



TERROR TRACKER

Newsletter by Counter Terrorism Centre



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR
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मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान



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ISIS CHIEF KILLS HIMSELF DURING US RAID IN SYRIA

45-YEAR-OLD AL-QURAYSHI BLOWS UP HIMSELF, FAMILY MEMBERS



Destroyed building after the US military raid in Atmeh, Syria. — Courtesy Global Tribune

The leader of the terrorist group ISIS, Abu Ibrahim al-Hashimi al-Qurayshi, reportedly blew himself up along with members of his family as US forces raised his hideout in Syria in the night of 2-3 February 2022 in the town of Atmeh, Northern Syria. The raid on the three-storey residential building, lasted for at least two hours. The option of a drone strike was eliminated in favour of a ground assault to minimise civilian casualties, as reports indicated that another family was residing within the building. About 50 US special operation forces undertook this crucial counter-terror operation, in which 13 people died; however, there were no American casualties.

Nicknamed “The Destroyer,” al-Qurayshi had assumed the leadership of ISIS after the killing of the previous ISIS chief Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi in 2019. A secretive man, who presided over a far diminished version of ISIS and never appeared in public, Al-Qurayshi was earlier member of Ansar ul-Islam, which later merged with al-Qaeda. He eventually switched loyalties to ISIS and was detained in the US prison Camp Bucca in 2008. During ISIS’ heydays, he was responsible for commanding religious courts in Mosul. He proved vital for eliminating the contenders who posed a threat to Al-Baghdadi’s leadership and was understood to have engineered the Yazidi genocide after Sinjar fell to ISIS forces in 2014.

According to Michale Pregent, a Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute, al-Qurayshi’s death is a “significant strike,” but “ISIL (ISIS) machine will continue whoever the new leader is.” —[AP](#), [Al Jazeera](#), [BBC News](#), [The Print](#)

PRISON BREAK FUELS FRESH FEARS OF ISIS’ RESURGENCE



ISIS fighters launched an attack on a Syrian prison run by Kurdish militia in Hasaka . - Newsnpr

On 20 November, over 100 Islamic State (IS) terrorists managed to break into the Gweiran or al-Sina’a prison in Hasaka, Syria. The prison break attempted to free 3,500 ISIS fighters, who were detained by the US-backed SDF forces. The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have said they have taken control of the prison but noted that 40 of their troops, 77 prison guards, and four civilians died in the 10-day-long violence. The SDF also stated that 550 terrorists, including 250 mutineers had been captured and 23 prison officials freed from the terrorists’ clutches. However, hundreds of children, caught in the crossfire, are said to be missing after the attack. - [CBS News](#), [Rudaw](#), [NYT](#)

ISIS 'MOM' WHO LED WOMEN'S BRIGADE TO FACE CHARGES



Allison Fluke-Ekren with her newborn baby

A former US teacher and mother of five children, Allison Fluke-Ekren, 42, is not contesting detention for her alleged role as the leader of an all-female ISIS brigade, as she awaits trial.

The woman from Kansas is accused of training her children as young as six to use machine guns and for planning to commit "violent jihad".

Her transformation from a Midwestern wife to terror fanatic is blamed on the time she spent living in the Middle East in the late 2000s with her then-husband.

After her husband's death she is said to have married several ISIS operatives and trained women to use AK-47 guns, detonate bombs and use suicide belts. — [Washington Post](#), [ABC](#)

TOP JAISH LEADER AMONG FIVE KILLED IN KASHMIR

TERRORIST ZAHID WANI WAS ACTIVE IN CONDUCTING ATTACKS SINCE 2017



Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorists operating in Jammu and Kashmir

Top Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) commander was among five terrorists killed in two separate gunfights in South Kashmir's Pulwama and Central Kashmir's Budgam, J&K police said on 30 January 2022.

JeM commander Zahid Ahmad Wani was active since 2017 and was involved in several attacks in South Kashmir, the police said.

Wani was killed in an encounter with the joint forces in Pulwama along with three others, including Inayat Ahmad Mir, son of the owner of the house, where the militants were hiding.

Although the police said Inayat was a "hybrid militant", his family protests that he was innocent and are demanding the return of his body.

Addressing reporters on 30th of January, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said Inayat was a "hybrid militant".

He said the police will also book his father under the anti-terror laws for "providing shelter" to the terrorists. In an official statement, the police said Inayat "joined the terror fold recently".

Apart from Zahid Wani and Inayat, others killed in the encounter were identified as Pakistani nationals Kafeel Bhai and Waleed Ahmad Reshi. The police said all four belonged to the JeM.

In a separate gunfight in Budgam, a Lashkar-e-Toiba militant was killed in an overnight gunfight. Identified as Bilal Ahmad Khan, the police said an AK-56 rifle was recovered from the militant. — *The Indian Express*

DRONE ATTACK BY HOUTHIS IN UAE KILLS TWO INDIANS

NEW DELHI CONDEMNS TERRORIST ATTACK ON ABU DHABI'S CIVILIAN AREA



Screengrab from a video of the Houthi drone attack in Abu Dhabi - Al Jazeera

On 18 January 2022, India condemned the drone attack by Yemen's Houthi rebels in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) that killed two Indian nationals and called it a "terrorist incident".

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar spoke by phone about the "terror attack" that took place on 17 January 2022, with his UAE counterpart Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The UAE foreign minister shared details of the attack and conveyed his government's deepest condolences at the death of the two Indians.

Mr Jaishankar "condemned the terror attack in the strongest terms", and emphasised that such "an attack on innocent civilians was completely unacceptable and against all civilised norms". He appreciated the immediate assistance provided by UAE authorities to the Indian embassy in responding to the situation.

Meanwhile, the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) confirmed on 17 January that three of its employees – two Indians and a Pakistani national – were killed in the drone attack. They died in the blast that followed the drone attack, which struck three petroleum transport tankers at the Industrial City of Abu Dhabi. Another fire broke out in a new construction area of Abu Dhabi international airport. Houthi spokesman Yahia Sarei said his group had launched an attack deep inside the UAE but didn't provide details.

The attack came nearly two weeks after Houthi militants had seized the UAE vessel *Rwabee* and its 11 crew members, which includes seven Indians in the Red Sea. India and the UAE have demanded the release of the crew members. — [The Hindustan Times](#), [The Hindu](#)

INDIA CHAIRS UN COMMITTEE TO COUNTER TERRORISM



India's UN Ambassador
TN Trimurti

On 19 January 2022, India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations (UN), Mr T.S. Tirumuthi, has assumed the Chair of the international organisation's Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) for 2022.

The CTC was established in 2001 on the heels of the 9/11 terrorist attacks as a division of the UN Security Council.

Calling out the UN for recognising "religiophobia", India has raised concerns over the matter of emergence of contemporary forms of religiophobia especially anti-Hindu, anti-Buddhist, and anti-Sikh saying that it needs the attention of the UN and other member states to address the threat. Voicing against Hindu hatred at the UN, Mr. T.S. Tirumuthi said that he speaks as Ambassador of India to the UN and not as chairman of the CTC. — [Republic World](#)

INDIA URGES UN TO AGREE ON DEFINITION OF TERRORISM

On 24 January 2022, India's Second Secretary to the United Nations Dinesh Setia addressed the recently held former plenary session of the General Assembly, where he noted that the UN had yet to agree on a common definition of terrorism or craft a coherent policy for the same. He complained that UN member states had failed themselves by "continuing to procrastinate on concluding a comprehensive convention against international terrorism".

Mr Setia pointed out that the effectiveness, relevance and longevity of any institution lies in its dynamic character and ability to adapt itself to changing times. "As long as the key organs of the organisation remain anchored in a governance structure frozen in the past, the crisis of legitimacy and performance will persist."
— *The Hindu, Times Now News*

Germany-based Khalistan supporters on NIA radar

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is seeking more information on a member of the proscribed group 'Sikhs for Justice' by the name Jaswinder Singh Multani and has reportedly reached out to its German counterparts for more information in this regard.

The NIA has also announced Rs 10 lakh reward on Multani after his name cropped up in the Ludhiana blast case.

At least eight other people are said to be associated with pro-Khalistan activities in Germany, along with Multani.

— [The Hindu](#), [One India](#)

Academic faces trial for 1980 bombing

An Ottawa-based academic by the name of Hassan Diab is set to go on trial for his alleged role in the 1980 Rue Copernic bombing in France, which killed four people and injured 40.

He had initially been deported to France in 2014 following his detainment by Canadian authorities in 2008. Although he has repeatedly denied his involvement and a French lower court released him after a three-year imprisonment, the French Court of Appeal has reversed the decision, ordering him to stand trial.

Members of his support committee have declared French actions as "surreal and disgraceful." — [BBC News](#), [CBC News](#)

14 year old boy convicted of terrorism

A 14-year-old schoolboy from British town of Darlington has become one of the youngest people in the country to be convicted of terrorism charges. The boy, who cannot be named because of his age, appeared in court on 18 January 2022, charged with possessing a terrorist publication. Police said the charges related to extreme rightwing terrorism.

Before this case, a teenager from Blackburn was jailed for life in October 2015 for convincing an Australian jihadist, Sevdet Besim, then 18, to plot an attack in Melbourne on Anzac Day. — [The Guardian](#)

Texas synagogue hostage-taker gunned down

A 44-year-old British national, Malik Faisal Akram, was killed by the FBI on 16 January 2022, after he had taken four people hostage for 10 hours at a Texas synagogue. Demanding the release of Aafia Siddiqui (a Pakistani-American terror convict and former neuroscientist who is currently serving an 86-year sentence at Fort Worth), Akram is said to be member of the controversial group Tableeghi Jamaat.

No other casualty was reported by the officials, as all hostages remained unharmed. President Biden condemned the act of terror. — [The Times of Israel](#), [CNN](#)

Al-Shabab kills six Christians in Kenya

On 3 January 2022, Al-Shabab terrorists killed six people and destroyed seven homes in Kenya's coastal region of Lamu.

A beheaded body along with four charred ones were discovered by a pastor following the attack. Several villages fled the scene of terror in an attempt to save their lives.

It is reported that the terrorist group Al-Shabab had conducted these attacks in response to Kenyan intervention in Somalia in 2011 to eradicate the jihadist threat. — [CBN News](#), [France24](#)

Pharma giants face terrorism charges

Pfizer, AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson, and Roche are facing a legal battle after a U.S. Court of Appeals revived a lawsuit against these pharmaceutical companies.

It is alleged that the four companies bribed the then terrorist-controlled Health Ministry in Iraq to procure healthcare contracts and in the process funded terrorism that killed Americans during the war.

The complaint says the Lebanese Hezbollah-sponsored Jaysh al-Mahdi terrorist group had taken control of Iraq's health ministry in 2004. It is alleged that the companies used local agents to deliver cash kickbacks to the terrorists. — [Fierce Pharma](#)