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Iran satellite launch signals missile push

by Staff Writers
Beirut, Lebanon (UPI) Jun 20, 2011

The real importance of Iran's recent launch of its Rasad-1 satellite, the second it's put into orbit in two years, is the Safir booster rocket used to loft the 34-pound, data-gathering craft into space. That technology produces intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Iran's state television reported that the June 16 launch thrust Rasad, which means "Observation" in Farsi, went into orbit 163 miles above the Earth.

The satellite had been scheduled for launch in August 2010 and there was no explanation for the delay at a time when U.N. experts are reported to have concluded Iran has accelerated its efforts to develop long-range missiles.

These include the Shehab-3b and Sejil-2 intermediate-range ballistic missiles capable of hitting the Persian Gulf Arab states and Israel, by passing tough sanctions imposed by the U.N. Security Council in June 2010 over Iran's contentious nuclear program.

Tehran is reported to have increased the military budget by more than 40 percent, from \$7 billion to \$10 billion a year, apparently to fund the construction of more ballistic missiles. This was possible because of rising oil prices.

Rasad-1 was built at the Malek Ashtar University, founded and run by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, the elite military organization that's in charge of Iran's ballistic missile program and the strategic missile command.

This underlines the military aspect of the Rasad launch and indeed Iran's entire space program, which is seen by the West and by Israel as an integral part of the drive to develop a long-range ballistic missile capability.

According to Western specialists, the multistage Safir-2 used in the Rasad launch is much smaller than a weapon capable of carrying conventional or nuclear warheads.

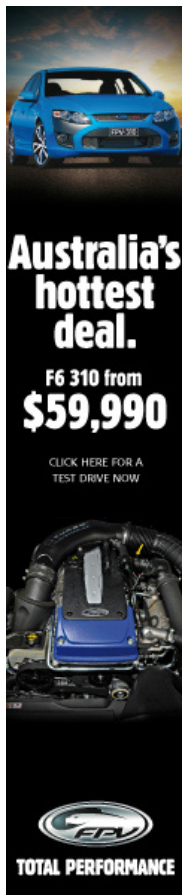
But the 72-foot, 26-ton Safir is a version of the Shehab-3 intermediate-range missile that currently forms the backbone of Iran's operational missile force.

The Rasad launch presumably took place at the Semnan launch site in the Great Salt Desert south of Tehran. It was there on Feb. 3, 2009, Iran sent aloft its first indigenously launched satellite, a research and communications craft called Omid-1 atop a Safir rocket.



Rasad-1 was built at the Malek Ashtar University, founded and run by the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, the elite military organization that's in charge of Iran's ballistic missile program and the strategic missile command.





The Islamic Republic thus joined the fewer than a dozen other countries capable of launching satellites into space.

"Tehran now has established its status as having the most advanced space, missile and nuclear programs in the Muslim Middle East, confirming its technical superiority over its Arab rivals," Jane's Intelligence Digest reported at the time.

The successful launch "confirms that the Iranians have overcome the technological obstacles to launching a multistage missile, a process than can increase flight range considerably," Jane's said.

In 2010, Iran announced plans to start sending research animals into space in 2011, initially using modified Shehab ballistic missiles as the booster rockets.

On Feb. 3 that year, Tehran announced it sent a rocket carrying a mouse, two turtles and a dozen worms into space aboard a 10-foot Kavoshgar-3 research rocket.

At that time, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has made the space program one of his government's priorities, unveiled a capsule for a monkey, along with four prototype Iranian-built satellites Tehran plan to launch before March 2012.

Hamid Fazeli, director of Iran's Space Organization, which oversaw the Rasad launch, said a 625-pound capsule carrying a monkey would be launched aboard a Kavoshgar-5 rocket between July 23 and Aug. 23 this year to an altitude of 74 miles.

Communications Minister Reza Taqipour says these launches will be followed by orbital missions as a prelude to an Islamic manned space program, by around 2021.

Many of the technological building blocks involved in the booster rockets like the Safir-2 are the same as those needed to develop long-range ballistic missiles.

This was the pattern of early U.S. and Russian development in the 1950s and 1960s of the Atlas, Titan and R-7 ballistic missiles.

One U.S. analysis of the recent advances in Iran's missile technology said a successful Safir-2 mission "could raise concerns in the U.S. Congress among Republicans who claim U.S. President Barack Obama acted wrongly by reducing Missile Defense Agency facilities in Poland and the Czech Republic against Iranian Safir-type missiles that could eventually have the capability to strike the United States directly."

In 2010, Iran unveiled plans for a four-engine, liquid-fuel Simorgh rocket to carry a 220-pound satellite into orbit at an altitude of 310 miles.

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
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Iran is on the very brink of a advanced missile delivery system! It will not take them long to launch a missile attack on Israel given the opportunity!
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 **Peraj Karbaschi** · Brisbane, Queensland, Australia
Such an idiot you are! If Iran sends a bulet to Israel, Israel turns Iran to a radioactive waste land. do you think Iran would Nuke Israel while Israel has 25% muslim population and almost all the holly sites of Jews are holly for Muslims too? Wake up idiot you have been fooled by the Zionist owned Media such as this propaganda producer.
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Please Peraj Karbaschi be kind enough not to use abusive language(s) on someone, make your opinion heard, people might disagree or agree with you, let the bond of friendship continue here.....
Robert Stout said "It will not take them long to launch a missile attack on Israel given the opportunity"
Note -- "given the opportunity", understand his massage well please->
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 **Babz Rahman** · Haywards Heath
Actually there is no proof Iran will launch an attack on Israel given the opportunity. However there is plenty of material to support the notion the US and Israel want to bomb Iran. Iran has in fact been threatened with nuclear attack by the US and France.
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 **Syed Meesam Ali Naqvi**
Arrogant nations don't want any peaceful country to advance in science and tech and if they do so then they call them Rogue Regimes and a threat to the world. Long Live IRI and Death to USA and arrogant powers!
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 **Gregory Savage** · Williamstown, New Jersey
I don't undersand you middle easterners. It would be much easier to understand your perspective is you didn't wish Death on my family and myself. What exactly does death to the USA get you? We over here in the US don't wish Death on your family. This is why war is inevitable, it seems like the Muslims don't respect anyone elses right to live. Not even their own people.
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The same way you don't understand IRI's right for nuclear power after stockpiling almost 10,000 nuclear bombs. So many warheads for what To destroy whole humanity !!!!
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the funny thing is we are already ahead with a robust missile defence system so I wonder how much of a deterrent this will be?
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NUKE WARS
Iran successfully launches satellite into space: Al-Alam TV

Tehran (AFP) June 15, 2011
Iran successfully launched its Rassad-1 satellite into space on Wednesday, the country's Arabic-language television channel Al-Alam said. "It was launched by the Safir rocket and put into orbit 260 kilometres (163 miles) above the Earth," the television said. "It is capable of photographing



the Earth." The report said Rassad-1 (Observation-1) can revolve 15 times around the Earth every 2 ... [read more](#)

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