News Release
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COUNTY OF KAUA‘I
KAUA‘I POLICE DEPARTMENT
TODD G. RAYBUCK, CHIEF
(808) 241-1600

Kaua‘i police make 2 arrests related to an illegal gambling operation on Thursday

KAPA‘A – A police operation that occurred Thursday evening resulted in the arrests of 36-year-old Moleni Koli of Anahola and 29-year-old John Taulung Jr. of Kaimuki, for offenses related to illegal gambling.

Kaua‘i police, along with the U.S. Marshals Service, executed search warrants and arrest warrants on an industrial complex in the Kawaihau District that contained an illegal game room.

Officers seized approximately a dozen gambling machines, a pickup truck, and an undisclosed amount of cash during the raid on Kuahale Street.

On Friday, as part of the ongoing investigation, a second pickup truck was located and seized. Search warrants were subsequently executed on both vehicles and, as a result, a handgun, ammunition and methamphetamine were recovered.

“Prior to and during the pandemic, illegal game rooms have become more prevalent across the state. Oftentimes, these places coincide with other illegal activities, such as the distribution of dangerous drugs and the sale of unregistered firearms. What’s more, they have also been also been tied to violent crimes,” said ISB Assistant Chief Bryson Ponce. “We are committed to shutting down any illegal operation in our community and I’m grateful to our officers, as well as those who partnered with us on this investigation, because our eastside community is now safer due to everyone’s diligent efforts.”
Taulung was charged with Promoting Gambling in the Second Degree and was released pending investigation.

Koli is currently in police custody on charges of one count of Assault in the Second Degree, two counts of Ownership Prohibited, two counts of Place to Keep and one count of Promoting a Dangerous Drug in the Third Degree. He is being held in cellblock on $500,000 bail.

Any property, such as a residence, commercial property, vehicle, cash, boat or any other item used to house, facilitate, or advance criminal activity, is subject to Asset Forfeiture Proceedings.

All forms of gambling are illegal in Hawai‘i and the public may report any suspicious activity to KPD Dispatch at 241-1711. Those who wish to remain anonymous may report a tip to Crime Stoppers Kaua‘i at www.cskauai.org.

Moleni Koli
John Taulung Jr.

Kapa‘a game room.

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