

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- The spokesman for Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said Sunday enemies of the Islamic Republic are well aware that no step taken against the country's national interests will go unanswered and will be met with suitable reactions. Brigadier General Ramezan Sharif made the remarks while addressing hostile media reports to the effect that the IRGC's recent naval drills, including targeting of a mock-up U.S. aircraft carrier, were not successful. During IRGC's large-scale drills in Iran's southern waters, codenamed Payambar-e A'zam (The Great Prophet) 14, which ended on Thursday, the elite force staged "all-out and multilayered" strikes against the life-size replica of a Nimitz-class U.S. aircraft carrier. (Continued on Page 7)

DUBAI (Dispatches) -- The foreign ministers of Iran and the United Arab Emirates agreed on Sunday that they would strive to cooperate during the COVID-19 pandemic. In a video call during which they also exchanged greetings for the Muslim Eid al-Adha holiday, Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahyan told his Iranian counterpart that strengthening bilateral cooperation was an important element in tackling the coronavirus. UAE state news agency WAM said. Iran's Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif said in a tweet that it was "a very substantive, frank and friendly video conversation" on COVID-19 as well as "bilateral, regional and global situations." "We agreed to continue dialogue on theme of hope—especially as region faces tough challenges, and tougher choices ahead," he wrote.

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The Long Reach of Law

'Virtuvin' Award Goes to 'Malakout' at U.S. Da Vinci Festival

Alireza Beiranvand Shortlisted for AFC Player of Year

Yemen Army Downs U.S. Spy Drone Over Jizan

Protesters Defy Riot Police for 66th Day in Portland

PORTLAND, Ore. (Dispatches) — Protesters marched through the streets of downtown Portland Saturday night and early Sunday morning, marking the third consecutive night of rallies that ended in a relatively peaceful manner as federal agents pulled back and made their presence less visible. Earlier in the evening, the Portland Police Bureau announced an unlawful assembly in the 4700 block of East Burnside Street, alleging that some protesters had thrown glass bottles at officers and directed lasers at them. Video shared by a journalist showed officers dispersing the crowd and pushing them back as they chanted "why are you in riot gear, I don't see no riot here?" One journalist at the scene did say he saw someone being treated for pepper spray. In a news release distributed early Sunday morning, Portland Police denied the use of CS gas. Another reporter tweeted video of officers rushing the crowd. Police said two people were arrested following this incident. Portland has seen more than two months of angry demonstrations following the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis. In early July, President Donald Trump sent more federal agents to the city, but local officials said their presence made things worse. All seven Democrats on the U.S. Senate Intelligence Committee wrote to the Department of Homeland Security request-

ing details on its agents conducting intelligence monitoring of the ongoing anti-racism protests in Portland. In a related move, DHS Acting Secretary Chad Wolf ordered the agency to stop collecting information on American journalists covering the protests, after the Washington Post reported that the department's Intelligence & Analysis unit had done so. The Senate committee Democrats in a letter to Brian Murphy, acting DHS undersecretary for Intelligence and Analysis, said they have "grown increasingly concerned" over the department's intelligence operations monitoring protesters. The senators asked Murphy to confirm the accuracy of a July 9 document related to "Portland Surge Operations" that says personnel may collect intelligence from "incarcerated, detained, or arrested persons so long as the collection is conducted overtly." The senators also asked Murphy whether DHS intelligence personnel have indirectly taken part in gathering intelligence on protesters. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects the right to free speech and public assembly. The senators asked Murphy to explain how the department's intelligence operations are "able to differentiate between peaceful protesters exercising their First Amendment rights and those individuals who have planned or conducted acts of violence."

American Firm Inks Deal With Terrorists In Detail: New U.S. Plan to Steal Syrian Oil



A U.S. military vehicle, part of a convoy arriving from northern Iraq, drives past an oil pump jack in the countryside of Syria's northeastern city of Qamishli, Oct. 26, 2019.

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) -- Syria's foreign ministry said on Sunday that an American oil company had signed an agreement with U.S.-backed Kurdish militants who control northeastern oilfields in what it described as an illegal deal aimed at "stealing" Syria's crude. A ministry statement, published on state media, did not name the firm involved in the deal with the so-called Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), an alliance that occupied swathes of north and east Syria with U.S. help. Damascus "condemns in the strongest terms the agreement

signed between Al-Qasd militia (SDF) and an American oil company to steal Syria's oil under the sponsorship and support of the American administration", the statement said. "This agreement is null and void and has no legal basis," it said, adding that it was a violation of Syrian sovereignty. Syria produced around 380,000 barrels of oil per day before a war was imposed on the country following Western-backed riots in 2011. Damascus lost control of most oil producing fields in a stretch east

of the Euphrates River in Dayr al-Zawr. Western sanctions have also hit the energy industry. U.S. President Donald Trump said that despite a military pullback from northeast Syria, American forces would remain "where they have oil". The Pentagon said late last year that oilfield revenues would go to the SDF. Following Trump's earlier insistence that his administration was solely interested in "keeping" Syrian oil, the U.S. military deployed mechanized military units to oil fields in the east of the country. The news of the deal was first

broken Al-Monitor news website last week. It quoted "well-placed sources with close knowledge of the deal" as saying that "the agreement to market oil in territory controlled by the U.S.-backed entity and to develop and modernize existing fields was inked 'with the knowledge and encouragement of the White House'". The sources named the company as Delta Crescent Energy LLC, a corporation organized under the laws of the state of Delaware. The sources gave no further details about the company but would only say they had been in talks for "a long time" and that it had received an OFAC license to operate in Syria. OFAC or the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the U.S. Treasury Department administers and enforces economic and trade sanctions based on American foreign policy and national security goals against targeted foreign countries. Last week, it sanctioned nine Syrian entities pursuant to Caesar Act which according to Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem is aimed at creating hunger and instability. The U.S. seizure of Syrian oilfields in Dayr al-Zawr came as Syria seemed on the brink of crowning military victories by ending the diplomatic isolation and recovering more of Syria without a bullet being fired. Not only had Kurds invited government forces back to the northeast, but businessmen from the once hostile United Arab Emirates. (Continued on Page 7)

U.S. Halts Search for Marines, All Presumed Dead

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- The U.S. military said Sunday it has called off a search for seven Marines and a sailor missing at sea for days, saying they were presumed dead. The military personnel were aboard an amphibious assault vehicle (AAV) that sank Thursday in deep water off the coast of California during a training exercise. "It is with a heavy heart that I decided to conclude the search and rescue effort," said Colonel Christopher Bronzi, commander of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit. During the 40-hour search, Marine, Navy and Coast Guard helicopters, ships, and watercraft searched more than 1,000 square nautical miles, the Marines said in a statement. A total of 16 service members were on the amphibious vehicle — until now eight were rescued but one later died, and two others

are in critical condition. The search and rescue operation now shifts to one aimed at finding the bodies of the missing service members, Bronzi said. The vehicle was on its way back to the U.S. Navy amphibious ship USS Somerset when it sank, according to three defense officials. It was among a group of 13 AAVs returning to the ship, which was approximately a mile from shore, Lt. General Joseph Osterman, commander of I Marine Expeditionary Force, said at a press conference. Osterman said that the personnel aboard the ill-fated vehicle signaled to other AAVs that they were taking on water. "It sank completely," he said, adding that "the assumption is it went all the way to the bottom," several hundred feet below the surface, too deep for divers. One of the rescued Marines died later, and two others were rushed to local hospitals and last

reported in critical condition. AAV training on land would continue although operations on water were being suspended "out of an abundance of caution," Osterman said. AAVs are used to carry out beach landings. The small, armored craft are launched from Navy amphibious ships and convert into armored personnel carriers on land. There have been 10 to 15 reported incidents over the past 20 years involving AAVs, with the most recent report involving a water-based fatality happening in January 2011. "San Clemente is a very challenging amphibious training ground," said Eric Oehlerich, an ABC News contributor and former Navy SEAL who has conducted trainings there. "Night amphibious training is some of the most complex and high-risk training you can do as an amphibious soldier."

Iran FM Proposes Strategic Partnership With Russia

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif said Sunday Iran and Russia must upgrade their document on promotion of lasting cooperation to strategic ties. Zarif told chairman of the Russian State Duma's foreign affairs committee Leonid Slutsky here that given the level of cooperation between the two countries in different fields, it is necessary to update the document. The top Iranian diplomat also stressed the importance of bolstering strategic relations between the parliaments. Slutsky said his visit to Tehran at the time of the coronavirus pandemic shows the significance of mutual relations and issues discussed by the two sides. Zarif and Slutsky discussed ways to boost bilateral ties, especially in the economic field, maintain Iran's nuclear deal, solve the conflicts in

Syria, Iraq, Yemen, and Libya, and enhance bilateral cooperation on regional and international issues. The call for strategic cooperation document with Russia comes as Iran and China are putting their finishing touch to a similar roadmap for final signature. Zarif announced in early July that China and Iran were in the process of negotiating a 25-year strategic agreement, aiming to work together more closely in the coming decades. China sees Iran as a major market for its commodities — and as a source of oil. Iran, for its part, hopes Chinese investments and its own exports will buffer it against the economic pressure of ongoing U.S. sanctions. Tehran's move toward Beijing is partly a reaction to the Trump administration's withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear agreement, said Hamidreza Azizi, a visiting fellow

at the German Institute for International and Security Affairs. But the US isn't the only reason, he told DW: Tehran is also disappointed that the Europeans have not lived up to their economic commitments. Azizi said China and Russia are the only two countries that have maintained their economic ties with Iran, leading the Iranian government to see expanded ties with these two powers as the only viable option to insulate the country's economy. At the same time, he said, Iranian politicians increasingly have the impression that U.S. power and international standing has begun to decline under President Donald Trump. "As such, their understanding is that the best way to preserve Iran's interests in the long run is to define frameworks for long-term partnership with 'non-Western' powers," said Azizi.