

# AHMAD MUSA JIBRIL'S TIES TO EXTREMISTS

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### Key Points:

- Ahmad Musa Jibril became one of the most followed English-language preachers by foreign fighters in 2014 and has since remained an influential jihadist voice.
- Jibril's lectures have helped radicalize dangerous Islamists like Khuram Shazad Butt, one of three London Bridge attackers who killed eight and wounded almost 50 on June 3, 2017.
- Despite Jibril's retreat from social media since 2014, Jibril has inspired multiple social media accounts that continue to promote his propaganda.

Ahmad Musa Jibril is an Arab-American Islamist preacher who has reportedly influenced Westerners to fight in the Syrian conflict.<sup>1</sup> A 2014 report by the London-based International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR) named Jibril as one of the most influential religious figures among foreign fighters in Syria.<sup>2</sup> Jibril “encouraged his students to spread Islam by the sword, to wage a holy war, to hate and kill non-Muslims,” according to his 2005 U.S. sentencing memo on fraud charges.<sup>3</sup>

From his home in Michigan, Jibril's online lectures and tweets advocated a Salafist version of Islam that praised jihad, although he has been careful not to specifically call upon his followers to join jihadi groups. The 2014 ICSR report found that Jibril “adopts the role of a cheerleader: supporting the principles of armed opposition to Assad.” Jibril spent almost seven years in prison on bank fraud, mail fraud, money laundering, and related charges before he was released on

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph A. Carter, Shiraz Maher, and Peter R. Neumann, “#Greenbirds: Measuring Importance and Influence in Syrian Foreign Fighter Networks,” International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation, April 2014, 8, <http://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/ICSR-Report-Greenbirds-Measuring-Importance-and-Influence-in-Syrian-Foreign-Fighter-Networks.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph A. Carter, Shiraz Maher, and Peter R. Neumann, “#Greenbirds: Measuring Importance and Influence in Syrian Foreign Fighter Networks,” International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence, April 22, 2014, <https://icsr.info/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/ICSR-Report-Greenbirds-Measuring-Importance-and-Influence-in-Syrian-Foreign-Fighter-Networks.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> United States District Court Eastern District of Michigan Southern Division, “Government's Supplemental Sentencing Memorandum,” No. 03-80810, April 25, 2005; available at <https://web.archive.org/web/20071029194740/http://nefafoundation.org/miscellaneous/FeaturedDocs/U.S. v Jibril USGSuppSentMemo.pdf>

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probation in 2012. A federal judge restricted Jibril's Internet and social media access in June 2014 after Jibril violated his probation. The restrictions, however, expired in March 2015.<sup>4</sup>

Though the number of foreign fighters traveling to Iraq and Syria has decreased since the ICSR's 2014 study, Jibril's message continues to resonate with extremists. His lectures remain freely available on Twitter, YouTube, and other social media platforms. Despite Jibril's publicized role in radicalizing ISIS fighters, YouTube shockingly declared in June 2017 that his content does not violate the company's terms of service.<sup>5</sup> That same month, Khuram Shazad Butt, Rachid Redouane, and Youssef Zaghba killed eight people and wounded almost 50 more in a terror attack on the London Bridge. Butt reportedly radicalized watching Jibril's videos online.<sup>6</sup>

Jibril had not returned to his digital pulpit as of February 2019, but his Twitter feed, video lectures, and writings remain online. His [Twitter account](#) still includes more than 38,000 followers as of February 15, 2019. More than 236,000 people follow his [Facebook account](#). And his [YouTube account](#) has more than 18,000 subscribers and has received more than 1 million views. CEP has found multiple social media accounts created by Jibril's self-proclaimed students who continue to spread his interpretations of Islam by retweeting and linking to his past statements and videos.

**CEP has recorded 15 entities—four extremist individuals and 11 Twitter accounts—that have been influenced by or promoted Jibril.**

### **INDIVIDUALS**

1. [Khuram Shazad Butt](#) ([New America](#), [New York Times](#), [Newsweek](#), [Telegraph](#))
  - a. Domestic terrorist. Suspected ringleader of the June 2017 London Bridge terror attack that killed eight individuals and injured 48 others. Killed by police during the attack.
  - a. Listened to Jibril's lectures online.
2. Farhad Said [[image](#)] ([Sydney Morning Herald](#), [Australian Broadcasting Corporation](#))
  - a. Domestic terrorist. Arrested in May 2016 on charges of conspiring to conduct an act in preparation for a failed terrorist act in December 2014 alongside five others. Pled guilty to making documents connected to preparation for terrorism. Sentenced in November 2017 to seven years and one month in prison.

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<sup>4</sup> Mark Hosenball and Alistair Bell, "U.S. online ban of militant Muslim preacher ends," Reuters, April 7, 2015, <http://www.reuters.com/article/2015/04/07/us-usa-religion-imam-idUSKBN0MY2CP20150407>; Niraj Warikoo, "Dearborn cleric cited as most inspirational leader for militants from West in Syria," *Detroit Free Press*, May 5, 2014, <http://www.freep.com/article/20140505/NEWS06/305050015/Dearborn-cleric-Syria>.

<sup>5</sup> Niraj Warikoo, "YouTube: Videos of controversial Dearborn cleric don't violate our guidelines," *Detroit Free Press*, June 7, 2017, <https://www.freep.com/story/news/2017/06/08/you-tube-videos-dearborn-preacher-dont-violate-our-guidelines-ahmad-musa-jibril/376680001/>.

<sup>6</sup> Kim Sengupta and Lizzie Dearden, "London attack: Terrorist ringleader Khuram Butt was known to police before rampage, Scotland Yard confirms," *Independent* (London), June 5, 2017, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/london-attack-khuram-butt-terrorist-known-police-before-stabbing-confirmed-a7774576.html>.

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- b. Followed Jibril on Facebook and reposted Jibril’s content.
3. Mohammad Farhan Shaikh [no image] ([Times of India](#), [Times of India](#))
  - a. Domestic terrorist. Indian national arrested in United Arab Emirates and deported to India in January 2016 for supporting ISIS. Sentenced to seven years in prison in 2017 for membership in ISIS, recruiting for the terror group, and fundraising.
  - b. Allegedly became an ISIS supporter in September 2014 under the influence of pro-jihadist propagandists like Mizanur Rahman, Musa Cerantonio, and Jibril, according to India’s National Investigation Agency. Created the email address hijrah1400@gmail.com in order to create a Facebook account under the name “Khalid Ibn Waleed” to follow pro-ISIS videos. Followed Jibril on Facebook and shared his lectures over social media.
4. Abu Usama [no image] ([Studies in Conflict & Terrorism](#))
  - a. Propagandist. Member of the banned al-Muhajiroun network founded in the United Kingdom by ISIS propagandist Anjem Choudary.
  - b. Previously followed Jibril on Twitter with the handle @A1Ghurabaa before being suspended by Twitter.

**TWITTER USERS**

1. [@AbooTawheed](#) ([Twitter](#), [Twitter](#))
  - a. Display name: Thalāthatul-Usūl. London-based Twitter account created in December 2015 with 465 followers as of February 15, 2019. Account suspended as of April 2019.
  - b. Uses Jibril’s image as a profile picture. Account is dedicated to Jibril. Claims to be “going through the Tawhīd classes of Shaykh Aḥmad Mūsā Jibrīl, picking out the best quotes to share and allow others to benefit from, in shā’a llāh.”
2. [@AbuEesa65793885](#) ([Twitter](#), [Twitter](#), [Twitter](#), [Twitter](#))
  - a. Display name: Abu Eesa greenbird. Twitter user since October 2018 who has called for divine support for mujahideen around the world, the destruction of “the enemies of your religion,” and the “humiliation for the enemies of Islam.”
  - b. Follows Jibril on Twitter.
3. [@AhmadJibril\\_E](#) ([Twitter](#), [Twitter](#), [Twitter](#))
  - a. Display name: Ahmad Jibril. Twitter account created in July 2014 with 1,684 followers as of February 15, 2019. Account suspended as of April 2019.
  - b. Uses Jibril’s image as a profile picture. Links to hashtags #Ahmadjibril and #AMJ in the user’s bio. Claims no actual affiliation with Jibril. Posts “Benefits and Reminders” from Jibril, including commentary on and retweets of Jibril’s old tweets, videos of Jibril lectures, and articles by Jibril.
4. [@AhmadMusaMV](#) ([Twitter](#), [Twitter](#))
  - a. Dhivehi-language Twitter account based in Maldives created in August 2016 with 155 followers as of February 15, 2019.
  - b. Uses Jibril’s image as a profile picture. Seeks to “spread the works and quotes of Shaykh Ahmad.” Retweets past Jibril tweets and reposts his videos.
5. [@audioshaykhamj](#) ([Twitter](#))

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- a. Display name: ShaykhAhmadjibril. Twitter account created in November 2014 with 240 followers as of February 15, 2019. Inactive since December 2014. Account suspended as of April 2019.
- b. Uses Jibril's image as a profile picture. Dedicates the account to Jibril and declares intent to "tweet all of his old lecture prior to him going to prison. May Allah release him."
6. [@lionsofhaqq](#) ([Twitter](#), [Twitter](#), [Twitter](#))
  - a. Display name: lionsofhaqq. Twitter account created in December 2018 with 111 followers as of February 15, 2019. Account suspended as of April 2019.
  - b. Promotes a YouTube channel "for short reminders from our beloved Shaykh Ahmad Mūsā Jibrīl." Tweets quotes by and videos of Jibril. Retweets other pro-Jibril Twitter accounts.
7. [@lithamuwaji](#) ([Twitter](#), [Twitter](#))
  - a. Display name: Muhammad ibn Ali. Philippines-based Twitter user since December 2009.
  - b. Tweeted in August 2017 that Jibril is one of the "giants" he admires most and requested Allah protect him. Regularly retweets Jibril-linked Twitter accounts.
8. [@LoveShaykhAhmad](#) ([Twitter](#), [Twitter](#), [University of Shaykh Ahmad Jibril](#))
  - a. Display name: LoveShaykhAhmad. Twitter account created in October 2015 with more than 1,200 followers as of February 15, 2019.
  - b. Uses Jibril's image as a profile picture. Reposts tweets and videos by Jibril and adds commentary on current events by the account's administrators. Claimed in March 2018 to have compiled a list of Jibril's "confirmed students" that contains the names of "giants he raised." Will not publicize the list for "known" reasons. Links to ahmadjibril.com, which claims to be the official website dedicated to Jibril and refers to itself as the University of Shaykh Ahmad Jibril.
9. [@MamoonJunayd](#) ([Twitter](#), [Twitter](#), [Twitter](#), [Twitter](#))
  - a. Display name: Junayd Al Mamoon. Twitter user since November 2018 who tweets pro-jihadist messages. Advised followers that when "looking for your spouse search for someone who is going to mother/father the next generation of Mujahideen, who will sacrifice in order to spread this Deen, and hoist the humiliation off of the back of this Ummah."
  - b. Follows multiple Twitter accounts dedicated to Jibril.
10. [@ShabhatY](#) ([Twitter](#))
  - a. Display name: shabhat yousef. Twitter account created August 2018. Retweeted extremist propaganda on Twitter.
  - b. Displays Jibril's image as a banner image. Follows Jibril on Twitter and retweets Jibril's past tweets.
11. [@Sheikh\\_AJ\\_Quote](#) ([Twitter](#), [Twitter](#), [Twitter](#))
  - a. Display name: Sheikh\_AhmadJibril\_Q. Twitter account created in April 2016 with 1,406 followers as of February 15, 2019.
  - b. Uses Jibril's image as a profile picture. Account is dedicated to "reminders from Sheikh Ahmad (may Allah protect him)." Posts quotes and videos by Jibril as well as retweets from Jibril's Twitter account.