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Two Businessmen Are Charged in Sale of Military Parts to Iran

By [ERIC LICHTBLAU](#)

WASHINGTON — Two American businessmen were charged Monday with selling military parts to Iran to help prop up its aging air fleet, the latest in a string of cases that American prosecutors say violate longstanding bans on exports to Tehran.

Federal prosecutors in Florida said the two men — Hassan Saied Keshari, a naturalized citizen from Iran who runs an aviation parts company in Northern California, and Traian Bujduveanu, a naturalized citizen from Romania who ran an aviation company in the Fort Lauderdale area — shipped parts to the United Arab Emirates for resale to Iran. Some of the parts, prosecutors said, were for the repair of Iran's aging F-14 jet fighters, while others were for military helicopters.

R. Alexander Acosta, the United States attorney in Miami, said the sales helped Iran “build up its military strength.”

The sale of military parts to Iran, a violation of American export law since 1995, has become a source of growing concern to American law enforcement officials at a time of rising military tension between the Bush administration and Tehran.

In the last year, federal prosecutors have brought at least a dozen cases accusing businesspeople in the United States of illegally selling aircraft parts, submachine guns, engineering software and other material to Iran. Last Friday, a Pakistani man living on Long Island pleaded guilty to charges that he had sold parts for F-14 and F-5 fighter jets that prosecutors said might have eventually ended up in Iran.

The two defendants in the Florida case made their initial appearances in federal court on Monday and face sentences of 5 to 20 years in prison if convicted.

Robert Abreu, a lawyer for Mr. Keshari, 48, said in an interview that based on his initial reading of the case: “It does not deal apparently with any weapons or munitions. As far as I know, it was simply dual-use aircraft parts, and I think this is being trumped up to an arms violation where it's not.”

Mr. Abreu added that if Mr. Keshari “did commit a violation of U.S. law by not acquiring a proper export license, we'll deal with that.”

A lawyer for Mr. Bujduveanu could not be reached.