U.S. Attorney, Florida, Middle press release, 2026-10-21
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Indian National Indicted for Conspiracy to Commit Wire Fraud

Ocala, Florida – Manojkumar N. Desai (44, Ocala) has been charged by indictment with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud. If convicted, he faces a maximum penalty of 20 years in federal prison. The indictment also notifies Desai that the United States will seek an order of forfeiture in the amount of $370,198.40, representing both the proceeds of the offense and $55,970 in U.S. currency seized from Desai's residence in June 2026. United States Attorney Gregory W. Kehoe made the announcement.

According to the indictment and evidence presented in court, beginning in at least April 2026, and continuing through June 5, 2026, Desai conspired with others to commit wire fraud. One of the members of the conspiracy contacted the victim by phone and fraudulently posed as an agent of the U.S. Treasury Department. The conspirator informed the victim that their identity had been stolen and directed the victim to withdraw money from their bank accounts. The victim was further instructed to meet with a conspirator to provide them with cash, to wire money to another conspirator, and to purchase gold coins that would be tendered to an "officer" for safekeeping.

On May 21, 2026, Desai, posing as the "officer," met with the victim and obtained the gold coins. He then directed another individual to sell some of the coins and deposit the proceeds ($12,873) into a joint bank account. The following week, Desai transferred $10,000 by wire from that account to another conspirator.

An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed one or more violations of federal criminal law, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until, proven guilty.

This case was investigated by the United States Secret Service, the Citrus County Sherriff's Office, and the St. Petersburg Police Department. It is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Angela M. Palacios.