

Nuclear

Questions raised

US enforcement of Iran arms embargo slipped

WASHINGTON, Oct 5, (RTRS): Addressing concerns that a landmark nuclear deal reached this year could boost Iran's military power, the Obama administration reassured critics that it would maintain and enforce its remaining tough sanctions against the country.

Yet the US government has pursued far fewer violations of a long-standing arms embargo against Iran in the past year compared to recent years, according to a review of court records and interviews with two senior officials involved in sanctions enforcement.

The sharp fall in new prosecutions did not reflect fewer attempts by Iran to break the embargo, the officials said. Rather, uncertainty among prosecutors and agents on how the terms of the deal would affect cases made them reluctant to commit already scarce resources with the same vigor as in previous years, the officials said.

The more relaxed enforcement raises questions over how strictly the arms embargo and other remaining sanctions will be applied in future, since the nuclear deal still needs to be implemented and Iran will likely remain sensitive to a tough sanctions regime.

Fiscal

In the 2014-15 fiscal year, which ended on Sept 30, US law enforcement officials filed fresh charges just twice against those suspected of attempting to smuggle weapons and related technology from the United States to Iran, according to court records.

Eight such cases were brought in 2013-14. By comparison, around 10 to 12 such cases were brought in each of the preceding six years.

"There's been a precipitous drop-off," said one of the senior US officials, who declined to be identified. "The facts are the facts — there's no other explanation."

The official added there was already a "reticence" in some agencies and US

federal prosecutors' offices to pursue the cases because they are so tough to build and time-consuming.

"And if we're going to normalize things with Iran soon, people are asking, 'Is it worth it?'"

The nuclear deal, reached in July after two years of concerted negotiations, tasks Iran with dismantling much of its nuclear infrastructure in return for the removal of many of the international sanctions placed on it over the past five years.

The US sanctions being lifted are largely nuclear-related measures that barred other countries from dealing with Iran's banking and oil sectors.

US sanctions for Iran's alleged human rights violations and support for militant groups remain in place, as do measures barring US persons from most trade with Iran. A United Nations embargo on conventional weapons will be lifted in five years, and a UN embargo on ballistic missiles in eight.

Multiple US laws and regulations still bar the export of US goods and technology to Iran, especially anything related to defense.

Obama administration officials say they continued to aggressively enforce sanctions against Iran throughout the negotiations, are still doing so, and will strictly enforce the remaining sanctions after the deal is implemented.

"The Justice Department continues to pursue criminal prosecutions against those that seek to circumvent US sanctions involving Iran and other export controls," said Marc Raimondi, a spokesman for the department, adding there were numerous ongoing cases.

A senior Commerce Department official said its Office of Export Enforcement "continues to vigorously enforce sanctions on Iran" and that Iran cases make up the bulk of its current file.

A spokesperson for Immigration and Customs Enforcement, a Department of Homeland Security agency, did not respond to a request for comment.



In this Sept 30 file photo provided by Phillips Academy, former president George H.W. Bush, with his wife Barbara, speaks with former baseball teammate Richard Phelps, during a visit to Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts. (AP)

Former president healing nicely after summer spill

Former President George H.W. Bush is healing well after taking a fall this summer, feeling good enough to go out on his speedboat and even visit a local biker bar with his wife.

The nation's oldest living president is "healing nicely" after he fractured his C2 vertebra, the second one below the skull, in July, said his chief of staff, Jean Becker.

Former first lady Barbara Bush is pleased with her husband's progress, Becker said.

"She is just thrilled that he has recov-

ered the way he has. They're at the end of this road. It was a scary thing when it happened, and he's almost back to 100 percent," Becker said.

After getting his doctor's green light, Bush has gone on his boat several times when the sea was not too rough.

He also recently attended the George and Barbara Bush Lecture at the University of New England and paid a surprise visit to Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts.

He even grabbed a beer at a biker

bar last month. Photos posted on the website of Bentley's Saloon in nearby Arundel showed Bush greeting staff and posing for pictures with his wife.

Even though he remains active, the father of former President George W. Bush and former Florida Gov Jeb Bush doesn't plan to get heavily involved in Jeb Bush's campaign to become the third in the family to serve in the White House. The Bushes will attend occasional events on their son's behalf.

Bush, 91, continues to wear a neck

brace to help immobilize his neck as he prepares to travel this week from his summer home in Kennebunkport to his primary home in Texas for the winter. His doctor said at the time of the break that it normally takes three to four months to heal.

Bush, who has a form of Parkinson's disease and uses a motorized scooter or a wheelchair for mobility, has dealt with setbacks before. He was hospitalized in Houston in December for about a week for shortness of breath. (AP)

America

Tourist's body found at beach:

Lifeguards rescued a distressed swimmer at Honolulu's Waimanalo Beach Park but were unable to save the life of his companion.

Hawaii News Now reports that lifeguards on Saturday afternoon noticed two swimmers in distress about 70 yards offshore.

The swimmers were a male and female in their 20s, both tourists from Korea. A lifeguard brought the male safely to shore, but the woman's body was recovered with the help of the Honolulu Fire Department. She was pronounced dead at the scene. (AP)

Surfer bitten by shark: Authorities say a teenage surfer has been hospitalized after being bitten on the left hand by a shark off Florida's coast.

The Volusia County Beach Patrol says the 14-year-old boy from Vero Beach was with four other surfers in Atlantic waters off New Smyrna Beach when he was bitten Sunday morning.

Capt. Aaron Jenkins, a patrol spokesman, told the Orlando Sentinel that the boy suffered "significant lacerations" from what was described as a 4- or 5-foot (1.2- or 1.5-meter) blacktip shark. He says the boy punched the shark before returning to shore, where he was given aid by a beach safety officer before being taken to a hospital. (AP)

An Impressive Presence of Mercedes-Benz "Commercial Vehicles" at the Big-5 Kuwait 2015



In a step considered the first of its kind and amid a striking presence of Mercedes-Benz "Commercial Vehicles" at the Big-5 Kuwait Fair 2015, the Commercial Vehicles Dept A.R.Albisher & Z.Alkazemi Co. the Authorized General Distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait, launched the special and thoroughbred off-road truck "Zetros" for the first time in Kuwait.

"Zetros", a leading truck worldwide

"No doubt, Zetros, the first of its type in Kuwait, is the answer to the enormous demand for a truck line with unsurpassed reliability,

durability and sustainability that reflects the continued successful story of Heavy duty trucks from Mercedes-Benz", said Ralph Geyer, the General Manger commercial Vehicle and Daimler busses at A&A., speaking on the occasion.

"We were keen to use this platform as an opportunity to launch a pioneering model of special truck Zetros, which will be the first of its kind in Kuwait, and exhibit the latest technology of concrete mixer trucks in collaboration with Middle East's leading companies for supplying concrete mixers

installed in Mercedes-Benz", he added.

"We also displayed the latest Mercedes-Benz Actors Truck featuring Mercedes PowerShift® technology which incorporates over 30 years of Mercedes-Benz experience and expertise in the production of automated manual transmission for trucks. Thanks to its rugged gearbox technology and a superior shift strategy, as well as the availability of a 12-speed and a 16-speed version, Mercedes PowerShift® is the number one choice even in the most demanding operating conditions, thus contribut-

ing to low fuel consumption and reduce emissions", Geyer elaborated.

Exceptional Features

Tamer Al-Ghazouly, the Marketing Manager of Commercial Vehicles at A.R.Albisher & Z.Alkazemi Co. pointed out saying: "The adaptable and flexible concept of the Zetros is ready to deal with all transport requirements and grand easy mounting and operating of all kinds of bodies. Powerful engines, future-proof technology and a vehicle concept offering easy access for maintenance and service, make the Zetros the perfect fit for a huge range of operations and are perfectly equipped for operations

on the most challenging terrain- even under the most extreme conditions. The Zetros' durable design with low fuel consumption, together with perfectly under gears, a smart axle combination and the Telligent engine system, makes for an efficient, diesel-saving powertrain".

About A.R.Al Bisher & Z.Al Kazemi Co.

A.R.Albisher & Z.Alkazemi Co. Is the authorized general distributor of Mercedes-Benz in Kuwait since 1952. The company boasts more than 129 years of experience of traditions and innovation. The company's commercial vehicles are equipped with the latest technology and safety systems, as well as a professional staff committed in providing the best Sales, After-Sales and Customer Service. The brand's commercial vehicles include Buses, Trucks, Special Trucks and Vans, all present in all segments, such as Constructions, Transportation, Oil and Gas field operations, public and Government Services and Defense.

