

Iran seizes second oil tanker in a week in Gulf -U.S. Navy

DUBAI, May 3 (Reuters) - Iran seized a second oil tanker in a week on Wednesday in Gulf waters, and the U.S. State Department called for its release, in the latest escalation in a series of seizures or attacks on commercial vessels in Gulf waters since 2019.

The Bahrain-based Fifth Fleet of the U.S. Navy said the Panama-flagged oil tanker Niovi was seized by Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy (IRGCN) at 6:20 a.m. (0220 GMT) while passing through the Strait of Hormuz.

In Iran's first response, Tehran's prosecutor announced the oil tanker was seized on a judicial order following a complaint by a plaintiff, the judiciary's Mizan news agency said. No further details were provided.

The incident comes after Iran on Thursday seized a Marshall Islands-flagged oil tanker in the Gulf of Oman called the Advantage Sweet. That tanker is being held by Iranian authorities in Bandar Abbas, the Marshall Islands flag registry said on Tuesday.

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