

U.S. arrests 755 from Mexican drug cartel

by UPI

WASHINGTON - U.S. officials announced Wednesday they had arrested 755 suspects in a nationwide crackdown on a major Mexican drug cartel.

U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder and Acting DEA Administrator Michelle Leonhart told a Washington news conference that the arrests capped a 21-month operation against the Sinaloa Cartel, one of the leading trafficking gangs based in Mexico.

"We successfully concluded the largest and hardest hitting operation to ever target the very violent and dangerously powerful Sinaloa drug cartel," said Leonhart. "We have disrupted this cartel's domestic operations -- arresting U.S. cell heads and stripping them of more than \$59 million in cash -- and seriously impacted their Canadian drug operations as well."

The Justice Department said in a written statement that more than 23 tons of various narcotics were seized during Operation Xcellerator. More than 50 individuals were picked up Wednesday in California, Minnesota and Maryland.

The investigation was spawned by a previous operation that resulted in the indictment of Victor Emilio Cazarez-Salazar, a reputed top-ranking manager of the Sinaloa Cartel who remains a fugitive.

The Justice Department said the 755 people arrested faced various charges including drug trafficking, money laundering and possession of unregistered weapons

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