



U. S. Department of Justice

Jason R. Coody
United States Attorney
Northern District of Florida

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, November 17, 2022

United States Attorney's Office
Northern District of Florida
(850) 216-3845
libby.lastinger@usdoj.gov
Follow us on Twitter | @NDFLnews

PERRY MAN SENTENCED TO 30 YEARS IN FEDERAL PRISON **FOR DRUG-TRAFFICKING CHARGES**

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA – Beyah Islam “Bear” Basha, 44, of Perry, Florida, was sentenced to thirty years in federal prison after being convicted following a jury trial on August 23, 2022, on charges of conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of methamphetamine and distribution of 50 grams or more of methamphetamine. The sentence was announced by Jason R. Coody, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Florida.

“Those who repeatedly commit serious crimes are deserving of significant prison sentences,” said U.S. Attorney Coody. “This career criminal has demonstrated his unwillingness to abide by the law, committing repeated drug crimes. Given the outstanding work of our state, local, and federal law enforcement partners, he will no longer be distributing drugs in our community.”

Evidence introduced at trial demonstrated that Basha was distributing methamphetamine from his home in Perry, Florida, while Basha was on house arrest for state charges including possession of cocaine with intent to sell/deliver. Multiple witnesses testified that they had purchased methamphetamine from Basha at his home, citing his then state court restrictions. The Perry Police Department and Taylor County Sheriff's Office made three controlled purchases of methamphetamine from Basha at or outside his residence. On August 25, 2021, an undercover DEA agent and a confidential source also purchased three ounces of methamphetamine from Basha at his residence.

Basha's imprisonment will be followed by ten years of supervised release.

“The DEA Miami Field Division remains committed to doing everything we can to prevent drug misuse and poisonings, including working with our local, state, and federal law enforcement partners, to hold those who threaten the safety and health of our Florida communities accountable for their unlawful actions,” said DEA Special Agent in Charge Deanne L. Reuter. “I commend the hard work and dedication of these investigators who worked tirelessly to bring Beyah Basha to justice.”

Basha qualified as a Career Offender and had an enhanced mandatory minimum sentence based on his prior criminal history. Basha had been to prison on seven prior occasions, primarily for

drug-trafficking offenses. In 2018, Basha finished serving an 84-month federal prison sentence for distribution of cocaine and possession of cocaine with intent to distribute. Basha subsequently violated supervised release and served an additional 18-months in federal prison.

“Beyah Basha has been involved in the illicit drug trade in Taylor County and the City of Perry for at least two decades, said Chief Jamie Cruse, Jr., Perry Police Department. “This is not his first conviction for such crimes, having chosen to follow a career as a criminal, participating in the drug trade and committing offenses that are closely associated with the illicit sale of drugs the entire time. Basha’s conviction and incarceration will remove him from a society to which he has distributed dangerous drugs for years. The Perry Police Department is proud to partner with The Taylor County Sheriff’s Office, The Drug Enforcement Administration, the U.S. Attorney’s Office, and other Federal and State partners in a concerted effort to remove this and other dangerous career criminals that continuously spread the poison of dangerous drugs to the youth and other Citizens of North Florida.”

The case resulted from a joint investigation by the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Taylor County Sheriff’s Office, and the Perry Police Department. It was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney James A. McCain.

This prosecution is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) investigation named Operation Arrowhead. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level drug traffickers, money launderers, gangs, and transnational criminal organizations that threaten the United States by using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach that leverages the strengths of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies against criminal networks. More information about OCDETF may be found at <https://www.justice.gov/OCDETF> and more information about Operation Arrowhead may be found at <https://www.justice.gov/usao-ndfl/pr/georgia-man-arranging-methamphetamine-transactions-within-federal-prison-sentenced-300>.

The United States Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of Florida is one of 94 offices that serve as the nation’s principal litigators under the direction of the Attorney General. To access public court documents online, please visit the [U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Florida](https://www.uscourts.gov/uscourts/USADistrictCourtfortheNorthernDistrictofFlorida) website. For more information about the United States Attorney’s Office for the Northern District of Florida, visit <http://www.justice.gov/usao/fln/index.html>.

#