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Iran begins new submarine production

Mon, 25 Aug 2008 09:06:36 GMT

Iran has launched the production line of a new domestically-manufactured submarine in an attempt to boost its defensive capabilities.

Iranian Defense Minister Mostafa Mohammad-Najjar inaugurated the production line of the new submarine *Qaaem*, on Monday.

Qaaem functions as a submarine capable of carrying and firing various torpedoes and subsurface missiles with a special operation crew onboard.

During the opening ceremony, the Iranian defense official said the Islamic Republic has become self-sufficient in manufacturing all types of military vessels.

He added that the development of new military equipment, such as the surface and subsurface missiles, would increase the navy's ability to defend Iranian territorial waters and prevent an attack against the country.

"Iran is the main force safeguarding peace and security in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman with its strong presence in the strategic region," said the brigadier general.

Mohammad-Najjar added that the greatest threat against the security of the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz is the presence of foreign forces. The Strait of Hormuz is an essential waterway that connects the oil-rich region to the high sea.



An Iranian submarine

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"The withdrawal of these forces will set the scene for sustainable security in the region," explained the defense minister.

The launch of the production line comes amid reports that an armada of US and European warships will be deployed in the Persian Gulf in an unprecedented build-up.

The US and Israel have long threatened to attack Iran over its nuclear program.

Washington demands that Tehran end its uranium enrichment program despite the country being entitled to the peaceful applications of nuclear technology under the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In reaction to US threats, Iran has begun revamping its fighter jets and supplying its navy with sophisticated military equipment, such as a high-tech weapons system, reportedly capable of targeting any vessel within a range of 300 km from its shores.

MJ/AA/BGH

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