

London Bridge attack: Terrorists 'used steroids' before attack

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The terrorists who killed eight people on London Bridge and at Borough Market had taken steroids before the attack, a court has heard.

Khuram Butt, 27, Rachid Redouane, 30, and Youssef Zaghba, 22, all had high levels of a drug called DHEA in their system, according to a toxicologist speaking at a pre-inquest hearing at the Old Bailey.



L-R: London Bridge attackers Rachid Redouane, Khuram Butt and Youssef Zaghba

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. 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.

The extent of MI5 knowledge of one of the attackers – ringleader Khuram Butt who was under active investigation by the agency – will form part of the inquiry. Around 1,800 witness statements have been taken in advance of the inquests. Lawyer Victoria Ailes, representing five of the victims’ families, said anyone who had CCTV footage or mobile phone film of the attacks should come forward.