



Tuesday, March 22, 2022

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY AND INCIDENT REPORTS

No significant suspicious activity or incidents to report.

TERRORISM

Trial Opens into Knife Murder of British Lawmaker Amess

AP News, 3/21/2022

A man who stabbed a veteran British lawmaker to death last year while he was meeting with voters was a “committed Islamist terrorist” who had spent years researching and planning potential attacks on lawmakers, a prosecutor said Monday. Ali Harbi Ali, 26, appeared in the dock Monday at London’s Central Criminal Court as a trial opened into the murder of Conservative lawmaker David Amess, who was attacked on Oct. 16 during a routine meeting with constituents in a church hall in the town of Leigh-on-Sea in eastern England. Ali, a London man with Somali heritage, denies charges of murder and preparing acts of terrorism. Opening the trial, prosecutor Tom Little said the case was “nothing less than an assassination” carried out because of a “warped and twisted and violent ideology.” “It was a murder carried out by that young man who for many years had been planning just such an attack and who was, and is, a committed, fanatical, radicalised Islamist terrorist,” he said. <https://apnews.com/article/europe-london-england-terrorism-7b203e4cca15beed52993a6972f8b86a>

ANALYST COMMENTARY: Ali Harbi Ali, 26, was arrested after stabbing British MP Sir David Amess. Amess was meeting with local constituents in Leigh-on-Sea in Essex when Ali approached him and stabbed him several times. Amess died at the scene. Authorities stated that Ali was motivated by Islamic extremist beliefs. Reports indicate that the attacker also “carried out reconnaissance” on other potential targets. BBC News reported that Ali had searched for a list of Members of Parliament (MP) that had voted to approve airstrikes in Syria prior to his attack. Ali took a series of trips to observe potential targets, including six different visits to the Home of Michael Grove, a British cabinet minister. Authorities discovered that the attacker had created several different plans on how to attack Grove. BBC News reported that “Mr. Ali had also researched Justice Secretary Dominic Raab and Labour leader Keir Starmer QC in September 2021”. The murder of David Amess was the third stabbing of a UK politician in 10 years, and the second fatal incident. Jo Cox was killed by a right-wing extremist in 2016 and Stephen Timms was stabbed by an Islamist extremist in 2011 but survived.

Northern Ireland Terrorism Threat Level Lowered for First Time in 12 Years

The Guardian, 3/22/2022

The terrorism threat level in Northern Ireland has been lowered from “severe” to “substantial” for the first time in 12 years after what the government described as significant continuous progress with peace. The Northern Ireland secretary, Brandon Lewis, announced the decision after an assessment by MI5. “This is the first time the threat level in Northern Ireland has changed since 2010 and shows the significant progress that Northern Ireland has made, and continues to make, towards a more peaceful, more prosperous and safer society. “It is a testament to the ongoing commitment to protecting the peace process and tackling Northern Ireland-related terrorism, and the tremendous efforts of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and MI5 for their hard won gains over the past decade,” he said. The threat level is subject to continuous review, and judgments about the threat are based on a wide range of information. This was the first time the threat level in Northern Ireland has been reduced from severe since it was first published in 2010.

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/mar/22/northern-ireland-terrorism-threat-level-lowered-for-first-time-in-12-years>

ANALYST COMMENTARY: The United Kingdom government has lowered the Northern Ireland-related terrorism threat level from “severe” to “substantial” for the first time in over a decade. The announcement stated that the decision was made by MI5, the UK’S domestic intelligence agency. The “substantial” marking indicates that a terrorist attack is likely and “might well occur without further warning”. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, The Rt Hon Brandon Lewis CBE MP, stated that “this is the first time the threat level in Northern Ireland has changed since 2010 and shows the significant progress that Northern Ireland has made, and continues to make, towards a more peaceful, more prosperous and safer society”. Lewis urged that this “is not a time for



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complacency. There is still a minority who wish to cause harm in Northern Ireland. As ever, the public should remain vigilant and report any concerns they may have to the police". While much Northern Ireland-related terrorism ended after the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, extremist groups still operate today. The UK Home Office currently proscribes fourteen groups linked to Northern Ireland related terrorism as terrorist organizations, including the Irish Republican Army (IRA). MI5 urges that there are still dissidents that "seek to destabilize Northern Ireland through the tactical use of violence, targeting members of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) and other security personnel as well as seeking to cause disruption and economic damage". MI5 identifies four main republican dissident groups in Northern Ireland: the new IRA, the Continuity IRA (CIRA), Óglaigh na hÉireann (ONH – which split into two factions ONH and IRB), and Arm na Poblacht (ANP).

Iran Nuclear Deal's Final Hurdle Is Lifting Terrorism Sanctions on Revolutionary Guards

The Wall Street Journal, 3/21/2022

The effort to revive the 2015 nuclear deal agreement now hinges on perhaps the most politically sensitive issue in the negotiations: whether to remove the U.S. terrorism designation for Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards, the country's powerful security force, diplomats said. The issue is galvanizing opposition to the nuclear deal in Washington and among Middle East allies such as Israel, where the government issued stinging public criticism of any attempt to remove the terrorism designation of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps. Senior U.S. officials say a failure to find a compromise with Iran on the issue quickly could cause a breakdown in negotiations that—over almost a year—have resolved nearly every other disagreement. The U.S. has accused the Guard of killing hundreds of Americans, while its elite Quds Force has arranged weapons and support for proxy forces throughout the region and for pro-Iranian groups that fought in Syria. The Guard has long faced U.S. sanctions for its ballistic-missiles programs and alleged human-rights violations and was placed on the counterterrorism sanctions list in 2017.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/iran-nuclear-deals-final-hurdle-is-lifting-terrorism-sanctions-on-revolutionary-guards-11647864073>

SECURITY & SAFETY AWARENESS

Man Arrested in Connection with Deadly Shooting on RTA Bus in Cleveland

WKYC, 3/21/2022

The Cleveland Division of Police is investigating a fatal shooting that took place on Monday night near the area of Euclid Avenue and East 30th Street. According to officials from the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority, (GCRTA), the homicide took place on a Healthline bus. 3News confirmed Tuesday morning that a suspect has been arrested in connection with this case. He has been identified as 28-year-old Delorn Martin of Cleveland. The victim has also since been identified as 21-year-old David Kittreles of Cleveland, according to an update from the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office early Tuesday morning. No other information has been provided.

<https://www.wkyc.com/article/news/local/cleveland/cleveland-police-investigating-homicide-rta-bus/95-10a37e7d-5ed8-428e-9f61-36d6faa94bab>

Security Strike at German Airports Causes Cancellations

AP News, 3/22/2022

A strike on Tuesday by security staff at eight German airports — among them Frankfurt, a major intercontinental hub — led to widespread disruption and flight cancellations. The ver.di union called the all-day strike at Frankfurt, Germany's busiest airport, as well as Berlin, Bremen, Hamburg, Hannover, Stuttgart, Duesseldorf and Cologne-Bonn, before a round of pay talks with employers that is set for Thursday. It followed walkouts at several airports last week. At Frankfurt, 108 out of the day's 790 planned flights had been canceled by Tuesday morning, German news agency dpa reported. Passengers due to start their journeys at the airport were unable to board, though passengers could transfer flights. All 88 planned departures from Hamburg were canceled. Security checks at German airports are under the supervision of federal police but largely conducted by private firms. Security officials in Bavaria are paid in line with a pay deal for public service employees and aren't striking.

<https://apnews.com/article/business-germany-berlin-hamburg-europe-b1eddfa25425dae01ee282687306c960>



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Miami Beach Announces Curfew After Spring Break Shootings

The New York Times, 3/21/2022

Faced with an onslaught of spring break revelers, Miami Beach officials declared a state of emergency on Monday and announced a curfew for the city's South Beach area after two shootings over the weekend that left five people wounded. Mayor Dan Gelber said the shootings came during a period when "tens of thousands of people" descend upon the city, creating an unwanted "young party-hard crowd." "We can't endure this anymore, we just simply can't," Mr. Gelber said, adding that 371 police officers had been deployed over the weekend. "This isn't your father's, your mother's spring break. This is something totally different. We don't ask for spring break, we don't promote it, we don't encourage it, we just endure it, and frankly it's something we don't want to endure." City commissioners will meet on Tuesday to finalize the curfew, which runs from 12:01 a.m. to 6 a.m. this Thursday through Monday. The curfew applies to a specific area in South Beach with many bars and restaurants, said Veronica Paysse, a spokeswoman for the city.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/21/us/miami-beach-shooting-emergency-curfew.html>

ANALYST COMMENTARY: Miami Beach, Florida has declared a state of emergency following recent violence and large spring break crowds. The Miami Beach area has been inundated with thousands of college-aged individuals traveling for spring break. Five people have been shot in Miami Beach since the beginning of spring break, according to local news outlets. Nine police officers have also been injured during the spring break period. Authorities have seized 100 firearms in the last week alone. The local government has also installed a curfew as part of the public emergency. The curfew is set to begin on Thursday at 12:01am and last through Monday at 6:00am. NBC South Florida reported that the curfew is in effect from "23rd Street to the north, down to South Pointe Drive to the south, the ocean to the east and the bay to the west". The curfew is expected to take place the following weekend as well. The Florida Department of Transportation will be creating traffic blockades in certain popular areas where only residents and visitors with hotel reservations in the area will be allowed to enter, according to the Miami Herald.

CP, TCRC Reach Arbitration Agreement: Work Stoppage to End Today

Progressive Railroading, 3/22/2022

Canadian Pacific and the Teamsters Canada Rail Conference's (TCRC) Train and Engine Negotiating Committee have entered into binding arbitration, the railroad announced today. CP will immediately begin working with customers to resume normal train operations across Canada as soon as possible, company officials said in a press release. "CP is pleased to have reached agreement with the TCRC Negotiating Committee to enter into binding arbitration and end this work stoppage," said CP President and CEO Keith Creel. "This agreement enables us to return to work effective noon Tuesday local time to resume our essential services for our customers and the North American supply chain."

<https://www.progressiverailroading.com/labor/news/CP-TCRC-reach-arbitration-agreement-work-stoppage-to-end-today--66178>

Deep South on Alert After Severe Storms Injure Multiple People in Texas

CBS News, 3/22/2022

A storm system that caused widespread damage and numerous injuries in Texas drifted into Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama on Tuesday, possibly triggering "a regional severe weather outbreak," the Storm Prediction Center said. The affected areas, including the cities of Baton Rouge and Jackson, Mississippi, could see strong tornadoes, forecasters said. Louisiana's federal and state authorities reminded thousands of hurricane survivors living in government-provided mobile homes and recreational vehicle trailers to have an evacuation plan because the structures might not withstand the expected weather. The storm already left misery in its wake in Texas, causing multiple injuries and one possible death. Sarah Somers, director of the Office of Emergency Management in Grayson County in northeast Texas said in a statement provided to CBS News that ten people were brought to hospitals and officials were investigating a reported, but unconfirmed, fatality. Search and rescue operations were ongoing Monday night.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/texas-tornadoes-thunderstorms-jacksboro-bowie/>



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Amtrak Sued Over Fatal Onboard Shooting

Trains Magazine, 3/21/2022

The family of a man shot and killed aboard an Amtrak train is suing the passenger railroad and the suspect in the killing for at least \$100 million, the Kansas City Star reports. Richie Terrell Aaron Jr., 30, was shot aboard the Missouri River Runner on Jan. 14, 2022. His family says in the federal lawsuit that after the shooting occurred at the Lee's Summit, Mo., station, the train continued on to Independence, Mo., despite pleas from others on board to get attention for Aaron. Upon the train's arrival in Independence, 35 minutes later, he was pronounced dead by emergency personnel. Amtrak also failed to provide security measures to prevent firearms from being brought on board the train, the suit alleges. An Amtrak spokesman told the Associated Press the railroad could not comment on the pending litigation.

<https://www.trains.com/trn/news-reviews/news-wire/amtrak-sued-over-fatal-onboard-shooting/>

Ukrainians Flee Mariupol as Russian Forces Push to Take Port City

The Wall Street Journal, 3/22/2022

As the battle for Mariupol intensifies, civilians fleeing the conflict told of escalating violence as Russian and Ukrainian forces fought street by street through the downtown of the historic port city and Russian airstrikes, artillery and mortar rounds have gutted entire neighborhoods. Hundreds of people from Mariupol arrive here daily in a grim procession of cars, with shattered windscreens and shrapnel scars speaking to the ordeal endured by their passengers. Taped to the windows are homemade signs reading "children" in Russian, and strips of white material tied to the door handles, scant protection from the war raging over their city. They pull into the parking lot of a hardware store on the outskirts of Zaporizhzhia—now a way station for people fleeing the city on their way to safety further west, or abroad—part of the more than 10 million people uprooted by the fighting. Nearly a month since Russia invaded Ukraine, it is on the verge of taking Mariupol in what would be the first major city to fall under its control. But Mariupol is a shattered prize.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/ukrainians-flee-mariupol-as-russian-forces-push-to-take-port-city-11647947707>

Health Experts Predict Uptick in U.S. COVID Cases Due to News BA.2 Variant

CNBC, 3/20/2022

U.S. health experts are warning an emerging, highly contagious Covid omicron variant, called BA.2, could soon lead to another uptick in domestic coronavirus cases. White House chief medical advisor Dr. Anthony Fauci said BA.2 is about 50% to 60% more transmissible than omicron, but it does not appear to be more severe. Health officials continue to stress coronavirus vaccines and boosters remain the best ways to prevent serious illness from the virus. "It does have increased transmission capability," Fauci said Sunday on ABC's "This Week." "However, when you look at the cases, they do not appear to be any more severe and they do not appear to evade immune responses either from vaccines or prior infections." The variant has already caused cases to increase in China and parts of Europe. It is estimated to account for about 25% or 30% of new cases in the U.S., but it could become the country's most dominant variant, Fauci said.

<https://www.cnn.com/2022/03/20/health-experts-predict-uptick-in-us-covid-cases-due-to-new-bapoint2-variant.html>

'It's a Scar': Mosque in Mississauga Looks to Beef Up Security After Attack

CBC, 3/20/2022

Members of a mosque in Mississauga, Ont., are still coming to grips with what happened after a man wielding an axe and bear spray attacked congregants during an early-morning prayer, a volunteer at the mosque who witnessed the incident said Sunday. "We're all trying to shake it off," said Noorani Sairally, who was one of the roughly 20 men praying in a room at the Dar Al-Tawheed Islamic Centre when the attack unfolded on Saturday morning. "It's a scar that is going to take a long time before it goes away. But at the same time, we're not going to let this deter us from coming to the mosque." When he heard screaming shortly after the prayer began, Sairally's mind automatically turned to other attacks on mosques: the 2017 shooting in Quebec City, and the ones in 2019 in Christchurch, New Zealand. But when he turned around, he said, he saw a man with a can of bear spray in one hand and an axe in another, who started spraying the congregants that were assembled in two rows. Sairally said a few men in one row got sprayed, while some in the other row reacted quickly to subdue the man. Others ran outside because the spray made it "unbearable to breathe," he added.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/mississauga-mosque-attack-1.6391466>



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CYBER SECURITY

The U.S. Warns Companies to Stay on Guard for Possible Russian Cyberattacks

NPR, 3/21/2022

The White House is warning companies that Russia could be planning to launch cyberattacks against critical U.S. infrastructure. The U.S. has previously warned about the Russian government's capabilities to digitally attack U.S. companies, but President Biden reiterated the message on Monday, saying in a statement that "evolving intelligence" showed Russia is "exploring options for potential cyberattacks." The potential attacks would be in response to U.S. sanctions against Russia over its invasion of Ukraine, the White House said. Deputy National Security Adviser for Cyber and Emerging Technology Anne Neuberger called for companies to secure their systems, including implementing multifactor authentication, patching systems against known vulnerabilities, backing up data, running drills and engaging with federal authorities before a cyberattack happens. Neuberger said the administration held classified briefings with companies last week based on "preparatory activity" that U.S. intelligence is picking up from Russia, but she said the U.S. government doesn't see a specific cyberattack approaching. Neuberger told reporters the U.S. had noticed an increase in malicious behavior while still seeing avenues for bad actors to easily exploit critical targets.

<https://www.npr.org/2022/03/21/1087903332/us-companies-russia-cyberattacks-ukraine-infrastructure>

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