U.S. Attorney, Maine press release, 2026-11-05
Source: https://www.justice.gov/usao-me/pr/illegal-alien-india-sentenced-fraud-scheme-targeting-elderly-victims

Illegal Alien from India Sentenced for Fraud Scheme Targeting Elderly Victims

PORTLAND, Maine: An Indian national was sentenced yesterday in U.S. District Court in Portland for conspiring to commit wire fraud.

Chief U.S. District Judge Lance E. Walker sentenced Prakashkumar Prajapati, 47, to nine years in prison and ordered him to pay $1,897,386 in restitution. Prajapati pleaded guilty on January 15, 2026.

According to court records Prajapati conspired with others in a multi-state scheme to defraud at least eight victims in five states, including Maine. As part of the scheme, victims received telephone calls from individuals posing as government officials. These imposters instructed victims to withdraw cash and purchase gold to turn over to the government for safekeeping. The callers then arranged for victims to meet fake government agents to hand over the cash and gold. As part of the conspiracy, Prajapati directed his co-defendant Bharat Awasarmol to collect gold and cash from victims. Awasarmol was intercepted when FBI agents caught him accepting a package from a victim in Maine. The Maine victim had been instructed by an individual posing as an employee of the Federal Trade Commission to meet Awasarmol and provide him with gold bars.

As part of the conspiracy, Prajapati and his coconspirators collected cash and gold from seven additional victims in New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, and Virginia, all of whom had been deceived by individuals posing as government officials. As part of the conspiracy, Prajapati caused $1,897,386 in losses to the victims.

Awasarmol pleaded guilty on December 9, 2025, and faces up to 20 years in prison and a fine of up to $250,000 on the wire fraud conspiracy charge and up to five years in prison and a fine of up to $250,000 on a false statement charge. Awasarmol is scheduled to be sentenced in January 2027.

The FBI investigated the case.

On April 7, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the National Fraud Enforcement Division (“Fraud Division”). The Fraud Division is investigating and

prosecuting those who commit fraud against the American people. The Department's work to combat fraud supports President Trump's Task Force to Eliminate Fraud, a whole-of-government effort chaired by Vice President J.D. Vance to eliminate fraud, waste, and abuse within Federal benefit programs.

The Department of Justice is committed to aggressively combating elder abuse, neglect, financial exploitation and fraud. Between July of 2025 and July of 2026, the Department pursued nearly 350 criminal and civil enforcement actions against 712 defendants either charged with stealing, or alleged to have stolen, over $4.8 billion from over 700,000 victims. The Department also returned millions of dollars to older victims and helped to prevent tens of millions of dollars in losses from older Americans. But enforcement alone is not enough. Preventing fraud and abuse in the first place is always the best outcome. For more information on elder fraud and abuse, visit the Department of Justice's Elder Justice Initiative website at justice.gov/elderjustice. If you or someone you know has been the victim of elder fraud, please call the National Elder Fraud Hotline at 833-FRAUD-11.

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