



Written by [Mary McHugh](#) on June 1, 2010

Times Square Bomb Plot Suspects Released, Deported

On Monday, May 31, the Los Angeles Times was reporting that officials in Pakistan have released Major Adnan Ahmad, recently taken into custody under suspicion of helping the Times Square bomb attempt suspect, Faisal Shahzad. Pakistani law enforcement sources said it had been determined that Major Ahmad had not been involved with the failed car bombing.

On Saturday, May 1, Shahzad tried to leave a bomb-laden Nissan Pathfinder in New York's Times Square, but the apparatus did not detonate and he was arrested two nights later. He has apparently been talking with U.S. authorities about the event, and officials in Pakistan have also been cooperating in investigating there what part may apparently have been played by Pakistani militants in assisting him.



Ahmad was taken into custody in mid-May with some confusion as to whether he had retired from the military or was still active — or indeed was active at the time he was suspected of helping Shahzad — who claims to have had terrorist training in Pakistan. Reports at first stated that the two appeared have had cell phone contact, and at least one meeting together. Pakistani officials now say they have cleared Major Adnan, but are still keeping his brother, Qamar Admad for questioning. He is expected to be released soon.

Although Pakistan officials would not let U.S. authorities interview Major Ahmad directly, they claim to have relayed any pertinent information to American investigators. If Ahmad were found to have indeed assisted Shahzad while actually still in their military, it would be embarrassing for the Pakistan government to explain as it claims to be assisting all it can in fighting the existence of terrorists there. Pakistan is under intense U.S. pressure in this regard.

Said the L.A. *Times*:

It remained unclear when Ahmad had left the army, but the chief army spokesman told the Associated Press that Ahmad was forced to retire because he had ties to banned extremist groups.

Of the 13 people arrested in Pakistan in connection with the Times Square bombing attempt, seven have been released, the sources said.

One of the people who remains in custody is Shoaib Mughal, a Pakistani computer sales business owner from Islamabad who investigators believe acted as a go-between for the Taliban and Shahzad. Mughal is suspected of financing Shahzad's activities with \$11,000 to



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\$15,000, the sources said. The money was transferred to Shahzad with the help of Shahid Hussain, a close friend of Shahzad who has lived both in Pakistan and the U.S. and is in custody in Pakistan.

Another man who remains in custody is Mohammed Rehan, a Pakistani from Karachi and an alleged member of the militant organization Jaish-e-Mohammed. Investigators have said Rehan drove Shahzad from Karachi to Peshawar last summer, though they have not elaborated on alleged links between the two men.

Before Ahmad's release, U.S. officials said they could not link him to the Times Square plot. The information they had received from Pakistani officials after the interrogation of another suspect in the case suggested Ahmad was "disaffected" and had ties to Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, a militant group that allegedly assisted Shahzad, a senior official said. But the U.S. had not been able to independently verify those allegations.

U.S. authorities remain concerned that there have been connections between some in the Pakistani military and security services, and militant groups there.

Meanwhile, the [Associated Press](#) has reported that one of the men arrested on May 13 in Massachusetts has been ordered deported to Pakistan by a U.S. immigration judge. Aftab Khan was one of several men arrested in a simultaneous sting operation in several states as part of the ongoing investigation into the bomb attempt in Times Square. Khan has 30 days to appeal the ruling. He was suspected of supplying funds to Faisal Shahzad, but may not have known how Shahzad was going to use the money. Officials said that they found the name Faisal and his phone number listed in Khan's cell phone, and also written on an envelope in his apartment. Khan's attorney, Saher Macarius, says the phone may not have been his. According to the AP article:

Macarius has said that Khan came to Colorado last summer to marry an American soldier he had met overseas, but that she broke off the engagement. In November, Khan married a teacher in Cambridge.

During the hearing, an ICE [Immigration and Custom Enforcement] agent said Khan offered the woman in Colorado \$5,000 to marry him and became angry when she refused. The ICE agent also said the teacher told investigators her marriage to Khan was a fraud, and she had agreed to marry him because he paid her \$1,500 to \$2,000.

Khan claims to have never heard of Faisal Shahzad.

Photo: U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers take Aftab Ali Khan into custody outside a Watertown, Mass., home searched by FBI agents. A U.S. immigration judge on May 27 ordered that Khan be deported to his native Pakistan: AP Images



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