



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 8, 2003

For Information Contact Public Affairs
HARRIET BERNICK
Telephone: (602) 514-7736
Pager: (602) 356-0004

COURIERS FOR LARGE MDMA (ECSTASY) ORGANIZATION SENTENCED

PHOENIX, ARIZONA -The United States Attorneys Office for the District of Arizona, announced that on July 7, 2003, District Court Judge James A. Teilborg sentenced Hai Ming Mu, DOB 8/9/60 and Heng Zhao, DOB 2/12/73 both from Fujian, China, for their respective roles in conspiring with others on August 29, 2002 to posses with the intent to distribute in excess of 60,000 dosage units of MDMA (ecstasy) in violation of Title 21 of the United States Code, Sections 841 and 846. The 60,000 dosage units of MDMA (ecstasy) is the equivalent of 3,695.5 kilograms of marijuana.

The defendants were stopped during a routine traffic stop by the Arizona Department of Public Safety. The officer initiated the traffic stop for excessive speed on Interstate 40 near Navajo County, Arizona. The driver, Mu and the passenger Zhao gave consent to the officer to search the vehicle. The officer subsequently found a suitcase in the trunk of the vehicle with the MDMA (ecstasy) secreted in the pockets of the suitcase. Initially, the defendants told law enforcement the pills that were seized, in 30 plastic packages, each containing approximately 2,008 pill of MDMA (ecstasy), were painkillers. Prior to entering pleas on April 16, 2003 both defendants provided information that they were the couriers for the MDMA (ecstasy).

(MORE)

Defendants Mu and Zhao were both given sentences of 87 months of confinement and at the completion of their sentences both defendants will be subject to deportation proceedings that will likely result in their deportation back to China.

The prosecution was handled by Steven P. Logan, Assistant United States Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix, Arizona.

CASE NUMBER: CR 02-977-PHX-JAT
RELEASE NUMBER: 2003-118

(MORE)