IRANWATCH DAILY | July 23, 2025

Brief Notes

Islamic Republic Claims U.S. Warship Forced to Alter Course: IRGC-affiliated Tasnim News today released footage allegedly showing an Islamic Republic naval helicopter forcing the USS Fitzgerald, a U.S. destroyer, to alter its course. The report said the destroyer had approached waters in the Sea of Oman under Tehran's supervision.

Russia is Set to Launch Islamic Republic Satellite: The IRGC-affiliated Tasnim News Agency today reported that Russia is set to launch two Islamic Republic satellites into orbit on July 25 at 09:54 Iran Time (02:24 ET) from the Vostochny Cosmodrome. The Soyuz-2 rocket will also carry 18 smaller secondary payloads. The Islamic Republic Space Agency and Space Research Institute logos are featured on the rocket. The move follows previous missions of a similar nature, particularly last year's Russian launch of two Islamic Republic satellites.

Regime Officials Wary of Potential Sabotage: Since the end of the 12-Day War, fires and explosions have been reported almost daily in Iran. Islamic Republic officials tell the New York Times that they are investigating what they think is a "coordinated campaign."

Netanyahu on Regime Change in Iran: In an interview with the Full Send Podcast, Netanyahu stated that "Everybody talks about regime change and they envision the American and Israeli forces invading Iran, boots on the ground and all that stuff people spew. No, it has to come from within… from the people."

Deadly Clashes with Kurdish Militants Continue: Two Islamic Republic border guards were killed and another was injured during a clash with PJAK Kurdish militants yesterday in the border town of Baneh, Iranian Kurdistan Province. The incident follows another fatal clash on July 21 in which two regime border guards were killed, and comes days after PJAK reported an Islamic Republic drone strike killed one of its fighters in Iraqi Kurdistan. PJAK has been designated as a terrorist organization by the U.S. since 2009.

Russian, Chinese Diplomats in Tehran to Discuss Snapback: The Islamic Republic, Russia, and China held trilateral talks in Tehran yesterday to coordinate positions on the regime's nuclear program and responses to the potential triggering of snapback sanctions by the E3. The meeting comes ahead of Tehran-E3 talks in Istanbul on July 25.

Tehran to Host IAEA Delegation in Coming Weeks

In New York yesterday, Deputy Foreign Minister Kazem Gharibabadi met with 10 non-permanent members of the UN Security Council. In a press conference following the meeting, Gharibabadi confirmed that Tehran will host a delegation from the IAEA within the next two to three weeks, likely attempting to appeal to the E3 prior to their potential triggering of snapback sanctions. Gharibabadi further specified, "The delegation will come to Iran to discuss the modality, not to go to the (nuclear) sites."

Gharibabadi also met with Russian, Chinese, and UN officials, raising concerns over the "potential abuse" of the snapback of UN sanctions.

President Pezeshkian Vows Enrichment Will Continue

President Masoud Pezeshkian said that Tehran will continue its nuclear program and uranium enrichment under the purview of international law.

He reacted to President Donald Trump's statements that the U.S. has indeed destroyed the Islamic Republic's nuclear facilities and called the comments "an illusion… Our nuclear capabilities are in our scientists' minds, not just in the facilities."

Pezeshkian claimed that Tehran "categorically refuses to possess nuclear weapons… [but] we will not accept threats and dictates."

Mass Arrests, GPS Jamming, and an Online Crackdown

Judiciary Chief Gholamhossein Mohseni Ejei said today that some 2,000 individuals were arrested during and after the 12-Day War, "but many of them were released shortly after as they neither spied for nor collaborated with the Zionist regime." However, according to him, a large number of the detainees had indeed collaborated with Israel on varying levels and in various capacities.

During the 12-Day War, Tehran launched a sweeping campaign of arrests targeting individuals it claimed were collaborating with Israel. The campaign has continued, including through the introduction of draconian bills that would further limit freedom of speech in Iran and potentially lead to mass executions of dissidents and journalists.

Furthermore, Tehran has confirmed that it has been systematically disrupting geolocation services to prevent Israel from using the data in its military operations. Information and Communication Technology Minister Sattar Hashemi today said, "Since the Zionist regime disregards international norms and exploits geolocation data for operational planning, our security and intelligence agencies deemed it necessary to restrict GPS services."

On the Radar

- Protests continue in northeast Iran over widespread water shortages and power outages amid an ongoing heatwave. On Tuesday, several protesters gathered outside a municipal office in Sabzevar, Razavi Khorasan Province, chanting: "Water, power, life" and "Street protest is the only way to claim our rights." Security forces responded by firing tear gas at the unarmed crowd, prompting demonstrators to chant "Shameless, Shameless."

- Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi, in a call today with his Italian counterpart Antonio Tajani, condemned the U.S. and Israel's "military aggression" during the 12-Day War, calling it a violation of international law that disrupted nuclear talks. The readout released by the Foreign Ministry claimed that Tajani voiced support for diplomacy during the call.

- The Islamic Republic and Russia today concluded a three-day joint search-and-rescue drill, CASAREX 25, which was held in the Caspian Sea from 21–23 July. The exercise, hosted by the Islamic Republic Navy, included fire rescue, medevac, aerial photography, and tactical formation drills. Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan sent observers.

- The foreign ministers of Israel and Ukraine, in Kyiv today, announced the start of a "separate dialogue on the Iranian threat." Foreign Minister Andriy Sybiha called the Islamic Republic and Russia a united "alliance of criminal regimes" posing a threat to global security. He also proposed resuming political consultations between Israel and Ukraine.

- The Islamic Republic has continued its crackdown on illegal firearms, arresting a total of 76 individuals in possession of unlicensed firearms, including recent arrests of three gun smugglers in the northern province of Mazandaran. According to Mazandaran police chief Brig. Gen. Hassan Mofakhami, the suspects had concealed firearms in passenger coaches and smuggled them from Iran's western provinces.

→ For inquiries or more information, please contact ***k.isfahani@nufdiran.org***