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US authorities seize laundered money

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US authorities seized more than \$US5.6 million (\$NZ7.6 million) on Friday from 16 New York City bank accounts used by an accused Dubai-based drugs money launderer, US Attorney Michael Garcia said.



Garcia said the money was seized after law enforcement authorities in Italy, Britain and the United Arab Emirates learned that a man identified as Naresh Jain Kumar Patel, of Dubai, said he had laundered proceeds of an Albanian drugs trafficking organisation operating in Italy.

Patel and 39 others were arrested in the United Arab Emirates on money laundering charges on February 20, Garcia said in a statement.

"Patel gave a post-arrest statement in which he admitted that he operated a money laundering business on behalf of several criminal organisations, and that he would launder these organisations' illicit funds through various individuals and companies under his control," he said.

Police in Dubai recovered banking and wire transfer records from Patel's office that showed he held accounts at Man Financial Inc in Manhattan.

"Some of the activity in the Man Financial accounts demonstrated that Patel engaged in sham commodities trades in which Patel and his nominees would always suffer losses and other entities ... would enjoy profits - all with no real change in trading position for either party," Garcia said.

He said the "wash" commodities trades are now the subject of a civil lawsuit by the US Commodity Futures Trading Commission.

Source: Reuters

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