U.S. Attorney, Arizona press release, 2026-10-29
Source: https://www.justice.gov/usao-az/pr/indian-national-sentenced-eight-years-prison-laundering-money-fraud-scheme-targeting

# Indian National Sentenced to Eight Years in Prison for Laundering Money from Fraud Scheme Targeting Elderly

TUCSON, Ariz. – Ahmed Maqbul Syed, 60, a citizen of India, and former resident of Illinois, was sentenced on Oct. 27, to 96 months in prison by U.S. District Judge John C. Hinderaker. Syed previously pleaded guilty to Conspiracy to Commit Money Laundering. He was also ordered to pay approximately $2.4 million dollars in restitution to the victims.

Syed participated in a conspiracy to launder proceeds from a widespread “tech support” and “government imposter” fraud scheme that targeted elderly victims around the United States, including Arizona. Generally, the victims were initially deceived by fraudulent computer pop-up messages warning them of a computer problem or causing their computer to freeze. When victims followed instructions to call for assistance, they were instead connected to scammers posing as tech support or government representatives. The scammers convinced victims that their accounts had been hacked and their information had been compromised, which was not true. In some cases, victims were wrongly led to believe that their accounts had been linked to child pornography or other crimes. The scammers then instructed the victims to withdraw or transfer money under the guise that they needed to protect or safeguard their assets

Victims were directed to purchase gold and withdraw cash, turning those funds over to individuals posing as government officials. Victims were also directed to purchase gift cards and transfer the gift card numbers to individuals falsely claiming that they would help. At least one victim was also directed to make cash deposits into a bitcoin ATM. Some victims lost most of their life savings to the scam.

The FBI Phoenix Division’s Tucson office and the Marana Police Department conducted the investigation, with assistance from the FBI’s Indianapolis Division and other local law enforcement agencies from Illinois, Wisconsin, Texas, and Indiana. The United States Attorney’s Office, District of Arizona, Tucson, handled the prosecution.

CASE NUMBER: 24-CR-08825-TUC-JCH

RELEASE NUMBER: 2026-182_Syed

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