

Iranian ship arrives at Venezuelan port in defiance of U.S. sanctions



Iran's Golsan cargo ship. (Photo: Press TV)

Caracas, January 9 (RHC)-- Iran and Venezuela continue to defy illegal U.S. sanctions against the two longtime allies and trade partners, with reports saying an Iranian cargo ship has arrived at the Venezuelan port city of La Guaira.

The vessel tracking data from analyst Refinitiv Eikon, as cited by Reuters, said the Iranian-flagged general cargo ship Golsan berthed at La Guaira on Thursday after it left Iran in late November. Media reports fell short of providing details as to what cargo the ship was carrying.

Last July, the Golsan brought food to supply Venezuela's first Iranian supermarket and later returned home carrying a cargo of alumina, a powder refined from bauxite that is used for manufacturing aluminum.

Venezuela is grappling with shortages of gasoline due to sanctions unilaterally imposed by the United States not only on Caracas but also on Iran. Venezuela sits on the world's largest oil reserves. The country's refineries can produce more than 1.3 million barrels per day (bpd) of fuel, but they are working at less than 20% of their capacity mainly due to power outages and lack of spare parts amid the U.S. sanctions.

Iran has already sent several tankers loaded with barrels of gasoline and alkylate to Venezuela to help jump start the oil refineries there amid a fuel crisis.

The fuel shipments to Venezuela's ports and refineries drew the ire of the US administration in Washington, which had previously threatened to prevent new oil tankers leaving Iran from reaching the Venezuelan coast.

Iran has warned of retaliatory measures against the United States should Washington cause problems for tankers carrying Iranian fuel to gasoline-starved Venezuela. Moreover, the two OPEC-member countries have deepened their cooperation over the past year, exchanging gold and other commodities for food, condensate and fuel as the U.S. sanctions do not allow them to use the dollar-dominated financial system.

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