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Convenience Store Owner Indicted for Tax Evasion

MONTGOMERY, March 31, 2017 – A Mobile County grand jury returned an indictment on March 24 charging a Mobile County convenience store owner with 28 counts of failure to collect, report and pay sales tax, and eight counts of willful failure to file corporate and individual income tax returns. Anil Patel was arrested on March 30 by the Mobile County Sheriff's Department.

According to the allegations in the indictment, Patel, the president and sole corporate officer of Jai Maatadee Inc., owner and operator of four convenience stores in the Mobile area, filed false sales tax returns with the Alabama Department of Revenue during the periods of September 2011 through 2013, thereby evading payment of sales tax in excess of \$1 million. It is also alleged that Patel willfully failed to file corporate and individual income tax returns.

“The Department is leveraging technology and industry insiders to combat tax evasion committed by convenience store owners. This is a significant problem and costs the taxpayers of Alabama millions of dollars every year,” said Revenue Commissioner Julie P. Magee. “If you are a convenience store owner and think you can thwart reporting your true and accurate tax liability, your day of reckoning is here. You will be caught and prosecuted. We are also working with members of the legislature to evaluate and adopt new laws designed to stop this growing problem. The days of store owners giving themselves a raise on the backs of Alabama’s taxpayers are over.”

If convicted, Patel faces a statutory maximum sentence of five years in prison and a possible fine of \$10,000 for each felony and one year in prison and payment of the cost of prosecution for each misdemeanor. Patel faces 148 years in prison, payment of the outstanding taxes and interest, and criminally imposed fines totaling at least \$280,000.

Patel is being held in the Mobile Metro Jail in lieu of a \$500,000 bond.

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