

Zionists Seek to Partition Iraq: Larijani

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- Iranian Parliament Speaker Ali Larijani on Wednesday warned about bids to break up Iraq, saying the Arab country's partitioning serves the interests of Israel. "The Zionist regime seeks Iraq's disintegration," Larijani said during a meeting with Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi here. Larijani said that Takfiri terrorists seek two objectives in Iraq; first to create internal conflicts in the country "to raise the issue of Iraq's partition, which Israel is seeking," and second to engage Baghdad in domestic issues to undermine its positive role in the region.

Kayhan International

Kurds Delaying Civilians Fleeing Daesh: HRW

BAGHDAD (AFP) -- Human Rights Watch on Wednesday accused Kurdish authorities of delaying thousands of Iraqi civilians fleeing from militant-held areas at checkpoints, in some cases within range of front lines. The New York-based rights group said the delays, some lasting weeks or months, were not only increasing the hardships of civilians but also putting their lives at risk as Iraqi forces battle Daesh. "These families have lived for years under the horrific abuses of ISIS (Daesh), months with limited food, water, and medicine, and have just risked their lives trying to get to safety," Lama Fakih, HRW's deputy Middle East director, said in a statement.

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By Kayhan Int'l Staff Writer  
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Qods' Date of Destiny with Liberation

Kayhan Int'l Political Desk

*"If the world's billion plus Muslims, each pour a bucket of water, Israel will be drowned."* (Imam Khomeini)

This was not any burst of emotion on the part of that Sage of the Age, when he called for the eradication of the cancerous tumour known as Israel from the region.

In fact, Imam Khomeini (RA), as a Man of God who was well acquainted with the past and whose vision pierced the future, fully knew every word that he ever expressed.

For the Father of the Islamic Revolution, since the days of British colonialism were over and inflated might of the Americans punctured, the illegal entity they had planted in the heart of Palestine ought to be weeded out.

Confident that one day, the Ummah will close ranks and mobilize its resources for the liberation of Islam's former qibla (focal point of prayer), the al-Aqsa Mosque and the entire city of Bayt al-Moqaddas, along with the whole of Zionist-usurper Palestine, he took the historic step of designating the Last Friday of the Fasting Month of Ramadhan (*Jummat-al-Weda*), as World Qods Day.

His statement in 1979, shortly after the founding of the Islamic Republic system of government in Iran, read:

*"In the Name of Allah the All-Compassionate, the All-Merciful*  
*"For many years, I have been notifying the Muslims of the danger posed by the usurper Israel which today has intensified its savage attacks against the Palestinian brothers and sisters, and which, in the south of Lebanon in particular, is continually bombing Palestinian homes in the hope of crushing the Palestinian struggle. I ask all the Muslims of the world and the Muslim governments to join together to sever the hand of this usurper and its supporters.*  
*"I call on all the Muslims of the world to designate as al-Qods Day the last Friday of the blessed month of Ramadhan — which is itself a determining day and can also be the determiner of the Palestinian people's fate — and through rallies demonstrating the solidarity of Muslims worldwide, announce their support for the legitimate rights of the Muslim people.*  
*"I beseech God Almighty for the victory of the Muslims over the infidels."*

The prophetic words of Imam Khomeini continue to ring in our ears, as we see the significant growth in the rallies in Iran and over the world on this day that brings in Muslims of every denomination on the platform of unity, for not just voicing support for the usurped rights and lands of the Palestinian people, but for ending the illegal existence of the Zionist entity.

This year's Qods Day Rallies are being held at a crucial juncture. Hamas, which holds sway in Gaza, finds itself in an awkward position, after failing to heed the advice of Islamic Iran concerning the events in Syria and the region.

Reactionary Arab regimes, headed by Saudi Arabia, have openly ganged up with Israel against Islam and Muslims, and are calling Hamas "terrorist", a factor which has again made the oppressed Palestinians realize that it is only Islamic Iran which is the true friends of the Islamic cause for liberation of Bayt al-Moqaddas.

In Syria, following the setbacks suffered by the Takfiri terrorists, the US, led by the quixotic Donald Trump, is trying to destabilize the region by dropping whatever pretensions that Washington had to the supposed 2-state solution.

To pour salt on Muslim wounds, Zionist premier, Benjamin Netanyahu, held a provocative cabinet meeting inside the tunnels that the Israelis have dug up underneath the al-Aqsa Mosque to loosen its foundations for collapse of the al-Aqsa Mosque and the Dome of the Rock.

The days that went by saw Iran's legendary anti-terrorist organization, the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) — at the name of which terrorists of every hue and colour shudder — fired a volley of missiles at Deir az-Zour in Syria, by blasting the headquarters of the perpetrators of recent terrorist attacks in Tehran on the parliament and the mausoleum of Imam Khomeini.

Iran's decisive response, on the threshold of the World Qods Day is indeed a sign of encouragement to Muslims all over the world that terrorism will receive fatal blows. This action by Iran is also a warning to the illegal Zionist, its partners in crimes against Muslims (the Arab reactionary regimes) and their common godfather the US, Palestine and Bayt al-Moqaddas will definitely be liberated one day.

That day is not far. The Ummah is in quest of a united Islamic stand, and as Islamic Iran has shown the way over the past 38 years, only Islamic solidarity, and not sectarianism or narrow Arab nationalism will liberate Palestine.

As the Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has made it clear, Palestine means the entire land between the borders of Egypt and Lebanon, and from the Mediterranean Sea coast to the banks of the River Jordan.

He has suggested a referendum with participation of all Palestinians — whether Muslims, Christian, and the original Jewish inhabitants of the land — but not the Zionists who do not belong to this land.

If the UN, the US, and the Arab reactionary regimes continue to procrastinate then it means armed struggle and materialization of the prophecies in the Islamic texts regarding the end of Zionism in a way that no single Zionist will be safe from Divine Wrath.

Seyyed Hassan Nasrallah, Secretary General of Lebanon's legendary anti-terrorist movement, Hezbollah has rightly remarked: "The priority must be emphasis on confrontation with the Zionist enemy and if it was this way from the beginning, we would not have come to this pathetic point today. If the Arabs had spent on Palestine, one-fifth of the budget they spend for war on Iran and Shiaphobia, Bayt al-Moqaddas would already have been liberated.

Better late than never, Iran has shown the way and is determined to rally Muslims worldwide for this noble cause, which cannot be obstructed, no matter how many hundreds of billions of weapons reactionary Arab regimes can buy to save the Zionist entity from the impending destruction.

Soft Coup in Saudi Arabia



Muhammad bin Salman (left) with the deposed crown prince Muhammad bin Nayef and King Salman

RIYADH (Dispatches) – Saudi King Salman finally promoted his young son Muhammad to crown prince on Wednesday after sacking Muhammad bin Nayef -- completing a gradual removal of powers and shift in the line of succession.

The central question now is whether the king will abdicate soon and allow his son to become king in his lifetime. Historically, no Saudi king has abdicated according to his own will. King Saud was deposed in 1964 under palace siege, followed by safe voyage to Greece.

According to a royal decree issued by the official Saudi Press

Agency, Muhammad bin Salman, 31, was also named deputy prime minister, and maintains his post as minister of defence.

Muhammad bin Nayef, a veteran law enforcer well-regarded in the West for his efforts to combat Al-Qaeda, was also fired from his post as interior minister, the decree said.

Intent on dispelling speculation of internal divisions in the ruling dynasty, Saudi television was quick to show that the change in succession was amicable and supported by the family.

Throughout the early morning it aired footage of Muhammad bin Nayef pledging allegiance to the

younger Muhammad bin Salman, who knelt and kissed his cousin's hand.

"I am content," Muhammad bin Nayef said. Muhammad bin Salman replied: "We will not give up taking your guidance and advice."

The new appointment means a lot of things for the future of the kingdom - and all point to uncertainty brought about by the erratic Muhammad.

Muhammad bin Salman has been responsible for running Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen, dictating an energy policy with global implications and launched the 2030 vision

for an economy less dependent on oil revenues.

He has also taken a hard line on Saudi's regional rival Iran, last month threatening to take the battle "inside Iran", while also ruling out talking to the Islamic Republic to resolve regional conflicts.

He heads the Council for Economic and Development Affairs (CEDA), a group of cabinet ministers who meet weekly and which oversees all elements of policy that touch on the economy or social issues like education, health and housing.

Prince Muhammad chairs the supreme board of Aramco, making him the first member of the ruling family to directly oversee the state oil company, long regarded as the preserve of commoner technocrats.

But perhaps most importantly, he also holds the critical position of gatekeeper to his father, King Salman, who in Saudi Arabia's absolute monarchy retains the final say in any major decision of state.

According to Madawi al-Rasheed, a visiting professor at the Middle East Center at London School of Economics, rule by a continuous iron fist at home will be entrenched under Muhammad bin Salman.

"Muhammad bin Salman will silence any dissident voices while allowing limited personal freedoms organized by his new entertainment commission in charge of keeping Saudis moderately entertained," she wrote in the Middle East Eye news portal on Wednesday.

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**Leader Tells Iraqi PM: Don't Trust U.S.**

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei on Tuesday praised the "success" of Iraqi forces in the battle against Daesh terrorists in Mosul.

"Today Daesh is fleeing Iraq and this and this admirable achievement is the result of internal unity and integrity in Iraq—which was accomplished thanks to the Iraqi government relying on the faithful Iraqi youth," he said as he received Iraqi Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi here.

"I praise the unity and harmony of political and religious currents in Iraq in their fight against Daesh," Ayatollah Khamenei added.

But he warned that Iraq "should not trust" the United States, which is purportedly leading a coalition fighting Daesh in Iraq and neighboring Syria.

"One should be vigilant against the U.S and never trust them because they and their allies in the region oppose Iraq's independence, identity and unity."

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**Egypt Court Blocks Giving Islands to Saudis**

CAIRO (Reuters) -- Egypt's top court has temporarily halted all verdicts on a contested deal to transfer two Red Sea islands to Saudi Arabia until it decides who has jurisdiction, a spokesman said on Wednesday.

Egypt's parliament last week backed plans for the uninhabited islands under an accord that attracted widespread public criticism. But the deal has been caught in a dispute over which institution has the final say after Egypt's highest administrative court rejected it last year.

A separate court suspended the Supreme Administrative Court's verdict. The agreement now sees two courts and parliament in a battle over jurisdiction.

President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi's government last year announced a maritime demarcation agreement that cedes control of Tiran and Sanafir islands to Saudi Arabia, an ally which has given billions of dollars of aid to Egypt.

Supreme Constitutional Court

spokesman Ragab Saleem said: "The Constitutional Court, in cases of contradictory judgments, looks at who has jurisdiction. It might see one side has jurisdiction, or that neither side has. It might be under the jurisdiction of another entity."

He said the court was not examining whether the deal was constitutional and did not give a timeframe for a decision.

State media earlier reported the ruling was made to allow time to decide on the constitutionality of the islands deal.

Wednesday's decision only applies to the two courts involved, not to parliament, which has approved the deal.

The Egyptian and Saudi governments say the islands are Saudi but have been subject to Egyptian protection since 1950. But the plan caused street protests last year from many Egyptians who say their sovereignty over the islands dates back

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