

CAIRO (Reuters) -- A historic neo-Islamic ministry in central Cairo was engulfed in flames on Saturday, only days after its employees had moved to premises in a new capital city under construction in the desert 45km east of Cairo. The fire appeared mainly confined to the top floor of the Ministry of Religious Endowments, or Awqaf, building, although flames were seen shooting out of a second floor window as well, according to a Reuters reporter. A committee was being formed to determine its cause and the amount of damage sustained.

Kayhan International

WASHINGTON (Reuters) -- Two U.S. Navy sailors have been arrested on charges of handing over sensitive national security material to China, U.S. officials said Thursday. Petty Officer Wenheng Zhao, 26, was charged with conspiracy and bribetaking in connection with taking nearly \$15,000 in exchange for photographs and videos of sensitive U.S. military information, the officials said. U.S. Navy sailor, Jinchao Wei, whose age was not disclosed, was charged with conspiring to send national defense information to China in exchange for thousands of dollars.

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Viewpoint
The Enlightening Message of the Holy Qur'an

Sri Lanka, Iran Agree to Boost Trade, Tourism Ties

Iran's Youth Weightlifting Team Finish Runners-Up in Asia

Senior Zionist Regime Officials Discuss Regime Collapse to Draw 'Action Plans'

Former U.S. National Security Council Official: Backing Israel No Longer Serves U.S. Interests

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- A former U.S. official who directly managed the Israel-Palestine file believes it's time to fundamentally reconsider the U.S.-Israel relationship, arguing that American support for the occupying regime no longer serves strategic U.S. interests.

Steven Simon, the former U.S. National Security Council senior director for the Middle East and North Africa under the Obama administration, recently released the book "Grand Delusion: The Rise and Fall of American Ambition in the Middle East." In it, he skewers the decades of U.S. policy in the Middle East that has largely remained unchanged through successive administrations.

Simon's arguments are all the more relevant with the Zionist regime finding itself at a dramatic inflection point -- with its own direction, relations with the Palestinians and a potential normalization deal with Saudi Arabia, all against the backdrop of U.S. involvement (or lack thereof) in those matters.

"It's empty-nest syndrome," says Simon of U.S. reluctance to press the reset button. "The chicks fly the coop, they hang out with the wrong people. 'Why don't they come home for dinner anymore and ask for advice' -- if you're a parent, that's really vexing and it's hard to learn to let go," he observes.

"Everybody's so interested in this current crisis precisely because it seems to be like a tipping point," he says of the fierce protests against the Netanyahu regime's efforts to weaken the judiciary. "The message of the book, to the extent that it's relevant to the crisis that's going on now back there, is simply that it's not our problem," he adds.

As Simon sees it, "what we're looking at now goes back to the 1930s at least. Now the chickens are coming home to roost in a fairly big way. There are technical issues, but the issues are sort of much deeper," he says.

This leads to the crux of the matter, in Simon's eyes: issues relating to Israel are strictly a political issue rather than a strategic one. "Why would the administration pick a fight with the current regime in Israel over something that the United States simply has no control over -- precisely because it's so deep? There isn't a strategic stake involved, and in the absence of the strategic stake, it's really just all about politics."

Simon points to the current political environment, whose roots lay in the late '90s, as one creating a structural disadvantage for Democrats, since the party as a

whole is moving in a different direction to the Israeli regime. "So why, when there's an American election coming up where the stakes are truly immense, would the Biden administration walk into a minefield for this? It would appear to me to be deeply imprudent," he says.

"From my former Washington perspective, the issue is what uses up air in the room -- so you've got this campaign that's really fraught. It's dealing with a lot of serious issues and deep issues, in an American context, and the stakes are really high. Why would you allocate bandwidth to this issue? It's simply something you don't want out there. It crowds out other stuff," Simon argues.

He also claims that matters ostensibly related to strategic affairs such as military aid are actually political matters at their core. "The kinds of things that Israel wants from the U.S. are generally easy to provide. A lot of it is financial. We have a \$21 trillion GDP -- who cares if you give \$4 billion a year to Israel [in military aid]? As a practical political matter, it's pocket change and it's well spent, so you do it," he says. This extends to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and peace process. Simon says the United States began to realize during Barack Obama's first term that it "had no juice" and when then-Secretary of State John Kerry's efforts during the second term were not met with much enthusiasm.

"My main takeaway was that, in terms of the traditional agenda, the relationship was over and the U.S. and Israel were in a very different place than they had been," he says of his time in the White House. Simon was at the National Security Council from 2011-2012 and worked on counterterrorism and Mideast security policy at the council from 1994-1999, having spent 15 years at the State Department prior to that.

On Israelis and Palestinians, Simon notes that the U.S. has gradually lost influence. He argues that the foundations of the U.S.-Israel relationship were grounded in the liberal temper of a certain era, first established by former President Harry Truman. The relationship evolved from being values-based to one based on strategy.

The prevailing wisdom in Washington has been that the occupying regime of Israel is a strategic ally. Relations between the two regimes were based on the idea that they broadly share the same strategic outlook: Both are dedicated to counter-terrorism; both exchange intelligence and advanced

IRGC Navy Gets New Missile Systems, Drones



New drones and 1,000-km range missiles were delivered to the IRGC Navy during a ceremony on Saturday.

TEHRAN -- Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) navy on Saturday took delivery of sophisticated homegrown missile systems, unmanned aerial vehicles and armament featuring state-of-the-art technologies suitable for electronic warfare. The new hardware including drones and 1,000-km range missiles was supplied to the IRGC naval force during a ceremony attended by IRGC chief Major General Hussein Salami, IRGC Navy chief Rear Admiral Alireza Tangsiri, and other military officials.

They have all been developed by military experts at Aerospace Industries Organization (AIO), a subordinate of the Iranian defense

ministry and a leading high-tech complex headquartered in Tehran, the Marine Industries Organization, the Iran Aviation Industries Organization (IAIO), Iran Electronics Industries (IEI), and Iranian knowledge-based firms.

Various types of reconnaissance and combat drones, as well as different types of armored command and logistics vehicles, surveillance systems, and electronic warfare systems are among the equipment added to the capabilities of the IRGC's navy.

The IRGC navy also took delivery of different types of cruise missile launcher trucks, radar and command systems, and several

hundred cruise and ballistic missiles with ranges between 300 and 1,000 kilometers.

In remarks at the event, Admiral Tangsiri described the new equipment as a "major and effective step" on the path of expanding the combat capabilities of the IRGC navy.

He noted that the new cruise and ballistic missiles are furnished with artificial intelligence, have longer ranges, can be prepared for launch instantly, destroy the enemy's electronic warfare systems, and hit designated targets from various directions.

The new drones have longer flight endurance, are armed with

larger and heavier munitions, can be used in electronic warfare circumstances, detonate mobile targets, and strike naval targets with great pinpoint accuracy, he said.

Iranian military experts and engineers have in recent years made remarkable breakthroughs in manufacturing a broad range of indigenous equipment, making the armed forces self-sufficient.

Iranian officials have repeatedly underscored that the country will not hesitate to strengthen its military capabilities, including its missile power, which are entirely meant for defense, and that Iran's defense capabilities will be never subject to negotiations.

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has repeatedly called for efforts to maintain and boost Iran's defense capabilities.

Earlier this week, Washington said it could soon offer to put armed sailors and Marines on commercial ships in the Persian Gulf.

Last month, it said it would send additional F-35 and F-16 fighter jets, along with a warship to the Middle East, to monitor waterways. About a fifth of the world's crude oil passes through the Strait of Hormuz between Iran and Oman.

Admiral Tangsiri said Saturday the new missiles had better precision as well as longer range. "The cruise missiles can attack several targets simultaneously and the commands can be altered after take-off."

(Continued on Page 7)

Cyberattack Hits Hospital Computer Systems Across U.S.

WASHINGTON (Dispatches) -- A cyberattack has disrupted hospital computer systems across the United States, forcing emergency rooms in several states to close and ambulances to be diverted.

The U.S. has the highest maternal mortality rate among industrialized countries, and Black women have a three times higher risk of dying during childbirth than white women.

Many primary care services remained closed on Friday as security experts worked to determine the extent of the problem and resolve it.

The "data security incident" began Thursday at facilities operated by Prospect Medical Holdings, which is based in California and has hospitals and clinics there and in Texas, Connecticut, Rhode Island and Pennsylvania.

"Upon learning of this, we took our systems offline to protect them and launched an investigation with the help of third-party cybersecurity specialists," the company said

in a statement. "While our investigation continues, we are focused on addressing the pressing needs of our patients as we work diligently to return to normal operations as quickly as possible."

Cyber attacks and data hacking have been on the rise globally in recent years. In the U.S., such attacks have compromised the security of universities, public school systems, hospitals, local governments and federal agencies.

In most ransomware attacks, cybercriminals seek out vulnerabilities in security systems to gain access to data like personal information. They then hold that data hostage, often threatening to make it public or otherwise releasing it unless they are paid a ransom by a certain deadline.

In June, several U.S. agencies, including the Department of Energy, were hit in a hacking spree by Russian cybercriminals that affected private companies and public institutions, according to the top U.S. cybersecurity agency.

Experts say there's already been \$450 million in ransomware payments globally in the just the first half of 2023, a marked increase from 2022 when payments are estimated to be less than \$500 million for the entire year.

The hack caused chaos in medical facilities in several states. In Connecticut, the emergency departments at Manchester Memorial and Rockville General hospital were closed for much of Thursday and patients were diverted to other nearby medical centers.

The FBI in Connecticut said it was with "law enforcement partners and the victim entities" but could not comment further on an ongoing investigation.

Elective surgeries, outpatient appointments, blood drives and other services were suspended, and while the emergency departments reopened late Thursday, many primary care services remained closed on Friday, according to the Eastern Connecticut Health Network, which runs the facili-

ties. Patients were being contacted individually, according to the network's website.

Similar disruptions also were reported at other facilities system-wide.

In Pennsylvania, the attack affected services at facilities including the Crozer-Chester medical center in Upland, Taylor hospital in Ridley Park, Delaware County Memorial hospital in Drexel Hill and Springfield hospital in Springfield, according to the Philadelphia Inquirer.

In California, the company has seven hospitals in Los Angeles and Orange counties including two behavioral health facilities and a 130-bed acute care hospital in Los Angeles, according to Prospect's website. Messages sent to representatives for these hospitals were not immediately returned.

Condolences
Dear Mr. Morteza Naghikhani,
We are saddened by the passing of your father. May Allah bless his soul and grant you patience and strength.
Kayhan Int'l Management and Staff