



# 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.

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### Meddling In Iraq

#### Shaalan has concrete evidence on Iran meddling

**Al-Iraqiya Television, Dec. 29** – Iraqi Defense Minister Hazem Shaalan says, "I have concrete information on the interference of these two countries and hopefully the people will see a special film on the confessions of one of the detainees who provides information on Syria and Iran."

#### Allawi's man warns Tehran against interfering in Iraq

**Mehr news agency (Iranian state-run), Dec. 29** – Emad Shib, the number two man of Allawi-led National Solidarity Party, accused Iran of interfering in Iraq's internal affairs and warned, "If Iran keeps interfering, Iraq will prosecute the terrorists."

#### Iraqi daily calls on Tehran to stop meddling in Iraq

**As-Shahed Al-Mostaqel weekly, Dec. 28, Iraq** – In an article by Fazel Al-Badrawi on the Iranian regime's interference in Iraq's affairs and citing the remarks by Khatami and Iranian Friday prayer leaders advocating meddling in Iraq, the *Sawt Al-Ahali* daily wrote, "Since the fall of the dictator, Iranian officials have not abandoned their apparent interference in Iraq's affairs and have made themselves the guardian of Iraqi people and particularly the Shiites. In every Friday prayer, a prayer leader who is naturally one of the Islamic Republic's high-ranking officials issues a Fatwa to the people of Iraq as if the Iraqi people are ignorant and do not understand a thing about their country's affairs..."

The article concludes by urging Iraqi officials and parties that maintain good relations with Iran to ask Iran to abandon its interferences and let the people of Iraq choose for them selves.

#### Iran has a rush for its plans in coming elections

**AFP, Dec. 27, Tehran** - Iran insisted that landmark elections should go ahead in Iraq as planned next month despite a bomb attack Monday on a leading Tehran-backed Shiite politician that killed 13 people. ... "We believe that the elections should be held on time so that the occupation, assassinations and violence that target Iraq's interests come to an end," government spokesman Abdollah Ramezanzadeh said. The government spokesman hit out at ministers in Iraq's US-backed interim cabinet who have accused Iran of "meddling."

#### Shaalan: Iran interferes in Iraq



**Al-Mada daily, Dec. 27, Iraq** – Excerpts of an interview with the Iraqi Interim Defense Minister:

Question: What has been done about securing the borders with neighboring countries?

Hazem Al-Shaalan: The issue of securing the borders is a serious problem. Ever since I was the governor of Divaniya province, large groups of Iranians came to Iraq. Some of them came for pilgrimage but the rest were conspirators who inflicted damages on and endangered Al-Amara, Divaniya, Hilla and Basra, while operating from centers which had been prepared for

them. They were deployed in many of the incidents in Najaf, Medina As-Sadr, Nasseriya and Basra. They were also involved in the demonstration that took place... Even then, I complained about the situation of the borders but I did not have enough budget and financial resources to form new military or National Guard teams. After the government was formed, I did my best through the Prime Ministry and the Multi-National Forces to get the Defense Ministry's budget for securing the borders... I have to set up an army to provide security for my people but the Finance Minister is affiliated with a party that is in turn affiliated with a country in the region. What has happened is that that country has pressured the party and the party has pressured the minister to cut the Defense Ministry's budget...

Question: Your remarks have provoked many politicians and people who oppose Iran's interference in the Iraqi internal affairs. What is your opinion on this? Hazem Al-Shaalan: This is because these remarks are blunt and frank. I do not like to pay the price of diplomacy from my people's pockets... I am a frank person. Some ministers close to me might criticize me on this and say that these are your personal remarks, as if I have a personal enmity towards Iran or Syria. I am a person who supported Iran when Saddam fought with it. I have written much about this... But now in light of the current circumstances and while the people of Iraq are tasting freedom, Iran interferes in Iraq's internal affairs. I must say that Iran interferes. I must say what I see in the films that are given to me or those prepared of the interrogations of arrested suspects who bring us car bombs, death and destruction... When someone harms and attacks my people and family, I will not accept it and I will clearly speak out against it... Question: What is the role of the People's Mojahedin who are presently in Iraq?

Hazem Al-Shaalan: The presence of the People's Mojahedin in Iraq has been determined according to an agreement between them and the Multi-National Forces. The United Nations has only intervened in their humanitarian affairs. They are presently staying in some camps and we do not have any role in that regard.

### **Iran-Iraq Friendship and Solidarity Society warn of mullahs' hand in elections**

**Iran National Television (INTV), Dec. 27** - Members of the Iran-Iraq Friendship and Solidarity Society held a meeting to condemn the Iranian regime's interference in Iraq, particularly in the upcoming elections. The meeting, presided by Sheik Kamel Omran Atiya Al-Jabbouri, emphasized on the need for the political presence of the Mojahedin in Iraq as a strong barrier against the clerical regime's fundamentalist aggressions... He urged the gathering to make every effort to expose the clerical regime's interferences in the elections.

### **"An imposed election will bring another Islamic Republic to Iraq" – Iranian official**

**ISNA (Iranian state-run news agency), Dec. 26** – Morteza Nabavi, the managing editor of Ressalat daily and member of the State Expediency Council, said, "The Americans' literature of democracy and elections provides the first opportunity for all Shiites of Iraq to be able to take power after many years." He expressed hope that in light of the influence the people and government of Iran have on the people and Shiites of Iraq, the US will be forced to leave that country in humiliation. Stating his optimism that the Iraqi election would be imposed on the US, he added, "An imposed election will cause the formation of another Islamic Republic in Iraq."

## **Support of terrorism**

### **Iraq to show satellite images of 50 suicide vehicles**

**Radio France Internationale, Dec. 28** – In an interview with *Al-Watan* daily, Iraqi Defense Minister Hazem Al-Shaalan said, "Iraq will soon show satellite images of 50 suicide vehicles that were brought into Iraq from Iran." The Iraqi Defense Minister claimed 14 of these vehicles contained explosives and were ready for a suicide operation. Iraq's Defense Minister said, "The rest of the vehicles were being loaded with explosives but were confiscated." According to Hazem Shaalan these



satellite images will be shown on the country's television before the election and after the Prime Minister agrees.

### **78 Iranian prisoners in Abu-Ghraib prison**

**Iran (state-run) daily, Dec. 28** – Hours after an Iraqi government minister spoke about the presence of Mid-East nationals in the US detention centers, an informed source told "Iran daily" that these 78 people are Iranian nationals in the US detention center called Abu-Ghraib... According to the source, aside from the people detained by the Americans, at present 1,500 Iranian citizens have been arrested by Iraqi governors and institutes... As the center which follows up on the fate of Iranian nationals, the Iranian Foreign Ministry in addition to lobbying the Iraqi government officials, has mobilized a group of experts and lawyers to gain the release of Iranian nationals.

### **Iranian connection in explosion in Najaf**

**Al-Etteja Al-Akher daily, Dec. 26** – Najaf's Police Chief said that three people who attempted to explode a car bomb Sunday in Najaf, have been arrested. Their commander is an Iraqi with ties to the Iranian Intelligence and this issue compelled Iraq to completely close its borders with Iran on Wednesday.

### **Police Chief accuses Iran of terrorism in Najaf**

**Fars news agency (Iranian state-run), Dec. 26** – Najaf's Police Chief denied news disseminated by some media indicating that he had accused Syria of involvement in Sunday's explosion in Najaf. According to the report of the American SAVA radio which broadcasts in Arabic, Major General Ghalib Al-Jazayeri chief of Najaf's Police... also accused Iranian intelligence services of engagement in the explosion in Najaf. He claimed, "One of the three suspects arrested in the incident in Najaf confessed that he had relations with Iran's intelligence agencies."

### **Tehran blamed for murder of Baghdad University professor**

**Al-Iraqiya TV, Dec. 26, Iraq** – Thousands participated today in the funeral procession of Doctor Hassan Rabeii, professor of medical sciences and vice-president of Baghdad University's school of dentistry, who was assassinated yesterday by unidentified individuals. People accuse foreign elements of involvement in this murder. One participant: This is the work of Syrian and Iranian intelligence agencies. Another participant: They want our brains to leave the country.

## **Nuclear proliferation**

### **Heavy water plant in Arak will soon inaugurate**

**ISNA (Iranian state-run), Dec. 29** - Iranian Deputy of Atomic Energy Organization announced that a heavy water plant will be inaugurated in Arak in near future. In a gathering with students of the engineering collage of Shiraz University, Dr. Mohammad Ghanadzadeh Maragheii, Deputy Director of Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, said, "One-third of the area of the country is presently under uranium exploration with gigantic mines in central Iran and good prospects on the existence of considerable uranium sources in Khashoumi region." He added, "In the beginning of the next (Iranian) year, Saghand uranium mine will be exploited and with the inauguration of Ardakan factory we will produce 67 tons of uranium each year..." The Deputy Director of Atomic Energy Organization said, "One of Iran's biggest honors is that as international agencies say, we are the eighth country in time and seventh country in capacity to develop nuclear technology..."



He also gave news of inaugurating a heavy water plant in Arak in the near future and said, "This project will consume natural uranium and the technology is entirely developed by Iranian."

## Iran, North Korea top Rice's agenda

**Hamshari (state-run) daily, Dec. 29, Iran** – In an interview with The Christian Science Monitor, outgoing Secretary of State Collin Powell said Iran is trying to develop nuclear weapons. He pointed out, "Iran and north Korea will continue to top Condoleezza Rice's agenda, because both are endeavoring to develop and gain access to nuclear weapons capability."



## Unanswered questions on mullahs' secret nuclear activity

**AXcess News, Dec. 28, Vienna** - Uranium enrichment is not the only cause for concern. (IAEA spokeswoman Melissa) Fleming says Iran's secret nuclear program for more than a decade has left many unanswered questions. "One, there was contamination found with particles of highly enriched uranium and some low enriched uranium," she added. "In any case, there's a mystery there and it has to be solved. There are also questions surrounding Iran's development of a certain type of centrifuge P-2. There's a lapse of time when they say there was no activity and we're trying to verify that. These are some examples."

# Deteriorating conditions of human rights

## Berlin demonstration rebukes stoning in Iran

**Voice of America, Dec. 29** - Upon the invitation of three members of the European Parliament from Germany's Free Democratic Party, a group of Iranians demonstrated outside the Islamic



Republic Embassy in Berlin against stoning sentences. Now we listen to an interview with Javad Dabiran, member of National Council of Resistance of Iran: Dabiran: "We participated in today's demonstration to support the courageous move by three MEPs and to voice our loud and clear protest against stoning sentences... As I am speaking to you right now, the MEPs have gone into the embassy on behalf of the participants to announce the protests personally to the Iranian regime's representatives."

Question: Do you have information on the context of the demonstration's declaration?

Dabiran: "The declaration calls on the EU to step up pressure and adopt a firm policy against violations of human rights in Iran. It also states that any improvement in relations with the Iranian regime must be conditioned on improvement of the human rights situation, particularly, on the abolition of the stoning sentence. The MEPs also call for abolition of the death sentence in Iran."

## Iran's restless youths want rights as well as jobs

**The Christian Science Monitor, Dec. 29, Editorial** – With the US and Europe fixated on Iraq, where insurgents are trying to stop the masses from adopting democracy, next door in Iran a parallel struggle for democracy remains largely unnoticed. It shouldn't, especially given the West's concern over Iran's nuclear ambitions. Young Iranians, who make up more than half the population and are restless from massive unemployment, have been pushing for Western-style political and social reforms for nearly a decade. But they've been losing ground to the conservative ruling clerics, especially over the last year, and need discreet international support....Western countries, rightly concerned about Iran's nuclear ambitions, should not be content to open their markets and offer other benefits in exchange for security assurances alone. A more fundamental concern must also be addressed: Iran's human rights record. A government that rules its people with arbitrary interpretations of law and restricts civic freedoms when they interfere with its agenda is unlikely to make a reliable diplomatic partner. Case in point: Iran reneged on previous nuclear agreements. Thus, in these coming negotiations, the three European Union nations - Britain, France, and Germany - should more strongly insist that improved human rights and basic liberties be part of any final deal. The struggle for democracy in Iran has reached a critical stage. ...(The EU trio) need to be clear that economic benefits will come to Iran only in proportion as it values its people, granting them due process of law and letting them decide the future of their country. The clerics, squeezed between this international pressure and the restlessness of its young masses, will have little choice but to move Iran forward.

### Teenage to be executed within days

**Iran Focus, Dec. 28, Tehran** - A young man who was accused of killing a member of Iran's security forces when he was a minor is to be executed within "the next few days", according to a Tehran judge who sentenced him. Iman Farrokhi who was 17 at the time of the offence is currently on death row in the Tehran Centre for Reform and Education (Juvenile Prison). Farrokhi is said to have fatally stabbed Mohammad Ali Ghasemzadeh, while hiking in October 2000, though he insists that he forced to act in self defense.

### Imminent execution of two 18-year-olds

**Iran Focus, Dec. 28, Tehran** - A teenager [only identified as Mohammad T.] who is currently in one of Iran's Centers for Reform and Education (Juvenile Prison) is to be hanged to death within three weeks for a crime allegedly committed when he was fourteen...The acting judge at the time, cleric Mohammad Sultan Hematyar, sentenced Mohammad to spend time in the Center for Reform and Education until he turned eighteen and then be executed. Under Iranian law, girls above the age of nine and boys above the age of fifteen are considered to be adults and can be executed for capital offences. The sentence was later approved by Iran's Supreme Court which called for him to be hanged by the end of the Iranian calendar month. Mohammad now faces imminent execution.

### Execution of a 21-year-old

**Radio Farda, Dec. 28** - Hamshahri daily has reported the execution of a 21-year-old man by the name of Iman. He is to be executed on Friday.

### Two hanged in Iran

**Iran Focus, Dec. 28, Tehran** - Two young men were hanged in public in the Iranian city of Mashad (northeastern province of Khorrasan) yesterday and on Sunday after authorities accused them of rape. One of the young men identified only by his first name, Mohammad-Reza, was publicly hanged in Hedayat blvd. in the city-center. The second individual only identified as Mostafa was hanged in public yesterday morning in the Doo

