

Importer Sentenced for Defrauding Luxury Car Buyers Regarding EPA Standards

On June 14, 2007, Ali Raza, also known as Hassan Ali Raza, was sentenced in U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Georgia to 41 months imprisonment followed by 3 years probation on conspiracy charges. In addition, Raza was ordered to perform 200 hours of community service and pay \$3,185,244 in restitution and a \$100 special assessment.

The sentence stems from charges that Raza imported luxury vehicles into the United States that did not meet the U.S. Department of Transportation or EPA vehicle standards for sale and use on U.S. roads.

Starting in 2000, Raza placed sales advertisements for high-priced foreign vehicles in magazines. He misled potential buyers by asserting that the imported vehicles would meet Federal highway and environmental standards or that the vehicles would be exempt from those standards. After purchasing the vehicles, the buyers discovered that the vehicles did not meet Federal standards and they were required to spend considerable amounts of money to have these vehicles modified to meet Federal standards. As part of his sentence, Raza agreed to pay full restitution to all the victims.

This investigation was conducted jointly with the Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the U.S. Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General, with assistance from the Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Patrol, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and the EPA Office of Transportation and Air Quality. (Case Cost: \$282,780)