



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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IRAN LAUNCHES GULF EXERCISE

February 8, 2007 The Middle East Newline reported: "Iran has launched a major exercise in the Gulf. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps said the exercise would be a specialized maneuver in the southern and central Gulf. IRGC said the air and naval exercise would begin on Wednesday and last two days.

In a statement on Tuesday, IRGC said missile units would conduct the exercise in the Gulf and Sea of Oman. The military force said the air force would conduct the Saeqeh exercise while the navy would stage Raad.

The exercise was meant to demonstrate the lessons learned from the two Great Prophet exercises in 2005 and 2006. IRGC said the latest exercise would exhibit combat preparedness of the IRGC, including missile fire and interception."..."

IRAN THREAT BEHIND POLISH INTEREST IN MISSILE DEFENSE

February 7, 2007 SpaceWar.com reported: "Poland may agree to the deployment of a U.S. missile defense system on its territory because it perceives a threat from Iran, not Russia or Belarus, Polish military attache Andrzej Lewandowski said Tuesday. Washington officially proposed January 20 placing a radar network in the Czech Republic, and two days later announced plans to begin formal talks with Poland on the deployment of anti-ballistic missile systems on its territory.

"A threat from Iran will appear in five to six years," he told journalists in Moscow. Lewandowski said many experts think Iran will have ballistic missiles with a range of over 6,000 kilometers (3,730 miles) by 2010-2013. A missile defense base in Poland, if any, would be built in 2011-2012, he said.

"We are not looking at Russia or Belarus as our enemies," Lewandowski said. The military attache said the missile defense bases would not be able to counter Russia's military might.

He said his country's leadership supports the plan to deploy the base, whereas polls indicate that 45% of the population is against the deployment of U.S. missile defenses in Poland, and 38% back such developments.

The Polish ambassador in Russia, Jerzy Bahr, also refuted statements that a deployment of American missile defense elements in Poland would be aimed against Russia. "I can't imagine that the policy Poland conducts could be anti-Russian. It's in our interests to have good relations with our neighbors," he said.

On February 1, Russian President Vladimir Putin said at an annual news conference with Russian and foreign journalists, televised live from the Kremlin, that Washington's arguments were not convincing and that Russia considered Washington's plans to be a threat to its national security.

He said that should the U.S. proceed with its intentions, Russia would respond decisively. "We must think, and are thinking, of ways to ensure our national security," Putin said. "All our responses will be asymmetric but highly effective."



UKRAINE PROTESTS US PLANS TO BUILD MISSILE DEFENSE SITES IN EUROPE

February 6, 2007 Voice of America News reported: "Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister Mykola Azarov says U.S. plans to build a missile defense system in central Europe are a threat to Ukraine. Azarov said Monday that such a system close to the Ukrainian border would be a target of attack and threaten to suck Ukraine into a conflict.

Washington says it wants to build missile defense sites in Poland and the Czech Republic to counter a possible threat by North Korean and Iranian long-range missiles. Russia has also called the plans a mistake and has noted that neither North Korea nor Iran have such missiles. The Pentagon has acknowledged that Iran does not currently possess long-range missiles, but says it is important to stay one step ahead."

TALIBAN WARN OF BLOODY SPRING AS U.S. TAKES NATO REINS

February 5, 2007 Reuters reported: "The Taliban threatened a spring offensive of thousands of suicide bombers as the United States, doubling its combat troops in Afghanistan, took over command of the 33,000-strong NATO force on Sunday. As U.S. General Dan McNeill took over the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), NATO said a local Taliban leader in a southern district was killed on Sunday in a drive to recapture the key town of Musa Qala from the rebels.

The Taliban warns 2007 will be "the bloodiest year for foreign troops", saying they have 2,000 suicide bombers ready to go into action when winter snows melt in a few months.

"We have made 80 percent preparations to fight American and foreign forces and we are about to start war," Mullah Hayatullah Khan, a 35-year-old black-bearded guerrilla leader, told Reuters at a secret base in the east on Saturday. Khan says the 2,000 are just 40 percent of fighters preparing to become suicide bombers, a tactic almost unheard of here until last year as militants copied Iraq.

"Now there is great enthusiasm for suicide attacks among the Taliban and these attacks will increase," he said. Hours after the handover,

a suicide bomber attacked a NATO convoy in Afghanistan's second city and birthplace of the Taliban, Kandahar, killing himself but no one else, police said."..."

U.S. INTEL ENVISIONS DECLINE IN IRAQ

February 5, 2007 The Middle East Newline reported: "The U.S. intelligence community, warning of continued deterioration, has determined that a civil war was raging in Iraq.

In an assertion disputed by the Bush administration, the National Intelligence Estimate issued a report that concluded that the violence in Iraq comprised a civil war. The NIE, a document that represents the views of all 16 U.S. intelligence agencies, warned of continued deterioration in Iraq in 2007.

"The Intelligence Community judges that the term 'civil war' does not adequately capture the complexity of the conflict in Iraq," NIE, released on Feb. 2, said. "Nonetheless, the term 'civil war' accurately describes key elements of the Iraqi conflict, including the hardening of ethno-sectarian identities, a sea change in the character of the violence, ethno-sectarian mobilization, and population displacements."..."

DON'T MESS WITH ISRAEL, OPEN LETTER TO IRANIANS SAYS

February 2, 2007 YnetNews.com reports: "People of Iran, beware. Your leaders are taking you down a dead-end street. If they continue, it will end in a terrible blow to the Iranian people and their country and bedlam in the whole region, an open letter written by a group of Israeli citizens begins. The writers of the letter are hoping to get 100,000 Israelis to sign the letter and then plan to send it to Iranian President Ahmadinejad

Ran Porat, deputy editor and security affairs reporter at internet site Omedia, who came up with the idea for the letter, explains: "It is about making a statement – for the Israeli public, instilling the feeling that there is something we can do, and for international public opinion, so they realize that we, in Israel, are taking this problem seriously."

In addition, he says, the letter is making a statement to the Iranian public. "We are separating the Iranian public from their leadership. We support the Iranian people in their struggle to release themselves from an oppressing regime, and we know that they are not looking for war with us," Porat says.

The writers of the letter are telling the Iranian people that Ahmadinejad is "leading a monstrous and shameful attempt to vilify the memory of the six million Jews who were destroyed in the Holocaust, with a dubious academic excuse. By doing this he is viewed by the nations in a ridiculous light and he is giving Iran the image of a racist, boorish country, that propagates hatred and lacks basic humanitarian values.

"Your regime is working diligently to acquire nuclear capabilities for military purposes. It would appear that they would not shy away from methods that could cause the death of thousands or even millions of you and others," reads the letter."..."



EGYPTIAN MPS WANT NUCLEAR BOMB

February 2, 2007 YnetNews.com reported: "Egyptian Parliament members have called on their government to seriously work to obtain nuclear weapons. The Egyptian newspaper al-Masry al-Youm reported that during a stormy meeting held Friday by the Parliament's national security, defense, foreign and Arab affairs committees, Ibrahim al-Jaafri of the Muslim Brotherhood called on the government to "change the country's diplomatic language".

The remarks were made after Prime Minister Ehud Olmert implied that Israel possesses nuclear weapons during a visit to Germany about two months ago.

Jaafri's colleague, Abed al-Fatah Amar, also called on the government to obtain nuclear weapons for deterrence purposes, while Parliament Member Esmat Sadat criticized the government for ignoring the nuclear plan.

"We have no one to complain about but ourselves. I am afraid that the nuclear project will turn into 'business' and a matter of interests," he said.

During the meeting, many criticized former Arab League Secretary-General Dr. Esmat Abdul Meguid for expressing doubts over the possibility that Israel has nuclear weapons, calling his remarks "dangerous" and "irresponsible."

"Olmert's confession cancelled all doubts. Abdul Meguid's statements are irresponsible because he is not in power, but he meant to say in his statements that Israel is lying all the time," said Dr. Mustafa al-Fiqi, chairman of the Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee.

Last month, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak hinted during a meeting with Olmert in Sharm al-Sheikh that his country may aspire to obtain nuclear weapons if another country in the region (apparently Iran – R.N.) acquires such weapons.

"We don't want nuclear weapons," Mubarak stated, "But since they appear highly present in the area, we must defend ourselves."..."