

NEWS IN BRIEF

IRGC
monitors U.S.
destroyer
in Strait of
Hormuz

● TASNIM

International Desk

The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) Navy said it has been monitoring the U.S. Navy's 'Paul Hamilton' (DDG-60) destroyer, which was reportedly carrying three top commanders of the U.S., English, and French naval forces in the Strait of Hormuz, south of Iran, by drones and vessels. Commander of the IRGC Navy's First Zone Rear Admiral Abbas Qolamshahi added that the IRGC has full control over all vessels passing through the Strait of Hormuz and the Persian Gulf.

Terrorists
affiliated
with Mossad
arrested in
Iran: Minister

● IRNA

TASNIM - The Iranian intelligence minister revealed that a terrorist team affiliated with the Israeli Mossad spy agency that had crossed into Iran from the western border has recently been captured, saying the new government of Iraq has given guarantees that it will ensure security along the common frontier. Esmail Khatib warned that the Iranian armed and intelligence forces will give a crushing response to any hostile action at the borders.

Iran, Vietnam
ink MoUs
to extradite
convicts

IRNA - Iranian and Vietnamese officials signed two memorandums of understanding (MoUs) in the field of extraditing convicts on the eve of the 50th anniversary of bilateral relations. General To Lam, the minister of public security of Vietnam, told Amin Hossein Rahimi, Iran's justice minister, that the MoUs will bring about increasing cooperation on human rights.

Iran Navy to continue its presence
in high seas: *Top general*

▲ Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani (R) and the Chief of Staff of the Iranian Armed Forces Major General Mohammad Hossein Baqeri (2nd-R) salute Captain Farhad Fattahi (L), the commander of the 86th flotilla, in Bandar Abbas, Iran, on May 21, 2023.
● AKBAR TAVAKKOLI/IRNA

National Desk

The chief of staff of the Iranian Armed Forces said that Iran's Navy will resolutely continue its presence in the oceans, referring to the successful round-the-globe mission of the navy's 86th flotilla. Making the remarks on the homecoming ceremony of the flotilla in the southern Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas on Sunday, Major General Mo-

hammad Hossein Baqeri added, "We do not need foreigners to make our region secure," Press TV reported. The Iranian top general said the country's 86th naval flotilla concluded its historic voyage on the high seas to mark an outstanding achievement in the history of Iran's naval missions despite Western-led sanctions against the Islamic Republic. The 86th flotilla, which

set sail from the south of Iran in early autumn, returned home on Saturday after circumnavigating the world. It has officially broken the record for the distance an Iranian flotilla has sailed in international waters.

He said the flotilla, which is comprised of the domestically-manufactured Dena destroyer and Makran forward base ship, is a source of pride for the Iranian nation. "Maritime prowess is among the most significant factors of our country's military might," Baqeri said.

"We are gifted with home-grown industries [and expertise] and do not lack anything to become a major naval power. Furthermore, our commanders and marines undertake naval missions fearlessly." The top general said the unprecedented move of the Iranian Navy in carrying out this difficult mission ushers in a new era for the Iranian Armed Forces, adding, "Even major countries in the world do not have the courage

to undertake such a [formidable] task". "Our forces sailed through a precarious route. Through faith, devotion, and patriotism, our forces pulled off such an achievement," the top general said, stressing that dignity can only be preserved through the path of power.

'Iran is impervious to
isolation'

Addressing the ceremony, Commander of the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy Rear Admiral Shahram Irani said that his force, through its deployment to the high seas and conclusion of the lengthy naval mission, has established and expanded its strategic depth, foresight in maritime prowess, and regional identity and influence.

Irani said Iranian marines, under Commander-in-Chief of the Iranian Armed Forces Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, managed for the first time ever to employ modern technologies and know-how to convey the message of peace and

friendship.

The naval forces onboard Dena and Makran showed up on the high seas to declare that the Islamic Republic is impervious to isolation and sanctions, and continues to tread the path of sustainable development through the promotion of interactions with other nations, the navy chief added.

Irani said that Iranian marines pulled off a scientific, political, and cultural achievement.

"Iran, with its discourse of resistance and motto of peace and friendship, is properly placing itself in the new world order. This is a sign of the waning power and hegemony of the United States," he remarked.

The flotilla's return was hailed by top Iranian officials and commanders including the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Khamenei, who congratulated the "courageous forces of the 86th flotilla of warships of the Islamic Republic of Iran Army on their great and successful voyage."

Taliban says committed
to more cooperation
with Iran

▶ A high-ranking Iranian military delegation meets with Afghan officials in Kabul, Afghanistan, on May 20, 2023.
● AFGHANISTAN'S MINISTRY OF DEFENSE

International Desk

The ruling Taliban government in Afghanistan has expressed its commitment to further cooperation with Tehran in different fields amid a dispute over Afghanistan's violation of Iran's water rights from the Hirmand River (also known as Helmand). Afghanistan's interim Defense Ministry reported that an Iranian military delegation, led by Bahram Hosseini Motlaq, the head of the Planning and Operations Department of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Iran, held talks

with Haji Mali Khan Seddiq, the deputy chief of staff of Taliban's army, and his companions in Kabul, Iran Front Page reported.

According to the report, during the talks, the Afghan side said it has sought "good relations with Iran and been committed to neighborly cooperation in different areas". The Iranian delegation, in turn, stressed Iran's determination to forge good ties with Afghanistan. During the meeting, the two sides discussed border issues and stressed enhancing joint cooperation and resolving problems



through dialogue and relevant authorities, the statement added.

Tehran and Kabul have been locked in a row over the latter's refusal to allow Iran access to its share of water from the Helmand River in violation of a 1973 treaty. As per the provisions of the treaty, Afghanistan is bound to release 820 million cubic meters of water from the river annually, but Iranian authorities have repeated-

ly said that Kabul has been withholding its share.

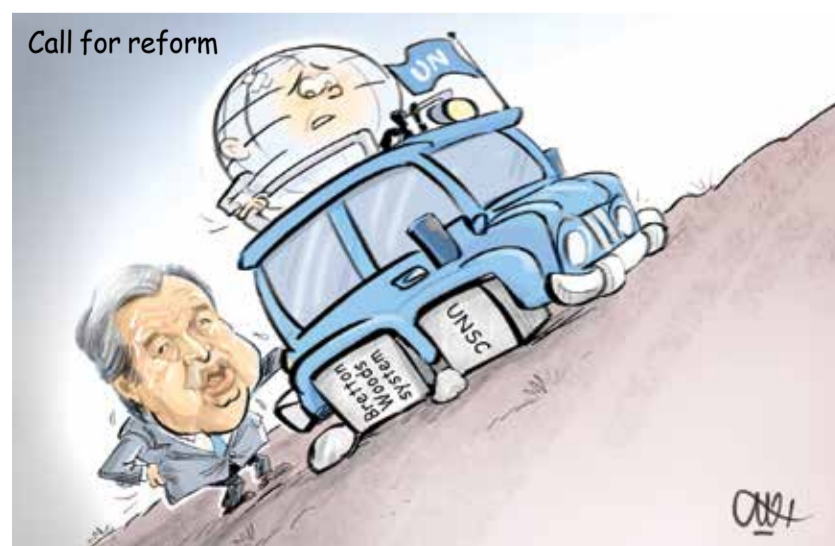
Afghanistan has also built dams on the Hirmand, which have constricted the water flow into Iran. By grossly violating the accord in letter and spirit, the ruling Taliban government has endangered the lives of many Iranians who rely on the Hamoun wetlands for drinking water, agriculture, and fishing. Earlier this week, Iranian President Ebrahim Raeisi

delivered a stern warning to Afghanistan against withholding Iran's water rights, cautioning the Taliban that they will be responsible for the repercussions of their refusal. Hirmand is the longest watercourse in Afghanistan. It rises in the Hindu Kush Mountains, west of Kabul, and flows in an arc southwest until it empties out into the Hamoun wetlands, located in Iran's Sistan and Baluchestan Province.

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▶ Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist

Kanaani: Iran expected Arab League
to be constructive

The Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman said the Arab League was expected to take a positive and constructive step towards ensuring peace and stability in the region instead of repeating baseless claims. Nasser Kanaani on Sunday expressed dismay at a statement issued at the end of an Arab League summit in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, saying it was a repetition of baseless claims leveled against Iran, IRNA reported. He added that the Arab League had chosen to trav-

el on an unending path by raising issues about Iran in a statement issued a day earlier at the end of the 32nd meeting of Arab League leaders. However, the Iranian official welcomed the constructive approach adopted by some regional countries towards strengthening cooperation in the region and giving priority to mutual understanding. According to the spokesman, the Islamic Republic of Iran has always stressed the importance of having comprehensive cooperation



● MAHMOOD HOSSEINI/TASNIM

tion in the region. At the end of his remarks, Kanaani emphasized that the three Persian islands of Abu Musa, the Greater Tunb, and Lesser Tunb belong to Iran, and the country rejects any claim about them.