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LB Man Gets 14 Years For Smuggling Hashish

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A 30-year-old Laguna Beach man has been sentenced to 14 years in federal prison and fined \$55,000 for smuggling millions of dollars worth of hashish oil into the United States.

Authorities said Joseph Shelton Davis III used former members of the Hare Krishna sect, dressed as businessmen, to carry the hash oil out of Pakistan in typewriter cases.

Once the hash oil arrived in the U.S., prosecutors said it was transferred into baby bottles and was sold to drug pushers at \$12,000 per liter. Profits from the smuggling operation were used to finance importing firms and a restaurant in Laguna Beach, authorities continued.

Davis, the reputed leader of the ring, was convicted Jan. 20 on nine counts of conspiracy, importing narcotics and possessing narcotics for sale.

On top of the prison term and fine imposed in Los Angeles Monday by U.S. District Court Judge A. Andrew Hauk, Davis faces five years on probation when he is released from custody.

In addition to Davis, Hauk sentenced two other men Monday.

Douglas H. Snyder, 26, and a convicted drug smuggler, was sentenced to one year in jail, fined \$1,000 and placed on five years' probation. Lawrence Dana Montgomery, 30, was fined \$250, and was released on five years' probation on his conspiracy conviction.

30-year-old Roy Christopher Richard, was sent to prison for up to three months of psychiatric evaluation. Richard had admitted two misdemeanor charges before the case went to trial. His sentencing was scheduled for May 26.

Two other men indicted in the case, Joseph G. Fedorowski, 28, and Robert Leonard Carreras, 36, also had admitted misdemeanor charges and face sentencing next Monday.

Three other men named in the indictment still are being sought.

Eric L. Dobberteen, the assistant U.S. attorney who prosecuted the case, said the defendants comprised one of the largest drug smuggling rings in Southern California history.

"We consider it one of the most

significant prosecutions in this district," he said.

As many as 12 couriers were in Pakistan at a time, Dobberteen said, buying hashish oil for \$1,000 a liter (1.7 pints). The Pakistani drug connection would sell the hash only after the courier displayed a photograph of himself with Davis, Dobberteen continued.

The hash then was smuggled into Vancouver, Canada, and then into a Laguna Beach home where it was transferred to the baby bottles for sale on the street.

Testimony at the trial showed the defendants had met when they were members of the Krishna organization, Dobberteen said.

However, he added, "There was no

evidence ever introduced at trial to link the Krishna organization to the scheme. When the suspects were arrested, they were disavowed by the Krishnas."

After the arrests were announced last November, Krishna leaders sharply criticized the news media for linking the sect to the drug smuggling operation.

A spokesman for the religion said it doesn't condone the use of any intoxicants.

The investigation into the smuggling operation began more than two years ago with the arrest of a man linked to the October 1977, murder of Stephen John Bovan, 36, of Fountain Valley.

Federal Drug Enforcement agents were called into the case when sheriff's deputies found more than a pound of heroin on Alexander Kulik, 28, of Newport Beach.

Kulik was dropped from the Bovan murder case after he admitted violating state and federal drug laws. He wasn't named in the hashish case when the federal grand jury indictment was returned last September.

Fedorowski is scheduled to go to trial Monday in Orange County Superior Court in connection with the Bovan murder and Davis was sentenced to six months in jail after he admitted conspiring to kidnap Bovan.

No charges were filed against Richard in the Bovan case after he agreed to testify against the other defendants in the slaying