

Name: Alert ID: TMML202403518123 A Colombian who was one of the top financial managers and supervised money-laundering for a cocaine cartel accused of smuggling \$10 billion in drugs into the U.S. was sentenced Tuesday to 30 years in federal prison. Eugenio Montoya Sanchez, 39, pleaded guilty in January to drug trafficking and obstruction of justice charges, the latter involving his role in setting up the torture, killing and dismemberment a cartel associate suspected of cooperating with authorities. In a brief statement, Montoya expressed remorse. "There is no justification for what I did," Montoya said through a Spanish interpreter. Montoya is the brother of the purported mastermind of Colombia's North Valley cartel. Diego Montoya Sanchez is also in U.S. custody in Miami and has pleaded not guilty to a 12-count federal indictment charging cocaine trafficking, money laundering, witness retaliation and obstruction of justice. Another brother, Juan Carlos Montoya Sanchez, is serving a 22-year prison sentence in the U.S. his role in the drug cartel. The Montoyas are accused of overseeing a cocaine empire that smuggled cocaine into the U.S. beginning in the 1990s. U.S. District Judge Cecilia M. Altonaga set a July 10 hearing to consider whether Montoya can pay restitution to the U.S. government for his drug activities. Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Davis said most of Montoya's assets have been seized by the Colombian government and that the additional time is needed to determine how much he could pay. Eugenio Montoya, who has been cooperating with U.S. authorities, previously admitted his role as a top financial manager of the cartel. Among his duties was handling a series of so-called "stash houses" in Colombia where about \$20 million in U.S. currency was hidden. Montoya also made numerous real estate investments and oversaw a computer equipment business. Testified about torture The obstruction charge stems from the August 2003 killing of Jhon Jairo Garcia Giraldo, known as "Dos Mil," whose main job was handling pagers and cell phones for the Montoya organization. According to court documents, Garcia was tortured at a farm outside Cali, Colombia, on orders from Diego Montoya to find out if he had talked with U.S. officials during a visit to South Florida. "Methods used included hitting Garcia Giraldo with baseball bats in the shins and other parts of the body, holding his head under water, and asphyxiating him with a plastic bag over his head," according to a statement of facts signed by Eugenio Montoya. Although Garcia denied being an informant, he was beaten to death and dismembered, his body parts thrown in a river.