

# **DEPORTATION TO NEW ZEALAND IS LIKELY FOR SADDAM'S STEPSON AFTER ARREST; INS SAYS HE LACKED STUDENT VISA TO TAKE COURSES AT FLORIDA FLIGHT SCHOOL**

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## **Body**

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Saddam Hussein's stepson will likely be deported back to New Zealand after his arrest on immigration charges, federal authorities said.

Mohammed Nour al-Din Saffi, a citizen of New Zealand who has worked in commercial aviation, planned to attend classes at Aeroservice Aviation Center, said James Goldman, an assistant director for investigations at the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

FBI spokeswoman Judy Orihuela said one of the Sept. 11 hijackers trained at the same flight school. The South Florida Sun-Sentinel identified the hijacker as Ziad Jarrah, who is believed to have commandeered the plane that crashed in Pennsylvania.

According to the INS, the Iraqi leader's stepson was traveling as a tourist and had not applied for a student visa that would have allowed him to take courses.

There was no evidence that Saffi was connected to any terrorist group.

Goldman said Saffi was seeking recertification training at the flight school. The FBI said he is employed by an airline in New Zealand.

Saffi, 36, failed to tell customs agents of his intent to take courses when he arrived Tuesday in Los Angeles on a flight from New Zealand, Goldman said.

Orihuela, the FBI spokeswoman, said Saffi was tracked Wednesday as he flew from Los Angeles to Miami International Airport. He was taken into custody at a motel shortly after he arrived.

Saffi was at Krome Detention Center in Miami-Dade County and was being processed for deportation to New Zealand, Goldman said.

The Weekend Herald, a newspaper in New Zealand, reported in December that Saffi worked for Air New Zealand as an engineer and had lived in the country six years.

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The paper **said** officials **in New Zealand** had investigated Saffi **after** Sept. 11 when they learned he was **Saddam's stepson**. No action was **taken**, the paper **said**.

Mohammed Saffi is the eldest son of Samira al-Shahbandar, **Saddam's** second wife. His father is Nour al-Din Saffi, an aviation engineer and former head of Iraqi Airways.

According to sources **in** Baghdad and **in** Iraqi exile circles, Saddam forced Nour al-Din Saffi to divorce al-Shahbandar **in** the late 1970s before Saddam married her. He has since married again.

Mohammed Saffi is believed to have left Iraq **after** the 1991 Gulf War - first to neighboring Jordan and then to **New Zealand** - **after** an argument with his mother.

## Graphic

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PHOTO; Photo by THE ASSOCIATED PRESS - Mohammed Nour al-Din Saffi, the **stepson** of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, is pictured **in** December **in New Zealand**. Saffi has worked for Air **New Zealand** as an engineer, a newspaper reported.

## Classification

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**Person:** SADDAM HUSSEIN (50%)

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**Geographic:** MIAMI, FL, USA (67%); **FLORIDA**, USA (86%); CALIFORNIA, USA (79%); PENNSYLVANIA, USA  
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