

(Eds: APNewsNow. Will be updated with quotes and context.)

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PAUL ELIAS - The Associated Press - Associated Press

A lawsuit over an apparent business spat has grown into an international criminal case.

An indictment unsealed last month charges a Northern California couple, two former DuPont scientists and the Chinese company Pangang Group Co. Ltd. and an executive there with economic espionage. At issue is DuPont's recipe for titanium dioxide, a whitening ingredient used in a wide-range of products from Oreo cookies to car paint.

Federal prosecutors in San Francisco allege Walter and Christina Liew launched their California company with the intent to transfer DuPont's technology to China. The Liewes hired retired DuPont engineers and won a \$17 million contract to design a Chinese factory to make titanium dioxide.

The Liewes have denied wrongdoing.

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