



US FLIES STEALTH BOMBERS OVER SOUTH KOREA

March 28, 2013 SpaceDaily.com reported: "The United States said two nuclear-capable B-2 stealth bombers flew "deterrence" missions over South Korea on Thursday, defying apocalyptic threats of retribution from North Korea against ongoing war games.

The deployment of the stealth bombers was intended to send a potent message to Pyongyang about the US commitment to defending South Korea against any aggression, as military tensions on the Korean peninsula soar.

It came shortly after the North severed its last-remaining military hotline with South Korea and put its rocket units on combat status with a threat to target US bases in the Pacific region."..."

CHINESE NAVAL FLEET HEADS DEEP INTO DISPUTED WATERS

March 28, 2013 Voice of America News reported: "A small fleet of Chinese naval ships recently concluded drills in a disputed part of the South China Sea, some 80 kilometers from Malaysia's shores. The People's Liberation Army's naval foray so far south is a first in recent memory.

The fleet of four ships headed to the Spratly Islands and made their way to James Shoal - less than 100 kilometers from Malaysia - to carry out their drills. The fleet included two guided missile frigates and a guided missile destroyer. The Xinhua news agency says the vessels did formation exercises with some land-based aircraft, which were fighters and fighter-bombers.

Ian Storey of the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies says the number of ships involved was "not significant."

"This, again, is designed to send a message that China has the capabilities to operate far from the mainland and also to land forces and retake these islands in order to resolve the dispute, should it so wish to do so," Storey said.

Resources are at the heart of the disputes over sovereignty of the South China Sea. The area is an abundant fishing location and is believed to hold significant hydrocarbon deposits. It also straddles some of the world's busiest shipping lanes. China, Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines, Vietnam and Taiwan all have total or partial claims there."..."

NORTH KOREA RAISES NUCLEAR THREAT LEVEL AGAINST US, S. KOREA

March 28, 2013 Israel National News reported: "North Korea raised the nuclear threat level against the United States on Wednesday, warning it could launch a pre-emptive attack on the U.S. and South Korea.

Pyongyang claimed such an attack could come as part of its military options, as it continued to raise its rhetoric and escalate tensions over military drills carried out recently in the region between the two allies.

The North Korean military leadership said Tuesday it would place its missile and artillery units into 'highest level combat readiness' and reiterated that it could take actual military action. The statement further increased already-tense relations on the northern and southern sides of the Korean border.

American geopolitical military strategy analyst Mark Langfan noted that 'while the north has issued threats before, threats of 'pre-emptive nuclear attack' appear to ratchet up the north's rhetoric.'

When asked whether North Korea appeared to be bluffing, Langfan told Arutz Sheva in an email exchange on Thursday, 'It certainly looks real to me.'..."

IRAQI OIL: ONCE SEEN AS U.S. BOON, NOW IT'S MOSTLY CHINA'S

March 27, 2013 mcclatchydc.com reported: "Ten years after the United States invaded and occupied Iraq, the country's oil industry is poised to boom and make the troubled nation the No.2 oil exporter in the world. But the nation that's moving to take advantage of Iraq's riches isn't the United States. It's China.

America, with its own homegrown energy bonanza, isn't going after the petroleum that lies beneath Iraq's sands nearly as aggressively as is China, a country hungry to fuel its rise as an economic power.

Iraq remains highly unstable in terms of security, infrastructure and politics. Chinese state-owned oil companies appear more willing to put up with that than Americans are.

"The Chinese have a higher tolerance for risk," said Gal Luft, a co-director of the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security, a Washington research center focused on energy.

The International Energy Agency expects China to become the main customer for Iraq's vast oil reserves. Fatih Birol, the agency's chief economist, recently declared "a new trade axis is being formed between Baghdad and Beijing." Birol said that about 80 percent of Iraq's future oil exports were expected to go to Asia, mainly to China."..."



EGYPTIAN MOSQUE TURNED INTO HOUSE OF TORTURE FOR CHRISTIANS

March 27, 2013 FoxNews.com reported: "Islamic hard-liners stormed a mosque in suburban Cairo, turning it into torture chamber for

Christians who had been demonstrating against the ruling Muslim Brotherhood in the latest case of violent persecution that experts fear will only get worse.

Such stories have become increasingly common as tensions between Egypt's Muslims and Copts mount, but in the latest case, mosque officials corroborated much of the account and even filed a police report. Demonstrators, some of whom were Muslim, say they were taken from the Muslim Brotherhood headquarters in suburban Cairo to a nearby mosque on Friday and tortured for hours by hard-line militia members.

They accompanied me to one of the mosques in the area and I discovered the mosque was being used to imprison demonstrators and torture them,' Amir Ayad, a Coptic who has been a vocal protester against the regime, told MidEast Christian News from a hospital bed..."

CHINA TO BUY RUSSIAN FIGHTERS, SUBS

March 26, 2013 SpaceDaily.com reported: "China has agreed to buy two dozen fighter jets and four submarines from Russia, state media reported Monday, the country's first large-scale weapons technology purchases from Moscow in a decade.

The agreement to buy the 24 Su-35 fighters and four Lada-class submarines was signed just before President Xi Jinping's weekend visit to Russia, said the People's Daily, the Communist Party organ, citing state television.

The report, which did not give a value for the purchases, said it was the first time in 10 years China had bought 'large military technological equipment' from Russia.

The deal comes as Beijing expands its military reach -- it commissioned its first aircraft carrier last year -- and is embroiled in a bitter territorial row with Japan over disputed islands in the East China Sea. Two of the submarines will be built in Russia, with the other two to be built in China..."



NORTH KOREA 'COMBAT POSTURE TO HIT U.S.'

March 26, 2013 BBC News reported: "North Korea says it has ordered artillery and rocket units into 'combat posture' to prepare to target US bases in Hawaii, Guam and the US mainland. The announcement, carried by KCNA news agency, follows days of strong rhetoric from Pyongyang. It came as South Korea marked the third anniversary of the sinking of the Cheonan warship, which left 46 sailors dead. South Korea said it had detected no signs of unusual activity in the North.

Tensions remain high on the Korean peninsula in the wake of North Korea's third nuclear test on 12 February. The test led to new UN sanctions which Pyongyang strongly opposes.

Joint US-South Korea annual military drills have further angered the communist nation. In recent weeks its habitually fiery rhetoric has escalated - it has threatened the US with 'pre-emptive nuclear attacks', as well as strikes on US military bases in Japan.

'From this moment, the Supreme Command of the Korean People's Army will be putting in combat duty posture No 1 all field artillery units including long-range artillery units and strategic rocket units that will target all enemy objects in US invasionary bases on its mainland, Hawaii and Guam,' the KCNA statement said..."

SENIOR MP: ISRAEL UNABLE TO THREATEN IRAN

March 24, 2013 The Fars News Agency reported: "Chairman of the Iranian Parliament's National Security and Foreign Policy Commission Alaeddin Boroujerdi dismissed Israel's intensified war rhetoric against Iran, and stated that the Zionist regime lacks the required capability to threaten Iran.

'Although the Zionist lobbies are exerting great influence on the US administration, the (Israeli) regime will have no power of its own in the absence of the US support,' Boroujerdi said on Saturday.

'Despite its claims of being the fourth strongest military power in the world, the Zionist regime is too powerless to be regarded as a major power in the regional strategic equations,' he added.

He pointed to Israel's failures in its war in Lebanon and the Gaza Strip, and stated, 'The question is how the Zionist regime can face a strong state like the Islamic Republic of Iran while it cannot defeat guerilla groups and politico-military groups like Lebanon's Hezbollah or (Palestinian) Islamic Jihad and Hamas?'

The remarks by the Iranian lawmaker came a few days after Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei deplored Israel's war rhetoric against Iran, and warned that any hostile move by the Zionist regime against the Islamic Republic would be reciprocated with a destructive response..."

*Compiled by L. Jim Tuck, Pastor
UCGIA Oakland, San Jose, Santa Rosa, Stockton, and Hawaii
ljt5053@sbcglobal.net*