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London Bridge terror attackers 'were pumped up on steroids'

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The Evening Standard

On steroids: Khuram Butt, Rachid Redouane and Youssef Zaghba *Metropolitan Police/PA*

Three Islamic extremists who killed eight people in the [London Bridge](#) terror attack were pumped up on steroids when they carried out the atrocity, a court heard today.

Khuram Butt, 27, Rachid Redouane, 30, and Youssef Zaghba, 22, all had traces of bodybuilding supplement DHEA when they were shot dead by police in Borough Market, at the end of their 10-minute rampage.

The attack began just after 10pm on June 3 last year, when a white van mounted the pavement on London Bridge, hitting several people and killing Canadian Christine Archibald, 30, and Frenchman

Xavier Thomas, 45.



The three extremists, all armed with knives and wearing fake suicide vests, leapt from the van after it crashed into railings outside the Barrowboy and Banker pub.

They attacked members of the public at random, killing Alexandre Pigear, 26, Sara Zelenak, 21, Kirsty Boden, 28, Sebastien Belanger, 36, James McMullan, 32, and Ignacio Echeverria, 39, before all three shot dead by armed police.

Jonathan Hough QC, counsel to the inquest, told a hearing at the Old Bailey this morning a toxicology report on the killers revealed evidence of drug use shortly before they struck.

“Analysis of samples take from the attackers revealed the presence of DHEA, a steroid hormone, above the acceptable physiological range”, he said, in a written submission to the court.

“These findings suggest use of steroid DHEA recently prior to death - in a period ranging from several hours to days before death.”

An expert will be asked to prepare a full report on the drug use, to be shown to the jury at the full inquest next year.

The same court heard last month that Khalid Masood, the man behind the Westminster terror attack in March last year, had also taken steroids before killing five people including PC Keith Palmer while trying to storm the Houses of Parliament.

Mr Hough told the court firearms officers at London Bridge will ask for anonymity at the inquest, and some evidence from MI5 may be given in secret.

He said Butt had “been the subject of an MI5 priority investigation for almost two years, from mid-2015”, and while Redouane and Zaghba had not been under MI5 surveillance, they “were associates of Khuram Butt”.

At the start of today’s hearing, Chief Coroner Mark Lucraft QC said he wanted to “express my sincerest condolences to the families of those who lost loved ones”.

He said the attack, on the “iconic” London Bridge, had lasted no more than ten minutes but had been a “terrible drama which devastated the lives of many”.


The judge ruled that inquests for the victims will be heard together in early 2019, before a separate hearing in front of a jury for the attackers.

Some of the relatives of the attackers may also seek anonymity in the proceedings, for their own safety. ■

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