, Ghani and British Prime Minister David Cameron in Paris where the three agreed on cooperation-based regional relationship.

Ghani had, however, maintained that Kabul will not compromise its sovereignty and independence at any cost.

Relations between the two neighbours received a hit after Ghani blamed Pakistan of supporting the Afghan Taliban for carrying out suicide blasts in Kabul.

His statement was followed by Islamabad’s accusation that an attack on Pakistan Air Force’s Badaber airbase was planned and controlled from Afghanistan.

The governments of both the countries were communicating through ‘backdoor channels’ to get bilateral ties back on track.

The Heart of Asia conference was a platform to repair the stalled relations between the two neighbouring countries.

Indian External Affairs Minister also arrived in Islamabad to attend the conference which was established in 2011 at the initiative of Afghanistan and Turkey.

Sushma will later on Wednesday hold bilateral meetings with Sharif.

[News Source](#)

Pakistani MP Imran Khan calls on Modi

Member of Pakistan's parliament and former cricketer Imran Khan called on Prime Minister Narendra Modi here on Friday.

"At his request, Pakistan MP & Chairman of Tehreek-e-Insaf Party Imran Khan called on PM @narendramodi today," external affairs ministry spokesman Vikas Swarup tweeted along with a picture of the two.

Swarup said Modi and Khan welcomed the recent thawing in relations between India and Pakistan and expressed the hope that these would lead to cooperative ties between the two countries.

During External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj's visit to Pakistan earlier this week for the Heart of Asia Conference on peace and stability in Afghanistan, the New Delhi and Islamabad decided to start a comprehensive bilateral dialogue covering the entire gamut of issues.

"Mr Imran Khan invited PM @narendramodi to visit Pakistan," Swarup said in another tweet.

Modi is scheduled to visit Pakistan next year to attend the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) Summit meeting.

[News Source](#)

No force in world can stop Bangladesh's war crimes trial

The BNP chief's paying tribute to Martyred Intellectuals' Memorial was nothing but a mockery, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said yesterday, adding no one in the world could stop the war crimes trial initiated by her government.

The Pakistani occupation forces and their local collaborators, including Razakars, Al-Badr and Al-Shams, killed poets, writers, teachers, journalists, doctors and many other intellectuals from different fields on December 14, 1971 in the then East Pakistan.



Bangladesh' Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, daughter of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman

Their aim was to make the country to be born, Bangladesh, intellectually bankrupt, the PM said at a discussion organised by the ruling party at the Institution of Engineers in the capital to mark Martyred Intellectuals Day.

"Those who committed such crimes are now undergoing trial and their trial will go on alongside the war crimes trial," said Hasina, chief of the ruling Awami League.

Earlier, a one-minute silence was observed remembering the martyrs of December 14, 1971, four martyred national leaders and all the martyrs of the Liberation War, democratic movements of the country and the August 15, 1975 carnage.

The BNP chief is following in the footsteps of her husband Ziaur Rahman, the PM said, criticising Khaleda Zia for making those, executed for war crimes, ministers during her tenure as prime minister.

How she could pay tribute to the martyred intellectuals after making war criminals ministers, Hasina questioned.

"This is nothing but a mockery.... She (Khaleda) thinks our people do not understand anything, but they understand everything."

Before the recent execution of two war criminals, Khaleda returned from London in a hurry, Hasina said, in a bid to save them through waging a movement.

The Prime Minister also took a swipe at those freedom fighters who accompanied Khaleda to the memorial.

Hasina continued saying that following the assassination of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman along with most of his family members on August 15, 1975, Bangladesh lost its glory and dignity it had attained through the war.

But as the Awami League assumed power after 21 years, she said, Bangladesh began regaining its lost glory.

Neither of the Pakistani occupation forces and their collaborators could forget their defeat and so they want to destroy the spirit of the Liberation War, halt the economic development of the country and force Bangladesh into slavery again, the PM said.

“Their conspiracy is going on and will go on, but we must move on foiling all the conspiracies.”

Hasina said some considered Ziaur Rahman the proclaimer of independence and a freedom fighter.

“If Zia were a true freedom fighter, he could not have put war criminals in state power.”

Hasina also reiterated her resolve not to bow to anyone and lead Bangladesh into becoming a hunger and poverty-free prosperous country by 2041.

[News Source](#)

In Mourning, In Fury

Observance of the Martyred Intellectuals Day was markedly different this year.

The day was observed yesterday with a renewed demand for banning Jamaat-e-Islami, and a call to sever ties with Pakistan for denying the atrocities it had carried out during the 1971 Liberation War.

People from all ages and professions, including family members of the martyred intellectuals, thronged the Martyred Intellectuals’ Memorial at Mirpur and the Rayerbazar Mausoleum, with different cultural and political organisations placing wreaths at the altars.

The nation, for the first time this year, saw the execution of a war criminal, Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed, Jamaat leader and a top brass of Al-Badr, for the killing of intellectuals in 1971.

Dr Nuzhat Choudhury Shampa, daughter of martyred physician Dr Abdul Alim Chaudhury, said, “This year’s December 14 is different because the nation saw the hanging of Al-Badr commander Mojaheed. We are hopeful that the government will try the remaining war criminals.”



People from every walk of life pay tribute to the martyred intellectuals, placing wreaths at the Rayer Bazar Memorial in the capital on the occasion of Martyred Intellectuals' Day. Photo Star

A diplomatic spat soon followed between Bangladesh and Pakistan over the execution of Mojaheed with Pakistan summoning the acting high commissioner of Bangladesh in Islamabad to deny the atrocities it had committed in 1971.

People from all walks of life yesterday expressed their outrage at Pakistan's denial.

When the Pakistani occupation forces were certain about their defeat, they, aided by local collaborators, particularly the Al-Badr, abducted the country's brightest minds and killed them, often after brutal torture, in an effort to cripple the emerging nation intellectually.

After the butchery, the bodies were left to rot in the killing fields.

Talking about Pakistan's outright lies, Maj Gen (retd) KM Safiullah Bir Uttam, chairman of Sector Commanders Forum (SCF), said, "Bangladesh should cut all ties with Pakistan until it seeks apology for its recent statement."

Later, the SCF handed over a protest letter to the Pakistan High Commission in Dhaka, demanding an unconditional apology from Pakistan for the barbarity of its forces in 1971.



Awami League Joint General Secretary Mahbubul Alam Hanif said the relationship with Pakistan had been severed in 1971.

A huge number of students from different schools and colleges too gathered at the memorial sites. Many children came with their parents.

A mock mass killing of intellectuals was staged afterwards. An exhibition of photographs on 1971 and paperclips attracted people's attention at the Rayerbazar graveyard.

DU CUTS ACADEMIC TIES WITH PAKISTAN

Dhaka University severed all academic ties with Pakistan from yesterday for the country's denial of the genocide committed in 1971.

The decision came yesterday at an emergency syndicate meeting with Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique in the chair at Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban.



“We have cut all bilateral relations with Pakistan, including exchange of teachers and students ... from today [yesterday] as Pakistan denied the genocide committed during the Liberation War of Bangladesh,” said the VC at a press briefing following the meeting. From now on, teachers, students and representatives from the DU will not be able to go to any Pakistani institutions and the university will not accept any representatives from the country for academic purposes.

“Dhaka University bears evidences of the atrocities, which are available in the archives of many foreign universities, international media, yet Pakistan keeps lying,” he said.

The DU VC also demanded the trial of 195 Pakistani army officers who had committed many crimes in 1971.

President of Federation of Bangladesh University Teacher's Association (FBUTA) Prof Farid Uddin Ahmed said they would hold meetings with the entire public university teachers' associations to sever academic ties with Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Civil Aviation and Tourism Minister Rashed Khan Menon said the government, if necessary, would go to the international court demanding the trial of the 195 Pakistan army persons who had committed war crimes.



At a programme at Dhaka Reporters' Unity yesterday, he said Pakistan was bound to bring the 195 Pakistan army personnel under trial following the Shimla agreement.

MIRPUR MAUSOLEUM

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina paid their tributes to the martyred intellectuals by placing wreaths at the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial at Mirpur, reports UNB.

President Abdul Hamid placed wreaths at 8:00am followed by the prime minister. They stood there in solemn silence for some time.

A contingent of Bangladesh Armed Forces gave a state salute as the bugle played the last post.

After placing wreaths, the president talked to war-wounded freedom fighters and family members of the martyred intellectuals there and inquired about their well-being.



Flanked by central leaders of the party, Sheikh Hasina, also president of Bangladesh Awami League, laid another wreath at the Martyred Intellectuals Memorial as the party chief. She too talked to the war-wounded freedom fighters and inquired about their well-being.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia paid her tributes at the memorial at 10:20am.

Cabinet ministers and political leaders also paid their homage to the martyred intellectuals at the memorial site.

[News Source](#)
