



Lead Stories

Man jailed after Facebook murder case in County Durham, England

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Three rebels in Indonesia killed in raids

Man jailed after Facebook murder case in County Durham, England

A man has been jailed after being found guilty of the kidnapping, rape, and murder of a girl in County Durham, England, after arranging to meet her on social networking website Facebook by befriending her and giving her a false identity. 33-year-old Peter Chapman, an unemployed man who has no fixed abode, went onto Facebook and in October 2009 was met there by Ashleigh Hall, a 17-year-old girl who was a childcare student. She came from the town of Darlington.

On the website, Chapman assumed the identity of a teenaged boy named Peter Cartwright. After initially meeting Hall on Facebook, Peter convinced the girl to meet him via several other social networking websites. Reports said Hall had notified her mother that she was going to visit one of her friends. According to text messages, she believed that she was departing to meet the father of "Peter Cartwright". The "father" was in reality Peter Chapman. He then kidnapped, raped, and murdered the girl.

A police notice had been issued in relation to the disappearance of Chapman. According to a Merseyside Police statement, the notice wasn't issued until nine months after they realised Chapman had disappeared from his residence. The notice was issued in September 2009, a month before the murder of Hall.

Ashleigh Hall's dead body was discovered in a field in the town of Sedgfield. A short

time after the murder, police officers arrested Chapman for minor traffic violations. After being escorted into the police station, he told police officers of his offences while being questioned. A CCTV camera recorded Chapman saying to police officers: "I killed somebody last night." The police then followed him to the location of the dead body. He was still on parole at the time of his arrest. During a trial in Teesside Crown Court, Judge Peter Fox QC stated to Chapman: "This was an evil scheme very carefully brought, and with considerable detail to trap your victim." Peter Chapman was found guilty of offences of kidnap, rape, and murder. Fox sentenced him to a minimum of 35 years in prison, stating to Chapman that "[f]or what it is worth, I cannot foresee your release."

Chapman has been convicted in the past for previous offences. In 1996, he was given a seven-year jail sentence for the rape of two prostitutes. In that incident, he threatened to attack the two prostitutes with a knife. He has also been suspected of committing several other offences of sexual attacks and rapes against young women, but was never charged in any of those instances. Peter has been on the Sex Offenders Register since 2000.

Andrea Hall, the mother of Ashleigh Hall, said outside of the courthouse: "Them sort of people shouldn't be allowed out into society anyway. I blame them [the authorities] for letting them out." In a video, she stated to the media: "Just put the message out that please, parents whose kids are on Facebook, please ask them to tell you who they're talking to. You just don't know who is behind that photo. Look what happened to my daughter. It's unimaginable, what me and my family have gone through. I've got three other children that probably won't have a life now because I'll never, ever keep my eye off them. I'd also like to say thank you to the community and to all my friends for the support that they have given me through this."

Facebook have also released a statement

advising Internet users not to meet any individual in person that they have previously met online unless they know who the individual is. They said that "there are unscrupulous people in the world with malevolent agendas". Graham Reeds QC, who was on the prosecuting side, noted: "Having invented 19-year-old Peter to make contact with girls, he now decided to invent Peter's dad in order to persuade Ashleigh that it was safe to get into his car. The plan he devised was calculated and wicked and it worked."

The leader of the murder inquiry was Chief Superintendent Andy Reddick, who also gave his opinion about this incident. "Ashleigh made a mistake and paid for it with her life," he commented. "Her death and this murder trial should be a wake up call to parents and Internet companies around the world to ensure as far as they can, that nothing happens to another innocent victim."

Ohio State gunman kills employee before committing suicide

An Ohio State University employee allegedly killed a co-worker before committing suicide on Tuesday morning. The suspect was Nathaniel Brown, a 51-year-old custodial worker who has worked at the University since October. The victim of the shooting was Larry Wallington, a 48-year-old building service manager. Another employee, Henry Butler, was also shot, but survived and is in stable condition at a nearby hospital. According to officials, the shooting took place at 3:30 A.M. local time. Brown is said to have walked into a maintenance building with two handguns, and then commenced firing. Although police say that there were six men in the room at the time, only Wallington and Butler were shot. Within an hour of the shooting, a text message was sent out to about 25,000 students and faculty on campus alerting them of what had happened.

Information gathered following the shooting has revealed that Brown was unemployed and struggling to pay his

mortgage prior to his employment at Ohio State. Although a neighbor described him as "happy to be back at work," Brown's tenure at Ohio State ended quickly. Brown had learned from a recent letter from the school that he was going to be let go as of March 13. The letter went on to say that he had gotten an "unsatisfactory" job evaluation, and that was why he was being dismissed.

Three rebels in Indonesia killed in raids

Three rebels in Indonesia, which authorities say were terror suspects, have been killed near the capital Jakarta in raids, which are apparently connected with an operation in Aceh against rebels. One of the raids occurred at an internet cafe in Jakarta in the city of Palmulang. According to the Associated Press, the suspected rebel had been on the internet for about five minutes when security officials entered; he fired a shot from a revolver, but police returned fire and killed him.

In the other raid, police shot and killed two suspects from the same rebel group, who were on a motorcycle apparently fleeing, according to National Police spokesman Edward Aritonang, adding that one of them had a rifle.

It was not immediately clear whether Dulmatin, a member of the Jemaah Islamiyah group, one of Indonesia's most wanted men, whom authorities allege played a role in the a role in the 2002 bombing in Bali, was among those killed.

Ansyaad Mbai, the chief of the security ministry, remarked to Agence France-Presse that "[i]f it's true that it's him, we will be very grateful that the most-wanted terrorist has been killed. It will be a big relief to us." The BBC reports that DNA tests may be needed to determine whether or not Dulmatin was indeed among the dead men.

Commons Picture of the Day



A Dutch F-16 of the Solo Display Team on the landing approach during a training flight before the Air Show 2009 in Radom. Image credit Konfliktky.pl

Quote of the Day

Perhaps if only once you did enjoy
The thousandth part of all the happiness
A heart beloved enjoys, returning love,
Repentant, you would surely sighing say,
"All time is truly lost and gone
Which is not spent in serving love."
~ Torquato Tasso ~

Word of the Day

hypernatremic *adj*
(medicine) Having an abnormally high concentration of sodium (or salt) in blood plasma.

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