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**ROBERT LUSTYIK, FORMER FBI SPECIAL AGENT, AND TWO
CO-CONSPIRATORS CHARGED IN WHITE PLAINS FEDERAL COURT
WITH BRIBERY SCHEME**

Preet Bharara, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Mythili Raman, the Acting Assistant U.S. Attorney General of the Criminal Division, and Michael E. Horowitz, the U.S. Department of Justice Inspector General, announced today the unsealing of a criminal Complaint (the "Complaint") charging ROBERT LUSTYIK, a former FBI Special Agent in White Plains, JOHANNES THALER, and RIZVE AHMED, a/k/a "Caesar," with a bribery scheme. The charges arise out of the solicitation by LUSTYIK, along with his alleged accomplice, THALER, of cash payments from AHMED in exchange for LUSTYIK and THALER's providing confidential, internal law enforcement documents and information to AHMED which LUSTYIK had access to by virtue of his position as an FBI Special Agent. AHMED and THALER were arrested today on the charges in the Complaint and were presented before U.S. Magistrate Judge George A. Yanthis in the White Plains federal court. THALER was released on a personal recognizance bond and AHMED was detained without bail. LUSTYIK is currently detained in connection with a separate pending indictment in United States District Court for the District of Utah, where he will be initially presented on the charges in the Complaint.

U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara stated: "It is egregious when, as charged, a law enforcement officer, trained and sworn to uphold the law, transgresses into any kind of criminal behavior. It is particularly egregious when the accused was an FBI Special Agent who was willing to compromise the operations of the Bureau. But he and his co-defendants will now be treated no differently from any other person so accused. We will prosecute to the full extent of the law."

According to allegations in the Complaint unsealed today in the White Plains federal courthouse:

LUSTYIK was an FBI Special Agent who worked in the White Plains Resident Agency. THALER was LUSTYIK's friend, and AHMED was an acquaintance of THALER's. From about September 2011 through March 2012, LUSTYIK, THALER, and AHMED engaged in a bribery scheme. As part of the scheme, LUSTYIK and THALER solicited payments of money from AHMED, in exchange for LUSTYIK's agreement to provide internal, confidential documents and other confidential information to which LUSTYIK had access by virtue of his position as an FBI Special Agent. The Complaint alleges that AHMED was a native of

Bangladesh who sought confidential law enforcement information, including a Suspicious Activity Report, pertaining to a prominent citizen of Bangladesh who was affiliated with an opposing political party (“Individual 1”). AHMED sought, among other things, to obtain information about Individual 1, to locate Individual 1, and to harm Individual 1 and others associated with Individual 1.

As part of the scheme, LUSTYIK and THALER exchanged text messages, including messages about how to pressure AHMED to pay them additional money in exchange for confidential information. For example, in text messages, LUSTYIK told THALER, “we need to push [AHMED] for this meeting and get that 40 gs quick I will talk us into getting the cash I will work my magic We r soooooo close.” THALER responded, “I know. It’s all right there in front of us. Pretty soon we’ll be having lunch in our oceanfront restaurant” For another example, in or about late January 2012, LUSTYIK, upon learning that AHMED was considering using a different source to obtain confidential information about Individual 1, texted THALER, “I want to kill [AHMED] I hung my ass out the window n we got nothing? Tell [AHMED], I’ve got [Individual 1’s] number and I’m pissed. . . . I will put a wire on n get [AHMED and his associates] to admit they want [a Bangladeshi political figure] offed n we sell it to Individual 1].”

According to the Complaint, LUSTYIK and THALER accepted at least \$1,000 from AHMED in exchange for the provision of confidential FBI information, including a Suspicious Activity Report. The Complaint also alleges that LUSTYIK and THALER schemed to obtain monthly cash bribes from AHMED, in increments of tens of thousands of dollars, in exchange for the provision of additional confidential law enforcement information about Individual 1 and for assistance in having criminal charges against a Bangladeshi political figure dismissed.

* * *

LUSTYIK, THALER, and AHMED are each charged in a four-count Complaint. Count One charges LUSTYIK, THALER, and AHMED with conspiracy to bribe a public official, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371. Count Two charges LUSTYIK and THALER with soliciting and receiving bribes, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 201(b)(2). Count Three charges AHMED with bribing a public official and offering to bribe a public official, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 201(b)(1). Count Four charges LUSTYIK with unlawfully disclosing a Suspicious Activity Report (“SAR”), in violation of Title 31, United States Code, Section 5322(a).

LUSTYIK, 50, of Westchester County, faces, upon conviction, a maximum sentence of 25 years in prison.

THALER, 49, of Fairfield County, Connecticut, faces, upon conviction, a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.

AHMED, 34, of Fairfield County, Connecticut, faces, upon conviction, a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Raman and Mr. Bharara praised the efforts of the Department of Justice’s Office of Inspector General in connection with this investigation.

The prosecution is being handled by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York, White Plains Division, and by the Criminal Division's Public Integrity Section of the U.S. Department of Justice. Assistant United States Attorney Benjamin Allee and Trial Attorney Emily Rae Woods are in charge of the prosecution.

The charges in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty.

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