

Two Chicago Men Charged in Connection With Alleged Roles in Foreign Terror Plot That Focused on Targets in Denmark

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CHICAGO, Oct. 27 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Two Chicago men have been arrested on federal charges for their alleged roles in conspiracies to provide material support and/or to commit terrorist acts against overseas targets, including facilities and employees of a Danish newspaper that published cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in 2005, federal law enforcement officials announced today. There was no imminent danger in the Chicago area, officials said, adding that the charges are unrelated to recent terror plot arrests in Boston, New York, Colorado, Texas and central Illinois.

The defendants charged in separate criminal complaints unsealed today in U.S. District Court in Chicago are David Coleman Headley, 49, and Tahawwur Hussain Rana, 48, also known as Tahawar Rana, announced Patrick J. Fitzgerald, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, and Robert D. Grant, Special Agent-in-Charge of the Chicago Office of the FBI. The complaints remained under seal temporarily after the defendants' arrests, with court approval, so as not to compromise further investigative activity.

Headley, a U.S. citizen who changed his name from Daood Gilani in 2006 and resides primarily in Chicago, was arrested on Oct. 3, 2009, by the Chicago

FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) at O'Hare International Airport before boarding a flight to Philadelphia, intending to travel on to Pakistan. He was charged with one count of conspiracy to commit terrorist acts involving murder and maiming outside the United States and one count of conspiracy to provide material support to that overseas terrorism conspiracy.

Rana, a native of Pakistan and citizen of Canada who also primarily resides in Chicago, was arrested on Oct. 18, 2009, at his home by federal agents. Rana is the owner of several businesses, including First World Immigration Services, which has offices on Devon Avenue in Chicago, as well as in New York and Toronto. He was charged with one count of conspiracy to provide material support to a foreign terrorism conspiracy that involved Headley and at least three other specific individuals in Pakistan.

Both men have been held in federal custody since each was arrested. If convicted, Headley faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment for conspiracy to murder or maim persons abroad, while Headley and Rana each face a maximum of 15 years in prison for conspiracy to provide material support to terrorism.

On Oct. 18, 2009, JTTF agents executed search warrants in connection with the investigation at four locations: Headley's and Rana's residences on the north side of Chicago, Rana's immigration business in Chicago, and a farm he owns in Kinsman, Ill., approximately 80 miles southwest of Chicago, which is used to provide halal meat for Muslim customers, as well as a grocery store in Chicago.

According to both complaints, since at least late 2008 until Oct. 3, 2009, as part of the conspiracy to murder and maim persons abroad, Headley

allegedly identified and conducted surveillance of potential targets of a terrorist attack in Denmark on two separate trips to Denmark in January and July 2009, and reported and attempted to report on his efforts to other conspirators in Pakistan. As part of the conspiracy to provide material support to terrorism, Rana allegedly helped arrange Headley's travels overseas and conceal their true nature and purpose to surveil potential terror targets overseas, and discussed potential targets for attack with Headley.

Headley allegedly reported and attempted to report on his overseas surveillance to other conspirators, according to the affidavits, including:

- Ilyas Kashmiri, identified as the operational chief of the Azad Kashmir section of Harakat-ul Jihad Islami (HUJI), a Pakistani-based terrorist organization with links to al Qaeda. Kashmiri, who is presently believed to be in Waziristan in the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA) region in northwestern Pakistan, issued a statement this month that he was alive and working with al Qaeda;
- "Individual A" (who is identified as Individual A in the Headley affidavit and as Individual B in the Rana affidavit), who is associated with Kashmiri, as well as with Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), another Pakistani-based terrorist organization;
- an individual identified as "Lashkar-e-Taiba Member A" (LeT Member A), who has substantial influence and responsibility within the organization and whose identity is known to the government.

"The public should be reassured that there was no imminent danger in the Chicago area. However, law enforcement has the duty to be vigilant to

guard
against not just those who would carry out attacks here on our soil but
those
who plot on our soil to help carry out violent attacks overseas. I wish
to
express my deep appreciation to the FBI agents and other members of
the Joint
Terrorism Task Force for their extremely hard work on this matter," said
Mr.
Fitzgerald.

"The criminal complaints unsealed today have exposed a serious plot
against
overseas targets by two Chicago-based men working with Pakistani-
based
terrorist organizations. Information developed during this investigation
was
shared with our foreign partners as we worked together to mitigate
these
threats. This case is a reminder that the threat posed by international
terrorist organizations is global in nature and requires constant
vigilance at
home and abroad," said David Kris, Assistant Attorney General for
National
Security.

"This investigation demonstrates the well-established relationships that
we
have with our law enforcement partners, both foreign and domestic.
We work
closely with state, local and federal law enforcement agencies in the
United
States, as well as with our overseas partners, to identify and disrupt
threats
here and abroad," said Mr. Grant.

According to the affidavits in both cases, Headley at times has claimed
to be
a consultant with or representative of Rana's business, First World
Immigration Services, but appears to perform little if any actual work
for the
business. In addition, Headley's apartment in Chicago is leased to an
individual who is deceased. Despite his apparent lack of financial
resources
and substantial employment, Headley has traveled extensively since
the second

half of 2008, including multiple trips to Pakistan and various countries in Europe. Postings to an internet group for graduates of a military school in the Pakistani town of Hasan Abdal (a group that refers to itself as "abdalians"), reflect that both Rana and Headley have participated in the group and referred to their attendance at that school.

The Denmark Project

Beginning in late 2008, Headley corresponded extensively with Individual A and LeT Member A regarding what they referred to in coded communications as the "Mickey Mouse Project," "mmp," and "the northern project," according to the affidavit. The Mickey Mouse Project allegedly involved planning for one or more attacks at facilities and employees of Morgenavisen Jyllands-Posten, a Danish newspaper that in 2005 published cartoons depicting the Prophet Mohammed, to which many Muslims took great offense. In October 2008, Headley allegedly posted a message to the "abdalians" internet discussion group stating that "I feel disposed towards violence for the offending parties," referring to the Danish cartoonists and others who he identified "as making fun of Islam."

Using coded language, Rana, Headley, Individual A and LeT Member A allegedly have referred to this plot, as well as discussions of other targets, as "investments," "projects," "business," and "action," and have described their hopes for success both in terms of receiving religious awards, as well as getting "rich," "richer," and making "profit." Between August 2008 and Dec. 7, 2008, Headley sent multiple email messages from internet addresses located in Karachi and Lahore in Pakistan, the charges allege. On Dec. 7, 2008, just before traveling from Pakistan to the United States that same day, Headley

allegedly used one of multiple email accounts to store a detailed list of items for himself, which he titled "Mickey Mouse." Included on the list (contained in the affidavits) were the following items:

- Route Design (train, bus, air)
- Cross (Cover Authenticator)
- Trade? Immigration?
- Ad? (Lost Luggage) (Business) (Entry?)
- Kings Square (French Embassy)
- Counter surveillance (magic eye)

- Security (armed)?

In January 2009, Headley traveled to Copenhagen, Denmark, and Rana allegedly arranged portions of his travel. During the trip, Headley allegedly visited two different offices of the Jyllands-Posten -- in Copenhagen and Aarhus, Denmark. The Copenhagen office is located in Kings Square near the French Embassy. Headley falsely told Jyllands-Posten employees that he was visiting on behalf of First World Immigration Services, which he said was considering opening offices in Denmark and might be interested in advertising the business in the newspaper. While in Denmark, Headley instructed Rana to be alert for an email from a Jyllands-Posten sales representative, and to ask First World's Toronto and New York offices to "remember me," in case a newspaper representative called. According to the complaints, Rana corresponded from Chicago with a representative of the Jyllands-Posten by email in which he pretended to be Headley.

After visiting Denmark, Headley traveled to Pakistan to meet with Individual A. During this visit, Headley traveled with Individual A to Pakistan's FATA region and met with Kashmiri. Before returning to Chicago in June 2009, Headley sent his will to Rana and Rana responded by sending a coded

message
establishing a new email account, the complaint alleges.

In July and August 2009, Headley exchanged a series of emails with LeT Member A, including an exchange in which Headley asked if the Denmark project was on hold, and whether a visit to India that LeT Member A had asked him to undertake was for the purpose of surveilling targets for a new terrorist attack. These emails reflect that LeT Member A was placing a higher priority on using Headley to assist in planning a new attack in India than on completing the planned attack in Denmark. After this time, Headley and Individual A allegedly continued focusing on the plan with Kashmiri to attack the newspaper, rather than working with LeT, the complaint alleges.

In late July 2009, Headley traveled again to Copenhagen and to other locations in Europe, and Rana again arranged portions of his travel. When Headley returned to the United States, he falsely told border inspectors that he was traveling on business as a representative of First World Immigration, although his luggage contained no papers or other documents relating to First World.

After returning to Chicago in August 2009, Headley allegedly used coded language to repeatedly inquire if Individual A had been in touch with Kashmiri regarding planning for the attack, and expressing concern that Individual A's communications with Kashmiri had been cut off. In early September 2009, Headley and Rana took a lengthy car ride during which they discussed the activities of the other individuals, including past terrorist acts, and Headley discussed with Rana five actions involving targets that expressly included "Denmark." In conversations with Rana and Individual A in August and September 2009, Headley indicated that if the "doctor" (alleged to be a reference to Kashmiri) and his people were unable to assist, then

Headley would perform the planned operation himself.

In September 2009, after initial press reports indicated that Kashmiri had been killed in a drone attack in Pakistan, Headley and Individual A allegedly had a series of coded conversations in which they discussed the reports of Kashmiri's death and what it meant for the projects they were planning. Individual A sought to reassure and encourage Headley, telling him, among other things, that "[t]his is business sir; these types of things happen." On Sept. 20, 2009, Headley allegedly told a family member words to the effect that he had spoken to Rana and they agreed that "business must go on."

In a Sept. 21, 2009, telephone conversation, Individual A indicated to Headley that Kashmiri was alive and "doing well." In a subsequent conversation on Sept. 30, 2009, Individual A again assured Headley that Kashmiri, whom he referred to as "Pir Sahib," was "absolutely all right" and had not gotten "married," which was code for being killed. Headley asked Individual A if it was possible to now have a meeting with Kashmiri and Individual A responded that Kashmiri "just today, was asking about you" (Headley).

According to the affidavit, Headley stated in conversations last month that he intended to travel to Pakistan in early October to meet with Individual A and Kashmiri, and he was arrested on Oct. 3 as he prepared to board a flight from Chicago to Philadelphia, intending to travel on to Pakistan. During a search of Headley's luggage, a memory stick was recovered that contained approximately 10 short videos of Copenhagen, including video focused on the Jyllands-Posten building in King's Square taken both during the day and night,

as well as a nearby Danish military barracks and the exterior and interior of Copenhagen's central train station, consistent with the checklist he stored which mentioned "route design." In addition, Headley had an airline reservation, allegedly made by Rana, to fly from Atlanta to Copenhagen on Oct. 29, 2009.

The investigation is continuing and is being conducted by the Chicago FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force, with particular assistance from the Chicago Police Department, the Illinois State Police and the Department of Homeland Security.

The prosecution is being handled by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Daniel Collins and Vicki Peters from the Northern District of Illinois, with assistance from the Counterterrorism Section of the Justice Department's National Security Division.

The public is reminded that a criminal complaint contains mere allegations that are not evidence of guilt. The defendants are presumed innocent and are entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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