



U.S. Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

**DEFENDANTS CHARGED FOR THEIR ROLES IN TWO SCHEMES TO PAY
KICKBACKS IN RETURN FOR BUSINESS FROM NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION**

***In Newly-Charged Scheme, Kickbacks Were Paid for the Award of Contracts Worth Millions
that Provided Information Technology Services to Homeless Shelters***

Earlier today, in federal court in Brooklyn, a superseding indictment was unsealed charging Gary DSilva, also known as Pankaj DSilva, Jonathan Velazquez, Luis A. Camarena, and Pradeep Nigam with conspiracy to commit wire fraud and bribery, as well as substantive counts of wire fraud and federal-program bribery; DSilva and Velazquez are also charged with money laundering conspiracies. The new charges arise from a scheme in which DSilva and Velazquez, employees of a Brooklyn-based non-profit organization (the Organization), received kickbacks from Nigam in exchange for steering business to a vendor owned by Nigam (Vendor 2). DSilva, Velazquez, and Camarena had been charged in a previous indictment that was unsealed on November 21, 2024, for their roles in a similar scheme in which DSilva and Velazquez received kickbacks from Camarena in return for steering business to a vendor owned by Camarena (Vendor 1). Nigam surrendered to authorities earlier today and will be arraigned this afternoon before the United States Magistrate Judge Marcia M. Henry. DSilva, Velazquez, and Camarena will be arraigned at a later date.

Joseph Nocella, Jr., United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York; Jocelyn E. Strauber, Commissioner, New York City Department of Investigation (DOI); and Christopher G. Raia, Assistant Director in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation, New York Field Office (FBI); announced the arrest and charges.

“As alleged, DSilva, Velazquez and Nigam set up a secret side deal with Nigam and awarded Nigam business contracts worth millions of dollars that provided essential information-technology services to homeless shelters in return for illegal kickbacks,” stated

United States Attorney Nocella. “Today’s indictment underscores our strong commitment to prosecuting all illegal fraud and contract steering schemes.”

DOI Commissioner Jocelyn E. Strauber stated, “These defendants, employees of a City-funded nonprofit and principals of the nonprofit’s subcontractors, engaged in kickback schemes in return for millions of dollars in contracts, as charged. These funds were intended to provide technology services in homeless shelters operated by the non-profit, instead the defendants exploited these arrangements to benefit themselves. I thank the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of New York and the New York Office of the FBI for their continued partnership and commitment to protect public funds.”

“These four defendants allegedly crafted a kickback scheme to enrich themselves by discreetly contracting a co-conspirator’s company to install security systems in several New York City homeless shelters,” stated FBI Assistant Director in Charge Raia. “This alleged conspiracy prioritized personal interests and established an unfair financial advantage to perpetuate the cycle of unlawful payments flowing into the defendants’ bank accounts. The FBI remains committed to investigating any instance of quid pro quo, especially when it impacts critical services to our city’s vulnerable communities.”

As alleged in the superseding indictment, DSilva and Velazquez were employed in the Management Information Systems department of the Organization, which supplied numerous services to indigent New Yorkers, including administering multiple homeless shelters. As part of their work for the Organization, DSilva and Velazquez were responsible for soliciting vendors to complete various projects involving information technology.

The superseding indictment details two schemes in which DSilva and Velazquez received kickbacks for steering contracts for the Organization to specific vendors. In the first scheme, which was also detailed in the original indictment, DSilva and Velazquez received approximately \$500,000 in kickbacks from Camarena in return for steering contracts worth approximately \$1.6 million to Vendor 1, Camarena’s company, for installing and/or replacing security cameras at the Organization’s homeless shelters. In the second scheme, DSilva and Velazquez took payments from Nigam in exchange for the approval of payments from the Organization to Vendor 2, Nigam’s company. The payments from the Organization were for the installation and maintenance of telephone, Internet, and network services at homeless shelters operated by the Organization. DSilva, Velazquez, and Nigam had a secret deal whereby they agreed to split the profits Vendor 2 made on the payments from the Organization three ways. DSilva and Velazquez had control over how much Nigam charged the Organization. In one instance, DSilva, using a personal email account, sent to Nigam an invoice for Vendor 2 to submit to the Organization—DSilva’s employer. As part of the conspiracy, Nigam regularly sent money to companies in the names of relatives of DSilva and Velazquez. In total, the Organization paid almost \$2 million to Vendor 2 during the operation of the scheme, and Nigam paid kickbacks exceeding \$700,000 to DSilva and Velazquez.

The charges in the superseding indictment are merely allegations and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.

The government's case is being handled by the Office's Public Integrity Section. Assistant United States Attorneys Laura Zuckerwise and Turner Buford are in charge of the prosecution, with the assistance of paralegal specialist Kavya Kannan.

The Defendants:

GARY DSILVA (also known as "Pankaj DSilva")

Age: 46

Manalapan, NJ

JONATHAN VELAZQUEZ

Age: 54

Massapequa Park, NJ

LUIS A. CAMARENA

Age: 57

Bronx, NY

PRADEEP NIGAM

Age: 63

Edison, NJ

E.D.N.Y. Docket No. 24-CR-471 (S-1) (HG)