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DEA Seizes \$10 Million in Crypto Tied to Sinaloa Cartel

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– Categories: Crime



Federal law enforcement officials say U.S. drug agents have seized over \$10 million worth of cryptocurrency connected to Mexico’s infamous Sinaloa cartel. The bust came as part of a sweeping nationwide crackdown on drug trafficking that also uncovered massive quantities of fentanyl, methamphetamine, and other illicit substances.

According to a statement released Tuesday by the U.S. Department of Justice, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), working alongside the FBI, made the cryptocurrency seizure during a raid in Miami. The operation is part of a larger coordinated effort that began

in January, targeting the financial and logistical operations of Mexico's most powerful drug syndicates.

Cartel Crackdown

The crypto seizure is just one piece of a wider campaign to disrupt cartel operations across the United States. Since the start of the year, federal agents have reportedly seized 44 million counterfeit fentanyl pills, 4,500 pounds of powdered fentanyl, and nearly 65,000 pounds of methamphetamine. The drugs were confiscated in multiple states, including Texas, California, and Georgia, often concealed in commercial vehicles or disguised within legitimate produce shipments.

One notable bust occurred in Galveston, Texas, where agents discovered more than 1,700 pounds of methamphetamine, estimated at \$15 million, hidden in a vehicle. In Georgia, over 700 pounds of meth were found packed among cucumbers, while in Texas, authorities uncovered nearly 800 pounds inside a refrigerated truck hauling blueberries.

The DEA says these seizures are part of a broader strategy aimed at dismantling the Sinaloa cartel's distribution and financial infrastructure. DEA Acting Administrator Robert Murphy emphasized the agency's resolve. "DEA is hitting the cartels where it hurts, with arrests, with seizures, and with relentless pressure," he said.

The Sinaloa cartel, long regarded as one of the most violent and sophisticated drug trafficking organizations in the world, has evolved beyond just smuggling narcotics. Federal investigators say the group has embraced digital currencies like cryptocurrency to move and conceal drug profits internationally, making the recent crypto seizures especially significant.

The timing of the enforcement actions also comes shortly after Ovidio Guzmán López, the son of jailed drug kingpin Joaquín "El Chapo" Guzmán, entered a guilty plea to drug charges in Chicago. His plea deal reportedly includes a reduced sentence in exchange for cooperation with prosecutors. El Chapo himself was convicted in 2019 and is serving a life sentence in a U.S. federal prison.

The Sinaloa cartel's brutality continues to alarm authorities. Just weeks ago, U.S. officials disclosed that the cartel had employed hackers to infiltrate Mexican surveillance systems in a scheme to identify and assassinate FBI informants. Mexican officials also recently

discovered 20 bodies, several of them decapitated, hanging from a highway bridge in an area ravaged by infighting among cartel factions.

As U.S. authorities continue ramping up pressure on cartel operations, the latest crypto seizure illustrates a new frontier in the battle against transnational organized crime, one where law enforcement must be as agile and tech-savvy as the criminals they pursue.