

Navy takes delivery of homegrown cruise missiles, choppers

The Islamic Republic of Iran Navy has taken delivery of a range of domestically-designed and manufactured military equipment, including strategic cruise missile systems and helicopters furnished with electronic warfare systems. The new weapons were supplied to the naval forces during a ceremony attended by Chief Commander of the Iranian Army Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi, Iranian Navy Commander Rear Admiral Shahram Irani and other senior military figures in Iran's southeastern port city of Konarak on Sunday, Press TV reported. The arrivals included the Talayieh strategic cruise

missile system, Nasir cruise missile system, helicopters with first-ever homegrown electronic warfare systems, and light military helicopters for reconnaissance purposes. Surface-to-surface missile systems with eight launchers, Sanjar smart loitering and suicide drone mounted on Jamaran destroyer, a multipurpose drone system used for electronic warfare and surveillance operations, a diver detection system, and Sirvan tugboat to be used in ports and anchorages were also among them. Speaking at the event, Irani described Talayieh as a smart cruise missile with a range of over 1,000 kilometers (621 miles) that can change course during

flight and choose a new target before striking and destroying it. Nasir cruise missile, with a range of more than 100 kilometers, offers a high destructive force against enemy targets, and can be mounted on rocket launching vessels of different classes, the commander stated. The Iranian Navy's new helicopters have been furnished with a range of electronic warfare systems, which can deceive various missiles. Moreover, the naval force's reconnaissance copters have Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) systems fitted in. The systems allow the aircraft to undertake both naval combat and civilian maritime missions.



Nasir cruise missile system is put on display during a ceremony in Iran's southeastern port city of Konarak on December 24, 2023. aja.ir

Russian envoy summoned over isles statement

Iran has summoned the charge d'affaires of Russia in Tehran in protest at a recent joint statement issued by Russia and several Arab countries on Iran's three Persian Gulf islands of Abu Musa, the Greater Tunb, and the Lesser Tunb. The assistant director general of the Persian Gulf Department of Iran's Foreign Ministry on Saturday summoned the Russian diplomat in the absence of the Russian ambassador, IRNA reported. The development came after the final statement of the 6th Arab-Russian Cooperation Forum, which was held in Morocco on December 20, reiterated the UAE's baseless claims about the three Iranian islands.

The Iranian diplomat conveyed the Islamic Republic's "strong protest" in writing to the Russian envoy over Moscow's repeated support for the "groundless claims" that were included in the statement.

The Iranian official reminded the Russian diplomat of "the necessity of showing respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries as one of the most recognized and fundamental principles in international relations."

For his part, the Russian diplomat said he would convey Iran's strong protest to his country's authorities as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Bogdanov has reiterated his country's full respect for Iran's territorial integrity.

In a Saturday meeting with Iranian Ambassador to Russia Kazem Jalali, Bogdanov said that respect for Iran's territorial integrity is a fundamental part of Russia's foreign policy, Press TV reported. During the meeting, Bogdanov briefed Jalali about the 6th Russian-Arab Cooperation Forum.

Iran to take Sweden to ICJ over Nouri verdict: MP

The chairwoman of the Human Rights Committee at the Iranian Parliament said the country will file a complaint with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Sweden's judiciary for illegally prosecuting and handing life imprisonment to former official Hamid Nouri. Zohreh Elahian made the remarks on Sunday, a few days after the Stockholm Court of Appeals upheld a life sentence for Nouri, who was arrested in 2019 under unfounded allegations of human rights violations, Press TV reported. "By this ruling, the Swedish judicial system showed that it is strongly influenced by the propaganda of the Mujahedin-e-Khalq Organization (MKO) terrorist group and that it issued a life sentence based on the cult's baseless complaint," she said.

"Nouri's family reserves the right not to recognize the verdict issued by the Swedish National Court due to its non-compliance with legal standards, to lodge a complaint with international conventions, and to pursue the case at the International Court of Justice."

The former Iranian judiciary official was put on trial on unfounded allegations staged against him by elements representing the MKO terrorist group that has openly boasted about carrying out terrorist operations against Iranian officials and civilians perceived to be supporters of the government.

The terrorist group had falsely claimed that Nouri was involved in the execution and torture of MKO members in 1988, baseless charges he has vehemently rejected.

Muttaqi: Kabul paving ground for return of Afghan migrants

International Desk

Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi said that Kabul is trying to pave the ground for the return of Afghan migrants to their homeland as soon as possible.

In an interview with IRNA, Muttaqi referred to measures taken by the Afghan government for the safe return of migrants. He said that Kabul is trying to improve the economic and living conditions in the country.

He said that Afghanistan has been in war with the Soviet Union, the United States and NATO for 45 years, which caused the migration of Afghan people

from the country. Now, the country is trying to pave the ground for their return to the country.

The Afghan official also thanked the countries that have hosted Afghan immigrants and called on Afghans to return to their homeland gradually.

After Taliban's takeover of Kabul in 2021, millions of Afghans left their country for a better life in other countries.

Pakistan and Iran have been the main destinations of Afghan migrants.

In recent months, both countries have repatriated hundreds of thousands of illegal Afghan refugees to their country.

Over 160 killed in 24 hours amid Israeli attacks on Gaza

International Desk

Israel bombed areas of Jabalia in the northern Gaza Strip overnight, with fighting throughout Sunday morning, residents and Palestinian media said, as Gaza health authorities and the Israeli military both announced mounting death tolls.

Israel claims it has achieved almost complete operational control over northern Gaza and is preparing to expand a ground offensive against

Hamas fighters to other areas. But Jabalia residents reported persistent aerial bombardment and shelling from Israeli tanks, which they said had moved further into the town on Saturday. Israel pushed on Sunday with its military campaign, as the focus of the deadly combat shifted to southern Gaza where most displaced Palestinians are trapped.

A Gaza health ministry spokesman said on Sunday 166 Palestinians had

been killed in the past 24 hours, taking the total Palestinian death toll to 20,424. Tens of thousands have been wounded, with many bodies believed trapped under rubble. Almost all of Gaza's 2.3 million people have been displaced.

The Israeli military said eight soldiers had been killed, bringing to 154 its published combat losses since it began its ground incursion in response to Hamas' Oct. 7 attack, in which 1,140 people were killed in Israel, and about 250 abducted, according to an AFP tally based on Israeli figures.

The White House said that US President Joe Biden and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had discussed the Israeli campaign. Biden "emphasized the critical need to protect the civilian population including those supporting the humanitarian aid operation, and the importance of allowing civilians to move safely away from areas of ongoing fighting", the White House said.

US claims dismissed

Meanwhile, the US claimed on Friday that Iran was "deeply involved" in planning operations against commercial vessels in the Red Sea and its intelligence was critical to enable Yemen's Houthi movement to target ships.

Houthis, who say their attacks are in support of Palestinians under siege by Israel in Gaza, have targeted commercial shipping in the Red Sea with drones and missiles, forcing shippers to change course and take longer routes around the southern tip of Africa.

Iran denies involvement in attacks by the Houthis in the Red Sea with its deputy foreign minister saying the group was acting on its own.

"The resistance (Houthis) has its own tools... and acts in accordance with its own decisions and capabilities," said Ali Baqeri. "The fact that certain powers, such as the Americans and the Israelis, suffer

strikes from the resistance movement... should in no way call into question the reality of the strength of the resistance in the region," he told Mehr News Agency.

Earlier on Saturday, Iranian Foreign Minister

Hossein Amir-Abdollahi said Washington had previously asked Iran to advise Yemenis not to act against US and Israeli interests in the region.

REUTERS and AFP contributed to this report.

Mohammad Ali Rajabi
Cartoonist



A child stands amid the rubble in a room overlooking a building destroyed by a strike in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip on December 24, 2023. [SAID KHATIB/AFP](http://saik.khatib/afp)