

Police lost chance to deport Reading terror attacker because he 'ate a mattress'

More specifically an outstanding charge of criminal damage (to said mattress) had to be dealt with before he could be deported. From the [Telegraph](#)

A Libyan refugee behind the Reading terror attack could not be deported as he was facing trial over accusations that he ate a mattress at a police station, an inquest has heard.



Khairi Saadallah was given a whole-life sentence at the Old Bailey in 2021 | CREDIT: AFP via Getty Images

Khairi Saadallah shouted "Allahu akhbar" as he [fatally stabbed friends](#) James Furlong, 36, Dr David Wails, 49, and Joseph Ritchie-Bennett, 39, in the Berkshire town's Forbury Gardens on June 20 2020.

On Monday, a pre-inquest review hearing at the Royal Courts of Justice in London heard that, on July 24 2019, Saadallah allegedly spat at a police officer after being arrested and went on to damage a mattress.

Nicholas Moss KC, counsel to the inquest, said in court papers: "On that date, Saadallah is said to have attended Reading police station, spat at a detention officer after arrest and damaged a mattress by eating it.

"He was charged, pleaded not guilty, released on unconditional bail and his trial was adjourned due to Covid.

"It appears that Saadallah was next due in court for these offences in July 2020 – after the date of the attack."

Home Office staff emailed Thames Valley Police on May 28 2020, stating that they planned to deport Saadallah but were unable to "until the impending charges had been dealt with".

However, other Home Office staff were [arguing against deporting](#) Saadallah as it was dangerous for him to return to Libya at the time, the court heard. Mr Moss said solicitors to the inquest have requested a witness statement from

the Crown Prosecution Service "addressing why the decision was made not to pursue" the charges. He added: "Whatever the right and wrongs of that, it appears from that exchange between the CPS and the Home Office, charges were dropped . . ." *It is my belief that there is a fifth column within the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice whose loyalty is not to this country but to alien ideologies.*

Nick Harborne, chief executive of the Refugee Support Group, told the court that the scope of the inquest should go back to 2016, when his organisation was first aware of "the potential of his violence and the vulnerable state of his mental health". Saadallah had informed the organisation that he wanted to return to Libya to "avenge the deaths of his family members" and "martyr himself", the court heard. Mr Harborne said: "We spent four years after 2016 trying to get some mental health support. He came as a minor, a vulnerable young person with the trauma of being a child soldier."