



Portfolio Media, Inc. | 111 West 19th Street, 5th floor | New York, NY 10011 | www.law360.com
Phone: +1 646 783 7100 | Fax: +1 646 783 7161 | customerservice@law360.com

Ex-Goldman Banker To Face June Insider Trading Trial

By **Rachel Scharf**

Law360, New York (November 17, 2022, 5:02 PM EST) -- A Manhattan federal judge on Thursday set a June 2023 trial for a former Goldman Sachs banker charged with insider trading based on not-yet-public information about corporate mergers with a business school buddy.

Brijesh Goel, 37, received a June 12 trial date during a conference before U.S. District Judge P. Kevin Castel. It was the former investment banker's first court appearance since **pleading not guilty** to fraud, conspiracy and obstruction of justice in July.

Goel is accused of tipping off his business school friend and squash partner about deals Goldman was considering financing. The friend then placed call options on acquisition targets and split his trading profits with Goel, according to the indictment.

Among other mergers, the government says Goel passed on information about Sprint Corp.'s acquisition by T-Mobile and Frontier Group's since-abandoned plans to buy Spirit Airlines. Prosecutors allege that the trades netted \$280,000 between 2017 and 2018.

The indictment does not name Goel's alleged co-conspirator, but a related U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission action identifies him as Akshay Niranjana, a 33-year-old foreign exchange trader. Niranjana has settled out of the SEC suit and is described in criminal court papers as a cooperating witness.

Counsel for Niranjana declined Law360's request for comment on the case Thursday.

Prosecutors have said their evidence includes emails and WhatsApp messages, as well as conversations recorded by the cooperator. Reed Brodsky of Gibson Dunn & Crutcher LLP, counsel for Goel, said Thursday that the defense will likely seek to exclude two such recordings due to "severe deficiencies" in their quality.

"You can only hear, perhaps, 10 to 20 percent of the words that are being exchanged," Brodsky told Judge Castel.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Joshua Naftalis countered that the tapes are audible, although admittedly "not perfect." Judge Castel urged the parties to agree on a transcript of the conversations and said that he'll consider suppression closer to trial.

Brodsky said it also appears that one of the recordings is only a partial snippet of a longer conversation. The judge noted that such issues would be "fertile ground for cross-examination" if the tapes are let in.

Goel is due back in court for a final pretrial conference on May 25, 2023.

The government is represented in the criminal case by Joshua A. Naftalis and Samuel P. Rothschild of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of New York.

The SEC is represented in-house by Amy Harman Burkart and Richard M. Harper II.

Goel is represented by Reed Brodsky and Liesel N. Schapira of Gibson Dunn & Crutcher LLP and Adam C. Ford of Ford O'Brien Landy LLP.

Niranjan is represented by Robert J. Anello, Brian A. Jacobs and Patrick Branson of Morvillo Abramowitz Grand Iason & Anello PC.

The cases are USA v. Goel, case number 1:22-cr-00396, and Securities and Exchange Commission v. Goel et al., case number 1:22-cv-06282, both in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York.

--Editing by Melissa Treolo.

All Content © 2003-2022, Portfolio Media, Inc.