

Beat: Miscellaneous

Small government plane crashes off southern Iran, killing 4

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USPA News - A small government plane on a test flight crashed in the Persian Gulf off southern Iran on Monday evening, killing all four crew members on board, officials said on early Tuesday. The cause of the crash was not immediately known. The accident happened at around 6:46 p.m. local time on Monday when the Falcon 20 aircraft, which is capable of carrying between 10 and 16 people, went down in the water about 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) off the eastern shore of Kish Island, an Iranian resort island in the Persian Gulf.

A total of four people were on board. The aircraft belonged to the Civil Aviation Organization (CAO) and was carrying out a test flight when it crashed near the island, said CAO spokesman Hamid Habibi. The state-run Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported that four bodies had been recovered by early Tuesday morning. Habibi said a committee had been formed and sent to the scene to investigate the circumstances surrounding the accident. "Any comment on the cause of the aircraft accident will come from the committee and is subject to the completion of the investigation," the spokesman added. Iranian aircraft are frequently involved in accidents which the Iranian government has previously blamed on sanctions by the international community. The sanctions, mainly over the country's nuclear program, prevent airlines and the government from carrying out proper maintenance and buying spare parts. The last major crash in Iran happened in January 2011 when at least 77 people were killed after Iran Air Flight 277 crashed as it attempted to land at Urmia Airport in northwestern Iran. At least 26 people survived the accident, which occurred during severe weather conditions in the area.

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