German authorities see Islamic extremist motive in Mannheim knife attack

From The Associated Press via [ABC News](#) and the [Daily Mail](#)

BERLIN — German authorities say they have uncovered evidence of an Islamic extremist motive in last week's knife attack in the southwestern city of Mannheim in which a police officer was fatally injured.

Justice Minister Marco Buschmann wrote on the social media platform X late Monday that "there are now clear indications of an Islamist motive" for the attack and federal prosecutors, who are responsible for terrorism and national security cases, are taking over the investigation.

Sulaiman Ataee, 25, launched a frenzied attack in Mannheim city centre on Friday, stabbing well-known Islam critic Michael Stuerzenberger, and murdering a police officer

…as far as his friends, neighbours and even the authorities were concerned, Ataee was a perfectly helpful, polite and agreeable citizen who had worked hard to develop fluency in German. . . Roughly a year ago, residents living in Ataee's apartment complex said they noticed a change — he became noticeably colder and less communicative.

But neighbours of the Afghan knifeman claimed he had begun to show signs he was being 'radicalised' over the last year. 'He used to be normal,' 31-year-old neighbour Abdul told MailOnline.

Another neighbour told Bild: 'He was inconspicuous, we greeted each other usually. But recently, about a year ago, I noticed that he had changed. He was helpful before, then suddenly he

turned cold. He suddenly became more reserved — and also more aggressive.'

Ataee's appearance also changed in recent years. He was previously clean shaven but grew out a large beard.

It was later revealed that Ataee — who was reportedly unemployed and living off benefits according to [Bild](#) — allegedly shared ISIS propaganda on YouTube prior to his attack. German newspaper [Welt](#) connected the knifeman to a now defunct YouTube account that had posted videos of the late radical preacher Ahmad Zahir Aslamiyar.