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## **Man Alleged to Have Been Bin Laden's Body Guard to Face Guantanamo Commission**

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GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, Cuba (AP) - A Yemeni man alleged to have been Osama bin Laden's bodyguard and charged with conspiring to attack civilians was to face a U.S. military commission for a third time, even though he has vowed to boycott the proceedings.

Ali Hamza Ahmad Sulayman al Bahlul will appear before a U.S. military commission on Wednesday. He is also charged with conspiracy to attack civilian objects and conspiracy to commit murder.

At his last hearing in January, al Bahlul rejected his military counsel and told the presiding officer he was boycotting the proceedings. He could appear at Wednesday's hearing but still refuse to take part.

Al Bahlul's counsel, Maj. Tom Fleener, said his client agreed to see him on Tuesday after refusing several times before.

The meeting Tuesday was delayed for a few hours because of a question of whether al Bahlul had tuberculosis. But hours later, he appeared to be healthy, Fleener said.

The presiding officer, Army Col. Peter E. Brownback, will likely take up the health issue on Wednesday, Fleener said.

Hearings scheduled this week for three other Guantanamo detainees facing charges were postponed. The hearing for Sufyan Barhoumi, a 33-year-old Algerian, was postponed on Tuesday for 24 hours after he learned that his father had died, said his attorney, Army Capt. Wade Faulkner.

Hearings for Ghassan Abdullah al Sharbi, of Saudi Arabia, and Binyam Ahmed Muhammad, of Ethiopia, were also postponed after the defense was granted a request for delay. A new date for al Sharbi was not given; Muhammad's was tentatively set for April 3.

The U.S. government has alleged that Barhoumi trained two al-Qaida members, including al Sharbi, how to make detonation devices for explosives. Muhammad allegedly had contact with terror suspect Jose Padilla and met with an al-Qaida leader to discuss plans for attacks against the United States.

Barhoumi's hearing was postponed for 24 hours, but it likely won't happen until April, Faulkner said.

Al Bahlul got the 2006 hearings off to a rocky start when he held up a piece of paper with the word "boycott" written on it in Arabic. He has asked to represent himself, but Brownback has said the commission's rules require him to have military counsel.

Al-Qaida leader bin Laden allegedly assigned al Bahlul to work in the organization's media office from late 1999 through December 2001.

Al Bahlul allegedly created several instructional and motivational recruiting video tapes for al Qaida. Bin Laden also asked al Bahlul to create a video "glorifying," among other things, the USS Cole attack in 2000, according to charges filed by the U.S. government.

Human rights observers and lawyers have disputed the military commissions' legality -- which was to be tested in late March before the U.S. Supreme Court. The Court will hear arguments on whether U.S. President George W. Bush overstepped his authority with plans for a military trial for bin Laden's former driver, Salim Ahmed Hamdan, who is held at Guantanamo Bay.