

Timeline: terror attacks in Britain

MAY 22, 2017
A suicide bomber blows himself outside a pop concert by teen idol Ariana Grande in Manchester in northwest England, killing 22 people and injuring 116. Seven of the victims were under the age of 18. The attack was carried out by 22-year-old Salman Abedi, a Manchester-born university drop-out of Libyan origin. The attack was claimed by the Islamic State group.

MARCH 22, 2017
Five people are killed and more than 50 wounded when a man rams his car into pedestrians on Westminster bridge in London before crashing into the barriers surrounding parliament and then stabbing a police officer to death. The attacker, 52-year-old British Muslim convert Khalid Mahmood, is shot dead by police at the scene. Investigators describe the lone-wolf attack as "Islamist related terrorism".

JUNE 16, 2016
British Labour lawmaker Jo Cox is shot and stabbed to death by a pro-Nazi sympathiser just days before the historic vote to leave the EU. Far-right white nationalist Thomas Mair is later sentenced to life in prison for her murder.

DECEMBER 5, 2015
A paranoid schizophrenic stabs two people at London's Leytonstone Underground station, two days after Britain's first air strikes on the Islamic State group in Syria. The knifeman, Somali-born Muhaydin Mire, 30, is sentenced to life behind bars. The police say the incident is a "terrorist" attack.

MAY 22, 2013
British soldier Lee Rigby, 25, is hacked to death by two Britons of Nigerian descent near an army barracks in London. Witnesses say the attackers encouraged them to film the scene as they shouted "Allah Akbar" ("God is greatest") before being injured and arrested by police. In February 2014, Michael Adebolajo, 29, is sentenced to life in prison for the murder while Michael Adebowale, 22, receives a minimum of 45 years behind bars.

MARCH 2009
A sudden resurgence of political violence in Northern Ireland with two soldiers shot dead outside their barracks by republican militants as they went to collect a pizza delivery, the first such slaying since 1997. Two days later a police officer is shot dead by a different paramilitary republican faction.

JUNE 30, 2007
Two men in a burning vehicle ram into the main terminal of Glasgow Airport in Scotland. An Indian driving the car suffers serious burns and later dies. The passenger, Iraqi doctor Bilal Abdulla, 29, is jailed in December for at least 32 years for plotting to murder hundreds of people.



FAKE BOMB SCARE THREAT IN TURIN

A Juventus' fan is helped to walk as the fans gathered in San Carlo Square, Turin, Italy run away following panic created by the explosion of fire-crackers when they were watching the match on a giant screen on Saturday night. Inset, an injured woman cries after the panic movement.

Pak forces 'kill dozen IS fighters' in raid

Pakistani forces yesterday said they had killed around a dozen Islamic State militants in a three-day raid prompted by intelligence reports that the group were holding two recently kidnapped Chinese nationals. The operation took place in the rugged Mastung district of southwest Balochistan province and targeted the hideout cave of a group of IS commanders, a senior security official told AFP. "Some 12-13 IS commanders have been killed after intense gun-battles and the area was cleared late Saturday," he said, but added that the Chinese pair were not recovered from the scene despite the presence of the vehicle used in their kidnapping nearby. IS has been making inroads in the country through alliances with local militant outfits such as the sectarian Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Jamaat-ul-Ahrar groups, though its presence is generally downplayed by the government. Security forces also seized six suicide jackets, a cache of ammunition, explosives, detonators, solar panels and food rations, a second Pakistani security official told AFP, adding the cave was a base used by IS to plan attacks across the country. The two Chinese workers were abducted last month in Quetta, the capital of Balochistan, raising safety concerns for Beijing's multi-billion-dollar investments in the country. One Chinese woman managed to escape as the men began firing in the air to scare off onlookers. A passer-by, Muhammad Zahir, was shot as he tried to prevent the abduction. Mineral-rich Balochistan has been plagued by Islamist and separatist insurgencies since 2004, with hundreds of soldiers and militants killed in the fighting. But a greater push towards peace and development by Pakistani authorities has reduced overall levels of violence in recent years.

LONDON TERROR ATTACK

Woman 'saved 20 lives' by barricading door

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK
A woman has been described as "heroic" after she reportedly used her body to barricade the door of a restaurant in the London Bridge area, stalling terrorists trying to enter during Saturday night's attacks and possibly saving the lives of up to 20 people. Cab driver Aksha Patel told Sky News that the woman had managed to block the door "for a few seconds" giving the people inside the restaurant the opportunity to escape through a back door of the Black and Blue steak restaurant on Rochester Walk in Borough Market. At least seven people were killed and dozens more injured after a van drove into pedestrians on London Bridge and several men then started stabbing passersby in what police said was a terrorist attack. Patel told the broadcaster that the woman was one of two of his passengers who had come out of the restaurant after holding the doors closed from the inside. "She knew they were bad people trying to break in," he said, adding: "She managed to hold the door for a few seconds but then I think they overpowered her." "People managed to escape through the rear door so she saved maybe 20 peoples lives," he said. There have been other eyewitness accounts of people attempting to fight those behind the attacks using pint glasses and bar stools. One taxi driver reportedly attempted to use his vehicle to stop the attackers. Speaking to London radio LBC, he said that he had tried to "ram" the suspected attackers with his vehicles.

Enough is enough Says May, condemns 'Islamist extremism'

REUTERS, London
Three attackers drove a van into pedestrians on London Bridge before stabbing revellers nearby on Saturday night, killing seven people in what Britain called the work of Islamist militants engaged in a new trend of terrorism. The attack occurred five days ahead of a parliamentary election and was the third to hit Britain in less than three months. Prime Minister Theresa May said the election would go ahead as planned on Thursday. "It is time to say enough is enough," she said in a televised statement outside her Downing Street office, where flags flew at half-mast. "We cannot and must not pretend that things can continue as they are," May said, calling for a strengthened counter-terrorism strategy that could include longer jail sentences for some offences and new cyberspace regulations. Police raided a building in the Barking district of east London yesterday. Sky News reported it was the address of one of the attackers and a witness told the TV channel that residents had heard controlled explosions early in the morning. "We believe we are experiencing a new trend in the threat we face as terrorism breeds terrorism," May said. "Perpetrators are inspired to attack not only on the basis of carefully constructed plots ... and not even as lone attackers radicalised online, but by copying one another and often using the crudest of means of attack." She said the series of attacks were not connected in terms of planning and execution, but were inspired by what she called a "single, evil ideology of Islamist extremism" that represented a perversion of Islam and of the truth. She said this ideology had to be confronted both abroad and at home. "While we have made significant progress in recent years, there is - to be frank - far too much tolerance of extremism in our country," she said, without elaborating. US President Donald Trump, taking to Twitter yesterday, urged the world to stop being "politically correct" in order to ensure public security against terrorism.



A police officer escorts members of the public, wrapped in foil blankets, towards The Shard in London yesterday following a terror attack.

Trump 'does believe in climate change': Haley

REUTERS, Washington
US President Donald Trump "believes the climate is changing," US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley said on Saturday after Trump's decision to take the United States out of the Paris climate accord sparked dismay across the world. "President Trump believes the climate is changing and he believes pollutants are part of the equation," Haley said during an excerpt of a CNN interview released on Saturday. Trump "knows that it's changing and that the US has to be responsible for it and that's what we're going to do," Haley said. On Thursday, Trump announced the United States would withdraw from the Paris climate change pact, tapping into his "America First" campaign theme. He said participating in the pact would undermine the US economy, wipe out jobs, weaken national sovereignty and put his country at a permanent disadvantage. "Just because the US got out of a club doesn't mean we aren't going to care about the environment," Haley said. Later on Saturday, Vice President Mike Pence said that remaining in the accord would have proved costly to US economic growth and to the working-class Americans at the core of Trump's political base. "By withdrawing from the Paris climate accord, President Donald Trump chose to put the forgotten men and women of America first. And he always will," Pence told a political rally in Iowa. On Friday, nobody at the White House was able to say whether Trump believed in climate change. In recent years, he has expressed skepticism about whether climate change is real, sometimes calling it a hoax. But since becoming president, he has not offered an opinion.



Pro-democracy activists speak as visitors listen in front of a banner depicting the Goddess of Democracy (C) and Tiananmen Square, ahead of a candlelight vigil in Hong Kong yesterday, to mark the 28th anniversary of the 1989 Tiananmen crackdown in Beijing.

NEWS IN brief

1,200 IS operatives in Philippines: Indonesia
AFP, Singapore
There are about 1,200 Islamic State (IS) group operatives in the Philippines, including foreigners of whom 40 are from Indonesia, the Indonesian defence minister said yesterday. Defence Minister Ryamizard Ryacudu called the militants "killing machines" and urged full-scale regional cooperation.

Child stabbed to death at German refugee shelter
AFP, Berlin
A five-year-old child was stabbed to death by an Afghan national at a refugee shelter in southeastern Germany, German authorities said yesterday. The 41-year-old assailant also injured the child's mother, a Russian national, and a six-year-old child at the scene was treated for shock and taken to hospital.

North Korea missile fears grow

Japan holds evacuation drills in coastal town; Pyongyang slams 'mean' targeted UN sanctions, vows to press ahead with its nuke weapons programmes

AFP, Tokyo
Hundreds of residents of a small Japanese coastal town took part in an evacuation drill yesterday as fears grow that a North Korean missile could hit the country. The drill in the town of Abu, about 800 kilometres (500 miles) west of Tokyo facing the Sea of Japan, simulated a ballistic missile attack in the surrounding mountains in Yamaguchi prefecture which hosts a major US Marine Corps air station, a disaster agency official said. It came less than a week after the nuclear-armed North test-fired a short-range projectile which fell provocatively close to Japan, its 12th ballistic missile test this year -- in defiance of UN sanctions warnings and US threats of possible military action. TV footage from Abu showed young children holding hands as they ran to a school gymnasium doubling as an evacuation centre after a siren began blaring early yesterday. "I was able to stay calm and evacuated in a few minutes," 67-year-old Yuriko Suewaka, who was among the 280 people involved in the exercise, told Jiji Press. The drill, organised by central and local authorities, followed a similar exercise in March in the northern prefecture of Akita. There are plans to conduct drills later this month in Yamagata and Niigata, north of Tokyo, both of which face the Sea of Japan, the official said. "The government has requested local communities to prepare for the holding of an evacuation drill," he told AFP on condition of anonymity. The southwestern city of Onojo in Fukuoka prefecture also held a drill yesterday, independently from the central government, the official added. Meanwhile, North Korea yesterday slammed the latest UN sanctions as "mean" and vowed to press ahead with its missile and nuclear weapons programmes. The UN Security Council on Friday unanimously adopted a US-drafted resolution imposing new targeted sanctions on a handful of North Korean officials and entities, in response to a series of ballistic missile tests this year that are banned under UN resolutions. The resolution put North Korea's suspected spy chief, 13 other Pyongyang officials and four entities on a sanctions blacklist, hitting them with a global travel ban and an assets freeze. The North's foreign ministry "condemns and outrightly rejects the sanctions racket put forth by the United States and the UN Security Council to prevent the strengthening of our nuclear deterrence", a ministry spokesman said.



TENSIONS IN KOREAN PENINSULA

Police: gambler behind Manila casino attack

AFP, Manila
An armed man who killed 37 people when he set fire to a casino in the Philippine capital was a father-of-three from Manila motivated by heavy gambling debts and not terrorism, authorities said yesterday. The identification of the attacker as Jessie Javier Carlos, a Catholic, proves that claims of responsibility by the Islamic State group for Friday's attack were false, President Rodrigo Duterte and police said. "I would call him a habitual gambler. He lost everything in his life and became crazy. He lost his mind. He vented his anger (through the incident)," Duterte told reporters yesterday. "It's not terrorism." Manila police chief Oscar Albayalde said Carlos, 43, had three children.

'I've got a sword' Man places £50k bounty on own head for IS

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A journalist has invited any Isis terrorist to a sword duel for a £50,000 reward on his own head after seven people were killed in the attack on London Bridge. Andre Walker, a New York Observer columnist, posted a photo of himself on the Westminster terrace by the Thames, holding what appeared to be a sword with both hands. "A bounty on my head. Any #ISIS terrorist that kills me gets £50k. I'll give my address. No police. But I've got a sword. Good luck," he tweeted. He added: "I'm not worried about looking silly, nor am I worried about #ISIS... Come on lads, have a crack." The reaction to the tweets was mixed, with some people on social media engaging in humour while others criticised the post for its timing. "Not sure what point you're making with this," one person commented. "So let's get this straight. You're offering to fund terrorism?" another person asked. A third said: "Probably illegal to carry a sword around in the street like that. This is the dumbest thing I've seen on twitter so far this morning." Walker said the reason for his offer was "very simple". "[...] fight someone who is a fair opponent. No honour in running over children," he responded online.

Outgoing PM Muscat wins Malta election

AFP, Valletta
Outgoing Prime Minister Joseph Muscat has retained power in Malta with a commanding victory in an early general election called against a backdrop of corruption allegations against his Labour Party. A sample count of ballots yesterday showed a clear enough trend for Muscat, 43, to make an early declaration of victory. **Prince Harry starts visit in Singapore**
AFP, Singapore
Britain's Prince Harry began a goodwill visit to Asia on a subdued note yesterday following a deadly terror attack in London. The fifth in line to the throne attended a reception at Eden Hall, the British High Commissioner's official residence in Singapore where a flag flew at half-mast in respect for the seven killed in Saturday night's carnage.