



## **8 Dead in New York, Several Injured as Driver Careens Down Bike Lane**

November 1, 2017

At least eight people were killed Tuesday and more than a dozen others were injured when a man drove a rented truck onto a busy bike path in New York City.

“Based on information we have at this moment, this was an act of terror, and a particularly cowardly act of terror aimed at innocent civilians,” New York Mayor Bill de Blasio said at a news conference.

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo called it a "lone wolf" attack, saying there's no evidence to suggest it was part of a wider plot. The incident took place near the World Trade Center memorial in lower Manhattan.

New York Police Commissioner James O’Neill said around 3:05 p.m., a man driving a rented Home Depot pickup truck entered the bike path, striking riders and pedestrians. The truck also struck a school bus, injuring two adults and two children.

The man then “exited the vehicle brandishing two handguns,” O’Neill said.

A paintball gun and a pellet gun were later found at the scene. He was shot in the abdomen by police and taken into custody.

He underwent surgery and is expected to survive.

A Home Depot truck which struck down multiple people on a bike path, killing several and injuring numerous others is seen as New York City first responders are at the crime scene in lower Manhattan in New York, NY, Oct. 31, 2017.

Argentina's foreign ministry said five of its citizens were among those killed. A statement identified them as natives of the city of Rosario, who were in New York with a group celebrating their 30th anniversary of graduating school.

Belgian Deputy Prime Minister Didier Reynders said one Belgian was killed in the attack.

"It always seems really distant but then when it's right next to you, obviously it's really shocking and disturbing, and you don't want it to happen to anybody," said Elizabeth Chernobelsky, who witnessed the crime scene.

Others were left in disbelief. College student Jake Saunders, who barely missed a train at a crucial moment, told VOA he considers himself lucky.

"If I had made that train, I would be right where the shooting is, right there, because that was my destination," Saunders said.

Police said the driver shouted "Allahu Akbar," Arabic for "God is great" when he got out of the truck. But when O'Neill was asked whether the suspect shouted the phrase, he replied: "Yeah. He did make a statement when he exited the vehicle," though he declined to elaborate.

The New York Police Department said they will increase the number of police throughout the city "out of an abundance of caution."

Law enforcement officials, who refused to be identified, told media outlets the suspect was a 29-year-old immigrant from Uzbekistan named Sayfullo Saipov, who entered the U.S. in 2010.

Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev said Wednesday the attack was ruthless and cruel, and that his government stood ready to use all means to assist in the investigation.

"We express our feelings of full solidarity to the people of the United States of America," Mirziyoyev said in a statement posted on the Uzbekistan foreign ministry website.

"We strongly condemn the terror truck attack on the innocent civilians in New York City. Our deepest sympathy and condolences to the families who lost their loved ones," said the Turkistanian American Association of New York and New Jersey, on behalf of the Uzbek community, in a statement sent by email to the Voice of America.

The Cato Institute told VOA only about 40,000 Uzbeks have entered the United States as migrants in the last 20 years, of those only 2 percent arrived as refugees.

David Bier, a policy analyst at the Washington-based think tank, said he believed this is the first time an Uzbek national has killed anyone on U.S. soil in a terrorist attack.

As of March 2017, three Uzbek nationals had been convicted of terrorism offenses. Ulugbek Kodirov who entered as student visa holder in 2008 and later radicalized on the Internet was convicted of threatening to kill President Obama in 2011. Fazliddin Kurbanov who entered as refugee in 2009 attempted to build bombs for an attack in 2013. Abdurasul Juraboev who immigrated after winning the green card lottery in 2011 was convicted of attempting to join ISIS in Syria in 2015.

### **VOA's Ramon Taylor on the scene:**

In Washington, White House press secretary Sarah Sanders said President Donald Trump had been briefed on the incident and will be continually updated as more details are known. "Our Thoughts and prayers are with all those affected," she said.

Trump later tweeted, "We must not allow ISIS to return, or enter, our country after defeating them in the Middle East and elsewhere. Enough!" Followed by: "I have just ordered Homeland

Security to step up our already Extreme Vetting Program. Being politically correct is fine, but not for this!"

Department of Homeland Security said Acting Secretary Elaine Duke had been briefed and the department was "closely monitoring the situation."