

Eight Dead in Suspected Terrorist Truck Attack in New York

A driver in a rented pickup truck mowed down pedestrians and cyclists on a bike path alongside the Hudson River in New York City on Tuesday, killing eight people and injuring about a dozen others in what authorities said was an act of terrorism.

It was the greatest loss of life from a suspected terrorist attack in New York since suicide hijackers crashed jetliners into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in lower Manhattan on Sept. 11, 2001, killing more than 2,600 people.

Tuesday's assault, on the far west side of lower Manhattan not far from the site of the World Trade Center, was reminiscent of several deadly vehicle attacks in Europe during the past 15 months.

The 29-year-old suspect in Tuesday's attack was shot in the abdomen by police and taken into custody after he crashed the truck into a school bus and fled his vehicle, New York City Police Commissioner James O'Neill told a news conference.

Mayor Bill de Blasio called the attack a "cowardly act of terrorism." A spokesperson for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security called the incident an "apparent act of terrorism."

O'Neill said police were declining to publicly identify the driver. A source familiar with the investigation identified him as Sayfullo Saipov.

The source would not confirm a CNN report that police believe the suspect is from Uzbekistan and entered the United States

in 2010.

Asked at the news conference about reports that the driver shouted “Allahu Akbar”—Arabic for “God is greatest”—O’Neill said a comment by the suspect when he exited his truck and the general circumstances of the assault led investigators to label the incident a “terrorist event.”

Governor Andrew Cuomo said the suspect appeared to have acted alone.

“There’s no evidence to suggest a wider plot or a wider scheme. These are the actions of one individual meant to cause pain and harm and probably death,” Cuomo said at the news conference.

The driver entered the bike path in lower Manhattan at 3:05 p.m., O’Neill said, adding that he was armed with a paint-ball gun and a pellet gun.

Two children and two adults were injured when the truck plowed into the school bus, he said.

O’Neill said the suspect was driving a rented pickup from the Home Depot hardware chain but declined to say where the truck was rented.

After the attack, mangled and flattened bicycles littered the sunlit bike path, which runs parallel to the West Side Highway along the Hudson River.

Of the eight people killed, six were pronounced dead at the scene and two more were pronounced dead at a nearby hospital, O’Neill said.

Fire Commissioner Daniel Nigro said 11 survivors with serious but non-life-threatening injuries were taken to hospitals.

Despite the attack, municipal officials said New York City’s main Halloween parade would go on as scheduled Tuesday

evening, just a few blocks from the scene of the carnage, with a heightened police presence.

U.S. President Donald Trump was briefed on the incident, White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said.

Trump, who has pressed for a ban on travelers entering the United States from some predominantly Muslim countries, said in a Twitter post: "We must not allow ISIS to return, or enter, our country after defeating them in the Middle East and elsewhere. Enough!"

Similar attacks in Europe last year killed dozens of people.

On July 14, 2016, a suspect drove a large truck into a crowd celebrating Bastille Day in the French city of Nice, killing 86 people and injuring hundreds more in an attack for which Islamic State claimed responsibility.

Five months later, a Tunisian asylum seeker, who had pledged allegiance to Islamic State, plowed a truck into a crowded Christmas market in central Berlin, killing 12 people and injuring 48.

On Aug. 17 of this year, a driver rammed his van into crowds in the heart of Barcelona, killing 13 people, in an attack authorities said was carried out by suspected Islamist militants. {eo}

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