



Department of Justice

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AHMAD KHAN RAHIMI INDICTED IN MANHATTAN FEDERAL COURT FOR EXECUTING BOMBING AND ATTEMPTED BOMBING IN NEW YORK CITY

Rahimi Allegedly Detonated and Attempted to Detonate Bombs on Public Streets in the Chelsea Neighborhood of Manhattan

WASHINGTON—Ahmad Khan Rahimi aka Ahmad Rahami, 28, of Elizabeth, New Jersey, was charged today in Manhattan federal court in an eight-count indictment for offenses related to his alleged execution and attempted execution of bombings in New York City on Sept. 17, announced Acting Assistant Attorney General for the National Security Division Mary B. McCord and U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara for the Southern District of New York. The case is assigned to U.S. District Judge Richard M. Berman for the Southern District of New York.

“Ahmad Khan Rahimi has been indicted in New York and separately charged in New Jersey for allegedly planting and detonating bombs that resulted in numerous injuries,” said, Acting Assistant Attorney General McCord. “It was through world class investigative work that the defendant was identified and arrested before he could do any more harm. Pursuing those who seek to conduct attacks on our homeland will always remain the highest priority of the National Security Division.”

“Two months ago, Ahmad Khan Rahimi allegedly planted bombs in the heart of Manhattan and in New Jersey,” said U.S. Attorney Bharara. “The bomb that exploded in Chelsea shattered windows hundreds of yards away and propelled a 100-pound dumpster over 120 feet, injuring over 30 people. Now indicted by a grand jury, Rahimi will face justice in a federal court for his alleged violent acts of terrorism.”

As alleged in the criminal complaint that was filed on Sept. 20 and the indictment that was filed today:

On Sept. 17, Rahimi transported two improvised explosive devices from New Jersey to New York. Rahimi placed one of the devices in the vicinity of 135 West 23rd Street in the Chelsea neighborhood of New York (the 23rd Street Bomb) and the other in the vicinity of 131 West 27th Street in the Chelsea neighborhood (the 27th Street Bomb).

At approximately 8:30 p.m., the 23rd Street Bomb – consisting of a high explosive main charge – detonated, causing injuries to over 30 people and multiple millions of dollars of property damage across a 650-foot crime scene. The injuries included, among other things, lacerations to the face, abdomen, legs and arms caused by flying glass; metal shrapnel and fragmentation embedded in skin and bone and various head injuries. The explosive components appear to have been placed inside a pressure cooker and left in a dumpster. The explosion propelled the more than 100-pound dumpster more than 120 feet. The blast shattered windows as far as approximately 400 feet from the blast site and, vertically, more than three stories high.

Shortly after the 23rd Street Bomb detonated, the 27th Street Bomb was located by law enforcement. The 27th Street Bomb, which failed to detonate, consisted of, among other things, a pressure cooker connected with wires to a cellular telephone, likely to function as a timer, and packaged with an explosive main charge, ball bearings and steel nuts.

Earlier that day, at approximately 9:35 a.m., another improvised explosive device, which also was planted by Rahimi, detonated in the vicinity of Seaside Park, New Jersey, along the route for the Seaside Semper Five Marine Corps Charity 5K race. The start of the race – which was scheduled to begin at 9:00 a.m. – was delayed on account of other law enforcement activity.

On Sept. 18, at approximately 8:40 p.m., additional improvised explosive devices that Rahimi also planted were found inside a backpack located at the entrance to the New Jersey Transit station in Elizabeth. One of these devices detonated as law enforcement used a robot to attempt to defuse it.

On Sept. 19, at approximately 9:30 a.m., Rahimi was arrested by police in Linden, New Jersey. Rahimi fired multiple shots at police, striking and injuring multiple police officers before he was himself shot, subdued and placed under arrest. In the course of Rahimi's arrest, a handwritten journal was recovered from Rahimi's person. Written in the journal were, among other things, mentions of explosive devices and laudatory references to Usama Bin Laden, the former leader of al Qaeda, Anwar al-Awlaki, a former senior leader of al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and Nidal Hasan, who shot and killed 13 people in Foot Hood, Texas.

* * *

Rahimi is charged in the indictment with one count of using a weapon of mass destruction, one count of attempting to use a weapon of mass destruction, one count of bombing a place of public use, one count of destroying property by means of fire or explosive, one count of attempting to destroy property by means of fire or explosive, one count of interstate transportation and receipt of explosives and two counts of using of a destructive device in furtherance of a crime of violence, namely, the use and attempted use of weapons of mass destruction.

The statutory maximum penalties are prescribed by Congress and are provided here for informational purposes only, as any sentencing of the defendant will be determined by the judge.

In addition to the pending charges in Manhattan federal court, Rahimi also has been charged in the federal court for the District of New Jersey in a complaint with offenses in connection with his alleged efforts to detonate explosives in Seaside Park and Elizabeth and in New Jersey state court for attempted homicide of police officers during his arrest.

U.S. Attorney Bharara praised the outstanding efforts of the FBI's New York Joint Terrorism Task Force. U.S. Attorney Bharara also thanked the Counterterrorism Section of the Department of Justice's National Security Division for its assistance.

The prosecution of this case is being handled by the Office's Terrorism and International Narcotics Unit. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Nicholas J. Lewin, Emil J. Bove III, Andrew J. DeFilippis and Shawn G. Crowley are in charge of the prosecution, with assistance from Trial Attorney Brian K. Morgan of the National Security Division's Counterterrorism Section.

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

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