

# Iran says it will unveil new fighter jet, continue developing missiles

Tehran's defense minister claims aircraft, believed to be the Qaher F-313, will fly over Iranian skies as part of National Defense Industry Day celebrations next week



Former Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, center, listens to an unidentified pilot during a ceremony to unveil Iran's newest fighter jet, the Qaher-313, in Tehran, Iran, February 2, 2013 (AP/Mehr News Agency/Younes Khani)

Iran's defense minister said Saturday that the Islamic Republic was set to unveil a new fighter jet and, despite new US sanctions, will continue developing its missile program.

"Our top priority has been development of our missile program. We are in a good position in this field, but we need to develop it," Brigadier General Amir Hatami was quoted as saying by the Fars news agency, according to Reuters.

"We will present a plane on National Defense Industry Day, and people will see it

fly, and the equipment designed for it,” he added, referring to the August 22 celebrations.

Hatami is believed to have been referring to the Qaher F-313 fighter plane, which Tehran said it began testing last year.

The Qaher is one of several aircraft designs the Iranian military has rolled out since 2007. Tehran has repeatedly claimed to have developed advanced military technologies in recent years, but its claims cannot be independently verified because the country does not release technical details of its arsenals.

In 2013, then president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said that building the Qaher F-313, or “Dominant” F-313, shows Iran’s will to “conquer scientific peaks.”

Hatami’s announcement came after Iran’s navy on Saturday unveiled its first-ever advanced defense system for its warships, amid rising tensions with the US in the Strait of Hormuz.

Navy Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi told reporters in Tehran the domestically made Kamand system would protect Iran’s naval destroyers against anti-ship cruise missiles.

In remarks carried by the semi-official Tasnim news agency, Khanzadi said the Kamand system was based on the American-made Phalanx CIWS, and could destroy any target up to 2 kilometers away.

For the time being, Khanzadi said, the defense system would only be installed on Iranian warships “that carry out missions in deep and distant waters.”

The announcement came two weeks after Iran launched naval exercises in the Strait of Hormuz as a show of force while Washington prepared to reimpose sanctions on Tehran.



Navy Rear Admiral Hossein Khanzadi speaks at a Tehran press conference on July 31, 2019. (screen capture: YouTube/PressTV)

Iran routinely operates small boats in the Strait of Hormuz and the surrounding area, and has often threatened to shut down the vital waterway where one third of all oil traded by sea passes.

In recent weeks, President Hassan Rouhani renewed the threat, saying that if US sanctions threatened Iran's crude oil exports, the rest of the Mideast's exports would be threatened as well.

Earlier in August, Iran's Revolutionary Guard confirmed that it had carried out a naval exercise in the Gulf, days before the US re-imposed the economic sanctions that were eased under the 2015-Obama era nuclear deal.

The general overseeing US military operations in the Middle East said Tehran was trying "to use that exercise to send a message to us that as we approach the period of the sanctions here that they had some capabilities."

The capabilities include ocean mines, explosive boats, coastal defense missiles and radars, US Central Command head General Joseph Votel said.

In May, the US announced it was abandoning the 2015 agreement and reimposing

nuclear-related sanctions, threatening global companies with heavy penalties if they continue to operate in Iran.

In a bid to salvage the accord, the EU and European parties to the deal — Britain, France, and Germany — presented a series of economic “guarantees” to Iran last month, but they were deemed “insufficient” by Tehran.



In this photo released by official website of the office of the Iranian Presidency, President Hassan Rouhani attends a meeting with a group of foreign ministry officials in Tehran, Iran. Sunday, July 22, 2018. (Iranian Presidency Office via AP)

The sanctions that went into effect earlier in August target US dollar financial transactions, Iran’s automotive sector, and the purchase of commercial planes and metals, including gold. Even stronger sanctions targeting Iran’s oil sector and central bank are to be re-imposed in early November.

US President Donald Trump has offered talks on a “more comprehensive deal” but Iran has balked at negotiating under the pressure of sanctions and has instead leaned on its increasingly close ties with fellow US sanctions targets Turkey and Russia.

*Agencies contributed to this report.*

---

Source: <https://www.timesofisrael.com/iran-says-it-will-unveil-new-fighter-jet-continue-developing-missiles/>

[Disclaimer]