**Fourteen suspects facing trial for 2015’s Paris massacre**

Fourteen people are facing trials in France over the deadly massacre 5+ years ago on Charlie Hebdo, a magazine of Paris. The alleged conspirators are in the Paris court and the three of them are being tried in absentia. 12 people in and across the Paris-based office of Charlie Hebdo shot dead by the Islamic attackers in 2015, and the people under trials got accused of helping and supporting them.

One of the three gunmen shot a policewoman too leading her death, and he also attached a supermarket of Jewish. Within 3 days, around 17 people got killed, and it was just the beginning of the jihadist attacks across the France states leaving around 250 people dead.

After the attack, there were several protests and millions of people marched across France and also across other parts of the globe exhibiting the contents with the slogan ‘Je Suis Charlie’ (I am Charlie). The magazine started the trials reprinting the Prophet Muhammad’s (who started the protests in the Muslim nations) controversial cartoons. President Emmanuel Macron then defended the press and French’s freedom "freedom to blaspheme, which gets linked to freedom of conscience".

**Expectations with the trials:**

Fourteen people, accused of supporting and planning the massacre are under trails, that were previously delayed with the Covid-19 pandemic. The former judge stated in March 2020 that with the tightened lockdown measures in France, it is nearly impossible to gather all the parties, all the witnesses, and the experts, even in the sanitary conditions.

The alleged conspirators got accused of seeking weapons and ensuring supports for the attacks at the office of Charlie Hebdo on January 7th, 2015. They are also accused of the later attacks on the police officer and also the ones on the supermarket, followed by the Hebdo’s attacks.

Evidence states that 3 of the accused have disappeared in Iraq and Northern Syria, and hence there are absentia trials for them. Several reports also reveal that the disappeared ones were killing through bombings against the Islamic State group; however, there are no confirmations for the same yet.

200 plaintiffs are there in the trial and the attacks’ survivors are to testify as expected.

The anti-terror prosecutor of France, Jean-Francois Ricard stated that it depends on the individuals involved in the logistics and the events, and in preparation of them, and the ones who offered financial supports, materials for the operation, weapons, and staying areas to the culprits. H added that these were the essentials of the attack.

These trials might continue till November 2020, before reaching any final verdict, as expected.

**The attack of 2015:**

On January 7th, 2015, two gunmen Cherif and Said Kouachi, who were French-Muslims and were also brothers, stormed the Charlie Hebdo’ Paris office before starting the open fire on the staff. Four celebrated cartoonists got killed, and Stephane Charbonnier (Charb), the magazine editor of the time, got killed too. Altogether, the victims constituted of the 2 police officers, 8 journalists, a visitor, and a caretaker.

After a tiresome manhunt, the gunmen were eventually killed by the France security forces.

Just a few days later, there was another related attack where a gunman Amedy Coulibaly killed an employee and three customers. The employee was previously a hostage investment source for the jihadists at the Jewish supermarket, Hyper Cacher, east of Paris. The gunman also shot a policewoman previously in the city and left her dead.

The remaining hostages were then freed by the security forces who then stormed the supermarket, killing the gunmen.

**All about the accused:**

One of the accused is Ali Reza Polat, a 35-year old man who got accused of following a main role in the attacks and was a key link between both of them. He was also accused of obtaining the required weapons. He also tried fleeing to Lebanon, Syria, and Dubai, but could not succeed.

Mickael Pastor Alwatik is another one of them whose DNA samples were later abstracted from the two guns found at the home of Coulibaly and also from a glove found at the scene.

Mohamed Fares himself told the investigators of his role being as a middleman for the assault rifle sale that was then used in the attack at the supermarket.

Amir Ramdani, Willy Prevost, Christophe Raumel, and Samir Makhlouf were also accused of providing the necessary supports.

Two people from the north-eastern France who were Miguel Martinez, a garage owner, and Abdelaziz Abbad, his associate, and two others from Belgium, Metin Karasular, the garage owner, and Michel Catino, his associate- got accused of the supplies of assault rifles, rocket launchers, pistols, bulletproof vests, ammunition, and chargers. They supplied these to the three gunmen.

Hayat Boumeddiene was the partner of Coulibaly, and she is being tried in absentia. A week before the attacks, she fled to France, moving ahead to Syria. Previously, reports stated that the US air-strike killed her, but then she was reportedly seen in the camp of al-Hol for the detainees of IS.

Mohammad Belhoucine and Mehdi Belhoucine are also accused of helping Hayat fleeing to Syria. However, both of them are now believed to be killed earlier in Iraq or Syria.

**Why was there a target on Charlie Hebdo?**

The weekly magazine Charlie Hebdo has been in controversies for a longer time, and it was also known for taking strikes on French establishments and religions.

Charb got death threats due to the controversial cartoons of Prophet Mohammad, leading which he sought 24-hour police protection. Earlier, there was also an attack in 2011 at the office of the magazine with the petrol bombs.

Charb, however, defended the Prophet’s cartoon stating it as a symbol of freedom to speech, he also stated that he does not blame the Muslims for not finding his cartoons funny, and he added telling the Associated Press in 2012 that he stays in French law and not in Karonic law.

In 2015, the magazine republished the controversial cartoon leading the magazine to the target.