



NJOHSP *at a glance*

YOUR WEEK IN REVIEW | July 6, 2015

New Jersey/New York: Recent Arrests Reveal a Cell of ISIS Supporters

A review of court documents associated with arrests since June 13 reveals that a small cell of supporters of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has been disrupted in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area. With the arrest of Alaa Saadeh in West New York (Hudson County) on June 30 (see photo), at least six individuals have been identified. Based on the criminal complaints, they include the following:



- Munster Saleh, age 20, of Queens, New York, was making efforts to prepare an explosive device for detonation in the New York metropolitan area on behalf of ISIS. He conducted extensive Internet searches that reflected his efforts to identify and obtain components required to construct an explosive device. He also viewed information on various notable landmarks in New York, allegedly to assess potential targets for a terrorist attack. He discussed plans to travel overseas with other co-conspirators, allegedly to join ISIS. He was arrested on June 13 while attempting to attack a law enforcement officer.
- Alaa Saadeh, age 23, of West New York, discussed plans to travel overseas with other co-conspirators, allegedly to join ISIS. He assisted his brother in obtaining money and an airline ticket to travel to Jordan. Saadeh told an individual in New Jersey not to tell the FBI about his brother's plans to join ISIS. This resulted in Saadeh being charged with witness tampering.
- Alaa Saadeh's brother, whose name was not disclosed in court documents, age 20, was a resident of Rutherford (Bergen County) until May 5, when he traveled to Jordan, allegedly to join ISIS. He was arrested in Jordan on suspicion of supporting ISIS.
- Samuel Topaz, age 21, of Fort Lee (Bergen County), discussed plans to travel overseas with other co-conspirators, allegedly to join ISIS. Even after a concerned acquaintance hid his passport, Topaz continued with his plans to travel overseas.
- The criminal complaint for Saleh identified a co-conspirator who assisted in Saleh's plan to construct an explosive device. A separate complaint identifies him as Fareed Mumuni, age 21, of Staten Island, and charges him with repeatedly attempting to stab an FBI agent who was executing a search warrant at his home.
- The criminal complaint for Saleh identified an unnamed co-conspirator, who was driving Saleh and Mumuni on June 13, when Saleh was arrested.

Essex County: West Orange Murder Suspect Indicted on Terrorism Charges

On July 2, an Essex County grand jury indicted Ali Muhammad Brown, age 30, on terrorism charges in connection with the June 2014 murder in West Orange of Brendan Tevlin, a 19-year-old college student from Livingston. Brown, a Muslim convert, allegedly killed Tevlin, as well as three men in Washington State, as "vengeance" for lives lost during U.S. military action in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, and other Islamic countries, according to court documents filed in Seattle. Brown also faces additional charges, including murder, robbery, and carjacking. Brown allegedly shot and killed Tevlin as he stopped at a traffic light in West Orange on his way home to Livingston.

Acting Essex County Prosecutor Carolyn Murray said in a statement that this is the first murder case in New Jersey in which a defendant has been charged with terrorism under state law. According to the statement, as the investigation continued, evidence was developed, including evidence subsequent to the arrest, which led to the decision to seek terrorism charges against Brown.

Passaic County: Security Increased at a Paterson Mosque After Hoax Call

Paterson police are attempting to track a hoax call that reported a threat to the Islamic Center of Passaic County on July 2, and have increased security at the mosque. The false threat – also known as "swatting," because such calls are sometimes intended to generate a response by a SWAT team – reported that a man with an assault rifle and a pipe bomb was about to attack the mosque in Paterson (police response shown in photo). Paterson police said the following day that they plan to continue increased patrols around the mosque during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and will meet with mosque officials to discuss linking the mosque's surveillance cameras to police headquarters for increased monitoring.



Contact Information

Any agency with information or comments/questions on this or other analytical products, please contact the NJOHSP Analysis Bureau at analysis@njohsp.gov or 609-584-4000.

TO REPORT SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY, CALL 1-866-4-SAFE-NJ