Georgetown main administration building

Georgetown University officials have not been given a reason for the detention of a postdoctoral researcher and instructor in the Jesuit-run university’s School of Foreign Service. (Courtesy of Georgetown University)



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Masked agents arrested a Georgetown University postdoctoral fellow and instructor as part of the Trump administration's campaign against student activists accused of opposing U.S. foreign policy, according to media reports.

Badar Khan Suri, an Indian national in the United States on a student visa, was detained outside his home in the Rosslyn neighborhood of Arlington, Virginia, on March 17 by Department of Homeland Security agents, his attorneys told Politico and The Washington Post.

Homeland Security spokeswoman Tricia McLaughlin said on X on Wednesday that Suri "has close connections to a known or suspected terrorist, who is a senior advisor to Hamas" and accused him of disseminating “Hamas propaganda and promoting antisemitism on social media."

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Suri's attorney Hassan Ahmad said Suri is innocent.

Suri is a scholar at the Jesuit-run university’s School of Foreign Service where he is teaching a course this semester. He is a conflict-studies researcher with a specialty in Iraq and Afghanistan matters.

A spokesperson for the Catholic institution told the National Catholic Reporter on Thursday that university officials have not been given a reason for his detention and they are unaware of any illegal activities.

"We support our community members’ rights to free and open inquiry, deliberation and debate, even if the underlying ideas may be difficult, controversial or objectionable," the Georgetown spokesperson said in an email on March 20. "We expect the legal system to adjudicate this case fairly."

After his detention, Suri was taken to a holding facility in central Virginia before being taken to Alexandria, Louisiana, where he is now awaiting a date in immigration court, Ahmad told the Post.

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Suri was expected to be transferred soon to a detention center in Texas, Politico said. On Wednesday evening, an online locator for immigration detainees showed him at an Immigration and Customs Enforcement staging center at the Alexandria, Louisiana, airport.

The move is consistent with how the administration has handled other high-profile immigration cases. Officials have moved swiftly with deportations before courts have time to intervene.

Ahmad told reporters that it's unclear whether he will need to refile Suri’s petition for release in Louisiana, but said he is prepared to do what he must to protect his due process rights.

Suri, who earned a Ph.D. in peace and conflict studies from a university in India, is a fellow at the Washington, D.C., university's Alwaleed Bin Talal Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding, according to his faculty page on Georgetown’s website reviewed by Politico before it was taken down.

He is teaching a class this semester on "Majoritarianism and Minority Rights in South Asia," a court petition and a university directory said.

This story appears in the **Trump's Second Term** feature series. View the full series.