

Iran's Evolving Approach to Asymmetric Naval Warfare: Strategy and Capabilities in the Persian Gulf

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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Farzin Nadimi, a Senior Fellow with The Washington Institute, is a Washington-based analyst specializing in the security and defense affairs of Iran and the Persian Gulf region.



In-Depth Reports

A military expert offers historical context and present-day specifics on Iran's naval activities in the Gulf, using maps and other graphics to outline its capabilities and intentions during a perilously unstable time.

In an April 22 tweet, President Trump spoke of instructing the U.S. Navy to destroy any Iranian gunboats that "harass our ships at sea." Aside from whether it departed from existing U.S. rules of engagement, the statement highlighted a persistent reality: the military threat posed by Iranian forces in the Persian Gulf. Months before the coronavirus pandemic seized the world's attention, these forces were already reasserting themselves through bold actions against U.S., Saudi, and wider Gulf interests.

In this impressively detailed Policy Focus -- an updated version of his [2008 volume](#) (<https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/policy-analysis/view/irans-asymmetric-naval-warfare>) -- military expert Farzin Nadimi offers historical context and specifics on Iran's naval activities in the Gulf. The study, which includes maps, tables, and other graphics, covers everything from submarines to sea mines, while also distinguishing between the roles of the revolutionary navy (IRGCN) and the conventional one (IRIN). Most important, it offers a sober take on Iran's capabilities and intentions during a perilously unstable time.

The Author

Farzin Nadimi is an associate fellow with The Washington Institute who specializes in the security and defense affairs of Iran and the Persian Gulf region. A native Persian speaker, he holds a PhD in Middle Eastern studies from the University of Manchester. ❖

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