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## Bagram Airbase threat to entire region

12/19/2011



Head of Iran Foreign Ministry's Afghanistan Headquarters says the US airbase near the city of Bagram poses a serious security and intelligence threat to Kabul's regional neighbors.

Mohsen Pakayin said the Bagram Airbase is among the main US bases in Afghanistan and has very sophisticated equipment.

“It has been built at the cost of more than 200 million dollars and millions of dollars have been also spent on equipping it. Its main feature is a terrible prison which houses about 700 prisoners...,” he added.

The Iranian official emphasized that the United States uses bases in Afghanistan to implement its policies toward regional states.

“After a US spy aircraft was downed by Iran's security forces, it became clear that it had taken off from one of the US military bases in Afghanistan,” he said.

Pakayin said that a US spy who was arrested by Iran's intelligence forces in recent days had been also trained at Bagram Airbase.

“Such incidents show that US military bases in Afghanistan are not meant to help establish and maintain security in that country, but pose a serious security and intelligence threat to regional states, especially Afghanistan's neighboring countries,” he added.

Pakayin stated that US intelligence and military forces will not wait for the Afghan government's permission to carry out operations against other regional countries and will not even inform Afghan officials.

On Sunday December 4, the Iranian Army's electronic warfare unit downed with minimum damage a US RQ-170 Sentinel stealth aircraft which was flying over the Iranian city of Kashmar, some 140 miles (225km) from the Afghan border.

Two days later, two US officials speaking on condition of anonymity, confirmed that the drone has been part of a CIA reconnaissance mission, involving the US intelligence community stationed in Afghanistan.

Iran's Intelligence Ministry also announced on December 17 that it has arrested a CIA spy of Iranian descent, foiling an intricate American plot to carry out espionage activities in the Islamic Republic.

The ministry's statement said that the operative, who was identified by Iranian intelligence upon arriving at the Bagram Airbase, underwent intense intelligence training before beginning his mission.

Iran has warned that if such measures continued against the Islamic Republic, Tehran will have to take more serious countermeasures against the US.