



NEWS RELEASE

Office of the United States Attorney
Eastern District of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GUILTY PLEA TO DRUG CHARGE

(Tyler, Texas) A traffic stop in Panola County last December has led to an Ohio woman pleading guilty to a drug trafficking charge. This afternoon in Tyler, **THUY BICH DANG**, pleaded guilty to Possession with Intent to Distribute more than 500 grams of a substance containing a detectable amount of 3,4-methylenedioxy amphetamine (MDA or Ecstasy). Her co-defendant, **KHAN PHAN**, pleaded guilty to Misprision of a Felony.

According to information prosecutors presented in court, Dang and Phan were traveling from Houston to their home to Ohio when they were stopped for a traffic violation last December on Highway 59 in Panola County. During the stop, Dang and Phan consented to the search of their car and officers discovered more than 10,000 ecstasy tablets hidden in the trunk of the car. The investigation revealed that Dang, 39, had asked Phan, 21, to travel with her to Houston for cosmetic surgery. After they had left Ohio, Dang informed Phan that her original story was false and that she planned to pick up Ecstasy pills in Houston to bring back to their hometown of Moraine, Ohio for distribution in Ohio. Phan admitted today that after he learned of the real purpose of the trip, he continued and did nothing to stop the criminal activity of Dang.

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Matthew D. Orwig, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of Texas, says this case should send a message that, "prosecutors are serious about halting drug trafficking. Whether you are dealing drugs or just along for the ride, we will vigorously investigate and prosecute those trafficking in illegal narcotics."

Dang could be sentenced to a maximum of life in prison and a fine of \$4 million. Phan could face a maximum sentence of three years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. Judge William Steger did not set a sentencing date.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregg Marchessault is prosecuting the case.

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