

Bomb disposal units evacuate third Midland mosque as police say device may have been activated THREE WEEKS ago

- **Unknown device 'activated' in June at Wolverhampton Central Mosque**
- **Police only found out about it yesterday and evacuated the mosque**
- **Officers trying to understand what device is - and how to deactivate it**

By Anna Edwards

Bomb disposal units have been called in to search a mosque after police were told that a 'device' was activated three weeks ago.

Specialist officers were called in to inspect the unknown device, which was 'activated' on June 28 at Wolverhampton Central Mosque in Dunstall Road, Wolverhampton - but police only found out about it yesterday. Now the mosque has been evacuated and surrounding roads closed as police try to understand what the device is - and how to deactivate it.



A number of specialist and local police officers were at the scene and a military bomb disposal team attended



The new information has resulted in an evacuation of the mosque and the surrounding area last night



Investigation: Forensic officers search the roundabout that fronts Wolverhampton Central Mosque



The mosque has been evacuated and surrounding roads closed as police try to understand what the device is

The discovery came as a result from investigations about two separate attacks on other mosques. They were unable to confirm what the device actually was.

People reacted with shock at the news, branding the activation 'sad' and 'awful'.

More...

- Two Eastern European men arrested in connection with bomb attacks on Midlands mosques in the wake of Lee Rigby's death

A Twitter user under the name of Shez Khan said: 'Dear me. Bomb planted INSIDE Wolverhampton Mosque! What has happened to people?!'

Another Twitter user called Salma said: 'It's so sad to see a mosque being under threat :(especially a mosque i spent my childhood in #WolverhamptonMosque'.



The roads surrounding the mosque are closed as a result of urgent inquiries underway as part of the investigation



West Midlands Police sent in specialist officers and increased visible patrols across the force area



West Midlands Police said they cleared Wolverhampton Central Mosque and the surrounding area at around 8pm

A person under the name of Amreet tweeted: 'The first time I've heard Wolverhampton mentioned on the main news and it's because someone has tried to bomb the Mosque, that's so awful'.

Faizaan wrote: 'ANOTHER device left outside a Mosque n (sic) Wolverhampton now! This is becoming ridiculous!!!!' A West Midlands Police spokesman said: 'Cordons in place in Wolverhampton have been reduced with Five Ways island

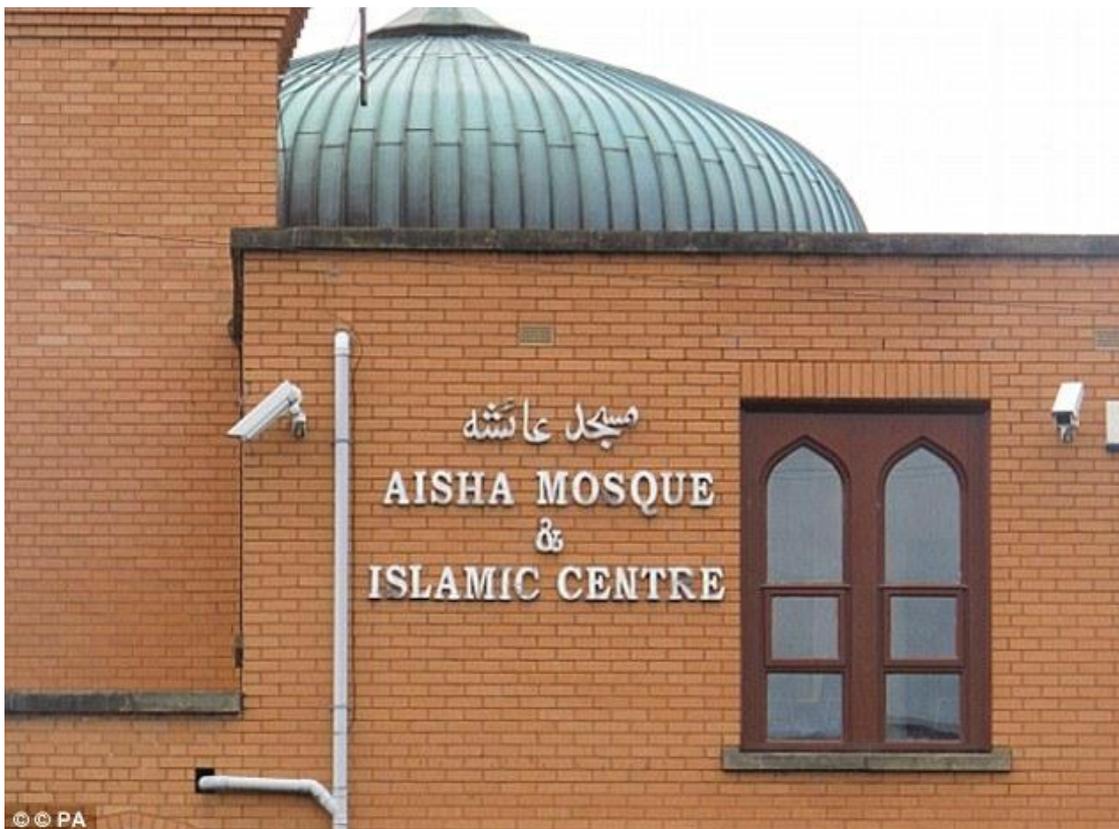
now at the centre of a 20m cordon and the following roads closed around it: Foxes Lane, Dunstall Avenue, Dunstall Hill, Dunstall Road, Waterloo Road, North Road.

'The roads are closed as a result of urgent inquiries underway as part of the investigation into the attacks near mosques in Walsall and Tipton.

'Information has been received regarding a possible device activation on June 28 at Wolverhampton Central Mosque on Waterloo Road.



Attacked: The blast came after more than 100 residents were evacuated from their homes in the Caldmore area of Walsall last month after an explosion near the Aisha Mosque



Concern: No-one was hurt in that Walsall blast, which caused minimal damage to a wall near the mosque in Rutter Street on the evening of June 21

'A number of specialist and local police officers are at the scene along with a military bomb disposal team. Searches and checks will take place throughout this evening. Updates will follow. 'West Midlands Police has increased visible patrols across the force area, including around mosques and religious premises following two recent explosions near to mosques in Walsall and Tipton.' The investigation comes after detectives arrested two Eastern European men in connection with two separate bomb blasts during the last month.

The men are being questioned on suspicion of being involved in the commission, preparation or instigation of an act of terrorism following blasts near the Aisha Mosque and Islamic Centre in the Caldmore area of Walsall last month and the Tipton mosque last Friday.

Residents were evacuated after the blast, near the Kanzul Iman Masjid in Tipton, left nails and debris scattered outside.



Map: The blast came after more than 100 residents were evacuated from their homes in the Caldmore area of Walsall last month after an explosion near the Aisha Mosque

No-one was injured but some minor damage to property was reported. The bomb exploded just an hour after the funeral of Drummer Lee Rigby.

A small component part of the suspected nail bomb was found in a garden nearby and specialist Army disposal officers were called to the scene to carry out a controlled explosion.

The blast came after more than 100 residents were evacuated from their homes in the Caldmore area of Walsall last month after an explosion near the Aisha Mosque.

No-one was hurt in that blast, which caused minimal damage to a wall near the mosque in Rutter Street on the evening of June 21.

Although residents in the area heard a loud bang at the time of the explosion, the incident was not reported to the police until the following day when parts of the small home-made device were found by a worshipper at the mosque, sparking a major operation involving Army bomb disposal experts.

A 75-year-old man had been arrested in connection with the attack, but he was subsequently released without charge.