

Stouffville man charged in online gambling probe

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Eighteen people – including a 48-year-old Stouffville man – have been arrested in connection with the Platinum SB Sportsbook and Casino gambling ring, following raids in several municipalities across Ontario Tuesday.

One of Canada's biggest illegal betting operations was dealt a significant blow, police said, with many members of its management arrested in York Region, London, Toronto and Barrie.

Six people were arrested in connection with the gambling ring during an invite-only Super Bowl event at Le Parc Banquet Hall, near the Leslie and Hwy. 7 intersection, last month. Two of those arrested Tuesday were among the original six and now face additional charges.

In all, 13 search warrants were executed at various residences and financial institutions.

Another four suspects are still being sought, RCMP Asst. Commissioner Stephen White said.

"Today, I can say we dismantled one of the largest illegal gaming groups in Canada," he said during a news conference in Aurora. "This activity generated significant profits. It also demonstrates how technology has had a significant impact on the manner and sophistication with which criminal activity is carried out."

Those arrested are charged with numerous offences, including participating in a criminal organization, bookmaking and conspiracy to

commit a criminal offence.

Police estimate the ring was earning about \$1 million in revenue every month. The bulk of the gambling occurred in Canada and the bettors are being considered victims in this investigation, RCMP Acting Supt. Keith Finn said.

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The Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit operation included the efforts of Royal Canadian Mounted, Ontario Provincial, York Regional and other police services and led to the seizure of several million dollars in cash – including \$1.5 million Tuesday – four vehicles, two handguns, a Taser, computers, cellphones, betting lists, ledgers and many documents linked to criminal organizations.

— with files from Jeremy Grimaldi

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