

**PRESS RELEASE**

# **Two Virginia Men Arrested for Conspiring to Destroy Government Databases**

Wednesday, December 3, 2025

**For Immediate Release**

Office of Public Affairs

Two Virginia men were arrested today for their roles in a conspiracy to destroy government databases hosted by a federal government contractor, among other crimes.

"These defendants abused their positions as federal contractors to attack government databases and steal sensitive government information. Their actions jeopardized the security of government systems and disrupted agencies' ability to serve the American people," said Acting Assistant Attorney General Matthew R. Galeotti of the Justice Department's Criminal Division. "The Criminal Division remains committed to investigating and prosecuting those who compromise sensitive information and threaten the integrity of government operations."

"The malicious and intentional criminal actions allegedly committed by the defendants in this case undermine the ability of the United States to serve our citizens effectively and transparently," said U.S. Attorney Lindsey Halligan for the Eastern District of Virginia. "This office will hold accountable anyone who abuses the trust placed in them to safeguard vital government information, and we will prosecute those who deliberately compromise our data infrastructure."

"Destroying government records and data is unlawful and can jeopardize public safety and the integrity of agency operations," said Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) Inspector General Jennifer L. Fain. "Such misuse and exploitation by government contractors will not be tolerated. We will continue to work with our law enforcement partners to investigate allegations of wrongdoing that pose a threat to federal agency programs and operations, and services they provide to the American people."

"Federal contractors who abuse their positions will be held accountable for their actions," said Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Inspector General Joseph V. Cuffari, Ph.D. "The actions of individuals like Muneeb and Sohaib Akhter are threats to

our national security. The Office of Inspector General remains committed to working with our law enforcement partners to bring perpetrators to justice.”

According to court documents, brothers Muneeb and Sohaib Akhter, both 34, of Alexandria, Virginia, were indicted on Nov. 13 for conspiring to delete databases used to store U.S. government information. Both men were federal contractors. Following the termination of their employment, the brothers allegedly sought to harm the company and its U.S. government customers by accessing computers without authorization, issuing commands to prevent others from modifying the databases before deletion, deleting databases, stealing information, and destroying evidence of their unlawful activities.

The indictment alleges that on or about Feb. 18, Muneeb Akhter deleted approximately 96 databases storing U.S. government information. Many of these databases contained records and documents related to Freedom of Information Act matters administered by federal government departments and agencies, as well as sensitive investigative files of federal government components.

Court documents further allege that approximately one minute after deleting a DHS database, Muneeb Akhter asked an artificial intelligence tool how to clear system logs following the deletion of databases.

According to the indictment, the brothers also discussed cleaning out their house in anticipation of a law enforcement search. The company laptops used by both men were wiped before being returned to the federal contractor.

Muneeb Akhter also allegedly obtained information from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission without authorization after he was fired from the contractor. He is further alleged to have stolen copies of IRS information stored on a virtual machine, including federal tax information and other identifying information of at least 450 individuals.

The indictment also charges Sohaib Akhter with trafficking in a password that could access a computer used by and for the government of the United States.

Muneeb Akhter is charged with conspiracy to commit computer fraud and to destroy records, two counts of computer fraud, theft of U.S. government records, and two counts of aggravated identity theft. Sohaib Akhter is charged with conspiracy to commit computer fraud and to destroy records and computer fraud (password trafficking). If convicted, Muneeb Akhter faces a mandatory minimum penalty of two years in prison for each aggravated identity theft count and a maximum penalty of 45 years in prison

on the remaining charges. If convicted, Sohaib Akhter faces a maximum penalty of six years in prison.

The FDIC Office of Inspector General (OIG), DHS OIG, and Homeland Security Investigations are investigating the case. Valuable assistance was provided by the Department of Agriculture OIG; Department of Education OIG; Environmental Protection Agency OIG; Equal Employment Opportunity Commission OIG; Federal Reserve Board OIG; Department of Health and Human Services OIG; DHS Office of the Chief Security Officer; Department of Housing and Urban Development OIG; Department of the Interior OIG; International Development Finance Corporation OIG; Department of Justice OIG; Department of Labor OIG; Nuclear Regulatory Commission OIG; Small Business Administration OIG; Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration; Department of Veterans Affairs OIG; United States Capitol Police; and Fairfax County Virginia Police Department.

Trial Attorneys George Brown and Stefanie Schwartz of the Criminal Division's Computer Crime and Intellectual Property Section (CCIPS) and Assistant U.S. Attorney Vanessa Strobbe for the Eastern District of Virginia are prosecuting the case.

CCIPS investigates and prosecutes cybercrime in coordination with domestic and international law enforcement agencies, often with assistance from the private sector. Since 2020, CCIPS has secured the conviction of over 180 cybercriminals, and court orders for the return of over \$350 million in victim funds.

*An indictment is merely an allegation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.*

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**Topic****CYBERCRIME****Components**

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