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Colombia Cash Seizure Swells to \$22 Million

BOGOTA – Colombian police found an additional \$11.2 million in a shipment from Mexico that arrived in the southwestern Pacific port of Buenaventura, bringing to \$22.4 million the total amount of cash hidden in a consignment of chemicals, authorities said Friday.

The extra cash was discovered “thanks to an exhaustive search” of the shipment, the deputy director of the National Police, Gen. Rafael Parra, told reporters.

The cash was distributed in packets of \$700,000 each that were wrapped in plastic and hidden in containers of ammonium nitrate, a chemical product used in domestic and industrial cleaning supplies.

“For us, there is no doubt that this money comes from drug trafficking,” Parra said Thursday after the first half of the cash hoard was found.

“We have observed that several of the (drug) shipments that have been seized coming out of Buenaventura were bound for the port of Manzanillo, in Mexico, the port from which this money left. One would say this is the route of sending the drugs and receiving the payments,” he said.

He said the government plans to use the confiscated money to build housing for members of the National Police, “as recognition of their anti-narcotics struggle during 30 years.”

Colombia is the world’s largest producer of cocaine and Buenaventura is a major port through which drugs are clandestinely shipped. EFE

