

# NEWS

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United States Department of Justice  
U.S. Attorney, District of New Jersey  
970 Broad Street, Seventh Floor  
Newark, New Jersey 07102

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***Christopher J. Christie, U.S. Attorney***

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## Plainfield Man Admits Killing U.S. Companion in Pakistan in Attempt to Loot Estate

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NEWARK – A Plainfield man admitted today that while on vacation in Pakistan he killed his live-in companion and then attempted to benefit from the homicide by collecting assets of the man's estate, including his home, life insurance and retirement savings, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

Khawar Gardazi, 31, pleaded guilty to a two-count criminal Information charging him with Foreign Killing of a United States National and wire fraud in connection with the death of Nicolas Queune, 52, and the attempt to take control of Queune's estate.

U.S. District Judge Dennis M. Cavanaugh scheduled sentencing for March 24. Gardazi faces a maximum statutory penalty of 30 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Gardazi has remained in custody since his arrest at his parents' Woodbridge home on June 21, 2007.

Gardazi was first charged by the U.S. Attorney's Office with three counts of mail fraud and one of wire fraud – all connected with his attempt to loot Queune's estate by, among other things, claiming Queune had died of natural causes and presenting a photocopied, fraudulent death certificate for Queune.

The continuing investigation by the U.S. Attorney's Office and FBI led to today's guilty plea, which included the admissions by Gardazi that he killed Queune during an argument in Pakistan, buried the body there and attempted to fraudulently take control of the estate.

"This was a complex investigation and prosecution involving fraud and a killing committed in Pakistan," said Christie. "In the end, we are pleased with the result and the knowledge that Gardazi will spend a very long time in federal prison."

Gardazi is a U.S. citizen, born in Pakistan. Queune was born in France and had dual U.S./French citizenship.

Gardazi told Judge Cavanaugh today that, after meeting Queune in about 2005, the two formed a relationship and began living together at Queune's home in Plainfield.

In December 2006, Gardazi asked an attorney to draft a will for Queune and a trust in Gardazi's name. Upon Queune's death, the trust was to receive Queune's real property, worth approximately \$500,000, and other death benefits (including Queune's federal Thrift Savings Plan account which was valued at \$152,000) and federal employee retirement funds. Queune had worked for the Veterans Administration in Lyons.

Gardazi stated that on Jan 6, 2007, he and Queune boarded an airplane en route from JFK International Airport to Lahore, Pakistan. Customs records do not show Queune ever leaving Pakistan. After they arrived, on Jan. 7, Gardazi stated that the two men stayed in a house in Valenciatown, Pakistan, that had been rented by Gardazi's brother, identified in the Information as "N.H."

On Jan. 10, Gardazi admitted he and Queune had a violent argument, during which Gardazi

killed Queune, by shoving him and causing him to strike his head and die instantly.

Gardazi told Judge Cavanaugh, that after killing Queune, he realized that he could profit from his death. First, Gardazi said that N.H. assisted him, by transporting Nicholas Queune's body to a rural area outside Lahore, where it was buried in a field, to conceal his death from authorities.

After the body was disposed of, Gardazi said he enlisted the aid of his sister, identified as "M.K." in the Information, to help him obtain a fraudulent death certificate. M.K. telephoned a medical school classmate of hers, "W.A." and asked W.A. for her assistance in procuring a fraudulent death certificate for Gardazi.

On Jan. 13, Gardazi stated he and W.A. went to a stamp maker who was located in a market in Lahore, and using W.A.'s medical credentials, Gardazi had two stamps made, that he then used to make the fraudulent death certificate look authentic.

Gardazi admitted that on Jan. 15, he placed a telephone call to a resident physician who was affiliated with Nicholas Queune's employer. During the call, Gardazi advised him that Queune had died of a cardio-pulmonary arrest while in Pakistan, and that Queune's body had been cremated. Gardazi asked that the physician notify the VA of Queune's death.

Gardazi told Judge Cavanaugh that he then flew back to the United States on Jan. 17. Upon his return, Gardazi immediately visited the estate attorney who had prepared Queune's will and instructed that he begin probate proceedings on Queune's will, under which Gardazi was designated as the sole beneficiary immediately.

According to the Indictment which was filed in June, after learning of his brother's death, "P.Q.," flew from his home in France to the U.S., according to the Information. Before leaving, he filed a missing person's report with the Plainfield Police and asked that the authorities investigate Queune's death.

Gardazi admitted that on March 3, he called Queune's brother in France and told him that his brother had, in fact, died during a violent argument when Queune fell and struck his head. Gardazi proposed that he would end pursuit of Queune's assets if the brother would call off the police investigation.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Deborah J. Gannett.

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Weyssan Dun, with the investigation leading to Gardazi's arrest and guilty plea.

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Defense Counsel: Donald McCauley, Esq., Assistant Federal Public Defender, Newark

