

Beat: News

Mississippi man arrested in connection with poisoned letters

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USPA News - A Mississippi man was arrested and charged Saturday in connection with poisoned letters which were sent to U.S. President Barack Obama and two other people, federal officials and prosecutors said. Another Mississippi resident had earlier been arrested but was later cleared.

James Everett Dutschke, 41, was arrested at his residence in Tupelo, a city in Lee County, at approximately 12:50 a.m. local time on Saturday by Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). He was taken into custody without incident, according to FBI spokeswoman Deborah Madden. The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Mississippi said Dutschke was arrested on a criminal complaint that charges him with knowingly developing, producing, stockpiling, transferring, acquiring, retaining and possessing a biological agent, toxin and delivery system, for use as a weapon, namely ricin, and with attempting, threatening and conspiring to do the same. "Dutschke is expected to appear in the United States District Court in Oxford, Mississippi, on Monday, April 29, 2013, before U. S. Magistrate Judge S. Allan Alexander," the office said in a brief statement. It added that Dutschke, if convicted, faces maximum possible penalties of life imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine and 5 years of supervised release. The poisoned letters were sent earlier this month and addressed to Obama, Republican U.S. Senator Roger Wicker of Mississippi, and Lee County judge Sadie Holland, but all were detected before reaching their intended targets. They came just days after a double bomb attack at the Boston Marathon, briefly raising fears that the letters were part of a wider terror plot. Another Mississippi resident, 45-year-old Elvis impersonator Paul Kevin Curtis, was arrested in connection with the case on April 18. But he maintained his innocence and insisted that he knew nothing about the poisoned letters, and the charges against him were eventually dropped as authorities began to focus on Dutschke.

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UPA United Press Agency LTD
483 Green Lanes
UK, London N13NV 4BS
contact (at) unitedpressagency.com
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