



HUDDERSFIELD

GROOMING GANG TRANSCRIPT

2021



Banaras Hussain



Talish Ahmed



Mohammed Akram



The sentencing remarks of Banaras Hussain, Talish Ahmed, and Mohammed Akram

Active in the '90s

PUBLISHED OCT 26

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About this case

These remarks concern three defendants, sentenced as a result of arrests made during Operation Tendersea, initiated by West Yorkshire Police in late 2013 in order to investigate historic sexual abuse of young girls.

The offences were committed throughout the mid-to-late 1990s, and concern one victim, who was aged between 12 and 15 at the time. The case is one part of a larger scandal involving the sexual abuse of children in Huddersfield.

Talish Ahmed was sentenced to 10 years for rape.

Mohammed Akram was sentenced to 13 years for multiple offences of indecent assault and rape.

Banaras Hussain was sentenced to 18 years for multiple offences of rape.

The victim was noted by the judge presiding over the case, HHJ Mushtaq Khokhar, as being “extremely vulnerable” at the time she was preyed upon by the defendants, being bullied at school and possessing “no feelings” towards her birth mother.

Along with Akram, Hussain, who was married at the time of the offending, gave the victim drugs and alcohol for the sole purpose of facilitating a sexual relationship with her. Ahmed raped the victim in a car before abandoning her in an “embarrassing and humiliating” state of undress.



IN LEEDS CROWN COURT

Case No: T20197566

Courtroom No. 4

The Courthouse
1 Oxford Row
Leeds
LS1 3BG

Thursday, 15th July 2021

Before:
HIS HONOUR JUDGE KHOKHAR

R E G I N A

-v-

MOHAMMED AKRAM
BANARAS HUSSAIN
& TALISH AHMED

MS A PARNHAM appeared on behalf of the PROSECUTION
MS D BREEN-LAWTON appeared on behalf of the DEFENDANT AKRAM
MR KHAZI[?] appeared on behalf of the DEFENDANT HUSSAIN
MS MUSHTAQ[?] appeared on behalf of the DEFENDANT AHMED

SENTENCE

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A

SENTENCE

JUDGE KHOKHAR: Banaras Hussain, you are 44 years of age and you stand to be sentenced on

B

count one and count two. Count one is a specific count relating to the first time you had sexual intercourse with the complainant. I say sexual intercourse; it was a rape of course. She was 13 years of age at that time. Count two, relates to a number of occasions on which you proceeded to rape her, that was between the ages of 13 to 14 years. On the indictment you were convicted of at least 10 occasions. But of course, as you will recall, in the course of your evidence, you conceded that during the period you were with the complainant, sexual intercourse took place with her as frequently as three to four occasions per week. Her estimate was two. But I am going to proceed on the basis of your conviction on count two, namely, that at least on 10 other occasions, you had sexual intercourse with Person 1, other than in count one.

C

It was of her misfortune that she met you at the age of 12 in 1995. It seems that you were the one who had approached her and at the time she was extremely vulnerable. I say that because, firstly, insofar as her family life is concerned, her birth mother, as she refers to her natural mother, had no feelings for her, she was not getting on with her at all. And a child does not refer to their natural mother as birth mother unless there was nil emotional attachment with their mother, and that was the case here.

Throughout the proceedings, in her interviews, in her evidence, whenever Person 2's name came up, she referred to her as a birth mother; in other words, she had no feelings. So, that is one aspect of it. Insofar as her schooling is concerned, she was bullied at school so she was not in a happy environment at school either.

A

She was hard working in the sense, there are not that many who start doing paper rounds at the ages of 12 and 13, she was [REDACTED] on her bike as the prosecution described in the [REDACTED]. And that is where she came across you.

B

I say her misfortune, because you were probably the first one who paid her any attention that was meaningful for her and she grabbed it with both hands, as someone who is starved of such affection. And you knew what you were doing but she was just a child, she did not know what she was doing. She thought she was in love with you and I remember the statement of Person 3, her friend which was read out in court. Saying, how head over heels she was with you but she was not prepared to listen to any criticism being made of you. And she was prepared to do anything for you and she did and more.

C

Because what happened after your meeting with her was, whilst she might have experimented with alcohol and maybe even cannabis prior to meeting you as youngsters do, you latched on to that, that was what you thought she wanted to do and you gave her plenty. Alcohol, cannabis, and cigarettes and she became dependent on you and she thought she was in a relationship, knowing fully well you were a married man, you had a wife. She knew you were much older than her and that is what I am saying. That the first person who comes along and showers her with a bit of love and affection, according to her, and she fell for you. But that was part of the grooming. You were much older than her, you compare the experiences of a 12-year-old or 13-year-old for that matter, with the experiences of someone of your age, you were 18 to 21 years of age.

A There is a vast difference and you capitalised on her affection for you by
giving her these things in terms of alcohol, cigarettes and drugs, you made her
feel dependent on you, and the affection of course. And it was inevitable
that it would lead to sexual relations between the two of you. But it is quite
clear and Person 4[?] asked you, what else was in common between the two of
B you? There was not anything, you were not interested in her as a person, you
were interested in her as sexual object and that is what you predominantly used
her for.

C At the same time, it is clear from the evidence that I heard, you were friends of
Akram and of course, again her second misfortune to have across Akram.
Because Akram, likewise, groomed her, that is the evidence that I heard and
that is the basis of the convictions against you. That is how the prosecution
put the case against you, that you were grooming her as well.
Well, what was your role? We know, according to the evidence given by her
that you were supplying her with speed, a new drug which she had not taken
prior to meeting you. She was still taking weed, cannabis, there was alcohol
and you made a foursome in that house which you rented with Banaras and
Person 5[?]. And of course, you knew at the time what was going on
between Banaras and her, notwithstanding her age. Both of you gave
evidence to the fact that she told you that she was 17 years of age. She
denied it and the jury did not believe you, so I have to proceed on the basis
that you knew what her age was at the material time when these things are
alleged to have taken place.

The most precious thing, certainly from a girl's point of view or something
which they remember for the rest of their life, is when they lose their
virginity.

A And insofar as poor Person 1 is concerned, she lost her virginity to you,
B Banares Hussain, on a mattress covered by curtains, used as a blanket or an
under sheet. What a way or desperate state to be having sex for the first time.
C But that was just the start of it, the rest of it was no better. I heard about
another address in [Inaudible] Street, where she had sex with you according
to your co-accused, Mr Akram. And she gave evidence about having sex in the
cars and outdoors. There was no mention of you treating her like someone who
would be in a relationship with you. I know you gave evidence about taking
her to cinemas and restaurants. She was never asked about any of that and I
am sure, you would agree, that in the course of the interviews which were
conducted with the police, there was never any time when she had said
anything against you. She always said it was consensual; you were caring
and I am sure that if you had taken her to the cinema as you said you did every
week or every other week, or taken her to the restaurants, she would definitely
have mentioned that. She did not, nor was she asked about it. It was
something you were trying to make up in order to make yourself look better
than you really are in the eyes of the jury. You did not have any care for her.

I can understand you lying to the police about it because it had come out and
you might have been embarrassed in front of your family, but to put her through
cross-examination where it is being alleged that no sex had taken place between
you and her, that she was lying on her oath in front of the jury. Just shows how
callous you were. She had to live her ordeal in the witness box.

Akram, a number of times that she complained about you touching her. And
as I mentioned to your learned counsel, whilst she is right that groping is not
as serious as the two rapes on which you have been convicted of, nevertheless,
I regard that as part and parcel of grooming. Touching her first and then getting
her to be disinhibited and then proceeded to have sex with her. And that is
precisely what happened.

A The first sexual encounter with her takes place in her father's flat
against sparsely furnished, nobody lived in it, it needed redecoration
according to Person 6's evidence. There was very little in it and under the
B influence of alcohol and drugs, she was raped whilst Person 5 was in that
bed. You denied throughout Person 5's presence or even indeed Person
1's having met her. But the evidence was different, she was always
there. Once particular occasion stands out quite well from the rape when
she refers to Person 5 herself and you travelling on a bus to Elland[?]
C where Person 5 lived or around there. And before you were making of
yourself on the bus, Mr Hussain gave evidence to the effect that Person 5 was
always there.

[REDACTED]

You are a supplier of drugs and you have got previous convictions for it,
so it does not surprise me when Person 1 says that you supplied her with
amphetamines or speed, whatever you want to call it. A very strong drug,
much stronger than cannabis. So much so that she was hallucinating on three
or four occasions when she took it. And then the audacity on your part to
actually rape her in her own parents' home, whilst they are sleeping next
door. However you gained entry, it matters not, as I said to the jury. The fact
of the matter is both of you were talking about this the same night. She says
you raped her, you were saying you did not, and the jury accepted her evidence,
so I proceed on that basis.

3

A Whilst no force was used, I accept, but then there did not need to be any force
being used to rape her. Because she had been groomed by you and by
Banaras Hussain. So, this was an offending course of conduct on your part
which went over a period of time against her. Whether it was in the form
of the two rapes which took place or in the form of simple groping. I think
B she put it about a minimum of 20 times, but you were convicted of at least 10,
that is right is it not. Amendment to count five?

THE CLERK OF THE COURT: Yes, yes
she did. JUDGE KHOKHAR: Yes.

C And then I move on to you Talish[?] Ahmed. You are 41 years of age now.
You all have previous convictions but none for sexual offences. And your case
is different from the others in the sense that you were not a groomer but you
did take your opportunity when it presented itself, and some might say, you
contrived it. Because at the flat, it seems, whilst there is no scientific
evidence before the Court to say that her drink was spiked, whether the drink
was spiked or simply because you and [Inaudible] plied her with a quantity of
drink to cause her to be intoxicated, the intention seems quite clear.

You did not know her from Adam at the time, and being so generous with her
points to only one indicator and that is the intention. That you had this
intention to have sex with her. Maybe [Inaudible] did as well, we will never
know. But the fact of the matter is, there came a stage in the course of the
night and she has had enough to drink, not to know where she is going, what
she is doing really. She is put in the car and it might have been, it might have
started off a case of simply dropping her but there was a detour. You were on
the backseat with her.

A Blackmoorfoot Reservoir, that is where she was raped, in the car whilst
[Inaudible] he driver of the taxi was watching.

B No force was used, and as I say in this case, she was totally incapacitated it
seems. Even if she wanted to resist, she could not have resisted. But, what
makes it abundantly clear as to how she was treated is the way she was
dropped off and that is the respectable way of saying how she was dumped out
of the car. It was not a moving car, the car stopped with her trousers and
knickers round her ankles. She was asked to leave the car. She fell on the
C side of the road and poor Person 1 could not even walk. Why not? Because
of her knickers and trousers being round her ankles. She did not even have the
strength to pull them up in order to walk; that was the state she was found in
by her parents. Just imagine, with hindsight, whenever she remembers that
occasion, how embarrassing and humiliating it would be for her. Her parents
to see her in that state.

I do not pass any judgment on the way she was dealt with by the police in
relation to her complaint. But one thing is certain, as she put it, she went
through one side and came through the other as a better person. Because
something inside her, and decent people do have, something inside her, in her
brain clicked and she did not want to be in that position again. And she
changed herself by going to college, by learning, getting qualifications, by
working and it is of great credit to her that at the age of 17 she was living
independently of her parents. Her own flat, working and studying and she
eventually qualified as a teacher. Come 2018, if somebody else other than
herself had pointed a finger at her and said that she was the subject of
grooming and had been raped many times by a lot of people, nobody would
have believed. That is how much she had changed her life. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

A

And whilst she was unable to name people who had sex with her or sexually assaulted her during that period of time, when Banaras, you and Akram were accompanying her, she knows there were other men who exploited her vulnerability and because she was groomed it was easier for them to carry out that exploitation.

B

And the seeing of the headline in the newspaper brought it all back, something she wanted to bury and take with her to her grave, as she puts it, and she has never been the same since. The head teacher, you heard her statement

C

being read out. Supportive, and she was absolutely frank with the head teacher as to what had happened and she did not know what to do because she realised that by reporting it, she would be exposed, and the peaceful existence, to an extent, that she was leading, the life that she was leading, would be ruined. And she did it. In her interview she says why she did it; she does not want anybody else to suffer. Good on her. And one hopes that with counselling and the passage of time, she will recover, no thanks to you.

These are serious offences and it would not surprise you the sort of sentences I have in mind. You would have read about these sentences for these types of cases in the newspapers or on the television. And I am afraid it is just and appropriate that sentences of this type are passed to deter others from embarking upon a course of conduct like you Akram and Banaras Hussain, where you robbed children of their innocence. A time when she should have been playing with her friends, carrying out the normal activities which children do of 12, 13 and 14 years of age. Instead, she was being drunk, on weed, having sex with people much older than her. She did not see much of her childhood. These are serious offences.

A Insofar as the Sexual Harm Prevention Order is concerned, I have considered
that with a great deal of care. Regardless of what my predecessors might have
done in cases such as these, I have no indication that at present there would be
any risk that you present, which causes me to think it is necessary for the
making of such an order. Because as it is, you are going to be subject to the
B sex offenders' register and that by itself has its own requirements. Also, the
type of sentence that I am going to pass will have lengthy licence periods,
during which your movements will be monitored and you will be seen by the
Probation Service. And of course, what these convictions mean is, that if any
risk is entertained by those who work with you and you come out of prison.
C This order can be applied for on the basis of these convictions and the
evidence of those risks which come to light, when you are release. So, think
about that. And it is for those reasons I do not think it is necessary for me to
make the order today. The sentences I am going to pass are as follows.

Firstly, Banaras Hussain, will you stand up.

You are 44 years of age, a grandfather. You have children of your own, and
whilst you have a number of previous convictions, you have none for
offences of a sexual nature. But you would agree that in this particular
instance, what you did over a period of time, to this girl, has had a long-
lasting impact upon her. There might have been a period of time when she
was able to recover in the sense, not think too much about it. But as it is, it is a
consequence of your conduct and others towards her and you are a
contributor, that she suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder. She needs
counselling in order to get herself right.

A You were the primary groomer and I remember in the course of your evidence,
you were proud to say that you had an open relationship, which can only
mean one thing in the sort of context we are talking about. Open relationship
for the others to abuse the same girl if they choose to do so and that is
precisely what happened to her and you were the initiator. The starter, you got
B her introduced to some of the others.

The sentence, as I say, I have in mind. Mr Khazi[?] is quite right in making
the submissions that I have been thinking of. The campaign of rape; that is
precisely what I had in mind. This is a campaign of rapes. Notwithstanding
C the fact that the perpetrator and the victim are known to each other.
Nevertheless, it is a grooming case in that context. Whilst no violence is being
used, there does not need to be violence.

The sentences are as follows. Insofar as count one is concerned, 10 years'
imprisonment. Insofar as count two is concerned, it has at least 10 rapes and it
is general course of conduct, a concurrent sentence of 18 years' imprisonment.
18 years in all, that is the sentence I pass in respect of you, you can go down.
Mohammed Akram, stand up.

You are also 44 years of age. You stand to be sentenced for two offences of
rape and at least 10 offences of indecent assault. All committed over a period
of time when Person 1 was 12 to 15 years of age. Insofar as the first rape is
concerned, I need not repeat myself by saying, that you were convicted as one
of the groomers in the case. You supplied drugs, you supplied alcohol and other
stuff to her.

Insofar as count three is concerned, there will be a sentence of 10 years'
imprisonment.

A I am going to make all sentences concurrent in this case. So, it is course of
conduct that I am dealing with. Count four, that is the rape at her parent's
house, 13 years' imprisonment, concurrent. Count five, indecent assaults, at
least 10, three years' imprisonment, concurrent. Making a total of 13 years'
B imprisonment. You may go down. Appropriate victim surcharges and
collection orders will apply to all defendants.

Talish Ahmed, will you please stand up.

C Count seven, you are charged with one count of rape. You were 18 years of
age at the time. In many ways, your rape really is the worst of the lot because
she was a total stranger to you until she met you that very evening at the
snooker bar. And thereafter what followed I have already covered. This was a
very very nasty offence that took place. But I accept what has been advanced
on your behalf by Ms Mushtaq[?], to an extent, and I shall remain in the
category which is accepted to be the category that applies to you, namely
Category 2A.

In your case, there was, as I have said before, a considerable amount of
degradation and humiliation involved the way after the sexual intercourse,
the rape. The complainant was dumped out of the car. In her state she could
have wandered on to the road and got knocked down. Anything could have
happened to her. But mostly, if you think about it yourself, what I have
described earlier, the state she was found in. I would not expect anyone
who has caring characteristics, rather than selfish motives, dumping somebody
by the side of the road in that manner. The least sentence I can pass in your
case is one of 10 years' imprisonment and also the appropriate victim surcharge
and collection order. You may go down.

A

JUDGE KHOKHAR: Anything else?

MS PARNHAM: Your Honour, I am grateful. You did indicate earlier that you would impose a restraining order and I take it that is in place.

JUDGE KHOKHAR: Yes, in the case of all three defendants for an indefinite period of time.

B

MS PARNHAM: Thank you.

JUDGE KHOKHAR: As I say, it is for the police to keep an eye whenever they are released and

these motions by themselves, with the evidence of the risk which the impose, will entitle the police to give the order.

C

MS PARNHAM: Your Honour, I am grateful, thank you.

JUDGE KHOKHAR: Yes, yes. Thank you very much all of you.

MS PARNHAM : Thank you.

JUDGE KHOKHAR Yes. You can leave, you do not have to stay, thank you very much.

MS PARNHAM: All right, thank you.

JUDGE KHOKHAR: Can I say something about the officer in the case. I think she did a wonderful job. I know now is not the time to say anything. But my thanks and gratitude to her.

MS PARNHAM: Your Honour, I am grateful. She is sat in the public gallery [inaudible]. **End of sentence.**

A

B

C

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