Sir David Amess killing was terrorism, police say

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**BBC News**

**https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-58935372**

The killing of Conservative MP Sir David Amess is being treated as a terrorist incident by police.

[Sir David was stabbed multiple times](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-58930593) at his constituency surgery in Leigh-on-Sea in Essex on Friday.

The Metropolitan Police said there was a potential link to Islamist extremism. A 25-year-old British man was arrested at the scene on suspicion of murder.

Home Secretary Priti Patel paid tribute to Sir David as a "man of the people" who was "killed doing a job he loved".

Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer laid flowers at the scene together on Saturday morning.

Ms Patel and Commons Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle also paid their respects outside Belfairs Methodist Church in Leigh-on-Sea.

Speaking a short time later, Ms Patel said: "We are all struggling to come to terms with the fact that David Amess has been so cruelly taken away from all of us."

She said the Southend West MP "was absolutely there for everyone, he was a much loved parliamentarian, to me he was a dear and loyal friend, but also he was a devoted husband and father".

Ms Patel, who has asked police forces to immediately review security arrangements for MPs, maintained a balance could be found to allow face-to-face meetings with constituents to continue.

"We will carry on, we live in an open society, a democracy," she said. "We cannot be cowed by any individual or any motivation... to stop us from functioning".

Sir David, 69, had been an MP since 1983 and was married with four daughters and a son. He is the second serving MP to be killed in recent years, following the murder of Labour MP Jo Cox in July 2016.

The Met said officers are carrying out searches at two addresses in the London area and are not seeking anyone else over the death.

The force believes the man, who is in custody in Essex, acted alone but inquiries into the circumstances of the incident are continuing.

Government sources have told the BBC he is a British national who, from initial inquiries, appears to be of Somali heritage.

BBC security correspondent Frank Gardner reports Whitehall officials are saying the arrested man was not on a database of terror suspects.

Sir David was holding a constituency surgery - where voters can meet their MP and discuss concerns - at the church on Friday when [he was attacked at 12:05 BST](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-58932139).

The Met later said the fatal stabbing was being declared a terrorist incident, with the investigation being led by Counter Terrorism Policing.

Police added: "The early investigation has revealed a potential motivation linked to Islamist extremism."

Officers are appealing for anyone with any information or with footage from CCTV, dash cams or video doorbell, to contact them.

Southend borough councillor John Lamb, who went to the scene after hearing the MP had been stabbed, said: "The paramedics had been working on Sir David for over two and a half hours and they hadn't got him on the way to hospital.

"We knew it had to be extremely serious and that the worst scenario could occur - we were hoping it wouldn't but it did."