



**Drug Enforcement Administration**

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# **China-Based Chemical Manufacturing Companies and Employees Indicted**

# for Alleged Fentanyl Manufacturing and Distribution

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**WASHINGTON** – Eight China-based chemical companies and eight employees have been charged in the Middle District of Florida with federal crimes including attempted distribution of synthetic opioids and

precursor chemicals used in the production of fentanyl. Five of the indictments also charge defendants with money laundering.

“Today, the Justice Department announced charges against China-based companies and individuals we allege are responsible for trafficking precursor chemicals that cartels use to manufacture lethal fentanyl,” said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland. “The global fentanyl supply chain, which ends with the deaths of Americans, often starts with chemical companies based in China. In order to break this critical link in the fentanyl supply chain, the Justice Department has aggressively investigated and prosecuted these companies. We will continue to target every organization and individual that fuels the deadly drug trade.”

The indictments target the evolving tactics of drug traffickers, who often adapt to tightening restrictions on the production and sale of fentanyl. For example, when China banned the production of fentanyl in 2019, China-based companies began producing and selling fentanyl precursors, the ingredients needed to manufacture the drug. Many of these China-based companies that manufacture fentanyl precursors openly advertise on the internet. Once manufactured, these China-based companies distribute fentanyl precursors throughout the world, including to the United States and Mexico, where drug cartels and traffickers combine the chemicals and then distribute fentanyl and other synthetic opioids throughout the United States to individual users.

“Today’s indictments against eight China based chemical companies and eight Chinese nationals are further evidence of DEA’s unwavering commitment to disrupt every aspect of the global fentanyl supply chain,” said Administrator Anne Milgram of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA). “For the third time in over a year, DEA investigations have resulted in charges against chemical companies and individuals in China who we allege are supplying chemicals to the cartels to make deadly fentanyl. While they may go to great lengths to try to evade our detection, DEA will use every tool and authority we have to save American lives.”

Many China-based chemical companies go to great lengths to evade law enforcement and hide their illicit chemicals and

substances in the flow of legitimate commerce. Some of the techniques employed by these China-based companies to conceal the true contents of the parcels and the identity of the distributors include the use of re-shippers in the United States, false return labels, false invoices, fraudulent postage, and deceptive packaging. These companies routinely communicate with potential customers on encrypted platforms and accept cryptocurrency payments as these methods lessen the risk of being detected by law enforcement.

“These indictments are part of our continuing commitment to the protection of our country from the deadly scourge of fentanyl,” said U.S. Attorney Roger B. Handberg for the Middle District of Florida. “Along with our partners at the Drug

Enforcement Administration, we will be relentless in our pursuit of Chinese chemical companies and their employees who are knowingly manufacturing and exporting fentanyl precursors that cause thousands of deaths every year in the United States.”

Organizations such as the Sinaloa Cartel based in Sinaloa, Mexico and Cartel Jalisco Nueva Generación based in Jalisco, Mexico, receive fentanyl precursors and synthetic opioids directly from China or from intermediaries in the United States. These substances are then synthesized within clandestine laboratories into finished end-user products at scale. These two transnational criminal organizations maintain distribution hubs in various cities across the United States and control smuggling corridors into the United States.

## **Case Summaries**

The indictments unsealed today in the Middle District of Florida charge eight Chinese corporations and eight Chinese nationals with the illegal importation of fentanyl, fentanyl-related chemicals, and other synthetic opioids into the United States. Five of the indictments also charge money laundering.

According to the indictments, the defendants openly advertised their ability to thwart U.S. Customs and deliver the synthetic opioids or the chemicals used to make fentanyl to the Middle District of Florida and elsewhere in the United States. The defendants offered special delivery procedures such as mislabeling the contents of shipments to ensure the illicit chemicals



and controlled substances went undetected. According to the indictments, some of the Chinese companies demonstrated past success delivering a stable supply of product to clients in Mexico and the United States for years. One of the companies even represented that every month it sends “more than 20 kilograms to the United States, Africa, Canada, and other countries.”

Guangzhou Tengyue Chemical Co. Ltd., based in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province, China, was charged with attempted importation of protonitazene, along with Chinese national Xiaojun Huang, who allegedly maintained a Bitcoin wallet for the remittance of payments for illicit synthetic opioids on the company’s behalf.

Hubei Shanglin Trading Co., based in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, was charged with attempted international money laundering, along with Chinese national Zhihan Wang, who was the alleged registered owner of a Bitcoin wallet associated with the company utilized to complete the sale of fentanyl precursors.

Jiangsu Jiye Chemical, based in Beijing, Hebei Province, China, was charged with attempted importation of protonitazene, along with Ji Zhaohui, a Chinese national, who was the alleged holder of the Bitcoin wallet associated with the company.

Tianjin Furuntongda Tech Co. Ltd, based in Tianjin, Hebei Province, China, was charged with attempted importation of fentanyl precursors, along with Wenxing Gao, a

Chinese national, who was the alleged registered agent of Tianjin Furuntongda and the owner of a cryptocurrency wallet associated with the company.

Wuhan Jinshang Import & Export Trading Co. Ltd., based in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, was charged with attempted importation of protonitazene, attempted importation of a fentanyl precursor, and attempted international money laundering, along with Wenying Nie, a Chinese national, who was the alleged holder of a Bitcoin wallet associated with the company.

Wuhan Mingyue Information Technology, based in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China, was charged with attempted importation of fentanyl precursors and attempted international money laundering, along with

Chinese national Huanhuan Song, who was the alleged recipient of funds via Western Union on the company's behalf and the alleged holder of a cryptocurrency wallet associated with the company.

Henan Oumeng Trade Co. Ltd., based in Zhengzhou, Henan Province, China, was charged with attempted importation of protonitazene and attempted international money laundering, along with Yinxia Zhao, a Chinese national, who was the alleged holder of the Bitcoin wallet associated with the company.

Shanghai Senria New Materials Co. Ltd. doing business as Shanghai Senria Biotechnology Co. Ltd., based in the Fengxian District of Shanghai, China, was charged with attempted importation of

protonitazene and attempted international money laundering, along with Zhenbo Han, a Chinese national, who was the alleged holder of the Bitcoin wallet associated with the company.

The Justice Department acknowledges the efforts of the People's Republic of China, Ministry of Public Security. The following companies are out of operation now: Jiangsu Jiye Chemical, Tianjin Furuntongda Tech Co. Ltd, Wuhan Jinshang Import & Export Trading Co. Ltd., Hubei Shanglin Trading Co., and Wuhan Mingyue Information Technology.

In addition, DEA Administrator Milgram said, "I would also like to recognize the work done by the People's Republic of China's Ministry of Public Security in taking action to

schedule protonitazene, piperidone, and 1-BOC-4-AP, which were not scheduled at the time of these investigations, but have now been scheduled.”

The DEA is investigating the cases.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys David Chee, David Pardo, Lauren Stoia, and Adam McCall and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Ashley Haynes for the Middle District of Florida are prosecuting the cases.

These cases are part of an Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Forces (OCDETF) operation. OCDETF identifies, disrupts, and dismantles the highest-level criminal organizations that threaten the United States using a prosecutor-led, intelligence-

driven, multi-agency approach. Additional information about the OCDETF Program can be found at [www.justice.gov/OCDETF](http://www.justice.gov/OCDETF).

*An indictment is merely an allegation. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.*

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