

Exclusive: Downing Street suspect was 'White Beast' jihadi's friend

The terror suspect arrested with a bag full of knives in Westminster was close friends with a British jihadist who died fighting for an Islamist terror group in Africa, the [Thomas Evans, known under the terror name as the notorious White Beast](#). The pair, who were both in their early 20s at the time, were part of a seven week aid mission in 2010 with the charity Road to Hope, photos show them smiling together.

Evans' mother Sally Evans said she believed the trip, which saw them stuck in Libya for a time, radicalised her son. Her son was shot while fighting for Somalia-based al-Shabaab, which has links to al-Qaeda, in Kenya in 2015 at the age of 25.

A year earlier security reports reveal he and a woman believed to be White Widow Samantha Lewthwaite – the world's most wanted woman – were jointly involved in a brutal atrocity which left 70 people dead.

Last night detectives from Scotland Yard were continuing to question Mr Ali, 27, on suspicion of offences under the Terrorism Act and possession of offensive weapons after he was detained by armed police in Whitehall on Thursday afternoon. Ali, who was born overseas but is a British national, was living in Tottenham, north London, and had been under surveillance as the subject of an active anti-terrorism investigation. He is reported to have spent several years in Afghanistan returning only recently.

Just hours after his arrest, anti-terror police thwarted another and unrelated "active plot" which saw a 21-year-old woman shot in Willesden and six others arrested in a series of

raids. One was Mohamed Amoudi, 21, a Yemeni-born British citizen who studied physics at Queen Mary University in east London. In 2015?? he was stopped with two sixth-form students in Turkey on suspicion of travelling to Syria, charges which were later dropped.

Mr Amoudi has previously attended a talk by controversial cleric Haitham al-Haddad at Queen Mary Student Union in 2014. It comes after a 2015 report into extremism at campuses by the group Student Rights, found that Queen Mary hosted the second highest number of extremist events at any UK University in 2013-14.

Armed officers apprehended him as he got off a bus on Willesden High Street on Thursday. A woman with him was also detained.

Just half an hour later officers then fired CS gas into a nearby property and shot a woman. Eyewitnesses described how the woman, who was dressed in Islamic clothing, shouted "don't touch me" as paramedics fought to save her life.