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OWNER AND OPERATOR OF CRIME RIDDLED TUKWILA MOTEL SENTENCED

Dramatic Drop in Crime Follows Seizure of Motels

The owner and manager of one of three crime infested motels in Tukwila, Washington was sentenced today to one year in prison and three years of supervised release for conspiracy to maintain drug involved premises, announced U.S. Attorney Jenny A. Durkan. KULWINDER SAROYA, 42, of SeaTac, Washington, admitted he and his brother, co-defendant Jaspal Singh, knowingly operated drug involved premises at the Travelers Choice Motel and Great Bear Motor Inn and profited from the drug activity there. SAROYA and his brother have forfeited the two motels, the family home in SeaTac, more than \$265,000 seized from their home and bank accounts and a 2007 Mercedes Benz. At sentencing U.S. District Judge John C. Coughenour noted that SAROYA was being punished with a substantial economic loss, "wiping out 20 years of work."

"Since we shut these motels, the violent crime rate in the area was cut nearly in half. This case shows we will use all tools to protect the public and hold people accountable. This operation shut down a major spawning ground for crime in the community of Tukwila, stripped the defendant of the profits of his crime, and will reunite a neighborhood," said U.S. Attorney Jenny A. Durkan. "I applaud the comprehensive work of law enforcement and look forward to a future for these properties that will benefit the community."

"It's a new day for Tukwila," said City Administrator David Cline. "We've made a commitment to work towards providing a solid foundation and sense of safety in our community. We are now another step closer to revitalization and redevelopment of the heart of the neighborhood along Tukwila International Boulevard."

A third defendant, Lakhvir Pawar, 41, the manager of the Boulevard Motel on Tukwila International Boulevard has pleaded guilty and agreed to forfeit any interest in that motel as well as more than \$90,000 he accumulated from the criminal activity. Pawar and Singh will be sentenced in April.

In total the defendants in this case are forfeiting cash and property valued at about \$4.5 million.

"Just over six months ago, the collaboration of a number of agencies resulted in the seizure of three motels, arrests and resulting prosecution of defendants, and most importantly, the

dramatic improvement of safety along Tukwila International Boulevard,” said Tukwila Police Chief Mike Villa.

According to records filed in the case, the Tukwila Police Department and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (ATF) jointly-led investigation used undercover officers and people working with law enforcement to document criminal activity at the motels and the role the owners and managers played in that activity. SAROYA and Singh admitted they would collect or would direct their staff to collect a \$10 entry fee for those coming on the property seeking drugs or sexual services. The owners and/or managers would take the money and direct the customer to rooms to purchase drugs or sex. In some instances the person taking the “fee” would call the motel room to inform the dealer or sex worker that a customer was on the way. SAROYA and Singh admitted that they collected additional rental fees from the dealer or sex worker based on how many customers were sent to the room over the course of the day.

The investigation, search and seizure operation was led by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (ATF) and the Tukwila Police Department. Many additional agencies assisted the investigation including the U.S. Marshals Service; Department of Homeland Security; Drug Enforcement Administration; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation; U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General; Washington State Patrol; Seattle, Auburn, Kent, Renton, Federal Way, and Port of Seattle Police Departments; Valley SWAT Team; King County Sheriff’s Office; Washington State Department of Corrections; and Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS).

The case is being handled by Assistant United States Attorneys Justin Arnold, Jill Otake and Richard Cohen.

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