



Department of Justice

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ATLANTA MAN SENTENCED FOR FRAUDULENT SALES OF LUXURY AUTOMOBILES

Dozens of Consumers Suffered Over \$3.6 Million Loss; Raza Defrauded Customs, Environmental, and Highway Safety Authorities

Atlanta, GA - ALI RAZA, a/k/a "Hassan Ali Raza," 54, of Atlanta, Georgia, was sentenced today by United States District Judge Thomas W. Thrash, Jr., on charges of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and to defraud the United States by making materially false representations in matters regulated by the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection, the National Highway Traffic Safety Authority, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

"The defendant in this case is a consummate confidence man, who defrauded victims throughout the United States," said United States Attorney David E. Nahmias. "During his many years of fraud, the defendant repeatedly lied to federal authorities, lied to his customers, and even continued his scam after being released on bond."

RAZA was sentenced to 3 years, 5 months in prison to be followed by 3 years of supervised release, and ordered to pay restitution of \$3,698,244. RAZA pleaded guilty to the charges on March 9, 2007.

According to Nahmias and the information presented in court: RAZA engaged in a number of fraudulent schemes, each aimed at the consumers in the luxury automobile market. Beginning as early as February 2000, RAZA advertised in specialty magazines that he had available for sale luxury foreign automobiles worth hundreds of thousands of dollars. RAZA represented to his victims and to federal authorities that these automobiles would be imported meeting federal highway and environmental standards, or would otherwise be exempt from those standards, and would therefore be legal to drive in the United States. In fact, RAZA imported automobiles that were not legal in the United States and that failed to meet highway safety and clean air standards. As a result, victims received contraband automobiles that they could not title, could not drive, and that required tens of thousands of dollars of repair to conform to U.S. standards.

In addition, after RAZA's fraudulent import scheme was discovered by authorities and through at least 2006, RAZA altered his scheme so that he would simply provide nothing to his customers, leaving them empty handed, even after they paid him hundreds of thousands of dollars for luxury automobiles he advertised and promised to deliver to them. RAZA continued defrauding victims even after he had been charged and released on bond, reaping over a million dollars from his new victims.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Transportation.

Assistant United States Attorneys Bernita B. Malloy and Lawrence R. Sommerfeld prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan.