



NJOHSP *at a glance*

YOUR WEEK IN REVIEW | May 31, 2016

Interfaith Issues/Bergen County: Lodi Man Convicted of Terrorism for Attacks on Jewish Facilities

In the first conviction achieved under New Jersey's anti-terrorism statute, a 24-year-old Lodi resident has been found guilty of terrorism and bias intimidation, as well as a series of other charges, for firebombing and vandalizing Jewish synagogues and a rabbi's residence—all in Bergen County—in late 2011 and early 2012. He was acquitted of attempted murder and aggravated arson charges. Anthony Graziano and alleged co-conspirator Aakash Dalal, also of Lodi, who will be tried separately, were charged with spray-painting anti-Semitic slogans at synagogues in Maywood and Hackensack in December 2011. The criminal activity then escalated from vandalism to arson attempts in January 2012, as Graziano and Dalal tried unsuccessfully to start a fire at a synagogue in Paramus. Four days later, Graziano plotted to firebomb a Jewish community center in Paramus, but fled when a police car drove by. In the final attack, on January 11, 2012, he firebombed a rabbi's residence in Rutherford—while the rabbi and his family were present—in an attempt to burn down the adjacent synagogue (see photo).



Homegrown Violent Extremists: Bronx Arrest Demonstrates the Persisting Allure of ISIS

The arrest of a 22-year-old Bronx man on May 24 shows the persisting attraction that the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has for US extremists, despite the group's recent military setbacks and an increased awareness of the harsh conditions of life under ISIS. Sajmir Alimehmeti was charged with attempting to provide material support to ISIS and with passport fraud. In October and again in December 2014, he attempted to enter the UK en route to Syria, but was denied entry at an airport because of his possession of suspicious items. In October 2015, he applied for a new US passport, claiming he had lost his previous passport. However, he confided to an undercover law enforcement employee that he had not lost the passport, but that he believed the rejection stamps on his old passport would make it difficult for him to travel. As recently as this month, he expressed an enthusiastic desire to travel to Syria to join ISIS. When he was unable to travel, he assisted others in their perceived attempts to go overseas to join ISIS. In May 2016, he assisted a different undercover law enforcement employee in purchasing equipment, which the undercover employee said he would use as a fighter for ISIS.

Although FBI Director James Comey said this month that the appeal of ISIS to Americans is declining, he also indicated that the threat remains significant, noting that there are more than 800 open FBI investigations related to ISIS. Even as ISIS becomes less attractive to Americans, the presence of young extremists such as Alimehmeti indicates that it will take time for the threat to dissipate.

Aviation: Intruders Breach US Airport Fences Every 10 Days, Says AP Study

An Associated Press (AP) study released last week found that intruders get over fences or through perimeter gates at major US airports about once every 10 days. AP cited 345 security breaches from January 1, 2004, through mid-February 2016, at the nation's 30 largest airports. The study counted breaches of perimeter fencing or other barriers—not instances within terminals, such as passengers going unscreened through security checkpoints or walking out an exit door onto the tarmac.

Of the 30 airports included in the study, Newark Liberty International Airport was tied for 24th in number of security breaches, with four. San Francisco International was at the top of the list, with 41 breaches. Philadelphia International was tied for second, with 30. JFK International was 10th, with 12. LaGuardia Airport had the fewest incidents, with one.



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.

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