



John Sawers

UK foiled Iran nuke-weapon drive: M16

AFP, London

Britain's foreign intelligence chief believes his agents prevented Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons but that the pariah state will become armed within two years, the Daily Telegraph reported yesterday.

In a rare public speech, MI6 boss John Sawers told a meeting of around 100 senior civil servants in London that British agents had foiled Iran's attempts to produce a nuclear weapon as long as four years ago, according to the Telegraph.

"You'd have Iran as a nuclear weapons state in 2008 rather than still being two years away in 2012," the report quoted Sawers as saying last week.

When Iran does finally acquire nuclear status, the intelligence chief warned that Israel and the United States "would face huge dangers".

"I think it will be very tough for any prime minister of Israel or president of the United States to accept a nuclear-armed Iran," he suggested.

The US unleashed a fresh wave of sanctions against Iran on Thursday, ratcheting up pressure to convince Tehran to take seriously concerns about its suspected nuclear weapons programme.

Iran has been subject to severe international economic sanctions over its controversial nuclear programme, which Western powers believe masks an atomic weapons drive despite repeated denials by Tehran.

Sanction call grows after massacre

Russia rejects West's move against Syria regime; questions rise on Turkey jet grounding

AFP, United Nations

The UN Security Council embarked on new talks on a Syria resolution yesterday with western envoys saying the killing of more than 150 people highlighted the need for tough measures.

Syria's regime and opposition yesterday accused each other for the alleged massacre.

France joined the opposition Syrian National Council in urging the UN Security Council to pass a binding resolution against Damascus, which pointed the finger at the "bloodthirsty media" and "terrorists" seeking intervention.

In the first US reaction to what has been widely reported as a massacre, Washington's ambassador Susan Rice said reports coming out of the village of Treimsa were "nightmarish".

In a message on her Twitter account, she said the killings "dramatically illustrate the need for binding (Security Council) measures on Syria."

France also said the killings, in which the UN has said helicopters and "mechanized units" were used, reinforced the need for sanctions.

Meanwhile, Syria's UN backed peace mission chief Major General Robert Mood said his team was ready to go to Treisma if a



A picture released yesterday by the Syrian opposition's Shaam News Network shows the destruction in Homs Karm Shamsham neighbourhood.

PHOTO: AFP

ceasefire is in place.

"The facts that we already have, related to the situation in the Hama province and the village Treimsa, are already reported to New York," Mood said in Damascus, adding a team of monitors was present "five or six

kilometres" (three to 3.7 miles) away from the village.

The peace envoy Kofi Annan, who was appalled by the killing, will meet Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov today about the crisis and "the chances of an internal

Hillary in plea for workers' rights

AFP, Siem Reap

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton yesterday urged Southeast Asian nations to promote workers' rights and improve labour conditions as a means of spurring economic growth.

"Standing up for workers' rights and high labour standards is both right and moral, it's also smart and strategic," Clinton told a women's forum in the Cambodian town of Siem Reap.

Respecting workers' rights "leads to positive economic outcomes including higher levels of investment. And bringing women into the economy has ripple effects," she said, adding it boosted equal opportunity and raised taxes for governments.

"Denying workers their universal rights costs societies dearly in lost productivity, innovation, and growth, as well as undermining the rule of law and creating instability", Clinton insisted.

She held up neighbouring Vietnam and Cambodia as examples where agreements with the United States had opened markets and helped spur economic growth.

But Hillary warned the current model under which Southeast Asian nations have grown thanks to "low-cost labour and materials, and by exporting affordable goods to more developed markets" may have reached its limits.

Changes were needed as Asia expands its middle-class and the United States and Europe look to boost their exports to the region, she said.

She also called on multinationals to insist on high labour and ethical standards, saying even though it might require more investment it would pay dividends in Western markets keen for untainted goods.

30 people killed as S Africa train collides with truck

AFP, Johannesburg

More than 30 people were killed yesterday when a goods train ploughed into a truck carrying farm workers on a level crossing in South Africa, an official said.

The victims were "torn into pieces" in the accident that saw the mangled truck shunted up to two kilometres (one mile) down the line, said Thulani Sibuyi, head of eastern Mpumalanga province's community safety department.

"What we know at this stage is that more than 30 people appear to have died at the point of impact," he said.

Parademics were still at the scene near Malelane, east of the provincial capital Nelspruit.

"It would appear as if the truck driver may have crossed the railway line without having a proper look-out and as a result the train hit him and then pulled him for about a kilometre to two kilometres," said Sibuyi.

The exact number of dead and injured who had been taken to hospital still needed to be confirmed, he said.

The truck was transporting about 50 people, believed to be farm labourers, he said.



PHOTO: AFP

This picture shows an aerial view of a residential area affected by a landslide triggered by torrential rain at Aso city in Kumamoto prefecture, on Japan's southern island of Kyushu. Southwestern Japan was bracing for more torrential rain on top of "unprecedented" downpours that left at least 19 people dead and eight missing as whole neighbourhoods were swamped.

US probes Michelle Obama death threat from local cop

AFP, Washington

The US Secret Service said Thursday it was investigating a police officer in Washington after he allegedly made a death threat against First Lady Michelle Obama.

"We're aware of the incident, and we're going to take appropriate investigative steps," spokesman Edwin Donovan told AFP after The Washington Post newspaper first reported the incident.

According to the newspaper, the policeman, who worked as a motorcycle escort for official motorcades in the US capital, was overheard Wednesday declaring that he would shoot Obama, and showed an image



on his cell phone of the weapon he said he intended to use.

The paper says Washington police moved the officer to administrative duty and reported the incident to the Secret Service, which is charged with protecting the US president and his family.

"We received an allegation that inappropriate comments were made. We are currently investigating the nature of those comments," police spokeswoman Gwendolyn Crump told The Washington Post, without providing any further details.

The first lady's office did not immediately comment on the report.

US warns over chemical weapons

AFP, Phnom Penh

The US yesterday said that Syrian officials would be "held accountable" if they failed to safeguard the country's chemical weapons after a report suggested some were being moved out of storage.

The Wall Street Journal reported on Thursday that intelligence reports suggested some chemical weapons were on the move, but the reasons for the transfers were unclear.

It said some US officials feared the weapons could be used against rebels or civilians, while others believed the material was being deliberately hidden from armed opposition groups or Western powers.

The Wall Street Journal said the Obama administration was "particularly worried about Syria's stocks of sarin gas, the deadly and versatile nerve agent"

NEWS IN brief

E Timor ruling party wins polls

AFP, Dili

The ruling party of East Timor resistance hero Xanana Gusmao has won 30 seats in parliament, according to a final count yesterday from last weekend's vote, and will need to form a coalition to govern.

Gusmao's centre-left National Congress for Timorese Reconstruction (CNRT) is three seats shy of the 33 needed for an absolute majority in the 65-seat parliament.

The main opposition left-wing Fretilin party had come second with 25 seats. The Democratic Party (PD), a member of the previous ruling coalition, won

Mladic trial to resume Monday

AFP, The Hague

The trial of former Bosnian Serb army chief Ratko Mladic will resume next week after being suspended when Mladic fell ill, the Yugoslav war crimes tribunal said yesterday.

The 70-year-old was taken to hospital as a precautionary measure after falling ill during his trial on Thursday, though his lawyer, Branko Lukic, told AFP later the same day that his client was already feeling better.

Mladic is being tried for genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role in Bosnia's 1992-1995 war that claimed 100,000 lives and displaced 2.2 million people.

Court orders Mugabe to hold by-polls

REUTERS, Harare

Zimbabwe's Supreme Court has ordered President Robert Mugabe to call by-elections by the end of August, a ruling that could alter the balance of power in parliament between his ZANU-PF party and its rivals.

The case was taken to court by three opposition MPs who lost their seats in 2009 when they were expelled from a splinter wing of Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai's Movement for Democratic Change (MDC).

The High Court ordered by-elections to be held but Mugabe appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing the government had no money to conduct the polls.

The MDC holds 96 seats in the 210-seat lower house of parliament, 10 short of a simple majority, against ZANU-PF's 91. The original three constituencies are all in Tsvangirai strongholds.

Russia MPs pass 'foreign agents' law

AFP, Moscow

Russia's lower house of parliament yesterday approved a controversial bill that brands as "foreign agents" non-governmental organisations who receive funding from abroad.

The legislation, condemned by both the European Union and Washington, was passed by the State Duma with 374 votes in favour, three against and one abstention in the third and final reading -- just minutes after the second one.

A breach of the law would be punishable by hefty fines or jail time.

The deputies also passed a law making libel or slander a criminal offence punishable by a fine of up to 5 million rubles (\$152,000), voting 238 in favour to 91 against. Communist lawmakers then staged a walkout.

Thai government escapes threat of dissolution

Court dismisses complaint against ruling party

AFP, Bangkok

Thailand's ruling party escaped the threat of dissolution yesterday after the Constitutional Court dismissed an opposition complaint that had raised fears of reigniting the kingdom's bitter splits.

"The Court dismiss all the petitions," said Nurak Marpraneet, one of eight judges at the Bangkok court, which had been flanked by security forces in anticipation of the ruling.

The court found complaints against plans by Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra's party to amend the constitution -- drawn up under the military junta that deposed her divisive brother Thaksin -- were unfounded.

Opposition Democrats, which were swept out of power in a landslide election win for Yingluck last year, alleged the efforts to amend the constitution signalled a threat to the deeply-revered monarchy.

"There are not sufficient facts to convince the Court that the defendants are trying to



Yingluck

overthrow the constitutional monarchy," said Nurak, adding a drafting assembly had yet to be elected.

Security was tight ahead of the verdict.

Yingluck's party vowed to go ahead with



Thaksin

the amendment.

Political tensions in Thailand have spiralled since huge anti-Thaksin rallies helped topple the tycoon, who draws support from rural and working class.

Judicial rulings have played a key part in Thailand's volatile recent past, with two pro-Thaksin premiers forced from office in 2008 by the courts.

Their departure made way for the Democrats, who are backed by the military and Bangkok elite, to take power.

The Democrats said they accepted the ruling. But the Democrats, who also fear the move could be used to open the way for Thaksin's return, alleged the underlying motivation threatens Thailand's system of constitutional monarchy.

CIRCUMCISION ROW Germany to protect religious rights

AFP, Berlin

The German government yesterday pledged quick action to protect the right of Jews and Muslims to circumcise baby boys on religious grounds, after a court ruling that prompted international outcry.

Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman Steffen Seibert told reporters it was "concerned" about the judgement published by a Cologne regional court last month calling the religious rite of circumcision a criminal act.

"It is absolutely clear to the federal government that we want Jewish, we want Muslim religious life in Germany," he said.

The Cologne ruling said circumcision of male infants on religious grounds was tantamount to grievous bodily harm, a criminal act subject to prosecution.



Bangladesh Power Development Board

“বিদ্যুৎ সশ্রয়ী বাতি ব্যবহার করুন”

NOTICE OF TIME EXTENSION FOR SUBMISSION OF QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS AND PROPOSALS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF 200-850 MW LNG BASED COMBINED CYCLE POWER PROJECT INCLUDING LNG TERMINAL & STORAGE AND REGASIFICATION SYSTEM ON BOO BASIS AT CHITTAGONG, BANGLADESH

Ref: Invitation Ref. No. 1086-BPDB (Sectt.)/Dev.197/2010

Date: 14.05.2012

The date for submission of Qualification Statements and Proposals against bid documents for the development of 200-850 MW LNG based Combined Cycle Power Project including LNG terminal & storage and regasification system at Chittagong, Bangladesh on BOO basis has been extended from July 15, 2012 to August 13, 2012. All other terms and conditions of bid documents shall remain unchanged.

Interested bidders intending to submit Qualification Statements and Proposals to BPDB should check BPDB's website on a regular basis to ensure that they are familiar with any amendments or modifications to the bid documents, which amendments or modifications shall be binding on the bidders and their Qualification Statements and Proposals.

Biddyt/Jana-35(6)/10/7/12
GD-2808

Secretary

Bangladesh Power Development Board