



# 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

**December 18, 2006**

**No. 223**

### Iran's nuclear threat

**Germany's Merkel says Iran must never get atom bomb, sanctions should be imposed**

**REUTERS**

**December 13, 2006 Berlin --** German Chancellor Angela Merkel

said on Tuesday the international community must use all diplomatic options, including sanctions, to prevent Iran from getting nuclear weapons. "It must be unmistakable and clear to Iran that (getting a nuclear weapon) would not be acceptable," Merkel said. "That is why the time has come ... not just to think about, but to work on sanctions," she said.

**Security Council sanctions to be imposed on Iran before Christmas**

**Los Angeles Times  
latimes.com**

**December 12, 2006 UN --** Russia and China voiced tentative

support Monday for a new draft resolution imposing sanctions on Iran for its nuclear program, saying that with a few tweaks, it could be adopted by Christmas.

**Iran to push ahead with industrial scale enrichment as international community keeps watching**

**AP Associated Press**

**December 9, 2006 Tehran --** Iran has begun installing 3,000

centrifuges in an expansion of its uranium enrichment program that brings the Islamic nation significantly closer to large-scale production of nuclear fuel, the president said Saturday. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad also claimed that the international community was caving in to Tehran's demands to continue its nuclear program.

**Iran won't forgo nuclear ambitions**

**News Agencies, December 9, 2006 Tehran --** A senior Iranian cleric vowed on Friday that the Islamic Republic would never retreat in the international standoff over its controversial nuclear program.

"The Iranian nation is standing firm over its right to obtain peaceful nuclear energy, and it will not retreat", Ahmad Khatami told Friday prayers worshippers in Tehran. His remarks were aired on state television. "Iran is adamant in the complete realization of its rights".

**Condoleezza Rice: We have a serious problem with an atomic Iran**

**U.S. State Department, December 8, 2006--** Secretary Condoleezza Rice Remarks With German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier After Meeting: Syria and Iran seem intent on trying to destabilize this young democracy [Lebanon]. And it simply cannot be tolerated. But I want to repeat, we have a serious problem if Iran continues its current course toward the development of technologies that will lead to a nuclear weapon. That is a really serious problem for us, for the neighborhood and for the international community.

**Putin admits concern over Iran nuclear program**



**December 8, 2006 Moscow** -- Russian President Vladimir Putin admitted Thursday that Russia was "concerned" over Iran's nuclear program... "One cannot say that the IAEA does not have serious questions on certain aspects of Iran's past nuclear activity," Putin said in an interview with the Mexican publisher Mario Vasquez Rana.

**A nuclear Iran is most destabilizing in Middle East**

**U.S. State Department Daily Press Briefing, December 6, 2006** – Sean McCormack: You know, with respect to Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapon, they're doing so covertly in violation of their treaty obligations... And nobody wants to see Iran with a nuclear weapon. Iran with a nuclear weapon, everybody agrees, would be one of the most destabilizing events that anybody can imagine in the Middle East; that occurrence.

**PMOI is off the list**

**Iranian Resistance leader: We have the tools to bring about change in Iran**

**I tele Chanell<sup>+</sup> Television, December 13, 2006 France** – In a telephone interview with Mrs. Maryam Rajavi we asked her about the consequences of the European Court's verdict on the PMOI... Maryam Rajavi: "This verdict has a clear message that the terrorist tag against the PMOI has always been unjust. We have this same condition in U.S. and therefore, U.S. too should remove the PMOI from the blacklist." Mrs. Rajavi added: "The Iranian Resistance depends on that 90% of Iranian people who want a regime change. We have the levers to bring about a change."

**EU court overturns freeze on Iran group's funds**



**December 12, 2006 LUXEMBOURG-** Europe's second-

highest court on Tuesday annulled an EU decision freezing the funds of an exiled Iranian opposition group that argues it was wrongly placed on the European Union's list of terrorist organizations. The decision is likely to infuriate Tehran and may have wider implications for the EU's policy of banning alleged terrorist groups and freezing their assets. EU member states ordered the freezing of funds of the People's Mujahideen (OMPI) in 2002. The armed wing of the France-based National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) has stated that it has renounced military activity since 2001. In a ruling on a case brought by the Iranian opposition, the European Court of First Instance said: "The court finds that the decision ordering the freezing of the OMPI's funds does not contain a sufficient statement of reason and that it was adopted in the course of a procedure during which the right of the party concerned to a fair hearing was not observed. "Accordingly that decision must be annulled insofar as it concerns the OMPI," it said in a decision open to appeal before the higher European Court of Justice. ECJ decisions are binding on member states, but would not preclude decisions by individual governments to keep the group on their own terror lists. An NCRI spokesman called the court decision "a great victory." "The court very clearly has dismissed the decision by the EU Council of Ministers and the relevant consequences of that decision," said Farzin Hashemi, a member of the movement's Foreign Affairs Committee. An EU spokeswoman declined immediate comment on the ruling, saying legal experts were studying the judgment. The Iranian government had used the EU decision to justify repression of OMPI sympathizers in Iran and to try to restrict its activities abroad, he said. Despite being labeled a terrorist group in the EU and the United States, the OMPI has devoted followers on both continents and was first to expose Iran's covert nuclear program. However, diplomats and Iran analysts say it has little support within Iran, where few can forgive its siding with Saddam Hussein in the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. The NCRI complained that the group was added to the EU terrorist list under pressure from Tehran at a time when Western countries were seeking to improve relations with Iran. The movement argued that the EU decision had breached its right to defend itself and failed to take into account the right to revolt against tyranny and oppression.

**Iranian opposition leader gives a press conference at European Parliament**



**December 12, 2006 Strasbourg, France** -- Exiled Iran opposition leader Maryam Rajavi gives a press conference at the European Parliament, in Strasbourg 12 December 2006. A European court annulled today an EU decision to freeze the assets of the main Iranian opposition in exile, a move that will force the bloc to rethink the way it compiles its terror blacklist.

**The European court decision could result in the removal of PMOI from the EU terror list**

Tuesday annulled a European Union decision that had frozen the funds of an exiled Iranian opposition group and called into question the group's label as a terrorist organization. The ruling by the European Court of First Instance was more than a financial victory for the group, the Mujahedeen Khalq, or People's Holy Warriors, which has long argued that its terrorist label is unfair. "All restrictions resulting from the terror tag should be removed from the Iranian resistance immediately," the group's leader, Maryam Rajavi, said during a visit to the European Parliament in Strasbourg, France. She said that the ruling proved that her organization was a legitimate resistance movement rather than a terrorist group.

### **European court overturns EU decision to add Iranian resistance movement to terror list**



**December 12, 2006-BRUSSELS, Belgium (AP) -** The

European Court of Justice on Tuesday overturned an EU decision to put the People's Mujahadeen of Iran, an exiled Iranian resistance movement, on the bloc's terror blacklist. The court's ruling annuls a 2002 decision to freeze all European assets of the Paris-based group, also known by the acronym MEK.

The U.S. also lists the group as a terrorist organisation. But the group, founded by students at Tehran University in the 1960s, insists it advocates the overthrow of Iran's hardline clerical regime in Tehran by peaceful means. In its ruling, the court said the group was not given a fair hearing to defend itself against the move to blacklist it. "Certain fundamental rights and safeguards, including the right to a fair hearing, the obligation to state reasons and the right to effective judicial protection are, as a matter of principle, fully applicable," the court said in a statement. Reacting to the court's decision, Iranian resistance leader Maryam Rajavi called for the immediate lifting of all restrictions on the organization and described the ruling as "proof of the resistance's legitimacy over the religious fascism in Iran and victory of justice over economic interests." "Today, one of the highest judicial authorities in Europe confirmed the Iranian resistance's claim that the terrorist label, from the beginning, was a political issue which was meant to appease the mullahs," she said in a statement issued in Paris. The group previously operated a military wing but since June 2001 has renounced all military activity. Based in Auvers-Sur-Oise, near Paris, it serves as an umbrella movement for exiled Iranian opponents of the Islamic Republic. In 2003, French police arrested dozens of members of the group. Seventeen people, including Rajavi, were placed under investigation on suspicion of associating with or financing terrorist groups. She was held for two weeks before being released. In June, the Paris Appeals Court lifted a series of restrictions on the 17, including a ban on them leaving French territory and another preventing them from associating with one another.

## **Iran's meddling in Iraq and Lebanon**

### **Iran's occupation of Iraq far more dangerous than U.S.'s**

**Lebanon Television, December 12, 2006 –** Muhammad Daini, Iraqi MP: "Right now, occupation of Iraq by Iran is far more dangerous than its occupation by U.S." Daini said: "Iran is attempting to own Iraq... Iran controls all sections of Iraq's government... a few months ago, on the verge of Nouri al-Maliki's visit to Iran, 400 Iranians were released from Iraqi prisons; they were all elements affiliated with the Iranian Intelligence Ministry who had been arrested in different parts of Iraq."

### **British Prime Minister: Iran is 'Major Strategic Threat'**



**December 12, 2006 --** Tony Blair has said Iran poses a "major strategic threat" to the Middle East and is "deliberately causing" problems. At his monthly media briefing the prime minister said the Iranian regime was "deeply extreme". "Iran is deliberately causing maximum problems for moderate governments and for ourselves in the region - in Palestine, in Lebanon and in Iraq," Blair said. Mr Blair said: "The principal reason we are having a problem in Iraq is because people are deliberately giving us a problem... This problem hasn't originated naturally. It's originated as a result of the deliberate outside interference linking up with internal extremism."

### **Iranian regime braced against democracy, advance of freedom in Middle East**

**U.S. State Department, December 11, 2006-Daily Press Briefing --** Sean McCormack, Spokesman: "You see on the other side of that line states like Iran and Syria and their terrorist subcontractors, Hamas and Hezbollah as well as others, who through use of violence, terror and extremism don't want to see the cause of democracy and freedom advanced in the Middle East. And that is a fundamental struggle that is ongoing now in the Middle East. "Make no mistake about it, if Iran were to

obtain a nuclear weapon that would be one of the most -- if not the most -- destabilizing event that we have ever seen in the Middle East, which is why we are trying to make sure that that doesn't happen."

### **Iraq's national security advisor accuses Iran of fomenting violence in Iraq**

**Al-Hurra Television, December 10, 2006-Iraq** – Mowafaq al-Rubai, Iraq's national security advisor, accused Iran and Syria of not controlling their borders with Iraq. Speaking at the security conference in Bahrain, Rubai said that Iran and Syria provide sanctuary to the insurgents and allow them to enter Iraq. Without naming a specific country, Rubai accused Iraq's neighbors of fomenting ethnic violence in Iraq by assisting armed men.

### **Iraqi women's activist asserts flagrant Iranian meddling in her country**

**Aashur Television, December 9, 2006-Iraq** – Mrs. Sohay al-Azawi, professor of political science and Iraqi women's rights activist: "Allow me to overtly assert that there is flagrant Iranian meddling in Iraq's affairs. However, Mr. Nouri Maliki, the prime minister, states that there is no Iranian interference. How could we say there is no interference, when for example, after Kofi Anan declared that there should be an international conference on Iraq, the first politician who rejects the idea before all Iraqi personalities is the president of Iran Ahmadinejad. We should ask him what is your business in this matter?"

### **Lebanese people set Ahmadinejad posters on fire**

**Al-Arabiya Television, December 9, 2006** – Protestors gathered in one of the Jabalia cities in Lebanon to offer their support for Lebanese prime minister Fouad Siniora. One of the protestors said: "The rightfully elected government is faced with a coup by Hezbollah which itself is supported by Iran and Syria. Everywhere people are saying no to Syria! No to Iran! Yes to Lebanon and freedom and sovereignty!" In this protest, a number of the youth set pictures of Ahmadinejad... on fire.

### **Lebanese parliament majority leader accuses Iran of attempting to topple government**

**Nile satellite television, December 8, 2006** – Saad Hariri, Lebanese parliament majority leader, asserted: "Iranian and Syrian regimes have issued the orders to topple the lawful government of Fouad Siniora. Hariri added that what Hezbollah is staging is against the interests of the Lebanese people..."

### **Iraq's salvation calls for toughening up on Iranian meddling not offering wider role**

**The Orange County Register, December 8, 2006 --** Amid heated debate in search of a viable Iraq solution, there is a growing chorus from supposed foreign-policy "realists" to bring the Iranian regime into negotiations, failing to realize that Iranian regime, facing acute crisis at home, has a direct interest in seeing Iraq in chaos. For many historical reasons, Iraq was the most strategic target. The appetite of Iran's ayatollahs is no secret: They want to establish a proxy regime in Iraq, which has the world's second-largest known oil reserves and a majority Shiite population. Iran is the main impediment to stability in Iraq. A stable and democratic Iraq would be a nightmare for the clerical regime that is facing a restive population that committed 4,100 protest acts and anti-government demonstrations throughout Iran this year.

If one is looking for a solution to the Iraqi crisis, toughening up on Iranian meddling in Iraq and isolating the Iranian regime is key. Giving Tehran more opportunity to meddle by engaging in futile negotiations with its leaders will only embolden Tehran to pursue its objectives more vigorously.

### **United Nations accuses Iran of transgression against UNSC resolutions in arming Hezbollah**

**Radio France, December 8, 2006-Persian Version** – The United Nations has reported that in violation of the Security Council resolutions, the Lebanese Hezbollah continues to arm itself. Much of the armament reaching Hezbollah after the summer war comes from Iran and Syria.

### **Bush: Iraq violence is deliberate plan, involves Iran**

**U.S. Office of the Press Secretary, December 7, 2006 --** President Bush Meets with British Prime Minister Tony Blair President Bush: ...the Prime Minister put it this way, he said, "The violence [in Iraq] is not an accident or a result of faulty planning. It is a deliberate strategy. It is the direct result of outside extremists teaming up with internal extremists -- al Qaeda with the Sunni insurgents, and Iran with the Shia militia -- to

foment hatred and to throttle, at birth, the possibility of a non-sectarian democracy." But one thing is for certain, when people-- if people come to the table to discuss Iraq, they need to come understanding their responsibilities to not fund terrorists, to help this young democracy survive, to help with the economics of the country. And if people are not committed, if Syria and Iran is not committed to that concept, then they shouldn't bother to show up. Prime Minister Blair: Now, the very reason we have problems in parts of Iraq -- and we know this very well down in the south of Iraq -- is that Iran, for example, has been doing that, has been basically arming, financing, supporting terrorism.

## Iranian regime looking to install satellite government in Lebanon through chaos

**Al-Jazeera Television, December 6, 2006** – Interview with Samir Geagea, head of the executive board of the Lebanese forces. Mr. Geagea: “It is long time that the Iranians were looking for a direct line of contact with Israel through the Hezbollah. It is in Iranian interests to instigate chaos to force international forces out of Lebanon... Iranian influence in Lebanon is against our principles. Through arming specific groups they want to compose their suitable government.”

## New Iran-Iraq policy

### Bush: A stable Iraq can reject Iranian influence, send message of freedom to Iran

**The White House, December 13, 2006-Office of Press Secretary** – President Bush: It's in Saudi's interest, it's in Jordan's interest, it's in the Gulf Coast countries' interest that there be a stable Iraq that is capable of rejecting Iranian influence. It's in our interests that we succeed in Iraq so that we can continue to send a clear message to those in Iran that are desirous of a free society that freedom is possible in your neighborhood.

### Rice brushes off negotiation with Iran over Iraq, warns Iran on meddling in Lebanon



**December 11, 2006** -- In an exclusive interview with AFP, Rice rejected mounting calls to deal directly with Damascus and Tehran as part of efforts to end the crisis in Iraq and said the two states should have no doubts about Washington's commitment to the embattled government of Lebanon. "I want to make it very clear that the future of Lebanon is not an issue for negotiation with anybody," she said.

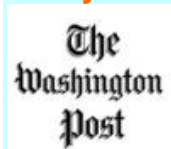
### A hat-in-hand plea will only embolden Iran



**December 10, 2006** -- The Baker-Hamilton findings start badly, with the commission's wholly unproven assertion that Iran and Syria have an “interest in avoiding chaos in Iraq.”

A hat-in-hand plea for help from our adversaries will only confirm their belief that a policy of fueling the insurgency with weapons, money, intelligence and foreign fighters is working.

### Current path in Middle East if unchecked promises broader, bloodier, more costly war



**December 10, 2006** -- ...Washington's decades-old rivalry with Iran, the growing dangers posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the fear that the Middle East's simmering conflicts will erupt into a broader, bloodier and far more costly war. Today, as King Abdullah of Jordan has observed, the region is verging on three civil wars -- in Iraq, in Lebanon and in the Palestinian territories -- all of which somehow involve Iran, the United States or their proxies.

### U.S. top Generals warn of catastrophe in the region perpetrated by the Iranian regime



**December 8, 2006** – General John Custer, commander of U.S. Central Command Intelligence in the Middle East, CENTCOM: “In my opinion, the Iranian regime is benefiting twofold. On the one hand they want diplomatic relations with Iraq... and on the other they continue to support Shiite militias who fight the Coalition.” CNN reporter adds that General Abizaid warns that support of the Iranian regime for the Lebanese Hezbollah is part of the greater unrest in the region. General Abizaid: “Activities of the Iranian regime is a pretext to a catastrophe and instability for the region. We in reality cannot tolerate further instability in the Middle East whether it is in Iraq, Lebanon or elsewhere.” (*translated from Persian*)

### Prominent politicians doubts Iranian regime good will in any negotiations over Iraq

**December 7, 2006** – The Australian Prime Minister John Howard, in reaction to the ISG report said that retreating from Iraq in a defeated sense would give rise to a sharp increase in terrorism in region and the world. Howard said that he is not against recommendations in the report for negotiations with Iran and Syria but that he suspects good will on behalf of these two countries.  
(translated from Persian)

### UK group calls negotiating with Iran “a recipe for disaster”



**December 7, 2006** -- Negotiating with Iran will not work in solving Iraq's problems, a group of British Parliamentarians has said. The British Parliamentary Committee for Iran Freedom supports the National Council of Resistance of Iran, which opposes the current Iranian government. At a London briefing the group said Iran was "the major part" of Iraq's problems and called negotiating with Tehran "a recipe for disaster." Chairman Lord Corbett said: "The golden rule is... don't talk to terrorists." The report's suggestion followed the proposals made by Washington's Iraq Study Group, published on Wednesday, which suggested talking to Iraq's neighbors to solve the region's problems. Lord Corbettsaid the West needed to "deal robustly" and start sanctions. "The mix of rampant fundamentalism and nuclear weapons is a lethal cocktail," he said.

The report said neither military action nor appeasement would work when it came to dealing with Iran. It also suggested that the West should deal with the People's Mojahedin Organization of Iran (PMOI), currently blacklisted by Western governments.

### Inducements only encourage bad behavior

**The Middle East Quarterly, December 7, 2006** -- ...a number of influential policy makers have made public statements encouraging the Bush administration to engage in dialogue with the Iranian regime. Such inducements will not lead Iran's leaders to change their nuclear program and, indeed, could backfire if they reinforce the view of some Iranian policymakers that their tough stance works. Economic inducements look like bribes paid for bad behavior.

## Student protest against dictatorship

### Students interrupt Ahmadinejad

**CNN.com, December 11, 2006** -- A group of students Monday briefly interrupted a speech by Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad at their university by booing and chanting "Death to the dictator," Iranian semi-official news agencies reported. Some even burned pictures of the Iranian president. Ahmadinejad responded by accusing the protesting students of having no shame and being on the payroll of the United States. The protesters also broke the cameras of Iranian state TV. The president's speech was interrupted several times by students.

### Angry protestors in Tehran call for mullahs' downfall

**News Agencies, December 7, 2006-Tehran** -- Thousands of students and Tehran residents took to the streets surrounding Tehran University and the university complex to show their anger against the clerical regime. Protests went on throughout the day and the participants pledged to continue tomorrow in force. Photos of Ahmadinejad were held upside down as an open call for the downfall of the regime. His torn up photos were waved by protestors in Tehran. In the university campus, students condemned new suppressive measures and up coming elections by chanting "Down with tyranny," "Down with dictatorship," "free all political prisoners," and "Freedom, equality, election boycott."



**AP** Associated Press

**Dec 6, 2006 6:59 AM ET** -- An Iranian student holds a photo of Iran's president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad upside down to show his disapproval of Ahmadinejad's policies during a demonstration at Tehran university, Tehran, Wednesday, Dec. 6, 2006, to mark Iran's student day, held annually after 3 students were killed in a protest to a visit by then U.S. vice-president Richard Nixon to the university in 1953. (AP Photo/Hasan Sarbakhshian)