

Isis supporter jailed for life for trying to build child army in London

From the [Newham Recorder](#)

An extremist who attempted to build an army of child jihadists has been jailed for life with a minimum of 25 years for a range of terrorism offences.

Umar Haque was convicted of attempting to groom children as young as 11 at the Ripple Road mosque in Barking, east London, where he showed them footage of beheadings and conducted terrorism role-play exercises. The self-confessed Isis supporter was also convicted of planning to use guns and a car packed with explosives to strike 30 high-profile targets including Big Ben, the Queen's Guard and Westfield shopping centre in east London.

The court heard he played Isis propaganda to students at the fee-paying Lantern of Knowledge Islamic school in east London, where he taught an Islamic studies class despite having no teaching qualifications and being employed only as an administrator.

Sentencing him at the Old Bailey on Tuesday, Mr Justice Haddon-Cave said Haque, 25, wanted to do "something big" and his ambition was "extreme and alarming".

He was a "very real" threat to the young and old alike, the judge said, adding: "Haque was a dangerous liar. He is intelligent, articulate and persuasive, with an easy smile. He is narcissistic and clearly enjoys the power he wields over others."

The judge told Haque: "You have violated the Qur'an and Islam

by your actions, as well as the law of all civilised people. It is hoped you will come to realise this.” *He said this on [Ahmed Hassan](#) for his bomb at Parson’s Green tube station. I dread to think where he is getting it from; some senior Ministry of Justice official I expect.*

Haque could be heard talking about “domination” and “hunger and insecurity” as he was sent down.

Fundraiser Abuthaher Mamun – 19, from Barking – who was said to have “renounced” Haque’s extremist view of Islam, was jailed for 12 years with a further year on extended licence.

Haque’s confidant Muhammad Abid – 27, from Newham, a qualified cupping therapist – was handed four years and three months in prison for failing to report the plot.



Left to right Umar Haque, Muhammad Abid, Abuthaher Mamun

In bugged conversations, he talked about being inspired by the Westminster Bridge atrocity in March last year. Haque said: “We are here to cause terror, my brother. We are a death squad sent by Allah and his messengers to avenge my Arab brothers’ blood.”

In the months before his arrest, he bragged about recruiting 16 children, telling Ripple Road youngsters he intended to die a martyr and IS was “good”.

One of the youngsters later told police: "Umar has been teaching us how to fight, do push-ups, given strength and within six years he was planning to do a big attack on London. He wants a group of 300 men. He's training us now so by the time I'm in Year 10 [aged 14-15] we will be physically strong enough to fight."

Police believe Haque attempted to radicalise at least 110 children at the mosque and the school, with 35 of them now receiving long-term support. Prosecutor Mark Heywood QC said a specialist social worker had assessed nine of the boys affected by Haque's indoctrination. "Although they are clear what they saw was wrong, they are left conflicted and without answers which leads them to be particularly vulnerable to grooming. Some speak of having flashbacks of the videos and nightmares centred around fear of death and punishment in the after life, perhaps in reference to (the video) of the young boy seen buried and in a grave."

The Charity Commission previously opened a statutory inquiry into the Lantern of Knowledge Educational Trust. It is also investigating the Ripple Road mosque.