France: Schoolgirl left in coma after attack for 'un-Islamic behaviour'

From the [Telegraph](#) and the [Independent](#)

A 14-year-old girl was severely wounded and left in a coma after being beaten outside her school by three other teenagers over what, her mother suggested, could have been down to un-Islamic behaviour.

The French government has launched an investigation over the attack in the southern city of Montpelier, which has caused political uproar across the country.

The victim, named as Samara, is now out of her coma but was "seriously wounded" in the attack on Tuesday afternoon outside the Arthur Rimbaud College in Montpellier. The school is in the La Mosson-La Paillade district, a low-income suburb with many residents of immigrant origin, prosecutors said.

One of the accused is a girl from the same school, also 14, who was arrested on Wednesday and admits to having beaten the victim, Montpellier prosecutors said in a statement late on Wednesday. The two other minors (a girl and a boy) arrested are aged 14 and 15.

The mother of the injured teen said her daughter was bullied for the past two-and-a-half years, mainly over the clothes she chose to wore. The victim's mother, Hassiba, said: "I don't actually understand this child's reasons for constantly attacking Samara, but there is something. I think it's… the fact that [Samara]… is maybe a little more liberated than some students," she told broadcaster BFMTV. Samara wears a bit of make-up. And this young girl [who attacked Samara] wears a veil. All day long, she called her a kouffar, which means

miscreant in Arabic. My daughter dresses in European style. All day long there were insults, she was called a kahba, which means c—t in Arabic. It was physically and psychologically unbearable."

"if this is the reason for the harassment against my daughter, it is very serious. . . I let my daughter express herself while monitoring her. I am a mother, but my daughter has grown up and makes her own choices,"

The victim's mother accused this classmate of being the "sponsor" of the attack and claimed that this schoolgirl had been suspended for two days in June 2023, having published a photo of her daughter on social networks calling for her to be raped.

Valérie Pécresse, conservative president of the Paris region, said she was appalled to hear Samara had been targeted by "the Islamist dress police," saying the teenagers behind it were "the same as those who chase unveiled Iranian women in the streets of Tehran".

On the Left, MP Sandrine Rousseau denounced an "absolutely, totally sexist attack" pointing out that "all women have the right to dress as they wish".

On Thursday evening, the victim's mother said that on the day of the attack she had been called by her daughter's head teacher to warn her that a group of young people were waiting for her outside the school. "Following this call, I called the school office twice," asking them to keep Samara inside the school. But she said the staff member responsible was "unreachable". "And at 4pm my daughter, [having had] no information, went out as usual to catch the school bus … she was thrown into the lion's den", she told the Touche pas à mon poste ! programme on the C8 channel.

According to a group of pupils interviewed on Thursday by an AFP journalist as they left the Arthur Rimbaud secondary

school, what happened had "nothing to do with a certain way of dressing".

Le Parisien cited the mother as also suggesting the attack may have been an act of revenge for posts on a "fake" Snapchat account in her daughter's name in which classmates were ridiculed with filters such as rabbit ears. *I wonder if this was the girl's way of standing up to those who had been bullying her for over 2 years. Even the most mild-mannered will snap eventually.*