

Large oil slick seen off Kharg



A satellite image shows likely oil spill covering dozens of square kilometers near Iran's Kharg Island on Wednesday.

(European Union/Copernicus Sentinel-2/Handout via Reuters)

blockade on the Strait of Hormuz. The Iranian government has also restricted ship traffic through the strait as talks on reopening the passage stall.

That has left tankers stranded, constraining exports and causing Iran to rapidly run

out of places to store its oil, raising concerns of possible leaks or other mishaps at the Kharg Island hub. Large volumes of crude were being stored in tankers, adding to the risk of spills, said Dalga Khatinoglu, who follows Iran's energy sec-

tor at Iran Open Data, an independent data initiative.

A rupture in an undersea pipeline connecting the hub with the Abuzar oil field, a major offshore field west of Kharg Island, was another possible source, Khatinoglu said. The poorly maintained, decades-old pipeline had suffered a number of leaks over the past several years, including a breach in October 2024, he said.

Others speculated that oil may have been deliberately discharged into the sea because of a lack of storage space, though there is no evidence for that. **Vessels and facilities have also sustained damage in US and Israeli attacks, making them vulnerable to spills.**

New York Times News Service

New York: A large oil slick is spreading in the Persian Gulf off Kharg Island, Iran's primary crude oil export terminal, satellite images show, raising concerns about the state of Iranian oil infrastructure straining under a US-imposed naval blockade.

The apparent spill, located off the western coast of the island, had spread over an area of more than 50sqkm as of Thursday, according to an estimate by Orbital EOS, a global oil spill monitoring service. More than 3,000 barrels of oil may have been released, Orbital EOS said.

The exact cause of the spill was unclear. Iranian oil and gas infrastructure has been under strain because of the US

PARTY, FILMS & FRIENDS RING IN BIRTHDAY OF CELEBRATED WILDLIFE PRESENTER

Voice of nature David Attenborough turns 100

London: The BBC is hosting a party for David Attenborough at the Royal Albert Hall. Cinemas are playing his nature films. Friends have spent weeks lavishing praise on the man and his work.

But the world's most famous wildlife presenter is likely to be uncomfortable with all the attention as he celebrates his 100th birthday on Friday, said Alastair Fothergill, the producer of some of Attenborough's most well-known documentaries and the director of Silverback Films.

"He's always been very clear to all of us that work with him: 'Remember, the animals are the stars, I'm not,'" Fothergill told The Associated Press. "So, yes, surprisingly for one of the

most famous men on the planet, he does not like being famous at all."

But Attenborough has had to accept the accolades this week as scientists, politicians and conservationists celebrated the man who has brought frolicking gorillas, breaching whales and tiny poisonous frogs into living rooms around the world for more than 70 years.

Born in London on May 8, 1926, the same year as the late Queen Elizabeth II, Attenborough was raised on the grounds of what is now the University of Leicester, where his father was a senior leader.

His fascination with nature developed when he was a young boy, riding his bicycle into the surrounding countryside where he



David Attenborough holds an armadillo from Edinburgh Zoo on January 24, 2017. (AP file picture)

collected treasures such as abandoned birds' nests, the shed skin of a snake and, most importantly, fossils.

"I'd find a fossil and show it to my father and he'd say 'Good, good, tell me all about it.' So I responded and became my own ex-

pert," Attenborough told *Smithsonian Magazine* in 1981.

He went on to study geology and zoology at the University of Cambridge.

In 1952, Attenborough joined the BBC, working behind the scenes on "everything from ballet to short stories". After he had been there about two months, the capture of a "living fossil" off the coast of East Africa caused an international stir, and he was asked to produce a short piece about the coelacanth.

That story was told in the studio by Professor Julian Huxley, an evolutionary biologist, who used pickled wildlife specimens and a photograph of a coelacanth to explain the fish's significance.

But Attenborough thought television could do more.

"I'd always wanted to do films on animals around the world," he recalled in a 1985 interview with The Associated Press. "But the attitude was, 'We've got TV cameras in the studio. What's this about spending money abroad?'"

In 1954, he finally persuaded the BBC to let him accompany a London Zoo team that travelled to West Africa to collect specimens. That began a decade as host and producer of *Zoo Quest*, kick-starting his career in the field.

Through BBC programmes such as *Life on Earth*, *The Private Life of Plants* and *The Blue Planet*, Attenborough has illumi-

nated the beauty, ferocity and sometimes downright weirdness of nature in a hushed melodic voice that conveys his own awe at what he is witnessing.

Viewers who might never leave their hometowns were transported to the Himalayas, the Amazon and the unexplored forests of Papua New Guinea. But behind the stunning images was an attention to scientific accuracy that helped teach people about complex subjects like evolution, animal behaviour and biodiversity.

And as the evidence mounted, he began to sound the alarm about climate change, ocean plastic and other human-caused threats to the planet.