



MEDIA STATEMENT

CRIMINAL JUSTICE BRANCH

Monday, 10 February 2003

03-02

INDERJIT SINGH REYAT PLEADS GUILTY TO ROLE IN AIR INDIA EXPLOSION

Vancouver - The Criminal Justice Branch of the Ministry of Attorney General is announcing that Inderjit Singh Reyat pleaded guilty to manslaughter today for his part in the explosion and crash of Air India Flight 182 off the coast of Ireland in June 1985. The guilty plea was made before the Chief Justice of the BC Supreme Court, Donald I. Brenner, in Vancouver this morning.

Reyat pleaded to a new direct indictment that charged him with aiding or abetting in the construction of an explosive device placed on board Air India Flight 182, which exploded and killed all 329 passengers and crew in June 1985. The Agreed Statement of Facts read into the court record today consisted of the following:

In May and June, 1985, in the province of British Columbia, Mr. Reyat acquired various materials for the purpose of aiding others in the making of the explosive devices. Mr. Reyat was told and believed that the explosive devices would be transported to India in order to blow up property such as a car, a bridge or something "heavy". Although Mr. Reyat acquired materials for this purpose, he did not make or arm an explosive device, nor did he place an explosive device on an airplane, nor does he know who did or did not do so.

At no time did Mr. Reyat intend by his actions to cause death to any person or believe that such consequences were likely to occur. However, unbeknownst to Mr. Reyat the items that he acquired were used by another person or persons to help make an explosive device that, on or about June 23, 1985, destroyed Air India Flight 182, killing all 329 people on board.

In 1991, Reyat was convicted in BC Supreme Court for manslaughter in relation to the June 1985 explosion at the New Tokyo International Airport in Narita, Japan that caused the death of two individuals. The trial judge in that case found Reyat guilty of manslaughter because he had either fabricated or aided others in the fabrication of the bomb that exploded and killed the two men.

In addition to the 15 years Reyat has already served in prison either as a result of his awaiting trial and conviction for the Narita bombing, or awaiting trial on the Flight 182 charges, he was sentenced today to an additional five years in prison.

Because the law in Canada holds as a rule that time in custody awaiting trial is generally credited on a "2 to 1" basis and because Reyat has spent a total of 5 years in pre-trial custody, his actual sentence for his role in the bombing at Narita and the explosion of Air India Flight 182 amounts to 25 years in prison. This 25 years is the same amount of prison time a person convicted of 1st degree murder would be sentenced to serve prior to being eligible to apply for parole.

There are a number of reasons why Crown counsel has agreed to this guilty plea. In the Crown's opinion:

1. The plea to manslaughter is consistent with the prosecution's evidence against Reyat;
2. It is consistent with the trial judge's finding of Reyat's level of guilt in his 1991 trial; and
3. The length of the trial of the remaining two accused persons will be shortened, potentially by a significant amount.

There are other important reasons why this course of action was the appropriate one to take and why Crown counsel agreed to it. However, Crown counsel must proceed with the proper amount of caution when discussing these reasons because there are still two individuals before the court in relation to this matter. Consequently, in order not to jeopardize the prosecution's case or the accused persons' right to a fair trial, the Crown is compelled to refrain from discussing these other reasons at this time.

Last week, a number of relatives of the victims of Flight 182, including some who were flown to Vancouver, met with members of the prosecution team and the RCMP Air India Task Force. The purpose of this meeting was to consult personally with them and advise them of the Crown's decision concerning the guilty plea. At the end of those discussions there was an understanding of the Crown's reasons for agreeing to Reyat's plea to manslaughter.

As there are still two accused persons before the court, it would be inappropriate for Crown counsel to comment on the factual foundation of Reyat's guilty plea at this time.

The trial of the two remaining accused persons is set to commence on March 31st, 2003 as scheduled.

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INDERJIT SINGH REYAT

TIME IN CUSTODY

<i>DATE</i>	<i>REASON FOR CUSTODY</i>	<i>REAL TIME</i>	<i>CREDITED TIME</i>
February 5th, 1988 to June 10th, 1991	In custody in U.K. awaiting extradition and in custody in Canada awaiting Narita trial	40 months	80 months
June 11th, 1991 to June 3rd, 2001	Serving Sentence on Narita offences	10 years (120 months)	120 months
June 4th, 2001 to February 9th, 2003	Current Indictment	20 months	40 months
February 10th, 2003 to February 10th 2008	Sentence	(60 months)	60 months
Total =			300 months or 25 years

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