



# TERROR TRACKER

*Newsletter by Counter Terrorism Centre*



MANOHAR PARRIKAR INSTITUTE FOR  
DEFENCE STUDIES AND ANALYSES  
मनोहर पर्रिकर रक्षा अध्ययन एवं विश्लेषण संस्थान



## **RUSSIA FOILS ISIS** ATTACK ON INDIAN LEADER

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**+ MORE NEWS & ANALYSES**

# RUSSIA NABS BOMBER PLANNING TO STRIKE ‘TOP INDIAN LEADER’

ISIS RADICALISED SUICIDE ATTACKER ONLINE FROM APRIL TO JUNE



A blurred picture of the terror suspect (left), believed to be 30-year-old Uzbek terrorist Azamov Mashahont, who was radicalised online by ISIS recruiters, along with a file picture of NIA investigators (right). It has been reported that NIA may be sending a team to Russia to investigate the case. —TV 9 Gujarat.com

On 22 August 2022, the Russian Federal Security Services (FSB) made a critical announcement about the arrest of an ISIS terrorist hailing from Central Asia, Azamov Mashahont, who intended to carry out a suicide attack in India against a “high-profile” leader of the “ruling circles,” in response to controversial remarks made about Prophet Muhammad. Recently, a news bulletin released by the Al-Azaim foundation, ISIS’ mouthpiece, named India on its list of countries for future strikes. Azamaov reportedly pledged allegiance online to ISIS Emir Yusuf Tajike while in Turkey from April to June 2022.

In his confession, he reportedly disclosed that he was due to establish contact with someone in India who would then provide him with material support, including explosives and detonators, to carry out the attack. The National Investigation Agency and Intelligence Bureau are expected to send their respective teams to Russia for further investigation into Mashahont.

During their exchange at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation conclave at Tashkent, Indian Defence Minister Mr. Rajnath Singh expressed his gratitude to his Russian counterpart, Mr. Sergey Shoigu, for the pre-emptive arrest that prevented a deadly attack in India. As per an official FSB statement, “His (Mashahont’s) indoctrination was carried out remotely through the accounts of the messenger Telegram and during personal meetings in Istanbul by a representative of the terrorist organisation. After that, he was given the task of leaving for the territory of Russia ... and then flying to India to commit a terrorist attack.” – [Deccan Herald](#), [The Economic Times](#), [Times of India](#), [The Indian Express](#), [India Today](#)

## PAK DOCTOR CONFESSES PLAN TO ATTACK U.S.



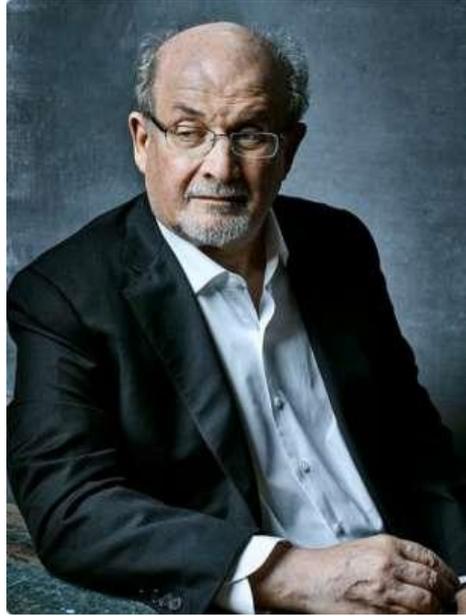
MUHAMMAD MASOOD

On 15 August 2022, Muhammad Masood, a Pakistani doctor and Mayo Clinic’s former Research Coordinator in Minnesota, pled guilty to a terrorism charge of providing material support to a foreign terrorist organisation. Masood was residing in the United States on a work visa. His charges were brought about two years after he was arrested following his confession to the F.B.I. informants that he planned to carry out lone-wolf attacks in the United States of America, travelled to Syria, and pledged his allegiance to ISIS. He confessed to the informants that he had been deeply involved in listening to lectures of Anwar al-Awkali, a former Senior Al-Qaeda recruiter, who was killed in a drone strike in 2011. – [DailyMail](#), [The National News](#), [ABC News](#)

# INDIA CONDEMNS HORRIFIC KNIFE ATTACK ON RUSHDIE

IRAN "CATEGORICALLY" DENIES ANY LINK WITH 24-YEAR-OLD ATTACKER

‘I’M SURPRISED HE SURVIVED,’ SAYS ASSAILANT HADI MATAR



Rescuers come to the aid of Salman Rushdie after he was stabbed at a literary event in New York

In a court appearance on 18 August 2022, a judge ordered Hadi Matar, the 24-year-old accused of stabbing Salman Rushdie, to be held without bail at Chautauqua County Jail, in New York state.

Hailing from New Jersey, Matar had entered a ‘not guilty’ plea to second-degree attempted murder and assault charges.

In an interview to the *New York Post*, Matar said he had only read "a couple of pages" of the controversial novel *Satanic Verses* and that he was “surprised” to hear that Rushdie had survived the attack.

Matar told the daily, “He (Rushdie) is someone who attacked Islam, he attacked their beliefs, the belief systems.”

Investigation into his social media accounts show Matar him to be sympathetic to Shia extremism and causes of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) — [BBC](#), [The Indian Express](#)

On 12 August 2022, Booker prize winner and author of the novel *Satanic Verses*, Salman Rushdie, was repeatedly stabbed at a literary event organised at the Chautauqua institution in New York. As a result, Rushdie suffered injuries to his nerves, liver, and eye, after which he was placed on the ventilator briefly until his health improved.

The attempted murder resulted in an international outcry, with heads of state of countries like the United States of America, France, and the United Kingdom, and the UN Secretary General condemning the attack. India has also condemned the stabbing of Salman Rushdie as “horrific”.

The novelist was forced into hiding for nearly 10 years after *The Satanic Verses* was published in 1988. Many Muslims reacted with fury to it, arguing that the portrayal of the Prophet Muhammad was a grave insult to their faith. Rushdie faced death threats and the then-Iranian leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, issued a fatwa calling for Mr Rushdie's assassination, placing a \$3m (£2.5m) bounty on the author's head. The fatwa remains active, and although Iran's government has distanced itself from it, a quasi-official Iranian religious foundation added a further \$500,000 to the reward in 2012.

After the recent stabbing incident, Iran "categorically" denied any link with Salman Rushdie's attacker - instead blaming the writer himself. Iranian media extensively commented on the attack, with some commentators there calling it “divine retribution”. Iran’s state broadcaster daily *Jaam-e Jam* highlighted the news that Rushdie might lose an eye following the attack, saying "an eye of the Satan has been blinded". Celebrated authors and journalists like Paul Auster, Hari Kunzru, Gay Talese, and Tina Brown read from Rushdie’s works on the New York Public Library’s steps to demonstrate their solidarity with the booker-prize winner in an event titled “Stand with Salman: Defend the Freedom to Write.” – [BBC News](#), [DNA India](#), [The Hindu](#), [The Indian Express](#)

# J&K POLICE RAIDS BUST NEXUS OF BITCOIN AND TERRORISM

RAIDS CONDUCTED IN POONCH, BARAMULLA, AND KUPWARA DISTRICTS



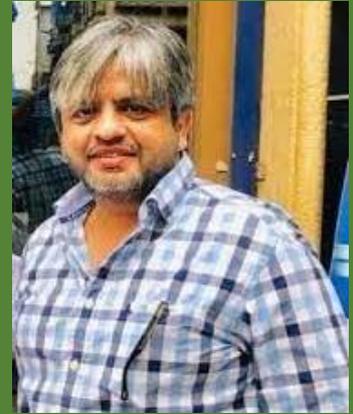
- News Now

On 3 August 2022, accompanied by J&K police and CRPF officers, the State Investigation Agency conducted raids in Kashmir in Poonch, Baramulla, and Kupwara districts and unearthed a nexus between bitcoin trade, ISI, and terrorism. Searches were carried out in seven suspects' – Zahida Bano, Tamjeeda Begum, Yasir Ahmad Mir, Mujtaba Deedad, Imran Chowdhary, Farooq Ahmad, and Mohammad Sayed Masoodi – houses that day. The initial investigations have revealed that these individuals were the recipients of the dirty money originating in Pakistan.

It has also been discovered that Pakistan's ISI has been using bitcoin to finance its terrorist activities in Jammu and Kashmir. As per a police spokesperson's statement, "Details that are being investigated into at the initial stage include a mastermind in Pakistan who with the active support of Pakistani intelligence agencies and in connivance with proscribed terrorist organisation(s) based in Pakistan has been pumping slush money to their agents in J&K for further distribution among terrorist organisation(s), secessionist(s) for fueling mass violence and terrorist activities in J&K. The Pakistani mastermind has been comprehensively identified. His particulars, however, is being kept confidential because other agents connected with him have not been alerted."

Besides this discovery, the preliminary searches also uncovered SIM cards, mobile phones, and documents with incriminating evidence. They were subsequently recovered and seized by the authorities. – [Deccan Herald](#), [The Tribune](#), [Hindustan Times](#)

## NIA ARRESTS DAWOOD ALLY SALIM FRUIT FOR AIDING TERRORISM



Salim Qureshi alias  
Salim Fruit

On 4 August 2022, The National Investigation Agency arrested fugitive Chhota Shakeel's close aide, Salim Qureshi alias Salim Fruit, for his culpability in aiding the terrorist activities carried out by the Dawood Ibrahim gang.

Qureshi had been deeply immersed in extorting substantive money from dispute settlements and property-based conflicts by relying on Chhota Shakeel's name.

These extortions were carried out to generate "terror funds in furtherance of terrorist activities of the D company." The D company is an organisation that frequently colluded with anti-India groups like LeT, JeM, and al-Qaeda. – [Times of India](#), [NDTV](#)

## INDIA INVITES UNSC MEMBERS FOR COUNTER-TERROR MEET

India has extended an invitation to all the United Nations Security Council Members to attend the Counter-Terrorism Committee's special meeting in Mumbai and New Delhi from 28 to 29 October 2022.

The discussions are supposed to revolve around emerging technologies used by terrorists and effective counter-responses to this challenge. As the new Security Council Counter-Terrorism Committee Chair, India will host high-level diplomats from 15-member states.

India's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ruchira Kamboj, called for an intensive discussion about this security dilemma, emphasizing how "the growing use of the internet and social media platforms to spread terrorist and violent extremist propaganda has posed challenges to governments and the tech industry alike." – *The Week, The Economic Times*

### **Army foils two infiltration bids into Kashmir**

During two infiltration bids foiled by the Indian Army in the Rajouri district (Kashmir) in August 2022, two terrorists were killed, while one – Tabarak Hussain – was wounded and captured.

The latter confessed to being paid Rs. 30,000 by a Pakistani intelligence officer – Colonel Yunus Chaudhry – to carry out a suicide attack at an Indian army post.

Hussain had previously been captured by the Indian Army in 2016 from this exact sector and repatriated in 2017 on humanitarian grounds. – [NDTV](#)

### **Terror financing the communists**

On 15 August 2022, a criminal case on alleged terror financing charges and for violation of the Philippines' anti-terrorism law was filed against 16 individuals.

These charges were filed with a trial court in Iligan City, Mindanao, as per two alleged former rebels' testimonies, who have accused the suspected individuals of financing the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army.

These organisations were designated as terrorist groups in December 2020. – [ABS CBS News](#), [UCA News](#)

### **Member of ISIS 'Beatles' convicted**

On 19 August 2022, El Shafee Elsheikh, a member of the ISIS terrorist cell nicknamed "The Beatles," was convicted for the kidnapping around 12 western nationals.

The attack had resulted in the deaths of four Americans, and sentenced to life imprisonment by an American federal court. – [NBC News](#)

### **NIA's Rs25 Lakh Bounty on Dawood Ibrahim**

India's top anti-terror body has announced a ₹ 25-lakh reward for giving information on "global terrorist" Dawood Ibrahim and released a new photo of him.

The National Investigation Agency, or NIA, has also placed a bounty of ₹ 20 lakh on Dawood Ibrahim's lieutenant Chhota Shakeel.

Other terrorists Anees Ibrahim, Javed Chikna and Tiger Memon have a bounty of ₹ 15 lakh each. – [NDTV](#)

### **21 die in Al-Shabaab siege on Mogadishu hotel**

On 19 August, al-Shabaab terrorists stormed the Hayat Hotel in Mogadishu, resulting in a siege lasting for 30 hours.

At least 21 people died and no less than 117 were wounded during this ordeal.

The terrorists used explosives, car bombs to be precise, to secure their entry inside the upscale hotel. The site is largely in ruins due to the intense fighting between security forces and terrorists. – [BBC News](#)

### **Telecom company 'bribed' terror groups**

Ericsson, the Swedish telecoms company, stands accused by 528 American plaintiffs of terror financing through bribes paid to groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS for protection.

Furthermore, the payments made to these organizations is believed to have knowingly facilitated a terror campaign in Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan against American citizens in exchange for protecting its interests.

As a result, it violated the United States Anti-Terrorism Act. – [Data Center Dynamics](#)