

U.S. says Iran nuclear work is escalation

The United States says that Iran's uranium enrichment activities at an underground bunker south of Tehran amount to a "further escalation" of its ongoing violation of UN resolutions. The warning comes after the IAEA said that Iran had begun enriching uranium up to 20 percent at its Fordow plant

FORDOW: Satellite image shows plant under construction in September 2009

Key nuclear sites



100m
300ft

Tunnel
entrances

Tunnel
entrances

Earth deposits
from tunnel
excavation

Underground
enrichment area

▶ **Fordow** is built next to military complex. Hardened tunnels are protected by air defence missile batteries and elite Revolutionary Guard troops

▶ Site is shielded from aerial surveillance and attacks by up to 90m of mountain rock

▶ Kept secret by Tehran, revealed only after being identified by Western intelligence in 2009

▶ Has 348 centrifuges in operation for enriching uranium to 20 percent, with others assembled but not yet working

▶ Iran's main plant at **Natanz** has about 8,000 centrifuges, enriching uranium to 3.5 percent

URANIUM ENRICHMENT LEVELS

Low (3 to 5%): Used in civilian reactors. Iran has stockpiled enough for several nuclear bombs

Medium (20%): Iran began production in 2010, saying it needed higher grade as fuel for Tehran reactor which produces medical isotopes

High (90%): Weapons-grade. Can be produced more quickly from uranium enriched to 20%