

## Iran successfully simulates nuclear warhead detonation - report

Contributed by Debkafile  
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German intelligence reports that Iranian scientists have successfully simulated the detonation of a nuclear warhead in laboratory conditions, in an effort to sidestep an underground nuclear test like the one that brought the world down on North Korea's head earlier this year. DEBKAFfile's Iranian and intelligence sources report that this development is alarming because detonation is one of the most difficult technological challenges in the development of a nuclear weapon. Mastering it carries Iran past one of the last major obstacles confronting its program for the manufacture of a nuclear warhead.

After this breakthrough, the German BND intelligence believes it will take Tehran no more than a year to perfect its expertise and stock enough highly-enriched uranium to make the last leap toward building the first Iranian nuclear bomb or warhead. DEBKAFfile's military sources confirm that simulated detonation of a warhead takes Iran to the highest level of weapons development.

Using the example of Israel and other nations, Western nuclear arms experts have claimed in recent years that since the emergence of simulated detonation technique, nuclear tests are no longer necessary.

With this hurdle overcome, Tehran has set about restructuring its defense ministry for the coming task of actually making a weapon.

The new Department for Expanded Technology Applications - FEDAT was set up to speed up the military nuclear program. It is divided into sub-departments for uranium mining (to increase the output of the Yazd mines), enrichment (to guarantee the quantity of high-grade uranium needed for weapons), metallurgy, neutrons, highly explosive material and fuel supply.

Wednesday, Dec. 2, Iran's president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said: "The Iranian nation will by itself make the 20 percent (nuclear) fuel (enriched uranium) and whatever it needs."

President Barack Obama has reminded Tehran that it has until the end of the year for a negotiated accommodation on its nuclear program that will uphold its international obligations. However, for Iran's leaders, progress toward a nuclear weapon is now unstoppable by any diplomatic means.

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