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Potential sureties for Ryan Wedding's alleged money launderer questioned on his lavish lifestyle

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Attorney General Pam Bondi speaks with reporters during a news conference about fugitive Ryan Wedding at the U.S. Department of Justice, on Nov. 19, 2025, in Washington.

MARK SCHIEFELBEIN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Two proposed sureties for a jeweller accused in the United States of laundering money for an allegedly violent, international cocaine smuggling ring told a Toronto court on Wednesday that they were unaware of how he paid for what prosecutors described as his affluent lifestyle.

Rolan Sokolovski, 37, has been in jail since November, facing extradition to the United States on charges he helped launder hundreds of millions of dollars for a drug-trafficking network allegedly run by former Canadian Olympic snowboarder Ryan Wedding. He's among eight people in Canada charged in connection to their alleged ties to Mr. Wedding, including Toronto-area lawyer Deepak Paradkar, who is accused of advising the organization on the killing of a police informant.

At a bail hearing in Ontario Superior Court on Wednesday, federal Crown attorney Milica Potrebic pressed two of Mr. Sokolovski's proposed sureties about their knowledge of the Toronto-area jeweller's finances and business – including how he could afford a Porsche SUV, a new \$4-million home, cash gifts for his girlfriend and trips to the Bahamas and the Pacific island of Bora Bora, and yet declare zero personal income or any salary from his business, Diamond Tsar.

“How does that person sustain his livelihood? Where does that person get any money from?” Ms. Potrebic said. “Help us understand this.”

The identities of the sureties, including their relationship to Mr. Sokolovski, are protected by a publication ban granted after defence lawyer Scott Fenton argued their safety is at risk, given the violence allegedly linked to Mr. Wedding's drug-trafficking organization.

In testimony, both proposed sureties repeatedly told Ms. Potrebic they either didn't know about or couldn't remember details of any conversations with the jeweller about his finances. They said the jeweller was known to be generous, but they had never received any gifts from him. One of the allegations from U.S. investigators is that Mr. Sokolovski paid an alleged Montreal hitman with a "bejewelled necklace" for his role in orchestrating the killing last year in Colombia of a witness for the FBI who was expected to testify against Mr. Wedding.

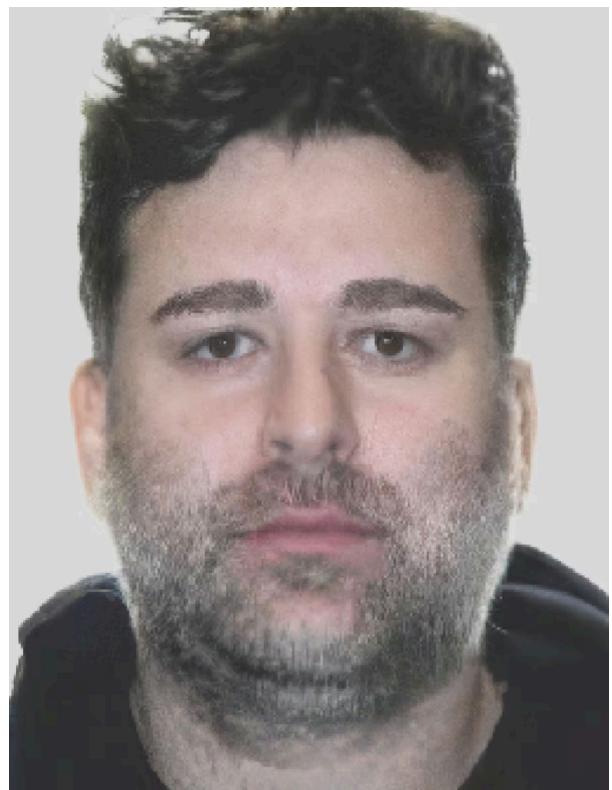
After their testimony, Ontario Superior Court Justice Peter Bawden adjourned the bail hearing, and asked the Crown and defence lawyer to return Jan. 21 for submissions.

None of the allegations against Mr. Sokolovski have been proven in court. One of his lawyers, Michelle Psutka, told the court on Tuesday that the allegations against her client were not the subject of the bail hearing and that some of the U.S. information was "false."

FBI seized phone with messages between jeweller, alleged Ryan Wedding drug ring, court documents show

Prosecutors are opposing Mr. Sokolovski's release, arguing he should remain in custody to protect the public and that he poses a flight risk. He is pledging to post \$2-million in bail.

In the witness box, both sureties said they had no direct understanding of where Mr. Sokolovski's money came from. One of them suggested his wealth could have come from bank loans borrowed against his jewellery assets or



Rolan Sokolovski.
HO/THE CANADIAN PRESS

from playing poker. Both dismissed the U.S. charges that the jeweller played a key role in a violent organization as merely allegations.

One of the sureties argued there are ways to measure a company's success other than its financials, and suggested Mr. Sokolovski's tax returns and his business's books don't account for outside sources of income, such as gambling profits.

Mr. Sokolovski told the court on Monday he bought his \$4-million home using a down payment of \$1.7-million that came from savings, money from trading cryptocurrency, and about \$500,000 from his company's retained earnings. He testified that he did not declare hundreds of thousands of dollars he made in cryptocurrency on his tax returns and was unaware of rules requiring him to do so.

U.S. prosecutors claim he used cryptocurrencies to help manage and launder millions of dollars in proceeds from Mr. Wedding's alleged criminal enterprise. In his bail hearing, Mr. Sokolovski, who was born in Lithuania and came to Canada as a young child, testified he began investing in cryptocurrencies about seven years ago and has at times made hundreds of thousands of dollars in single transactions.

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