

# 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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***More Information?*** Call the Assistant U.S. Attorney or other contact listed below to see if more information is available.

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queu0621.rel  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## Plainfield Man Suspected in Companion's Disappearance Arrested, Charged with Attempting to Loot Estate

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NEWARK – A Plainfield man under suspicion in the disappearance and death of his former companion was arrested today on charges of attempting to defraud him of his estate, including his home, life insurance and retirement savings, U.S. Attorney Christopher J. Christie announced.

The victim, Nicholas Queune, 52, of Plainfield, has not been seen since his departure on a trip to Pakistan with the suspect, Khawar Gardazi, 31. Upon his return to the United States, Gardazi reported that Queune had died of a heart attack in Pakistan and that Queune's body had been cremated. Gardazi then allegedly presented a dubious Pakistani death certificate to a New Jersey attorney in an attempt to probate Queune's will, in which he was designated the sole beneficiary, according to a criminal Complaint unsealed today.

Subsequently, Gardazi told a brother of the victim that, during an argument in Pakistan, he shoved Queune, who fell, hit his head and died.

Gardazi was arrested early today by Special Agents of the FBI at his parents' home in the Avenel section of Woodbridge. Gardazi is charged in a criminal Complaint with three counts of mail fraud and two counts of wire fraud, each of which carries a maximum federal prison sentence of 20 years and a \$250,000 fine.

Gardazi was brought before U.S. Magistrate Judge Patty Shwartz this afternoon. He was ordered detained without bail. The case will next be presented to a grand jury to consider an indictment against Gardazi.

Gardazi met Queune in early 2005 and shortly thereafter moved into Queune's Plainfield home, according to the Complaint. On April 18, 2005, Gardazi convinced Queune to add Gardazi's name to the deed to Queune's home, which had a value of approximately \$500,000.

In December 2006, the two men met with an attorney to draft a will for Queune and a trust in Gardazi's name. Upon Queune's death, the trust was to receive his real property, death benefits (valued then at \$152,000) and federal employee retirement funds. Queune had worked for the Veterans Administration in Lyons.

The attorney told investigating agents that Gardazi orchestrated the creation of the trust.

On Jan. 7, the two men boarded a flight from JFK International Airport to Lahore, Pakistan. Prior to the departure, Queune told several friends that he feared he might not return from the trip, according to the Complaint. Customs records do not show Queune ever leaving Pakistan.

Gardazi returned to the United States on Jan. 17 accompanied by his mother. He immediately called the attorney who drafted the will and met with him the next day, saying he wanted the attorney to begin probating the will, according to the Complaint. He presented a purported Pakistani death certificate, but the document was a photocopy, had no seals or proper authentication.

The attorney advised him that the death certificate had no legal value as a basis to probate the will. The investigation confirmed that the death certificate is fraudulent.

On March 3, Gardazi called Queune's brother in France and told him that his brother had, in fact, died during an argument when Queune fell and hit his head, according to the Complaint. Gardazi allegedly proposed that he would end pursuit of Queune's assets if the brother would call off the police investigation.

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

A criminal Complaint is merely an accusation. All defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.

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

Christie credited Special Agents of the FBI, under the direction of Acting Special Agent in Charge Pedro Ruiz, with the investigation leading to Gardazi's arrest.

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