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**QUEENS RESIDENT CHARGED WITH STEALING \$1 MILLION**  
**IN IMMIGRATION AND REAL ESTATE FRAUD SCHEME**

*Defendant Allegedly Posed As ICE Agent With Inside Connections;  
Nearly a Dozen Victims Scammed; Other Victims Urged To Come Forward*

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown, joined by Port Authority Police Superintendent Michael A. Fedorko, announced today that a Queens resident posing as a federal government agent has been charged with defrauding nearly a dozen members of Queens County's West Indian community out of more than \$1 million by promising to assist them in obtaining "federally seized" properties at cheap prices or to assist them in gaining legal status in this country.

District Attorney Brown said, "Our immigrant community can be especially vulnerable to deception and fraud when someone promises to help them navigate the process of obtaining the necessary documents to work and remain in the United States or get ahead by dealing in real estate. Immigrants, especially, who in many instances are earning very little money and working at more than one job, put their faith and their finances in the hands of the defendant who, in turn, allegedly turned their American Dream into the American nightmare by ripping them off. They now face an uncertain future."

Port Authority Police Superintendent Fedorko said, "This is a classic case of good police work begetting good police work. Earlier this year, Detective Dewan Maharaj worked a great case involving an immigration scam. The hard work and integrity he brought to that investigation lead victims in this case to come forward and seek his aid. The Port Authority Police Department responded with a careful and thorough investigation and I congratulate all of our PAPD officers on an excellent arrest."

District Attorney Brown and Superintendent Fedorko ask that anyone who believes that he or she may have been a victim of the defendant's alleged scheme to contact Port Authority Police Detective Dewan Maharaj through the Port Authority's Central Police Desk at 201-239-3500 or the PAPD Suspicious Activities Hotline at 800-828-7273, or the District Attorney's Rackets and Organized Crime Bureau at 718-286-6659.

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Shane Ramsundar, 49, of 101-35A 120<sup>th</sup> Street in South Richmond Hill, Queens. Ramsundar, who is presently awaiting arraignment in

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Queens Criminal Court in Kew Gardens, is charged in two criminal complaints involving eleven alleged victims with the crimes of second-degree grand larceny, first-degree scheme to defraud and first-degree criminal impersonation of a public servant. If convicted, he faces up to 15 years in prison.

According to one of the complaints, Pete Baldeo, the owner of a tattoo parlor located at 127-03 101<sup>st</sup> Avenue in Richmond Hill, Queens, met Ramsundar in May 2008 after employing his teenage daughter at the store, which is a neighborhood gathering place for West Indian nationals. At the time, Ramsundar allegedly identified himself as an agent for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (“ICE”) who was on loan to the FBI and Homeland Security as an undercover agent. Ramsundar allegedly showed Baldeo a Homeland Security badge and a black automatic handgun which he wore on his hip. It is alleged that Ramsundar told Baldeo, and others in Baldeo’s presence, that he could use his insider access to get people green cards, have them removed from deportation lists and even get them off “terrorist watch lists” in exchange for sums of money.

For example, it is alleged that Samih Zabib, who is in the United States legally under the country’s amnesty program, met with Ramsundar in February 2008. Zabib allegedly had received notice that his work authorization was not being renewed and he was petrified at being deported after raising his family and operating a business here for 22 years. Ramsundar allegedly told Zabib that he could get him, a friend and a relative permanent legal status in the form of resident alien cards, though it would cost \$42,000 and a one-time money order “processing fee” for \$1,010 made out to U.S. Immigration and Customs. It is alleged that the money order was never cashed but merely requested so that it would appear that Ramsundar was legitimately processing the applications.

Ramsundar allegedly told Zabib he should act fast because he was from Lebanon and was now on the top of the terrorist watch list to be deported. It is alleged that due to Ramsundar’s threats of imminent deportation, Zabib decided not to go to court but instead provide Ramsundar with his actual immigration documents, his identifying and immigration paperwork and a total of \$43,010 in cash in order for him to stop their deportation and enhance their immigration statuses. Thereafter, when Zabib questioned Ramsundar why he had not received any official communications from the U.S. government, Ramsundar allegedly provided him with a phony case number that he could use to log onto the Immigration website. Zabib and the two others have never received any change in status from the U.S. government.

The complaint further alleges that Ramsundar repeatedly claimed to be able to help other victims with various immigration problems, including fixing expired tourist and student visas and, in one instance, offering to help a man who feared deportation following a divorce from his wife who was an American citizen. He allegedly told all of his victims he could obtain permanent resident status for them in exchange for large sums of money. In total, Ramsundar allegedly received a total of \$237,030 from eight victims.

In a second complaint, Ramsundar is alleged to have stolen a total of \$855,000 from four individuals – including one allegedly defraud in the immigration scam – through two real estate deals. In his guise as an ICE agent, Ramsundar allegedly informed Baldeo and Zabib that he could gain access to federally seized real estate properties in Florida, which they could purchase for minimal fees and then sell for large profits. Ramsundar allegedly showed Baldeo photographs of

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several houses and even planned a trip so they could view the properties and attend the closings but cancelled the trip at the last minute. It is alleged that Baldeo and Zabib paid Ramsundar \$445,000 and \$210,000, respectively, in cash and checks and never received title or ownership documents for the promised real estate.

The complaint further alleges that, in March 2007, Kowlessar Mahadeo and Ramish Ramcharran met with Ramsundar, who claimed he worked for the FBI. Ramsundar allegedly drove them around Queens and showed them residential properties that purportedly had been seized by the federal government. Having agreed to purchase the Queens properties and one in Florida, it is alleged that Mahadeo and Ramcharran signed three actual contractual agreements entitled “co-purchasing agreements” and “confidential agreement,” which had been provided by the defendant and listed the amounts they had to pay Ramsundar. In total, Ramsundar allegedly received \$92,000 from Mahadeo purportedly for the properties and a government-seized Mercedes Benz, and \$108,000 from Ramcharran for the properties. Neither man received any title to, or ownership or possession of the properties or car.

District Attorney Brown said that today’s case was initiated when its alleged victims read press reports last month about the sentencing of Port Authority janitorial worker Nazim (“Tony”) Hosein who had defrauded five members of the West Indian community by promising to expedite and produce legitimate green cards and other U.S. documents after collecting a total of nearly \$100,000 from them. As a result of that unrelated case, the alleged victims in the instant case contacted the Port Authority Police with information about Ramsundar.

The investigation was conducted by Port Authority Police Detectives Dewan Maharaj and Curt King, under the supervision of Lieutenant William Hanley and Inspector Anthony Fitzgerald and the overall supervision of Chief George Albin.

Assistant District Attorneys Catherine C. Kane, Chief of the District Attorney’s Airport Investigations Unit, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Gerard A. Brave, Rackets Bureau Chief, and Mark L. Katz, Deputy Bureau Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney of the Investigations Division Peter A. Crusco and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Linda M. Cantoni.

It should be noted that a criminal complaint is merely an accusation and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

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**Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted at [www.queensda.org](http://www.queensda.org).**