

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF FLORIDA
TAMPA DIVISION

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FILED - USDC - FLMD - TPA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

CASE NO. **8:23cr334 UMC-VAM**

HENAN RUIJIU BIOTECHNOLOGY CO. LTD. and
YONGLE GAO

21 U.S.C. § 963
18 U.S.C. § 1956

INDICTMENT

The Grand Jury charges:

INTRODUCTION

A. The Fentanyl Epidemic in America

1. Fentanyl is the deadliest drug threat facing the United States in its 247-year history. Not only is fentanyl 50 times more potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine, a dose of as little as two milligrams can kill a grown adult. Fentanyl analogues are similar in chemical structure and effects as fentanyl.

2. Fentanyl is the leading cause of death for Americans ages 18 to 49. From February 2022 to January 2023, at least 105,263 Americans died of drug overdoses, the majority of which involved synthetic opioids such as fentanyl and fentanyl analogues. In Florida in 2021, fentanyl was present in approximately 6,417 deaths, an average of 17 fentanyl-related deaths per day.

B. The Role of Fentanyl Precursors

3. Fentanyl is a chemical that does not occur in nature. It and its analogues therefore need to be synthesized through raw chemicals known as

precursors. Illicit manufacturers use fentanyl precursors to evade law enforcement detection.

4. Chemicals used in interstate and foreign commerce are often identified through a Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS) Registry Number. The CAS is a division of the American Chemical Society and it maintains the CAS Registry, a list of all CAS numbered chemicals and their chemical associations. A CAS Registry Number is a unique and unambiguous identifier for a specific substance.

5. CAS: 79099-07-3 is the CAS Registry Number for N-Boc-4-Piperidone. This chemical compound is one of the approximately 30 possible chemical reactants commonly used in the production of fentanyl and fentanyl analogues.

6. CAS: 79099-07-3 can be used in the production of fentanyl. The amount of fentanyl that can be generated from a particular chemical is called a yield. Each yield is dependent upon a variety of factors, including the purities of the associated precursors, reagents, and solvents, as well as the expertise and experience of the laboratory operator. A theoretical yield is the maximum amount of fentanyl or fentanyl analogue a precursor could theoretically produce.

7. One kilogram of N-Boc-4-Piperidone (CAS: 79099-07-3) would theoretically yield up to 1.83 kilograms of fentanyl.

8. 4-Piperidone and any combination thereof is a List I Chemical. N-Boc-4-Piperidone (CAS: 79099-07-3) is a 4-Piperidone combination and is therefore a List I Chemical.

C. Chinese Chemical Companies Supply Fentanyl Precursors to the United States and Mexican Drug Cartels

9. The primary distributors of fentanyl and fentanyl analogues in North America are the Sinaloa Cartel and the Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación. These two transnational criminal organizations have significant presences throughout Mexico, maintain distribution hubs in various cities across the United States, and control smuggling corridors into the United States.

10. Organizations such as the Sinaloa Cartel and Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación receive fentanyl precursors from China that are then synthesized within clandestine laboratories into finished fentanyl at scale. China-based precursor chemical manufacturers ship precursors from mainland China by mislabeling the products being shipped and using containers and other packaging to mask their illicit contents.

D. The Defendants

11. HENAN RUIJIU BIOTECHNOLOGY COMPANY (“HENAN RUIJIU”) is a chemical manufacturing company based in the city of Zhengzhou, in the Henan Province, China. HENAN RUIJIU openly advertises the sale of chemicals to the United States and Mexico on its website and through its employees, as depicted in the below photo.

fentanyl



Product Detail

Product Name: fentanyl

Cat No: 437-38-7

Appearance: Powder

Storage: Drying / sealing

Purity: 9.91% MAX

Min Order: 10g

12. HENAN RUIJIU ships fentanyl precursors to the United States and represents it can deliver parcels with fake shipping labels to evade United States customs authorities.

13. YONGLE GAO is a national of China and the registered owner of the Bitcoin Wallet associated with HENAN RUIJIU.

14. HENAN RUIJIU has never registered with the DEA to import regulated chemicals.

E. Contact with Undercover

15. In or around August and September 2023, an individual acting behalf of HENAN RUIJIU, began negotiating the sale of fentanyl precursors to an individual posing as a fentanyl precursor trafficker in the United States. The trafficker was a DEA undercover Special Agent (UC-1).

16. In a series of messages using an encrypted messaging application, HENAN RUIJIU represented that it sold and shipped fentanyl precursor chemicals to the United States. HENAN RUIJIU engaged in the following conversation with UC-1:

UC-1:	I'm interested in 2FDCK 111982 and 79088-07-3 how do you ship?
HENAN RUIJIU:	We can provide, Air freight delivery. Wait a minute, I'll get you the biggest discount. How much do you need?
HENAN RUIJIU:	79088-07-3. Is this the wrong number? 79099-07-3. You want this, right?
UC-1:	You are correct yes.
HENAN RUIJIU:	OK. You can buy a minimum order quantity first and have a look at the product quality, because our quality is very good, so please rest assured.

17. During this discussion, HENAN RUIJIU offered proof of successful fentanyl precursors deliveries to the United States. HENAN RUIJIU sent a photo of a conversation with another customer, Mike, which showed a shipping label of a package that was delivered to Lexington, Ohio.



18. A search of the United States Postal Service tracking system showed the package delivered to the specified address on September 5th, 2023.

19. HENAN RUIJIU also sent UC-1 the below image of purported fake labels it uses to successfully ship fentanyl precursor chemicals and added, “we will not be stopped by customs.”



20. HENAN RUIJIU agreed to sell 100 kilograms of CAS: 79099-07-3 to UC-1 for a price of \$12,000. HENAN RUIJIU then sent a Bitcoin Wallet (BTC-1) for payment. One-hundred kilograms of CAS: 79099-07-3 would theoretically yield up to 183 kilograms of fentanyl.

21. The Bitcoin Wallet (BTC-1) was registered in the name of YONGLE GAO.

COUNT ONE
(Attempt to Import Fentanyl Precursor Into the United States)

Paragraphs 1 to 21 are realleged and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

In or around August and September 2023, in the Middle District of Florida, China, and elsewhere, the defendants,

HENAN RUIJIU BIOTECHNOLOGY CO. LTD.
and
YONGLE GAO,

did knowingly and willfully attempt to manufacture, distribute, and export from China a listed chemical, to wit: N-Boc-4-Piperidone, a 4-Piperidone combination, intending, knowing, and having reasonable cause to believe that such chemical would be unlawfully imported into the United States, and knowing and having reasonable cause to believe that such listed chemical would be used to manufacture a controlled substance, to wit: fentanyl.

All in violation of 21 U.S.C. §§ 963, 960(d)(3), and 960(d)(7), and 21 C.F.R. Part 1310.02(a)(38).

COUNT TWO
(Attempted Money Laundering)

Paragraphs 1 to 21 are realleged and incorporated by reference as though fully set forth herein.

In or around August and September 2023, in the Middle District of Florida, China, and elsewhere, the defendants,

HENAN RUIJIU BIOTECHNOLOGY CO. LTD.,
and
YONGLE GAO,

did knowingly and intentionally attempt to transport, transmit, and transfer a monetary instrument and funds from a place in the United States to and through a place outside the United States, in an amount exceeding \$10,000, with the intent to promote the carrying on of specified unlawful activity, to wit, felonious narcotics offenses involving controlled substances and listed chemicals (as those terms are defined in the Controlled Substances Act), including the violation charged in Count One of this indictment.

All in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1956(a)(2)(A).

FORFEITURE

1. The allegations contained in Counts One and Two of this Indictment are hereby realleged and incorporated by reference for the purpose of alleging forfeitures, pursuant to the provisions of 21 U.S.C. §§ 853 and 970, and 18 U.S.C. § 982(a)(1).

2. Upon conviction of a violation of Count One of this Indictment, in violation of 21 U.S.C. §§ 959 and 963, punishable by imprisonment for more than one year, the defendants,

HENAN RUIJIU BIOTECHNOLOGY CO. LTD.
and
YONGLE GAO,

shall forfeit to the United States, pursuant to 21 U.S.C. §§ 853 and 970, any property constituting, or derived from, any proceeds obtained, directly or indirectly, as the result of such offense and any property used, or intended to be used, in any manner or part, to commit, or to facilitate the commission of, the offense.

3. Upon conviction of a violation of Count Two of this Indictment, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 1956, punishable by imprisonment for more than one year, the defendants,

HENAN RUIJIU BIOTECHNOLOGY CO. LTD.
and
YONGLE GAO,

shall forfeit to the United States, pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 982(a)(1), any property, real or personal, involved in such offense, and any property traceable to such property.

4. The assets to be forfeited include, but are not limited to, an order of forfeiture in the amount of proceeds obtained from the offense.

5. If any of the property described above as being subject to forfeiture as a result of any act or omission of the defendant:

- a. cannot be located upon the exercise of due diligence;
- b. has been transferred, sold to, or deposited with a third party;

- c. has been placed beyond the jurisdiction of the Court;
- d. has been substantially diminished in value; or,
- e. has been commingled with other property which cannot be subdivided without difficulty,

the United States shall be entitled to forfeiture of substitute property under the provisions of 21 U.S.C. § 853(p), directly and as incorporated by 18 U.S.C. § 982(b)(1).

A TRUE BILL,



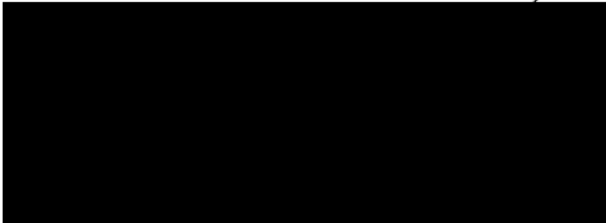
Foreperson

ROGER B. HANDBERG
United States Attorney

By:



By:



No.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
Middle District of Florida
Tampa Division

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

vs.

HENAN RUJIU BIOTECHNOLOGY CO. LTD. and
YONGLE GAO

INDICTMENT

Violations: 21 U.S.C. § 963
18 U.S.C. § 1956

A true bill,



Foreperson

Filed in open court this 27th day
of September 2023.



Clerk

Bail \$ _____