
US Blacklists Five Iranian Entities Citing Nuclear, Missile Ties

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WASHINGTON: The US Treasury said Tuesday that it had imposed sanctions on five Iranian entities for alleged ties to the country's nuclear and missile programs.

Washington has already blacklisted Iranian entities and banks for their apparent links and support of Iran's nuclear programs. Tehran has steadfastly denied it is pursuing nuclear arms, and says its nuclear ambitions are peaceful.

"Responsible financial institutions and businesses worldwide are taking steps to avoid doing business with Iranian nuclear and missile entities, as well as with the front companies and cut-outs the Iranian regime uses to disguise its activities," said Stuart Levey, a senior Treasury official.

The five entities were identified as the Nuclear Research Center for Agriculture and Medicine, the Esfahan National Fuel Research and Production Center, Jabber Ibn Hayan, Safety Equipment Procurement Company and Joza Industrial Company. "These five nuclear and missile entities have been used by Iran to hide its illicit conduct and further its dangerous nuclear ambitions," Levey charged. The sanctions bar any US citizen from business dealings with the Iranian groups and also freezes any assets the groups may have under US jurisdiction.

Iran builds new, smart sub: Iranian state radio is quoting the country's defense minister as saying Iran's military capabilities "increased remarkably" after the construction of a new submarine.

General Mostafa Mohammadnajar says the submarine is "smart," unmanned and has radar-evading capabilities. Tuesday's report did not elaborate on its size and technical specifics, and did not say whether the submarine had been tested. Iran occasionally announces production of advanced weapons. Since 1992, it has been active in producing military tanks, missiles, torpedoes, as well as guided bombs and airplanes.

But little is known about Iranian submarines, beyond announcements years ago that Tehran bought some Russian subs and was to produce its own, smaller-sized ones.

Resistance pays off, says Iran's Khamenei: Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Tuesday that resistance by nations against major world powers pays off, state television reported. "People and their government's resistance and their demanding their rights will bear fruit," Khamenei said during a meeting with visiting Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, the report said.

The meeting was held on the last day of a three-day visit by the Algerian leader to Tehran.

"The Iranian nation and government achieved all the progress they have despite pressures, sanctions, and threats by the domineering powers," Khamenei said. Tehran has been at loggerheads with the West for the past five years over its controversial nuclear programme. During Bouteflika's visit,

Tehran and Algiers inked separate agreements on avoiding double taxation and customs cooperation as well as a memorandum of understanding for banking cooperation, the television said. On Monday, Bouteflika met with his Iranian counterpart Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who said Tehran would press on with its nuclear programme despite the risk of fresh sanctions. Iran is facing a possible fourth round of UN Security Council sanctions over its refusal to halt enrichment, a process which makes nuclear fuel but also the core of an atomic bomb.

Turkey awaits Nejad's visit

ANKARA: Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad will pay a two-day visit to Turkey this week for talks expected to focus on bilateral ties and Tehran's nuclear programme, a government official said Tuesday. The trip was planned well in advance of the conflict in Georgia, which -- bordering as it does on Turkey and separated from Iran only by small landlocked Armenia -- is a geopolitical concern for both nations. Ahmadinejad, who arrives Thursday in Istanbul, will meet in the metropolis with President Abdullah Gul and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, said the official, who requested anonymity and gave no details. Israel last week voiced misgivings over Ahmadinejad's visit, saying it was "not the appropriate time" for Turkey, its main regional ally, to host the Iranian president. "It is not a good idea to give legitimacy" to a leader who has called for the destruction of Israel and denies the Holocaust, moreover at a time when Western powers are mulling fresh sanctions against Iran over its controversial nuclear programme, an Israeli diplomat based in Ankara said. Ankara, which had in the past complained of Iranian attempts to undermine Turkey's secular order, has in recent years significantly improved relations with its eastern neighbour. - AFP
