



PROPHETIC TIMES

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NORTH KOREA 'READY FOR SACRED WAR' WITH THE SOUTH

December 23, 2010 BBCNews.co.uk reported: "North Korea is ready for a "sacred war of justice" using a nuclear deterrent, its armed forces minister has said. Kim Yong-chun accused South Korea of making preparations for war by holding live-fire exercises near the border.

The drills are one of the largest in South Korea's history, and come a month after North Korea shelled a Southern island killing four people.

The US state department condemned the North's latest comments as returning to its "old belligerent tricks". "We need constructive actions, not heated rhetoric," said spokesman Philip Crowley on his Twitter page, without specifying any actions.

South Korean President Lee Myung-bak has promised immediate retaliation to any further Northern attack.

The BBC's John Sudworth says people on the Korean peninsula are used to fiery rhetoric from Pyongyang, but as the tension escalates, the danger is that one side will feel forced to act on its threats.

The South Korean army acknowledged that the drill was aimed to display its firepower. Although the South has conducted 47 military drills this year, this is the largest winter live-fire exercise ever conducted on land.

The North earlier branded Seoul's exercises "warmongering" but until now had not threatened the South with any retaliation. During a meeting in the North Korean capital, Mr Kim, quoted by Pyongyang's Korean Central News Agency, accused the South of preparing for a new Korean War.

"The South Korean puppet forces perpetrated such grave military provocation as renewing their shelling against the DPRK [North Korea] during their recent exercises for a war of aggression in the West Sea [Yellow Sea] of Korea," he said.

"This indicates that the enemy's scenario for aggression aimed at the start of another Korean War, has reached the phase of its implementation."

"The revolutionary armed forces of the DPRK are getting fully prepared to launch a sacred war of justice of Korean style based on the nuclear deterrent at anytime necessary to cope with the enemies' actions deliberately pushing the situation to the brink of a war," he added.

Despite possessing enough plutonium to create a bomb, the North is not thought to have succeeded in building a nuclear weapon.

Both China and Russia have called on the South to defuse tensions and US officials too are privately expressing their concern about Seoul's new, more aggressive stance.

South Korea and the US had already been conducting large-scale military exercises, following the apparent torpedoing of a South Korean warship by the North on 26 March, which killed 46 south Korean sailors.

Efforts to redirect the Korean issue back to the negotiating table have been unsuccessful. China and the North say it is time to return to the six-nation talks about North Korea's nuclear programmes.

But the US, South Korea and Japan have said they will not return to such talks, which have previously involved rewards for the North if it cuts back on nuclear development.

North Korea walked out of the six-party talks in April 2009 and expelled UN nuclear inspectors from the country."

LATEST TERROR THREAT IN US AIMED TO POISON FOOD

December 20, 2010 CBSNew.com reported: "In this exclusive story, CBS News chief investigative correspondent Armen Keteyian reports the latest terror attack to America involves the possible use of poisons - simultaneous attacks targeting hotels and restaurants at many locations over a single weekend.

A key Intelligence source has confirmed the threat as "credible." Department of Homeland Security officials, along with members of the Department of Agriculture and the FDA, have briefed a small group of corporate security officers from the hotel and restaurant industries about it.

"We operate under the premise that individuals prepared to carry out terrorist acts are in this country," said Dec. of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano on Dec. 6, 2010. The plot uncovered earlier this year is said to involve the use of two poisons - ricin and cyanide - slipped into salad bars and buffets.

Of particular concern: The plotters are believed to be tied to the same terror group that attempted to blow up cargo planes over the east coast in October, al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula.

In online propaganda al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula has praised the cargo attack, part of what it called "Operation Hemorrhage."

The propaganda says in part, "...attacking the enemy with smaller but more frequent operations" to "add a heavy economic burden to an already faltering economy."

Manuals and videos on jihadist websites explain how easy it is to make both poisons.



"Initially it would look very much like food poisoning," said St. John's University professor of pharmaceutical sciences Dr. Susan Ford. She showed how little of each poison could be fatal by putting a small amount of poison in cups."...

That leads to a difficult debate: The need to inform the public without alarming it. Former Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said, "A threat you might feel is sufficiently specific and credible to tell the people who are professionally involved might not be specific or credible enough to tell the general public."

Chertoff says it's important to let public health officials know that what looks like food poisoning could be a terrorist attack."..."

PAKISTAN TEST FIRES NUCLEAR-CAPABLE MISSILE

December 21, 2010 SpaceDaily.com reported: "Pakistan on Tuesday successfully test fired a medium-range ballistic missile capable of carrying nuclear and conventional warheads, the military said. The military said in a statement that Ghauri Hatf 5, with a range of 1,300 kilometres (800 miles), could carry conventional and other warheads.

The launch was conducted by the Army Strategic Force command's strategic missile group at the end of a field-training exercise aimed at testing the force's operational readiness, the statement said.

Pakistan's Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee chairman General Khalid Shahmeem Wyne and other senior military officers and scientists witnessed the tests, it said.

"You have made the nation proud and we salute you for your outstanding work," Gilani told the scientists and engineers. Gilani said Pakistan could be proud of its defence capability and the reliability of its nuclear deterrence. This capability, he added, formed the bedrock of Pakistan's security policy and will continue to be enhanced.

"The test amply demonstrates the credibility of our minimum deterrence strategy, which is the cornerstone of our security policy and ensures peace in the region," he said."..."

INDIA TESTS TWO NUCLEAR-CAPABLE MISSILES

December 22, 2010 SpaceDaily.com reports: "The Indian military successfully tested two short-range nuclear-capable missiles from a facility in the east of the country Wednesday, a defence research official told AFP.

The domestically-developed Prithvi-II surface-to-surface missiles were tested as part of a routine exercise at the Integrated Test Range in Chandipur-on-sea in the state of Orissa, S. P. Dash, the range director, said.

The Prithvi-II missile has a range of 350 kilometres (220 miles) and can carry a conventional or nuclear payload. The weapon was last tested from same launch site on September 24 this year, when it failed due to technical problems.

'Prithvi-II missile had proved its robustness and accuracy repeatedly during many trials earlier,' a Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) official told the Press Trust of India news agency..."

NEW GAZA WAR 'ONLY A QUESTION OF TIME'

December 23, 2010 BBC News reports: "A senior Israeli army officer has told the BBC that as long as Hamas remains in control of the Gaza Strip, another war is 'only a question of time'. He said the Palestinian Islamist group had re-armed so much since the Israeli offensive two years ago that it was now in a stronger position militarily. There has been an increase in rocket fire coming from Gaza in the past week.

Earlier, Israeli defence officials said tanks fitted with a new missile defence system would be deployed near Gaza. The announcement came after Palestinian militants for the first time used a Kornet tank-piercing missile. On 6 December the Russian-made laser-guided missile - which carries 10kg (22lb) of high explosive - penetrated the tank's armour, but did not injure its crew.

The UN has condemned the firing of 'indiscriminate' rocket and mortar attacks by militants in Gaza in recent weeks..."

VENEZUELA PARLIAMENT GIVES HUGO CHAVEZ MORE POWERS

December 18, 2010 BBC News reports: "Venezuela's parliament has granted President Hugo Chavez special powers to deal with the aftermath of devastating floods. Mr. Chavez will be able to pass laws by decree, without needing the support of congress, for 18 months. His critics say the move will turn the country into a near-dictatorship.



They accuse him of taking advantage of the floods to strengthen his grip on power before a new congress is sworn in in January. This is the fourth time Mr. Chavez has been given such authority since he came to office almost 12 years ago. He had asked to able to rule by decree for a year to address the emergency caused by floods and landslides that have killed around 40 people and left 140,000 homeless.

But the National Assembly extended the period to 18 months."..."

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