



# 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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### US Country Report on Terrorism made public: Iran remains most active state sponsor of terrorism

#### **Iran remained the most active state sponsor of terrorism in 2004**

**The Washington File, Apr. 27, U.S. Department of State, Country Reports on Terrorism 2004** - Iran remained the most active state sponsor of terrorism in 2004. Its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and Ministry of Intelligence and Security were involved in the planning and support of terrorist acts and continued to exhort a variety of groups to use terrorism in pursuit of their goals. Iran continued to be unwilling to bring to justice senior al-Qa'ida members it detained in 2003. Iran has refused to identify publicly these senior members in its custody on "security grounds." Iran has also resisted numerous calls to transfer custody of its al-Qa'ida detainees to their countries of origin or third countries for interrogation and/or trial. Iranian judiciary officials claimed to have tried and convicted some Iranian supporters of al-Qa'ida during 2004, but refused to provide details. Iran also continued to fail to control the activities of some al-Qa'ida members who fled to Iran following the fall of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. During 2004, Iran maintained a high-profile role in encouraging anti-Israeli terrorist activity, both rhetorically and operationally. Supreme Leader Khamenei praised Palestinian terrorist operations, and Iran provided Lebanese Hizballah and Palestinian terrorist groups -- notably HAMAS, the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command -- with funding, safe haven, training, and weapons. Iran provided an unmanned aerial vehicle that Lebanese Hizballah sent into Israeli airspace on November 7, 2004. Iran pursued a variety of policies in Iraq during 2004, some of which appeared to be inconsistent with Iran's stated objectives regarding stability in Iraq as well as those of the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG) and the Coalition. Senior IIG officials have publicly expressed concern over Iranian interference in Iraq, and there were reports that Iran provided funding, safe transit, and arms to insurgent elements, including Muqtada al-Sadr's forces.

## Terrorism and Meddling in Iraq

### **3 Sunni statesmen resign due to meddling in Iraqi list decisions**



ALJAZEERA.NET

**Al-Jazeera television, Apr. 26** – Three Sunni Arabs, Fawaz Al-Jorbeh, Mozar Shokat and Abdul-Rahman Al-Ta'imi, announced their withdrawal from the Iraqi Alliance list led by Abdul-Aziz Hakim. The three members said the reason for resigning is that the Alliance list tries to dismiss Sunni Arabs and because of what they call foreign interference in the decisions of the list leaders.

Sheikh Fawaz Al-Jorbeh: These interferences are decisions by a neighboring country that has direct impact on the deciders of the Alliance list.

## **Iranian mercenaries making Iraq's future gloomy**

**Al-Jazeera television, Apr. 22** – The Los Angeles Times reports on chain assassinations of Shiite and Sunni officials in Basra which has raised concerns over the intentions of some parties to undermine the security of the city that has tried for two years to remain stable.

No party has claimed responsibility for these assassinations that have taken the lives of a Sunni judge, an education ministry inspector, two Shiite City Council candidates and one Iraqi National Guards Officer. Basra residents are concerned that these assassinations have fomented an extensive religious war in the Shiite dominated city where a considerable number of Sunnis residing there. If the critical security situation that exists in some large Iraqi cities happens in Basra, the future of Iraq will be dark. Some officials blame foreign parties like Iranian mercenaries for what is happening in Basra.

## **Iran Policy: Third Option**

### **Iran Convention in Brussels urges EU support for 'Third Option'**

**Iran Focus, Apr. 25, Brussels** - Some 2,000 delegates from Iranian communities in the Benelux - Belgium, The Netherlands and Luxembourg - today held their first-ever convention, in which they condemned the current policy of appeasement vis-à-vis Iran's clerical regime and rejected the notion of a foreign war. They declared support for the "Third Option", introduced by Maryam Rajavi, the President-elect of the National Council of Resistance of Iran, which calls for democratic change through the Iranian people and their Resistance.



The Convention in Brussels also "strongly condemned the restrictions imposed on Iranian refugees and asylum-seekers and called for greater accommodations for them", by European countries. Participants called for the immediate removal of the terror tag from the main Iranian opposition group, the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI), describing the label as "the biggest obstacle to democratic change" in Iran. Speakers included Herman Van Rompuy, a Member of the Belgian Parliament and former deputy Prime Minister of Belgium; Senator Pierre Galand, Vice-Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Belgian Senate; Jean-Pierre Malmendier; member of the Belgian Parliament; Belgian Senator Patrik Vankrunkelsven; Edward McMillan-Scott, Vice President of the European Parliament; Paulo Casaca, head of the European Parliamentary delegation to NATO; Erik Meijer and Dr Andre Brie, Members of the European Parliament, Dr Laima Andrikiene, Euro-MP from Lithuania and member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and the Human Rights Committee of the European Parliament; His Excellency Professor Vytautas Landsbergis, Euro-MP and former President and Head of State of the Republic of Lithuania; Mahfoudh Romdhani, Member of the Belgian Parliament; Ryszard Czarnecki, Euro-MP from Poland, member of the Foreign Affairs Committee and former Minister of European Integration; Piia-Noora Kauppi, Euro-MP from Finland and member the Women's Committee of the European Parliament; and Professor Eric David, Chair of the Centre of International law in ULB University (Brussels) and President of the Advisory Commission of humanitarian International law of the Belgium Red Cross, among others. Rajavi addressed the Convention via live video link, saying, "Appeasing the mullahs and silence vis-à-vis the violation of the most basic rights of the Iranian people and silence vis-à-vis the suppression of popular uprisings by the Iranian people are contrary to all principles of democracy. This silence must be broken."

Democracy is our path, guide, aim and ideal. Without democracy in Iran, there will be no peace, stability and calm in the region. Democracy in Iran will pave the way for true prosperity for Iranians and advancement for the country. It will also serve as the key to peace and tranquility in this region of the world", she added. Rajavi denounced the upcoming presidential elections in Iran as "completely illegitimate" and predicted that it would be overwhelmingly boycotted by the Iranian people.

“This farce has no semblance of elections. It is neither free nor fair. I, therefore, expect that international bodies would declare the election sham as illegitimate and prevent the clerics to take advantage of this masquerade”, she said.

One speaker at the event was former Iraqi Governor of Diyala Province, Sa'd Abdullah Al-Jabouri, who read the text of a declaration by 2.8 million Iraqis, which denounced the Iranian regime's meddling in Iraq and expressed support for the PMOI and their struggle.

### **Iranian opposition group condemns European asylum restrictions**



**Associated Press** *Apr. 25 BRUSSELS, Belgium* - An Iranian opposition group condemned European governments on Thursday for appeasing the clerical regime in Iran and being too tough with Iranians seeking political asylum. “In pursuit of appeasing Tehran, the European countries have exerted an assortment of pressures and privations on these refugees,” said Maryam Rajavi, co-leader of the National Council of Resistance of Iran. Speaking in a video link to a meeting of Iranians living in Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, Rajavi accused European nations of taking a soft line with the Iranian government to secure economic advantages. She urged the Europeans to take a more robust stance to ensure Iran does not develop nuclear weapons. However she also warned against military attack to topple the regime. “The solution to the Iranian problem (is) neither war and foreign military intervention, nor appeasing the ruling mullahs,” Rajavi said, adding that resistance from Iranians would bring about change. Organizers said about 2,000 people attended the meeting in Brussels, including several members of the European Parliament. Around 20,000 Iranians are estimated to be resident in the three countries.

## **Nuclear proliferation**

### **Iran Says Will Restart Enrichment if Talks Fail**



**Reuters**, *Apr. 28, The Hague* - Iran will restart its uranium enrichment program if talks with European Union heavyweights France, Britain and Germany fail on Friday, Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said on Thursday. “If there is no agreement and negotiations collapse, there is no choice but to restart the program,” Kharrazi told reporters in The Hague after talks with his Dutch counterpart Bernard Bot. Iran is due to hold talks in London on Friday with Britain, France and Germany, who want Iran to give up uranium enrichment in return for incentives such as trade deals.

### **The "Decision-Hour" for Iran is rapidly approaching**



**World Net Daily**, *Apr. 28* - Yesterday, Hossein Musavian, the director of the foreign policy committee of the Supreme National Security Council told the Mehr News Agency in Tehran that the Europeans must agree to allow Iran to resume enriching uranium at their next negotiating session scheduled for this Friday, April 29, in London. Otherwise, Iran is ready to declare that no progress is being made in the talks and they are ready to pull out. In other words, the mullahs are threatening to tell the world that it is their way or the highway. Why such a tough negotiating stance? The mullahs know that their game is down to the final hours. The mullahs view their getting an atomic bomb as their ultimate life-insurance policy. With the bomb in hand, the mullahs see themselves as being instantly in control, able to dictate their terms to the world...With nuclear weapons in hand, Iran will assert its power and will upon the world. Right now we are seeing the mullahs play this policy out to its conclusion... Iran is playing the world for a fool, promising to use nuclear fuel for peaceful purposes only, while secretly pursuing a nuclear weapons program.

### **Iran steps up pressure on EU in nuke talks-diplomats**



**Reuters**, *Apr. 27, Vienna* - Iran is ratcheting up the pressure on EU giants France, Britain and Germany to accept its plan to join the world's nuclear club, European diplomats said on

Wednesday....Four months of talks have not changed Tehran's position. Iran has taken the offensive in the talks, diplomats said. "We are on the defensive now," a diplomat from one of the EU trio countries said about the next round of talks in London on Friday...

### **EU to ask Iran for postponement of nuclear talks**

**Expatica, Apr. 27, Vienna** - The European Union 'big three' of Germany, France and Britain are to ask Iran to postpone the resumption of nuclear talks until after presidential elections in the country slated for 17 June, it was reported on Wednesday - then promptly officially denied.... EU sources said earlier that the request was being made because negotiators felt that real progress could only be made on the issue after the polls, when the balance of political power in Iran has been clarified.

## Iranian election turnout apathetic

### **Promises (\$60 for instance) fail to rouse Iran's voters**

**The New York Times** **New York Times, Apr. 24, Tehran, By Nazila Fathi** - With elections less than two months away, Iran's presidential hopefuls are scrambling to lure voters, promising everything from lowering the soaring prices of fruit and vegetables to normalizing relations with the country's longtime foe, the United States. But much of the public is deeply apathetic. There is no real chance for a candidate who can spearhead the democratic changes once promised by the departing president, Mohammad Khatami, who proved unable to ward off the encroachment of the Guardian Council and its repressive agenda. Over the last eight years, the opposition has been marginalized as the judiciary has shut down more than 100 pro-change newspapers and journals and jailed dozens of advocates and intellectuals... "If people feel the candidates they want to vote for are banned from running, they will get disillusioned," (Khatami) said. "The country is faced with very obvious foreign threats. Only a large turnout can give legitimacy to the regime and deter the threats." Such a turnout appears unlikely...

### **Iran's voter turnout forecast: 42-51%**

**IranMania, Apr. 24, London** - Iran's Interior Ministry Spokesman Jahanbakhsh Khanjani said opinion polls conducted so far indicate public participation in the presidential race has been predicted to be between 42 to 51%.

Khanjani also told reporters that decision-makers should boost people's awareness about the importance of presidential election and encourage them to vote in large numbers, IRNA reported. "People must realize that by not voting they can seriously impact their own destiny as well as that of the Islamic system," he said.

## Human rights abuse

### **International protests highlight Iran's abuses**

**The Jerusalem Post, Apr. 25** - The United Nations and Iranian officials have yet to issue a response to a worldwide day of protest last week hoping to "break the silence" of the violation of human rights in Iran.

An Israeli student group called the Student Solidarity Movement organized a series of protests – which drew more than 2,000 in Belgium, Germany, Sweden, France and the UK – to criticize the UN meeting in Geneva, which declined to condemn Iran for human-rights violation.

### **Student to be jailed, flogged for demonstrating**

**AFP, Apr. 26, Tehran** - An Iranian student detained for taking part in anti-regime demonstrations has been sentenced to 18 months behind bars and 76 lashes, his lawyer told the ISNA news agency Tuesday.

The lawyer said an Islamic revolutionary court had found Farab Samimi guilty of "propagating against the regime" and



"disturbing public order" for taking part in an illegal gathering on July 9, 2003...

### **Call for release of two imprisoned journalists**

**Reporters Without Borders, Apr. 26** - Reporters without Borders called today for the immediate release of reformist Iranian Arab journalist Yosef Azizi Banitrouf, who was arrested in a raid on his home on 25 April. It also demanded the release of dissident journalist Reza Alijani, expressing "great concern" about his deteriorating health after two years in prison.

"We strongly deplore the arrest of Banitrouf, who was simply expressing his personal opinion in articles and in interviews given to other newspapers," it said. "As soon as a journalist speaks out in Iran, the authorities crack down, either by closing the paper concerned or throwing the journalist in prison.

"There are now 12 journalists and cyber-dissidents in jail in Iran, which remains the Middle East's biggest prison for journalists."

Eight plainclothes agents raided Banitrouf's home and seized all his papers, his computer and telephone address book. The agents said they had a warrant but refused to show it to his wife or say where they were taking him, though he is thought to be in Teheran's Evin prison along with most of the country's other jailed journalists. After giving interviews to the national and international media a few hours after he was taken away, his wife received threatening phone calls from one of the agents who told her not to talk to the media...



### **Iran: Political prisoner facing imminent execution**

**Iran Focus Paris, Apr. 21** - Iran's Supreme Court upheld an execution sentence for a 38-year-old political prisoner from the western Iranian town of Boukan. Esmaeil Mohammadi was informed of the decision through a letter from the authorities, which indicated that his execution would be carried out within the next few days. Mohammadi, a father of five, has been imprisoned for the past two years in the city of Urumiya (northwest Iran), accused of being a supporter of the Kurdish Komala organisation. Mohammadi was reported tortured while in prison. Last year, he was handed



down an execution sentence by an Islamic court in Urumiy The Iranian regime has stepped up the execution of political prisoners, many of which are carried out in secret, primarily to create an atmosphere of fear among Iran's rebellious young generation. Earlier this month Iran's Supreme Court upheld the death sentence against another long-time political prisoner in Iran. Hojjat Zamani, 29 years old, has been imprisoned in the notorious Evin Prison in Tehran since the year 2000 for being a member of the main Iranian opposition group, the People's Mojahedin Organisation of Iran (PMOI). Both the political prisoners now face imminent execution.