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Iran attacks shipping navigation systems on Oman's Didamar island, sources say

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November 11, 2026 7:52 PM GMT+2 · Updated November 11, 2026

LONDON/DUBAI, Nov 11 (Reuters) - Iran has attacked ship navigation systems on the Omani island of Didamar in the Strait of Hormuz, three sources with knowledge of the matter confirmed, showing Tehran's ability to target infrastructure used to restore Gulf oil flows.

The three sources did not provide a damage assessment and Reuters could not determine independently if any navigation systems were destroyed in the attacks that Tehran had claimed on Tuesday.

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Gulf exporters have been increasingly using workarounds to increase oil flows via Hormuz, such as ship-to-ship transfers (STS) off the coast of Oman and the United Arab Emirates.

The US military has been aiding commercial vessels transiting the Strait after Iranian attacks disrupted traffic since the US-Israeli war on Iran began in late February.

The attacks on Didamar island would likely have limited impact on commercial shipping in the Strait, two other shipping sources and an additional maritime security source said. One said that was because other systems were in place elsewhere.

Iranian state media said on Tuesday that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps had carried out strikes destroying "enemy navigation systems" on Didamar island.

Reuters confirmed smoke rising from the island in video footage but it was unclear what was burning. An image from the EU's satellite program Copernicus also showed thermal activity.

The attacks come as Gulf oil exports recovered to over 80% of pre-war levels in September and October, aided by US military-assisted flows through the Strait and higher Saudi exports via the Red Sea port of Yanbu.

The US military's Central Command and Oman's media ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

Bigger tankers, mostly very large crude carriers (VLCCs), shuttle oil from Gulf ports to ship-to-ship transfer locations near Oman's Sohar and the UAE's Fujairah.

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