



PRESS RELEASE

Press Release No.	: 4/2021	Telephone	: (679) 322 3333
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FIU PROVIDES FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

The Fiji Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) provided targeted financial intelligence and assistance to law enforcement agencies during the investigation of a major international drug trafficking case that resulted in the successful conviction of a Canadian national in Fiji. The FIU identified suspicious wire transfers, shell companies, unusual account activities, and provided asset tracing in this case.

The Suva High Court today sentenced Joshua Aziz Rahman to 20 years imprisonment with a non-parole period of 14 years. Joshua Aziz Rahman was found guilty by the High Court for being in possession of 39.5 kilograms of cocaine worth FJ\$30 million in April 2021.

Joshua Aziz Rahman was first arrested and charged in 2019, following a raid and discovery of bars of white powder in a residential property that was rented by his father, Tallat Rahman in Suva. When the raid and seizure occurred, Joshua Aziz Rahman was occupying the property while his father was in New Zealand. His father was also arrested in New Zealand for the importation of methamphetamine during the same period.

In 2020, Tallat Rahman pleaded guilty to four charges of importing methamphetamine from Mexico to New Zealand and was sentenced to 16 years imprisonment by the Auckland District Court.

The Director of the FIU, Mr Razim Buksh, said that this is an excellent outcome of law enforcement co-operation and networking. The profiling and targeting of key individuals in complex criminal activities through the collaboration and partnership of law enforcement agencies shows how we can disrupt international criminal networks in Fiji.

Mr Buksh also said that drug trafficking, cultivation and related offences continue to be the biggest contributor to money laundering risk in Fiji. This is based on an assessment of the money laundering risk in Fiji in 2015 and a recent review in 2020.

The FIU is one of the leading agencies in Fiji that is responsible for preventing and detecting money laundering, terrorist financing and related criminal activities such as drug trafficking. The core role of the FIU as an intelligence agency is to receive, analyse and disseminate financial intelligence to relevant law enforcement agencies.

Mr Buksh said that the FIU uses a data-mining and data-monitoring system to generate meaningful intelligence that is shared with its law enforcement partners, both in Fiji and internationally. The FIU currently has over 20 million financial transaction records in its database. This information is extremely useful in profiling suspects, identifying and monitoring flow of funds, tracing syndicates and conducting related financial surveillance.

The FIU is also Fiji's anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism regulator and the lead agency on AML/CFT policy formulation, compliance and enforcement.

The FTR Act and Regulations specifies a range of measures that financial institutions, including real estate agents, legal practitioners and accounting firms in Fiji must implement in order to prevent the abuse of Fiji's financial system from money laundering, terrorist financing and other serious criminal activities.

FINANCIAL INTELLIGENCE UNIT

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