



IRAN TODAY & TOMORROW

WEEKLY NEWS BULLETIN

The Committee in Support of Referendum in Iran (CSRI), a 501(c)(3), 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.

August 26, 2005

No. 169

Nuclear Proliferation

The New York Times

August 17, 2005

Security Council 'reasonable next step' for Iran - Rice

Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on Wednesday touched on contentious issues, notably Iran and North Korea... "There seems to be very strong international consensus that an Iran that has behaved the way that it has over the last couple of years really should not have a fuel cycle," she said.

"We expect that the next step will be to work with others to make certain that there are consequences for that behavior, and we believe that the Security Council is the reasonable next step."



Middle East Online

August 19 2005

Iran "solid" in pursuing nuclear drive

Iran's Islamic regime is as "solid as a mountain" and can easily stand up to international pressure for it to abandon sensitive nuclear activities, supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei said Friday. "We are not in the 19th century and Iran is not ruled by a lackey regime. Today the Iranian nation and its officials are feeling as solid as a mountain and we are not afraid of anyone," Khamenei insisted. "We have the ability to defend ourselves and no official has to right to compromise our rights."... "I tell you, the Iranian nation, will not accept blackmail and extortion," Khamenei said, drawing chants of "Death to America", "Death to Israel" and "Death to Britain" from thousands of worshippers.



REUTERS

August 19 2005

Iran forges ahead with plutonium project - exiles

Iran is forging ahead with a program to produce plutonium for nuclear weapons while the European Union focuses its energy on shutting down Tehran's uranium enrichment activities, an Iranian exile said on Friday. The National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), a coalition of exiled Iranian opposition groups, said several Iranian officials expressed their pleasure at the progress made at Iran's heavy water program at Arak, which could produce plutonium, at a recent meeting of top officials. The meeting was the final session of a special nuclear committee within the powerful Supreme National Security Council before newly appointed government officials took office this week, a senior NCRI official said, citing sources "within the clerical regime". "During this session, then Defense Minister Ali Shamkhani expressed his appreciation to (former chief nuclear negotiator) Hassan Rohani for deceiving the IAEA for the past 22 months, and diverting the attention of the international bodies away from the Arak site," Masomeh Bolurchi told reporters. Bolurchi said that at the Iranian officials' meeting, the head of Iran's Atomic Energy Organisation, Gholamreza Aghazadheh, expressed satisfaction "that unlike the Natanz site, where progress has stalled, the IAEA has not intervened to stop the advancement of this project".



Europeans call off key nuclear talks with Iran

August 23, 2005

European powers have called off August 31 talks with Iran over its nuclear program, France said on Tuesday...French Foreign Ministry spokesman Jean-Baptiste Mattei said talks on a formal European proposal made earlier this month would not now go ahead because Iran had resumed certain nuclear work in breach of a promise to freeze it while talks lasted...

"There will, in fact, be no negotiations meeting on August 31 since the Iranians have decided to suspend application of the Paris Agreement," Mattei told a regular news briefing.

"So by common accord between the three Europeans it is clear that there will be no negotiations meeting ... as long as the Iranians remain outside the Paris Agreement."

Supporting Global Terrorism

WorldNetDaily

August 20, 2005

Plans to turn Gaza Strip into terrorist playground

Iran is taking great interest in Gaza as the Israelis complete their disengagement... Tehran is funding plans for a flotilla of ships to repatriate the territory with Palestinian terrorists from Lebanon and elsewhere, working with Fatah dissidents to undermine the Palestinian Authority and spearheading an effort to make the Gaza Strip a beachhead of Islamist terrorism within six months.

Iran Focus

August 14, 2005

Regime's "suicide operations" chief threatens to hit U.S. interests

The commander of Iran's "Lovers of Martyrdom Garrison", a general in the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) vowed that his suicide volunteers will destroy United States' interests all over the world in retaliation to any attempt by the U.S. to hit Iran's nuclear installations. "If America were to make a mistake and carry out an attack against the sacred state of the Islamic Republic of Iran, we will set fire to its interests all over the world and will not leave it with any escape route", Jaafari was quoted as saying. ...



As-Siyasa Daily

August 22, 2005

Aqabeh attack outcome of new efforts by Zarqawi, Hizbullah, and Revolutionary Guards Corps

A German Intelligence report from the capital of Lebanon indicates that dramatic changes brought about in the Middle East, intense and accelerating developments in the United States and Europe on Iran's nuclear program and Syria's obvious interferences in the war in Iraq, have led to the filling of Hizbullah's huge frozen arsenal of missiles in Lebanon...Perhaps the seven missiles discovered in a storage house in the Port of Aqabeh --of which only three were fired-- were from the smuggler trucks that got stuck in Jordan after they could not find their way into Palestine and were later used against U.S. interests upon Iran's request.



August 24, 2005

New Iranian defense minister - Mughniyeh's controller

-Mostafa Mohammad-Najar, Brigadier general in the Revolutionary Guards and Iran's new defense minister, [is] the longtime senior controller of **Imad Mughniyeh**, one of Washington's most wanted terror masters, who currently serves as chief of the Hizballah's special security apparatus and Tehran's go-between with al Qaeda. In 1982, after the Iran-Iraq war, Muhammad-Najar was placed at the head of the Revolutionary Guards Middle East department, which controls Iranian intelligence bodies in the region. He planted 1,500 Revolutionary Guardsmen in the Lebanese Beqaa Valley. This Iranian outpost established the first recruiting center for the new Lebanese Shiite terrorist organization calling itself Hizballah... Right from the start, Muhammad-Najar worked closely with Imad Mughniyeh, who debuted with spectacular abductions of foreigners, mostly American and British hostages. In February 1988, the pair organized the kidnapping of Colonel William R (Rich Higgins, the most senior American intelligence officer in Lebanon. He was tortured to death by Iranian Revolutionary Guardsmen and Hizballah operatives on an unknown date...



Iran Focus
August 24, 2005

New IRGC Ground Forces chief had Lebanese terror ties

The new commander of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) Ground Forces was involved in terrorist activities in Lebanon during the 1980s, analysts say. In a ceremony on Wednesday to mark Revolutionary Guards brigadier general Ahmad Kazemi's new post, the IRGC commander, Major General Yahya Rahim Safavi, acknowledged the general's past activities in the Guards' Lebanon Force. "I am better informed than anyone of General Kazemi's record of sacrifice, valour, and courage; from his presence in southern Lebanon and difficult battles in Kurdistan to his presence in the frontlines of the eight-year [Iran-Iraq] war" the news agency ISNA quoted Safavi as saying. Before being appointed commander of the IRGC Ground Forces, Brigadier General Ahmad Kazemi was the commander of the IRGC Air Force. In that position, Kazemi was responsible for the production and development of Shahab missiles. "The [IRGC] Air Force under the command of General Kazemi underwent serious development, and today the Guards Corps has the potent missile force of the Middle East", Safavi said.

Meddling in Iraq

Al-Jazeera
August 16, 2005

Iran behind Hakim's call to set up Shiite federal region in Iraq

Dr. Fadhel: It is the Americans who are drafting the constitution. What is said about the constitution is a cover-up for the talks led by Abdulaziz Hakim between Iran and the US in Iraq. Hakim raised the issue of federalizing the South to pressure the US to back off on Iran's nuclear program. It was the Iranians who made Hakim raise the federalization issue. This is part of a multilateral program that even reaches Lebanon and the Lebanese Hezbollah, to turn it into a political party. The federalization that Hakim mentioned was for the talks with the US.

Anncr: So it's not uncalculated when they say Abdulaziz Hakim wants to connect Iraq to Iran?

Dr. Fadhel: That is Iran's historical wish... In addition to wanting to bury Khomeini in Najaf, they also want Farsi to be recognized as one of the official languages of Iraq.

Al-Mashreq
August 18, 2005

Karbala governor warns Iranians against political activities, drugs

Aqil Al-Khaza'ii, Governor of Karbala, on Wednesday urged Iranian pilgrims to obey security instructions and avoid bringing in drugs and engaging in political activity in the city. Al-Khaza'ii told the Iranian delegation, "We hope the negative things that Iranian pilgrims sought in the past won't be repeated. We hope there is no sale of drugs or meetings with political personalities in the locations designated for the pilgrims to live in."

The Washington Times
August 19, 2005

Iran wants to replicate its system of government in Iraq – Rumsfeld

Iran is continuing to supply weapons to insurgents in Iraq with the goal of creating an Islamist government, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said.

"I see intelligence reports and we know that we're finding Iranian weapons inside the country," Mr. Rumsfeld told reporters. "And we know that Iran has a system of government it would like to replicate in Iraq... As for Iran's efforts, the defense secretary said they are "making a mistake" by arming insurgents. "I think they're going to have to live with their neighbors like any country does over time," he said. Mr. Rumsfeld said a democratic Iraq "will stand in stark contrast to Iran."

U.S. officials said an arms shipment from Iran recently was intercepted at the Iraqi border, prompting official protests to the Tehran government... Iraqi security troops fired weapons at the smugglers who fled back to Iran but left the weapons behind, including timers, detonators and bomb-making equipment



newsVOA.com

Roadside bombs resemble those provided by Iran - National Security Advisor

August 20, 2005

VOA-Farsi-White House National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley says there are concerns that weapons might be entering Iraq from neighboring countries including Iran. He said the bombs that are planted in the roadsides as well as other types of ammunition might be similar to the instruments used by groups that Iran has always supported.

Hadley said it is high time for Iraq's neighbors to ensure that their soil is not used as a spring board for terrorism in Iraq.



Iraq Al-Ghad

August 20, 2005

Iraqi ministries serving as employees of Tehran

The Iraqi Interior Minister acknowledged two incidents, but downplayed them. One of them was an Iranian officer and soldier driving around in Iraq on motorcycle... The second was the entry of a group that carrying boxes of dynamite charge. However, the deputy Interior Minister said the accusations are still under investigation and no tangible results have been reached yet.

Maybe the Interior Ministry has mistaken the dynamite charge for sweets...

Do these Iraqi ministers serve the Iraqi people and homeland, or are they employees of the Iranian government? Why don't the Shiite Islamic political parties reveal the reality of their relations with Iranian officials? Are these parties devoted to Iraq or Iran?

San Francisco Chronicle

The Iranian factor in Iraq insurgency

August 21, 2005

The United States says it faces another enemy in Iraq: Iran, the country's Shiite neighbor, which President Bush once called part of an "axis of evil." Senior Bush administration officials have gone so far as to publicly accuse Iran of helping to arm the insurgents and of undermining the government. The Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI), created by Iraqi expatriates in Iran in the 1980s, and another Iran-linked Shiite party, Dawa, won the overwhelming majority of the seats in Iraq's National Assembly last January. SCIRI's military arm, the Badr Brigade, was formed and trained in Iran in the 1980s. Although most of its fighters have now joined Iraq's nascent police and military, their alliances may still lie with SCIRI and Iran... Critics also see Iran's influence in the drafts of Iraq's new constitution, which calls for Islamic Shariah law to be the main source of legislation and requests that Shiite clerics be granted special status, paving the way for Iraq to become an Iran-like theocracy.

"They want to have control over Iraq," said Michael Ledeen, a consultant to the National Security Council under former President Ronald Reagan, and now a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. "Their favorite way of doing it would be to create an Islamic republic," said Ledeen

August 24, 2005

New constitution would make Iraq easily exploitable by Iran

If the draft constitution becomes reality... Iraq would become a decentralized, even fragmented, land in a volatile region, where neighbors such as Iran could easily exploit such weakness... For Sunnis, the biggest risk is turning Iraq into a decentralized federal state. Sunni Arabs fear it would lead to the breakup of Iraq - or at least leave the country with a weakened central government, deprived of oil wealth and unable to defend itself against pressure from Iran, Syria and Turkey... Shiite regional security forces, many of whose members have close ties to Iran, could wind up with responsibility for controlling the border with Iran.

Inside Iran: Oppression, Youth execution, A cabinet of terrorists and murderers



IRAN FOCUS
August 19 2005

Residents of Iran city claim new Interior Minister ordered massacre

In a letter to the United Nations human rights office in Geneva, residents in the southern Iranian port city of Bandar Abbas accused the country's new Minister of the Interior-designate of ordering the summary execution of dozens of young people in the city to put down an anti-government riot in 1981 and demanded an international inquiry into the incident. The letter named 48 of the victims of executions. Under Hojjatol-Islam Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi's supervision as Military Revolutionary Prosecutor, Revolutionary Guards rounded up the dissidents throughout the province and shot them after summary trials.



IRAN FOCUS
August 20, 2005

New Justice Minister vows harsher crackdown on women

The man designated by Iran's hard-line President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as his Minister of Justice vowed on Saturday that "improperly-veiled women" will be treated as if they had no Islamic veil at all. Jamal Karimi-Rad told the local press, "Crimes such as mal-veiling or other prohibited acts, which happen before the eyes of a law enforcement agent, are evident crimes and must be dealt with in accordance with the law", Karimi-Rad said. Karimi-Rad also made it clear that members of the para-military Bassij and the notorious Ansar-e Hizbollah, government-organized gangs of hooligans, are regarded as law enforcement agents in clergy-ruled Iran.



Etemad daily
August 20, 2005

Cholera epidemic sweeping Iran

The confirmed number of people afflicted with cholera across the country has reached 700.



PMOI political prisoners' fate still undetermined after five years

August 20 2005

Mr. Valiollah Feiz Mahdavi was arrested in 2001; he is sentenced to death and was a member of the PMOI. He was told of his charges in court. He was once taken to court branch No. 26; his case has not yet been sent to the Supreme Court and remains undetermined. He has not had any leaves. Mr. Jaffar Eghdami was arrested in 2001; he was also charged with membership in the PMOI. He is not eligible for conditional release and his leave was cancelled because he was on hunger strike. He has been sentenced to six years banishment. Hojjat Zamani was arrested in 2001 and received triple death sentences. His crime is membership in the PMOI. Hojjat Zamani has not been transferred to the political [prisoners'] ward and is still living in terrible circumstances in [the] criminal [prisoners'] ward. He is not willing to repent and is mentally distressed.

Iran Mania

August, 2005

Mullahs' regime hangs yet another Iranian

An Iranian man was hanged in a prison in the southern port of Bandar Abbas, the Jomhuri Islami newspaper reported. The man was identified as Mousa Mohsenipour.

Etemad daily

August 24 2005

Clerical regime sentences 16-year-old schoolboy to death

Iran's clergy-dominated Supreme Court has given the green light for the hanging of a 16-year-old schoolboy in Tehran, a state-owned daily reported on Wednesday.

The boy, identified only by his first name Mostafa, was convicted of killing a man in a scuffle that began when the boy tried to save a girl who was being harassed by the drunken man, the daily Etemaad reported. Mostafa, who had no criminal record, told the Islamic judge that when he saw the drunken man insult and harass a young girl near his home in Tehran Pars district, he intervened and tried to save the girl, but the foul-mouthed man began to beat him.

The hanging of the sixteen-year-old boy is expected to take place in the next few days, now that the death sentence has been upheld by the Supreme Court.

Iran Mania

August 23, 2005

Mullahs' regime tightens Web control

The Iranian government has tightened its control over the Internet, increasingly blocking content in its national language of Farsi and restricting what citizens can publish through Web journals, Western researchers say. Iran shows sophistication in filtering seen only in China and a few other countries...

Before, the targets were mostly static English Web sites located in the United States and Europe. But with the rise of Web journals, or blogs, Internet service providers are being ordered to prevent Iranians from reaching other Iranians directly, blocking them from posting messages containing certain Farsi keywords.



August 24 2005

Four Iranian youth hanged in public

Four young Iranian men...at least one of whom was under the age of 18 - have been hanged publicly in the southern port of Bandar Abbas, the Kayhan newspaper said today. The revolutionary and public prosecutor from the city, who was not named, told the hardline paper the convicts were aged between 17 and 23 - but the report did not specify how many of them were under 18 at the time of the crimes or execution. Two of the young men...had also been sentenced to 74 lashes and a 10-year jail term to be served if they had have been spared execution.



IRAN FOCUS

August, 24, 2005

17-year-old musician to be hanged in Iran capital

A seventeen-year-old musician in Iran is facing imminent execution in public after his death sentence was upheld by Iran's hard-line Supreme Court, a state-owned daily reported on Wednesday.



August, 24, 2005

Lawmakers reject 4 proposed cabinet ministers

...

Lawmakers, the majority of whom are conservatives like Ahmadinejad, endorsed 17 of the president's ministerial picks, putting well-known hardliners in charge of the ministries of intelligence, interior and culture. Along with Saeedlou, the nominees to head the ministries of higher education, cooperatives and social welfare failed to get sufficient votes...

Earlier, conservative lawmaker Emad Afrough had spoken out strongly against proposed Interior Minister Mostafa Pourmohammadi, who was deputy intelligence minister during the mid-1990s.

"You must realise that when someone comes from such a ministry ... our reaction is to shudder with fear," he said, pointing to alleged human rights abuses, including the murder of dissidents, by Intelligence Ministry agents in the 1990s. Pourmohammadi was, nevertheless, approved and will form part of what analysts say will be a hardline core of ministers dealing with domestic politics and foreign affairs.

Feature



August, 25, 2005

Iran seeking nuclear bomb "booster," say exiles

By Mark John

BRUSSELS



Safavi said he understood that Iran's attempts to acquire the substance had been successful, but gave no further details.

Iranian agents have tried to obtain from South Korea a substance that can be used to boost nuclear explosions in atomic weapons, an Iranian exile group said on Thursday. The National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI), which has in the past provided accurate information on hidden Iranian nuclear activities, said Tehran had used front companies to obtain the substance, a hydrogen isotope known as tritium. "The regime has tried to smuggle it in from South Korea," said Ali Safavi, a senior NCRI official, told a news conference in Brussels, citing what he called high-placed unnamed sources in the Iranian leadership. Safavi said he understood that Iran's attempts to acquire the substance had been successful, but gave no further details. Tritium has many civilian uses such as in luminous paint and in testing the safety of drugs but can be combined with another hydrogen isotope known as deuterium to act as a "booster" in nuclear bombs. It is subject to export controls. "Tritium and deuterium together increase the explosive power of a bomb tenfold. This is essential for producing a smaller size of nuclear bomb," said Safavi, adding that it had informed the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog, the IAEA, of its allegations. The IAEA declined to comment.

South Korea ranks sixth in output of nuclear power in the world, producing about 40 percent of its electric power at its 20 nuclear plants. The West suspects Iran is taking steps toward building atomic arms. Tehran denies this and says its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes only. The NCRI, which is listed by the State Department as a terrorist organization, revealed in August 2002 the existence of the Arak heavy water facility and a massive underground uranium enrichment plant at Natanz. Its new allegations come days after Britain, France and Germany, prompted by Tehran's resumption of some nuclear work, canceled talks with Tehran aimed at encouraging it to halt activities in return for economic and other incentives. Safavi also repeated allegations by the NCRI that Iran had already purchased deuterium from abroad. It is not illegal for Iran to buy deuterium, but it should be reported to the IAEA. The NCRI said last week that Iran was forging ahead with a separate program that could produce plutonium for nuclear weapons at Arak, 240 km (150 miles) south of Tehran. Safavi said the Iranian leadership was working on the assumption that the plant, which Tehran says is based around a 40 megawatt research reactor, would be ready by 2007.



August 22, 2005

Baghdad Blues: Is Iran the true victor of the Iraq war?

*By
Volkhard Windfuhr and Bernhard Zand*



The rise of a Shiite-dominated government last May has transformed Iran's former arch-enemy into the kind of neighbor the Iranian theocracy can welcome with open arms.

Iran has benefited from the downfall of the Saddam regime like no other country. Now Iran's mullahs are pressing for more influence -- and are apparently using terror as a means to that end. The Shiite-dominated south is already said to be completely under Tehran's control...

The rise of a Shiite-dominated government last May has transformed Iran's former arch-enemy into the kind of neighbor the Iranian theocracy can welcome with open arms. And with each passing day, Iran gains even more influence in Iraq. Americans and Britons see this influence as acutely dangerous -- and Iraqi Sunnis and the country's Arab neighbors are deeply concerned...

Mithal Alusi raised serious charges against Tehran last Wednesday on the state-owned Al-Iraqiya television station. Alusi, a former dissident, heads the Iraqi National Party. Iran, says Alusi, is the true winner of the Iraq war, and it is now doing everything within its power to weaken its neighbor. Iran's efforts, he claims, are supported by Iraq's Shiite-dominated government, whose leading members spent their formative years in Iranian exile.

To support his claims, Alusi cites the fact that Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari, after visiting Iran in July, released 400 Iranian prisoners and admitted to Baghdad's culpability for the Iraq-Iran war -- even though the two countries had never negotiated a peace treaty.

He also says that Iran's handwriting is obvious in the political process, which Iraqis hope to move forward by ratifying the constitution this week...

An Iranian source reveals that the leadership in Tehran long ago began preparing for a long-term presence in postwar Iraq. On the day after Saddam's overthrow, an advance unit of the revolutionary guards sent a cable to Tehran to let officials know that American troops were in the streets of Kut, headed for Baghdad. But there was apparently no reason for concern. According to the cable, the Iranians were convinced of one thing: "We have the city under control."