

# **Jihadi bride Shamima Begum, 22, fears she will be sentenced to DEATH as she faces trial in Syria over her support for ISIS – and argues she was ‘an angel who was brainwashed’**

Jihadi bride Shamima Begum fears she will be prosecuted in Syria over her support for Islamic State – and could even face the death penalty if convicted.

In an interview with [The Mail on Sunday](#), the 22-year-old expressed horror at the threat of being dragged before a court in northern Syria, saying: ‘No, no, I don’t want that, that can’t happen. I don’t want to be tried in Syria.’

Detainees at two camps for suspected members of the extremist group, including Begum, were recently told that trials for women are expected to begin this summer.

Speaking from the Al-Roj camp, where she has languished since 2019, Begum again protested her innocence, arguing she was ‘an angel’ who had been brainwashed and then sex-trafficked by ISIS. But her account contrasts starkly with her earlier statements condoning ISIS and claims that she was not only a committed member of the group’s brutal Al-Khansa female ‘morality police’ but also sewed ISIS bombers into suicide vests.

Begum was 15 when she and two East London school friends, Amira Abase and Kadiza Sultana, fled Britain in 2015, and

remains 'shocked by how easy it was'. Last week, she described how another teenager, Sharmeena Begum (no relation), who left Britain to join ISIS in December 2014, had inspired the group. 'She was my closest friend. If she had not been radicalised, I don't think we would have been,' she said. 'It was online and it was a group thing. We fed off each other.'

Begum ended up in Raqqa, the capital of Islamic State's self-styled caliphate, but insists she was '100 per cent' trafficked as a bride for the group's fighters. Yet after being captured near the Syrian town of Baghuz as ISIS was routed, she gave an infamous interview in which she lamented being 'weak' for fleeing the group's last stand.

She also said that the sight of a 'severed head in a bin didn't faze me at all' because it was that of 'a captured fighter... an enemy of Islam', defiantly adding: 'I don't regret coming here.'

There was widespread revulsion at her comments, and Begum soon switched to wearing Western clothing and seeking to distance herself from ISIS and its barbaric acts.

'I was an angel, you can ask my mum, [I was an angel](#),' she said.



Shamima Begum (far right) and her friend Hafida Haddouch (far left red cardigan) in a group photo alongside some of their fellow inmates and their children at the Al-Roj prison camp in northern Syria

'I was an angel, you can ask my mum, I was an angel,' she said. 'In secondary school,

'In secondary school, they [Amira and Kadiza] were like my only friends because I like to have a small group of friends. I prefer quality over quantity. I did not like my primary school because I faced some racism there, not constantly, but at a young age one thing is enough. Not bullied, but little comments and stuff and favouritism with teachers to white kids over non-white kids.'

The prospect of Begum going on trial in Syria comes after her bid to return to the UK to challenge the Government's decision to strip her of British citizenship was last year rejected by the Supreme Court.

She admitted fears of being a prisoner at Al-Roj 'for ever', but the new threat of a death sentence may spark a renewed effort by campaigners to have Home Secretary Priti Patel re-

examine the case. The British Government has a long-standing policy of opposing the death penalty. *I wonder how likely the death sentence really is ??*