



IRAN TODAY & TOMORROW

WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN

The Committee in Support of Referendum in Iran (CSRI), a 501(c)(4), non-profit and independent group, is committed to advance change in Iran through an internationally monitored referendum as the only peaceful means to bring democracy and establish a secular and representative government in Iran

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Iran's nuclear threat

Iran angered by new UN chief's nuclear talk

AFP

January 18, 2007--TEHRAN - Iran on Thursday condemned remarks by the UN's new Secretary General Ban Ki-moon that its nuclear ambitions posed a threat to international security. Ban said he and US President George W. Bush agreed earlier this week that Iran's nuclear programme was "one of the serious issues which threaten peace and security of the world". He also said Iran's sensitive uranium enrichment "has very serious and wide implications for not only the Middle East but also all around the world".

UN chief, Bush agree Iran nuclear crisis "serious"

AFP

January 17, 2007-WASHINGTON - UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said he and US President George W. Bush agreed in talks Tuesday that the Iranian nuclear problem is a "serious" issue threatening international security. "We are of the same position that this is one of the serious issues which threaten peace and security of the world," Ban said when answering questions after delivering a speech at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington. "The international community should prevent the Iranian government from further firing its nuclear technologies," Ban said, citing sanctions adopted by the Security Council recently.

We will continue nuclear work regardless of UN resolutions –Iranian regime

AFP

January 17, 2007 - Mohammad Saeedi, vice president of Iran's atomic energy organization said Iran would press on with its nuclear programme, even if the UN Security Council agreed even tougher resolutions against Tehran in the future. "Even if worse resolutions are adopted, we have started our work and we will continue with it" he said. "UN Security Council resolutions will not prevent the Iranian people from achieving their objectives," he added.

Iran says nuclear enrichment work has not stopped

REUTERS

January 14, 2007 - Iran is pressing ahead with nuclear enrichment activities at its underground Natanz facility, foreign ministry spokesman said on Sunday, dismissing some suggestions that the disputed enrichment work had stalled. "Our activities at the Natanz nuclear enrichment facility continue as scheduled," Mohammad Ali Hosseini told a weekly news conference. As an immediate reaction to the U.N. Security Council sanctions resolution passed on December 23, Iran said defiantly it would immediately start installing 3,000 centrifuges, which experts say could enrich uranium in sufficient volume for power plant fuel, or for one bomb within a year.

Iran's meddling in Iraq and Lebanon

Iranian detainees are still under investigation

MNFI-Website, January 18, 2007-- Q There are some Iranian citizens who were detained in Northern Iraq by U.S. forces, allegedly for interfering with the situation in Iraq. Does the U.S. have any plans to abide by the wishes of the Iraqi government and release those Iranian citizens?

Rear Adm. Mark Fox, Communications Director, MNF-I: The situation in Northern Iraq with the Iranian detainees is still under investigation, and we are still assessing and getting the feedback from the information that we've gotten, both in terms of material evidence and also detentions. They were connected with networks that were smuggling weapons into Iraq, attempting to undermine the stability of the government of Iraq, and ultimately targeting coalition forces.

Thinking the unthinkable

UPI Editor, January 18, 2007-The United Press International, WASHINGTON, January 16 - No sooner did the United States invade Iraq in March 2003 than Iran poured hundreds of agents into Iraq to aid the majority Shiites in consolidating a sudden geopolitical bonus. This was payback time. Before the end of 2003, the Jordanian intelligence service informed the CIA that "several hundred thousand had come across the (900-mile-long) Iranian border. Thus, several hundred Iranian Revolutionary Guards came in and scattered to major cities to train volunteers for the two principal Shiite militia -- the Mahdi army and Badr organization.

Gates assures Saudi king that US wants Iraq to be a barrier to Iranian expansion



January 18, 2007-- BAHRAIN, January 17 - US Defense Secretary Robert Gates assured Saudi King Abdullah Wednesday that the United States wants Iraq to be a barrier to Iranian expansion and urged him to support Iraq's embattled government, a senior US defense official said. "They are very nervous about Iraqi politics, nervous about things. But they wanted to hear reassurance from us that we had a strategy, and they expressed their strong hope that we succeed," he said. "Our Arab friends tend to see Iraq in the context of the new challenge from Iran. That's clearly the Saudi perspective. So the secretary was able to reassure them that we want an Iraq that is a barrier against Iranian expansion," he said.

Iran basic position is defiance of the international community and support for terrorism

US State Dept. website, January 17, 2007--Q: Kuwait's Foreign Minister is quoted as saying that he has told Secretary Rice that he would like to see the U.S. engage Iran and Syria on Iraq. Tom Casey, Deputy Spokesman: I think our position on this is quite clear.

I will say it's certainly hard to see, based on Iranian actions and behaviors in Iraq and elsewhere, that there's any real change in their views and any real change in their basic positions, which includes not only defiance of the international community on its nuclear program, but also continued support for terrorism and continued support for sectarian violence in Iraq.

US wins firm Arab opposition to Iran meddling in Iraq



January 17, 2007- KUWAIT CITY - US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice concluded her tour by meeting the foreign ministers of the "GCC+2" group of US allies -- the six members of - who called on Iraq's neighbors to respect its sovereignty. "With respect to US policy towards Iran... the US and the Gulf (States) expressed in (a) joint communique that we call to all countries to refrain from," Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammad al-Sabah told a joint news conference with Rice after Tuesday's talks.

Iranian detained in Iraq tied to Vienna murders: report



January 17, 2007-VIENNA One of five Iranians arrested by US forces in Iraq last week is the suspected leader of a commando team that assassinated three Iranian Kurds in Vienna in 1989, Austrian public radio has reported. Austria's Oe1 radio said Tuesday that one of the arrested Iranians is Mohammad Jafari-Sahroudi, implicated in the assassination of Abdul Rahman Ghassemlou, then head of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran, his assistant and another Kurdish exile.

Iran 'taking control of Basra by stealth'

The Daily Telegraph, January 16, 2007-Iranian intelligence is preparing for complete dominance of southern Iraq when the British withdraw by penetrating Basra's security network and political parties, it can be revealed. Iraqi intelligence sources disclosed to The Daily Telegraph that Iran plans to reap the huge financial rewards presented by the southern oil fields and prevent Western businesses from gaining a

foothold inside Basra. British and American political and military leaders are also concerned over Teheran "giving succor" to terrorists who continue to kill troops every week.

New Iran-Iraq policy

How to Topple the Mullahs

FrontPage Magazine, January 18, 2007-- For now, the nutty recommendation of the Baker-Hamilton Iraq Study Group that the United States should engage in direct talks with Syria and Iran appears to have been mooted by events on the ground. U.S. military forces have caught Iran red-handed – twice – over the past few weeks in Iraq. No one can possibly doubt any longer what I and many others have been saying for some time: that Iran is involved on the ground in Iraq and is aiding both Sunni and Shia insurgents in an effort to blow that country apart. The Islamic Republic of Iran is a regime that over the past twenty-seven years has been willing to pay a tremendously high price in blood and treasure to pursue its radical policies. The United States has repeatedly attempted to “influence the behavior” of the regime, without success. There is only one approach that will get the attention of the Tehran’s revolutionary and clerical leaders: support for regime change. This is the one approach that the United States and its allies have never tried.

Iran Warned as Troop Surge Begins

Guardian , January 18, 2007-The US defence secretary, Robert Gates, said this week that Iran believed it had gained the upper hand over Washington in the Middle East, but he declared a US military build-up was intended to signal American determination to remain a dominant player in the region. Mr Gates said the build-up of US forces in the PERSIAN Gulf region, involving the dispatch of an aircraft carrier and Patriot missile defence batteries as well as the deployment of more than 20,000 US reinforcements to Iraq, was intended as a signal that Washington would not be intimidated.

Rice Resists Seeking Talks With Iran



January 18, 2007-BERLIN - Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice says now is not the time for the United States to talk to adversary Iran and that the United States is not trying to escalate a confrontation over Iraq. The top U.S. diplomat, in Europe to debrief German and British leaders on Mideast peacemaking efforts, said Iran is apparently not ready to accept a conditional U.S. offer to join European talks over its nuclear program. Until the Iranians comply, "this is not the time to break a long-standing American policy of not engaging with the Iranians bilaterally," Rice said during a press conference with German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier.

US Defense Secretary Scolds Iran

The New York Times

January 16, 2007- “The Iranians clearly believe that we are tied down in Iraq, that they have the initiative, that they’re in a position to press us in many ways,” The US Defense Secretary Robert Gates said, speaking to reporters at NATO headquarters in Brussels. Delivering that message to Iran is one of Mr. Gates’s priorities on a trip to the region this week that will take him later to the Persian Gulf. Senior Pentagon officials said they also planned to stress to the largely Sunni Arab governments worried about Iran that they must assist the United States in Iraq with reconstruction aid and with putting pressure on fellow Sunnis to reach political reconciliation.

Opening a New Front in the War, Against Iranians in Iraq

The New York Times

January 15, 2007-Over the past three weeks, in two sets of raids and newly disclosed orders issued by President Bush, a third front has opened — against Iran. Administration officials say the goal is limited to preventing Iranians from aiding in attacks on American and Iraqi forces inside Iraq. But in recent interviews and public statements, senior members of the Bush administration have made it clear that their agenda goes significantly further, toward foiling Iran’s dream of emerging as the greatest power in the Middle East. In an interview on Friday Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice described what she called an “evolving” strategy to confront “destabilizing behavior” by Iran across the region. Mr. Bush’s national security adviser, Stephen J. Hadley, said Sunday on the NBC News program “Meet the Press” that the United States was resisting an Iranian effort “to basically establish hegemony” throughout the region.

Coalition targets Iranian influence in Northern Iraq

MULTI-NATIONAL FORCE-IRAQ, January 14, 2007--BAGHDAD, Iraq – Coalition Forces continue investigations into the activities of five Iranian nationals detained in Irbil on Jan. 11. Preliminary results revealed the five detainees are connected to the Iranian Revolutionary Guard – Qods

Force (IRGC-QF), an organization known for providing funds, weapons, improvised explosive device technology and training to extremist groups attempting to destabilize the Government of Iraq and attack Coalition forces...

The facility in which the detention took place has been described by various Iraqi officials as an Iranian liaison office, but it did not enjoy the diplomatic status of a consulate according to Iraqi and U.S. officials. ...

After the surge ... what next?

Guardian, January 14, 2007-President Bush, under fire for sending 20,000 extra troops into Iraq, is now ready to target Iran for the chaos in Baghdad and beyond. Baghdad's Residency Office, a bustling maze of corridors and smoky rooms, is a place of Kafkaesque bureaucracy. Controlled by a Shia political party, it means foreigners who do not want to pay a bribe shuffle from desk to desk to get the signatures, stamps and counter signatures, and then more stamps, required to leave the country. Only one group is rushed through without a cursory glance: agents who breeze through with arms laden with stacks of passports. All of them from Iran.

The Watch on the Persian Gulf

The New York Times
ON THE WEB

January 14, 2007- Why name a sailor — Adm. William J. Fallon — as Cent Com's new commander, as President Bush did earlier this month? One word: Iran. Admiral Fallon's appointment comes amid a series of indications that the Bush administration is increasingly focused on putting pressure on Iran and, perhaps, veering toward open confrontation. They include the dispatching of a second Navy carrier battle group to the Persian Gulf; a blunt singling out of Iran in Mr. Bush's speech Wednesday night, warning that America will "seek out and destroy the networks providing advanced weaponry and training to our enemies in Iraq,"

Bush's Radio Address

White House Website, January 13, 2007- America will expand our military and diplomatic efforts to bolster the security of Iraq and protect American interests in the Middle East. We will address the problem of Iran and Syria allowing terrorists and insurgents to use their territory to move in and out of Iraq.

US responses Iranian activities in Iraq

The US States Department website, January 13, 2007- SECRETARY RICE: The United States is simply responding to Iranian activities that have been going on for a while now that threaten not just to destabilize the chance for Iraq to proceed to stability but that also endanger our forces. And the President has made clear that we will go after the networks that are producing explosive devices that are threatening our forces. We've also made clear that this is something that can be done inside of Iraq. I think that General Pace made that clear yesterday. We also, of course, continue to work with the international community to try and arrest Iran's movement toward a nuclear weapon.

Rice: Clock Is Ticking for Maliki

The Time Magazine, January 13, 2007-Two days after President George Bush announced a 20,000 man surge of U.S. forces in Iraq, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told TIME in an interview on Friday that the Iraqi government of Nouri al Maliki could lose both popular support at home—and the backing of Washington—if it fails to establish control in Baghdad. Rice emphasized that American patience is limited. "I think in the next few months you are going to know whether or not this is working," She would not rule out the possibility that U.S. troops might cross the Iraq border into Iran in pursuit of Iranians suspected of moving weapons to Iraqi militias. But she said she trusts the expertise of Gen. Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who believes that the Iranian arms networks can be broken up with intelligence and interdiction inside Iraq.