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## US concerned at Iran arms supplies to Taliban

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Expressing its concern over Tehran supplying weapons to the Taliban, the United States on Thursday branded Iran as the number one state sponsor of terrorism.

"We are aware of long-standing Iranian support for the Taliban and are concerned about it," a State Department spokesperson told Pajhwok Afghan News about the allegations that the country was supplying arms to the militants.

Hours after a senior Afghan police officer hit out at the neighbouring country, the spokesperson said: "We have long said Iran is the number one state sponsor of terrorism."

The Iranian government's support for terrorist and militant groups throughout the Middle East and Central Asia undermined international efforts to promote peace and democracy and threatened economic stability in the Gulf, the official added.

The police chief for southern Kandahar province, Brig. Gen. Abdul Razzaq, told reporters the security forces had recently captured 50 made-in-Iran assault rifles during recent operations in Kandahar, Uruzgan and Zabul provinces, he claimed.

"In the past, Iran secretly sent arms to Afghan fighters via Quetta, the capital of Pakistan southwestern province of Balochistan," the police chief said.

But the arms supplies are now openly routed through Nimroz province as well as Jungle area, according to Gen. Razzaq, who said they were trying to curb Taliban's attacks in Kandahar.