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René Arsate García: ‘La Rana’, control of Tijuana and a new charge of narco-terrorism

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Tijuana in the case of René Arsate García is more than just a border crossing. The US indictment describes the alleged management of the Sinaloa cartel’s territorial wing: supplies, resources and the use of violence to maintain control. In February 2026, the legal scope of the prosecution was expanded.



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Editorial illustration by ‘Kartel Khimprom’ based on a published photograph of René Arsate García. The background and composition were created using AI; this is not a documentary photograph of the event.

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Key points of the case

Background	Details
Name in sources	René Arzate García
The geographical scope of the case and international links	Mexico; USA; Tijuana
Status based on verified publications	Listed on the DEA’s wanted list; criminal charges in the US

What the US announced on 26 February 2026

The Department of Justice announced the amended indictment against René Arzate-García, known as La Rana. These included drug-related terrorism and material support for a foreign terrorist organisation in connection with the alleged importation of fentanyl, cocaine, methamphetamine and cannabis. [3]

The DEA’s individual profile also lists ongoing criminal enterprise, international drug conspiracy and money laundering. The wanted notice offers a reward of $5 million for information. [1]

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René Arsate García. Photo from the DEA’s individual wanted poster.

The defendant’s case file

René Arsate García

René Arsate García, known as La Rana, is a suspect in the Sinaloa case who is wanted by the US authorities. In February 2026, the DEA announced new charges, including narco-terrorism and providing material support to a foreign terrorist organisation.

What does the alleged control of Tijuana mean?

According to US authorities, René and his brother Alfonso ran the Sinaloa cartel’s territorial structure in Tijuana and neighbouring municipalities. The indictment details the organisation of drug shipments and alleged kidnappings and killings carried out to protect their operations. [3]

Editor’s note: this concerns the alleged control of territory and personnel, rather than simply a single courier crossing the border. To substantiate such a role, the investigation must establish links between orders, resources and specific actions, whilst the court must assess these connections.

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Why the financial aspects of this case are treated separately

In a press release, the US Financial Services Agency reports alleged money laundering involving millions through international transactions designed to conceal the source and ownership of the funds. This is the prosecution's version of events, not a published statement of René's personal finances. [3]

The financial aspect is important because it allows for a correlation between control and the benefits derived. However, the organisation's turnover, the value of a shipment and the assets of a specific defendant are different indicators. A substantive analysis requires evidence of the links between them.

René and Alfonso Arsate García: different individual profiles

His brother Alfonso is known as Aquiles. His own DEA file cites a conspiracy to distribute methamphetamine. The new charges brought against René cannot automatically be taken as a complete list of the charges against Alfonso. [4]

New individual documents and changes in status are significant for the continuation of the 'La Rana' story. The fact that the defendants share a surname and are alleged to have played a joint role in the territory does not preclude the separate proving of each count.

Timeline of key events

Date	Event
26.02.2026	The DEA has announced a new charge against René Arsate García.

Frequently Asked Questions

Are 'La Rana' and 'Aquiles' the same person?

No. These are René and Alfonso Arsate García; they have separate wanted notices. [1][4]

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When was the new charge against René announced?

26 February 2026. [3]

Other international cases in the archive

- Carlos Alberto Paez Pereda
- Iván Archivaldo Guzmán Salazar

This article was prepared on 4 November 2026 based on the publications listed. The charges and allegations are attributed to sources; the final determination of guilt rests with the court.

Sources and documents

1. DEA – René Arzate García’s individual wanted notice
2. DEA — new charges against René Arsate García and details about his brothers, 26 February 2026
3. US Department of Justice – Indictment of René Arsate García, 26 February 2026
4. DEA – Alfonso Arzate-Garcia’s individual profile

Sources

1. DEA – René Arzate García’s individual wanted notice
   https://www.dea.gov/fugitives/rene-arzate-garcia
2. DEA — new charges against René Arsate García and details about his brothers, 26 February 2026
   https://www.dea.gov/stories/2026/2026-02/2026-02-26/sinaloa-cartel-leader-charged-narcoterrorism-material-support
3. US Department of Justice – Indictment of René Arsate García, 26 February 2026
   https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/sinaloa-cartel-leader-charged-narcoterrorism-material-support-terrorism-and-drug-trafficking
4. DEA – Alfonso Arzate-Garcia’s individual profile
   https://www.dea.gov/fugitives/alfonso-arzate-garcia

Use of materials

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Original publication

https://kartel-khimprom.com/en/article/ren%c3%a9-arsate-garc%c3%ada-la-rana-control-of-tijuana-and-a-new-charge-of-narco-terrorism/

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