

Iran notes shipping in southern Iran unaffected by downing of U.S. drone



Tehran, June 29 (RHC)-- Iranian authorities say a recent military escalation in waters south of the country had no impact at all on shipping or container forwarding activity in the area.

A deputy to Iran's ministry of transportation said that major international shipping companies and freight forwarders were continuing their operations to and from ports in southern Iran despite tensions sparked by Iran's decision on June 20 to shoot down an intruding US drone above the Persian Gulf waters.

"There has been no announcement from various foreign shipping companies on disrupted traffic in Iran's waters and ports despite recent maritime incidents," said Mohammad Rastad. The remarks came days after reports in the U.S. media suggested A.P. Moller-Maersk, the world's largest shipping firm, had altered the route for its ships sailing through the Strait of Hormuz, a busy waterway located in the Persian Gulf which accommodates around a third of the world's seaborne oil traffic.

All major international shipping companies are maintaining port calls to Iran despite unilateral U.S. sanctions, head of Iran's Ports and Maritime Organization Mohammad Rastad says.

Soren Toft said at the time that ships operated by the Danish company were not “calling Iranian ports” without elaborating whether the decision would last or not.

However, Iranian officials said there had been no change in traffic in southern Iranian waters and shipping companies were continuing their normal operations.

Rastad, speaking on the sidelines of a maritime conference in Tehran, even claimed that a detailed monitoring of the traffic related to ships and oil tankers in the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman suggested that there had been a surge in activity since the downing of the U.S. drone last week.

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