



Department of Justice

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Aafia Siddiqui Arrested for Attempting to Kill United States Officers in Afghanistan

NEW YORK- Michael J. Garcia, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Mark J. Mershon, the Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), and Raymond W. Kelly, the Police Commissioner of the City of New York, announced today the arrest of Aafia Siddiqui on charges related to her attempted murder and assault of United States officers and employees in Afghanistan. Siddiqui arrived in New York this evening and will be presented tomorrow before a United States Magistrate Judge in the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. According to the Complaint filed in Manhattan federal court:

On July 17, 2008, officers of the Ghazni Province Afghanistan National Police ("ANP") observed Siddiqui outside the Ghazni governor's compound. ANP officers questioned Siddiqui, regarded her as suspicious, and searched her handbag. In it, they found numerous documents describing the creation of explosives, as well as excerpts from the Anarchist's Arsenal. Siddiqui's papers included descriptions of various landmarks in the United States, including in New York City. Siddiqui was also in possession of substances that were sealed in bottles and glass jars.

On July 18, 2008, a party of United States personnel, including two FBI special agents, a United States Army Warrant Officer, a United States Army Captain, and United States military interpreters, arrived at the Afghan facility where Siddiqui was being held. The personnel entered a second floor meeting room -- unaware that Siddiqui was being held there, unsecured, behind a curtain.

The Warrant Officer took a seat and placed his United States Army M-4 rifle on the floor next to the curtain. Shortly after the meeting began, the Captain heard a woman yell from the curtain and, when he turned, saw Siddiqui holding the Warrant Officer's rifle and pointing it directly at the Captain. Siddiqui said, "May the blood of [unintelligible] be directly on your [unintelligible, possibly head or hands]." The interpreter seated closest to Siddiqui lunged at her and pushed the rifle away as Siddiqui pulled the trigger. Siddiqui fired at least two shots but no one was hit. The Warrant Officer returned fire with a 9 mm service pistol and fired approximately two rounds at Siddiqui's torso, hitting her at least once.

Despite being shot, Siddiqui struggled with the officers when they tried to subdue her; she struck and kicked them while shouting in English that she wanted to kill Americans. After being subdued, Siddiqui temporarily lost consciousness. The agents and officers then rendered medical aid to Siddiqui.

Siddiqui, a 36-year-old Pakistani woman who previously resided in the United States, is charged in a criminal Complaint filed in the Southern District of New York with one count of attempting to kill United States officers and employees and one count of assaulting United States officers and employees. If convicted, Siddiqui faces a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison on each charge.

Mr. Garcia praised the investigative work of the Joint Terrorism Task Force ("JTTF"), the Federal Bureau of Investigation and New York City Police Department. He also expressed his gratitude to the Office of International Affairs of the Criminal Division of the United States Department of Justice and the United States Department of State for their assistance in the case. Mr. Garcia also thanked the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Massachusetts for their assistance.

Mr. Garcia said that the investigation is continuing.

Assistant United States Attorney Christopher L. Lavigne is in charge of the prosecution.

The charges and allegations contained in the Complaint are merely accusations and the defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

[Criminal Complaint](#)

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