

ANALYSIS: Iran teeters once again on the brink

Iran faces anti-terrorism sanctions, voter discontent, and a rising death toll from the Coronavirus outbreak.



Missiles in Tehran - Reuters

Watching events in Iran over the past few days, one cannot escape the impression that the country is facing a modern-day Purim scenario whereby the country is imploding and is hit by a range of disasters.

It is not Israel that is threatened with annihilation but the regime of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, just as the Jewish people in ancient Persia escaped unhurt while the Persian leader Haman who plotted their annihilation was hanged in the Purim tale in the book of Esther.

While the US Administration of President Donald J. Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is working to strangle the Islamist regime to death by trying to scuttle the so-called Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (the 2015 landmark nuclear deal) altogether by convincing the United Nations that it should invoke snapback sanctions over Iran's many breaches of the deal a global financial watchdog just returned Iran to its blacklist of countries supporting terror.

And this is a major blow to the regime.

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which was founded by the G7 in 1989 to prevent money laundering by rogue states and later also received a mandate to investigate the financing of terror by those states told Iran that if it would not come into full compliance with anti-terrorism financial measures by Friday it would be returned to the blacklist of the organization.

This will mean that Iran once again will not have access to the international banking system and that its continuing trade with Russia and China would be severed and this could bring down the Khamenei regime in the long run.

The FATF action was for a large part the work of an Israeli delegation to the organization led by Dr. Shlomit Wagman-Ratner, a high-ranking official at Israel's Justice Ministry, who headed the organization's operative working group.

Wagman-Ratner lauded the FATF decision and thanked attorney Elad Vader for his "significant contribution to Israel's excellent professional activity in the organization, "which, she said, "is highly regarded internationally."

Then there was the Iranian parliamentary election which took place last Friday.

The election should have bolstered Khamenei's regime because almost only hardliners were allowed to register as candidates for the new Majlis, the Iranian parliament.

The Iranian people, however, fed-up with the regime's failed policies at home and battered by the ruthless crackdown on protests that started at the end of last year and that killed more than 1.500 Iranians, apparently decided to boycott the election.

After delaying the data about the voter turn-out for more than one day the regime was forced to admit that only 42.57 percent of Iranian voters had participated in the election for the 290-seat Majlis, an all-time-low number.

Voter turnout in the last three parliamentary elections in Iran has always been above 60 percent with 73 percent voting in the last presidential election in 2017 when the so-called moderate President Hassan Rouhani beat the hard-liner Ebrahim Raisi.

In Tehran, only 25.4 of the eligible voters bothered to go to the polling stations, making a joke of Khamenei's prediction that the election would see "massive participation," which would teach the West a lesson about domestic support for the Islamist regime.

Khamenei later found an original reason for the low turn-out and claimed negative propaganda by Iran's enemies about the Coronavirus was to blame for the absence of voters.

To make things even worse, the regime also lied to the Iranian people about a massive Coronavirus outbreak before and during election-day.

This was apparently done to boast voter turn-out and the state-controlled media were ordered not to report about the Corona outbreak which has according to an Iranian lawmaker already caused the deaths of 50 Iranians.

The death toll of the virus in Iran has now become the second-highest in the world and the regime is most likely also lying about the number of people infected by the disease.

Iran continues to claim only 47 people have been infected but that would mean, taking into account the official death count of 12, that the percentage of Iranians who died of the virus would be far more higher than in the rest of the world where it stands at roughly three percent.

One of the Iranians infected by Corona is Mojtaba Rahmzadeh the mayor of a Tehran district who reportedly met with Dutch Foreign Minister Stephen Blok before he got ill.

Blok also met with Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif after the meeting with Rahmzadeh.

The Corona outbreak in Iran began in the Shiite holy city of Qom where Iranians are ordered not to kiss the shrine of the eighth Shia Imam. Authorities stopped short of ordering the quarantine of the city.

Instead, the regime ordered “the closure of all schools, universities, educational institutions, nurseries, and seminaries,” in Qom according to *Iranwire*.

Grand Ayatollah Jafar Sobhani now thinks the Corona outbreak is “an expedience of God.”

“There is definitely an expedience from God that we cannot know,” Sobhani said.

What’s for sure is that the combination of the various hardships in Iran and the failure of Khamenei’s regime to effectively deal with the current situation could become the straw that will break the camel’s back.

The protesters are already back in the streets of Iranian cities and even female students of the University of Tehran are now leading the protests.

Source: <http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/276438>

[Disclaimer]