

Mexican National Indicted for Murder Aboard Fishing Vessel 55 Miles Off Massachusetts Coast

A federal grand jury has indicted a Mexican national in connection with a murder aboard a fishing vessel off the coast of Massachusetts.

Franklin Freddy Meave Vazquez, 27, was indicted today on one count of murder in the second degree, one count of attempted murder, and one count of assault with a dangerous weapon. Meave Vazquez was arrested and charged by complaint on Sept. 24, 2018, and has been detained since.

On Sept. 23, 2018, the fishing vessel, Captain Billy Haver, was sailing approximately 55 miles off the coast of Massachusetts with seven crew members aboard, including Meave Vazquez. It is alleged that at some point in the afternoon, Meave Vazquez assaulted a crew member on board with a hammer in one hand and a knife in the other. The victim then saw that another crew member was lying on the deck bleeding. Meave Vazquez then struck a third crew member with the hammer. It is further alleged that Meave Vazquez then climbed up the mast of the ship as the others onboard tried to capture him.

The captain of the ship placed a call on the distress channel, to which a German cruise ship, the Mein Schiff 6, responded. Two of the wounded were taken aboard the cruise ship, where one victim was pronounced dead by the ship's doctor.

According to court documents, Meave Vazquez is illegally present in the United States. On March 9, 2018, he was arrested in Newport News, Va., for abduction by force, intimidation, or deception, and released on bond.

The charge of second-degree murder provides for a sentence of up to life in prison, five years of supervised release, and a fine of \$250,000. The charge of attempted murder provides for a sentence of no greater than 20 years in prison, three years of supervised release, and a fine of \$250,000. The charge of assault with a dangerous weapon provides for a sentence of no greater than 10 years in prison, three years of supervised release, and a fine of \$250,000. Vazquez will be subject to deportation proceedings upon completion of any sentence imposed. Sentences are imposed by a federal district court judge based upon the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines and other statutory factors.

United States Attorney Andrew E. Lelling; Richard D. Cox, Special Agent in Charge of the U.S Coast Guard Investigative Services Northeast Region; Harold H. Shaw, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Boston Field Division; and Peter C. Fitzhugh, Special Agent in Charge of Homeland Security Investigations in Boston made the announcement today. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Christine Wichers and Laura J. Kaplan of Lelling's Criminal Division are prosecuting the case.

The details contained in the charging documents are allegations. The defendant is presumed to be innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.