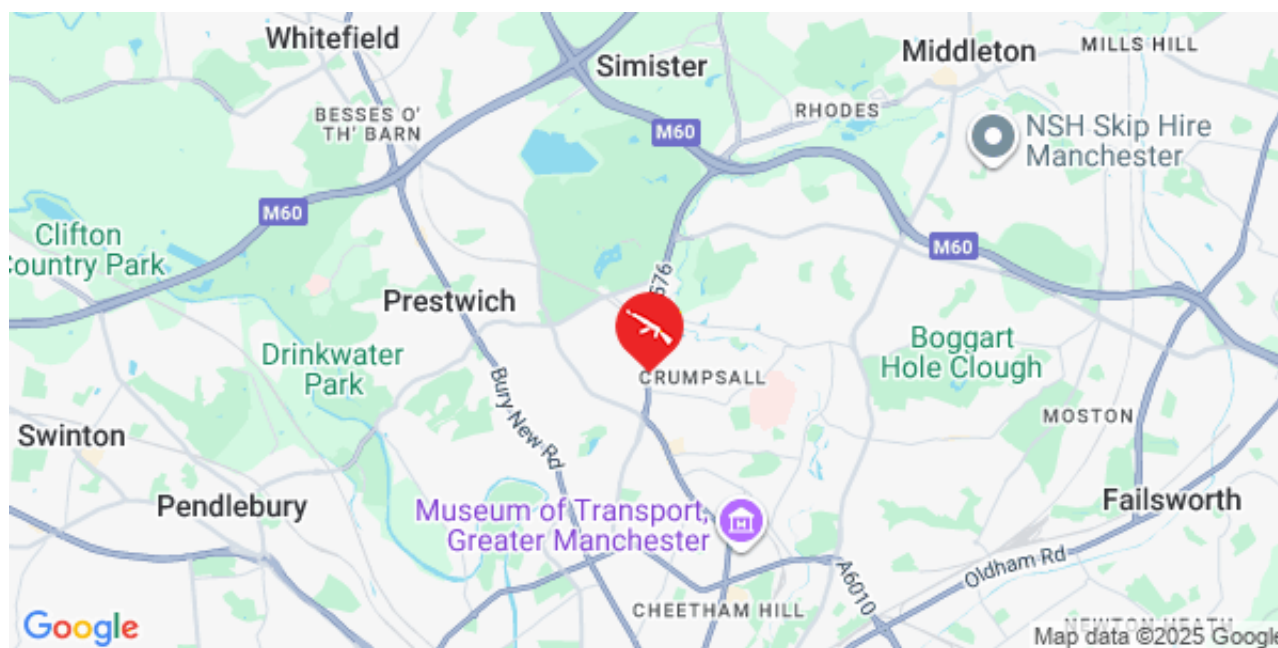


Militancy/Terrorism



03

OCT
11:55 UTC

UK Alert: Two killed, three injured in terror attack targeting synagogue in Crumpsall, Manchester on October 2; threat of extremist attacks against Jewish entities to remain high

Current Situation

- On October 2, at around 09:30 (local time), a car-ramming and stabbing attack outside the Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation synagogue in Crumpsall, north Manchester, killed two Jewish worshippers and seriously injured three others. The attack occurred on Yom Kippur, the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, while the synagogue was holding its morning prayers. On October 3, police reported that one of the victims may have been accidentally shot by officers, though further investigations are ongoing.
- The attacker, identified as Jihad Al-Shamie, a 35-year-old British citizen of Syrian descent, drove a car into congregants before exiting the vehicle and stabbing victims. Security personnel and worshippers prevented the suspect from entering the synagogue building, which was hosting a morning prayer service.
- Armed officers responded to initial emergency reports and fatally shot the attacker after he refused to drop his weapon. He was wearing a vest that appeared to be an explosive device, which was later confirmed to be fake. Authorities have also arrested three others on suspicion of terrorism in connection with the incident.
- The incident has been formally declared a "terrorist attack," and Prime Minister Keir Starmer announced an increased police presence at synagogues across the UK following this attack.

Assessments & Forecast

1. Given that authorities have classified the incident as a terrorist attack, and considering the suspect's background, choice of target, and tactics, the attack is likely Islamist-motivated, displaying characteristics consistent with previous Islamist attacks.
2. As such, the attack reiterates the sustained heightened threat of terrorist attack targeting Jewish establishments in the UK and across Europe, driven in part by the continued use of the Israel-Hamas conflict as a rallying point by Islamist extremist groups, including al-Qaeda and IS, to incite attacks against Jewish and Israeli establishments across Europe. Indeed, a series of Islamist-linked attacks and plots against Jewish establishments have been reported in recent months, including the July 30 arrest of two minors in Paris, France for plotting an attack against synagogues, the April 6 arrest of three individuals in France planning a jihadist suicide bombing that included a site linked to the Jewish community, as well as several similar foiled plots in Belgium, Denmark, Germany, and Sweden in 2024-25.
3. Meanwhile, the attack also underscores the sustained heightened risk of anti-Semitic violence in the UK. Notably, the Community Security Trust (CST), which monitors antisemitism and coordinates security at Jewish institutions, recorded 1,521 anti-Semitic incidents in the first six months of 2025 alone, marking the second-highest total for the first half of any year. This trend highlights the continued vulnerability of Jewish community establishments against targeted attacks, harassment, and extremist threats.
4. The attack on Yom Kippur, a day of high synagogue attendance, underscores the assailant's intent to inflict maximum harm and intimidation. It also highlights the elevated risk of extremist attacks during ideologically or religiously symbolic dates, when perpetrators can maximize casualties and amplify the psychological and propaganda impact of their actions. This pattern is illustrated by past incidents, including the September 2024 shooting at the Israeli Consulate in Munich on the anniversary of the 1972 Munich Olympics attack, the April 2021 foiled plot against a synagogue in Hagen, Germany, and the October 2019 neo-Nazi attack outside a synagogue in Halle, Germany, which killed two.
5. In the UK, this attack, set against the October 2023 fatal stabbing of a 70-year-old in Hartlepool by an assailant shouting "to free Palestine" – formally declared a terrorist act in May 2024 – underscores the sustained risk of Islamist attacks. Although the country has not experienced a major terrorist attack since the May 2017 Manchester Arena bombing and the June 2017 London Bridge attack, successive annual threat assessments by MI5 and Counter Terrorism Policing have consistently identified Islamist extremism as the primary terrorist threat, regularly rating the likelihood of a successful Islamist attack as "substantial", the third-highest threat level, indicating that an attack is likely.
6. **FORECAST:** Given heightened tensions from the protracted conflict in the Israeli and Palestinian territories, which Islamist networks continue to exploit in their propaganda, the overall risk of Islamist attacks against Jewish and Israeli establishments is expected to remain elevated across Europe, including the UK. As demonstrated by this attack, the primary threat comes from radicalized lone actors using rudimentary methods, such as stabbings and vehicle-rammings, which are easy to execute, require minimal training, and are difficult to detect. Also, the use of fake amplifiers, including imitation suicide vests, replica firearms, and mock explosive devices, is expected to remain a recurring tactic, heightening fear and complicating the security response.
7. **FORECAST:** Indeed, the simplicity and symbolic impact of such attacks also increase the risk of copycat incidents, particularly during religious holidays or other high-profile dates. The threat remains especially high during the upcoming events, such as the anniversary of Hamas's October 7, 2023, attack, as well as Jewish holidays of Tu B'Shvat and Passover in February-March 2026.
8. **FORECAST:** In addition to synagogues, vulnerable targets include Jewish schools, community centers, cultural institutions, Israeli diplomatic missions, and high-profile Jewish or Israeli events. Consequently, authorities are expected to maintain heightened security around these sites, including recurring patrols, access controls, and rapid response measures.

Recommendations

1. Travel to the UK may continue while maintaining heightened vigilance for potential Islamist terrorist threats nationwide.
2. Maintain heightened vigilance for vehicle-ramming and stabbing attacks, particularly in the vicinity of synagogues, Jewish communal sites, large gatherings, and crowded public spaces.
3. Travelers are advised to remain cognizant of their surroundings, including any suspicious behavior of individuals, which may include loitering near religious or community sites, wearing atypical clothing for the weather, or leaving behind unattended bags or containers.
4. Jewish and Israeli individuals and organizations are advised to be conscious of their surroundings and activity around any residences, places of work, or community centers. Consider keeping a low profile and limiting the wearing or presentation of overt signs or symbols associated with Judaism or Israel. Those who wear the traditional head covering (kippah) are advised to consider wearing an additional head covering, such as a baseball cap.
5. Alert authorities immediately upon witnessing suspicious items or behavior.
6. If a potential stabbing, shooting, explosion, or vehicle ramming manifests, leave the area immediately if possible, or take shelter in a secure location.
7. Move away from large groups to mitigate the risks of a stampede and of presenting a bigger target for a possible secondary attack.
8. Remain cognizant of authorities' updates regarding evolving security protocols, particularly around religious holidays and anniversaries of regional conflicts.
9. Maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of political rallies, pro-Palestinian or pro-Israel demonstrations, or other ideologically charged events in major UK cities due to the elevated risk of unrest and opportunistic extremist violence.
10. For further questions, please contact intel@max-security.com