



PROPHETIC TIMES

WEEKLY WORLD NEWS UPDATE

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IDF TO U.S.: ISRAEL CLOSING IN ON TAKING MILITARY AIM AT IRAN

March 18, 2009 Arutz Sheva reported: "IDF Chief of Staff Gabi Ashkenazi gave United States officials fresh intelligence information on an Iranian nuclear facility during his "working visit" this week, according to the Saudi Arabia daily *Al Watan*.

The newspaper quoted sources that claimed Lieutenant-General Ashkenazi told American officials that Israel is preparing for a military attack. He added that the government still prefers to see if the Western world's diplomatic pressures can succeed in stopping the growing threat that Iran soon will manufacture a nuclear weapon.

The new information concerned the facility in Arak, where a heavy water nuclear reactor is estimated to be operating. Iran also is building the Bushehr nuclear reactor at Natanz, where scientists will be able to enrich uranium that can be used for a bomb.

However, Lt.-Gen. Ashkenazi met only with U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Special Middle East Envoy on Iran Dennis Ross and National Security Advisor, General James Jones.

He did not meet with his counterpart, Admiral Michael Mullen, or with Defense Secretary Robert Gates. He cut short his planned five-day visit ostensibly to attend the Cabinet meeting on the collapse of negotiations for freeing kidnapped IDF soldier Gilad Shalit.

The IDF general's trip coincided with the publication of a report by a Washington-based think tank that Israel could use "Jericho" ballistic missiles to destroy or at least damage Iranian nuclear facilities at Natanz, Isfahan and Arak.

The missiles can hit a target with an error margin of only several feet. The Center for Strategic and International Studies estimated that Israel has 42 Jericho missiles, and that their use is "much more feasible than using combat aircraft."

Iran has buried its nuclear sites deep underground, making them a difficult target for aerial bombing."..."

U.S. NEEDS F-22 TO PENETRATE IRANIAN AIR SPACE

March 18, 2009 The Middle East Newline reported: "The United States would require an advanced fighter-jet to penetrate Iranian air space and attack strategic facilities, a report said. The Washington Institute said the U.S. Air Force would require the F-22 fighter to enter Iranian air space without being detected by Teheran's network of Russian-origin air defense systems.

The institute, in a report by Thomas Crimmins, said Iran's acquisition of the S-300 would rapidly detect virtually any U.S. combat aircraft, including the F-15 and F-16. "There is little doubt that the F-22 can neutralize the S-300," the report, titled "Buying Time with Iran: The F-22 Fighter," said."..."



GERMAN TEENS DRAWN TO NEO-NAZI GROUPS - STUDY

March 17, 2009 Reuters reported: "Roughly one in twenty 15-year-old German males is a member of a neo-Nazi group, a higher proportion than are involved in mainstream politics, according to a study released on Tuesday.

Many politicians fear a resurgence of right-wing extremism as unemployment creeps higher in Germany, which is facing its deepest recession since World War Two. Government figures have shown anti-Semitic crimes rose at the end of last year.

"It is shocking that right-wing groups have more success recruiting male youths than the established political parties," said Christian Pfeiffer, author of the report issued by Lower Saxony's criminal research institute. Pfeiffer said fewer than 2 percent of young men were active in mainstream politics, compared to the 5 percent involved in far-right groups.

The study, conducted in 2007 and 2008, also revealed that neo Nazi-symbols -- in either rock music, stickers or special clothing -- were used by one in 10 of the youths surveyed. The swastika and other Nazi symbols are banned in Germany.

The highest proportion of neo-Nazis was in former communist eastern Germany, where almost one in eight youths were in such groups. More than 14 percent of those questioned were described as racist, and anti-Semitism was rife.

More than 14 percent of those asked were inclined to brush off the Holocaust as "not awful" while a similar number tended to believe that Jews, through their behaviour, were not entirely blameless for their persecution."..."

U.S. TEEN BIRTH RATE UP AGAIN, FEWER PRE-TERM BABIES

March 18, 2009 Reuters reported: "The U.S. teen birth rate rose for a second straight year in 2007 after a long decline and the overall number of babies topped even the peak of the post-World War Two baby boom, officials said on Wednesday.

In an encouraging development, the rate of premature births and low birthweight babies declined after a long upward trend, according to a report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics.

But Cesarean deliveries rose for an 11th straight year to a new high -- up 2 percent to 31.8 percent of births.

"Every pregnant woman in the U.S. should be alarmed by this rate," Pam Udy, president of the International Cesarean Awareness Network advocacy group, said in a statement.

"Half or more of Cesareans are avoidable and over-using major surgery on otherwise healthy women and babies is taking a toll."

A record 39.7 percent of babies in 2007 were born to unmarried women, including 71.6 percent of black babies and 51.3 percent of Hispanic babies, the report found.

The birth rate for teenage girls rose 5 percent between 2005 and 2007, according to the report. The previously reported increase in 2006 ended 14 straight years of declines. The rate rose again in 2007 by 1 percent over the prior year to 42.5 births per 1,000 girls aged 15 to 19.

The rate for Hispanic teens was about three times as high as for whites and the rate for blacks was more than twice as high as for whites, according to the report."...

The total of 4.3 million babies born in 2007 was the most ever recorded in the United States, topping even the peak of the baby boom in 1957, according to the report."..."

AT G20, KREMLIN TO PITCH NEW CURRENCY

March 17, 2009 The Moscow Times reported: "The Kremlin published its priorities Monday for an upcoming meeting of the G20, calling for the creation of a supranational reserve currency to be issued by international institutions as part of a reform of the global financial system.

The International Monetary Fund should investigate the possible creation of a new reserve currency, widening the list of reserve currencies or using its already existing Special Drawing Rights, or SDRs, as a "superreserve currency accepted by the whole of the international community," the Kremlin said in a statement issued on its web site.

The SDR is an international reserve asset, created by the IMF in 1969 to supplement the existing official reserves of member countries.



The Kremlin has persistently criticized the dollar's status as the dominant global reserve currency and has lowered its own dollar holdings in the last few years. Both President Dmitry Medvedev and Prime Minister Vladimir Putin have repeatedly called for the ruble to be used as a regional reserve currency, although the idea has received little support outside of Russia.

Analysts said the new Kremlin proposal would elicit little excitement among the G20 members.

"This is all in the realm of fantasy," said Sergei Perminov, chief strategist at Rye, Man and Gore. "There was a situation that resembled what they are talking about. It was called the gold standard, and it ended very badly. "Alternatives to the dollar are still hard to find," he said."..."

WORLD ECONOMY TO SHRINK 'FOR FIRST TIME IN 60 YRS'

March 19, 2009 Breitbart.com reported: "The International Monetary Fund Thursday said that the world economy, reeling from financial crisis, was on track to shrink for the first time in 60 years in 2009, by as much as 1.0 percent.

In a report prepared for the Group of 20 meeting of finance chiefs last week in Britain and published Thursday, the IMF slashed forecasts from two months ago to a global contraction of between 0.5 percent and 1.0 percent.

The latest IMF projections were sharply lower than those in the World Economic Outlook update published on January 28 that had put global growth at an annual rate of 0.5 percent.

"Global economic activity is falling -- with advanced economies registering their sharpest declines in the post-war era -- notwithstanding forceful policy efforts," the IMF staff report said.

The revisions "reflect unrelenting financial turmoil, negative incoming data, sinking confidence, and the limited effect to date of policy responses with respect to the restoration of financial system health."

The world economy was expected to gradually stage a "modest recovery" in 2010, with growth between 1.5 percent and 2.5 percent, but downside risks were significant, it said. Advanced economies were expected to suffer "deep recessions" in 2009, shrinking between 3.0 and 3.5 percent, according to the IMF report.

The Group of Seven major industrialized economies -- Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United States -- were expected as a group to experience the sharpest contraction since "World War II" by a significant margin."

The United States, the world's largest economy, was projected to contract at an annual rate of 2.6 percent, and Japan, the second largest, by a staggering 5.8 percent. The 16-nation eurozone would contract 3.2 percent.

The IMF warned that the US and Japan have "high risks" of deflation, while that risk was "moderate" in several eurozone members, including Germany, Italy and France."..."