

Iranian Radars Can Detect Enemy Moves 3,000 km Off

TEHRAN -- Commander of the Iranian Army Air Defense Force Brigadier General Alireza Sabahifard on Saturday underlined the country's high military capabilities and deterrence power, saying the Air Defense Force is able to monitor even the slightest movements of enemies within the range of 3,000 km.

"The Air Defense Force of the Islamic Republic of Iran has taken important measures in recent years to increase national security," Brigadier General Sabahifard stated.

"Today, the Air Defense Force is equipped with detection and identification systems such as radars with a range (Continued on Page 7)

# Kayhan International

Russia: Ukraine Forces Shelled Nuclear Plant

MOSCOW (Reuters) -- Russia's defense ministry on Saturday accused Ukrainian forces of shelling the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant complex three times in the last 24 hours.

Reuters could not verify the battlefield report, and there was no immediate response from Kyiv to the allegation. Russia and Ukraine have traded blame for shelling near the plant, which on Thursday sparked fires in the ash pits of a nearby coal power station that disconnected the plant from the power grid.

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**Viewpoint**

**The Folly of Ever Trusting the Devilish US**

**President: Iran, a Regional Hub for Health Services**



**Junior Men Handball Team Qualifies for World Championship**



**Iraqi PM: Political Crisis Undermining Security Achievements**



## Ex-Afghan President Ghani Rues Trusting U.S.

DUBAI (Dispatches) -- Former Afghan president Ashraf Ghani has accepted "shared" responsibility for the fall of the country into Taliban hands, blaming himself for trusting the U.S. which negotiated a deal with the militant group that brought about his ouster.

"One has to take responsibility for trusting a partner that then trampled our sovereignty and imposed the release of 5,000 [Taliban] prisoners, among them, the largest drug dealers in history in the region," Ghani said in an interview with state-financed U.S. broadcaster, Public Broadcasting Service (PBS).

"Responsibility is shared, and where I take responsibility for is to have trusted our key partner that signed our withdrawal agreement -- and for one full year -- its (U.S.) forces were not attacked by the Taliban, but our forces paid the highest price," he said, referring to Washington's deal with the militant group not to attack U.S. and allied occupation forces across Afghanistan while leaving them free to wage terror attacks against Afghan government forces and civilians.

The deal -- known as the Doha agreement signed between the administration of former U.S. president Donald Trump and the Taliban -- did not involve the official Afghan government, provided a date for total withdrawal of American forces from Afghanistan and forced the Washington-sponsored Ghani administration to release 5,000 Taliban prisoners.

Ghani slammed the U.S.-Taliban deal, insisting that Washington's "assumptions regarding the Taliban were highly flawed" and "based on wishful thinking."

He said the preparation and implementation of the pact "will go down in the history as one of the worst agreements ever concluded."

"The U.S. propped up the Taliban... The Trump administration -- without the Trump administration's role, the Taliban would not be here today," Ghani said.

Ghani went on to blast Washington for establishing what he described as "false assurance systems".

"We were assured that a ceasefire would take place and political negotiations regarding the future government will be an indispensable part of the agreement, which they were not."

He also blamed successive U.S. administrations and their agents and contractors in Afghanistan for the widespread and growing corruption across his impoverished nation.

"Where did corruption start from?" he asked. "It started with a -- with buying of the warlords

by the Bush administration. The scale of corruption in Afghanistan is a confluence between your new barons, which represent Beltway contractors, and military industrial contractors, and Afghan new and old warlords."

"My agenda was to deal with this corruption and to contain it," he also claimed, describing it as "a cancer".

"But, simultaneously, you need to see our sacrifices. We were losing between 200 and 400 soldiers and officers a day," Ghani said. "A time comes when even steel has a snapping point, and that's the point it came, because the cities and the provinces where a lot of fighting took place could not receive sustained support."

The former Afghan leader further accused Washington and NATO of not sticking to their pledged withdrawal date of 2024, suggesting that their hasty pullout contributed to his government's inability to better plan for security measures.

"We need to understand, 20 years of engagement had been building systems based on the premises of 2024 departure," he said. "There was an agreed date with NATO and with the international community. It was 2024."

Ghani said key was predictability. "Had the U.S. decided to tell us in the -- on January 2019 that it will withdraw by 2021, we would have been able to plan."

The U.S. invaded Afghanistan in October 2001 following the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks in the United States, despite the fact that no Afghan national was involved in the attacks. Hundreds of thousands of Afghans have been killed as a result of the U.S. war of aggression on the country.

American forces had occupied the country for about two decades under the pretext of the so-called "war on terror". But as the U.S. forces left Afghanistan, the Taliban overran the capital Kabul last August. The militants entered the presidential palace after Ghani had fled the country.

The U.S. was also forced to shut down its huge embassy in Kabul and evacuate diplomats and staff by helicopters.

## Wall Street Journal: U.S. Alarmed as Iran, Russia Cement Alliance



Russia launched an Iranian satellite this month from a facility it controls in Kazakhstan.

TEHRAN — Iran and Russia are forging tighter ties than ever, as their isolation drives the two staunch American foes toward more trade and military cooperation, alarming Washington, the Wall Street Journal has reported.

In July, Iran became the world's largest buyer of Russian wheat. This month, Russia launched an Iranian satellite into space in a rare success for Tehran's space program. And last week, Iran's military hosted joint drone exercises with

Russian forces, as the U.S. warns Moscow is preparing to receive Iranian drones for use in the war in Ukraine, the newspaper claimed.

"The flurry of activity shows how the Ukraine war has accelerated efforts to bring together Russia and Iran, which have often talked of closer ties but with few results. The two states share an opposition to a U.S.-led world order and both suffer from tough U.S. sanctions. But until this year, their relations had been weighed down by oppos-

ing agendas in Syria, by Iran's historic suspicion of foreign interference and by Russia's historical role as the dominant power in Central Asia and the Caucasus," it said.

According to the Journal, a closer Russia-Iran alliance would help both countries mitigate the impact of Western sanctions by finding new markets for their products and boosting military cooperation. U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan recently called the burgeoning Russia-Iran ties a "profound

threat." The growing ties were punctuated by Russian President Vladimir Putin's visit to Tehran in July, in his second foreign trip since he ordered the military operation in Ukraine on Feb. 24, the paper said. Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi traveled to Moscow in January, when the two countries pledged more economic and military cooperation, it added.

Overall, bilateral trade is up 10% between Russia and Iran this year. In 2021, trade between the two countries surged 80% higher to \$4 billion, according to Russia.

Some observers say that apart from food and military cooperation, the relationship still has a long way to go, the Journal said. China traded \$14.8 billion worth of non-oil goods and services with Tehran last year, according to Beijing's customs statistics, and the two countries have a 25-year, \$400 billion trade agreement. China is also major consumer of Russian oil that is being shunned in much of the Western world.

Esfandiyar Batmanghelidj, chief executive of the Bourse & Bazaar Foundation, a think tank focused on economic diplomacy, said a revived nuclear deal—which Washington and Tehran appear on the cusp of clinching—could spark more Russian investment in Iran, the Journal said.

(Continued on Page 7)

## Judge: U.S. Families Not Entitled to Afghan Assets

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- A U.S. judge has ruled that victims of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks should not be allowed to seize billions of dollars of Afghanistan's central bank assets to satisfy court judgments against the Taliban.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Sarah Netburn in Manhattan stated that Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) was immune from jurisdiction, and that allowing the seizures would effectively endorse the militant group as the Afghan government, a call that can only be made by the U.S. president.

"The Taliban's victims have fought for years for justice, accountability and compensation. They are entitled to no less," Netburn wrote.

"But the law limits what compensation the court may authorize, and those limits put the DAB's assets beyond its authority."

Netburn's recommendation is to be reviewed by U.S. District Judge George Daniels in Manhattan, who also oversees the litigation and can overturn her recommendation.

The ruling marks a defeat for four groups of creditors that waged legal action against a variety of defendants, including the Al-Qaeda terrorist group that they hold responsible for the September 11 attacks, and obtained default judgments after the alleged defendants failed to show up in court.

The groups have been trying to tap into some \$7 billion of Afghan cen-

tral bank funds that are frozen at the Federal Reserve Bank in New York.

After the U.S. military occupation of Afghanistan, Taliban and Al-Qaeda militants were ousted from the country in late 2001, but the Taliban returned to power a year ago when American and other Western troops withdrew from the country.

In an executive order in February, U.S. President Joe Biden ordered \$3.5 billion of that sum set aside "for the benefit of the Afghan people," leaving 9/11 victims to pursue the remainder in court.

The U.S. government took no position at the time on whether the creditor groups were entitled to recover funds under the so-called Terrorist Risk Insurance Act of 2002.

It further called on Netburn and Daniels to view exceptions to sovereign immunity narrowly, citing the risks of interference with the president's power to conduct foreign relations, and possible challenges to American property located abroad.

Nearly 3,000 people died on September 11, 2001, when passenger planes were allegedly flown into New York's World Trade Center, the Pentagon in northern Virginia, and a Pennsylvania field.

The official claim of airlines striking the structures has been strongly challenged by many critics, citing lack of verifiable evidence and close review of televised coverage of the incidents.

## Ebtehaj Laid to Rest in Rasht

TEHRAN -- The body of distinguished contemporary Iranian poet Amir-Hushang Ebtehaj, who died earlier this month at age 94, was laid to rest in his home town on Saturday.

Ebtehaj, best known under his nom de plume of Sayeh (The Shadow), was buried at Mohtasham Garden in Rasht where his family and a deluge of his fans and friends

attended the ceremony.

Hundreds of Iranians had a day earlier attended his funeral service in the capital to pay farewell to the poet, who shot to prominence after composing lyrical poems themed on love and solitude as well as reflections on the woes of life.

Ebtehaj died of renal failure in his home in Cologne, Germany, on August 10 and

his body was transferred to Iran ahead of Friday's service, which was attended by a crowd of officials, artists and admirers.

"Father always said: I want to return to Rasht where I belong," Ebtehaj's daughter, Yalda, said at the gathering. "Although his body will be buried, he will live on in this country with his poetry... he always was with the Iranian people in their sorrow and

happiness; his heart was full of the love of Iranian people."

The poet was one of the founders of the Iranian Writers' Association (IWA), established in 1968.

In a message, President Ebrahim Raisi lauded the poet for "his role in the rich treasure of Persian literature" and for his "anti-hegemony" poems.