

Brag Sheet: 53 things to know about Tahir Abbas

1. **A genetic descendant of Genghis Khan and Alexander the Great**—because his mother, born near the River Punjab (where Alexander’s army was defeated and retreated), passed down her bright green eyes to his daughter. Genghis Khan, meanwhile, left a lot of genetic breadcrumbs while conquering (and occasionally murdering) millions.
2. **First—and still the only—in his extended *biraderi* (patrilineal clan-kinship network) of 4,500 or so ‘Bachlakrans’ to earn a doctorate**, achieved 25 years ago. While a few others have since joined the master’s club, his framed diplomas remain the gold standard (and a source of mild family intimidation).
3. **At 48, he received a diagnosis of ADHD and Asperger’s Syndrome**, which provided a number of explanations, such as why he consistently believed he was the only sane person in the room and that everyone else was crazy. Turns out, his brain just runs on a different clock speed (and it’s expectedly brilliant in between periods of zoning out in relation to other humans, including people he likes).
4. **Professor of Radicalisation Studies** at Leiden University, tackling extremism, Islamophobia, and ethnic relations with a critical eye.
5. **Honorary Professor at the University of Exeter**, because one professorship just wasn’t enough.
6. **Promoted to Full Professor at Leiden University in 2022**, a well-deserved milestone.
7. **Scientific Coordinator of the EU-funded DRIVE project**, exploring radicalisation and social inclusion across Europe.
8. **Principal Investigator for the PROTONE project**, protecting religious spaces and fostering interfaith dialogue.
9. **PhD in Ethnic Relations from the University of Warwick**, where he began his journey into understanding societal divides.
10. **Visiting scholar at the London School of Economics and New York University**, because globetrotting is his thing.
11. **Interdisciplinary researcher**, blending sociology, Islamic studies, and political science like a pro.
12. **Expert on Islamophobia**, challenging stereotypes and advocating for nuanced conversations.
13. **Critical voice on counterterrorism**, pushing for policies that actually work.
14. **Advocate for social inclusion**, believing education and community are the building blocks of stronger societies—because nothing counters extremism like a good dose of empathy and a curious, engaged community.
15. **Author or editor of 20 books**, including *Countering Violent Extremism* and *Islamophobia and Radicalisation*.

16. **Published over 100 articles and chapters**, because he loves writing almost as much as he loves coffee.
17. **Editor of *Muslim Diasporas in the West***, a four-volume series that's a must-read in the field.
18. **Co-editor of *Political Muslims***, offering a fresh perspective on Muslim youth resistance.
19. **Author of *Contemporary Turkey in Conflict***, exploring the complexities of ethnicity, Islam, and politics.
20. **Analysed the Buffalo Attack Manifesto**, casting light on far-right extremism.
21. **Examined Salafism in the Netherlands**, because understanding radicalisation starts with asking the right questions.
22. **Former professor of sociology at Istanbul University**, where he fell in love with the city's vibrant energy—a place where ancient minarets meet modern skyscrapers, and bazaars buzz alongside chic cafés. Turkey's vast natural beauty and the strong, unfiltered charm of Turkish coffee didn't hurt either.
23. **Reader in sociology at the University of Birmingham**, deepening his expertise in ethnic relations.
24. **Senior Research Officer for the UK government**, bridging the gap between academia and policy.
25. **Supervisor of PhD students**, guiding the next generation of scholars with patience and humour.
26. **Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts (FRSA) and the Academy of Social Sciences (FAcSS)**—fancy titles for a down-to-earth guy.
27. **Influential blogger**, sharing insights on Islamophobia, radicalisation, and counterterrorism.
28. **Collaborative researcher**, working with international teams to tackle global security challenges.
29. **Dedicated to public engagement**, fostering dialogue between academia, policymakers, and the public—because everyone loves a good chat.
30. **Speaks Urdu, school-level French, and minimal Turkish**—all rusty as hell. can read Qur'anic Arabic (thanks to childhood classes) and proudly pronounce his Dutch street name, though mastering the rest of the language feels like trying to explain radicalisation to a toddler.
31. **Lived and worked across continents**, from the UK to Turkey to the Netherlands and beyond.
32. **Resides in The Hague**, enjoying its beaches, museums, and vibrant cultural scene—because life's too short for boring cities.
33. **Committed to internationalisation**, because global challenges need global solutions.

34. **Believes in the power of innovation**, driving forward-thinking research and teaching.
35. **Inspired by critical theory**, applying it to understand the root causes of extremism.
36. **Advocated for decolonial approaches**, challenging dominant Eurocentric perspectives.
37. **Engaged in intensive fieldwork**, because real-world insights matter.
38. **Survived the pandemic**, adapting his research methods and perfecting the art of zoom fashion (business on top, pyjamas on the bottom).
39. **Passionate about writing**, whether it's academic papers, poetry, or his next big project.
40. **Publishes poetry under a pseudonym**, because even professors need a creative outlet.
41. **Chess enthusiast**, always ready for a game that challenges the mind.
42. **Fitness fanatic**, balancing yoga, cycling, and gym work with his busy academic schedule.
43. **Loves a good cappuccino**, often found brainstorming ideas in cozy cafés (and ranking latte art).
44. **Not a fiction fan**, because truth is far stranger—an axiom he often uses to justify his obsession with real-world complexities (and to dodge casual book club chatter about bestselling novels).
45. **Aspiring artist**, planning to create and display his own artwork in his flat (abstract chaos, anyone?).
46. **Committed to lifelong learning**, because there's always more to discover—and he's not done surprising himself yet.
47. **Believes in the importance of friendship**, valuing relationships as the cornerstone of success (and also because friends help you move furniture).
48. **Living his dream**, thriving as a university professor, but still wondering if his colleagues secretly regret hiring someone who spends so much time overthinking everything.
49. **Radical scholar**, shaping the future of radicalisation studies and contributing to a more inclusive world.
50. **Loves meaningful conversation**, whether it's about ideas, shared experiences, or life's big questions. Small talk, though? Not so much. When someone drones on about themselves without connection or depth, his face contorts like he's just bitten into a lemon.
51. **Occasionally wears socks inside out**, a side effect of being up late working most nights and being a little slow to get going in the morning. (He insists it's a deliberate act of rebellion against mundane routines.)
52. **Has a secret talent for mimicking accents**, though he only breaks it out at parties (or when someone dares him).
53. **Turning 55 in March**, but still feels 25 at heart (and occasionally acts like it, much to the amusement—or horror—of his students and colleagues).