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March 5, 2023
For Immediate Release

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Disgruntled Patient Charged with Murder, Attempted Murder in El Cajon Dental Office Shooting

Defendant Killed One Person and Wounded Two Others

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced murder and attempted murder charges today against a 29-year-old El Cajon, California man who opened fire at a dental office on February 29, killing one and injuring two others.

Mohammed Abdulkareem, 29, has been charged with one count of murder and two counts of premeditated attempted murder with gun and great bodily injury allegations. He was arraigned this afternoon in San Diego Superior Court. He faces life in prison if he is convicted of all charges.

“Today is the first step in seeking justice for the victims, their families, friends, and community in this tragic case,” DA Stephan said. “We grieve the loss of Dr. Benjamin Harouni along with his family. I am grateful for the thorough and professional work by El Cajon Police Chief Mike Moulton and his team that led to a swift arrest, and to our own DA team of experienced prosecutors and investigators who are working every angle of this case.”

In a motion filed today with the court, prosecutors argued against bail, saying in part the defendant burst into the dental office and immediately opened fire with a semiautomatic handgun. At least 23 rounds were fired over the course of about one minute. After the shooting, Abdulkareem ran from the scene and fled in a rented truck parked nearby.

The defendant is a former patient of the dental office. He was well-known at that dental office, having repeatedly shown up over the last six months to complain about his dental work. The Defendant was apprehended in the Balboa Park area on the evening of February 29, near the rented truck. He was found in possession of a loaded semiautomatic handgun, ammunition, and multiple handgun magazines. A handgun consistent with the shooting had been recently legally purchased by the Abdulkareem and was received by him on February 24.

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This is an ongoing investigation, and the DA's hate crimes team is assisting in thoroughly reviewing all possible motives. In the event evidence develops, it is possible additional charges could be added in the future.

The defendant pleaded not guilty and is being held on no bail. His next court date is March 12 for a readiness hearing.

About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.

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