



Department of Justice

United States Attorney Melinda Haag
Northern District of California

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HERCULES MAN SENTENCED FOR FILING FALSE TAX RETURNS, ILLEGALLY OBTAINING CITIZENSHIP

SAN FRANCISCO - Harjit Bhambra was sentenced today to 37 months in prison, and ordered to pay restitution of \$242,533 for filing false tax returns and making false statements to obtain his U.S. citizenship, United States Attorney Melinda Haag announced. As part of his sentencing, the court ordered Bhambra to immediately surrender his Certificate of Naturalization.

On Jan. 13, 2011, Bhambra was convicted of making false statements to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services in order to obtain naturalization. In a separate trial this summer, Bhambra was convicted of filing false federal income tax returns for himself and for assisting in the preparation and submission of false federal income tax returns for his elderly mother. During that trial, evidence showed that Bhambra failed to report all of the income earned by his trucking company, Bay Area Transportation, on his federal income tax returns. The evidence also showed that Bhambra assisted in the preparation and submission of federal tax returns for his elderly mother, who is not fluent in English, that falsely reported that Bay Area Transportation was her business. The tax loss to the government was in excess of \$242,533.

The sentence was handed down by U.S. District Court Judge Susan Illston following a jury verdict of guilty for one count of making false statements under oath relating to naturalization in violation of 18 U.S.C. §1015(a), making a false statement to the government in violation of 18 U.S.C. §1001(a), and unlawfully obtaining his United States citizenship in violation of 18 U.S.C. §1425(a); and following a jury verdict of guilty in a separate trial on two counts of making and subscribing false federal income tax returns in violation of 26 U.S.C. §7206(1); and two counts of aiding and assisting in the presentation of false federal income tax returns in violation of 26 U.S.C. §7206(2). Judge Illston also sentenced the defendant to a three-year period of supervised release. The defendant is scheduled to begin serving his sentence on Jan. 6, 2012.

Cynthia Stier, Natalie Wight and Katherine Dowling are the Assistant U.S. Attorneys who prosecuted the case with the assistance of Kathy Tat. The prosecution is the result of an investigation led by the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division and the Diplomatic Security Service's representative to the Document and Benefit Fraud Task Force (DBFTF) overseen by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations. The DBFTF is a multi-agency task force that coordinates investigations into fraudulent immigration documents.

Further Information:

Case # 09-1088-SI

A copy of this press release may be found on the U.S. Attorney's Office's website at www.usdoj.gov/usao/can.

Electronic court filings and further procedural and docket information are available at <https://ecf.cand.uscourts.gov/cgi-bin/login.pl>.

Judges' calendars with schedules for upcoming court hearings can be viewed on the court's website at www.cand.uscourts.gov.

All press inquiries to the U.S. Attorney's Office should be directed to Jack Gillund at (415) 436-6599 or by e-mail at Jack.Gillund@usdoj.gov.

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