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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

District of Maryland

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, November 8, 2017

**Owner Of Defense Contracting Firm Sentenced To 5 Years
In Prison For Paying Bribes To Civilian Employee At
Aberdeen Proving Ground**

**Civilian Employee Sentenced To 2 Years For Accepting Bribes In Exchange For
Favorable Actions On Contracts**

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Baltimore, Maryland – On November 7, 2017, United States District Judge Richard D. Bennett sentenced Rainier Ramos, age 50, of Bel Air, Maryland, to two years in prison, including a 12-month period of home confinement, followed by three years of supervised release for bribery in connection with his duties at the U.S. Army Public Health Command at Aberdeen Proving Ground. Judge Bennett also ordered Ramos to pay a money judgment of at least \$33,000, and pay restitution in the full amount of the victim's losses, \$2,215,779.

Co-conspirator Bhupesh Wadhawan, age 40, of Ashburn, Virginia, previously pleaded guilty and was sentenced to five years in prison for his role in the conspiracy. Judge Bennett also ordered Wadhawan to pay \$2,215,779 in restitution.

The sentence was announced by Acting United States Attorney for the District of Maryland Stephen M. Schenning; Special Agent in Charge Gordon B. Johnson of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Baltimore Field Office; Special Agent in Charge L. Scott Moreland, Mid-Atlantic Fraud Field Office, Major Procurement Fraud Unit, U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Command; and Special Agent in Charge Robert E. Craig, Jr. of the Defense Criminal Investigative Service - Mid-Atlantic Field Office.

Ramos was a civilian information technology professional at the U.S. Army Public Health Command at Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG). Co-conspirator Bhupesh Wadhawan was the owner and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Link Solutions, Inc. ("LSI"), an information technology company headquartered in McLean, Virginia.

Bhupesh Wadhawan, was the owner and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Link Solutions, Inc. ("LSI") an information technology company headquartered in McLean, Virginia. The Defendant founded LSI in December 2006.

Beginning in September 2009, Ramos and Wadhawan engaged in a course of conduct that consisted of Wadhawan offering, promising and ultimately giving and Ramos soliciting and accepting a stream of benefits, worth approximately \$33,000 in the form of meals and drinks, rounds of golf and tickets to sporting events, including courtside seats to Washington Wizards basketball games, football tickets and access to the LSI luxury suite for Washington Redskins football games at FedEx field, tickets to see the New Orleans Saints play at the Mercedes Benz Superdome in New Orleans, tickets to see the New Orleans Hornets basketball team in New Orleans, Louisiana, gift cards and other things of value in exchange for Ramos's favorable treatment of Wadhawan's business interests in contracting with the United States, as opportunities arose, in relation to contract number W81XWH-11-R-0348 in violation of Ramos's lawful duty to the U.S. Army Public Health Command.

In early 2010, the Wadhawan expressed to Ramos his interest in a high value IT contract the award of which, as the Defendant knew, Ramos had the ability to influence. That contract, the Agency Information Technology Services Support (AITSS) contract, was held by CSC Corporation in Fall 2009 but was ultimately re-competed as contract number W81XWH-11-R-0348 (hereafter the "MEDCOM" contract) with a value of \$10,000,000 in the base year and the option to extend for 4 more years, for a total value of more than \$50,000,000.

In exchange for bribes from Wadhawan, Ramos sought contracting opportunities at APG in the spring and summer of 2010, that would allow LSI to develop a track record of performance, in order to increase the likelihood that the company would be awarded the MEDCOM contract when it was re-competed in 2011. Ramos admitted that he took the following actions in exchange for bribes: influenced the award of a contract to LSI to deploy and configure 70 desktop and laptop computers at APG; recommended that the MEDCOM contract be reserved for companies that were part of the U.S. Small Business Administration 8(a) program, - a significant benefit to LSI as a certified 8(a) business.

After the award of this contract, the Wadhawan advocated for and Ramos recommended that a portion of the AITSS contract that had previously been awarded to CSC Corporation be reserved for companies that were part of the U.S. Small Business Administration 8(a) program. LSI was a certified 8(a) company and, as a result, would be in an enhanced competitive position if the work that had previously been part of the CSC contract was restricted to 8(a) companies, which CSC was not. Ultimately, in exchange

for things of value provided by Wadhawan, Ramos influenced the decision to restrict the MEDCOM contract to 8(a) companies, which was a significant benefit to LSI.

After the decision was made to restrict the former CSC contract to 8(a) entities. Ramos, in exchange for things of value provided by the Wadhawan, introduced Wadhawan to various potential teaming partners that Ramos and the Defendant believed would increase the likelihood that LSI would be awarded the MEDCOM contract.

Ramos also provided Wadhawan with the winning proposal of the previous contractor on the MEDCOM contract, including pricing data, which was sensitive, proprietary information; and helped write the Statement of Work for the MEDCOM contract to increase the likelihood that LSI would be awarded that contract.

Ramos also included in the Statement of Work for the MEDCOM contract two certifications that Ramos knew LSI had and, thus, increased the likelihood that LSI would be awarded the MEDCOM contract.

On or about November 2, 2010, a Manager of Client Services with the Washington Redskins sent another Redskins employee an email with the subject line, "Barry Kane will be in Bhupesh Wadhawan (Link Solution) suite for the Philadelphia game (see note)." The body of the email contained the following, "army-public health command....**one of the customers which is \$10 million a year annually to him the CIO is coming to the suite for the Philly game...**" (emphasis added)

On May 20, 2010, in an email to Wadhawan, Ramos stated, "If there's any way you can pull off a miracle and switch the 10 Eagles/Skins tickets you have already acquired for 10 Skins/Cowboys tickets, **I'll owe you some serious 8A business.** . . . Thanks again for EVERYTHING." (emphasis added)

In August 2011, the solicitation for the MEDCOM contract was issued, and Ramos was selected as the Chairman of the Source Selection Board. In early 2012, Ramos recommended that the contract be awarded to LSI.

After LSI was awarded the contract, Ramos approved invoices submitted by the Company under the contract. As of July 2016, LSI has been paid almost \$37 million by the U.S. government for invoices submitted under the MEDCOM contract.

The National Procurement Fraud Task Force was formed in October 2006 to promote the early detection, identification, prevention and prosecution of procurement fraud associated with the increase in government contracting activity for national security and other government programs. The Procurement Fraud Task Force includes the United States Attorneys= Offices, the FBI, the U.S. Inspectors General community and a number of other federal law enforcement agencies. This case, as well as other cases brought by members of the Task Force, demonstrate the Department of Justice's commitment to helping ensure the integrity of the government procurement process.

Acting United States Attorney Stephen M. Schenning commended the FBI, Army CID, and DCIS for their work in the investigation. Mr. Schenning thanked Assistant United States Attorney Leo J. Wise, who prosecuted the case.

Component(s):

USAO - Maryland

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