



# IRAN IN FOCUS

FEBRUARY 3, 2016

## Iran Steps Up Malign Activities

Iran's Supreme Leader has expressed his contempt for America by awarding "medals of conquest" to naval commanders who illegally detained 10 U.S. sailors last month. On the heels of Implementation Day, and in the run-up to Iran's Majlis elections, Iran's malign activity continues—overflying U.S. naval vessels in the Persian Gulf, reiterating its denial of the Holocaust, and accelerating its illicit ballistic missile program. Tehran's leaders are cementing their stronghold on Iranian society as they continue their appalling human rights abuses. Also, the regime has quashed any hopes for positive change in this month's elections by disqualifying most pragmatic candidates. America must firmly oppose Tehran's destabilizing activities in the Middle East in order to support U.S. allies and thwart Iranian ambitions.

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### [Iranian Leader Gives Out Medals for Detention of U.S. sailors](#)

*The Times of Israel - Times of Israel Staff*

Jan. 31, 2016

Iran's supreme leader on Sunday awarded "medals of conquest" to five naval commanders of Iran's Revolutionary Guards for their arrest earlier this month of 10 U.S. sailors whose two vessels strayed into Iranian waters.

### [Iran Says it has 'Doubled' Efforts to Develop Ballistic Missiles](#)

*The Times of Israel - Times of Israel Staff and Agencies*

Jan. 30, 2016

Tehran has doubled its efforts to develop its ballistic missile capabilities in reaction to US attempts to stop it, a top Iranian commander said Saturday. "We doubled our activities and the American demands from Iran had an opposite result," the country's Press TV quoted Brigadier General Amir Ali Hajizadeh, commander of the Revolutionary Guards' (IRGC) Aerospace Force, as saying.

### [Iran Flies Unarmed Military Drone Over U.S. Aircraft Carrier](#)

*The Associated Press - Nasser Karimi and Jon Gambrell*

Jan. 29, 2016

Iran flew a surveillance drone over a U.S. aircraft carrier and published video of the encounter Friday, the latest in a series of edgy naval incidents between the two countries in the Persian Gulf after the recent nuclear deal.

### [Iran Coerces Afghans to Fight in Syria: HRW](#)

*Agence France Presse*

Jan. 29, 2016

Iran's Revolutionary Guards has recruited thousands of Afghans, some by coercion, to fight in Syria's war alongside forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad, Human Rights Watch said Friday.

#### [Experts: Iran's Arrest of U.S. Sailors Broke International Law](#)

*Navy Times – David Larter*

*Jan. 28, 2016*

Iran's supreme leader is hailing his hard-line paramilitary forces as heroes for their arrest of 10 American sailors at gunpoint, but an emerging consensus of U.S. legal experts believe the provocative act was a dangerous violation of international law that has so far gone without repercussions.

#### [New Details of Iran Ordeal Emerge From Former Prisoners](#)

*The New York Times – Rick Gladstone*

*Jan. 28, 2016*

Two of the Americans freed by Iran in a January prisoner deal have provided new details about their time in captivity, saying they were told by Iranian interrogators that the United States had abandoned them and that they would never leave. One said he had been accused of plotting armed revolution.

#### [Khamenei Airs Holocaust Denial Video on International Remembrance Day](#)

*The Times of Israel - Times of Israel Staff*

*Jan. 28, 2016*

As the global community marked International Holocaust Remembrance Day Wednesday, Iran's supreme leader uploaded a video to his official website questioning the magnitude of the Nazi regime's mass murder campaign against the Jewish people during World War II.

#### [Iran Says Warns U.S. Warship to Leave Waters near Strait of Hormuz](#)

*Reuters*

*Jan. 27, 2016*

Iran's navy warned a U.S. warship on Wednesday to leave waters near the Strait of Hormuz where the Iranians were testing submarines, destroyers and missile launchers, news agencies reported.

#### [Iran Excludes Most Candidates in Elite Assembly Election](#)

*Reuters*

*Jan. 26, 2016*

Four-fifths of candidates for the body that will choose Iran's next Supreme Leader have withdrawn or been disqualified including a grandson of Ayatollah Khomeini close to reformist politicians, in a setback to President Hassan Rouhani.

#### [Iran Still a Leading Executioner of Minors, Report Says](#)

*The New York Times - Rick Gladstone*

*Jan. 25, 2016*

Iran is one of the leading executioners of juvenile offenders, despite its improved legal protections for children and a pledge more than two decades ago to end the death penalty for convicts younger than 18, Amnesty International said Monday.