

RELEASE IN  
FULL

**From:** Sullivan, Jacob J <SullivanJJ@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 29, 2011 10:23 AM  
**To:** H  
**Subject:** FW: IRAN DAILY BRIEF - Iran Office Dubai - Tuesday, November 29, 201

FYI

**From:** Abbaszadeh, Nima  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 29, 2011 10:48 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Jacob J; Wells, Alice G  
**Cc:** S\_SpecialAssistants  
**Subject:** IRAN DAILY BRIEF - Iran Office Dubai - Tuesday, November 29, 201

**BRITISH EMBASSY STORMED BY PROTESTERS:** Protesters stormed the British Embassy in Tehran in the mid-afternoon on November 29; according to domestic press. The police were unable to stop the assailants from entering the embassy, according to IRGC-linked Fars News. The Union Jack over the Embassy door was pulled down by the protesters and replaced with a flag of the Islamic Republic. Some news reports said that they had broken window panes and hurled documents out of the windows. Hundreds of 'students' had begun demonstrating in front of the embassy just after 2:00 PM, praising the November 27 Majlis bill to downgrade diplomatic ties with the UK and shouting 'Death to America,' 'Death to Britain', and 'the British Embassy must be shut down.' Holding up photos of IRGC Qods Force Commander General Ghassem Soleimani and assassinated nuclear scientists Shahriari and Alimohammadi, they had burned British and Israeli flags before invading the embassy grounds. Firebombs and stones were hurled into the embassy grounds, according to Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, which reported that a small gatehouse at the main entrance on Ferdowsi Street caught fire.

**GUARDIAN COUNCIL APPROVES U.K. DOWNGRADE BILL:** The Guardian Council approved on November 28 the Majlis bill to downgrade diplomatic relations with the U.K. to the level of chargé d'affaires. Guardian Council Spokesman said that his council had determined that the bill was not contrary to the Sharia Law or the Constitution. The approval means that relations with Britain will be downgraded within two weeks. According to some domestic press reports, the Ahmadinejad government and the Supreme National Security Council did not favor the decrease in relations. The bill stipulates that diplomatic ties can be restored to their normal level if Britain 'changes its hostile policies.'

**EXPLOSION IN ISFAHAN?:** Conflicting reports emerged from Iran on November 28 about a possible explosion heard in the city of Isfahan, near which a number of nuclear facilities are located. The sound of a large blast was heard in the city of Isfahan at around 2:40 PM on November 28, according to a report by IRGC-linked Fars News. The article, later removed from the news agency's website, quoted Isfahan Province Deputy Governor Mohammad Mehdi Esmaili as confirming the news and saying, 'We have no precise information and are pursuing the matter.' Isfahan's Fire department and Crisis Management Organization also confirmed that a loud noise had been heard, according to the news agency. Fars News reported that the blast 'was heard from Bozorgmehr to Darvazeh Shiraz.' The Bozorgmehr district is in eastern Isfahan and Darvazeh Shiraz (Shiraz Gate, the old name for Azadi Square) is in the south of the city. [note: The Nuclear Fuel Research and Production Center and the Nuclear Technology Center, listed in UN Resolution 1747, which houses the Isfahan Uranium Conversion Facility (UCF), are situated east of the city. The Military University is located close to Darvazeh Shiraz].

Concerned citizens reportedly contacted authorities to inquire about the incident. Isfahan Province Governor Alireza Zakar Esfahani told the Iranian Students News Agency (ISNA), 'The sound of an explosion that was heard in Isfahan is connected to a military exercise in the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Base northeast of Isfahan, next to the airport. But we had not been

informed and we should have been.' Asked whether any nuclear installations had been damaged, he said, 'In no way has anything like that occurred. The sound of the explosion is linked to that military drill and there is no particular problem at this time.' Isfahan's Judiciary Chief Gholamreza Ansari told ISNA the same day, 'In the afternoon, a noise resembling an explosion was heard, but we have not received any reports about the source or the incident from security and police authorities.' He minimized the event however, adding, 'If a significant incident had occurred, there would doubtless have been some initial communiqués and we would have been invited to attend a provincial crisis meeting. But this did not happen and we did not receive any initial reports.' Deputy Governor Esmaili later denied that any blast had been heard in an interview with Mehr News, saying, 'There have been no reports of such a sound from any organization or body in Isfahan thus far.' He added, 'Perhaps there was an incident in some part of Isfahan, for example the explosion of a water heater or something else in a house. But as far as a frightening noise, we have not received any reports.' Esmaili had previously told another news outlet that the sound had come from the explosion of a gas pump in the Dolatabad district. Fire department Chief Behzad Bozorgzad said on November 29 that he had not received any report on the incident. He said, 'From yesterday evening, I have been told that a noise was heard in Isfahan, but I can honestly say that the Fire Department has neither received any report or carried out any operations.' He also said that he had been in one of the city's public halls, listening to a speech by Isfahan's Mayor, when the explosion had allegedly taken place. He said that he had been informed of the incident by news agencies and the provincial government. *(Note: In early January 2011, then Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Head and current Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi said that the Isfahan UCF had successfully begun production of uranium fuel rods and plates. He said that the 20%-enriched fuel would be used in the Tehran Research Reactor. In mid-November, university students formed a human chain around the Isfahan nuclear facilities.)*