



**United States Attorney's Office
District of Columbia**

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NEWS RELEASE

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Local nightclub owner indicted and arrested on tax evasion charges

WASHINGTON- A federal grand jury sitting in Washington, D.C., has returned a twenty-two count indictment, charging a local nightclub owner and operator, Abdul Karim Khanu, with tax crimes associated with two nightclubs that he ran from 2000 through 2003, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey A. Taylor, John A. DiCicco, Acting Assistant Attorney General for the Tax Division, U.S. Department of Justice, and C. André Martin, Special Agent in Charge, Criminal Investigation, IRS, Washington Field Office, announced today.

Khanu, 41, of Potomac, Maryland, was charged with one count of conspiring to defraud the United States with the three co-owners of one of the clubs that he ran from 2000 through 2003, three counts of attempted tax evasion, and eighteen counts of aiding and assisting in the preparation and filing of false tax returns. Khanu was most recently the owner of H2O, a nightclub at 800 Water Street, SW, Washington, D.C., until it was closed in March of this year.

Khanu was arrested this morning by IRS Special Agents and is scheduled to be arraigned on the charges in U.S. District Court this afternoon.

According to the indictment, which was returned yesterday afternoon, Khanu owned and operated two nightclubs on F Street in the District, named DC Live (and later VIP) and Platinum from at least 2000 through 2003. The indictment alleges that Khanu, along with his co-owners of DC Live, skimmed cash from the club to pay employees cash wages and for personal use.

Specifically, the indictment alleges that in approximately 1998, the four owners of the corporation that ran DC Live (and then VIP) agreed to split much of the club's profits among themselves by skimming cash and that until January 2002, they met weekly to distribute the skimmed cash. The indictment also alleges that in approximately January 2002, the conspirators agreed that Khanu would take over the operation of the club, make monthly payments of \$10,000 in skimmed cash to each of his three conspirators, and keep the excess cash for himself. Furthermore, the indictment alleges that the partners paid club employees partially or entirely in cash and did not report this to the IRS.

According to the indictment, Khanu engaged in similar conduct in connection with Platinum, the club that he owned and operated by himself. In light of this, the indictment alleges that in connection with using both clubs to evade his personal income taxes, Khanu aided and

assisted in the preparation and filing of the clubs' corporate income tax returns, as well as their quarterly employment tax returns.

"Every citizen, regardless of his walk of life, has an obligation to pay income taxes on income he earns," stated U.S. Attorney Taylor. "This defendant operated highly lucrative cash businesses within the District and allegedly engaged in a multi-year scheme to defraud the Internal Revenue Service."

"Paying employees in cash to evade taxes is a crime. Those employers who practice this method of paying salaries will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law," said C. Andre' Martin, IRS Special Agent in Charge of the Washington D.C. Field Office.

Conspiracy to defraud the United States and tax evasion each carry maximum a punishment of five years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. Aiding and assisting in the preparation and filing of a false tax return carries a maximum punishment of three years in prison and a similar fine.

In announcing the indictment, U.S. Attorney Jeffrey Taylor, Acting Assistant Attorney General DiCicco, and IRS Special Agent in Charge Martin commended the investigative efforts of the IRS agents in the case, as well as Assistant U.S. Attorney John Roth and Howard Sklamberg and Department of Justice Tax Attorney Patrick J. Murray, who are prosecuting the case.

An indictment is only a charge and is not evidence of guilt. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty. The defendant is entitled to a fair trial in which it will be the government's burden to prove guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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