

Saifullah Paracha

 [sarifulla_paracha.jpg](#) [1]

 [sarifulla_paracha.jpg](#) [2]

Saifullah Paracha, 62, is a Pakistani national. He traveled to the US to study when he was 26 years old and remained there with his family for approximately 10 years before returning to Pakistan to set up an export business.

Paracha was scheduled to fly to Thailand for a business meeting on in July 2003, but when he arrived at the Bangkok airport on July 6, he was seized, hooded, and cuffed, thrown into the back of a vehicle and taken to an unknown location where he was held for a few days, blindfolded, with his ears covered and his hands and legs cuffed.

According to investigative reporting by Stephen Grey in his authoritative work, [Ghost Plane](#) [3], Paracha was flown from Bangkok to Bagram aboard a Gulfstream V aircraft, N379P, based at Smithfield, NC and operated by Aero Contractors, Ltd.

He was held at Bagram for more than one year before being transferred to Guantánamo. During the first month of his captivity, his family had no idea of his whereabouts and first received news of his capture via a television report, and later via the International Red Cross.

US authorities allege that Paracha is affiliated with al-Qaida and is associated with senior members of al-Qaida, including Osama bin Laden. Paracha has maintained that he saw Osama bin Laden twice, at public meetings only, and that he spoke to him only to ask if he would do a television interview.

Paracha has a history of health problems, including having suffered a heart attack in 1995, prior to his detention. According to the Associated Press, he has had three heart attacks while in US custody. His requests to be transferred to a hospital in the US or Pakistan for a catheterization procedure have been denied. Gaillard Hunt, Paracha's lawyer, said that his client has had his hands and feet shackled when being examined at the Guantánamo base hospital and that several attempts to perform an electrocardiogram, of EKG, proved difficult for base medical staff.

Saifullah Paracha continues to experience chest pain, fainting spells and breathing difficulties. He is also believed to suffer from diabetes and high blood pressure.

Paracha is married and has two sons and two daughters. In November 2005, his eldest son, Uzair Paracha was convicted in the United States of providing support to al-Qaida.

Read a 2007 [interview by Cageprisoner](#) [4] with Saifullah's daughter, Zahra.

On June 2, 2008, Zachary Katznelson, of [Reprieve](#) [5], appealed to the Pakistani government for assistance stating: "Political intervention is the only hope for Saifullah Paracha to receive justice."

However, as recently as February 2009, Fatima Bhutto of the [New Statesman](#) [6] noted that "... seven Pakistani nationals are being held at Guantánamo Bay, but if it keeps the Americans happy, the government in Islamabad doesn't care..."

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- [1] <https://www.nogitmos.org/sites/nogitmos.org/files/sarifulla%20paracha.jpg>
- [2] https://www.nogitmos.org/sites/nogitmos.org/files/sarifulla%20paracha_0.jpg
- [3] <http://ghostplane.net>
- [4] <http://www.cageprisoners.com/articles.php?id=19106>
- [5] <http://www.reprieve.org.uk/saifullahparacha>
- [6] <http://www.newstatesman.com/asia/2009/02/pakistan-obama-guantanamo>