

UK Propaganda Unit Targets French Muslims

LONDON (Middle East Eye) -- A shadowy UK government propaganda unit that privately declares that it works to "effect behavioral and attitudinal change" among British Muslims has drawn up plans to begin operating in France.

The Research, Information and Communications Unit (RICU), which is based at the Home Office in London, generates films, social media, websites, leaflets and news stories that are intended to influence public opinion while concealing the British government's role in their creation.

Kayhan International



FM Zarif Visits Japan

TOYKO (Dispatches) -- Iranian Foreign Minister Muhammad Javad Zarif traveled to Japan after visiting Turkmenistan and India as part of his efforts to boost the Islamic Republic's relations with the countries in the sanctions era.

Heading a high-ranking delegation, Zarif arrived here at the official invitation of his Japanese counterpart. The Iranian minister planned to meet with senior Japanese officials, including Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and hold talks on ways of boosting bilateral relations in diverse fields.

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Viewpoint

War or Talks, Both Out of Question

Farewell O Mother of All True Believers

By: Seyyed Ali Shahbaz

"All praise is due to Allah Who has made us the progeny of Abraham, the seed of Ishmael, the descendants of Ma'ad, the substance of Mudar, and Who made us the custodians of His House and the servants of its sacred precincts, making for us a House sought for pilgrimage and a shrine of security, and He also gave us authority over the people. This nephew of mine, Muhammad (SAWA), cannot be compared with any other man: if you compare his wealth with that of others, you will not find him a man of wealth, for wealth is a vanishing shadow and a fickle thing... He has sought Khadija daughter of Khuwaylid for marriage."

The above passage found in the acclaimed biographical work of our Sunni brethren "As-Sirat-an-Nabawiyah" of Ibn Hisham, is part of the famous sermon of Abu Taleb (AS) while solemnizing the nuptial of the person destined to be the Almighty's Last Prophet to mankind, with the spotlessly pure lady (at-Taheera), Khadija (SA), the daughter of Khuwaylid Ibn Asad and Fatema bint Za'adah.

Note the words of Abu Taleb. He is praising and invoking the One and Only Creator of the Universe. He is proud of being the descendant of the iconoclast, Abraham. He means to say that the authority he and his clan has over the Arabs, as custodians of Allah's Symbolic House, the Holy Ka'ba, is because of his lineal link to Ishmael and the monotheistic creed of his descendants.

In other words, while officiating the start of marital life for his loving nephew (who has yet to declare his prophetic mission), Abu Taleb is not invoking any of the idols of the Arab pantheon, such as Laat, Manat, Uzzah, and Habal -- as most of the Arabs used to do prior to becoming Muslims and claiming to be the "Sahaba" or companions of the Prophet Muhammad (SAWA).

This is ample proof of the fact that unlike the Abu Sufyans, the Abu Jahls, and the other idolaters of Mecca, whose progeny would one day masquerade as caliphs of Islam -- in order to distort the mission of Prophet Muhammad (SAWA) -- Abu Taleb was a "Hanif" (the Upright Monotheist), the term God has used in the Holy Qur'an for his great ancestor Abraham.

This means that on the eve of the advent of Islam, the land of Hejaz still had the primordial Muslims amongst its inhabitants, in contrast to the freewheeling ways of the deviated and debauched majority.

What I intend to emphasize here is that neither the Prophet had any remotest links with the polytheists, nor his family, and this includes the lady (a distant cousin) whom he was marrying and who as a member of Abraham's illustrious offspring was a monotheist by birth and belief.

Khadija (SA), the Richest Lady of Arabia, was to spend 25 years of marital bliss with the seemingly poor orphan of Abdullah Ibn Abdul-Muttalib, she chose as her husband over numerous suitors, having tested his honesty and integrity while employing him as manager of her trade caravans.

Fifteen years later, when God would command him to declare his universal mission as the Last of the Divine Messengers, she would immediately believe in her husband's Divine Mission. Thereafter, Khadija (SA) would spend all her proverbial wealth for the promotion of Islam and the defence of Muslims, by clothing, feeding and sheltering the neo-Muslim community, to the extent that when she breathed her last, no material inheritance remained for her only surviving child, daughter Fatema (SA).

The loving husband in turn would never take any spouse as long as the First Lady of Islam was alive. Even in the last ten years of his life when out of social necessity and to break the un-Islamic customs of Arabia he had to marry nine other women, he would always cherish the memory of the loyal Khadija (SA).

These undeniable facts are mentioned in the works of our Sunni brethren as well. For example, the author of "Sahih Bukhari" mentions that once when one of his wives called Ayesha tried to mock the memory of "Omm al-Momineen" (Mother of all True Believers), Hazrat Khadija (AS), the Prophet reprimanded her, saying: "By God, the Almighty did not grant me a better wife than her. She believed in me when the people used to mock at me and she acknowledged me when the people denied me. She shared her wealth and property with me and she bore me children which I was not destined to have through other women."

Today, while offering heartfelt condolences on the passing away anniversary of Hazrat Khadija (SA) to her direct descendant (and in fact the direct descendant of Abu Taleb as well), the awaited Saviour of mankind, Prophet Muhammad's (SAWA) 12th and last Infallible Heir, Imam Mahdi (may God hasten his advent), we picture the grief of the orphan Fatema az-Zahra (SA).

After performing the last rites, the Prophet consoled his orphaned daughter and for a while became speechless to her question: O Father, where has my mother gone? He broke his silence when Gabriel descended, and revealed the following to him:

"Your Lord commands you to inform Fatema that He sends His blessings upon her and says: Your Mother is in a house of brocade, its corners are made of gold, and its poles are of rubies. It is located between the houses of Asiya bint Muzahem (the tyrant Pharaoh's virtuous wife) and Maryam bint Imran -- the Virgin Mother of Prophet Jesus (AS)."

Little Fatema (SA) was a picture of profound patience, and expressing gratitude in the Divine Court, she said: "Surely Allah is Salaam (Eternal Peace), and peace is from Him and to Him."

For the moment, the little girl of hardly seven years finds solace in the arms of her father. She now bravely takes on the role of housekeeper for the widower Prophet to the extent that she would be known as "Omm Abiha" (Mother of her Own Father). But over a dozen years later, with the departure from the world of the Seal of Prophets, Fatema (SA) would find her inheritance sized, the right of her husband (the son of Abu Taleb) usurped, and the door of her house set on fire, by those ingrates who had survived on her mother Khadija's wealth, and who will now masquerade as caliphs of political heirs of her father, even though God and the Prophet had already appointed Imam Ali as the Vicegerent at Ghadeer.

To end this brief column, I cite a famous statement of the Prophet -- also mentioned by our Sunni brethren -- calling Hazrat Khadija (SA) as one of the four most perfectly virtuous ladies of all time -- the other three being: Mary the Mother of Jesus, Asiya bint Muzahim, the monotheist wife of the tyrant Pharaoh, and last but not the least, the noblest of them all Hazrat Fatema Zahra (SA).

Iran Participates at Dialogue of Asian Civilizations Conference in Beijing



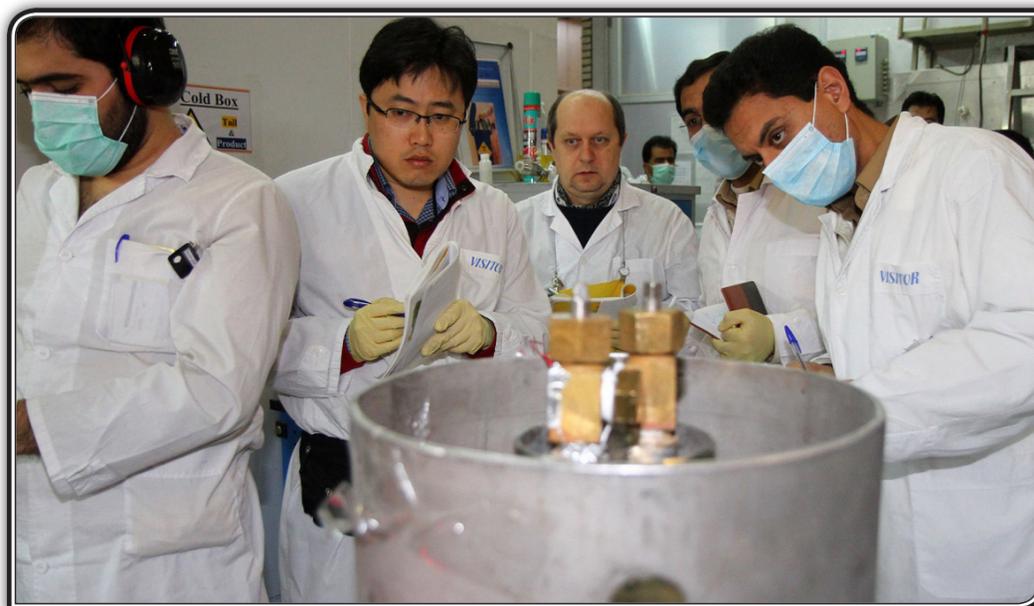
Belgium's Wilmots Appointed as Iran's New Head Coach



In 'Year of Shame' Amnesty Slams Saudi Regime's Arrests, Torture, Mass Execution



Iran Officially Halts Some Nuclear Commitments



International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors seal after disconnecting the connections between the twin cascades for 20% uranium production at Iran's Natanz nuclear power plant on January, 20, 2014.

TEHRAN (Dispatches) -- Iran has officially stopped some commitments under a 2015 nuclear deal with world powers following an order from its national security council, an informed official in the country's atomic energy body said Wednesday.

Last week, Iran notified China, France, Germany, Russia and the United Kingdom of its decision to halt some commitments under the nuclear deal, a year after the United States unilaterally withdrew from the accord and re-imposed sanc-

tions. Under the nuclear deal, Tehran was allowed to produce low-enriched uranium with a 300-kg limit, and produce heavy water with a stock capped around 130 tonnes. Tehran could ship the excess amounts out of the country for storage or sale.

The official said Iran has no limit from now for production of enriched uranium and heavy water.

Iran's initial moves do not appear to violate the nuclear deal yet.

But Iran has warned that unless the world powers protect Iran's economy from U.S. sanctions within 60 days, Iran would start enriching uranium at higher level.

The deal also caps the level of purity to which Iran can enrich uranium at 3.67 percent. It is also well below the 20 percent level to which Iran enriched uranium before the deal.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei said on Tuesday that Tehran would

not negotiate with the United States on another nuclear deal.

Senior negotiator Abbas Araqchi said last week Iran has put a "step-by-step" withdrawal from the 2015 nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), on the agenda.

"We have not left the JCPOA so far, but we have put such a move on our agenda and that will happen step by step," he said.

The spokesman for the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) also said the country has a host of different measures to take if its nuclear case is sent back to the UN Security Council.

"The Islamic Republic of Iran will take drastic and major steps to realize the right of the Iranian nation," Behrouz Kamalvandi told Press TV when asked about Iran's possible reaction if the case was sent back to the Security Council.

"We have so far talked about different measures. It could be leaving the deal and it could be other actions as to the NPT (the Non-Proliferation Treaty) or any other things," he said.

"If they take Iran's case to the Security Council, they will ruin the deal ... and the deal will not be alive anymore," Kamalvandi added.

The official said the main objective of the JCPOA was to remove sanctions against Iran, but the restrictive measures are still in place despite Tehran's full compliance.

Non-Emergency Staff Ordered to Leave Baghdad New U.S. Shenanigans Don't Impress Anyone

BAGHDAD (Dispatches) -- Germany said on Wednesday it is keeping the number of staff at its embassy and consulate in Iraq constant after Washington ordered the departure of non-emergency government employees from Iraq.

A senior British military official also told reporters at the Pentagon that he had seen no increased risk after U.S. expressions of concern about threats from Iranian-backed forces.

A German foreign ministry spokeswoman said the German Embassy in Baghdad was fully staffed and working even as the country's defense ministry said earlier on Wednesday that training operations by German armed forces in Iraq had been suspended.

A defense ministry spokesman said Germany has no indications of its own of attacks, adding that training programs could resume in the coming days.

Focus Online said the decision

had been taken in coordination with partner countries fighting Daesh in the region.

The assessment echoed remarks by British official Maj. Gen. Chris Ghika who is the deputy commander of the U.S.-led coalition allegedly fighting Daesh in Iraq and Syria.

A few hours later, the United States Central Command issued an unusual rebuke, saying Ghika's remarks run "counter to the identified credible threats available to intelligence from U.S. and allies regarding Iranian-backed forces in the region".

The rare public dispute highlights a central problem for the Trump administration as it seeks to rally allies and global opinion against Iran.

Spain on Tuesday withdrew a frigate from a U.S.-led naval group in the Persian Gulf because it was now focusing on Iran rather than an agreed objective to mark an historic seafaring

(Continued on Page 7)

Fresh From Gaza Feat, Palestinians Mark Nakba Day

GAZA (Dispatches) -- Scores of Palestinians were injured and two fires broke out in southern occupied territories as thousands protested along the Gaza fence for the annual commemoration of Nakba Day, or day of catastrophe.

The occupying regime of Israel's military said around 10,000 demonstrators were along the Gaza fence, while crowds also demonstrated in the occupied West Bank.

Clashes erupted along parts of the fence, with the health ministry in Gaza reporting at least 50 people wounded.

Several incendiary balloons were launched from the blockaded coastal enclave into southern Occupied Palestine, sparking fires in agricultural fields outside the communities of Nahal Oz and Alumim.

Palestinian media reported Zionist troops firing live bullets, tear gas and skunk spray at protesters trying to breach the Israeli fence along Gaza.

The occupying regime deployed additional snipers and hundreds of

troops in main friction spots along the Gaza fence in anticipation of protests during Nakba Day marking the creation of Israel in 1948.

Hundreds of thousands were expelled from their homes during the 1948 war which Israel waged with Western help to occupy Palestine.

In the West Bank city of Ramallah, protesters held up giant paper keys to symbolize their will to return to the lands and homes.

Every year, Palestinians commemorate the Nakba Day on which more than 700,000 Palestinians fled or were expelled from their land.

There have also been regular protests and clashes along the Gaza fence for more than a year.

According to the Palestinian health ministry, 305 Palestinians, including 59 children and 10 women, have been killed by Israeli forces since the beginning of the Great Return marches in March 2018.

The majority died during the weekly protests, though others were (Continued on Page 7)