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Dias Kadyrbayev Sentenced to Six Years for Impeding the Boston Marathon Bombing Investigation

BOSTON—Dias Kadyrbayev, 21, a close friend of convicted Boston Marathon bomber, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, was sentenced today to six years in prison for his role in retrieving, and later disposing of, evidence in the Boston Marathon bombing investigation, specifically Dzhokhar Tsarnaev's backpack, containing fireworks and other items, as well as his role in concealing Tsarnaev's laptop computer from law enforcement. Kadyrbayev previously pleaded guilty to conspiring to obstruct justice and obstructing justice with the intent to impede the Boston Marathon bombing investigation.

Kadyrbayev has agreed to be deported to Kazakhstan from the United States after serving his sentence. At the time of his arrest, Kadyrbayev was in the United States on a revoked student visa while attending the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth (UMass).

"The concealment and destruction of evidence can have profound effects on the course of an investigation," said U.S. Attorney Carmen Ortiz. "Mr. Kadyrbayev knowingly concealed and disposed of critical evidence relating to the Boston Marathon bombing. He now faces the consequences of those actions—six years in federal prison, with deportation to follow."

On the evening of April 18, 2013, after Kadyrbayev viewed images of the Boston Marathon bombers released to the public, he exchanged text messages with Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. Later that evening, Kadyrbayev, Azamat Tazhayakov and Robel Philipos entered Dzhokhar Tsarnaev's dormitory room at UMass. Kadyrbayev removed Tsarnaev's laptop and a backpack containing fireworks, a jar of Vaseline, and a thumb drive. The fireworks appeared to have been opened and manipulated, and some of the explosive powder appeared to have been removed.

After returning to their apartment on the evening of April 18, 2013, and during the morning of April 19, 2013, Kadyrbayev and Tazhayakov watched television news reports and read Internet news articles about the bombing investigation and the manhunt for the two Boston Marathon bombers, whom they believed were Dzhokhar and Tamerlan Tsarnaev. During the early morning hours of April 19, 2013, Kadyrbayev and Tazhayakov agreed that they should get rid of Tsarnaev's backpack. Kadyrbayev placed the backpack and its contents, including the fireworks, into a large black trash bag and threw the entire bag into the garbage dumpster in his apartment complex. After discarding the backpack in the garbage, Kadyrbayev decided to keep Tsarnaev's laptop computer and continued to conceal it. He did not attempt to return it to Tsarnaev's dormitory room, nor did he notify law enforcement that he had Tsarnaev's computer.

On April 26, 2013, after a two-day search, federal agents found Tsarnaev's backpack in a New Bedford landfill. Although it was found, the condition of the backpack and its contents had been altered by the actions of Kadyrbayev and Tazhayakov.

In July 2014, Azamat Tazhayakov, 21, was found guilty by a federal jury in Boston of conspiring to obstruct justice and obstructing justice with the intent to impede the Boston Marathon bombing investigation. Sentencing is scheduled for June 5, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. Robel Phillipos, 21, was found guilty in October 2014 of two counts of making false statements to law enforcement in a terrorism investigation, and will also be sentenced on June 5th at 2:00 p.m.

United States Attorney Carmen M. Ortiz and Vincent B. Lisi, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Boston Field Division, made the announcement today. This investigation was conducted by the FBI's Boston Division and member agencies of the Boston Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) which is comprised of more than 30 federal, state and local enforcement agencies. Homeland Security Investigations in Boston, Massachusetts State Police, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth Department of Public Safety, New Bedford Police Department, Dartmouth Police Department, U.S. Department of Transportation—Office of Inspector General, U.S. Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration (TIGTA), Essex County Sheriff's Office, and Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigations in Boston, provided assistance with this investigation.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorneys B. Stephanie Siegmann and John A. Capin of Ortiz's Anti-Terrorism and National Security Unit.

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