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Southern DAILY

Make Today Different

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Wednesday, March 24, 2021

A day after Colorado grocery store massacre, a suspect in custody but few answers

BOULDER, Colo. (Reuters) - Police on Tuesday identified the 21-year-old suspect accused of killing 10 people - including a policeman - in a hail of bullets at a Colorado supermarket, marking the United States' second mass shooting in a week and adding to the state's tragic history of deadly massacres.

The suspect, Ahmad Al Aliwi Alissa of Arvada, Colorado, stormed the King Soopers outlet in Boulder armed with an assault-style rifle and a handgun and wearing a tactical vest, all of which were recovered after Monday's shooting, according to an arrest affidavit filed by police. The affidavit also said law enforcement databases show Alissa purchased an AR-15 type of assault rifle on March 16.

Alissa was released from a hospital, where he was treated for a leg wound suffered in an exchange of gunfire with responding police, and transported to county jail on Tuesday afternoon to await an initial court appearance on murder and other charges. His criminal history shows a single charge for third-degree assault in 2018, according to the affidavit.

Authorities said they were confident he acted alone, though they did not offer any details on what might have motivated him to open fire at the store, about 28 miles (45 km) northwest of Denver.

"It would be premature for us to draw any conclusions at this time," Michael Schneider, the agent in charge of the FBI's field office in Denver, said at a news briefing. The 10 victims range in age from 20 to 65 and include Eric Talley, an 11-year veteran of the Boulder police force. Talley, 51, was the father of seven children and had recently been looking for a less dangerous job, according to a statement released by his father.

Police identified the nine other victims as Denny Stong, 20; Neven Stanisic, 23; Rikky Olds, 25; Tralona Bartkowiak, 49; Suzanne Fountain, 59; Teri Leiker, 51; Kevin Mahoney, 61; Lynn Murray, 62; and Jody Waters, 65.

Monday's attack, which began around 2:40 p.m., drew hundreds of police



officers to the scene and sent terrified shoppers and employees fleeing for safety amid the sound of gunfire.

Colorado has been the site of some of the most shocking episodes of gun violence in U.S. history, including the 2012 mass shooting at a movie theater in Aurora and the 1999 rampage at Columbine High School near Littleton.

The latest bloodshed came only six days after a gunman went on a killing spree on March 16 in the Atlanta area, fatally shooting eight people at three day spas before he was arrested.

"My heart aches today," Colorado Governor Jared Polis said on Tuesday. "Flags had barely been raised back to full-mast after the tragic shooting in Atlanta that claimed eight lives, and now a tragedy here close to home at a grocery store that could be any of our neighborhood grocery stores."

The two mass shootings are likely to intensify pressure on President Joe Biden to fulfill his campaign

pledge to enact tougher gun limits. But legislation to ban assault weapons and tighten background checks have stalled amid Republican opposition in Congress.

"I don't need to wait another minute, let alone another hour, to take common sense steps that will save lives in the future," Biden said at the White House on Tuesday. "This is not and should not be a partisan issue."

House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, the Democratic leaders in Congress, both said on Tuesday that the violence again underscored the need for stricter gun laws.

Biden also ordered U.S. flags to fly at half-staff in honor of the victims; they had just been raised at sunset on Monday after having been lowered following the Atlanta killings.

DETAILS OF SUSPECT'S LIFE EMERGING
 Details about Alissa were slowly emerging on Tuesday. He is a naturalized U.S. citizen from Syria, according to two U.S. law

enforcement officials briefed on the matter.

Slideshow (3 images)
 Ali Aliwi Alissa, the alleged shooter's 34-year-old brother, told The Daily Beast that his sibling was anti-social and paranoid.

Alissa graduated from Arvada West High School in May 2018, according to Cameron Bell, a spokeswoman for the school district. Records show he was on the wrestling team during two seasons ending in 2018, she said.

An archived Facebook page that appeared to belong to Ahmad Alissa said he was interested in computer science and kickboxing. The page, which uses the name Ahmad Al Issa, features a picture of a young man in a wrestling match who resembles the suspect's mug shot.

The page, which was taken down soon after Alissa's name was disclosed, also says he studied computer engineering at Metropolitan State University of Denver and was in the Class of 2022.

The university did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Witnesses in Colorado described a chaotic and frightening scene inside the store during Monday's attack.

Ryan Borowski, 37, went in looking for something to satisfy a sugar craving. He had picked out a 12-pack of soda and a bag of chips when he heard shots ring out, sending him scurrying for the store's back exit.

"It was pretty terrifying," he said. "Fastest fire drill I've ever been in."

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WEA LEE'S GLOBAL NOTES

CORONAVIRUS DIARY

03/23/2021

Today's Asian-Americans



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One of the anti-Asian mothers posted on social media saying that, "Because so many Asian students are in the schools, it makes it difficult for our kids to get into top universities because the Asians come into our subdivisions and the price of our real estate keeps on rising."

In the last century a lot of Asian immigrants flowed into America. They now comprise six percent of our population including people from China, India, The Philippines, Vietnam and twenty other countries. We speak different



languages and eat different foods. Our outstanding

immigrants are leading the most powerful companies such as Google and Zoom. But we also have a lot of them who live at the bottom of society. But increasing numbers haven't led to increases in power politically.

This is the time we need to work together in our community to participate in more social and charitable events to show our support.

The pandemic brought a lot of tragedy to our community. Our country is facing the biggest difficulty ever. Unless we can be united, we will not solve the problem in the future.

Today the hate crimes have reached the highest point in the last several decades and most of us are worried about our future and our safety.



Southern DAILY Make Today Different

Editor's Choice



Law enforcement officers sweep the parking lot at the site of a shooting at a King Soopers grocery store in Boulder, Colorado. REUTERS/Kevin Mohatt



Bride and groom Kate Fotheringham and Wayne Bell kiss in front of a flooded bridge that had blocked their five-minute drive into town, requiring a rescue by helicopter to get them to the church on time, in Port Macquarie, Australia. AMANDA HIBBARD, KATE FOTHERINGHAM /via REUTERS



New York Governor Andrew Cuomo arrives to visit a new vaccination center for the coronavirus at Grace Baptist Church in Mount Vernon, New York. REUTERS/Mike Segar



Dana McGregor (L) and Pismo his surfing goat catch a wave with friends while surfing with kids in San Clemente, California. REUTERS/Mike Blake



Pro-democracy protesters demonstrate in front of Royal Thai police headquarters demanding a discussion on police corruption in Bangkok, Thailand February 23.



Smoke billows at the site of the Rohingya refugee camp where fire broke out in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. REUTERS/Stringer

Southern
DAILY Make Today Different

BUSINESS

Illegal Immigrants To Receive \$4.38 Billion In Stimulus Checks: Report



Border Patrol agents apprehend about two dozen illegal immigrants in Penitas, Texas, on March 11, 2021. (Photo/Charlotte Cuthbertson/The Epoch Times)

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

As Americans start to receive the latest round of stimulus checks, a new analysis reveals that about \$4.38 billion will also go to illegal immigrants. The Center for Immigration Studies estimates that 2.65 million illegal immigrants have Social Security numbers that allow them to receive stimulus checks. This group of illegal immigrants can be described as “aliens temporarily present without status,” according to Steven Camarota, director of research for the Center for Immigration Studies.

“These individuals are in the country illegally and could be required to leave. Yet, under the current system, they are still given work authorization and Social Security numbers,” he said.

They include Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals and Temporary Protected Status recipients. In addition, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services issued 882,000 work authorizations and Social Security numbers to other illegal immigrants in fiscal year 2020, the analysis states. These include asylum applicants, as well as those applying for adjustment of status and suspension of deportation, among other categories.



Economic stimulus checks are prepared for printing at the Philadelphia Financial Center in Philadelphia, Pa., on May 8, 2008. (Jeff Fusco/Getty Images)

Not included in the numbers are the 1.8 million illegal immigrants that the Social Security Administration has estimated use Social Security numbers that don't match their names, according to Camarota. Another 600,000 have Social Security numbers from when they were legally in the country but overstayed their visa.

“There is simply no question that millions of illegal immigrants will receive billions of dollars in COVID relief checks,” Camarota said. “This highlights an even more disturbing fact—illegal immigrants are being issued Social Security numbers in large numbers. This is a clear

indication that America is simply not serious about enforcing its immigration laws.”

Asylum-seekers are routinely given work authorization while they wait for their case to be adjudicated—regardless of the merit of the application. While almost 90 percent of those who claim credible fear when presenting themselves at the border pass the initial screening, less than 20 percent are ultimately granted asylum relief by an immigration judge. For Central Americans, that number is less than 10 percent. During the last border surge in 2019, the southern border became so overwhelmed that most illegal aliens didn't even claim credible fear, knowing they'd still be released expeditiously into the United States—especially if they were accompanied by a child. Only about 25 percent of illegal border crossers were claiming credible fear, according to Kevin McAleenan, acting secretary of the Department of Homeland Security, on July 12, 2019.

In Yuma, Arizona, less than 10 percent made the claim, then-sector chief Anthony Porvaznik said on April 17, 2019.



Related

Estimating the Number of Illegal Immigrants Who Might Get Covid Relief Payments

During the debate over the Covid relief bill Sen. Durbin (D-Ill.) stated that “Undocumented immigrants do not have Social Security numbers, and they do not qualify for stimulus relief checks.” This is incorrect; we estimate that there are 2.65 million illegal immigrants who have Social Security numbers that allow them to receive stimulus checks. We estimate that 2.1 million of these individuals have incomes low enough to qualify for

checks, and they have 1.1 million U.S.-born dependent children. As a result, illegal immigrants could receive an estimated \$4.38 billion in cash payments from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Among the findings:

- There are 653,000 illegal immigrants with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and 411,000 with Temporary Protected Status (TPS). These individuals have work authorization, which comes with a valid Social Security number allowing them to receive a Covid stimulus check.

- In FY 2020, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) issued 882,000 work authorizations and Social Security numbers to other illegal immigrants. Among the categories eligible are adjustment of status, suspension of deportation, and asylum applicants, as well as those given withholding of removal, deferred action (non-DACA), and parolees.

Table 1. Estimated Population of Illegal Immigrants with Valid Social Security Numbers

DACA recipients	652,880
TPS recipients	411,326
Asylum applicants	441,943
Other aliens temporarily present without status under the Immigration and Nationality Act*	440,109
Illegal immigrants with stolen identities	700,000
Total illegal population who can receive stimulus money	2,646,258
Other Categories of Illegal Immigrants with Social Security Numbers Who Might Receive Stimulus Checks	
Former guestworkers who have overstayed	600,000
Illegal immigrants using SSNs and names that do not match	1,800,000

Source: Public-use USCIS tables on EADs issued in FY 2020 and Social Security Administration estimates of illegal immigrants working with SSNs. See text for more detail.
* This includes, but is not limited to, adjustment of status and suspension of deportation applicants, as well as those given withholding of removal, deferred action (non-DACA), and parolees.

• All of the above categories, as well as others, can be described as aliens temporarily present without status. These individuals are in the country illegally and could be required to leave. Yet, under the current system, they are still given work authorization and Social Security numbers, allowing

them to receive cash payments such as the Earned Income Tax Credit and Covid relief checks.

- In addition to the nearly two million illegal immigrants issued work authorization and Social Security numbers by USCIS, the Social Security Administration (SSA) has previously estimated that 700,000 illegal immigrants use stolen identities and Social Security numbers (SSNs).

- In total, we estimate that there are 2.65 million illegal immigrants with Social Security numbers that allow them to receive Covid stimulus checks.

- Based on their characteristics, we estimate that 2.1 million of these illegals have incomes that allow them to qualify for Covid payments. Those with qualifying incomes also have 1.1 million U.S.-born dependent children.

- In total, illegal immigrants could receive an estimated \$4.38 billion in stimulus checks from the new Covid relief bill — \$2.85 billion directly, and another \$1.53 billion on behalf of their children.

- Not included in these numbers are an estimated (by SSA) 600,000 former guestworkers employed illegally who use the Social Security number issued to them when they were in status. Although they should not be eligible for checks, we have been unable to determine what steps the government takes to actually prevent them from receiving payments. The same is true for the 1.8 million illegal immigrants SSA has estimated use Social Security numbers and names that do not match. (Courtesy cis.org)

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HELP NOW

Stay Home!

COMMUNITY

Wear Mask!

Covid-19: Kent Virus Variant Is 'On Course To Sweep World'



Key Point

The coronavirus variant first found in Kent could become the world's dominant strain, the head of the UK's genetic surveillance program has predicted.

Compiled And Edited By John T. Robbins, Southern Daily Editor

Prof Sharon Peacock told the BBC's Newscast podcast the new variant has “swept the country” and “it's going to sweep the world, in all probability”. She said her team's work sequencing variants of the virus could be required for at least 10 years.

The Kent variant has already been detected in more than 50 countries.

It was first detected in September 2020 in south-east England and its rapid spread over the following months was cited as the reason for the introduction of new lockdown rules across the UK in January.

Prof Peacock, director of the Covid-19 Genomics UK consortium, said: “What's really affected us at the moment is transmissibility.”

She added: “Once we get on top of [the virus] or it mutates itself out of being virulent - causing disease - then we can stop worrying about it. But I think, looking in the future, we're going to be doing this for

years. We're still going to be doing this 10 years down the line, in my view.” She explained this was not because she thought the pandemic would go on for 10 years, but she believed they would be sequencing new variants for that length of time.

Current vaccines were designed around earlier versions of coronavirus, but scientists believe they should still work against the new ones, although perhaps not quite as well.

Prof Peacock said the vaccines approved for use in the UK appeared to work well against the existing variants of the virus in the country.



Sharon Peacock is also Professor of

Public Health and Microbiology at Cambridge University Sharon Peacock is also Professor of Public Health and Microbiology at Cambridge University

The Covid-19 Genomics UK Consortium is a network of public health bodies and labs and currently analyses more than 20,000 positive tests a week.

In recent weeks, it has been explained that about 5-10% of positive tests are selected randomly to be sent on for further genome analysis but the consortium says, as the number of cases falls below its capacity, its aim is to genetically screen every positive coronavirus test.

Prof Peacock told Newscast that while it is normal to see variants, only a very small number have “special features”. These can make them more transmissible, avoid the immune response and affect vaccination, or have the potential to cause more severe disease.

“These are the things we are looking out for. I'd say it happens vanishingly rarely but we have to be on the look out for it,” the expert, who was previously director of the government's National Infection Service, said. (Courtesy bbc.com)

Related

UK Variant Found In 31 Of 39 Water Treatment Plants, City Says



Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner Answers Questions At A Press Conference On UK Variant in Houston.

Key Point

The city's health authority said on Feb. 8, the U.K. variant was found in 31 of the city's 39 wastewater treatment plants. Fourteen days later, that number has grown.

HOUSTON, Texas -- According to Hous-

ton's health authority Dr. David Persse, the U.K. variant is being found “in large amounts” and is spreading throughout the city fast. He said on Feb. 8, the U.K. variant was found in 21 of the city's 39 wastewater treatment plants. Fourteen days later, on Feb. 22, he said the variant was found in 31 out of 39 treatment plants.

“19% of all the virus that has been tested in the wastewater across the city has the genome that's consistent with the U.K. variant,” said Persse. “That does not mean that 19% of the people in Houston are infected with the U.K. variant ... it does not mean that. We know that there is a fairly large amount of the U.K. variant in our community and it is spreading.”

Sylvester Turner @SylvesterTurner

Our doctors and those in the medical field are concerned about a fourth #COVID19 wave. With places opening to 100%, we are concerned. Please continue to keep your mask on while you are around others and continue to take the necessary precautions that will combat this virus.

WHAT ABOUT OTHER VARIANTS?

As of Monday afternoon, Persse said the wastewater is being tested for other COVID-19 variants, such as the Brazilian and South African variants. However, the measurements have not been concluded, therefore new data was not available to report, Persse said.



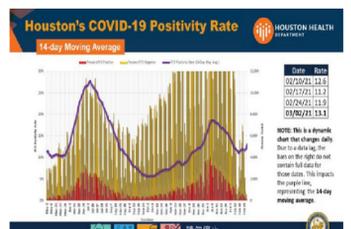
UK variant spread tracked to Houston's wastewater system.

“We are concerned about people dropping their guard and not wearing their masks and gathering in ways in which they wouldn't,” he said. “Remember,

the U.K. variant is the one that spreads much more easily. Those viruses are in the community so, the race is on to get as many people vaccinated as possible before the U.K. variant is able to take over and cause us to have another surge”

As of last week, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner said the positivity rate across the city is now 13.1%, which has increased since last week. The city's health department said this is the second week in a row in which the positivity rate has seen a slight uptick. In addition, the city has reported 318 new coronavirus cases, making the total case count 175,150. The death toll now stands at 2,018.

“We continue to make progress [and] getting people vaccinated, but we are nowhere near landing herd immunity,” said Turner.



The Texas' mask mandate lift and the several “mask-off parties” has caused concerns of other similar events from other states coming to Texas. Turner said promoters in states that are not allowed to operate at 100% and forced to wear a mask, are promoting bringing those events to cities like Houston, Dallas and Austin.

“This is not the time to drop our masks or drop our guard in the fight against the pandemic,” said Turner. (Courtesy https://abc13.com/)