

PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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WATER CRISIS TO BE BIGGEST WORLD RISK

June 6, 2008 The London Daily Telegraph reported: "A catastrophic water shortage could prove an even bigger threat to mankind this century than soaring food prices and the relentless exhaustion of energy reserves, according to a panel of global experts at the Goldman Sachs "Top Five Risks" conference.

Nicholas (Lord) Stern, author of the Government's Stern Review on the economics of climate change, warned that underground aquifers could run dry at the same time as melting glaciers play havoc with fresh supplies of usable water.

"The glaciers on the Himalayas are retreating, and they are the sponge that holds the water back in the rainy season. We're facing the risk of extreme run-off, with water running straight into the Bay of Bengal and taking a lot of topsoil with it," he said. "A few hundred square miles of the Himalayas are the source for all the major rivers of Asia - the Ganges, the Yellow River, the Yangtze - where 3bn people live. That's almost half the world's population," he said.

Lord Stern, the World Bank's former chief economist, said governments had been slow to accept the awful truth that usable water is running out. Fresh rainfall is not enough to refill the underground water tables.

"Water is not a renewable resource. People have been mining it without restraint because it has not been priced properly," he said.

Farming makes up 70pc of global water demand. Fresh water for irrigation is never returned to underground basins. Most is lost through leaks and evaporation.

A Goldman Sachs report said water was the "petroleum for the next century", offering huge rewards for investors who know how to play the infrastructure boom. The US alone needs up to \$1,000bn (£500bn) in new piping and waste water plants by 2020.

"Demand for water continues to escalate at unsustainable rates. At the risk of being alarmist, we see parallels with Malthusian economics. Globally, water consumption is doubling every 20 years. By 2025, it is estimated that about one third of the global population will not have access to adequate drinking water," it said."..."



OLMERT: WE'RE CLOSE TO STOPPING IRAN'S NUCLEAR PROGRAM

June 5, 2008 Haaretz.com reported: "After his meeting with U.S. President George W. Bush in Washington on Wednesday, Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said that the end of Iran's controversial nuclear program was approaching.

"With every day that passes, we are getting closer to stopping Iran's nuclear program," he said, adding that substantial steps were being taken to handle the Iranian threat in "a more effective manner."

Olmert added that, as a result of the hour-long meeting with Bush, there were fewer question marks between the two allies concerning the means, the time constraints, and the level of American determination in dealing with the Iranian nuclear program.

"Naturally the Iranian issue was central to our talks, and our shared point of departure is the need to deal with Iran before it manages to acquire non-conventional capabilities," Olmert told reporters.

He said the two leaders also discussed the talks with the Palestinians and Lebanon, and the U.S. president asked to be briefed on developments with Syria. "Every day that goes by we are making significant steps in dealing with this problem [Iran]. We, with the world under American leadership, are dealing with it in an effort to reach the goal which is to prevent Iran from acquiring [nuclear] arms," Olmert said.

"I do not think it is appropriate for Iran to know what we are doing," Olmert said, and described the cooperation with the United States on countering Iran's nuclear program."..."

CHINA TAKES ON THE US - IN SPACE

June 6, 2008 The Asia Times Online reported: "Chinese military experts believe a confrontation in space, probably with the United States, is inevitable. What they haven't said is whether they expect to win.

Two disarmament officials with the People's Liberation Army (PLA) this week accused Washington in an assessment of the global weapons buildup of fueling an arms race aimed at controlling "the commanding heights".

"In the not too distant future, outer space will certainly become a stage for struggle between countries," charged Xu Nengwu, of China's National Defense Science and Technology University."..."

The PLA has issued similar gloomy predictions before, usually accompanied by demands for a negotiated disarmament treaty, that were seen as an admission China lacked the ability to compete - and might be using as a cover for its own lagging research efforts. But since they successfully shot down an obsolete weather satellite with a missile in an outer orbit in January 2007, the Chinese armed forces have been operating from a position of relative strength.

So powerful was the impact from the four-stage rocket, which was traveling at nearly 29,000 kilometers an hour when it struck the satellite, that it scattered debris halfway around the globe. A definite footprint of strategic intent.

No surprise then, that the Pentagon responded in February this year by shooting down one of its own wayward satellites over the Pacific Ocean with a rocket, thus shattering a 1980s undertaking not to conduct antisatellite (ASAT) tests.

Thirty-two countries are known to have a missile capability, including Asian foes India and Pakistan, South and North Korea, Israel, Syria, Taiwan, Iran, Vietnam, Egypt and Saudi Arabia, as well as Russia, China and the US. Any could technically wage a military campaign in space, even if it were limited to ground-to-air strikes.

Most of these countries are signatories to the Outer Space Treaty, an agreement approved by the United Nations in 1967 after tortuous negotiations between the US and the Soviet Union - though China is one of the few nations to fully accede to its provisions.

The Chinese have noted, with support from some peace organizations, that the treaty is a Cold War relic fashioned in an era when the concept of futuristic Star Wars armed orbiters was the preserve of science fiction writers."..."

IRAN TELLS HAMAS TO 'KEEP UP RESISTANCE'

June 3, 2008 The Jerusalem Post reported: "Incoming Iranian parliamentary speaker, Ali Larijani, spoke to Hamas Prime Minister Ismail Haniyeh Tuesday morning and expressed faith in Hamas's regime in the Gaza Strip, Army Radio reported.

"If you keep up the resistance you will succeed in being victorious," Larijani told Haniyeh. In response, Haniyeh asserted that "[Hamas] will never stop battling the Zionist enemy."

Haniyeh added that US plans for the region were doomed to fail.

Meanwhile, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said US President George W. Bush and his advisors act like mentally ill people.

"Look at the behavior of the US president and members of his team, their words are like those of the mentally ill," said Khamenei, who has final say on all matters in Iran, on Tuesday at a ceremony honoring the late Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, founder of the Islamic Republic.

"Sometimes they threaten, sometimes they order assassinations ... and sometimes they ask for help - it's like mad people staggering to and fro," he said. Khamenei said the erratic behavior of the US leader is rooted in the failures in Afghanistan and Iraq and he urged nations to resist American bullying.

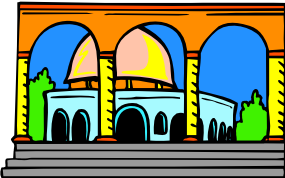
Khamenei also declared that his country will continue with its nuclear program, but rejected nuclear weapons. "Iran is after the peaceful use of nuclear energy and we will strongly pursue and reach it despite the envy of our enemies," he said. "No wise nation is interested in making a nuclear weapon," since it is not logical and cannot be used.

Earlier on Monday, UN IAEA chief Muhammad ElBaradei asked for more clarity from Iran about a possible nuclear weapons program."

TEMPLE MOUNT '100% ISLAMIC'

June 1, 2008 World Net Daily reported: "Jerusalem and the Temple Mount belong to the Muslims and any Israeli action that "offends" the Mount will be answered by 1.5 billion Muslims, declared the chief of staff for Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas.

"Jerusalem is Muslim. The blessed Al Aqsa mosque and Harem Al Sharif (Temple Mount) is 100 percent Muslim. The Israelis are playing with fire when they threaten Al Aqsa with digging that is taking place," said Abbas' chief of staff Rafiq Al Hussein...Husseini was referring to Israeli plans to construct a new bridge from the Western Wall area to the Temple Mount.



The old bridge was damaged two years ago. When Israeli workers tried to repair it, Palestinian leaders claimed the work was threatening the Al Aqsa Mosque, even though the mosque is located hundreds of feet away, the work did not tunnel under any Mount foundation or touch any structure connected to the mosque, and the repair work - which had been pre-approved by Jordan and the Mount's Muslim custodians - was conducted under the scrutiny of an accessible 24/7 webcam.

"Any hurting of Jerusalem will explode the whole negotiations between us and the Israelis ... we must work to strengthen Palestinian ties to Jerusalem," al-Husseini said.

Israel has been negotiating with Abbas in line with talks started at last November's U.S.-backed Annapolis Summit, which seeks to create a Palestinian state before the end of the year. Prime Minister Ehud Olmert is widely expected to offer the Palestinians most of the West Bank and eastern sections of Jerusalem. The Temple Mount is located in eastern Jerusalem.

Mainstream Palestinian leaders claim the Temple Mount is Muslim in spite of overwhelming archaeological evidence documenting the first and second Jewish temples."..."