

PG man going to prison for stealing millions in email scheme

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Greenbelt, MD - U.S. District Judge Paul W. Grimm sentenced Nkeng Amin, a/k/a "Rapone," a/k/a "Arnold," 31 of Beltsville, Monday, April 1 to 87 months in prison, followed by three years of supervised release, for a large-scale business e-mail compromise scheme during which Amin and his co-conspirators obtained over \$4.2 million from at least 13 individual and business victims. Judge Grimm also ordered Amin to forfeit and to pay restitution in the amount of \$1,021,474.

The sentence was announced by United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Robert K. Hur; Acting Special Agent in Charge Cardell T. Morant of Homeland Security Investigations; and Special Agent in Charge Brian Ebert of the United States Secret Service, Washington Field Office.

According to his plea agreement, and to evidence presented at today's sentencing hearing, between February 2016 and July 2017, Amin and his co-conspirators gained access to e-mail accounts associated with the victims. Then, posing as an entity with whom the victims were associated, they sent false wiring instructions to the victims, who wired millions of dollars into "drop accounts" set up by Amin and his co-defendants, in the names of fictitious businesses they registered. Drop accounts were bank accounts opened or controlled by Amin and his co-conspirators that were used to receive fraudulently obtained money from victims. Amin and others then disbursed the money in the drop accounts that were received from the victims by, among other things: electronically transferring money to other accounts; transferring funds to other accounts at the same bank; withdrawing cash; obtaining cashier's checks; and writing checks to other individuals or entities.

Amin worked hand-in-hand with co-conspirator Aldrin Fomukong to perpetrate the fraud in Maryland. Amin also independently corresponded with the leaders of the fraud scheme overseas and recruited and managed his own co-conspirators, including co-defendant Yanick Eyong, to open bank accounts to receive victim funds and withdraw the victim funds from the fictitious bank accounts before the fraud was detected.

Over the course of the conspiracy, Amin, Fomukong, and their co-conspirators obtained over \$4.2 million and attempted to steal over \$10.9 million from at least 13 victims.

The following co-conspirators have all pleaded guilty--Aldrin Fon Fomukong, a/k/a "Albanky," a/k/a "A.L.," age 24, of Greenbelt; Carlson Cho, a/k/a "Uncle Tiga2," age 23, of Braintree, MA; Izou Ere Digifa, a/k/a "Lzuo Digifa," a/k/a "Mimi VA," age 22, of Lynchburg, VA; Yanick Eyong, age 26, of Bowie; and Ishmail Ganda, a/k/a "Banker TD," age 31, of College Park.

Fomukong and Digifa remain detained pending sentencing. Judge Grimm sentenced Eyong to 57 months in prison; sentenced Cho to 48 months in prison; and sentenced Ganda to 90 days in prison, to be served during his first 18 months of supervised release.

United States Attorney Robert K. Hur praised Homeland Security Investigations and the United States Secret Service for their work in the investigation. Mr. Hur thanked Assistant U.S. Attorney Kelly O'Connell Hayes, who prosecute the case.

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