

Happy New Year & Felicitations on Blessed Birthday of Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA)

Saudi Minister's Accusations 'Nonsense'

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran on Friday rejected Saudi accusations as complete nonsense resulting from a sense of frustration and part of the kingdom's "delusory policies that are based upon lies." Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qassemi described Saudi Defense Minister Muhammad bin Salman as the chief coordinator of the kingdom's war against the innocent and defenseless people of Yemen and "the symbol of terrorism" in Syria, Bahrain and elsewhere.



Pakistan, Iran Navies Hold Joint Drill

TEHRAN (Fars) -- Iranian and Pakistani navies have held a joint military drill in the southern waters of the Sea of Oman, rehearsing airlifting, naval transportation, vertical exchanges, and host of other operations. "Iran's Jamaran destroyer was joined by a second missile-launch warship and a helicopter along with Pakistan's fleet, including Tipu Sultan destroyer and its entourage in a joint drill in the Sea of Oman," commander of First Naval Zone Rear Admiral Hossein Azad told reporters on Friday.

VOL NO: LV 10286 TEHRAN / Est.1959 Saturday, March 18, 2017, Esfand 28, 1395, Jamadi as-Sani 19, 1438, Price 10000 Rials

Viewpoint

By Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer

Anniversary of a Failed War

P. 2

UNDP Hails Iran's Efforts to Revive World's Largest Lake

P. 3



Russians Defeat Iranian Greco-Roman Wrestlers

P. 6



Saudi Strike on Refugee Boat Kills Dozens Off Yemen Coast

P. 8



The Blessed Birthday that Makes Nowrouz Happier

By: Seyyed Ali Shahbaz

"O Allah, You are Everlasting, Eternal, the Ever-Living, Generous, Merciful and Compassionate. This is a new year and You are the Eternal Sovereign.

"I beseech You to protect me from Satan and deliver me from the fire and help me to control inordinate lust and occupy myself in that which brings me near to Your presence; O Lord of Might and Power, through Your Mercy, O the Most Merciful."

The above passages are an English translation of a supplication in eloquent Arabic that is recited by the faithful in Iran on the star of the Calendar Year, known as Nowrouz or New Year - 1396 solar hijri, in accordance with the auspicious migration of Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) from Mecca to Medina.

The Muslims of Iran (and other parts of the world as well, especially in the Persianate World where Iranian culture and language have left indelible marks on their lifestyle, from the Balkans to the Subcontinent and the western parts of China), beseech the One and Only Allah to protect them from devilish temptations and the dangers posed by fire and inordinate lust, in order to make the New Year a prosperous and morally healthy.

At the exact time Planet Earth completes its annual orbit around the Sun (13:58:40 hours on 20th March this year), hands will be raised towards heaven by those seated at the traditional Haft-Seen table in their homes, and by those who gather in millions at the holy shrines in Iran of the descendants of Prophet Mohammad (SAWA) - of Imam Reza (AS) in Mashhad, of Hazrat Fatema al-Ma'soumah (SA) in Qom, of Shah Abdul-Aziz al-Hassani in Rayy-Tehran, of Seyyed Ahmad Shah Cheragh in Shiraz, and of the other Imamzadehs.

Qom's Jamkaran Mosque, which is associated with the Lord of the Age, the Prophet's 12th and Last Infallible Heir, Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his advent), will also be hosting a huge gathering, since it is believed that the Awaited Saviour of mankind, will reappear on the Spring Equinox to cleanse the Planet of all vestiges of oppression and corruption by establishing the global government of peace, prosperity and justice.

The supplication on their lips, which the radio and TV channels beam, is:

"Ya Moqallab al-Qoloub wa'l-Absaar;
"Ya Modabber al-Layl wa'n-Nahaar;
"Ya Mohawwel al-Howl wa'l-Ahwaal;
"Hawwil Halana ila Ahsan il-Haal."

Rendered into English it means:

"O' Transformer of Hearts and Eyes;
"O' Regulator of Day and Night;
"O' Rotator of Time and Situation."
"Change our state to the most excellent of Situation."

These supplications are proof of the fact that it is All-Wise Allah, Who is the One and Creator, without any partner, assistant or advisor in His designs, created the entire universe, shaped the Milky Way and other galaxies, fashioned the solar system, made the Earth (like the other planets) spin on its axis while revolving around the Sun - in order to determine day and night, the cyclic change of weather conditions, computation of the year - and created winds to interact with sunlight and the salty seas to set in motion the clouds for raining down fresh water on the soil to make it bloom with vegetation of different kinds for the thriving of birds, animals, and insects of various hues and colours - all for the benefit of the Best of Creation, that is Mankind.

"It is Allah Who sends the winds and these (winds) raise a cloud; then We drive it toward a dead land and with it revive the earth after its death. Likewise will be the resurrection [of the dead]." - Holy Qur'an 35:9

This means that the Spring Equinox, when verdure freshness brightens the environment and flowers bloom, is not the work of any human mind, neither has it anything to do with mythology, nor is it a narrow nationalistic phenomenon.

It is all the handiwork of the All-Merciful Lord, and it is for this very reason that the New Day of Spring (Nowrouz in Persian and Iranian cultures and Eid al-Omm or Day of Mother Earth in the Levant and Egypt), is celebrated as a manifestation of the Glory of God with prayers and supplications.

Interestingly, this year, Nowrouz or the Spring Equinox, is occurring a day after the anniversary of the blessed birthday of the Noblest-Lady Ever, the Prophet's Immaculate Daughter, Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA).

Thus, the coincidence of the New Year festivities with celebrations for the auspicious 20th of Jamadi al-Akher augurs well for the Islamic Republic and the Iranian people, who since the grand victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979 have been marking the Birth Anniversary of the epitome of feminine virtues, as "Women's Week" and "Mother's Day".

Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA) needs no introduction. For the Prophet, she was the Immaculate Daughter, to the extent that she became known as "Omm-e Aabiha" (Mother of her own Father), for the extreme care the little girl took in protecting the Prophet from the mischief of the pagan Arabs, following the death of her mother, Omm al-Momineen (Mother of all True Believers), Hazrat Khadija (SA).

For Imam Ali (AS), she was the Exemplary Wife, who eventually sacrificed her life in defence of his life and his "wilayah" or divinely-designated right of leadership, while he in turn used to say: One look at Fatema's face would make the vicissitudes of life vanish.

For her sons, Imam Hasan (AS) and Imam Husain (AS), and for her daughters Hazrat Zainab (SA) and Hazrat Omm Kolthoum (SA), she was the Devout Mother who groomed them to be guardians of faith, humanitarian values, courage, patience and the spirit of sacrifice.

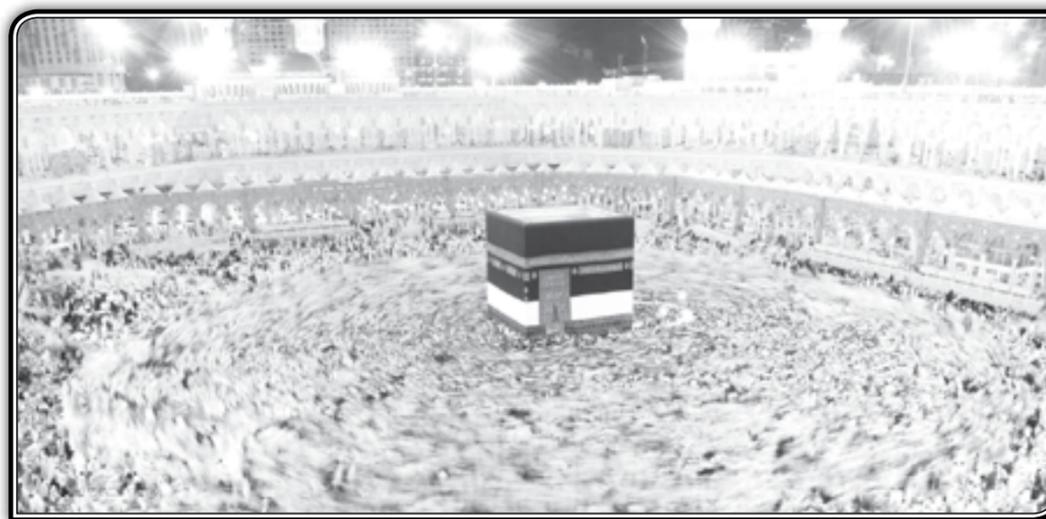
For Women aspiring for proximity to God with the welfare of family, friends, and society in mind, she remains the "Model-Par-Excellence" of feminine virtues and rights.

No wonder, these qualities make Hazrat Zahra (SA), the Pride of the Virgin Mary (SA), and this is the reason when the Saviour of Mankind, her Infallible Offspring Imam Mahdi (AS) will emerge, Prophet Jesus (AS) will reappear and serve as his lieutenant.

Indeed, reflecting on these realities makes Nowrouz a much-blessed to celebrate for Iranians and the faithful around the world.

Saudis Submit to Tehran's Demands:

Iranian Pilgrims to Attend Hajj



Pilgrims perform Hajj rituals around the Ka'aba at the Grand Mosque in the holy city of Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran's Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization said on Friday Iranians will be attending this year's Hajj after Saudi officials agreed

to make the necessary arrangements for pilgrims to participate in the rituals. In a statement, the organization said an agreement had been reached with

Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj and Umra on the dispatch of more than 85,000 Iranian pilgrims to Hajj this year.

The agreement took into account Leader of the Islamic Revolution Seyyed Ali Khamenei's emphasis on

the need to guarantee the security, dignity and honor of Iranian pilgrims and provide for consular, medical and other crucial services to Iranian pilgrims, it said.

Saudi Arabia's official SPA news agency also reported that the kingdom had completed all necessary arrangements for Iranian pilgrims to attend the annual Hajj pilgrimage.

The report said the arrangements were finalized after a meeting took place with an Iranian delegation on February 23.

A major issue was compensation for the families of hundreds of people killed in a stampede during the September 2015 Hajj. Iran says 464 of its citizens died in the disaster.

Earlier that month, a massive construction crane had collapsed into Mecca's Grand Mosque, killing more than 100 pilgrims, including 11 Iranians, and injuring over 200 others, among them 32 Iranian nationals.

Tehran suspended its umrah participation over the sexual assault of two Iranian teenage boy pilgrims by Saudi police at Jeddah airport in early 2015.

Syrian Army Downs Zionist Jet, Hits Another

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) -- The Syrian army said on Friday four Israeli warplanes breached the Arab country's airspace in the morning, adding its air defense shot down one of the aircraft and hit another.

The aircraft "penetrated our airspace at 2:40 a.m. (0040 GMT) via Lebanese territory and hit a military target on the way to Palmyra," said an army statement carried by state news agency SANA.

"Our air defense engaged them and shot down one warplane over occupied territory, hit another one, and forced the rest to flee," the army said, apparently referring to the Golan Heights.

The Syrian army blasted Tel Aviv's strikes as "an act of aggression" meant to assist the Takfiri Daesh terror group.

The occupying regime's aerial assaults are "a desperate attempt to

raise (Daesh's) deteriorating morale and divert attention away from the victories which Syrian Arab Army is making in the face of the terrorist organizations," the statement read.

The Syrian army recaptured Palmyra from Daesh on March 2. In January, the army accused the occupying regime of Israel of carrying out missile strikes on the Mazzeh air base near Damascus.

The Syria army underlined its resolve to repel any future Israeli attack by "all possible means."

The Zionist regime has carried out air raids against Syrian-based targets on many occasions, but has rarely acknowledged the attacks. On Friday, however, the Israeli military admitted that its jets bombed several targets in Syria.

(Continued on Page 7)

UN: Iran's Refugee Efforts 'Exemplary'

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran, one of the states targeted by Donald Trump's Muslim ban, is a country from which the U.S. could learn a lot on the resettlement of refugees, the UN has said.

The Soviet War in Afghanistan displaced six million people to neighboring Iran and Pakistan in 1979. Almost four decades later, the Tehran government still shelters around one million registered Afghans, and up to two million are thought to also be living in the country - making Iran home to the world's fourth largest refugee population.

"The leadership demonstrated by the Iranian government has been exemplary

in hosting refugees and keeping borders open," Sivanka Dhanapala, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Tehran, said on Wednesday.

"It's a story that's not told often enough."

The remarks come as Trump's administration tries to resuscitate its travel ban on people from seven Muslim-majority countries, and halt the resettlement of Syrian refugees.

The new ban - which could affect the one million Iranian nationals living and studying in the U.S. - was slapped down on Wednesday by a federal court in Hawaii on the grounds it could cause "irreparable injury."

It was ironic, Dhanapala noted, that Iranians could be barred from the U.S. while continuing to deal with the human fallout of the American conflict with the Soviet Union.

The Tehran government has recently taken positive steps such as ordering schools to take in all Afghan children, and embarked on a health insurance scheme that covers refugees.

(Continued on Page 7)

More Than 40 Worshipers Killed: U.S. Jets Bomb Mosque in Aleppo

DAMASCUS (Dispatches) -- At least 42 Syrian civilians lost their lives Thursday night when U.S. warplanes bombed a mosque full of worshipers overnight in a village west of Aleppo.

More than 100 people were also wounded in the air raid on the village of al-Jineh, just over 30 km west of Aleppo, the so-called Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said on Friday.

The head of the London-based observatory Rami Abdel Rahman said the raids targeted the mosque during

evening prayers.

The U.S. military confirmed that it had carried out a deadly airstrike in northern Syria and would investigate reports that civilians were killed when a mosque was struck in the raid.

The observatory said many people were trapped under the collapsed mosque as rescue workers struggled to pull survivors from rubble, and dozens of residents were unaccounted for.

Jineh is in the western Aleppo countryside, which along with Idlib

is home to hundreds of thousands of Syrians displaced by fighting in other areas.

Abu Muhammad, a village resident, told AFP he heard powerful explosions when the mosque was hit. "It was right after the prayer at a time where there are usually religious lessons for men in it," he said.

"I saw 15 bodies and lots of body parts in the debris when I arrived. We couldn't even recognize some of the bodies," he added.

(Continued on Page 7)

Holiday Notice

Wishing our readers a happy Nowrouz in advance, our next issue will be on the newsstands on Monday, April 3, 2017.