



THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
SOUTHERN DISTRICT *of* TEXAS

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local man charged with making threat during university Zoom lecture

HOUSTON – A 19-year-old U.S. citizen residing in Richmond is set to appear in federal court on allegations he made a bomb threat against University of Houston (UH), announced U.S. Attorney Ryan Patrick.

Ibraheem Ahmed Al Bayati is charged with making threats or conveying false information to destroy by means of fire or explosives and making a threat over interstate commerce. He is expected to make his initial appearance before U.S. Magistrate Judge Sam Sheldon today at 2 p.m.

Federal authorities took him into custody late Friday, Sept. 4, upon the filing of a criminal complaint. According to those charges, Al Bayati identified himself as Abu Qital al Jihadi al Mansur and joined a UH student lecture via Zoom on Sept. 2. Shortly thereafter, he allegedly interrupted and said “what does any of this have to do with the fact that UH is about to get bombed in a few days?”

According to the criminal complaint, he then uttered an Arabic phrase that means the “Islamic State will remain.” Al Bayati then allegedly held up his index finger and repeated the phrase. He left the call to the gasps of students, according to the charges.

The complaint further states that Al Bayati's discussion about the “Islamic State” is a reference to a certain foreign terrorist organization also known as ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham).

In addition, Al Bayati allegedly sought out ISIS supporters online, helped an individual make a “pledge” and, according to Al Bayati, was known as an ISIS recruiter.

If convicted of making threats or conveying false information to destroy by means of fire or explosives, Al Bayati faces up to 10 years in federal prison in addition to a maximum of five years for making a threat over interstate commerce.

The FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Force conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Alamdar Hamdani and Steven Schammel of the Southern District of Texas are prosecuting the case with the assistance of Trial Attorney Michael Dittoe in the Department of Justice's counterterrorism section.

A criminal complaint is a formal accusation of criminal conduct, not evidence. A defendant is presumed innocent unless convicted through due process of law.

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