

## Mahwah man gets six-year sentence for defrauding tiny Asian nation of \$3.5M

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A Mahwah man who pleaded guilty to defrauding the tiny Southeast Asian island nation of Timor-Leste out of more than \$3.5 million through a sham accounting firm was sentenced Thursday to six years 72 months in prison, U.S. Attorney Paul Fishman said.

Bobby Boye, 52, also known as Bobby Ajiboye and Bobby Aji-Boye, was a Nigerian-American lawyer with a history of legal trouble when he was hired in 2010 to represent Timor-Leste, formerly known as East Timor, in a foreign-aid program.

That program, created by Norway, was intended to help developing nations manage their oil wealth. Norway recommended Boye to Timor as a petroleum, legal and tax adviser, but apparently didn't realize that Boye, while using the name Bobby Ajiboye, had been barred by the New York Stock Exchange in 2004 for improperly transferring a client's funds.

Boye also was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Freda Wolfson, in federal court in Trenton, to serve three years of supervised release, and to pay \$3,510,000 in restitution.

Timor-Leste was referred to as "Country A" in court documents and by the U.S. Attorney's Office. The nation's identity, however, was revealed by its representatives.

In his role as adviser, Boye served on a committee responsible for evaluating bids for services for Timor-Leste, and created a fake New York law and accounting firm to steer a multimillion-dollar contract to himself. According to the U.S. Attorney's Office, between June and December 2012, Timor-Leste wired more than \$3.5 million to the fake firm's checking account, which was controlled by Boye. He then used part of that money to buy four properties in Ramsey, Oakland, North Haledon and Elizabeth for more than \$1.5 million in cash, a 2012 Bentley for \$172,000, a 2012 Range Rover for \$100,938, a 2011 Rolls-Royce for \$215,000 and two designer watches for almost \$20,000, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Boye agreed to forfeit the properties, vehicles and watches when he pleaded guilty in May to conspiracy to commit wire fraud. That charge carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison and a fine of up to \$250,000. Boye formerly lived in Franklin Lakes, where he bought a home on Apple Ridge Road for \$1.9 million in 2011 and sold it for \$1.85 million in late 2014, according to property records.

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