
Iran's supreme leader praises 'TANKER JIHAD' after oil shipments to Venezuela

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Iran's supreme leader Ali Khamenei has congratulated the tanker crews that delivered fuel to sanctions-stricken Venezuela, despite US threats and pressure, on "a great job" and even compared their mission to a religious struggle.

The 81-year-old Khamenei, who is one of the closest-followed Islamic leaders on Twitter, praised the tanker flotilla's crews and captains on Monday.

"You did a great job. It was Jihad & brought honor to the country," he wrote, while also praying that God grant strength and success to the sailors.

In late May, Iran sent a flotilla of five tankers, carrying 1.5 million barrels of gasoline, to Venezuela, which has suffered from a severe lack of fuel due to the crippling economic sanctions imposed by Washington.

The US government, which wants Venezuela's socialist leader Nicolas Maduro gone, worked hard to prevent the delivery, warning countries along the route of the tankers that there'll be consequences if the Iranian vessels get any assistance. Venezuela's envoy to the UN even insisted that the ships were facing the *"threat of imminent use of military force by the United States."*

[Also on rt.com WATCH Iranian tanker brave rough seas while carrying 1st oil shipment for Venezuela \(VIDEO\)](#)

Maduro has promised to visit Tehran soon in order to thank the Iranian people personally, while Iran has insisted that it's ready to send more fuel to Venezuela if such need arises.