

## **Muslim cleric denied bail;**

# **FBI AGENT TESTIFIES LODI IMAM FOSTERED SCHOOL FOR TERRORISTS**

San Jose Mercury News (California)

August 10, 2005 Wednesday MO1 EDITION

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**Section:** A; Pg. 3

**Length:** 717 words

**Byline:** By Pete Carey; Mercury News

## **Body**

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An immigration judge **denied** a **Lodi Muslim cleric bail** Tuesday, saying that based on the evidence presented by the **FBI** at a deportation hearing, he was "a flight risk and a danger to the community."

**FBI agent** Gary Shaaf **testified** that Shabbir Ahmed, 39, head of the **Lodi Muslim** Mosque, was helping establish a conservative Islamic **school** in **Lodi** that would be used for attacks in the United States at some unspecified time.

The startling testimony came during a bond hearing in San Francisco for Ahmed, who has been in jail since immigration authorities detained him in Sacramento on visa violations.

The hearing followed the arrest and detention in June of five members of a mosque that has shaken the religious community in the Central Valley town of **Lodi**. A father and son were arrested in June on charges of lying to the **FBI** about the son's six months at a Pakistani **terrorist** training camp, while Ahmed and two others were detained on visa violations.

Shaaf said he based his conclusions "on some of the information that's been provided to us" but said that the sources were confidential.

Ahmed's lawyer later called the allegations "ridiculous" and noted that his client has not been charged with any terror-related crimes, but merely with a visa violation.

The allegations come from the father and son who have been charged with lying to the **FBI**, the lawyer said. The **agent** said the **FBI** had "other sources" as well.

"My client can leave any time he wants, but he wants to fight," lawyer Saad Ahmad of Fremont told reporters after the hearing. "He believes he should not be removed unjustly." Ahmad said he would appeal Judge Anthony Murry's denial of **bail**. A hearing on the merits of the government's case is scheduled for Oct. 24.

Two members of the **Lodi** mosque **testified** as character witnesses, noting that the **imam** had preached obedience to U.S. law and had made outreach to Christian and Jewish religious groups a priority.

Clad in an orange Sacramento County Jail jumpsuit, Ahmed **testified** through an Urdu interpreter that he loves the United State. "I am living here. This is my country," he said.

He said that anti-U.S. speeches he gave in Pakistan in the months after the Sept. 11, 2001, **terrorist** attacks were emotional crowd-pleasers delivered in protest of U.S. bombing in Afghanistan. At the time, allied forces were

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ousting Afghanistan's Taliban government, which had given a haven to Osama bin Laden and his Al-Qaida **terrorist** organization.

Ahmed arrived from Pakistan on a religious visa in January 2002 to take the place of his mentor and fellow Pakistani, Mohammed Adil Khan, who had been the **Lodi** mosque's **imam** but was concentrating on developing the Islamic **school** nearby.

The **clerics** were tripped up by an **FBI** investigation and the arrest of a father and son -- Umer and Hamid Hayat of **Lodi** -- on charges of lying to the **FBI** about the 22-year-old Hamid's attendance at a Pakistani **terrorist** training camp for six months in 2003 and 2004 while he was living with his grandfather, who ran a conservative religious **school**.

Ahmed, Khan and Khan's son, Mohammad Hassan Adil, 19, were detained on visa violations. The Khans have agreed to be deported.

The **FBI agent testified** that Khan had suggested the young Hayat visit Pakistan and study at his grandfather's **school**, and Shabbir Ahmed encouraged it. The **agent** said the youth told the **FBI** that he had been trained at the **terrorist** camp and was told that orders for any attacks on the United States would be delivered to him through the two **clerics**, Ahmed and Khan. Shaaf said the orders would come to Khan from a radical political figure in Pakistan, Maulana Fazil Rehman.

Ahmed's lawyer said the elder Hayat merely had asked for help managing an unruly son.

Before coming to the United States, Khan taught at the Jamia Farooqia, a large Islamic **school** in Karachi founded by his father, Salimullah Khan, a prominent conservative religious figure in Pakistan. Shabbir Ahmed was a top student who taught at the **school** after graduation, then moved to Islamabad to become **imam** of a mosque there.

Shaaf **testified** that the Jamia Farooqia taught an ultra-conservative, "Deobandi" variety of Islam that was favored by the Taliban.

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## Classification

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Language: ENGLISH

**Subject:** PASSPORTS & VISAS (92%); **MUSLIMS** & ISLAM (90%); LAW ENFORCEMENT (90%); ARRESTS (90%); SPECIAL INVESTIGATIVE FORCES (90%); **TERRORIST** ORGANIZATIONS (89%); TERRORISM (89%); JUDGES (89%); AL-QAEDA (89%); RELIGION (89%); IMMIGRATION (78%); APPEALS (78%); **BAIL** (78%); CONSERVATISM (78%); SEPTEMBER 11 ATTACK (78%); TALIBAN (78%); LAWYERS (78%); CLERGY & RELIGIOUS VOCATIONS (78%); WITNESSES (78%); ASSOCIATIONS & ORGANIZATIONS (77%); **TERRORIST** ATTACKS (76%); CORRECTIONS (75%); CRIMINAL OFFENSES (75%); JEWS & JUDAISM (73%); CHRISTIANS & CHRISTIANITY (73%); BOMBINGS (71%)

**Organization:** FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (94%); FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION (94%)

**Industry:** LAWYERS (78%)

**Person:** OSAMA BIN LADEN (52%)

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**Geographic:** SACRAMENTO, CA, USA (79%); CALIFORNIA, USA (93%); PAKISTAN (92%); AFGHANISTAN (92%); UNITED STATES (92%)

**Load-Date:** August 10, 2005

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