



# NJOHSP *at a glance*

## YOUR WEEK IN REVIEW | August 22, 2016

### **Interfaith Issues: Suspect Charged With Killing Imam and His Associate in Queens**

Oscar Morel, age 35, of Brooklyn (see photo), has been charged with first-degree murder, among other charges, in connection with the shooting deaths of Imam Maulana Akonjee and his assistant, Thara Uddin, near the al-Furqan Jame Masjid mosque in Queens on August 13. Investigators have not yet determined a motive. Queens District Attorney Richard Brown said it is possible investigators will conclude that the shootings were a hate crime, but he said that regardless, the killings will be “vigorously prosecuted.”

Morel was arrested on August 14 in connection with a hit-and-run accident in Brooklyn about 10 minutes after Akonjee and Uddin were killed. Investigators believed the car was the same one identified in surveillance camera images as having fled the scene of the killings, said NYPD Chief of Detectives Robert Boyce, and a person who entered that vehicle was identified as Morel. Boyce said that when NYPD detectives attempted to arrest Morel, he rammed the detectives’ car several times as he attempted to escape. He was charged with murder after police searching his apartment found a .38-caliber revolver, which prosecutors later said was the murder weapon, and clothes similar to those seen in the surveillance camera images.



### **Aviation: Israeli Analysts Identify Insiders, UAVs, and Lasers as Terrorism Threats**

A report published this month by the Institutes for Counter-Terrorism (ICT) in Israel identifies insiders employed at airports, unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), and lasers as among the most serious terrorism threats to aviation. One of the trends identified in recent attacks is the threat from radicalized airport employees who remain undetected by law enforcement. A study conducted last year by ICT identified Facebook accounts belonging to airport employees throughout Europe who had access to secure areas and who had posted jihadist content on their social media sites. Despite strict security policies at airports, the report notes an increase in instances of deficiencies in the employment process. The increase in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs, also known as drones) flying without supervision, regulation, coordination, or awareness of the relevant authorities has become a major concern. The report states that “terrorists do not hide their motivation to make use of this technology,” citing a jihadist social media posting in April that recommended the use of UAVs carrying explosives to attack aircraft.

The ICT report noted the large number of incidents in which lasers are pointed at aircraft, including some in which pilots were temporarily blinded. It states that “the possibility cannot be ignored that terrorist organizations will use laser beams against pilots in order to carry out a terror attack.” It views the threat as especially significant because “particularly powerful laser devices can be found in the possession of terrorist organizations.”

*The report is available online at <http://www.ict.org.il/UserFiles/ICT-trends-aviation-terror-aug-16.pdf>*

### **Turkey: Child Suicide Bomber Kills 51 at Wedding Party**

Turkish President Erdogan said investigators believe a suicide bomber between the ages of 12 and 14 conducted the attack on a wedding party at Gaziantep, about 30 miles north of the Turkish/Syrian border, on August 20. There has been no claim of responsibility, but according to President Erdogan, “initial evidence suggests” the attack was conducted by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). At least 51 people were killed in the attack and more than 70 wounded. This makes it the deadliest terrorist attack in Turkey this year, surpassing the death toll of 44 in the attack at the Istanbul airport in June.



### **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](mailto:analysis@njohsp.gov) or 609-584-4000.

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