



Iran Unveils Intelligent Combat Robot

OE Watch Commentary: The Islamic Republic has long prided itself on its indigenous military industries, not only because it sees them as a symbol of Iranian power, but also because Iran's leadership sees the ability to manufacture top-tier platforms as key to maintaining independence. "Although, today we do not have F-35 fighters, our equipment is not borrowed and we are not the puppets of the big powers in the region," Brig.-Gen. Mohammad Hossein Dadras, deputy commander of the Ground Forces, said at a ceremony to unveil new technology at the Ground Forces' research center in Bandar Abbas, according to *Basij News Agency*. The experience of the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq War etched into the Iranian strategic psyche that they should never again become dependent on foreign powers for the spare parts or equipment needed to maintain their military.



The Hadaf-2 dual launcher at an unveiling ceremony for new army technology, 27 September 2020.

Source: BasijNews.ir https://basijnews.ir/files/fa/news/1399/7/6/2967534_247.jpg

Iranian official rhetoric often exaggerates and it is unclear how many of the new technologies Iran unveiled are anything more than prototypes or would be embraced and mass-produced by the Iranian military. Still, upgrading the capabilities of its drone fleet is consistent with recent military doctrine and Iran's own asymmetric emphases. The presence of unmanned surface vehicles in the Bab el-Mandeb suggests Iran also experiments with autonomous boats. That no photos of the Caracal robot were available raises the possibility that the robot is not as developed as the Iranian military claims. Nevertheless, even if nowhere near ready for deployment, Dadras' remarks suggest an interesting new direction for Iranian investment and development. It is unclear, however, how Iran might employ the Caracal.

In contrast to the lack of photographs of its robots, the Iranian military did release photographs of the Hadaf-2 dual rocket launcher, which reportedly can fire Labik-1 missiles simultaneously.

The ceremony described in the accompanying article came against the backdrop of the supposed delivery of almost 200 drones to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Navy on 23 September 2020, the delivery of two water-landing helicopters, and concurrent demonstrations of new vertical take-off and landing variants of the Sepehr, Shahab-2, and Hodhod-4 drones.

While the operational environment will not shift significantly with the announcement of new Iranian military technologies, the ceremony reports excerpted here suggest Iran will continue to invest in automation not only for the air and sea, but for the ground forces as well. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**

“The Caracal intelligent war robot... has the ability to carry light and semi-heavy weapons.”

Source: Haft Dastavard-e Jadid-e Artesh (Seven New Army Achievements) *Basijnews.ir*; 27 September 2020. <https://basijnews.ir/fa/news/9280338>

Seven New Army Achievements

According to the Basij news agency, the Masih [“Messiah”] rescue robot, UAV piston engines, high-frequency jump communication system, Caracal intelligent warrior robot, Ground Forces' Hadaf-2 dual-launcher, Gohar 4x4 tactical vehicle, and 40x26 upgraded vehicle were unveiled by the Ground Forces Self-Sufficiency Research and Jihad Organization. The unveiling ceremony of the defense achievements of the Research and Jihad Self-Sufficiency Organization of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran was held this morning at the Research and Self-Sufficiency Jihad Organization of Ground Forces in the presence of Brig.-Gen. Mohammad Hossein Dadras, deputy commander of the Ground Forces, and Brig.-Gen. [Kioumars] Heydari, commander of the Ground Forces....

Source: “Lanchir Do Favarandi va Jangjuye Hushmand Caracal Ravanmaye Shod (Dual Launcher and Caracal Intelligent Combat Robot Unveiled)” *Fars News*, 27 September 2020. <https://www.farsnews.ir/news/13990706000152>

...According to the Fars News Agency, the features of the unveiled devices are as follows: The Caracal intelligent war robot, designed for ground combat, is very agile and has an independent suspension; With a maximum speed of 18.6 mph and an operating range of more than 1650 feet, this robot has the ability to carry light and semi-heavy weapons, as well as an intelligent remote control system, laser rangefinder and optical system.... [and] the Hadaf-2 dual launcher is the platform for the Labik-1 missile and can fire two missiles simultaneously.