

Beat: News

Indictment unsealed charging terrorism, fraud, and identity theft offenses

Abdulrahman Mohammed Hafedh Alqaysi

Houston, Texas, 24.06.2022, 05:40 Time

USPA NEWS - A 24-year-old former Iraqi refugee has been charged with conspiracy to provide material support to a designated foreign terrorist organization, announced U.S. Attorney Jennifer B. Lowery and Assistant Attorney General Matthew G. Olsen of the Department of Justice's National Security Division (DOJ-NSD).

Abdulrahman Mohammed Hafedh Alqaysi made his initial appearance in federal court today. Also charged are his cousin Mohammed (aka Moe) Amer Faisal Al Qaysi, 26, another former Iraqi refugee, and Hami Jamshid aka Jamshid Ahmadzai, 32, a naturalized U.S. citizen. Hafedh Al Qaysi, Faisal Al Qaysi and Jamshid resided in Richmond, Houston and Sugar Land, respectively.

Law enforcement took them into custody June 16 on the charges contained in a sealed nine-count superseding indictment, returned April 26. The indictment was unsealed as the three appeared in court today.

Hafedh Al Qaysi did unlawfully and knowingly conspire and agree with others known and unknown to provide material support and resources to the Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS), according to the charges. The Secretary of State has defined ISIS as a foreign terrorist organization.

Hafedh Al Qaysi is also charged with three counts of making a false statement in a naturalization application. The indictment alleges that he falsely answered "no" when asked if he had ever been a member of or in any way associated, either directly or indirectly, with a terrorist organization, or if he was ever a part of any group or ever helped any group, unit or organization that used a weapon against any person or threatened to do so.

The naturalization application also asks whether the applicant had ever committed, assisted with or attempted to commit a crime or offense for which they were not arrested. Hafedh Alqaysi, Faisal Al Qaysi and Jamshid all falsely answered "no" to that question, according to the indictment.

The indictment also alleges that Jamshid procured citizenship or naturalization unlawfully.

The three men face additional charges of conspiracy to commit wire fraud. Beginning on or about Jan. 1, 2015, through on or about March 10, 2017, they conspired together to devise a scheme to defraud and to obtain money and property by means of false and fraudulent pretenses, representations and promises. The indictment alleges that Hafedh Alqaysi also committed aggravated identity theft in relation to that scheme.

If convicted, Hafedh Al Qaysi faces up to 20 years in federal prison for the material support count as well as well as a mandatory two years for the identity theft which must be served consecutively to any other prison term imposed. Making a false statement in a naturalization application and procurement of citizenship or naturalization unlawfully carry possible penalties of five and 10 years, respectively. All three also face up to 20 years for the conspiracy to commit wire fraud, upon conviction.

The FBI conducted the investigation with the assistance of Homeland Security Investigations. Assistant U.S. Attorney Alamdar S. Hamdani is prosecuting the case along with DOJ-NSD Trial Attorney Joshua Champagne.

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Source: Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Texas press release June 17, 2022

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-21123/indictment-unsealed-charging-terrorism-fraud-and-identity-theft-offenses.html>

Editorial office and responsibility:

V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDSIV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Wendy Westhoven

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619