

PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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INTELLIGENCE OFFICER: IRAN COULD HAVE NUCLEAR WEAPONS BY 2005

August 6, 2003 Ha'aretz reports: "Iran will soon complete its program for achieving a basic ability to create nuclear weapons that will be operational by 2005, Israel Radio quoted a senior military intelligence officer as telling the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee on Monday.

The Los Angeles Times reported Monday that Iran appears to be in the late stages of building a nuclear bomb and has sought help from scientists in Russia, China, North Korea and Pakistan.

Shimon Briarsky, a former intelligence official in charge of Iranian affairs, urged the United States to exert 'massive' diplomatic pressure on Iran to stop it from developing a nuclear bomb.

The U.S. has 'a window of a year and a half, two years,' Briarsky told Army Radio on Monday. 'Not for military action, for diplomatic action that would start with diplomatic pressure and continue with involving the [United Nations] Security Council - massive pressure on the Iranians to destroy and neutralize what they have attained.'

Citing its own three-month investigation into Iran's clandestine nuclear capacity, the Times said it had strong evidence Iran's commercial program masked a plan to become the world's next nuclear power and it was 'much closer to producing a bomb than Iraq ever was.'"

GROUP WANTS TO LAY TEMPLE CORNERSTONE

August 6, 2003 Ha'aretz reports: "The Temple Mount Faithful, led by Gershon Salomon, has asked the police to allow the group to hold a symbolic cornerstone-laying ceremony for the rebuilding of the Temple this Thursday, Tisha B'Av, the day of mourning for the destruction of the First and Second Temples.

The group would like to place the stone close to the Temple Mount and to hold a prayer session on the mount itself, at which they plan to read the Book of Job.

The leaders of the group met with police officers two weeks ago and their request was turned down. However, even if they do not get permission to visit the mount, they said they still intend to hold their prayer session at the mount's Mughrabi Gate entrance.

Salomon said that this year, Tisha B'Av would be marked not only by mourning over the destruction of the temples but also by mourning over a Jewish government that allowed Palestinians to take control of the mount"

HAMAS EXPECTED TO BRING KASSAM MISSILES TO WEST BANK

August 6, 2003 The Middle East Newline reports: "Israel's military expects that Hamas will succeed in deploying the Kassam short-range missile in the West Bank.

Israeli officials said Hamas plans to use the current ceasefire to complete Kassam production facilities in the West Bank. The officials said the effort has been aided by Hizbullah and Iran.

'Within the next few months, we could see Kassam rockets also in Judea and Samaria [West Bank],' Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee chairman Yuval Steinitz said. 'This is a situation that Israel cannot afford, even in exchange for temporary and relative quiet.'

Steinitz said the Kassam missiles would have the range to strike Jerusalem and other major Israeli cities. He said the missiles would also threaten civilian and military aircraft that use Ben-Gurion Airport east of Tel Aviv"

SOUTH AFRICA SEEN AT 'DEATH' PHASE OF AIDS EPIDEMIC

August 5, 2003 Reuters reports: "South Africa is entering the 'death' phase of its AIDS epidemic as deaths outstrip new infections, presenting new challenges for a health care system struggling to cope with the disease, scientists said on Monday. 'South Africa is experiencing a devastating epidemic -- the world's worst -- and this is just the beginning,' Quarraisha Abdool Karim, a researcher at the University of Natal, told the country's 1st national AIDS conference in Durban.

The disease already infects 4.7 million South Africans, the highest single caseload in the world.

While adult HIV/AIDS prevalence in the country is starting to plateau at around 33% (1 of every 3), sickness and death

are on the increase as the disease kills off workers in Africa's most vibrant economy. 'What we are starting to see is the real face of the epidemic,' Abdool Karim said.

'Mortality is really just starting and won't peak for another 3 to 4 years,' said Rod Hoff, a senior epidemiologist in the AIDS division at the U.S. National Institutes of Health. 'The social and economic impact will be considerable. Industry is really going to take a hit as people get sick.'

Abdool Karim said that in 1 major South African hospital, King Edward in Durban, an estimated 90% of hospital patients were HIV positive □"

NORTH KOREA THREAT HAS RUSSIA REARMING

August 5, 2003 WorldNetDaily.com reports: "In the wake of a claim by Russian military and political sources that North Korea is only five weeks from full nuclear capability, Moscow is preparing for the possible use of force against its neighbor, despite the Kremlin's often cozy diplomatic relationship with Pyongyang's Kim Jong-Il, according to a report in Joseph Farah's G2 Bulletin intelligence newsletter.

Last week, North Korea agreed to multi-lateral talks with the U.S., China, Japan, South Korea and Russia to discuss its nuclear program. While Russia and China maintain relations with North Korea, both are wary of Pyongyang's potential for destabilizing the region. Kim's regime has threatened the U.S. and other nations with nuclear missiles.

'Information from Moscow shows that, while President Vladimir Putin is refraining from making dramatic statements about North Korea, other officials, normally at the level of deputy ministers and regional army commanders, reveals North Korea is only five weeks away from announcing her full nuclear capability,' says the G2 Bulletin report.

Officials in Russia's Far East, based in the city of Vladivostok, were quoted last week as saying they believe the North Korean crisis could lead to military operations. Russia is also preparing to admit at least 200,000 North Korean refugees in the event of a crisis. Russian border guards have also stepped up patrols and built new observation posts along the 19-kilometer Russian-North Korean border □"

SENATE CONSIDERS SANCTIONS ON SAUDIS

August 3, 2003 The Middle East Newslite reports: "The U.S. Senate has launched an effort to examine the prospect of imposing sanctions on Saudi Arabia.

Congressional sources said several prominent senators have determined that despite U.S. appeals Riyadh has failed to stop the funding of groups deemed by the State Department as terrorists. The sources said the senators have warned the Bush administration that they will press for sanctions on the kingdom over the next year unless Riyadh halts the flow of money to these groups.

The United States was said to have threatened Saudi Arabia with sanctions as early as 1999. The congressional sources said an increasing number of senators are dismayed that the Bush administration, despite the U.S.-led war on terrorism, failed to fulfill that threat in wake of the investigation that demonstrated Saudi complicity in the Al Qaida suicide attacks on New York and Washington in September 2001.

Saudi Arabia has reduced financing to Al Qaida in wake of the May 12 suicide strikes by the organization in Riyadh that killed 35 people, the sources said. But they said the administration and the U.S. intelligence community have acknowledged that Riyadh might have increased its financial support of Hamas and other Islamic insurgency groups □"

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