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ELLICOTT CITY MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO TAX PERJURY

Baltimore, Maryland - Thomas M. DiBiagio, United States Attorney for the District of Maryland, announced that today Syrakes Shah, also known as Charlie Shah, age 35, of Ellicott City, Maryland, pled guilty before Chief U.S. District Court Judge Benson E. Legg to Count Two of the indictment returned on May 18, 2004 which charges Shah with willfully subscribing to a false tax return. Count Two covers calendar year 2000. According to the statement of facts agreed upon by the parties, Shah's tax return reported income of \$3,166 and tax due of \$476, when in fact Shah's income from his business in 2000 exceeded \$600,000, and he avoided taxes of approximately \$243,000.

Shah's finances came to light in connection with the investigation of his father, Mahendra Shah, for the arson of several industrial buildings in South Baltimore. Mahendra Shah was convicted last April of arson and related counts of insurance fraud and money laundering in connection with that fire. He has not yet been sentenced.

Syrakes Shah faces a maximum sentence of 3 years in prison and a fine of \$250,000. The sentencing hearing will be on February 11, 2005 at 10:00 am.

The criminal charges in this indictment are the result of a joint investigation by the Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation Division and the United States Attorney's Office. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Barbara S. Sale.