

Justice Department Announces \$45 Million Multi-Ton Drug Bust Targeting Mexican Organization

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FOX NEWS



SAN DIEGO — The Justice Department on Wednesday announced the largest drug bust in 10 years as it rounded up more than 400 members of a Mexico-based cartel distributing tons of cocaine, marijuana and methamphetamines in the United States.

"Operation Imperial Emperor" targeted the Mexico-based Victor Emilio Cazares-Gastellum, a.k.a. "Victor Emilio Cazares-Salazar," drug trafficking organization, which Justice says has been responsible for supplying multi-ton quantities of cocaine, as well as large amounts of methamphetamine and marijuana, monthly to distribution cells throughout the United States.

Federal or state charges were unsealed Wednesday morning against 139 defendants in California, Arizona, Illinois and New York. The 20-month DEA workers display roughly \$3.5 million

investigation led by the Drug Enforcement Administration and aided by more than 100 federal, state, local and foreign law enforcement agencies, has so far resulted in the seizure of approximately \$45.2 million, 27,229 pounds of marijuana, 9,512 pounds of cocaine, 705 pounds of methamphetamine, 227 pounds of pure methamphetamine or "ice," and 11 pounds of heroin. The investigation has netted \$6.1 million in property and assets, as well as 100 weapons and 94 vehicles. The drug ring is based in Sinaloa, Mexico.

Some of the products being used to make meth — like ephedrine and pseudoephedrine products found in cold medicines — are normally ground up and put through a filtering and cooking process. But The Combat Meth Act restricted the number of tablets a person can buy in one day, thus resulting in some regular cold medications to now be behind the counter at your local pharmacy. The amount one person can buy is now limited to 3.6 grams, which is 146 30-milligram tablets during a 30-day period.

After arriving in the United States, the drug shipments would be broken down further in cities like Los Angeles and San Diego for further distribution in Nevada, Arizona, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Colorado, Georgia, Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, Texas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Illinois, Kansas, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Washington and Oregon.

"The Cazares-Gastellum drug empire that rose to such heights of power in only two years, fell today at the hands of DEA and our partners," said DEA Administrator Karen P. Tandy. "This sprawling drug domain, headquartered in Mexico, penetrated deep into all corners of this country. Today we ripped out this empire's U.S. infrastructure from its commanders and transportation coordinators to its local distribution cells across the country, stripped it of \$45 million in cash, and tossed it into the dustbin of history."

1. What is the mean per state of people whose charges were unsealed this past Wednesday morning? Which four states did the defendants poorly represent? What percentage of the nation's states do they *not* represent?
2. In paragraph form, briefly summarize the passage above.
3. According to the White House, 32 oz of marijuana is valued at approximately \$8,000. The U.S. Customs agency claims that three pounds of cocaine is worth \$45,000, and an equivalent amount of methamphetamine or "ice" at \$18,000. Additionally, one lb of heroin = 22-lbs of U.S. fifty dollar bills or \$500,000. Given this information, coupled with the \$45,200,000 already seized in cash, what is a more accurate assessment of the overall value excluding property, weapons, and vehicles?
4. Annually, how many grams of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine products may a family of four legally purchase over the counter from a pharmacy? What legislative act controls and further outlines the restrictions?
5. Geographically, what regions of the United States were the drug shipments to be broken down and distributed? What states adjacent to Georgia exist and what impact may the arrival have had upon the citizens of that region?
6. Given the fact that there are potentially ten future Daughtry Times left in existence of this planet, how might this positively, or negatively impact middle school education in years to come? Explain in paragraph form.
7. Thoroughly explain **AT LEAST** ten ways that one's involvement in illegal drugs can ruin not only his/her own life but that of his/her loved ones as well.
8. In the passage above, in paragraph form, explain at least five ways using the "Four-Step Reading" poster simplifies understanding of the material. Be specific.
9. In complete sentences, using contextual clues only, explain the meaning of the italicized words: *cartel*, *seizure*, and *infrastructure*, and *penetrated*. Additionally, use each in a sentence to demonstrate further comprehension.
10. In paragraph form, explain at least five legitimate and educational purposes behind The Daughtry Times.