# Man convicted for Koran burning outside Turkish consulate fears for his life amid death threats



A man convicted for burning a copy of the Koran outside the Turkish consulate in London has voiced his deep fears for his safety following the incident, stating he has received numerous death threats since the protest. Hamit Coskun, 50, was fined £240 for what was deemed a religiously aggravated public order offence, in connection with his actions during a demonstration on February 13. While Coskun has asserted his right to express his views on Islam and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, he has also shared feelings of vulnerability and concern for his life, claiming he is now under continuous threat.

During the protest, Coskun positioned himself outside the consulate, shouting phrases including "Koran is burning" and "Islam is religion of terrorism", igniting uproar and leading to a violent confrontation. He was assaulted by an individual, identified as Moussa Kadri, who is due to face charges for this attack. The incident escalated to a point where, just days after the protest, Coskun was targeted in his home, further escalating his sense of peril.

Coskun has received social media messages filled with threats, one stating he should "sacrifice yourself to Koran" and another declaring, "Hail to the courageous man who will make your corpse lie down on the ground." In an interview, he expressed his apprehension about the lack of police support since his arrest in Derby following the protest. He explained, "What really worries and upsets me is the attitude of the police… when I told them I felt unsafe they said there was nothing they could do." This has compelled him to move from his previous residence for security reasons.

Critics have slammed Coskun's conviction as a potential breach of free speech. Prominent figures, including politicians and representatives from organisations such as the National Secular Society and the Free Speech Union, have argued that the ruling could signal the reintroduction of blasphemy laws by the back door, despite the UK government having repealed such statutes in 2008. Coskun has stated his intention to appeal against the ruling, insisting that he stands by his actions as an exercise of democratic freedom.

The Crown Prosecution Service has amended initial charges against Coskun, dropping references to the "institution of Islam," an alteration which was welcomed by some lawmakers who viewed the original charge as a potential violation of free expression rights. Coskun has delineated his views, explaining, "I am an activist. I criticize Islam. I think that Islam poses a threat to the whole world," while emphasising that his protests aim to raise societal awareness rather than incite harm.

As further developments unfold regarding his appeal and ongoing safety concerns, the case highlights critical discussions surrounding free expression, religious sensitivities, and the implications of public protest in contemporary society.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14776749/Man-convicted-burning-Koran-shouting-f-islam-outside-Turkish-embassy-admits-worried-end-killed.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://apnews.com/article/4663d8c06cb00d37dd295bd4c82698e1)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14776749/Man-convicted-burning-Koran-shouting-f-islam-outside-Turkish-embassy-admits-worried-end-killed.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/man-admits-assault-koran-burning-turkish-consulate-london-knightsbridge-b1222348.html), [[6]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/two-men-charged-over-quran-burning-clash-outside-turkish-embassy-b1211343.html)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14776749/Man-convicted-burning-Koran-shouting-f-islam-outside-Turkish-embassy-admits-worried-end-killed.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[5]](https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/quran-burner-blasphemy-laws-cnhlk1n7)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://apnews.com/article/4663d8c06cb00d37dd295bd4c82698e1), [[4]](https://www.gbnews.com/news/koran-burning-protester-hamit-coskun-charges-cps-rewritten-london-turkish-consulate)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14776749/Man-convicted-burning-Koran-shouting-f-islam-outside-Turkish-embassy-admits-worried-end-killed.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://apnews.com/article/4663d8c06cb00d37dd295bd4c82698e1)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14776749/Man-convicted-burning-Koran-shouting-f-islam-outside-Turkish-embassy-admits-worried-end-killed.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://apnews.com/article/4663d8c06cb00d37dd295bd4c82698e1> - Hamit Coskun, a 50-year-old man, was convicted in London for a religiously aggravated public order offence after he burned a copy of the Quran and shouted anti-Islamic slogans outside the Turkish consulate on February 13. Coskun claimed he was staging a peaceful protest against Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, whom he accused of turning Turkey into a base for radical Islamists. District Judge John McGarva stated that while burning a religious book may be offensive, the disorderly conduct stemmed from Coskun's timing, location, and use of abusive language. Coskun was fined £240 ($325). The National Secular Society and the Free Speech Union, which supported Coskun’s legal fees, criticised the conviction as a threat to free speech and vowed to appeal, potentially taking the case to the European Court of Human Rights. Coskun defended his actions as a democratic protest and labelled the ruling an attack on free expression. The UK government affirmed that blasphemy laws had been repealed in 2008 and asserted that no new ones would be introduced. ([apnews.com](https://apnews.com/article/4663d8c06cb00d37dd295bd4c82698e1?utm_source=openai))
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/man-admits-assault-koran-burning-turkish-consulate-london-knightsbridge-b1222348.html> - Moussa Kadri, 59, of Kensington and Chelsea, pleaded guilty at Westminster Magistrates’ Court to attacking Hamit Coskun, 50, in Rutland Gardens, Knightsbridge, on February 13. Kadri denied possession of a bladed article in relation to the incident. The case was sent to Southwark Crown Court, where Kadri will stand trial for the weapon charge and be sentenced for the assault on May 12. Coskun, from Derby, has denied religiously motivated harassment over the same incident and is due to go on trial at Westminster Magistrates’ Court on May 28. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/london/man-admits-assault-koran-burning-turkish-consulate-london-knightsbridge-b1222348.html?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.gbnews.com/news/koran-burning-protester-hamit-coskun-charges-cps-rewritten-london-turkish-consulate> - Prosecutors have removed references to "the institution of Islam" from charges against Hamit Coskun, 50, who set fire to a copy of the Muslim holy book outside the Turkish consulate in London. The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) amended a charge against Coskun to "more accurately reflect the alleged offence". MPs and lawyers had warned the original charge was akin to reintroducing blasphemy laws to Britain. Conservative Shadow Justice Secretary Robert Jenrick welcomed the decision to drop the charge of causing alarm to the 'religious institution of Islam'. ([gbnews.com](https://www.gbnews.com/news/koran-burning-protester-hamit-coskun-charges-cps-rewritten-london-turkish-consulate?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/quran-burner-blasphemy-laws-cnhlk1n7> - Senior MPs, including former Lib Dem leader Tim Farron, have shared concerns over the decision to charge a man for burning the Quran outside the Turkish consulate in London. Hamit Coskun, 50, was charged with "intent to cause against religious institution of Islam, harassment, alarm or distress". A shocking video circulating online appeared to show Coskun being attacked with a knife after burning the religious text on Thursday. Moussa Kadri, 59, has been charged with causing actual bodily harm and possessing an offensive weapon in connection with the attack. ([thejc.com](https://www.thejc.com/news/politics/quran-burner-blasphemy-laws-cnhlk1n7?utm_source=openai))
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/two-men-charged-over-quran-burning-clash-outside-turkish-embassy-b1211343.html> - Two men have been charged over a conflict outside the Turkish embassy in central London in which a man burning the Quran was attacked by another man wielding a knife. Hamit Coskun, 50, of Derby was charged with a religiously aggravated public order offence after he was allegedly filmed burning the Quran. He has been remanded in custody and will next appear at Westminster Magistrates’ Court on Saturday, February 15. Moussa Kadri, 59, who resides in the borough of Kensington and Chelsea, was charged with causing actual bodily harm and possession of an offensive weapon. He was bailed and will appear at Westminster Magistrates’ Court on Monday, March 17. ([standard.co.uk](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/two-men-charged-over-quran-burning-clash-outside-turkish-embassy-b1211343.html?utm_source=openai))