



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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IRON DOME MISSILE DEFENSE SYSTEM ACES FINAL TEST RUN

July 20, 2010 Haaretz reports: "Israel's defense establishment on Monday completed its final series of experiments on the Iron Dome missile defense system, which could protect Israeli towns from short and medium-range missiles and rockets. The Defense Ministry issued a statement explaining that the experiments, which included intercepting simultaneous rocket salvos, were completed successfully."

Two Iron Dome defense systems have so far been manufactured, and will become operational this coming November in the Israel Air Force anti-aircraft division.

U.S President Barack Obama in May asked Congress for \$205 million to support the development of Iron Dome, which intercepts the type of rockets used by Palestinian militants in Gaza and Hezbollah in Lebanon.

The defense establishment has not yet determined how many Iron Dome systems it will ultimately purchase from Rafael Advanced Defense Systems Ltd. - the manufacturer of the Iron Dome defense system. The series of experiments was conducted in the Negev this week, on the heels of another successful run some six months ago..."

US DIPLOMATS, WARSHIPS HEADED FOR SOUTH KOREA

July 19, 2010 Voice of America News reports: "Senior U.S. diplomats and two warships are converging on South Korea, in a show of solidarity four months after the sinking of a South Korean military vessel."

Defense Secretary Robert Gates was due in Seoul late Monday for three days of talks. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will join him on Wednesday for so-called two-plus-two talks with their South Korean counterparts.

U.S. authorities also announced that the aircraft carrier USS George Washington and two destroyers will visit the South Korean port of Busan for five days beginning Wednesday. Another destroyer will visit the port of Chinhae. Officials did not say whether the American warships will take part in a joint naval exercise that has troubled China. Details of the exercise, which will include maneuvers in the Yellow Sea, are to be finalized during this week's meetings.

China has vital seaports and economic zones along its Yellow Sea coast. It has objected to the exercise, but the United States says the maneuvers are intended to send a 'clear message of deterrence' to North Korea..."

SYRIA EXTENDS BAN ON WEARING FACE VEIL

July 20, 2010 SpaceWar.com reported: "Women in Syria are barred from wearing the niqab full-face veil while attending university, the minister of higher education said."

The decree follows a pronouncement by his counterpart, the minister of education, that disallowed fully veiled schoolteachers in lower and infant schools. Last month, around 1,200 schoolteachers wearing the face veil were dismissed from their jobs, Syrian media said.

The ban in universities was done to promote moderation within society, the Minister of Higher Education Ghiath Barakat said.

He said he made the decision based on the requests of parents who demanded their daughters be educated in a place that is free aspects of extremism. Concern over the use of the veil was highest among parents whose children attended private universities. Barakat also discussed the issue with presidents of universities this week, a spokesman for the education ministry said.

"The minister declared his objection to the face veil which, he argued, is against academic principles and campus regulations," the official said.

"The minister said Syria has always been capable of warding off several attempts at implanting subversive thought in its society and has managed to conquer all those ideological invasions. He also called for raising awareness of these potential threats among youths."

The Syrian banning isn't uncommon in mainly Islamic states whose government's are striving to maintain a secularist-leaning society in the face of growing conservative religious influence..."



HEALTH WATCHDOGS SOUND ALARM OVER TB/HIV DEATHS

July 23, 2010 AFP reported: "Two global health agencies joined forces on Thursday in a campaign aimed at averting 200,000 deaths each year by co-infection from tuberculosis and the AIDS virus."

"Every three minutes a person living with HIV has his or her life cut off prematurely by TB," said Jorge Sampaio, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's special envoy on stopping tuberculosis.

"This is completely unacceptable. TB is a preventable and curable disease."

Sampaio presided over a signing of a memorandum of understanding on the sidelines of the 18th International AIDS Conference, gathering the UN agency UNAIDS and Stop TB, a public-private health partnership. They pledged to work towards halving the mortality from

TB/HIV in 2015 compared to a base line of 2004, a year in which 400,000 people died.

"We are talking about a massive human tragedy," the executive secretary of Stop TB, Marcos Espinal, told AFP. "African countries in particular have been devastated by co-infection."

Espinal estimated that several billion dollars each year would be needed to reach the 2015 objective, but much of this could come from smarter use of existing resources.

"There is a package of activities that if properly implemented by countries will work," he said."..."

IRAN'S SUPREME LEADER SAYS HE REPRESENTS PROPHET MUHAMMAD ON EARTH

July 21, 2010 VOAnews.com reported: "Iran's Supreme Leader has reportedly issued a fatwah, or Islamic edict, demanding that people obey him as the earthly "deputy" of both the Prophet Muhammad and Shi'ism's mysterious 12th Imam. He also accused the U.S. and Britain of sowing division among Muslims and of fomenting the recent mosque bombing in Sistan-Baluchestan.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has created a stir after apparently issuing a religious edict Tuesday claiming ultimate spiritual powers on Earth. Iranian media reported that he told followers that they must "obey him" as the "representative of the Prophet Muhammad and [Shi'ism's] 12th Imam on Earth."

Iranian television also broadcast a communiqué by the Ayatollah claiming the United States and Britain were behind last week's suicide bombings at a Shi'ite mosque in Sistan-Baluchestan province. "All Muslims," he said, "must combat the evil and corrupt [powers] waging war on Earth."

Other top Iranian officials had previously accused Britain, the United States, Israel and al-Qaida of responsibility for the blasts that killed 28 people and wounded hundreds of others."...

His controversial claim to represent the Prophet Muhammad and the 12th Imam on Earth, followed strong, recent criticism by several Iranian religious leaders, questioning his policies. Mohsen Kadivar, an exiled Shi'ite cleric, went so far as to demand his "impeachment," recently.

University of Birmingham Professor Scott Lucas, who writes the popular Iran blog "Enduring America" says Ayatollah Khamenei's controversial fatwah could be a way of lashing out at those adversaries now attacking him.

"It is the first time that Khamenei has specifically gone so far as to claim that kind of authority, and there is a theological debate as to whether this constitutes heresy, in the sense that some interpretations of Shia Islam say that no one can claim to represent the Prophet and the Imams on Earth," he said. "Khamenei, feeling pressure on a number of fronts, regarding his clerical and political authority, feels the need to assert, effectively, 'You must obey me.'"

But Professor Hilal Khashan of the American University of Beirut says Ayatollah Khamenei rules Iran under the Wilayat al Faqih principle, which does give him broad powers to represent Shi'ism's Hidden or 12th Imam.

"It depends if you believe in Wilayat al Faqih concept," he said. "Now, Shi'ites who subscribe to Wilayat al Faqih concept would accept this, because, actually, this is the designation of the Supreme Leader of Iran. He is the 'deputy of the hidden Imam until his return, to lead humanity', quote unquote, 'into redemption and salvation.' So, for the believers, there is nothing unusual about the statement."

But Khashan notes many Shi'ites, who are not fundamentalists, do not believe in the Ayatollah Khamenei's extraordinary powers on Earth, and that they frown on anyone claiming to represent the Imam. Lucas, says many top Iranian religious leaders are now questioning Supreme Leader Khamenei's authority, amid a growing political and religious ferment."

EU COUNTRIES WANT MORE IRAN SANCTIONS

July 22, 2010 The Jerusalem Post reported: "A new poll shows European countries strongly supportive of international intervention to stop a nuclear-armed Iran, including further sanctions. By overwhelming numbers, citizens of Germany, France and Sweden said that they wanted the international community to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons – by 80 percent, 83% and 90% respectively – rather than agreeing that Iran has the right to develop nuclear weapons.

Those surveyed in the three countries also said they want to see the EU impose further sanctions. Germans answered that they wanted additional sanctions by a 70-22 margin, French by a 66-27 margin and Swedes by a 78-15 margin. In addition, significant majorities of all three groups had cool rather than warm feelings towards Iran.



The poll was conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research from The Israel Project over the second and third week of July. It was conducted of just over 1,000 people in Germany and France, and 500 in Sweden. The margin of error was +/- 3.1 percent in France and Germany and 4.5 +/- percent in Sweden.

The Israel Project declined to comment on whether a possible military strike had been another possible type of international intervention posed to those surveyed."

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