



Iran Opens 'Persian Gulf Air Defense Command Center'

OE Watch Commentary: The Iranian navy's repeated interception of shipping in the Persian Gulf as well as its sabotage of tankers in Emirati waters have increased strategic attention to the Strait of Hormuz. In July, the Pentagon announced plans for the United States and like-minded allies to escort and protect shipping in the region. It is against this backdrop that the excerpted article from the *Fars News Agency*, an Iranian outlet close to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), is relevant. It reports that Iranian authorities have opened a new command-and-control center in Bushehr province, which is littoral to the northeastern Persian Gulf, along Iran's coastline south of Khuzistan and north of Hormuzgan, the Iranian province that sits astride the Strait of Hormuz.

The new Persian Gulf Air Defense Command Center, which supposedly depends entirely on indigenous technology, will theoretically coordinate both IRGC and Iranian Army Air Force operations in the Persian Gulf. The photograph accompanying the article does not make clear whether the new center has any specific capabilities to track aircraft that an ordinary airport or, for that matter, commercial flight tracking services, would not.

The article discusses a visit to the center by Major General Sayyid Abdul Rahim Mousavi, the army command-in-chief whom Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei in May 2019 bestowed the additional position of commanding the Khatam al-Anbia Air Defense Base. As the passage reports, Mousavi also visited Kharg Island from which over 90 percent of Iran's oil is exported and Asalouyeh, a town in the central Bushehr province, which is the closest Iranian port to the offshore South Pars gas field. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**

“The center is set up with the capability of controlling the vast area.”

Source: “Markaz-e Farmandhayeh Pedafand-e Havaye Khalij-e Fars Eftatah Shod (The Persian Gulf Air Defense Command Center Opened),” *Fars News Agency*, 7 October 2019. <https://www.farsnews.com/news/13980715000150>

The Persian Gulf Air Defense Command Center Opened

While in Bushehr province, Major General Sayyid Abdul Rahim Mousavi, commander-in-chief of the army and commander of Khatam al-Anbia Air Defense Base, visited the Army air force and Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps units stationed in Asalouyeh and on Kharg Island. Alongside the base commander, he also visited the Persian Gulf Air Force Command Center which began operations. Based on state-of-the-art technology, the center is set up with the capability of controlling the vast area and directing the Army and Corps' air and defense units stationed along the southern coast of the country. In this center, this country's young staff and defense specialists monitor, with the most advanced Iranian-made equipment, all airborne activities in the Persian Gulf.



A photo showing the Persian Gulf Air Defense Command Center.

Source: Fars News Agency, https://media.farsnews.com/Uploaded/Files/Images/1398/07/15/13980715000341_Test_PhotoN.jpg, CC BY 4.0