



Department of Justice

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TWO CONNECTICUT MEN SENTENCED TO FEDERAL PRISON FOR SCHEME TO BRIBE FBI AGENT IN NEW YORK

WASHINGTON – Two Connecticut-area men were sentenced to federal prison today for their roles in a bribery scheme to obtain confidential, internal law enforcement documents and information from a former FBI Special Agent in White Plains, New York.

Assistant Attorney General Leslie R. Caldwell of the Justice Department’s Criminal Division, U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara of the Southern District of New York and Justice Department Inspector General Michael E. Horowitz made the announcement. The sentences were imposed by U.S. District Judge Vincent L. Briccetti of the Southern District of New York.

Rizve Ahmed, aka “Caesar,” 36, of Danbury, Connecticut, and Johannes Thaler, 51, of New Fairfield, Connecticut, were sentenced to 42 months in prison and 30 months in prison, respectively. In October 2014, both defendants pleaded guilty to bribery and conspiracy to commit wire fraud and honest services fraud.

In pleading guilty, Thaler and Ahmed admitted that, from September 2011 through March 2012, Thaler and FBI Special Agent Robert Lustyik solicited payments 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. Thaler was Lustyik’s friend, and Ahmed, a native of Bangladesh, was an acquaintance of Thaler. The confidential documents and information pertained to a prominent citizen of Bangladesh who was affiliated with a political party opposing Ahmed’s views. Ahmed requested the confidential information to help him locate and harm his political rival and others associated with the intended victim.

As part of the scheme, Lustyik and Thaler exchanged text 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”

Additionally, in late January 2012, Lustyik learned that Ahmed was considering using a different source to obtain confidential information. In response, Lustyik sent a text message to Thaler stating, “I want to kill C [Ahmed] I hung my ass out the window n we got nothing? .

. . . Tell [Ahmed], I've got [the victim'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] offered n we sell it to [the victim]." Lustyik further stated, "So bottom line. I need ten gs asap. We gotta squeeze C."

Lustyik pleaded guilty on Dec. 23, 2014, to all five counts against him in the indictment: conspiracy to engage in a bribery scheme; soliciting bribes by a public official; conspiracy to defraud the citizens of the U.S. and the FBI; theft of government property; and unauthorized disclosure of a Suspicious Activity Report. He is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Briccetti on April 30, 2015, at 9:30 a.m.

The case was investigated by the Department of Justice Office of the Inspector General, and prosecuted by Trial Attorney Emily Rae Woods of the Criminal Division's Public Integrity Section and Assistant U.S. Attorney Benjamin Allee of the Southern District of New York.

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