# Pakistani drug trafficker Muhammed Asif Hafeez sentenced to 16 years after decade-long global narcotics operation exposed



Muhammed Asif Hafeez, a name synonymous with duality, has recently emerged from the shadows of a carefully crafted façade to face the consequences of his elaborate criminal enterprise. Known for his connections with elite British society as a polo ambassador, Hafeez was accused by US officials of being one of the world’s most prolific drug traffickers. From 2017, he operated in the UK while orchestrating a vast narcotics network, moving heroin, methamphetamine, and hashish from South Asia to markets around the globe.

Born in September 1958 in Lahore, Pakistan, Hafeez was raised in a comfortably middle-class family. He claimed to have trained as a commercial pilot and ventured into business by establishing Sarwani International Corporation, a company that purportedly supplied technical equipment, including drug detection technology, to governmental and military entities across various countries. Despite the innocuous surface of these ventures, former employees raised suspicions about their legitimacy, reporting that transactions were often conducted in cash, devoid of any formal records.

For over two decades, Hafeez disseminated information about rival cartels to authorities in both the UK and the Middle East. He purportedly framed this as a civic duty, insisting that his actions stemmed from a desire to combat crime. However, this narrative began to unravel during legal proceedings in which courts deemed his informant status a mere stratagem to eliminate competitors, as evidenced by a notable correspondence submitted to the European Court of Human Rights.

The turning point for Hafeez came in 2014 when two associates unknowingly participated in an undercover operation targeting their leader's lucrative network. They were filmed negotiating with an undercover Drug Enforcement Administration agent from Colombia, unwittingly revealing the depth of their operation, which involved high-purity heroin. This sting operation marked the beginning of the end for Hafeez's empire.

After years of investigation and a complex joint effort between British and American law enforcement, Hafeez was arrested in London in 2017 and subsequently extradited in 2023. Upon pleading guilty to multiple drug trafficking charges in late November 2024, he faced a significant sentence of 16 years in a New York prison, with the potential for further penalties stemming from his elaborate criminal activities. His release is slated for 2033, leaving a significant gap between his lavish life and the stark realities of his punishment.

As the repercussions of his double life unfold, Hafeez’s case highlights the intricate tapestry of global drug trafficking networks, where the lines between legitimate business and crime often blur. His trajectory from polo clubs and high society to the harsh confines of a prison cell serves as a reminder of the risks inherent in a life founded on deception.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c14jpymxrkno), [[4]](https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/acting-manhattan-us-attorney-announces-provisional-arrest-london-pakistani-national)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c14jpymxrkno), [[2]](https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/pakistani-national-muhammad-asif-hafeez-pleads-guilty-drug-trafficking-charges), [[5]](https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/former-leader-kenyan-organized-crime-family-and-his-brother-plead-guilty-narcotics)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/former-leader-violent-kenyan-organized-crime-family-sentenced-25-years-prison-narcotics), [[6]](https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/acting-manhattan-us-attorney-announces-provisional-arrest-london-pakistani-national)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c14jpymxrkno> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/pakistani-national-muhammad-asif-hafeez-pleads-guilty-drug-trafficking-charges> - In November 2024, Muhammad Asif Hafeez, also known as 'Sultan', pleaded guilty in Manhattan federal court to conspiring to import heroin, methamphetamine, and hashish into the United States. Hafeez, 66, was arrested in London in 2017 and extradited to the U.S. in May 2023. He admitted to leading a sophisticated international drug trafficking network responsible for manufacturing and distributing ton quantities of dangerous narcotics globally. Each offense carries a maximum sentence of life in prison and a mandatory minimum sentence of 10 years. Sentencing is scheduled for a later date.
3. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/former-leader-violent-kenyan-organized-crime-family-sentenced-25-years-prison-narcotics> - In August 2019, Baktash Akasha Abdalla, leader of a violent Kenyan organized crime family, was sentenced to 25 years in prison for narcotics, weapons, and obstruction offenses. The sentencing followed his guilty plea to conspiring to import heroin and methamphetamine into the U.S., among other charges. The case highlighted the extensive international drug trafficking operations involving the Akasha Organization, with connections to Pakistan and other countries. The U.S. Department of Justice praised the efforts of the DEA's Special Operations Division and international law enforcement partners in bringing Abdalla to justice.
4. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/acting-manhattan-us-attorney-announces-provisional-arrest-london-pakistani-national> - In August 2017, Muhammad Asif Hafeez, known as 'Sultan', was provisionally arrested in London on charges related to large-scale drug trafficking. The U.S. Department of Justice announced plans to seek his extradition to face charges including conspiracy to import heroin and methamphetamine into the United States. Hafeez was alleged to have trafficked drugs on a massive and global scale, working with transnational criminal organizations to manufacture and distribute enormous quantities of narcotics worldwide. The arrest was a significant step in addressing international drug trafficking networks.
5. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/former-leader-kenyan-organized-crime-family-and-his-brother-plead-guilty-narcotics> - In January 2019, Baktash Akasha Abdalla and his brother Ibrahim Akasha Abdalla pleaded guilty to multiple charges, including conspiring to import heroin and methamphetamine into the United States. The case involved the Akasha Organization, a violent Kenyan crime family with international connections. The brothers faced charges related to drug trafficking, weapons offenses, and obstruction of justice. Their guilty pleas marked a significant development in the prosecution of international drug trafficking organizations operating between Kenya, Pakistan, and the U.S.
6. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/pr/acting-manhattan-us-attorney-announces-provisional-arrest-london-pakistani-national> - In August 2017, Muhammad Asif Hafeez, known as 'Sultan', was provisionally arrested in London on charges related to large-scale drug trafficking. The U.S. Department of Justice announced plans to seek his extradition to face charges including conspiracy to import heroin and methamphetamine into the United States. Hafeez was alleged to have trafficked drugs on a massive and global scale, working with transnational criminal organizations to manufacture and distribute enormous quantities of narcotics worldwide. The arrest was a significant step in addressing international drug trafficking networks.
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