

## POLICE FEAR SHOOTING MAY BE STRING OF RETALIATION

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Author: JOE SWICKARD Free Press Staff Writer and, AN FLANIGAN and MARGARET TRIMER Free Press Staff Writers

The Feb. 3 shooting of **Harry Kalasho** may be the latest skirmish involving suspected drug dealers in the Detroit-area Chaldean community, law enforcement officials fear.

"The next week or so's going to be interesting," said a federal law enforcement official who did not want to be identified. "There's going to be shooting in retaliation, and other retaliations for those retaliations. I don't know if I'd say it's a full-blown war out there, but there's damn sure a street battle going on."

Kalasho, 26, is in critical condition after being shot as he left a house on Greendale near Woodward in Detroit. He was shot, according to witnesses, by a gunman firing an automatic pistol from a car. A suspect is in custody.

Kalasho family spokesman Louis Akrawi, at the hospital Tuesday, denied his nephew is involved in drug trafficking.

Akrawi said federal agents came to the hospital warning the family against taking matters into their own hands.

"We don't have nothing against nobody," Akrawi said. "We don't want any revenge or retaliation. I just want my nephew Harry out of the hospital."

Grouped around a hospital lobby sofa and a prayer candle, Akrawi, family members and friends have maintained a vigil since the shooting.

"We want this guy in court," he said. "We want justice for this shooting through the system."

Raed Jihad, 19, of Detroit, was arraigned Tuesday on a charge of assault with intent to murder in the shooting. He was being held in Wayne County Jail in lieu of \$50,000 bond pending a Feb. 17 preliminary examination.

Local law enforcement officials and Akrawi said Kalasho's shooting might be linked to the alleged drug-related slayings late last year of Munthir Salem in Detroit and Salaam Gaggo in Southfield.

Three men -- Edward Stevenson, Kevin Minley and Lavaron Morris -- have been charged with first-degree murder in both killings and are awaiting trial. In statements to police, they said they were acting on behalf of a man identified only as Harry who promised a \$10,000 bonus if Salem's head was cut off and thrown in 7 Mile Road in the middle of the local Arab community.

According to the statements in the Salem killing, Harry is a major cocaine dealer who wanted

Salem eliminated. Harry was described as a muscular, blond, young man who drove a BMW.

Akrawi said the description matched his nephew, who has access to Akrawi's BMW. But Akrawi said the three men knew his nephew from a gym where they all worked out and "were jealous of him -- his nice cars, his nice clothes."

He said "not Harry, not anyone in the family" is involved with drugs, and said Kalasho is his partner in an Oakland County restaurant.

Akrawi and his lawyer, James Howarth, said that neither he nor Kalasho have been questioned about drug dealing or the slayings.

"They never questioned us for these things," Akrawi said. "A kingpin of dope? Why don't they arrest us, or even question us?"

William Coonce, special agent in charge of the Detroit office of the federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), said his agency is working with local police in an investigation focused on Kalasho.

"The DEA is looking into any and all intelligence information available on Kalasho and we are cooperating with the Detroit Police Department and other suburban agencies," Coonce said.

"Kalasho has come to our attention in the past as a suspected wholesale trafficker in cocaine," he said.

Akrawi acknowledged rumors within the Chaldean community linking his nephew to the shootings. He said he had heard that the relatives of one of the victims had put a \$100,000 contract on his nephew.

Meanwhile, Edward Deeb, president of the Michigan Food and Beverage Association, said the Chaldean community is concerned about drug dealing and does not want allegations against individuals to sully the community's reputation.

"You can't castigate an entire community based on the actions of a few people," Deeb said. "We should look at this as an isolated incident.

"This is really too bad because what is happening is reflecting on the whole community, all the people, whether they be a grocer a doctor a lawyer or an Indian chief."

## CUTLINE

### **Harry Kalasho**

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