

Lottery ticket vendor charged with theft

by UPI

TORONTO -- A Toronto convenience store owner was charged with fraud and theft Wednesday for allegedly stealing a \$5.7 million winning ticket from its owners while scanning it. At a Toronto news conference, Ontario Provincial Police Chief Superintendent Bob Goodall said Hafiz Zulqarnain Malik, 60, was charged with two counts of fraud over \$5,000 and one count of theft over \$5,000, the Globe & Mail reported. Detective-Inspector Paul Beesley said officers had "restrained or seized" \$5 million in assets belonging to Malik, including his home, bank and investment accounts and three vehicles. In July, an unidentified group of four lottery players complained to the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corp., which oversees the various provincial lotteries. The corporation in turn contacted police, the report said. Beesley said there are four more cases of questionable insider lottery wins under investigation, but did not elaborate. In June, the lottery corporation launched a publicity campaign urging players to sign their tickets before handing them to anyone, and also installed self-checking scanners at retail outlets.

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