Iran: Optoelectronic Military Developments

OE Watch Commentary: Optoelectronics enable engineers to decrease the size and weight of military systems, to increase data processing, and to broaden resistance to electronic interference. The excerpted article from *Tasnim News*, an outlet close to the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), reports on the introduction of "ten very advanced systems for air and sea surveillance, tracking and intelligence... built and designed by the scientists of the optoelectric industry of Iran," but curiously does not list the ten projects supposedly unveiled. This is also the case for articles on the same event from other Iranian outlets.

Amir Hatami, at a ribbon-cutting unveiling new Isfahan Optics Industry projects.
Source: Tasnim News Agency, https://newsmedia.tasnimnews.com/Tasnim/Uploaded/Image/1398/03/22/13980322140443484176355514.jpg

This might suggest that Iranian officials' rhetoric exaggerates the progress made on optoelectronic technologies. That said, the excerpted article also refers to the involvement of Iran Electronics Industries, a subsidiary of Iran's Ministry of Defense and the Isfahan Optics Industry. Isfahan Optics Industry has previously been linked to both Iran's nuclear activities and to its ballistic missile work, so projects undertaken at the company warrant serious concern.

Regardless of whether Iranian authorities are exaggerating the work supposedly unveiled in Isfahan, Iranian work on military applications of optoelectronics suggests that, even under sanctions, the Iranian government remains committed to becoming a regional military power and to acquiring the most advanced technologies. This is so that Iran can claim not only a quantitative military advantage over its neighbors, but also a qualitative military edge. They are unlikely to achieve this anytime soon, but the ambition remains among the network of companies operated by the Iranian Defense Ministry and the IRGC. **End OE Watch Commentary (Rubin)**

> *"Ten systems were built and designed by the scientists of the opto-electric industry of Iran."*

Source: "10 Samaneh Fogh Pishrafteh Rahgiri Havaye va Daryaye Ravanmaye Shod (10 Advanced Air and Sea Systems Unveiled)," *Tasnim News*, 12 June 2019. https://www.tasnimnews.com/fa/news/1398/03/22/2030663

Ten Advanced Air and Sea Systems Unveiled

The Defense Minister introduced ten very advanced systems for air and sea surveillance, tracking and intelligence in Isfahan. The Ministry of Defense's spokesperson said that Defense Secretary Amir Hatami opened the Isfahan Optoelectronics Technology Development Center during a visit to the Isfahan Optics Industry based in Isfahan, Iran.

At the opening ceremony, the Minister of Defense emphasized the importance of the position, mission and responsibility of the electronics and opto-electronics industries in strengthening the power of Iran's armed forces. He said that in the last few years, we have witnessed impressive improvements in the Iranian technology industry. The Isfahan Optics Industry was able to meet the demands of the armed forces in providing defense needs.

Amir Hatami celebrated the efforts and struggles of the still-young Ministry of Defense Electronics Industries. He said that the increase and diversity of the Industry's product portfolio in both civilian and military markets was impressive and admirable.

The Minister of Defense said: "These ten systems were built and designed by the scientists of the opto-electric industry of Iran. It increases our deterrence power and provides effective protection against threats. The technology of these systems is competitive at international standards and is on par with foreign systems."