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Military Commanders:

Sanctions Will Not Hinder Iran's Power



The 39th flotilla of the Iranian Navy returns home on April 2, 2016, some 75 days after conducting its overseas mission in international waters.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran's Navy commander Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said Saturday sanctions by the United States and its allies will fail to hinder the country's plans to boost its military might.

"Regardless of opposition from the U.S. and its allies, our plans will be implemented based on requirements to defend the country's maritime borders," Sayyari told reporters in the southern Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas on the sidelines of a ceremony to welcome the 38th fleet of the Iranian Navy.

Despite sanctions, the Iranian naval forces have succeeded in making great achievements, Sayyari said, adding

that if all countries opposing the Islamic establishment pool their resources they will fail to make any breakthrough to hinder the Iranian Navy's progress.

He downplayed the impact of sanctions against the Islamic Republic and said Iran's Navy has managed to manufacture military equipment, including destroyers such as Jamaran, Damavand and Sahand, under such embargoes.

He added that Iran's Navy would pay no heed to foreigners' talks about the country's maneuvers aimed at enhancing its defense power.

In recent years, Iran has made great achievements in its defense sector and conducted numerous military drills.

Iran has repeatedly assured other countries that its military might poses no threat to other states, insisting that the country's defense doctrine is entirely based on deterrence.

Iran's Navy chief further said the 38th fleet returned home after accomplishing its mission in international waters during some 75 days.

He added that the flotilla conveyed Iran's message of peace and friendship to other countries and carried out measures to fight piracy.

Sayyari said the 39th flotilla of the Iranian Navy, consisting of Alvand destroyer, had set off for the Bay of Bengal to attend a ceremony marking the anniversary of India's Independence Day (observed annually on August 15) and returned home before the 38th fleet.

He also noted that the 40th fleet, comprising Alborz destroyer and Qom logistic-combat warships, would set off for high seas in near fu-

ture. In recent years, Iran's Navy has increased its presence in international waters to protect naval routes and provide security for merchant vessels and tankers.

The Iranian Navy has also been conducting patrols in the Gulf of Aden since November 2008 in line with international efforts against piracy in order to safeguard merchant containers and oil tankers owned or leased by Iran or other countries.

Iran's Navy has managed to foil several attacks on both Iranian and foreign tankers during its missions in international waters.

Meanwhile, Iran's Army

Iranians Celebrate Nature's Day

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- **Iranians all over the country on Friday celebrated the ancient tradition of Sizdah Bedar or the Nature's Day by spending some quality time with their loved ones out in the wilderness.**

Every year, Iranians go outdoors for picnics, in the parks or the countryside on the 13th day of Persian New Year, called Nowruz, as part of rituals to mark the festival of nature. They also take the opportunity to preserve the environment.

The day, which is celebrated on the 13th day of the first Persian calendar month of Farvardin, usually falls on April 1 but in leap years, it coincides with April 2.

On this day families enjoy the final day of their New

The Holy Qur'an

They have taken a small price for the communications of Allah, so they turn away from His way; surely evil is it that they do.

The Holy Qur'an (9.9)

PRAYER TIMINGS

Noon (Zohr)	13:07
Evening (Maghreb)	18:22
Dawn (Fajr) "Tomorrow"	05:21
Sunrise "Tomorrow"	06:47

vommander Major General Ataollah Salehi on Saturday unveiled plans for the presence of the country's naval forces in Latin America.

Speaking to reporters in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas, the senior commander said special plans have been devised to reinforce the Navy in the new Iranian year (which began on March 20) and equip it with advanced gear.

According to the commander, one of the main purposes is to enable the naval forces to "take bigger steps" in naval voyages.

Iran seeks to prepare for "mighty presence" in Latin American waters, Major General Salehi noted.

The aim of presence in faraway waters is to display Iran's naval power to the world and carry out joint operations with friend countries in other regions, he added.

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Three Policemen Killed in Anti-Drug Fight

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- **A drug smuggler has killed three Iranian police officers and severely injured another one in the city of Kazeroun, in the southern province of Fars, a local official says.**

Chief prosecutor of Kazeroun County Abdol Hussein Lotfi said on Friday that the officers were shot dead by the trafficker at a police station a day earlier.

He added that the incident took place when the police officers arrested the smuggler who was carrying an unspecified amount of heroin.

Lotfi added that the trafficker then opened fire at the police officers and killed three of them and injured one who was transferred to hospital.

The smuggler, who had been previously convicted of crimes, is currently held in detention, the official said.

Despite high economic and human costs, the Islamic Republic has been actively fighting drug trafficking over the past three decades.

Iran has spent more than \$700 million to seal the borders and prevent the transit of narcotics destined for European, Arab and Central Asian countries. The war on drug trade originating from Afghanistan has claimed the lives of nearly 4,000 Iranian police officers over the past 34 years.

In December 2015, Iranian Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Executive Director Yury Fedotov signed an agreement in the Austrian capital of Vienna to fight the flow of narcotics into Iran from neighboring countries, mainly Afghanistan.

Iran, which has a 900-kilometer common border with Afghanistan, has been used as the main conduit for smuggling Afghan drugs to drug kingpins in Europe.