

THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
MIDDLE DISTRICT *of* PENNSYLVANIA

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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Middle District of Pennsylvania

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, January 26, 2022

Bartonsville Man Indicted For Pandemic Loan Fraud

SCRANTON- The United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Pennsylvania announced that on January 25, 2022, Nazim Hassam, age 70, of Bartonsville, Pennsylvania, was indicted by a federal grand jury on bank fraud and money laundering charges.

According to United States Attorney John C. Gurganus, the indictment alleges that Hassam applied for and received multiple loans under the federal Paycheck Protection Program ("PPP") while making false statements on the applications. Hassam was indicted along with two businesses he co-owns, the Pocono Plaza Inn and Om Sri Sai, Inc., in 2019 on felony sex and drug trafficking charges. When asked whether he or the companies applying for the loans were under indictment, Hassam falsely answered, "No." The indictment alleges that Hassam fraudulently obtained loans totaling \$89,308. Hassam then conducted unlawful monetary transactions with the bulk of those funds.

The case was investigated by the Internal Revenue Service. Assistant U.S. Attorney Sean A. Camoni is prosecuting the case.

This prosecution is part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) investigation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level drug traffickers, money launderers, gangs, and transnational criminal organizations that threaten the United States by using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-driven, multi-agency approach that leverages the strengths of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies against criminal networks.

On May 17, 2021, the Attorney General established the COVID-19 Fraud Enforcement Task Force to marshal the resources of the Department of Justice in partnership with agencies across government to enhance efforts to combat and prevent pandemic-related fraud. The Task Force bolsters efforts to investigate and prosecute the most culpable domestic and international criminal actors and assists agencies tasked with administering relief programs to prevent fraud by, among other methods, augmenting and incorporating existing coordination mechanisms, identifying resources and techniques to uncover fraudulent actors and their schemes, and sharing and harnessing information and insights gained from prior enforcement efforts. For more information on the Department's response to the pandemic, please visit <https://www.justice.gov/coronavirus>.

Anyone with information about allegations of attempted fraud involving COVID-19 can report it by calling the Department of Justice's National Center for Disaster Fraud (NCDF) Hotline at 866-720-5721 or via the NCDF Web Complaint Form at: <https://www.justice.gov/disaster-fraud/ncdf-disaster-complaint-form>.

If convicted, Hassam faces a maximum total penalty under federal law for these offenses of 120 years of imprisonment, a term of supervised release following imprisonment, and a fine. A sentence following a finding of guilt is imposed by the Judge after consideration of the applicable federal sentencing statutes and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines.

Indictments are only allegations. All persons charged are presumed to be innocent unless and until found guilty in court.

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Topic(s):

Coronavirus

Component(s):

USAO - Pennsylvania, Middle

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