
Cheney : Iran might be next US target

press tv - 19/3/2008

A senior aide to the US Vice President has reportedly said a military option against Iran over its nuclear program is on the table again.

Vice President Dick Cheney is again talking about possible US military action to shut down Iran's nuclear program, the Israeli website DEBKA quoted the aide as saying.

The official added Cheney had told US troops in a military base in Iraq that "Iran has got to be very high on that list (of the countries that might be attacked)".

The remarks came ahead of the talks Cheney was to hold during his 10-day tour of the Middle East, which began Monday, March 17 in Iraq.

The report added that Cheney is again talking about possible US military action to shut down Iran's nuclear program, citing military and political sources in the region.

Cheney stopped over in Oman Wednesday, after two days in Iraq. He will travel to Saudi Arabia and will be in al-Quds next Saturday. He is also scheduled to visit Ramallah and Turkey.

According to the report, Cheney would emphasize the Bush administration's decision to distance itself from the National Intelligence Estimate indicating that "Iran has halted its nuclear arms program in 2003."

The report has undermined the position of hawkish politicians who were beating the drums of war with Iran.

Cheney will also underline that "the administration now buys British, German, French and Israeli intelligence estimates that Iran is indeed pressing forward with programs for building nuclear weapons, warheads and ballistic missiles for their delivery."

The report added the Americans will need the cooperation of Oman, Saudi Arabia, Israel and Turkey to mount a military attacks on Iran.

Israel was notified by the White House that the Iranian issue had been added to Cheney's regional agenda at the last minute, DEBKA quoted informed sources as saying.

Saudi king rejects Cheney's belligerency

press tv - 21/3/2008

US Vice President Dick Cheney in Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah in a meeting with visiting US Vice President Dick Cheney has rejected any US military strike against Iran.

King Abdullah in a meeting with the US vice president is against any US military strike against Iran, Saudi official sources say.

Cheney who arrived in Saudi Arabia on Friday discussed Iran's nuclear program and its increasing influence in the Middle East with senior Saudi officials, DPA reported.

Saudi Arabia, along with other Persian Gulf Arab countries, sees negotiations as the best way to resolve the standoff between the US and Iran.

The king also told Cheney that the Middle East should be free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The Saudis say any nuclear non-proliferation efforts should include Israel, which is widely believed to be the only nuclear power in the Middle East with around 200 nuclear warheads.

The US vice president's efforts to drum up support for Washington's war mongering policies against Iran comes as a recent NIE report declared that Tehran is not pursuing any nuclear weapons program.

The Islamic Republic says, as a signatory to the non-proliferation treaty (NPT), the country is entitled to use the nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.
