

Explosives Seized Near Southeast Borders

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iranian security forces have discovered and captured a large cache of explosives in the country's eastern border areas, the Intelligence Ministry said in a Monday statement. Security forces in the eastern province of Sistan and Baluchistan confiscated the consignment, which was due to be smuggled into the country. They thwarted terrorist groups' plots to transfer 80 kilograms of composite explosives, 17 booby traps, 28 pistols with 2,100 bullets, 35 hand grenades, tens of electronic detonators and other explosive equipment through technical and intelligence operations, it said.

Kayhan International



'Syria Strike Proved U.S. Political Bankruptcy'

TEHRAN (Press TV) - A senior Iranian official said on Monday a recent U.S.-led missile attack against Syria proved the political bankruptcy of Washington and its allies. The strikes against Syria were carried out under a pretext similar to that used by former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell, which led to Washington's invasion of Iraq in 2003, head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Ali Akbar Salehi said. False U.S. claims, he said, have made people all over the world vigilant and made them familiar with the "real nature of the aggressive countries."

VOL NO: LV 10581 TEHRAN / Est.1959

Tuesday, April 17, 2018, Farvardin 28, 1397, Rajab 30, 1439, Price 20000 Rials

Viewpoint

Will India Punish Abusers-Murderers of 8-Year Old Asefa?

Iranian Cinema Shines at Beijing Int'l Film Festival



Iranian Female Shooter Elaheh Ahmadi Breaks New Record



World Leaders Urge Negotiation, Not Military Action on Syria



The Observances of Sha'ban & Its Virtues

(By: Seyyed Ali Quli Qara'i - English translator of the holy Qur'an and "Mafatih al-Jenan")

Sha'ban is a month of great merits. It is associated with Prophet Mohammad (SAWA), who used to fast throughout this month. He would say: "Sha'ban is my month, and whoever fasts a day of this month of mine will surely be admitted into paradise."

The best supplication during this month is "istegfar" or seeking forgiveness in the Divine Court. One should say 70 times every day "Astaghfirullah, wa as'aluhut-tawbah!" (I plead to Allah for forgiveness and beseech Him to accept my repentance!) Another recommended act for this month is "sadaqa" (charity), even if it be as little as half a date, so that God may make immune one's body from the fire of hell. A highly recommended act is to offer a 2-raka'ah prayer on every Thursday of Sha'ban with recitation of Surat al-Hamd once, followed by Surat at-Tawhid 100 times in each raka'ah, and after salaam Salawat to be recited 100 times. It is said God Almighty fulfills all needs pertaining to the world and the Hereafter of those who perform this. It is also meritorious to fast on this day, and as per a hadith the heavens are adorned every Thursday of Sha'ban and the angels plead with God to forgive those who fast on it and to answer their supplications.

In the book "Kalimat at-Tayyibah", once, on the 1st of Sha'ban, the Commander of the Faithful - Imam Ali (AS) - was passing by a group sitting in one of the mosques and engaged in a debate concerning such matters as pre-destination and similar controversial issues. They were debating hotly with raised voices. The Imam stopped and greeted them. They answered his greeting and stood up reverently, asking him to join them. He declined, saying:

"O people who venture into matters that neither concern them nor are of any benefit to them! Don't you know that there are servants of God who have been urged to maintain silence, not because they are incapable or dumb, but because of their trepidation? For indeed they are the most eloquent, intelligent and wise, who have knowledge of God. But when they remember the greatness of God, their tongues fail, their hearts cave in, their minds are perplexed, and their intellects are confused in front of God's might, majesty and glory. When they recover from this state, they approach God by the means of pious deeds, counting themselves among wrongdoers and the erring, even though they are exempt from the faults of laxity and negligence. But they are not satisfied with their little service of God, nor do they regard as plenty the works they have done for the sake of God. They do not flaunt their works before Him, and whenever you see them you will find them overcast with sorrow and awe, fearful and apprehensive. So where do you stand, O band of mavericks, in relation to them? Don't you know that the most knowledgeable of people concerning predestination are those who are the most reticent concerning it, and that the most ignorant of people concerning predestination are those who are most glib about it? O band of mavericks! Today is the first of Sha'ban, named so by our Lord because of the ramification and branching forth of His blessings during it. To be sure, in it your Lord has flung open the gates of His paradise and presented to you the spectacle of its palaces and good things, attainable at the cheapest of prices, in exchange for the easiest of works, and yet you decline them. The accursed Satan too has presented to you the branches of his multifarious evils and afflictions, and you catch hold of the offshoots sent out by Satan, and turn away from the branches of good, whose gates have been laid open for you."

He continued:

"This is the first day of Sha'ban. The branches of its goods are prayer, fasting, zakat, bidding what is right and forbidding what is wrong, kindness towards parents, relatives, and neighbours, resolving conflicts between people, and giving charity to the needy and the poor. You burden yourself with a task of which you have been spared, and venture to probe Divine mysteries, an exercise from which you have been forbidden, as those who try to explore them perish. But if you come to know what our Lord, the Almighty and Glorious, has prepared on this day for His obedient servants, you will cut short what you have been engaged in and start doing what you have been told to do."

They said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, what is it that God has prepared for the obedient on this day?" He replied,

"I will not recount for you anything except what I have heard from the Prophet of Allah. Once the Prophet of Allah dispatched a company of troops towards a people who were staunch infidels; the enemy made a sudden attack at night on Muslims. It was a pitch dark night and the Muslims were fast asleep. No one among them was awake that night except four: Zayd bin Harethah, Abdullah bin Rawahah, Qatadah bin Nu'man and Qays bin Asim Minqari. Each of them was engaged in prayer and reciting the Qur'an at one of the sides of the camp. The enemy rained arrows on the Muslims who could not shield themselves from the assailants, as they did not see because of darkness. Such was their predicament when they suddenly saw lights burst forth from the visages of these four men, which illuminated the battlefield for the Muslim warriors. This gave them strength and morale. Drawing their swords they gave a good fight, killing the attackers, wounding some and taking others captive. On their return when they related the incident to the Prophet, he told them that those lights came from certain acts of theirs performed on the first of Sha'ban. Then he described the acts that each one of them had performed."

"Thereafter he (the Prophet) said, 'When the first day of Sha'ban arrives, Satan spreads out his troops throughout the corners of the earth and its horizons, asking them to try to attract some of God's servants toward themselves. Indeed God Almighty and Glorious also scatters his angels throughout the earth's quarters and horizons, telling them 'Guide My (Continued on Page 7)

Shout 'Allah, Syria and Only Bashar'

Syrians Rally in Support of Their Armed Forces



Syrians gather at the central Omayyad Square in Damascus to pay tribute to the achievements of the Arab Syrian Army on April 16, 2018.

DAMACUS (Dispatches) -- Syrians gathered on Monday in a landmark square here, rallying in support of their armed forces, which succeeded in confronting the unprecedented joint airstrikes by the West over the weekend.

State TV broadcast the rally live from the central Omayyad Square. Protesters waved Syrian flags at the demonstration, dubbed a "salute to the achievements of the Arab Syrian Army," set off fireworks and unleashed celebratory gunfire.

Shouts of "Allah, Syria, and only Bashar," a reference to Syrian President Bashar Assad, rang out.

The joint airstrikes by the United States, Britain and France bombed sites that the three countries claimed were linked to Syria's chemical weapons program but the country has dismantled it several years ago.

A fact-finding mission from the Organization of the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons arrived in Syria to investigate.

Faisal Mekdad, Syria's deputy foreign minister, said Monday that government officials have met with the delegation, which has been in Damascus for three days, a number of times to discuss cooperation.

"Syria stressed during those meetings that it is fully ready to cooperate and to provide necessary facilitations to the delegation to carry out its mission," Mekdad was quoted as saying by state media.

The strikes have ratcheted up international tension, as the U.S. and Russia exchanged threats of retaliation.

Russian President Vladimir Putin said the military strikes violated the UN Charter and that if they continue, "it will inevitably entail chaos in international relations," according to a Kremlin statement on Sunday.

Iran: Zionists Will Receive Response to Aggression

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Bahram Qasemi said here Monday the occupying regime of Israel's recent attack on the T-4 airbase in Syria which left seven Iranians martyred will not remain unanswered.

"Gone are the days when the Zionist regime would hit and run and the resistance forces in the region are able to respond to this crime at an appropriate time," he told a weekly news conference here.

"The occupying regime will sooner or later receive the necessary responses to its recent crime and aggression, and they will regret their misdeed," Qasemi added.

The commander of Iran's ground forces Brigadier General Kiumars Heidari also said that the Zionist regime can no longer threaten the Islamic Republic.

Speaking here ahead of Iran's Army Day, Heidari said Iran's armed forces "are much more powerful than before" and "the

date has been set" for Israel's destruction.

Iran's Army Day is marked on April 18, the same day that the occupying regime of Israel celebrates the 70th anniversary of creation.

Heidari said compared to other countries in the region such as Saudi Arabia, which imports its arms from the West, the armed forces of Iran are produced locally.

Iran's military budget for 2017 was a record \$15.9 billion, up nearly 65% from 2014, with the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) receiving the largest boost with \$7.01 billion, up from \$4.52 billion the year before.

Heidari's remarks were echoed by Iranian Defense Minister Brigadier General Amir Hatami, who stated Sunday that Iran "has reached self-sufficiency" in producing, supplying and exporting weapons made in Iran.

(Continued on Page 7)

Russia-West Tensions Rise With New Sanctions

MOSCOW (Dispatches) -- Russia will not delay adopting legislation in response to new U.S. sanctions, Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Monday, RIA news agency reported.

Senior members of the lower house of parliament have said they are considering legislation to give the Kremlin powers to ban or restrict a list of U.S. imports.

Ryabkov said Moscow was discussing what he called Washington's abuse of the dollar's status as the global reserve currency.

The White House said Monday it is considering additional sanctions on Russia following a suspected poison gas attack in Syria, but has not made a decision yet.

"We are considering additional sanctions on Russia and a decision will be made in the near future," White House spokeswoman Sarah Sanders said in a statement.

She did not say why sanctions would be imposed but the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Nikki Haley, said on Sunday that the United States was preparing new sanctions on Russia over its support of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad.

If the U.S. sanctions are enacted, they will be the second such batch in just over a year.

The United States also imposed sanctions on 24 Russians earlier this month over what U.S. intelligence agencies have said was interference in the U.S. presidential election. Moscow has denied any wrongdoing.

Washington has said it had proof that Syrian forces conducted a deadly chemical weapons attack April 7, although a visit by chemical weapons inspectors to the suspected attack site was delayed Monday.

(Continued on Page 7)