

Iran presents new fateh submarine armed with cruise missile

DUBAI - Iranian President Hassan Rouhani on Sunday inaugurated a new domestically-built submarine armed with cruise missiles at a time of rising tensions with its arch-enemy the United States.

"From this moment, the Fateh Submarine joins Iran's naval force with my order," Rouhani said in a ceremony broadcast live on the state-run English-language Press TV. The Fateh "Conqueror" submarine weighs 600 tonnes, Press TV said, adding that it "enjoys state-of-the-art weaponry, including torpedoes, naval mines and cruise missiles that could be launched from a submerged position."

U.S. President Donald Trump pulled out of a 2015 nuclear agreement between Iran and six powers last May and reimposed sanctions on Tehran.

He said the deal was flawed because it did not include curbs on Iran's development of ballistic missiles or its support for proxies in Syria, Yemen, Lebanon and Iraq.

Iran has developed a large domestic arms industry in the face of international pressure and embargoes that have barred it from importing many weapons.

"Our defense power is solely defensive...Our enemy's pressure and sanctions imposed on Iran have instigated our progress," Rouhani said in the southern port city of Bandar Abbas.

Last year, Iran's navy launched a domestically-built destroyer, which state media said has radar-evading stealth properties. Iran says it has missiles with the range of up to 2,000 km (1,250 miles), which puts Israel and U.S. military bases in the region within reach. The European signatories of Iran's nuclear deal, despite remaining committed to the pact, have stepped up criticism of Iran's ballistic missiles program.

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