

MULTIPLE INDICTMENTS FOR INTERSTATE CONTRABAND CIGARETTE TRAFFICKING

**BERGEN COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE
TO: ALL NEWS MEDIA
FROM: PROSECUTOR JOHN L. MOLINELLI**

Bergen County Prosecutor John L. Molinelli announced multiple indictments of several defendants as a result of criminal investigations focused on interdiction of interstate contraband cigarette trafficking activities. Indictments were returned on Thursday, April 30 on a total of six defendants in four separate criminal investigations stemming from a combination of money laundering activities and possession or transportation of untaxed cigarettes through the State of New Jersey. The indictments highlight a recognized pattern of criminal activities in which US currency is transported to low-cigarette tax states such as Virginia and North Carolina coupled with the return transportation of contraband cigarettes to the New York/New Jersey area resulting in illegal higher profits.

Indictments were returned on the following:

YOUSEF KHRAIM (**DOB**:: 08/24/1987) of 105 120th Street, Ocean City, MD, and MOHAMED A. HASAN (**DOB**:: 10/31/1988) of 4260 Broadway, New York, NY were each indicted on one count of financial facilitation of criminal activity in the third degree. On September 28, 2012, both Mr. KHRAIM and Mr. HASAN were found to be in possession of over \$28,000 following a motor vehicle stop by Fort Lee Police on a roadway traveling southbound from the area of the George Washington Bridge.

BASEM NASER-EDDIN (**DOB**:: 10/31/1960) of 1976 East 177th Street, Bronx, NY, and ABDO M. SAIDI (**DOB**:: 08/12/1973) of 1104 Elder Avenue, Bronx, NY were each indicted on one count of financial facilitation of criminal activity in the third degree. On March 5, 2014, both Mr. NASER-EDDIN and Mr. SAIDI were found to be in possession of over \$22,000 following a motor vehicle stop by Fort Lee Police on a roadway traveling southbound from the area of the George Washington Bridge.

HATIM MOHAMED (**DOB**:: 08/26/1962) of 2200 Grainmill Court, Richmond, VA was indicted on one count of Possession of More than 20,000 Unstamped Cigarettes in the third degree, one count of Failure to Maintain Books with Intent to Evade in the third degree, one count of Engaging in Conduct Requiring a Registration or License in the fourth degree, and one count of Possession and Transportation of Unstamped Cigarettes without Records in the fourth degree. On January 2, 2015, Mr. MOHAMED was found to be in possession of over 250 assorted cartons of contraband cigarettes following a motor vehicle stop by Mahwah Police on a roadway traveling northbound near the New York State border.

GAMAL ALKATTEEB (**DOB**:: 08/25/1984) of 1538 Mechanicsville Turnpike, Richmond, VA was indicted on one count of Possession of more than 20,000 Unstamped Cigarettes in the third degree, one count of Failure to Maintain Books with Intent to Evade in the third degree and one count of Possession and Transportation of Unstamped Cigarettes without Records in the fourth degree. On March 18, 2015, Mr. ALKATTEEB was found to be in possession of 450 assorted cartons of contraband cigarettes following a motor vehicle stop by Fort Lee Police on a roadway traveling northbound near the George Washington Bridge.

The indictments are the result of concerted efforts among several law enforcement agencies to address the pattern of interstate contraband cigarette trafficking activities. Prosecutor Molinelli would like to thank members of the Fort Lee Police Department under the direction of Chief Keith BENDUL, the Mahwah Police Department under the direction of Chief James BATELLI and the New Jersey State Department of Treasury, Division of Taxation, Office of Criminal Investigation under the direction of Chief Charles GIBLIN for their assistance and collaboration in the series of investigations that led to yesterday's indictments.

Prosecutor Molinelli states that the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.