



MIDDLE EAST WEEKLY

Month: Nov 13 | Issue 14 | CSSAME

Middle East in a Week

Regarding international relations and world politics, the Middle East may be the most controversial region in the current times. On the one hand it sits on most of the world's oil reserves, while on the other hand, it inhibits the followers of the most controversial religion in the world, Islam. These matters combined have created a region filled with drastic events. Every day, there are new wars erupting in the region and every day, there are new ways through which the west and the far east try to increase their influence in the region. This region inhibits 411 million people out of which 28 % are under the age of 25 years old. This newsletter tries to give weekly updates on the important issues in the Middle East and combining them with some analysis, hopes to have a role in changing the region's situation to the better.

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TAIWAN GETTING CAOUGHT IN THE CROSSFIRE BETWEEN IRAN AND US¹

On Nov 10, 2020, the United States' Department of Justice (DOJ) charged a Taiwanese citizen plus two companies for violating the sanctions imposed on Iran and exporting to this country. Huang Chin-hua, Taiwan-based DES International Co., Ltd., and subsidiary Soltech Industry Co., Ltd. violated the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA) and the Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations (ITSRs), the DOJ alleged. 'The defendants are charged with conspiring to violate American sanctions on Iran by buying goods from the United States, concealing the origin of those goods and sending them to Iran for use by the government and business,' said Assistant Attorney General for National Security John Demers, according to the statement. The goods included a 'power amplifier designed for use in electromechanical devices and cybersecurity software,' the statement said.

AO 91 (Rev. 08/09) Criminal Complaint

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

District of Columbia

United States of America v.) Case: 1:20-mj-00225
CHIN HUA HUANG, also known as JINEE HUANG,) Assigned to: Judge Zia M. Faruqui
DES INTERNATIONAL CO., LTD., AND) Assign Date: 11/10/2020
SOLTECH INDUSTRY CO., LTD.) Description: COMPLAINT W/ARREST WARRANT
Defendant(s))

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.
On or about the date(s) of November 2011 through May 2018 in the county of Washington in the

District of Columbia, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section
18 U.S.C. Section 371

Offense Description
Conspiracy to Defraud the United States and to Violate the
International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. Section
1705) and the Iranian Transactions and Sanctions Regulations (31
C.F.R. Part 560)



WILL SEIZE EVERY CHANCE WE GET!²

'Whenever we see the chance to deny the sanctions, we will seize it' said President Hassan Rouhani in an interview conducted on Nov 11, 2020. Later in the interview he announced that 'nobody has the right to burn our opportunities'. He accused the United States of turning the situation into an economic warfare. He also referred to the assassination of Iran's major general Qasem Soleimani and the fact that Iran responded to this act of war from the United States in kind. The hostility between Iran and the United States began in the year 1979 when some of its (US) citizens were taken hostage in Iran. Since then it has just risen up day after day. Since 1979, Iran and US have been wearing the ID card of enemy and do not seem ready to change this identity. The sad part is the fact that the Iranian civilian citizens are the ones who pay the price for this 4-decade-long animosity. The USD-Rials exchange rate keeps fluctuating and everything's price in Iran changes with it. Is there an end in sight?

ANOTHER PEACE AGREEMENT IN THE REGION³

‘Unspeakably painful agreement’ is what Armenian prime minister, Nikol Pashinyan, called the peace deal signed between Azerbaijan and Armenia, with Russia as the witness of this agreement. It was signed just hours after Azerbaijan captured the region’s strategic city of Shusha. ‘I have made a difficult, extremely difficult decision for personally me and all of us. I have signed a declaration with the Presidents of Russia and Azerbaijan on stopping the war starting from 01:00 (local time),’ Pashinyan said in a statement posted on his Facebook page early Tuesday. After claiming earlier on Monday that the fight over Shusha was not over, Pashinyan said he made the decision to sign the agreement based on a deep analysis of the military situation and ‘on the conviction that in the existing situation this is the best possible outcome.’ Russian President Vladimir Putin said Russian peacekeeping forces will be deployed along the contact line in Nagorno-Karabakh and within the corridor that connects the region with Armenia.



ONE MORE MIDDLE EASTERN DEMOCRACY⁵

Comes May 2021, there will be a democratic election in Libya; or at least that is what its leaders claim. Libya’s warring sides have agreed to hold elections within 18 months, the United Nations has said, hailing a ‘breakthrough’ in a fraught peacemaking process. ‘There’s real momentum and that’s what we need to focus on and encourage,’ Stephanie Williams, the UN’s acting Libya envoy said on Wednesday at a news conference in Tunis, where 75 Libyan participants chosen by the global body have been meeting since Monday. The meeting has reached a preliminary agreement on a road map to ‘free, fair, inclusive and credible parliamentary and presidential elections’ that also includes steps to unite institutions, she added. A major oil producer, Libya has been wracked by violence since a NATO-backed uprising in 2011 overthrew and killed longtime ruler Muammar Gaddafi.

SAUDI KING SHOUTS FOR ATTENTION ON IRAN⁴

Salman bin Abdulaziz al-Saud, the Saudi King urged the world leaders to take a stance against Iran and its ballistic missile program. ‘The kingdom stresses the dangers of Iran’s regional project, its interference in other countries, its fostering of terrorism, its fanning the flames of sectarianism and calls for a decisive stance from the international community against Iran that guarantees a drastic handling of its efforts to obtain weapons of mass destruction and develop its ballistic missiles programme,’ the king said. What he claims is the threat Iran’s missile program could, can and will impose on the safety of the region as well as the safety of the world. What he fails to admit is that the Saudi government is simply afraid of its competition getting stronger. Saudi Arabia has been using airstrikes in Yemen and Syria for years and nobody seemed to have any objection to it. What happens between the Saudi Arabia and Iran is nothing but a simple security dilemma in which the Saudi state sees Iran’s missile program as a threat and hence, its attempts at delegitimizing Iran’s efforts in improving IRAN’s defensive capabilities. Something the Saudi State itself has done.



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