



Company linked to alleged foreign bribery conspiracy in Nauru received \$2.5m Australian government contract

7.30 / By Alex McDonald and Paul Farrell

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Mozammil Gulamabbas Bhojani has been charged with conspiracy to bribe a foreign public official. *(Supplied)*

A company linked to an alleged conspiracy to bribe foreign officials on Nauru received a \$2.5 million Australian government contract to build housing for refugees held on the island.

Last week the Australian Federal Police (AFP) charged Mozammil Gulamabbas Bhojani with one count of conspiracy to bribe a foreign public official under Australia's criminal code.

The AFP alleges Sydney-based Mr Bhojani provided the Nauruan officials with more than \$100,000 in kickbacks in exchange for favourable phosphate shipments for his company, Radiance International Pty Ltd.

Mr Bhojani is a director of Radiance International Pty Ltd and a global group of related companies, including Radiance International Inc, which specialise in trading rock phosphate.

7.30 can reveal that Radiance International Inc received the \$2.5 million contract from the

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Australian Department of Home Affairs for refugee accommodation structures on Nauru.

Tender documents show the contract was dated between December 2016 and July 2018, and is described as "refugee accommodation-Budapest Hotel, Nauru".

According to Mr Bhojani's website, Radiance International has provided "medium term" housing in Nauru "to accommodate both the growing number of foreign workers on the island and the number of refugees seeking to settle temporarily in Nauru".

"The department can confirm it has accommodation lease arrangements on Nauru with Radiance International," a spokeswoman from the Department of Home Affairs told 7.30.

"As this is a matter that is before the courts, it is inappropriate to comment further."

Payments allegedly made to obtain 'business advantage in Nauru'

A three-year investigation by a Brisbane-based AFP team culminated in Mr Bhojani's arrest on Thursday.

According to prosecutors who appeared in the Central Local Court in Sydney on Friday, the brief of evidence contains telephone intercepts and bank records.

The AFP seized a large number of documents and electronic records in a series of raids.

As well as searching Mr Bhojani's home, the AFP also executed a search warrant on the Brisbane-based office of Ronphos, Nauru's state-owned phosphate corporation.

AFP Commander, Fraud and Anti-corruption, Peter Crozier, told 7.30 the alleged payments were made to obtain "business advantage in Nauru".

"It enabled them through the payment to foreign officials to be able to obtain phosphate, at certain prices and the like, to be able to export it to different locations," he said.

"The concern that obviously we have is that an Australian company has been involved in the exploitation of a natural resource of a jurisdiction that doesn't have a lot of natural resources."

The state-owned Ronphos Corporation supplies what it describes as "premium grade rock phosphate" to customers around the world for use in fertilisers and other industrial products.

On its website, Ronphos claims that the "demand for Nauru rock is overwhelming".



The Australian detention centre on the Pacific island of Nauru. (ABC)

As the island's only natural resource, Nauru's primary phosphate reserves were exhausted in 2006. Secondary phosphate reserves in the island's interior began being mined the following year.

Mr Bhojani will appear in court again in November.

