



PROPHETIC TIMES

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LIBYA THREATENS RETALIATION AS U.S. SEEKS UN RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING STRIKES

March 17, 2011 FoxNews.com reported: "Libya's defense ministry warned Thursday that any military action against the African nation resulting from a possible U.N. Security Council resolution authorizing airstrikes and other measures will be met with retaliatory strikes on air and sea traffic in the Mediterranean region.

Reuters reported that a statement by the regime of Muammar al-Qaddafi broadcast on Libyan television warned that "the Mediterranean basin will face danger not just in the short-term, but also in the long term."

The Obama administration is pushing for a Thursday vote for a U.N. Security Council resolution authorizing airstrikes and other measures against Qaddafi's regime.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said Thursday that a U.N. no-fly zone over Libya "requires certain actions taken to protect the planes and the pilots, including bombing targets like the Libyan defense systems."..."

GADHAFI THREATENS TO JOIN FORCES WITH AL-QAIDA IF WEST ATTACKS LIBYA

March 15, 2011 Haaretz reports: "Embattled Libyan leader Muammar Gadhafi has warned Western leaders that if they dare to attack the North African country, he would form an alliance with al-Qaida - who he previously claimed are responsible for the domestic rebellion currently taking place in Libya - and together declare holy war against the West.

Gadhafi dismissed demands by world powers for a no-fly zone or airstrikes on Libya, telling the Italian daily Il Giornale on Tuesday, 'We will fight and win. A situation of that type will only serve to unite the Libyan people.' If western forces attacked Libya, 'We will ally ourselves with al-Qaida and declare holy war,' he said.

EU leaders have slapped economic sanctions on Tripoli following the outbreak of fighting between rebel forces in the east of the country and troops loyal to Gadhafi and at a summit meeting last week demanded that he step down.

Gadhafi said that his regime represents a bulwark against Islamic extremism in the region, which could now be unleashed, triggering more serious unrest in the region. His efforts to stem African migration to Europe may be abandoned, and European countries would be faced with a flood of illegal immigrants.

'If instead of a stable government which guarantees security, these bands linked to Bin Laden take control, the Africans will move in a mass towards Europe and the Mediterranean will become a sea of chaos,' he said..."

IRANIAN PRESIDENT UNDERLINES FURTHER EXPANSION OF ALL-OUT TIES WITH VENEZUELA

March 16, 2011 The Fars News Agency reports: "Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in a meeting with Venezuelan Ambassador to Tehran David Velasquez Caraballo stressed Iran's eagerness to further develop relations with Caracas in all fields.

'Expansion of Iran-Venezuela ties in all domains helps peace, stability and security in the world,' Ahmadinejad said on Tuesday. During the meeting, he also said independent nations and governments would not be deceived by Imperialism's plots.

'Independent and justice-seeking nations and governments have been vigilant against Imperialism's plots and would not be deceived by them,' Ahmadinejad added."...

Since taking office in 2005, the Iranian President has expanded Iran's cooperation with many Latin American states, including Venezuela, Bolivia and Cuba. But the strong and rapidly growing ties between Iran and Venezuela have raised eyebrows in the US and its western allies since Tehran and Caracas have forged an alliance against the imperialist and colonialist powers..."..."

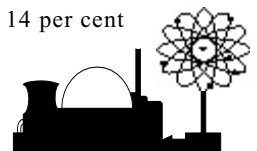
BLASTS ESCALATE JAPAN'S NUCLEAR CRISIS

March 16, 2011 brisbantimes.com.au reported: "Explosions and a fire at Japan's quake-hit nuclear plant have unleashed dangerous levels of radiation, sparking a collapse on the stock market and panic-buying in supermarkets.

Tokyo stocks, punished on Monday in a frantic sell-off that sent indexes around the world sliding, plummeted another 14 per cent before paring some losses and ending 10.55 per cent down. European and US stocks also fell sharply.

In towns and cities, fearful citizens stripped shelves of food and water, prompting the government to warn that panic-buying could hurt its ability to provide aid to areas devastated by Friday's massive quake and tsunami. But scared Tokyo residents filled outbound trains and rushed to shops to stock up on face masks and emergency supplies amid heightening fears of radiation headed their way.

Radiation levels around the Fukushima No 1 plant on the eastern coast had "risen considerably", Prime Minister Naoto Kan said, and his chief spokesman announced it had reached the point where it endangered human health.



In Tokyo, 250 kilometres to the southwest, authorities also said that higher-than-normal radiation levels had been detected in the capital, the world's biggest urban area, but not at harmful levels.

(Prime Minister) Kan warned people living up to 10 kilometres beyond a 20 kilometre exclusion zone around the nuclear plant to stay indoors. "I would like to ask the nation, although this incident is of great concern, I ask you to react very calmly," he said.

The fire, which was put out with the help of US troops, broke out in the plant's number-four reactor, meaning that four of the facility's six reactors were in trouble - and temperatures were reportedly rising in the other two. Radiation levels later dropped at both the plant and in Tokyo, chief government spokesman Yukio Edano said.

The UN weather agency said that winds were currently blowing radioactive material towards the ocean, and that there were "no implications" for Japan or countries nearby.

France's Nuclear Safety Authority said the disaster now equated to a six on the seven-point international scale for nuclear accidents, ranking the crisis second only in gravity to Chernobyl. Europe's energy commissioner Guenther Oettinger dubbed the nuclear disaster an "apocalypse", saying Tokyo had almost lost control of events at the Fukushima power plant."...

Japan however maintained its assessment of the disaster at a four, placing it behind the Three Mile Island accident in the United States in 1979."...The official death toll rose to 3,373 confirmed dead, police said, with the number of those unaccounted for at 6,746. Officials have said at least 10,000 were likely to have perished."...

Singapore's DBS Bank estimated that the twin disasters would cost Japan's economy about \$US100 billion (\$A99.24 billion), or about two percentage points of its annual gross domestic product."

CHINA ASKS JAPAN FOR TIMELY, PRECISE NUCLEAR INFO

March 17, 2011 The Associated Press reported: "China on Thursday urged Japan to provide prompt, precise information about its nuclear crisis in a bid to control a flurry of rumors sweeping the region about possible dangers.

Worried shoppers stripped stores of iodized salt in Beijing, Shanghai and other parts of China on Thursday in the false belief that it either wards off radiation injuries or that the nation's supply would be contaminated by fallout from a crippled Japanese nuclear power plant.

Experts have said the first rumor is not true and the second is unlikely: any catastrophe at the Japanese nuclear plant would most likely affect the immediate area, and wind patterns usually blow away from China at this time of the year. The rumors are part of a swirl of misinformation crisscrossing the region in the wake of Japan's nuclear emergency.

In China, text messages on mobile phones circulated about nuclear plumes spreading from Japan throughout Asia. Rumors also spread that iodized salt was adequate protection against radiation sickness. Chinese media reported that some people were also worried that radiation would seep into sea water and potentially contaminate China's future salt supply."..."

SAUDI SOLDIERS SENT INTO BAHRAIN

March 17, 2011 Aljazeera.com reported: "Hundreds of Saudi troops have entered Bahrain to help protect government facilities there amid escalating protests against the government. Bahrain television on Monday broadcast images of troops in armoured cars entering the Gulf state via the 26km causeway that connects the kingdom to Saudi Arabia.

The arrival of the troops follows a request to members of the Gulf Co-Operation Council (GCC) from Bahrain, whose Sunni rulers have faced weeks of protests and growing pressure from a majority Shia population to institute political reforms. The United Arab Emirates has also sent about 500 police to Bahrain, according to Abdullah bin Zayed Al-Nahyan, the Emirati foreign minister.

The US, which counts both Bahrain and Saudi Arabia among its allies, has called for restraint, but has refrained from saying whether it supports the move to deploy troops."..."

Interestingly, the Pentagon said neither Gates nor Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff who also recently visited Bahrain, had been given any indication that Saudi or other forces from the region would deploy to Bahrain."..."

BAHRAIN KING CLAMPS DOWN; 3 DEAD AS UNREST SPREADS

March 15, 2011 The Associated Press reported: "Bahrain's king declared a three-month state of emergency Tuesday to quell a Shiite uprising, as clashes spread through the capital and surrounding villages in a showdown that drew in the region's major powers and splintered along its main sectarian faultlines. At least two Bahrainis and a Saudi soldier died, and hundreds of protesters were injured by shotgun blasts and clubs.

A force of more than 1,000 Saudi-led troops expanded to defend the Sunni monarchy; Iran and Lebanon's Hezbollah denounced the presence of foreign soldiers; and Washington feared for its main naval base in the Gulf. Any compromise appeared distant at best, with the latest order from Bahrain's king and protesters' demands for the royal family to be toppled altogether.

Doctors were overwhelmed by onslaught of patients at Manama's Salmaniya hospital, rushing the wounded into a packed emergency room, forcing many to wait in the halls. Nurses held back tears when attending to injured young men, and doctors could barely contain their anger.

Iran holds no deep political ties to Bahrain's Shiite groups, but some Iranian hard-liners have supported their efforts over the years for greater rights. The United States bases its Navy's 5th Fleet in the country in part to try to counter Iran's military reach."..."



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