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New York Times  
December 26, 2007  
Pg. 10

## **Russia: Ballistic Missile Test-Fired**

By Reuters

A Russian submarine in the Barents Sea successfully test-fired a new ballistic missile, hitting a target on the Kamchatka Peninsula on Russia's Pacific coast minutes later, the Defense Ministry said. The RSM-54, or Sineva, is a hybrid ballistic missile that in its final stages becomes a modified cruise missile. In that guise, the missile can elude antimissile systems that rely on a ballistic trajectory for their calculations. The launching was the second such test-firing of the Sineva in less than a week. Officials also said a land-launched RS-24 missile with multiple warheads had been successfully test-fired from the Plesetsk range in northern Russia. Russia said it had also successfully launched a rocket carrying the last three satellites for a navigation system to rival the United States' Global Positioning System. The military-run Glonass mapping system works over most of Russia and is expected to cover the globe by the end of 2009, once all its 24 navigational satellites are operating.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/26/world/europe/26briefs--missile.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/26/world/europe/26briefs--missile.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

USA Today  
December 26, 2007  
Pg. 2

## Heir To North Korea's Helm Not Apparent, Analysts Say

*Among Kim Jong Il's three sons, none seems clear choice to 'win hearts of people'*

By Paul Wiseman, USA Today

SEOUL — The contenders all have potential weaknesses. One goes by the alias "Fat Bear" and keeps embarrassing the family. One might be too wimpy, one too young.

Meet the cast of North Korea's "My Three Sons" — one of whom is probably destined to succeed their father, Kim Jong Il, as the unquestioned leader of an impoverished, isolated, nuclear-armed land.

On the southern side of the Demilitarized Zone, South Koreans voted last week for a new president. On the northern side, the succession process is considerably murkier — to the extent that North Koreans are forbidden from even talking about who might one day replace "Dear Leader" Kim Jong Il, says Andrei Lankov, a North Korea watcher at Kookmin University in Seoul.

Kim Jong Il is 66, and the guesswork has begun about who will eventually replace him and whether a third generation of Kims can rise to power. (Kim Jong Il took over after the 1994 death of his father, dictator Kim Il Sung.)

The lives of the three sons are largely a mystery to the outside world, and even published pictures are hard to come by. Still, there is hope among North Korea watchers that the next Kim will be more enlightened than the current ruler, a diminutive man known for his pompadour, beige jumpsuits and taste for gourmet food.

"Reforms will take place for sure," says former South Korean intelligence analyst Sohn Kwang Joo, now managing editor at the *Daily NK*, a website that follows events in North Korea. "They want to maintain their dynasty for three generations. But they don't know whether the nation will accept it. So they need to win the hearts of the people."

The contenders:

**Kim Jong Nam, 36.** He's Kim Jong Il's eldest son, which would seem to give him an edge in a Confucian society that values seniority. But his pedigree is tainted by illegitimacy. His mother was Song Hye Rim, an actress who had a lengthy relationship with Kim Jong Il but never married him. "He was raised in the shadows. He does not have the network" of supporters he'd need to consolidate his rule, says Cheong Seong Chang, North Korea specialist at the Sejong Institute, a Seoul think tank.

Jong Nam has other liabilities. "He has health problems. He is grossly overweight," Lankov says. Jong Nam embarrassed his father when he was caught in 2001 trying to enter Japan with a fake passport under the Chinese name Pang Xiong - or "Fat Bear." He told Japanese authorities he intended to visit Tokyo Disneyland. "Since then, it's been clear he and Kim Jong Il don't have a smooth father-son relationship," Sohn says. "From then on, he could not go back to North Korea. He is wandering around China and Central Asia."

Sohn says Jong Nam has been telling almost anyone who will listen that he is first in line to succeed his father.

**Kim Jong Chul, 26.** His mother was Kim Jong Il's wife, Koh Young Hee. Jong Chul attended boarding school in Switzerland, where he learned several foreign languages and became an NBA fan. He was a popular student who once performed an act of chivalry, carrying an ailing female classmate to a medical center, Cheong says. Jong Chul also was caught on video attending an Eric Clapton concert in Germany last year.

After returning to North Korea, Jong Chul attended a military university, then took a well-placed job in the Korean Workers' Party's Central Committee — a sign, Cheong says, that he is being groomed for power.

Another sign: Five years ago, North Korean media began promoting a cult of personality around his mother, Koh - just as they once did with Kim Jong Il's mother. "The North is trying to appoint Kim Jong Chul as successor," Hwang Jang Yop, the highest-ranking North Korean official ever to defect, said in 2003. "The successor should be the offspring of the king's beloved. Kim Jong Il ... loved Koh most of all." (Koh died in 2004.)

But in his memoirs of his years working in Kim Jong Il's kitchens, Japanese sushi chef Kenji Fujimoto said the North Korean dictator dismissed Kim Jong Chul's potential, saying he was "no good because he is like a little girl." Cheong is skeptical about Fujimoto's account and is convinced that Jong Chul "is very likely to be the one." He also believes that Jong Chul's international exposure would make him more likely to open North Korea to the outside world. After all, he says, the late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping (who had studied in Paris) reformed China after succeeding Mao Zedong (who hardly left China).

**Kim Jong Woon, 23 or 24,** Jong Chul's little brother. Fujimoto claimed that Kim Jong Il favored his youngest son because he was tough and regarded strangers with steely-eyed suspicion. South Korea's Yonhap News Agency has reported that Jong Woon's mother, Koh, had ordered high-ranking North Korean officials to start calling him "the Morning Star General" in an apparent bid to put him in the succession race.

Lankov says Kim Jong II is tardy in arranging a successor. His father, Kim II Sung, was 61 when he anointed Jong II as his political heir. Lankov says Kim Jong II should have made his choice years ago, giving the heir apparent a chance to pack the bureaucracy with supporters and to purge those of dubious loyalty.

Lankov has a theory for Kim Jong II's indecision. He suspects that Kim Jong II is convinced that his repressive regime won't last long once he's gone. Perhaps he reasons that it would be better for someone else to take the fall and risk ending up like the Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu, executed along with his wife when the end came in 1989.

"The Kim family would go down with the country," Lankov says. "Some of them might get killed. They would have no chance to keep their money. If some ambitious general presided over the collapse of his country, it would be his problem, not the Kim family's."

"Maybe Kim Jong II is putting his family ahead of the regime," Lankov says. "Sometimes I think that is exactly what he is doing."

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2007-12-25-north-korea\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2007-12-25-north-korea_N.htm)

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Washington Post  
December 26, 2007  
Pg. 21

## **A Chance To Rein In North Korea**

By Nicholas Eberstadt

Last week's presidential election in South Korea presages a sea change in that key U.S. ally's policies toward North Korea. The resounding defeat of the candidates who favored more of Seoul's all-carrot, no-stick approach to Kim Jong II presents Washington with a horizon of new possibilities for reining in Asia's most troublesome dictator. The question now is whether the Bush foreign policy team will be adept enough to seize this opportunity.

The landslide vote, to be sure, was in large measure a rebuke of President Roh Moo-hyun's inept handling of the economy and polarizing domestic policies. Yet, taken together, the candidates who opposed the "Peace and Prosperity" policy (originally dubbed "Sunshine") toward North Korea in last Wednesday's election received more than 63 percent of the vote -- compared with 35 percent for all those who approved of it. Why the widespread discontent with "sunshine"? Because what had started as a policy of reconciliation with the North had degenerated in practice into almost reflexive appeasement of the "Dear Leader," Kim Jong II. Unsurprisingly, many ordinary Koreans found that kind of "sunshine" too distasteful, too embarrassing and just a bit too dangerous.

South Koreans winced as their government repeatedly abstained from U.N. votes criticizing North Korea for human rights abuses. They grumbled as they saw their tax-funded "economic cooperation" projects with the North devolve into an economic lifeline for a still-hostile government in Pyongyang. And they worried as the undisguised rift with Washington over "the North Korean threat" created unmistakable strains in the vital U.S.-South Korean alliance. South Korea, in short, is ready for a new and more critical approach to engagement with North Korea -- and this is just what President-elect Lee Myung-bak has promised. Lee is no Cold Warrior: He styles himself as a pragmatist who judges by results. Since his election, he has signaled that restoring the health of the U.S.-South Korean alliance and achieving a genuine denuclearization of the North Korean regime are to be top foreign policy priorities. He has also served notice to Pyongyang that it can no longer count on Seoul for a "see-no-evil" spin on events in the North -- much less unconditional handouts.

There would seem to be great promise in this new attitude toward "engagement with the North" -- to say nothing of new vistas for genuine cooperation between the United States and South Korea on the multifaceted North Korea problem.

With Seoul finally willing to criticize Kim Jong II's gulag "paradise," for example, an effective worldwide human rights campaign in the name of the North Korean people comes much closer to reality. With a South Korean government that no longer insists on sitting on the sidelines, the Proliferation Security Initiative to interdict illicit North Korean revenue (from drug-running, counterfeiting, weapons sales and the like) stands to be much more effective -- and that much more costly to Kim Jong II. No longer a "runaway ally," South Korea could at last join with the United States and Japan in a common policy to bring real pressure on North Korea for real denuclearization -- and to impose real penalties for noncompliance.

Today, China can depict its support for the North as joining a South Korean bandwagon. Without the cover of a seemingly all-forgiving South Korean government, China would finally be forced to make hard choices about the Kim Jong II regime -- within the confines of the six-party talks and beyond.

But is the Bush foreign policy team ready to make use of this long-desired diplomatic windfall from South Korea?

For a variety of reasons (among them the Republicans' loss of Congress in 2006 and the situation in Iraq) the Bush team all but abandoned its previous posture toward North Korea at the end of last year. These days it appears intent on producing only "good news" on the North Korean front. "Good news" about North Korea, for its part, seems to have been defined down to meaning a nuclear deal with Kim Jong Il -- irrespective of the fine print.

If this sounds implausible, consider the actual record of U.S. diplomacy with North Korea over the past 12 months. Early this year, the U.S. government quietly agreed to help "unfreeze" more than \$24 million in suspect North Korean funds from bank accounts in Macau. Why? Because North Korean nuclear negotiators threatened not to return to the table until their Dear Capo got his money back.

After returning to the six-party talks, the North Korean side then inked an "action plan" in February that promised to provide an accounting of its previous nuclear activities within two months. Here we are at the end of the year with no accounting -- and, so far as one can tell, no worries from the White House, either.

In September word emerged that Israeli jets had leveled a facility in Syria that from the air looked a lot like the Yongbyon nuclear reactor. The Syrian site was reputedly being developed with North Korean assistance. Yet under Washington's new rules of engagement with Pyongyang, the Bush team has scarcely whispered a word about this mysterious -- and potentially grave -- international incident.

And by the way: Have you heard from President Bush's special envoy for human rights in North Korea over the past year? Neither has anybody else.

Last week's election in South Korea should serve as a wake-up call to the Bush administration. With willing new partners in the wings in Seoul, President Bush still has the chance to register some real gains for his legacy on North Korea -- and, more important, for the security of the free world.

*Nicholas Eberstadt, the Henry Wendt chair in political economy at the American Enterprise Institute, is a member of the U.S. Committee for Human Rights in North Korea.*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/25/AR2007122500864.html>

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Chicago Tribune  
December 26, 2007

## **Experts: Strike Against Iran A Last Resort For Israel**

By Joel Greenberg, Tribune foreign correspondent

JERUSALEM -- Israel's freedom of action to strike at Iran's nuclear program has been curtailed after a recent American intelligence assessment that Tehran stopped its work on nuclear weapons, but force remains an option of last resort should Israel eventually conclude that the weapons threshold is about to be crossed, according to Israeli experts and former intelligence officials.

The U.S. National Intelligence Estimate released earlier this month, which judged "with high confidence" that Tehran halted its nuclear weapons program in 2003, has been met with skepticism among Israeli officials and experts, who say there are ample grounds to conclude that covert nuclear weapons development continues.

Aharon Zeevi Farkash, who was chief of Israeli military intelligence from 2001 to early 2006, said in an interview that continued uranium enrichment by Iran, acknowledged in the NIE, along with Tehran's development of long-range ballistic missiles, is a strong indicator that it is still working to acquire nuclear weapons.

Under international scrutiny, Iran had hidden and possibly suspended its nuclear weapons development for a time, but the work has apparently resumed clandestinely, Zeevi Farkash said.

"There's no definitive proof, but if you connect the dots -- the scale of uranium enrichment, the surface-to-surface missile program -- it leads to that conclusion," Zeevi Farkash said.

In the wake of the NIE, Israel has three options in dealing with what it believes is Iran's continuing effort to acquire a nuclear weapon, according to Yaakov Amidror, who in the 1990s headed the research division in Israeli military intelligence, with responsibility for preparing the Israeli national intelligence assessment.

Israel can launch a military strike to set back the Iranian nuclear program, try to persuade the United States that its intelligence approach is flawed and press for more vigorous diplomacy to block Tehran's nuclear ambitions, or it can acquiesce in a nuclearized Middle East with a Cold War-style balance of power that would deter any attack on Israel, Amidror said.

### **If Israel decides to strike**

If Israel eventually chooses to attack Iranian nuclear facilities, it can absorb retaliatory conventional missile strikes by Iran or its proxy militia in Lebanon, Hezbollah, and Israel is equipped with more sophisticated anti-missile protection systems than it had in the Persian Gulf war, when it was struck by Saddam Hussein's Iraq, experts say.

But the regional implications of an Israeli strike on Iran, including possible risks of retaliation against U.S. forces in Iraq and against Saudi Arabia, complicate any decision on military action, according to the analysts.

"If Israel faces an existential threat from an Iranian nuclear weapon, missile attacks by Hezbollah are bearable," said Giora Eiland, who formerly headed the Israeli National Security Council. "But Israel cannot carry out such a strike without coordination with the Americans, as long as they're in Iraq."

The findings of the NIE, which appear to have virtually eliminated chances of an American strike on Iran in the near future, mean that "this dilemma will be passed on for discussion with the next American administration," Eiland said.

Ephraim Kam, an expert at the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University, said the NIE findings have "restricted the freedom of action of the U.S. and Israel, both military and diplomatically" in dealing with the Iranian nuclear program.

"Israel would want international legitimization for a military strike, but the prospects for that are lower now," Kam said. On the diplomatic front, "countries already reluctant to impose sanctions will now say that if the danger is not so serious, we don't have to rush."

The military option remains a longer-term possibility, analysts say, if only because Israel has shown it is prepared to take risks if it senses an existential threat. Israeli planes bombed the Osirak nuclear reactor in Iraq in 1981 shortly before it was to have become operational and in September struck a site in Syria reportedly thought by Israeli intelligence to be linked to a nascent nuclear program.

#### **Analyst: It's not inevitable**

Zeevi Farkash said he rejects "deterministic" analyses that argue that continued Iranian efforts to attain a nuclear weapon would inexorably lead to an Israeli military strike.

"Israel's job is to continue trying on the intelligence level to find a smoking gun and to see to it that the West takes action so that [Iranian nuclear weapons capability] doesn't happen," Zeevi Farkash said. He added that the NIE's finding that Iran halted its nuclear weapons program in response to international pressure shows that Tehran is susceptible to diplomatic intervention and sanctions.

Considerations of the regional implications of a military strike could prove decisive when Israel weighs whether to use force, severely limiting Israel's ability to act on its own, analysts say.

Ultimately "it will not be the NIE that will limit Israel but rather Israel's own assessment of costs and benefits, its dialogue with the American administration and the longer-range regional implications" of a strike on Iran, Eiland said. "The NIE is not the most important thing."

[http://www.chicagotribune.com/services/newspaper/printedition/wednesday/iran\\_greenbergdec26,0,7237948.story](http://www.chicagotribune.com/services/newspaper/printedition/wednesday/iran_greenbergdec26,0,7237948.story)

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Air Force Link

## **AFMC team wins 'hazardous' Air Force competition**

by Rudy Purificato

311th Human Systems Wing

12/27/2007 - **BROOKS CITY-BASE, Texas (AFP)** -- An Air Force Material Command team of bioenvironmental engineering and emergency management professionals won the Air Force's 2nd annual Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Challenge held Dec. 10 through the 14 at Brooks City-Base, Texas.

Considered to be the olympics for the two career fields, AFMC was one of eight Air Force major commands to participate in the week-long event with six realistic scenarios that tested the teams' capabilities to respond to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear warfare threats.

The AFMC team edged units from Air Combat Command, Air Mobility Command, Air Education and Training Command, Air Force Special Operations Command, Air Force Space Command, Pacific Air Forces and U.S. Air Forces in Europe. An Air National Guard team also participated and captured the Team Spirit Award.

The challenge mirrors potential homeland security and war on terrorism threats. It was held at the Air Force School of Aerospace Medicine's Expeditionary Medical Support site here.

Each of the six scenarios lasted three hours and all were different from last year's exercise, said Tech. Sgt. Shawn Petro, a bioenvironmental engineering instructor and in charge of logistics for the exercise. One scenario was designed to test participants' capabilities to assess the health risk to an installation victimized by an unleashed chemical weapon.

"The vehicle-borne improvised explosive device scenario was actually a (so-called) 'dirty bomb' that had detonated and caused casualties," Sergeant Petro said.

There were also two head-to-head competitions where teams had to identify a chemical and biological sample within time limits. Teams also participated in a TV "Jeopardy" show-style quiz that tested their chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear knowledge.

"What was different this year is that we included civil engineer emergency management members," Sergeant Petro said. "We brought into the exercise the whole partnership with our emergency management responders. They help us identify hazards and are our base counterparts when responding to emergencies."

<http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123080626>

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New York Times  
December 28, 2007  
Pg. 9

## South Korea Says North Is Likely To Miss Deadline

By Choe Sang-Hun

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea is likely to miss a year-end deadline to declare all of its nuclear activities and disable its main nuclear site, the South Korean foreign minister said Thursday.

The comment by the foreign minister, Song Min-soon, came a day after North Korea warned that it would slow work to disable its main nuclear complex at Yongbyon, north of Pyongyang, the capital, because of delays in deliveries of aid.

Delays are a regular feature of carrying out any deal with North Korea but the latest setback will create fresh doubt about a deal previously seen as one of the few diplomatic successes of the Bush administration.

In agreements struck in February and fine-tuned in October, North Korea promised to disable its Yongbyon nuclear facilities and give a complete declaration of all its nuclear programs by the end of the year in return for fuel and other aid.

"Our target date was the end of December, but we may not make it," Mr. Song told reporters in a news conference four days before the Dec. 31 deadline. "We face hurdles both in the nuclear disablement and nuclear declaration." The likely delay comes at a delicate time in South Korean politics. The transitional team of President-elect Lee Myung-bak, who won the Dec. 19 election with a pledge to get tough on North Korea, has begun to review his country's policy toward the North.

Last month, North Korea began disabling its sole operating nuclear reactor and two other plutonium-producing facilities at Yongbyon, under the supervision of American experts.

The Bush administration, which had once designated North Korea as part of an "axis of evil" and refused to deal with it, embraced those agreements as a diplomatic breakthrough at a time when its diplomacy remained bogged down in Iran, another "axis of evil" country suspected of nuclear weapons development.

On Thursday, Mr. Song said more negotiations were required to solve the dispute that set off the nuclear crisis with North Korea five years ago: whether North Korea has tried to enrich uranium in addition to its known program of making bombs with plutonium.

In 2002, the United States confronted North Korea with what it called evidence that the North Koreans were trying to build a uranium enrichment program using centrifuges made of aluminum tubes. In recent talks, however, North Korea failed to give American officials a satisfactory explanation about its uranium enrichment program.

If that issue is not resolved, the United States and its allies may end up disabling North Korea's plutonium program but may leave it with a potential alternative route to building nuclear bombs with highly enriched uranium.

American suspicions about the uranium program — and the North's denials — led to the collapse of a 1994 nuclear agreement with North Korea that froze its plutonium program. North Korea revived its plutonium program in 2002 and tested a nuclear device in October 2006.

North Korea acknowledges that it imported tons of high-strength aluminum tubes from Russia, and has even provided the United States with samples, saying that they had nothing to do with uranium enrichment. But American officials reportedly found traces of uranium on those samples, though they remained unsure about their origins.

Kim Sung-han, a North Korea expert at Korea University in Seoul, said, "As long as North Korea flatly denies that it has had a uranium enrichment program, there cannot be advancement toward the next steps" — the dismantling of North Korea's nuclear facilities and the United States' normalization of ties with North Korea.

"North Korea must give an explanation the United States can accept," he said. "There can't be a compromise on this."

While negotiators continued haggling, Hyun Hak-pong, a vice director general at North Korea's Foreign Ministry, said Wednesday that North Korea had "no choice but to take measures to adjust" the disablement work at Yongbyon because aid shipments promised under the October deal were not arriving fast enough, according to Japanese media reports from Pyongyang.

In Washington, a State Department spokesman, Gonzalo Gallegos, said that he was not aware of any slowdown in aid and that the United States expected "further heavy fuel oil shipments and other energy assistance to move forward in the near future."

North Korea had been promised the equivalent of one million tons of heavy fuel oil in return for disabling its nuclear facilities. It has so far received 150,000 tons of oil and 5,010 tons of steel products to renovate its power plants. Mr. Kim, the Korea University professor, said North Korea's strategy appeared to be to "minimize" its nuclear declaration and "maximize" the economic rewards it could get from the Yongbyon plant's disablement. North Korea may also stall on the process to increase leverage against the new South Korean government, which will be inaugurated in late February, he said.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/28/world/asia/28korea.html?\\_r=1&ref=world&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/28/world/asia/28korea.html?_r=1&ref=world&oref=slogin)

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London Daily Telegraph  
December 29, 2007

## **Who Is In Control Of Pakistan's Nuclear Arsenal?**

By Rahul Bedi, in New Delhi

Benazir Bhutto's assassination not only threatens to exacerbate the volatile situation in Pakistan but also raises questions about the security of its nuclear arsenal.

Pakistan is the only Islamic state with nuclear weapons. Its atomic arsenal, comprising 60-65 warheads according to experts, is controlled almost exclusively by an increasingly "Islamised" military.

The arsenal's location remains secret but Western intelligence sources believe it is hidden close to Islamabad, with the warheads and missiles kept separately.

Islamabad's record in nuclear proliferation is dubious. Its top atomic scientist, Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, was exposed in 2004 as the head of a global black-market operation in nuclear technology, working reportedly in collusion with the military, leaking secrets to Iran, Libya and North Korea in exchange for money and long-range missile designs. Pakistani nuclear scientists are said to have visited Afghanistan to meet the al-Qa'eda leadership before the invasion of 2001.

Indian and Western analysts believe that radicalised elements within the military establishment could gain access to its nuclear weapons if the war of attrition against the jihadists continues.

They point to the large number of Pakistani soldiers, including officers, who have opted to surrender to militants in the tribal regions bordering Afghanistan and in Swat, north of Islamabad.

Analysts said there were growing signs of "fraying" loyalties in the Pakistani army - the country's most powerful institution - with its normally robust command and control system appearing "wobbly".

A number of retired Pakistani military officers question its motivation in fighting what many believe to be someone else's war.

In India, former Brigadier Arun Sahgal of the United Service Institution said: "A situation threatening the security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal and collapse of its command and control could only be brought about by subversion from within the military. Were this to happen, it would signify the Islamists' penetration of the last bastion of credible power in Pakistan."

This month President Pervez Musharraf assumed formal control of the National Command Authority (NCA), which he established in 2000 to manage the country's nuclear weapons.

But Harsh Pant, a nuclear analyst at King's College in London, said: "It would take little time for the [nuclear] command and control network to collapse if Pakistan slid toward anarchy. Should that happen, sympathisers of radical Islamists within the Pakistani military and intelligence agencies could very possibly assist militant groups in acquiring the wherewithal of a nuclear weapon."

Last month Pakistan confirmed that the US was helping to ensure the security of its nuclear weapons. It reiterated that the security of Pakistan's nuclear assets was "foolproof".

American media reports, meanwhile, said Washington had spent £50 million to secure Pakistan's nuclear weapons against theft and accidents, a claim Islamabad denied.

Some Western experts believe that, after the two countries aligned in the war against terror, the US fitted Pakistan's nuclear warheads with permissive action links or security devices that control their activation. Pakistan also rejects that claim.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml;jsessionid=JZSUJASAZPJPVQFIQMGCFF4AVCBQUIV0?xml=/news/2007/12/29/wbhattu729.xml>

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New York Times  
December 29, 2007  
Pg. 7

## **Iran: Russia Denies Planning Missile System**

By C. J. Chivers

A Russian government agency disputed reports that it had signed a contract to sell a sophisticated air-defense system to Iran, saying it had no such plans. This week, the Iranian defense minister, Mostafa Mohammad Najjar, said that a contract had been signed and that Russia would equip Iran with S-300 missiles, which are used to shoot down planes and missiles. In a statement posted on its Web site, the Russian agency, the Federal Military and Technical Cooperation Service, flatly denied the Iranian claim. "The issue of supplying Iran with S-300 anti-aircraft missile systems, raised by mass media, is not on the agenda, is not being considered and is not being discussed with the Iranian side at the moment," the statement said.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/29/world/middleeast/29brief-missile.html?\\_r=1&oref=slogin](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/12/29/world/middleeast/29brief-missile.html?_r=1&oref=slogin)

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Washington Post  
December 29, 2007  
Pg. 19

## **The Right Way To Engage Iran**

By Michael McFaul and Abbas Milani

As the year draws to a close, it's important to note that the U.S. debate on Iran is stalled, trapped between "regime changers" vs. "arms controllers," "hawks" vs. "doves," and "idealists" vs. "realists." The National Intelligence Estimate released this month offers an opportunity to escape this straitjacketed debate by embracing a new strategy that would pursue both the short-term goal of arms control and the long-term goal of democracy in Iran.

The NIE's "key judgment" that Iran suspended its nuclear weapons program has thrust the arms controllers onto center stage. Because the nuclear threat is no longer immediate, the arms controllers insist that the time is ripe for the United States to engage in direct diplomacy with Tehran as a way to change the regime's behavior, but not the regime itself -- specifically, to persuade the mullahs to suspend their nuclear enrichment program.

Those who profess to back regime change claim that the NIE changes nothing and that the United States should continue to use coercive power, potentially including military strikes, to counter Tehran.

Both sides have part of the strategy right, but on its own neither offers a long-term vision for dealing with Iran.

It is folly to assume that advocates of military strikes are in the same camp as those who advocate regime change. There is no better way to prolong the life of the autocratic regime in Tehran, to strengthen increasingly weakened radicals such as Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, than bombing Iran. Thankfully, the NIE has made military strikes less likely.

But the estimate provides no evidence to suggest that Iran's regime has changed its ways to be more compatible with American national interests or the interests of the Iranian people. The regime continues to repress its own people; supports terrorist organizations that threaten Israel and destabilize the governments in Iraq, Lebanon and the Palestinian territories; and still has not suspended its enrichment program, the key aspect of developing a nuclear weapon. Iran's suspension of its military nuclear program in 2003 was a tactical response to revelations about the clandestine operation, not a fundamental shift in strategic thinking.

To presume, therefore, that the NIE gives the United States license to bargain with Iran over its enrichment program and forgo any pressure on the regime is also folly. Focusing solely on enrichment would play into the hands of the mullahs, who see how the NIE has weakened the coalition in support of serious sanctions. They have every incentive to stretch out any negotiations -- while continuing to develop their enrichment program. Days after the NIE was made public, Ahmadinejad announced that Iran plans to have a cascade of 50,000 centrifuges, surely enough to make highly enriched uranium. American diplomatic tools to alter this behavior are extremely weak. Moreover, this strategy gives Iran a free pass on its support for terrorism and human rights abuses.

The United States and its allies must develop an Iran strategy that establishes both short- and long-term goals. Specifically, the United States must recommit to a policy of encouraging democratization inside Iran, because only a democratic regime will stop supporting terrorist groups abroad and repression at home. A democratic Iran is also less likely to restart a nuclear weapons program, especially if the United States and a new Iranian regime establish close military ties, a likely outcome.



Although counterintuitive to some, diplomatic engagement is required to pursue the long-term goal of democratization and, in parallel, the short-term goal of arms control. The first American offer of direct talks should include everything: the prospect of formal diplomatic relations and the lifting of sanctions; the potential supply and disposal of nuclear fuel (from a third-party organization or state); suspension of nuclear enrichment; an end to aid to Hezbollah and Hamas; and a serious discussion about stopping the arrests of students and human rights advocates and the persecution of union leaders and religious minorities. Discussion of new security institutions in the region should also be on the table. America's experience dealing with the Soviet Union during the Cold War demonstrates that we can engage a despotic regime without compromising our commitment to democracy and human rights. Greater contact between Iranian and American societies will further undermine the regime's legitimacy, strengthen the independence of Iranian economic and political groups, and perhaps even compel some regime leaders to cash out and exchange their diminishing political power for enduring property rights. Over the past four decades, autocratic regimes have rarely crumbled as a result of isolation but more often have collapsed when seeking to engage with the West. Even the collapse of the Soviet Union occurred not when tensions between Moscow and Washington were high but during a period of engagement.

Will Iran follow a similar path? We will never know if we do not try. Of course, the mullahs might reject our overtures, but their refusal would embolden the opposition inside Iran. And a serious attempt to engage the Islamic republic now would strengthen the American case for more coercive diplomatic and economic pressure, should they be necessary in the future.

*Michael McFaul is a professor of political science at Stanford University. Abbas Milani is director of the Iranian studies program at Stanford. Both are fellows at the Hoover Institution.*

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/28/AR2007122802299.html>

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Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
December 30, 2007

## **Camel Meal Kills 8; Anthrax Suspected**

Eight Afghans who ate an infected camel as part of a religious celebration died of what health experts suspect is a rare case of naturally occurring anthrax. Ten others fell sick in the southwestern province of Nimroz. Officials said they cannot say positively that the deaths were anthrax related until laboratory results are completed. Anthrax can occur in humans when they are exposed to infected animals, or when anthrax spores are used as a weapon. Officials said there is no evidence of terrorism.

<http://www.ajc.com/search/content/news/stories/2007/12/30/world1230.html>

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Los Angeles Times  
December 31, 2007  
Pg. 1

## **Iran's Inner And Outer Circles Of Influence And Power**

*The power of Shiite Muslim clergy has eroded in favor of various competing groups within a unique religious, civil, social and bureaucratic framework.*

By Borzou Daragahi, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

BEIRUT — Iran's supreme leader spoke not with the thunder of a man regarded in his country as God's representative on Earth, but with the exasperated tone of a corporate manager chastising his employees.

Ali Khamenei had ordered his deputies to start privatizing state-owned businesses: the telephone company, three banks and dozens of small oil and petrochemical enterprises.

Jealously guarding their own sources of power and patronage, however, his underlings all but ignored him.

Months passed. Then Khamenei gathered the country's elite for an extraordinary meeting. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his Cabinet ministers were there, as were important clerics, the leader of parliament and provincial governors, and the heads of state broadcasting and the Iranian chamber of commerce.

With television cameras rolling, Khamenei told them to pass some laws, sell off some businesses -- and be quick about it. "Those who are hostile to these policies are the ones who are going to lose their interests and influence," he declared.

The system shrugged. By November, nine months after his public scolding and almost a year and a half after Khamenei had first issued his order, almost nothing had happened. According to the Middle East Economic Digest, only two out of 240 state-owned businesses Khamenei targeted had been sold off.

For years, Western analysts have struggled to understand the inner workings of Iran's leadership. To many, it is a government tightly controlled by the Shiite Muslim clergy. But the power of the clerics has steadily eroded. Increasingly, power is distributed among combative elites within a delicate system of checks and balances defined by religious as well as civil law, personal relations and the rhythm of bureaucracy.

Iran analysts struggle to discern which officials have authority and how much. And when Iranian officials make public pronouncements, it often is unclear whether they are expressing established policy or fighting among themselves -- speaking for their own faction or just themselves.

Concentric circles of influence and power that emanate from the supreme leader include the clergy, government and military officials -- and at their farthest fringes, militiamen and well-connected bazaar merchants -- altogether perhaps 15% of Iran's 70 million people.

Even the man regarded in Iran as the highest-ranking cleric in Shiite Islam finds himself constrained and challenged. Those inside Iran's circle of power, says Ali Afshari, an analyst and former student activist now living in Washington, operate according to unique rules.

"It is not a democracy or an absolute totalitarian regime," he said. "Nor is it a communist system or monarchy or dictatorship. It is a mixture."

### **Those who matter**

In the parlance of Iran's ruling elite, those who truly matter are referred to as *khodi*, Persian for "one of us." *Khodi* accept that Khamenei has a God-given right to rule. At least outwardly, they adopt the values of the senior clerics. They even adhere to a dress code: The men wear white shirts buttoned up to the collar; gray, brown or black suits; and neatly trimmed beards -- the garb of the traditional merchant class. The women wear the single-piece black chadors covering all but their hands and faces.

"In our society there is a red line between *khodi* and non-*khodi*," said one political activist. "If you've never been on the right side of that divide, you're considered guilty until proven otherwise. If you're not *khodi*, you don't have the right to criticize."

Khamenei and his closest advisors are at the center of that power structure, overseeing grave matters of state, including the country's nuclear program and domestic policy, from a huge tree-shrouded compound in downtown Tehran. Each day, the Supreme National Security Council, Khamenei's main think tank, faxes his orders to newspapers, television stations and government officials. Clergy spread the word at homes and Friday prayer sessions.

Surrounding the supreme leader are several powerful committees consisting of dozens of clerics, each established to cement the central role of religion in Iranian politics. The Council of Experts chooses the supreme leader. The Guardian Council vets laws and candidates for public office. The Expediency Council mediates legal disputes. Next are the leaders of the Revolutionary Guard and armed forces, who are appointed by Khamenei; the elected president; the Cabinet; parliament; senior military commanders selected by the supreme leader; and the senior clerics in the holy city Qom.

Beyond that are governors and other provincial officials, all approved by the president. At the outer rim of *khodi* are well-connected merchants, militia members and millions of volunteers who make up the government's shock troops. Included in the system are people with different ideologies and agendas, including the offspring of Western universities and onetime operatives in the shah's intelligence service whom Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini needed to help bring down the shah in the 1970s, defend his revolution and withstand attack from Iraq's Saddam Hussein in the 1980s.

From the beginning, Iran's leaders fought over how wide to expand the circles of power, and how much room there would be to challenge the leadership.

Even those on the outer fringes of power can buck authority, especially if they retain a rank within the religious hierarchy. Despite a moratorium on stoning those convicted of morality crimes, a judge this year in the western village of Takistan ordered the stoning of a man for adultery.

Instead of firing the official, judiciary chief Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi decided the judge had a point: Stoning was, after all, part of Islamic law.

Though ordinary people have limited freedom to criticize the power structure, analysts and officials in Tehran say that the heads of government agencies eagerly devour results of polls about their leaders' performance and Iranians' attitudes toward everything from women's dress to making peace with the U.S. Many of Iran's leaders fear a popular uprising like the one that toppled the shah or the communist governments of Eastern Europe.

One after another over the past decades, Iranian leaders have tried to control this convoluted system -- and failed.

### **'Many centers of power'**

"There are so many centers of power," said a Western diplomat in Tehran, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "The system was designed to not let anyone be in total control."

In 1997, Khamenei watched helplessly as the reformer Mohammad Khatami crushed the supreme leader's candidate for president.

Despite his political mandate, the new president subsequently ran up against the power of the military and clerical elite. After his government signed a contract with Turkey to run Tehran's new airport, the Revolutionary Guard swooped in during the ribbon-cutting, shutting the airport and nullifying the deal in a blow to Khatami's attempts to open the country to foreign investment.

Hashemi Rafsanjani, a senior cleric who heads the Expediency Council, seemed a shoo-in to replace Khatami in 2005. But he was outmaneuvered by Ahmadinejad and lost the election.

Ahmadinejad found himself hemmed in by opposition to his appointees, including the key post of chief negotiator with the international community over Iran's nuclear program. Parliament has rejected many of his choices.

When Ahmadinejad was elected president in 2005, the urbane cleric Hassan Rowhani was fired as nuclear negotiator and disappeared from the spotlight. But after getting rid of Rowhani, Ahmadinejad was forced to give the job to a detested and well-connected rival, Ali Larijani.

In the meantime, Rowhani has made a political comeback.

Analysts said that despite his reputation as a relative moderate, Rowhani probably managed to get Khamenei's ear by exploiting the president's reputation as a populist rabble-rouser who could pose a threat to the supreme leader's power. He delivered a speech criticizing Ahmadinejad's authoritarian style and began appearing regularly on the front pages of state-run newspapers.

"The country is no one's property," he said. "The notion that someone owns the country and its people is our biggest problem and incurable disease."

That same week, Khamenei made a speech saying that no one in the government was above criticism, in effect barring Ahmadinejad from attacking Rowhani and blessing his return to Iran's innermost circle of power.

When Larijani quit this year, the president appointed his own man, Saeed Jalili, as nuclear negotiator -- at least until an advisor to Khamenei complained. Both Jalili and Larijani attended the next round of negotiations with European officials.

Ahmadinejad even has had to rescind some orders on relatively minor issues.

Last year, he extended Eid al-Fitr holidays and eliminated daylight saving time. But people complained loudly of missed international flights and too many days off. The man who challenged Iran's most powerful clerics bowed to public pressure. This year the calendar went back to normal.

### **No mandate on economy**

Khamenei has found that even if the power structure believes he has a mandate from heaven, he can't make it move on economic reforms.

Iran needs to free up billions of dollars from its budget to invest in its ailing oil industry, the source of half of the government's income. However, hundreds of money-losing state-owned enterprises drain the budget. Despite the high cost of oil, the World Bank predicts that Iran will be running a deficit in two years.

Privatization would help raise funds, but it would mean wresting lucrative patronage from the hands of religious foundations, military institutions and well-connected bazaar *khodi*.

"Khamenei is currently surrounded by intelligence forces, the Revolutionary Guards and the hard-line media," said Mohsen Sazegara, a former Iranian official and onetime *khodi* who is now a vehement critic and lives in Washington. "They pretend to listen to Khamenei's orders, but they do whatever they want."

Since the 1979 revolution, state-owned factories have been used as recruiting and fundraising centers for Basiji militiamen, who answer to the Revolutionary Guard. They provide jobs for the relatives of government loyalists.

One aluminum factory in central Iran provides jobs for relatives of local officials of the Ministry of Intelligence and Security, said a Tehran economist who spoke on condition of anonymity.

The businesses Khamenei wants to sell on the stock market also are expected to kick in millions of dollars each year for political and religious events that are part of the Islamic Republic's ideological machinery.

"They ask you politely, 'How much will you donate for the revolution festivities?' or, 'How many workers will you release to participate in the rallies?' " said one executive at an Iranian company.

Managers have found other ways to thwart the privatization plan. After shares of a state-owned aluminum company failed to sell this year, executives removed the offering rather than lower the price.

"There's a very large group of managers who don't want this to happen," said Moussa Ghaninejad, an economist and journalist at Donya Eghtesad, a business newspaper. "They create so many problems that it doesn't get done."

Sometimes, senior officials intervene to halt a sale. Ahmadinejad stopped a recent effort by an Iranian industrialist to buy a state-owned carmaker's share in a private bank.

In a lead editorial, Kayhan, a newspaper representing the views of the conservative leadership, demanded that non-*khodi* be cut off from the public wealth. Khamenei's own mouthpiece was subverting his goals.

"If you ask me, 'Who is running Iran?' " said one Tehran trial lawyer, "I would say, 'Everyone -- and no one.' "

<http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-circle31dec31.1.6012308.story>

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Washington Times

December 31, 2007

Pg. 11

## Summer Startup Eyed For Nuke

*Russian: End of '08 more likely*

By Stuart Williams, Agence France-Presse

TEHRAN--Iran yesterday insisted that its first nuclear-power station would be activated this summer, despite the plant's Russian constructors saying it will not go on line until the end of 2008.

"The Bushehr nuclear-power station will launch at a capacity of 50 percent next summer," said Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki, quoted by the state news agency IRNA.

A Russian contractor is finishing the construction of the much-delayed 1,000-megawatt plant in the southern city of Bushehr. Moscow has also agreed to deliver the nuclear fuel required by the facility.

A spokeswoman for the Russian contractor, Atomstroieksport, said earlier this month that it would take at least a year to activate the power station.

"We can predict that the Bushehr station will be launched no earlier than the end of 2008 due to the current situation," Irina Yesipova said Dec. 20.

The Bushehr project has suffered a series of delays since it was started in the 1970s under the since-ousted Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi using engineers from German engineering firm Siemens.

It was shelved in the first decade after the 1979 Islamic revolution but then resurrected in 1995 when Russia agreed to build and fuel the plant. Even then, the deadline for the station's going online was repeatedly pushed back.

But now it appears that the plant is finally on the verge of completion.

Mr. Mottaki made his comments after a second shipment of fuel for the plant arrived in Iran from Russia Friday the first shipment was delivered Dec. 17.

"The fuel delivery will be completed in eight stages," Mr. Mottaki added.

"Then the ground will be prepared for the injection of the fuel and the launching of the Bushehr nuclear plant by next summer, at the latest according to the contract. This will be half the capacity of the plant," he said.

Russia is pressing on with the completion of the power station despite Western concerns about Iran's insistence on using uranium enrichment to make its own nuclear fuel for use in future home-built power plants.

Western powers fear Iran could use uranium-enrichment technology to make a nuclear bomb, but Tehran insists it only wants to generate electricity for a growing population whose fossil fuels will eventually run out.

Moscow has echoed U.S. calls that Tehran should freeze enrichment in line with U.N. Security Council demands, and said Iran has no economic need to make its own fuel at the moment.

Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said last week that Russia is actively seeking to persuade Iran to halt enrichment in return for full negotiations with world powers, including the United States, over its nuclear drive.

But Iran insists that it has every right to uranium enrichment and needs to master the process to make its own nuclear fuel for the home-built atomic power plants it is planning to construct in the future.

Energy Minister Parviz Fattah said Iran has started building the planned nuclear-power plant of Darkhoyen in the southwestern Khuzestan province, the only such project whose location has been made public.

"Domestic specialists will build the 360-megawatt nuclear reactor under the supervision of the Iranian Atomic Energy Organization," state TV quoted him as saying.

"As Iran has a lot of experience in hydroelectric and steam plants, the nuclear plants can be constructed using domestic capabilities."

<http://www.washingtontimes.com/article/20071231/FOREIGN/585533084/1003/FOREIGN>

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Washington Post

## N.Korea misses nuclear declaration deadline: U.S.

Reuters

Monday, December 31, 2007; 11:01 AM

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - North Korea has missed a year-end deadline to provide a full account of its nuclear weapons program under a disarmament-for-aid deal, a U.S. official said on Monday.

"There has been no last-minute change," said State Department deputy spokesman Tom Casey after the target of midnight North Korean time 10 a.m EST/(1500 GMT) had passed.

The United States and allies South Korea and Japan had issued coordinated statements on Sunday lamenting the North's failure to deliver the expected declaration.

"It's unfortunate, but we are going to keep on working on this," Casey told reporters. He said he expected consultations in the coming days among the six parties to the nuclear deal.

"The important thing is not whether we have the declaration by today," said Casey. "The important thing is that we get a declaration that meets the requirement of the agreement, which means it needs to be full and complete."

The secretive communist state, which tested a nuclear weapon in October 2006 and may have enough fissile material for as many as eight bombs, gave no explanation for why it let the deadline pass, the official said.

North Korea reached a deal in February with China, Japan, Russia, South Korea and the United States to disable its plutonium-producing nuclear plant and release an inventory of its atomic activities by the end of 2007 in exchange for aid.

Officials from the United States and its ally South Korea had in late December begun suggesting that the December 31 target might not be met. Analysts said Pyongyang's unwillingness to address U.S. suspicions it had a secret program to enrich uranium for weapons might be behind the delay.

(Reporting by Paul Eckert, editing by Patricia Wilson)

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/12/31/AR2007123100603.html>

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