

Commander: Iran to Stage Naval War Game in December

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TEHRAN (FNA)- Iran's Navy Force commander Rear Admiral Habibollah Sayyari said Sunday that Iran would hold a war game early December in the Sea of Oman, the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormoz.

The forthcoming war game is dubbed "Unity 87," Sayyari said, adding that "All the movements of the enemy in Oman Sea, Persian Gulf and Hormoz Strait are under control and the enemy will never dare to enter Iran's waters."

He also said that on the occasion of the Iranian navy day on Nov. 27, Iranian Navy Force would be added by a light submarine named "Ghadir," and two small warships named as "Kalat (fortress in Farsi) and Derafsh (banner in Farsi) which are capable of launching rockets."

Meantime, another Iranian Navy commander Rear Admiral Hossein Ashrafi Sunday told a press conference that "the Navy forces are present in the region in the most powerful manner to defend the country's sea borders."

Iran's Basij (voluntary forces) Commander Hojatoleslam Hossein Ta'eb also said Wednesday that Iran would enhance its navy might three times if there is a necessity.

Iran upgraded the naval base in Assalouyeh, a Persian Gulf port in southern Iranian Booshehr province.

The United States and Israel have consistently refused to rule out the possibility of military strikes against Iran over its refusal to halt its nuclear program.

The United States and its allies have accused Iran of trying to develop nuclear weapons under the cover of a civilian nuclear program. Iran has denied the US charges and insisted that its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only.

A US attack on the Syrian village of Sukkariyah on October 26, has raised speculation about the likelihood of a US unilateral strike on the Islamic Republic.

Speculation that Israel could also bomb Iran mounted after a big Israeli air drill in June. In the first week of June, 100 Israeli F-16 and F-15 fighters reportedly took part in an exercise over the eastern Mediterranean and Greece, which was interpreted as a dress rehearsal for a possible attack on Iran's nuclear installations.

Iran has, in return, warned that it would target Israel and its worldwide interests in case it comes under attack by the Tel Aviv.

The United States has also always stressed that military action is a main option for the White House to deter Iran's progress in the field of nuclear technology.

Iran has warned that in case of an attack by either the US or Israel, it will target 32 American bases in the Middle East and close the strategic Strait of Hormoz.

An estimated 40 percent of the world's oil supply passes through the waterway.

In a Sep. 11 report, the Washington Institute for the Near East Policy says that in the two decades since the Iran-Iraq War, the Islamic Republic has excelled in naval capabilities and is able to wage unique asymmetric warfare against larger naval forces.

According to the report, the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps Navy (IRGCN) has been transformed into a highly motivated, well-equipped, and well-financed force and is effectively in control of the world's oil lifeline, the Strait of Hormuz.

The study says that if Washington takes military action against the Islamic Republic, the scale of Iran's response would likely be proportional to the scale of the damage inflicted on Iranian assets.

Meantime, a recent study by the Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS), a prestigious American think tank, has found that a military strike on Iran's nuclear facilities "is unlikely" to delay the country's program.

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