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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

Ahmadinejad warns of 'cutting hand of any aggressor'

Irish Examiner.com, April 18, 2006 -- President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad today warned Iran would "cut the hand of any aggressor," and insisted that Iran's military had to be equipped with the most modern technology. "Today, you are among the world's most powerful armies because you rely on God," Ahmadinejad told a parade in Tehran to commemorate Army Day. "Iran's enemies know your courage, faith and commitment to Islam and the land of Iran has created a powerful army that can powerfully defend the political borders and the integrity of the Iranian nation and cut the hand of any aggressor and place the sign of disgrace on their forehead," Ahmadinejad said.

Iran says it is developing advanced centrifuges that could speed up uranium enrichment



April 18, 2006 Tehran — Iran's recent claim it was testing a more sophisticated type of nuclear enrichment centrifuge could mean the country has significantly sped up the process of making fuel for power plants or bombs, analysts familiar with the technology said Monday. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad told students Wednesday that the Islamic republic was testing the P-2 centrifuge — a more sophisticated type. A day earlier, he had trumpeted Iran's success in enriching a small amount of uranium using a less-sophisticated type of centrifuge. The president's words were Iran's first acknowledgment it is working with the faster P-2 and came after the country told the U.N. nuclear watchdog agency it had given up all such work three years ago. It is not clear if Iran had been doing work all along on the more-sophisticated model, or had recently restarted efforts. Either way, the president's assertion is sure to raise concerns that Iran might have a more sophisticated program than believed. The International Atomic Energy Agency and some independent groups have long questioned if Iran has a parallel, secret nuclear program that is farther along. On the other hand, analysts familiar with the country's technology also say Iran's president seems to be deliberately exaggerating the country's capabilities in recent weeks — perhaps to boost domestic political support or to persuade the IAEA to back off. "Our centrifuges are P-1 type. P-2, which has quadruple the capacity, now is under the process of research and test in the country," Ahmadinejad told the students in Khorasan in northeastern Iran. If Ahmadinejad's comments are confirmation that Tehran has secretly developed its P-2 program over the past few years, that could mean it will be able to produce weapons-grade enriched uranium faster and in greater quantities than previously believed, he said. Ahmadinejad did not provide any details in his speech to the students. Iran previously told the IAEA the only work it had done on the P-2 design was carried out between 2002 and 2003 and was very limited. It also said all the work was halted in 2003, when it went back to the easier P-1 design.

Egypt not to tolerate emergence of Iran as a regional nuclear power



April 13, 2006 Cairo -- "Egypt does not accept the emergence of a military nuclear power in the region, as that will further complicate the regional security situation in the Middle East," Abul Gheit added. He expressed concern over what he said were "loopholes" in the implementation of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. But Joseph said Iran was a much bigger threat to the region. "Iran would, if it had nuclear weapons I am sure, be even more aggressive, would be even more ambitious in its use of terror to undercut the prospects for peace in the Middle East," Joseph said. Iran would further "undercut the

legitimate aspirations of the people of Lebanon, to undercut our determination with regard to moving forward on democracy and human rights in Iraq and Afghanistan," he added. "I think that a nuclear-armed Iran is something that we simply can't tolerate," he told reporters.

Iran one step closer to nukes



April 12, 2006 Washington -- Just days after strong rumors of a possible preemptive U.S. and/or Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear facilities circulated like wildfire around the Washington Beltway, Iran announced it has taken its nuclear program forward..."I think this is significant; the world must take this very seriously," Alireza Jafarzadeh, president of Strategic Policy Consulting and a former Washington spokesman for Iran's parliament in exile, the National Council of Resistance of Iran, told United Press International.

"This confirms what I have been warning," said Jafarzadeh. "Ahmadinejad's task was to give the regime its first nuclear bomb. And he is going ahead," said the Iranian dissident. "This also confirms that by April 28 -- the day Iran has to comply with the demands of the International Atomic Energy Agency -- he (Ahmadinejad) has no intentions to comply." Ahmadinejad's speech can also be perceived as a slap across the face to the world community -- particularly to the United States, the European Union and Russia, whose diplomats have tried to prevent Iran from joining the nuclear club. "Nothing will stop Ahmadinejad and the regime from getting the bomb," said Jafarzadeh. The only thing that can stop Iran's nuclear weapons program, says Jafarzadeh, is for the international community to strike at the Achilles' heel of the regime. And that is to empower the opposition. "The opposition can help. Empower the opposition before Ahmadinejad gets the bomb," pleaded Jafarzadeh.

"Iran has accelerated the nuclear clock, now the United States should accelerate the diplomatic clock," Raymond Tanter, a former senior National Security Counsel member in the Reagan administration and a principal with the Iran Policy Committee told UPI.

Iran to move toward large-scale enrichment



April 12, 2006 Tehran - Iran intends to move toward large-scale

uranium enrichment involving 54,000 centrifuges, the country's deputy nuclear chief said Wednesday, signaling its resolve to expand a program the international community has insisted it halt. Iran's president announced Tuesday the country had succeeded in enriching uranium on a small scale for the first time, using 164 centrifuges. The U.N. Security Council has demanded that Iran stop all enrichment activity because of suspicions the program's aim is to make nuclear weapons. "We will expand uranium enrichment to industrial scale at Natanz," Deputy Nuclear Chief Mohammad Saeedi told state-run television Wednesday. He said Iran has informed the International Atomic Energy Agency that it plans to install 3,000 centrifuges at Natanz by late 2006, then expand to 54,000 centrifuges, though he did not say when. He said using 54,000 centrifuges will be able to produce enough enriched uranium to provide fuel for a 1,000-megawatt nuclear power plant like the one Russia is currently putting the finishing touches on in southern Iran.

Iran resumes operation of nuclear centrifuges



April 11, 2006 Kuwait City -- Iran has successfully operated a cascade of centrifuges used to enrich uranium, the country's former president was quoted as saying by the Kuwaiti news agency Tuesday, despite a UN Security Council demand for the country to freeze the sensitive nuclear activity.

Iran 2-3 years from nuclear bomb: regime opponent



April 11, 2006 Washington -- Iran can deliver on its threat Tuesday to enrich uranium, said a regime opponent, who claimed the Islamic republic has the know-how and tools to make nuclear bombs within two or three years. "Once they master the technique, then they will only be a screwdriver's turn away from making fissile material for a bomb," Alireza Jafarzadeh, of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, told AFP. "Iran has about 5,000 centrifuges ready to be installed in (the) Natanz uranium enrichment facility," he said, backing up claims by Iran's hardline president. Jafarzadeh claimed that Iran has the parts to assemble 5,000 centrifuges, used to separate fissile uranium. "Iran is one to three years away from making a bomb," he said. The National Council of Resistance of Iran has in the past provided accurate information on Iran's secret nuclear programs, revealing in 2002 the existence of sites in Natanz and Arak, where the centrifuges are to be installed in underground halls, Jafarzadeh said. The next step, he said, is to assemble more than a hundred centrifuges in a "cascade," meaning that each successive machine furthers

the enrichment of the previous one. "The main barrier that Iran crossed is to work 164 together, which is the most difficult first step which Iran has overcome. "The nuclear clock is rapidly ticking and we don't have much time. Unless the international community acts now, Iran will eventually get a bomb," Jafarzadeh said.

Terrorism and meddling in Iraq

Iran-stoked sectarian violence in Iraq top threat of terrorism and insurgency

Chicago Tribune

April 15, 2006 Washington -- Sectarian violence in Iraq has

increased dramatically over the past year, to the point where senior U.S. officials now identify the problem as a greater threat to Iraq's stability than terrorism or the Sunni-led insurgency. It has become routine for corpses of Sunni men to appear on the streets of Baghdad, in many cases bound, shot execution-style and bearing signs of torture. In most cases, the men's families or other witnesses reported that they had been detained by security forces, often wearing the uniforms of the U.S.-supported police commandos charged with counterinsurgency operations. That has raised concerns that the commandos acting as anti-Sunni death squads are widespread.

In some instances, U.S. officials say they suspect insurgents are disguising themselves as police in order to stir sectarian tensions, or that Shiite militias pursuing sectarian agendas are using police uniforms. The U.S. military has confirmed the existence of at least one death squad operating under the ministry's auspices, and is convinced others exist. The Shiite militias clearly are a force within the Interior Ministry. Jabr, who heads the ministry, is a senior official in the pro-Iranian Shiite Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq. The party's armed wing, the Badr Organization, is suspected of involvement in many of the abuses.

Ahmadinejad: Iran to use its power, progress in service of neighbors, friends

IRNA, April 17, 2006 Tehran -- President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said here Sunday that Iran will use its power and progress to serve its friends and neighboring countries. The president made the remarks at a meeting with Syrian Parliament Speaker Mahmoud al-Abrash on the sidelines of the Third International Conference on Qods and Support for the Rights of Palestinian People which ended here Sunday. Stressing the need to strengthen the unity and convergence of world Muslims, he said Iran had been supporting Syria over the past three decades. "Fortunately, Iran and Syria have very transparent and common stances on regional and international issues. They both call for an end to the occupation of Palestine and for the Palestinian people to be able to decide their own affairs and for liberation of all Islamic lands," he said. Al-Abrash, for his part, expressed felicitations to the Iranian government and nation for having made it to the world's nuclear club. Iran's success in enriching uranium does not belong solely to Iran but to all Islamic nations and freedom lovers who resist US dominance as well, he said. The Islamic Republic of Iran will defy pressure on its peaceful nuclear program because it is an independent state which has always resisted US hegemony, he said.

Iran to give 50 mln dollars aid to Hamas government



April 16, 2006 -- Iran has announced that it was giving 50 million dollars in aid to the cash-strapped Hamas-led Palestinian government following a suspension of funding from the United States and European Union. "The government of the Islamic republic invites all countries to help the Palestinian government and nation, and announces the allocation of 50 million dollars to help the Palestinian government and people," Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki announced Sunday. He was speaking at the end of a regime-sponsored conference in Tehran on supporting the Palestinians. Top officials used the gathering to call for Islamic nations to fill the gap in Palestinian authority finances.

Iran suicide bombers 'ready to hit Britain'

The Sunday Times, April 16, 2006 -- IRAN has formed battalions of suicide bombers to strike at British and American targets if the nation's nuclear sites are attacked. According to Iranian officials, 40,000 trained suicide bombers are ready for action. The main force, named the Special Unit of Martyr Seekers in the Revolutionary Guards, was first seen last month when members marched in a military parade, dressed in olive-green uniforms with explosive packs around their waists and detonators held high. Dr Hassan Abbasi, head of the Centre for Doctrinal Strategic Studies in the Revolutionary Guards, said in a speech that 29 western targets had been identified: "We are ready to attack American and British sensitive points if they

attack Iran's nuclear facilities." He added that some of them were "quite close" to the Iranian border in Iraq. In a tape recording heard by The Sunday Times, Abbasi warned the would-be martyrs to "pay close attention to wily England" and vowed that "Britain's demise is on our agenda".... Alireza Jafarzadeh, a former spokesman for National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), an opposition group, said a secret, parallel military programme was under way. According to sources inside Iran, the Revolutionary Guards were constructing underground sites that could be activated if Iran's known nuclear facilities were destroyed. The NCRI is the political wing of the Mujaheddin-e-Khalq, which is deemed a terrorist organisation in Britain and America. However, much of its information is considered to be "absolutely credible" by western intelligence sources after Jafarzadeh revealed the existence of the Natanz plant in 2002. Within the past year, 14 large and several smaller projects have been created, according to Jafarzadeh. Several are designed to be nuclear factories; others are for the storage of weapons, he claimed.

Palestinian militant leaders rally behind Iran



April 15, 2006 -- Palestinian militant leaders have rallied behind Iran, vowing to resist pressure to recognise Israel and supporting the Islamic republic in its stand-off with the West over its nuclear programme. Hamas supremo Khaled Meshaal vowed that the new Palestinian government will not recognise Israel, regardless of mounting international pressure on the militant group to do so -- sticking with the tough position supported by Iran's leadership. "The pressure is aimed at making us change our political position, to recognise Israel and to give up the rights of the Palestinians. But Hamas will not give in to the pressure and will not recognise Israel," he told state television. Syrian-based Meshaal is in Tehran to attend a conference organised by the regime on supporting the Palestinians. He is also seeking Iranian funds to fill the gap left by the suspension of US and European aid to the Palestinian Authority.

Israel will be annihilated in one storm, says Ahmadinejad

Telegraph, April 15, 2006 -- President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran appeared to threaten Israel with a nuclear attack yesterday when he described it as a "rotten, dried tree" that would be annihilated by "one storm". In his most vitriolic and anti-semitic attack to date, Mr Ahmadinejad warned that Israel faced imminent destruction. While he did not refer explicitly to nuclear weapons, his reference to the "one storm" that would do away with Israel was seen as a code for nuclear Armageddon.... Speaking at the opening of a conference in Teheran to support the Palestinian cause, Mr Ahmadinejad repeated earlier anti-semitic attacks in Israel, questioning the scale of the Nazi Holocaust and attacking Zionism. "Like it or not, the Zionist regime is heading toward annihilation," he said. "The Zionist regime is a rotten, dried tree that will be eliminated by one storm." And he poured scorn on the established history of the Holocaust, saying that an atrocity committed in Europe should be settled in Europe. "If such a disaster is true, why should the people of this region pay the price? Why does the Palestinian nation have to be suppressed and have its land occupied?" The land of Palestine, he said, referring to the British mandated territory that includes all of Israel, Gaza and the West Bank, "will be freed soon". Meanwhile, the head of Iran's Revolutionary Guards yesterday warned the US not to attack the Islamic republic, saying that American troops in Iraq and the region were vulnerable. General Yahya Rahim Safavi, one of Teheran's most powerful figures, said of the US: "You can start a war but it won't be you who finishes it. Speaking at the pro-Palestinian conference in Teheran, the general warned: "The Americans know better than anyone that their troops in the region and in Iraq are vulnerable. I would advise them not to commit such a strategic error."

Iran's supreme leader urges 'Muslim World' to fund Hamas



April 14, 2006 -- The Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has called on the Muslim world to help the Palestinian people and their Hamas-led government. Both he and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad launched strong attacks on the West as a three-day forum on Palestinian solidarity began in Tehran. Ayatollah Khamenei, opening the Tehran conference, said all Muslims had a duty to help the Palestinian people and should not remain indifferent to tyranny. The chain of plots by the American government aimed at governing the Middle East through the control of the Zionist regime will not succeed. Ayatollah Ali Khamenei launched a scathing attack on the West, saying its liberal democracy was like a poison. He said global imperialism led by the US president openly threatened the Muslim world by talking about launching a crusade against it. He said "jihad" was not only taking place in "occupied Palestine and Qods (Jerusalem)" but all over the "Islamic world".

Armed Iranians infiltrate into Karbala

Al-Bassa'er daily, April 13, 2006 Iraq -- Press sources in southern Iraq said over 100 armed Iranians infiltrated the city of Karbala to join an Iraqi militia which is expected to engage in armed clashes

with American occupiers...Iranians' infiltration is in line with the militias' preparation to counter any confrontation with the forces of Occupation or other groups and militias. They are counting on meddling in Baghdad and other cities if any clashes erupt. This source said the Iranian infiltrators do not have any identity cards or documents. Following reports that the American occupiers intend to dissolve one of the well-known militia groups, an aura of excitement and anticipation prevails the city.

Feature

Is Iran preparing for war?



April 17, 2006 Editorial -- As the tone from Tehran grows more menacing, there is mounting international concern about Iran's progress towards an atomic bomb. Last week, the Institute for Science and International Security, a U.S.-based research group, released satellite images which suggest that Iran is expanding its uranium conversion facility at Isfahan. (The ISIS is headed by David Albright, a former United Nations weapons inspector who has been skeptical of using military means to disarm Iran.) Meanwhile, Israeli officials, who for many months have been privately counseling that there is still time for diplomatic efforts to dissuade Iran from pursuing nuclear weapons, tell us that they are increasingly worried that the Islamic Republic's program is on the verge of becoming impossible to stop. On Friday, Mr. Ahmadinejad spoke at a conference in Tehran that was aimed at raising money for the new Hamas-led Palestinian Authority. As representatives of terrorist organizations including Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah looked on, the Iranian president again questioned whether the Holocaust had actually occurred. Calling Israel a "dried up, rotten tree that will be annihilated by one storm," Mr. Ahmadinejad declared that "the existence of the Zionist regime" is "an unending and unrestrained threat" to the Middle East." Whatever else he had hoped to achieve, the Iranian leader seems to have inspired Ramadan Abdullah Shallah, the former University of South Florida professor who heads the Damascus-based PIJ -- perhaps the most violent jihadist group now operating in the West Bank and Gaza. Mr. Shallah told Mr. Ahmadinejad that Iran "would not stand alone" if it goes to war. Perhaps all of this will prove to be mere bluster. But the reality is that by behaving this way, Iran and its terrorist allies are playing a very dangerous game indeed.

Iran suicide bombers "ready to hit Britain"

The Sunday Times April 16, 2006, Marie Colvin, Michael Smith and Sarah Baxter

IRAN has formed battalions of suicide bombers to strike at British and American targets if the nation nuclear sites are attacked. According to Iranian officials, 40,000 trained suicide bombers are ready for action. The main force, named the Special Unit of Martyr Seekers in the Revolutionary Guards, was first seen last month when members marched in a military parade, dressed in olive-green uniforms with explosive packs around their waists and detonators held high. Dr Hassan Abbasi, head of the Centre for Doctrinal Strategic Studies in the Revolutionary Guards, said in a speech that 29 western targets had been identified: We are ready to attack American and British sensitive points if they attack Iran nuclear facilities. He added that some of them were quite close to the Iranian border in Iraq. In a tape recording heard by The Sunday Times, Abbasi warned the would-be martyrs to pay close attention to wily England and vowed that Britain demise is on our agenda.

At a recruiting station in Tehran recently, volunteers for the force had to show their birth certificates, give proof of their address and tick a box stating whether they would prefer to attack American targets in Iraq or Israeli targets. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad warned last Friday that Israel was heading towards annihilation. He was speaking at a Tehran conference on Palestinian rights aimed at promoting Iran as a new Middle Eastern superpower. According to western intelligence documents leaked to The Sunday Times, the Revolutionary Guards are in charge of a secret nuclear weapons programme designed to evade the scrutiny of the International Atomic Energy Agency. One of the leaked reports, dating from February this year, confirms that President George W Bush is preparing to strike Iran. If the problem is not resolved in some way, he intends to act before leaving office because it would be unfair to leave the task of destroying Iran nuclear facilities to a new president, the document says. Alireza Jafarzadeh, a former spokesman for National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), an opposition group, said a secret, parallel military programme was under way. According to sources inside Iran, the Revolutionary Guards were constructing underground sites that could be activated if Iran's known nuclear facilities were destroyed. The NCRI is the political wing of the Mujaheddin-e-Khalq, which is deemed a terrorist organisation in Britain and America. However, much of its information is considered to be absolutely credible by western intelligence sources after Jafarzadeh revealed the existence of the Natanz plant in 2002. Within the past year, 14 large and several smaller projects have been created, according to Jafarzadeh. Several are designed to be nuclear factories; others are for the storage of weapons, he claimed.