

# **TRACES OF TERROR: THE DETAINEES; U.S. Deports Most of Those Arrested in Sweeps After 9/11 - Correction Appended**

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 **Correction Appended**

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**Byline:** By SUSAN SACHS

## **Body**

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As legal challenges to its policy of secret detentions advance slowly through the courts, the government has managed to deport most of the Sept. 11 detainees at the center of the lawsuits.

Some 1,200 South Asian and Arab men were arrested in sweeps after the terrorist attacks, and 750 of them were ultimately detained on immigration violations, the Justice Department said. As of four weeks ago, when the latest head count was released, all but 74 had been expelled to their home countries or, in a handful of cases, released to resume their lives in the United States.

The government, citing national security concerns, has refused to disclose the names of those foreigners it held in detention, including the vast majority who were never charged with anything other than overstaying a visa. It has also banned the public from the deportation hearings of "special interest detainees" once it has finished investigating them.

The secret detentions and secret hearings have been attacked in federal lawsuits filed by civil liberties groups in Washington, D.C., New Jersey and Michigan, and those cases continue to wend their way through the judicial system.

"The fact that many of the so-called 9/11 detainees have been deported in no way diminishes the significance of the current legal challenges," said Lee Gelernt, a lawyer at the American Civil Liberties Union, adding that some detainees are still affected by the government's secrecy policies.

The group's lawsuits asked for the names of all detainees, whether they were still in the country or not.

Federal district judges have ruled against the government's blanket closing of hearings and refusal to release detainees' names. The Justice Department prevailed in just one instance so far. The New Jersey Supreme Court on Tuesday let stand an appellate decision against the disclosure of names.

Civil liberties groups and Muslim-American organizations have complained for months about the treatment of the foreigners picked up after Sept. 11, the lack of information given to the prisoners' relatives and the continued detention of people who had agreed to leave the country.

The pace of expulsions began to pick up in March, culminating in the group deportation of 26 Pakistani detainees on a chartered aircraft on June 26.

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They were among 131 Pakistanis who flew home together after being gathered from detention centers around the country. In addition to the Sept. 11 detainees, the passengers included 70 people who had ignored previous deportation orders and 35 who had been charged with crimes.

The immigration service routinely organizes special flights, usually once or twice a week, when large numbers of people from the same country are being deported, said Karen Kraushauer, a spokeswoman for the I.N.S.

Other expulsions of the Sept. 11 detainees have been so abrupt that family members did not know for days after the fact.

In the case of Ali Yaghi, a Jordanian detainee who had applied for residency, his American wife and three children in Albany were never told that he was deported to Jordan on June 24, after spending nearly nine months in the Metropolitan Detention Center in Brooklyn on an immigration charge.

Mr. Yaghi has not been heard from since, raising fears in his family that Jordan's security services may have been so suspicious about his long detention that they arrested him upon arrival.

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### Correction

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An article yesterday about the deportation of foreigners who had been detained for immigration violations after Sept. 11 misspelled the surname of a spokeswoman for the Immigration and Naturalization Service, who commented on transportation arrangements. She is Karen Kraushaar, not Kraushauer.

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