



***United States Attorney
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**TWELVE CHARGED IN MULTIMILLION DOLLAR
INTERNET GAMBLING OPERATION**

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, and MARK J. MERSHON, Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation ("FBI"), announced today the unsealing of an Indictment charging twelve individuals with gambling and money laundering offenses relating to the operation of a Costa Rica-based gambling website and telephone call center that served sports bookies in the United States. Eight of the twelve defendants were arrested earlier today. FRANCIS PUGLIESE and PATRICK CICALESE are expected to surrender, and CARMEN CICALESE remains at large. According to the Indictment filed in Manhattan federal court:

From at least 2005, CARMEN CICALESE, a/k/a "Buddy," operated an internet website and telephone call center, known as a wireroom (the "Cicalese Wireroom"), in Costa Rica which charged United States-based sports bookies weekly fees of approximately \$15 to \$30 for each gambler that the bookie registered with the Cicalese Wireroom. In return, registered gamblers were able to place bets on sporting events at odds set by the Cicalese Wireroom via a toll-free phone number and through various websites maintained by the Cicalese Wireroom, including datawager.com and betwestsports.com. The Cicalese Wireroom did not itself take an interest in the outcome of these wagers; paying winners and collecting from losers was the responsibility of the bookies.

Bookies paid the fees owed to the Cicalese Wireroom to representatives of the Cicalese Wireroom in the United States.

The collectors -- sometimes referred to among gambling organizations as "runners" -- in turn transferred the money back to the Cicalese Wireroom in various ways, including by using couriers, debit cards, and electronic funds transfers. On one occasion, the Cicalese Wireroom used a Pakistan-based "hawala" money transfer organization to move money collected from United States bookies.

The Cicalese Wireroom serviced several hundred bookies, each of whom had registered numerous gambling customers, and received millions of dollars in revenue.

The twelve defendants charged are CARMEN CICALEASE, a/k/a "Buddy," JULIUS MIGDAL, a/k/a "Jay," FRANCIS PUGLIESE, a/k/a "Butch," PATRICK CICALEASE, MARC GROUP, a/k/a "Box," LOUIE SANTOS, a/k/a "Brown," a/k/a "Lou the Shoe," PAUL CELLURA, a/k/a "Coppertone," FEDERICO SEMENTINI, a/k/a "Macie," CARL MURACO, a/k/a "Sheepshead," KEITH EAGLE, a/k/a "Sands," ANDREW FARRO, a/k/a "Dukie," and LANGHORNE CARTER RORER II, a/k/a "Lang," a/k/a "Cleaver." CARMEN CICALEASE ran the Cicalese Wireroom, while MIGDAL and PUGLIESE were "runners" who collected from the sports bookies. PATRICK CICALEASE collected money from the runners on behalf of the Wireroom. The remaining defendants are all accused of being United States based sports bookies who used the services of the Wireroom. All twelve defendants were charged with gambling and with conspiracy to engage in gambling. CARMEN CICALEASE, PATRICK CICALEASE, and MIGDAL were also charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering.

MIGDAL, GROUP, MURACO, SEMENTINI, EAGLE and FARRO were arrested this morning and are expected to be arraigned later today before United States Magistrate Judge KEVIN N. FOX. RORER was arrested in Maryland and is expected to be arraigned in federal court in Greenbelt, Maryland. SANTOS was arrested in Massachusetts and is expected to be arraigned in federal court in Springfield, Massachusetts.

Mr. GARCIA praised the investigative work of the FBI and stated that the investigation is ongoing. Mr. GARCIA also thanked the Rockland County District Attorney's Office for their efforts.

The prosecution is being handled by the Organized Crime Unit of the United States Attorney's Office. Assistant United States Attorney ARLO DEVLIN-BROWN is in charge of the prosecution.

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

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