

Britain involved in Deliberate Acts of Provocation directed against Iran

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IRAN CONDEMNS 'PROVOCATION' IN SOUTHERN IRAQ.

The Iranian Foreign Ministry issued a statement on March 29 denouncing a "bold and provocative" act by British forces against its consulate-general in the southern Iraqi city of Al-Basrah, ISNA reported. The ministry communique stated that British military vehicles arrived near the Iranian Consulate building before noon on March 29 and "besieged" the consulate by repeatedly driving past or around the compound "effectively for an hour and 20 minutes," ISNA reported.

The ministry said the number of British forces gradually increased, that they "violated" the consular building, and that there was shooting. Iran's consul in Al-Basrah, Mohammad Reza Nasir, told AFP the same day that British troops entered the consular building for 10 minutes and there was a shoot-out. The British Army denied its troops left their cars and stated that its forces were shot at near the consulate, AFP reported.

There were no reported casualties. ISNA observed that the incident, following "the blatant violation of Iran's waters by two British ships," raised "doubts" on "the real motives of the British in the actions they have taken in recent days." The Iranian Foreign Ministry "immediately" protested with the Iraqi Foreign Ministry, ISNA reported on March 29. Consul Nasir told AFP he thinks the incident is related to the recent capture of British sailors.

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