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Reno Man Charged with Conspiring to Provide Material Support to Terrorism Groups in India and Pakistan

A Reno, Nev. man has been charged with providing material support to terrorism groups in India and Pakistan in order to intimidate the Indian government and to harm persons that were not supporting their cause, announced John Carlin, Acting Assistant Attorney General for National Security, Daniel G. Bogden, U.S. Attorney for the District of Nevada, and Laura A. Bucheit, Special Agent in Charge of the FBI for Nevada.

“A thorough investigation and cooperation among agencies led to these charges,” said U.S. Attorney Bogden. “Investigating and prosecuting matters of national security is the top priority of the U.S. Department of Justice.”

Balwinder Singh, aka Jhajj, aka, Happy, aka Possi, aka Baljit Singh, 39, of Reno, is charged in an indictment with one count of conspiracy to murder, kidnap, and maim persons in a foreign country, one count of conspiracy to provide material support to terrorists, one count of making a false statement on an immigration document, two counts of use of an immigration document procured by fraud, and one count of unlawful production of an identification document. Singh was arrested on Tuesday, Dec. 17, 2013, in Reno, and is scheduled to appear before a U.S. Magistrate Judge on Friday, Dec. 20, 2013, for an initial appearance and arraignment.

“After an extensive investigation, the FBI-led Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) of Northern Nevada has disrupted an individual’s involvement in facilitation activities in support of a foreign terrorist organization, targeting an ally of the United States,” said FBI Special Agent in Charge Bucheit. “We will continue to work with our international partners to prevent acts of terrorism on U.S. soil or, as in this case, on that of an ally. This investigation demonstrates the importance of law enforcement coordination and collaboration here and around the world.”

According to the indictment, Singh was a citizen of India who fled to the United States and claimed asylum. Singh lived in the United States where he eventually obtained a permanent resident card from the United States. The indictment alleges that Singh is a member of two terrorist organizations, Babbar Khalsa International (BKI) and Khalistan Zindabad Force (KZF), whose members aim to establish an independent Sikh state in part of the Punjab region of India known as Khalistan. These groups engage in bombings, kidnappings and murders in India to intimidate and compel the Indian government to create the state of Khalistan. These groups also target for assassination persons they consider traitors to the Sikh religion and government officials who they consider responsible for atrocities against the Sikhs.

The indictment alleges that the object of the conspiracy was to advance the goals of BKI and KZF by raising money and obtaining weapons to support acts of terrorism in India. It is alleged that the conspiracy began on a date unknown but

no later than Nov. 30, 1997. It is alleged that Singh used a false identity and obtained false identification documents in the United States so that he could travel back to India without being apprehended by the Indian authorities. It is alleged that Singh communicated with other coconspirators by telephone while he was in the United States to discuss acts of terrorism to be carried out in India. It is alleged that Singh sent money from Reno, Nev., to co-conspirators in India for the purchase of weapons that would be provided to members of the BKI and KZF to support acts of terrorism in India. It is alleged that Singh traveled from the United States to Pakistan, India, and other countries to meet with coconspirators to assist in the planning of terrorism in India, and that Singh provided advice to coconspirators about how to carry out acts of terrorism.

If convicted, Singh faces up to life in prison and fines of up to \$250,000 on each count.

The case is being investigated by the FBI-led Joint Terrorism Task Force in northern Nevada, and prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys Sue Fahami and Brian L. Sullivan, and Trial Attorney Mara M. Kohn of the U.S. Department of Justice Counterterrorism Section.

The public is reminded that an indictment contains only charges and is not evidence of guilt. The defendant is presumed innocent and entitled to a fair trial at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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