



The City of New York  
Department of Finance  
1 Centre Street  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

BETH E. GOLDMAN  
COMMISSIONER

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FRIDAY, APRIL 11, 2014**

**DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE SHERIFF'S INVESTIGATION LEADS TO ARREST OF SIX INDIVIDUALS ON MULTIPLE TAX CRIMES AND COUNTERFEITING**

BETH GOLDMAN, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Finance ("DOF"), issued the following statement: "On Tuesday April 8, 2014 the New York City Sheriff's Office seized 1019 cartons of untaxed cigarettes and 132,242 unaffixed counterfeit tax stamps along with various financial records, computers and over \$20,000 in cash during the execution of multiple search warrants in Brooklyn. Investigators and Deputy Sheriffs arrested six individuals who were charged with the trafficking and sale of illegal tobacco products. The search warrants were executed at various delicatessens, a residence on 56th Street, and an apartment on New Utrecht Avenue. The bulk of the cigarettes and unaffixed tax stamps were recovered from an apartment that was used exclusively for stamping cigarettes with the counterfeit tax stamps."

The counterfeit tax stamps recovered were for a variety of states including joint New York City/State stamps, New York State, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Cigarette traffickers routinely purchase cigarettes in Virginia and North Carolina and transport them to New York City and the surrounding areas for resale with counterfeit tax stamps applied.

The cigarettes seized are valued at over \$100,000, and the counterfeit tax stamps represent additional lost revenue of over \$638,015, including more than \$508,310 in NYS and City excise tax, \$126,055 in Connecticut Tax and \$62,909 in Rhode Island Tax. Over 577 cartons of legitimate Virginia stamped product were seized. Cigarette Traffickers purchase Virginia stamped cigarettes, remove the legitimate stamp and replace it with counterfeit stamps which create the appearance that the proper tax has been paid.

The DOF Sheriff's Office investigation, conducted jointly with assistance from the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, the New York State Department of Taxation and Finance and the Connecticut Department of Revenue, is on-going.

"The trafficking and sale of untaxed cigarettes deprives the city of revenue that could be used for the common good of all citizens. We will continue to work with the Department



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of Finance and Sheriff's Office by prosecuting unscrupulous tax evaders and ensure that they abide by our tax laws," said Kings County District Attorney Kenneth P. Thompson.

"I commend the New York City Sheriff's Office for this action and for their ongoing participation in the New York Cigarette Tax Strike Force, targeted at reigning in illegal tobacco trafficking and sales," said New York State Commissioner of Taxation and Finance Thomas H. Mattox.

Several of the businesses owners are also being investigated for failing to file New York City business tax returns and failing to report personal income for New York State and City purposes.

The following individuals were arrested and charged with offenses related to the possession and transportation of untaxed cigarettes:

Diyazan Sufyan DOB 4/15/1986  
876 4th Ave Brooklyn, NY

Diya Karan DOB 1/26/1983  
121A Plains Road Walden New York

Zayed Ahmed DOB 1/1/1987  
370 Livingston Street Brooklyn

Abdulla Ahmed DOB 1/1/1991  
370 Livingston Street Brooklyn

Salah Abdelrahman DOB 1/15/1960  
1636 Castleton Ave Staten Island, NY

Mamdouh Almontasir DOB 1/3/1978  
625 56th Street Brooklyn NY

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