

Leader, Officials Stop Using Telegram

TEHRAN (Press TV) -- Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has stopped using the Telegram messaging application in a show of support for domestic versions and in line with the country's national interests.

The website for the preservation and publication of the works of Ayatollah Khamenei (khamenei.ir) announced on Wednesday that it had stopped its activities on Telegram. The decision comes "in line with safeguarding national interests and removing the monopoly of the Telegram messaging app," read the last message on khamenei.ir's Telegram channel.

Kayhan International

Two Killed in Helicopter Crash in Persian Gulf

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- A rescue helicopter has crashed in the Persian Gulf, killing at least two people on board, IRNA reported on Wednesday.

The helicopter was flying from an offshore rig toward Kish Island on Tuesday, transporting an oil worker who had suffered a heart attack. It said the oil worker and a paramedic died in the crash. Another two passengers are missing, and the pilot survived, it added.

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Viewpoint

Mercenaries at Wit's End as Resistance Movement Gathers Strength

Iran Hosts 35th Int'l Holy Qur'an Contest



UEFA Chief: VAR Could Be Used in Champions League by 2019



'Bolton Spurs Arab States to Create Regional Force in Syria'



Saviour of Humanitarian Values

By: Seyyed Ali Shahbaz

"As long as you enjoy sound physiques and enough time, take the initiative in acting because you may suffer the sudden visit of death that takes you from the surface of the earth to its inside, from its highest point to the lowest, from its affability to its loneliness, from its ease and light to its gloom, and from its wideness to its narrowness where the intimate friend cannot be visited, the ill cannot be called on, and the seeker of help cannot be aided."

Amazing words of wisdom indeed! The statement reflects the realities of life and death. To anyone with a grain of faith or conscience, this passage ought to be an inspiration for striving towards virtue and the doing of good deeds without wasting time or sparing efforts.

Since such dynamic words cannot be those of philosophers, who are mostly men of doubt and error, uncertain about the purpose of creation and the goal of afterlife, were these wise words spoken by some Prophet inspired by God Almighty Himself?

A good question indeed, but the person who pronounced these sentences was not a Prophet nor did God bestow upon him any heavenly scripture. As a matter of fact, he was superior to all Messengers of God, except for the Last and Greatest of them, Prophet Muhammad (SAWA).

This is not an exaggeration or any blasphemous idea, but an article of faith in Islam and the state of certitude it inculcates in the true believers, especially in view of the famous hadith of the Seal of Prophets: *"Husainun minni wa ana min Husain"* (Husain is from me and I am from Husain)."

Imam Husain (AS) needs no introduction. Born on the 3rd of Sha'ban in the year 4 AH in Medina, like his elder brother, Imam Hasan (AS), he was named personally by his grandfather the Prophet on the commandment of God conveyed through the Archangel Gabriel.

It would be repetitive to recount here the many hadith emphasizing his status and the incidents demonstrating his merits during the seven years he spent with his grandfather. One such saying from the Prophet as narrated by the great companion, Salman al-Farsi reads:

"I heard the Prophet of Allah (SAWA) saying, 'Hasan and Husain are my two (grand)sons. Whoever loves them then he loves me. And whoever dislikes them then he dislikes me. And whoever dislikes me then Allah dislikes him. And whomever Allah dislikes, He will throw him into hell face downward.'"

The message of the Messenger of Mercy to all Muslims is obvious from this hadith. Yet many of those who masqueraded as Muslims in that crucial period of the Prophet's departure from the world ignored this admonition.

The result was the usurpation of the right of political leadership of Imam Husain's (AS) father, Imam Ali (AS), by a group that also seized the orchard of Fadak from Imam Husain's mother, Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA), and then went on to hurl on the Prophet's Immaculate Daughter the door of her house after burning it, thereby laying the foundation for the occurrence of the heartrending tragedy of Karbala 50 years later in 61 AH.

With time and space forcing me to skip the sequence of events after the tragedy of 11 AH, I wish to draw the attention of the readers of this column to 50 AH, when God entrusted Imam Husain (AS) with the mantle of Imamate following the martyrdom through poisoning of his brother, Imam Hasan (AS) by Mu'awiyah ibn Abu Sufyan who was now masquerading as caliph in violation of the Treaty of 41 AH he had signed with the Prophet's elder grandson.

For the next 11 years till his tragic martyrdom in Karbala, Imam Husain (AS) spared no efforts to guide the Muslims during the Godless rule of the crafty Mu'awiyah, through such enlightening admonitions as mentioned at the head of this column.

The famous Supplication of the Day of Arafah (9th Zilhijja) by Imam Husain (AS) is indicative of the sensitiveness of those times. Mu'awiyah despite his criminal nature was clever enough to conceal his crimes under what appeared to be an Islamic cloak and did not allow matters to reach a boiling point that would have brought about confrontation with Imam Husain (AS). Accordingly, he advised his libertine son, Yazid, whom he imposed on the Muslims, in violation of the terms of the Treaty of 41 AH with Imam Hasan (AS).

Thus, when Yazid demanded oath of allegiance from the representative of God on earth, Imam Husain (AS) had to act in the most prudent manner, and he did by leaving Medina and taking up residence in Mecca in the vicinity of the holy Ka'ba in 60 AH. Incidentally he arrived in Mecca on the 3rd of Sha'ban, his birthday.

Here the people, remembering the Prophet's statements, such as the hadith that says, *"Hasan and Husain are the Two Leaders of the Youth of Paradise,"* gathered around him to learn the fundamentals of Islam and to acquire knowledge in the matters of science, commerce, rights, obligations, morals, ethics, etc. The tyrant Yazid felt alarmed, and from Damascus dispatched assassins in the garb of pilgrims to murder the Prophet's grandson.

Imam Husain (AS), in order to avoid any bloodshed in this most inviolable place, left for Iraq four months later on the 8th of Zilhijja, especially in view of the fact that he had received at least twelve thousand letters from the people of Kufa, and as the vicegerent of the Prophet could not ignore their invitation. The rest is history; how he was deceived by the fickle of faith Kufans, who under threats and in pursuit of transient wealth and worldly posts, turned against their own master, ignoring the calamities of afterlife.

I end the column with another thought-provoking passage from Imam Husain (AS) to the Kufans before his martyrdom in Karbala:

"So then, fie and grief be on you, O group. When you appealed for our help grievously and we hurried for your help exhaustingly, you unsheathed against us a sword that had been in our right hands and ignited against us the fire that we had struck against your and our enemy. You therefore formed groups surrounding your allies and became the support of your enemies although they did not spread justice among you and you lost all hope in them."

Leader: Beside Defense, We Also Need Assault Plan



Ayatollah Khamenei addresses a group of intelligence ministry officials and staff in Tehran, April 18, 2018.

Kayhan Int'l Political Desk

TEHRAN -- Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei here on Wednesday called for an "offensive" to confront a "big and complex intelligence war" being waged by the enemies against Iran.

"One of the main pivots of this

war is to infiltrate and influence the calculation system of the state officials and people's beliefs," the Leader said in a meeting with a group of intelligence ministry staff and officials.

"In this war, besides defending and blocking openings of intrusion, an offensive must also be carried out and any negligence and

oversimplification must be gravely avoided," Ayatollah Khamenei said.

"We are now in the middle of a big battlefield, where on one side is the Islamic Republic and on the other, there is a vast and powerful front of the enemies," the Leader added.

Intelligence services of the oppo-

site side, Ayatollah Khamenei said, are the pivotal point of this confrontation, but despite having all the means, they have not been able to do "any damn important thing".

"However, if we act negligently in this war, we will be defeated and if we oversimplify the confrontation, we will receive a blow."

The Leader touched on different aspects of the enemies' complex intelligence war, ranging from tapping into and stealing information to changing the calculations of the decision-makers and people's beliefs in addition to causing economic and financial disturbance and security turmoil.

Ayatollah Khamenei said foreign intelligence services have played a role in fueling Iran's currency crisis in an effort to destabilize the economy.

"When we look carefully at recent issues in the currency market, the footprints of foreign intelligence is evident," he said.

"In this war, we have to stand up to the opposite front's plans, and in order to overcome the enemy, in addition to the defense, there should be an assault plan, so that the playground is determined by our intelligence apparatus," the Leader added.

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Iran Marks National Army Day With Big Parades

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- President Hassan Rouhani said Iran would make or buy any weapons it needed to defend itself in a region beset by "invading powers", as the military paraded missiles and soldiers in front of him on National Army Day.

Fighter jets and bombers flew overhead as Rouhani told the Tehran crowd and a live TV audience on Wednesday that Iran's forces posed no threat to its neighbors.

"We tell the world that we will produce or acquire any weapons we need, and will not wait for their approval ... We tell our neighboring countries that our weapons are not against you, it's

for deterrence," Rouhani said.

"We are not living in a normal region, and we see invading powers have built bases around us. Disregarding the principles of international law, they intervene in regional affairs and invade other countries without UN permission," Rouhani added.

U.S., British and French forces pounded Syria with airstrikes early on Saturday after the Syrian army's remarkable advances in the fight against terrorists, including their expulsion of Takfiri militants from Damascus suburbs.

Britain, France and Germany have proposed fresh EU sanctions

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Human Rights Watch: UAE-Backed Troops Rape African Refugees in Aden

NEW YORK (Dispatches) -- Human Rights Watch (HRW) has revealed that Yemen's UAE-backed ex-officials based in Aden detain and brutally abuse African refugees passing through the war-torn country's southern port city.

The New York-based rights group reported that the former Yemeni officials controlling Aden "torture, rape and execute" the refugees from the Horn of Africa in a detention center and forcibly deport them out to sea.

"Guards at the migrant detention

center in Aden have brutally beaten men, raped women and boys, and sent hundreds out to sea in overloaded boats," said Bill Frelick, refugee rights director at HRW.

Several hundred Ethiopians, Somalis, and Eritreans have been held at the detention center since 2017, the group said.

Separately, the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) also reported the detention, abuse and forcible deportation of refugees in Yemen, without specifying the location.

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Sudan Protests to UN Over Egypt Voting in Disputed Area

KHARTOUM (AFP) -- Sudan said Wednesday it has protested to the UN Security Council against Egypt, accusing Cairo of organizing voting in a disputed border area during last month's Egyptian presidential election.

Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ghandour said Khartoum filed a complaint after Egypt held voting in the Halayeb triangle, a border territory claimed by both Khartoum and Cairo.

Egypt held a presidential election in March that saw Abdel Fattah al-Sisi re-elected for a second term.

"We have complained to the UN Security

Council against Egypt for organising voting in Halayeb during its presidential election in March," Ghandour told lawmakers in parliament on Wednesday.

Ghandour said that between December and March, Egypt had also undertaken some fishing and mining projects in the triangle.

"We have two alternatives to solve the issue, either by negotiations or through international arbitration," Ghandour said, adding that Khartoum had also protested about the demarcation of borders between Egypt and Saudi Arabia that showed "Halayeb as part of Egypt".

"Our position of full sovereignty on Halayeb triangle is something that is not negotiable," he said, but insisted that a military conflict with Egypt was not "an alternative at all" to solve the issue.

Egypt's control of the Halayeb triangle, which lies near the Red Sea in a mineral-rich border region, has been a bone of contention between the two neighbors for decades.

Khartoum says Halayeb has been part of its sovereign territory since shortly after independence in 1956.

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