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Businessman, Police Chiefs Indicted for U.S. Visa Fraud Scheme

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An Indian-origin businessman and four American law enforcement officials, including three police chiefs, have been federally indicted in Louisiana for orchestrating a fraudulent scheme to exploit the United States' U nonimmigrant visa program. The charges stem from falsified police reports used to support immigration applications.

Chandrakant Patel, a store and restaurant owner based in Oakdale, Louisiana, was charged alongside Chad Doyle, Glynn Dixon, Tebo Onishea, and Michael Slaney, a city marshal. According to court documents filed in Lafayette on July 16, the group conspired to create fake crime reports, often involving staged armed robberies. These reports were allegedly sold to immigrants seeking to obtain U nonimmigrant status (commonly known as U visas), which are reserved for victims of certain qualifying crimes who have suffered mental or physical abuse and are willing to assist law enforcement in investigations or prosecutions.

Investigators revealed that Patel acted as the go-between for immigrants looking to qualify for the visa. In exchange for thousands of dollars, he allegedly arranged for his co-conspirators, current or former members of law enforcement, to fabricate police reports that portrayed the immigrants as crime victims. These fraudulent documents were then submitted to the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), a federal agency under the Department of Homeland Security.

Ironically, Patel himself received a U visa in 2023, claiming to be a victim of armed robbery. Prosecutors now suggest that the claim may also have been falsified as part of the broader conspiracy.

The case is being led by a Homeland Security Task Force under “Operation Take Back America,” a policy initiative launched during President Donald Trump’s administration to combat immigration-related fraud and uphold the integrity of U.S. law enforcement and border protections.

The investigation highlights concerns about vulnerabilities within the U visa process, which was originally designed to encourage undocumented victims of crime to come forward and assist authorities. Misuse of this system not only compromises public trust but also undermines resources intended for genuine victims.

As the legal process unfolds, this case is likely to fuel broader debates around immigration policy enforcement and accountability within local law enforcement.