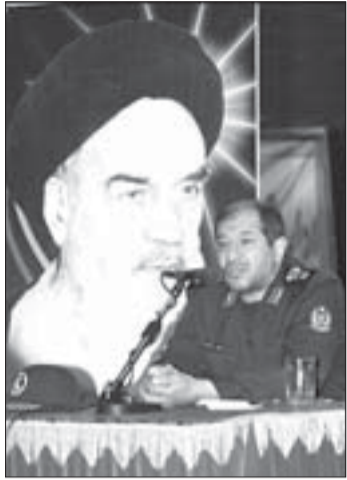


Iran to uncover new military equipment



Tehran Times Political Desk
TEHRAN — Iran will uncover a new generation of speedboat, submarine and drone in the port city of Bandar Abbas, the capital of Hormozgan Province on Monday.

The new equipment will be delivered to the Army in a ceremony to be attended by its Commander Ataollah Salehi, Defense Minister Mostafa-Mohammad Najjar announced on Sunday.

Najjar also referred to the Sajil generation missiles, saying that enemies are trying to question Iran's achievements.

On May 20, Iran successfully test-fired Sajil-2 missile with a two-stage solid-fuel system.

"We announce only a part of our military achievements", he noted.

Najjar said the country is highly self-sufficient that is able to build submarines and warships.

Election 'significantly important' to country's future: Rafsanjani



Tehran Times Political Desk
TEHRAN — Expediency Council Chairman Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani has said that the upcoming presidential election is highly important to the nation.

"This election has a significant importance in the nation's future and if the majority of people enter the scene, the national interests of the system... will be satisfied," he said in a meeting with a number of activists of Golestan Province on Sunday.

Rafsanjani added the multiplicity of candidates in the election has made the election more competitive and that all groupings are now able to choose their candidate of interest.

He also highlighted the importance of monitoring the process of counting the votes. "The monitoring should be serious so that no one disappoints people intentionally or out of good will."

Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi condemns Zahedan bombing

Tehran Times Political Desk

TEHRAN — Grand Ayatollah Naser Makarem Shirazi issued a statement on Saturday condemning the Thursday terror attack in Zahedan.

"Once again the hands of the world's criminals emerged from Wahabis' sleeves...(wrongly) assuming that this act of crime can undermine our dear nation's will or cause a conflict between Shias and Sunnis," he stated.

A terrorist attack on a mosque in the city of Zahedan in the southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan on Thursday left 25 people dead and 120 injured.

Ayatollah Makarem Shirazi urged officials to teach a lesson to the criminals so that such tragic incidents will never occur again.

He also said those people who their ignorance provide a pretext for criminals to perpetrate such crimes are also responsible for such tragedies.

The grand ayatollah urged religious scholars to promote awareness among people.

Seyyed Hassan Khomeini also said on Saturday that the bombing was aimed at undermining the fundamentals of the Islamic Revolution.

"What happened in the Zahedan Shia mosque ...sought to create division among people," the grandson of the founder of the Islamic Republic, the late Imam Khomeini, said during a ceremony at the Imam Khomeini shrine in Tehran.

After the revolution many attempted to create division



between ethnic groups but failed due to the people and officials' vigilance, Hassan Khomeini stated.

And now the same forces are trying to promote religious and ethnic extremism in the country, but they must know that all citizens and officials are aware of their intentions, he added.

Pakistan vows to wipe out Jundullah terror group

TEHRAN (FNA) — Pakistani interior ministry aims to wipe out Jundullah terrorist group after the terror cell claimed responsibility for a recent terrorist attack that killed at least 25 people in a mosque in southeastern Iran, informed sources said on Sunday.

The interior ministry of Pakistan has presented all its information about Jundullah to the country's intelligence services, including ISI and MI and FIA, and urged for the rapid identification of the group members and the immediate arrest of its notorious ringleader Abdulmalek Rigi, an informed source told FNA on Sunday, reiterating that Islamabad has ordered that the group be disbanded and wiped out.

The group's spokesman Abdolrauf Rigi contacted the Pakistan-based office of the al-Arabiya television

network to report a bombing in a mosque in the Sistan-Baluchestan province last Thursday. The group reportedly claimed responsibility for the attack.

The bomb blast rocked a mosque in the city of Zahedan as mourners participated in a ceremony marking the death of the daughter of the prophet of Islam, Hazrat Zahra (PBUH).

Following the incident, Iran summoned Pakistan's Ambassador Mohammad Bakhsh Abbasi over the deadly bombing after the rebels reportedly claimed responsibility.

According to media reports, the chief of the Iranian armed forces, General Hassan Firouzabadi, said on Saturday that Iran "has located the base of the group's head and informed Pakistan's government of his arrest".

The Iranian authorities said they

immediately arrested three men involved in the bombing. The trio were executed on Saturday morning near the mosque in Zahedan city, the capital of Sistan-Baluchestan province.

Jundullah has claimed responsibility for a dozen terrorist operations inside Iran. So far the gang leader has escaped punishment as the group crosses the border and runs away into Pakistan after staging terrorist attacks inside Iran.

Tehran has repeatedly warned Islamabad that if it cannot handle the situation at and inside its shared borders with the Islamic Republic, Iran has the required power and military capabilities to trace and hunt down such terrorist groups inside Pakistan in a bid to put an end to serial terror attacks on its nationals.

South African ambassador meets Iran VP

Tehran Times Political Desk

TEHRAN — Iranian First Vice President Parviz Davoudi and South African Ambassador Ebrahim M. Saley agreed that the two countries should expand their relations during a meeting in Tehran on Sunday.

South Africa plays a significant role in the entire African continent, and Iran attaches great importance to its relations with South Africa, Davoudi told the new South African ambassador to Tehran.

By utilizing their current potential, Tehran and Pretoria



South African envoy Saley (L) talking with Davoudi.

can strengthen their political, economic and cultural relations, he said, adding that the expansion of bilateral ties would benefit both nations.

He went on to say that Iranian and South African companies and investors can definitely cooperate more closely in industrial and infrastructure projects.

Ambassador Saley said the two countries should expand their ties since Tehran-Pretoria relations are unsatisfactory despite the current level of cooperation.

Iran foils plane bomb plot

Tehran Times Political Desk

TEHRAN — Flight security officers have defused a homemade bomb that was placed on an aircraft on a domestic flight in Iran.

The bomb was discovered on a Kish Air jet on a flight from the southwestern city of Ahvaz to Tehran late on Saturday night.

The security personnel found the explosive device inside the plane at 11:30 p.m. local time, 15 minutes after the plane took off.

The plane made an emergency landing at Ahvaz airport and its 131 passengers were evacuated so that the security

personnel could defuse the bomb.

Mohammad Hassan Kazemi, a commander in the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps, which is responsible for aviation security, said, "The enemies want to create a security-threat climate in the run-up to the country's presidential election and to foster despair among the people," IRNA reported.

On Thursday, a bombing in a mosque in the southeastern city of Zahedan killed 25 people and injured about 120 others. Three men convicted of involvement in the mosque bombing were executed in public on Saturday in Zahedan.

UN chief condemns 'despicable' mosque bombing in Iran

TEHRAN (IRNA) — UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon condemned as "despicable" the bombing of a mosque in the Iranian city of Zahedan which reportedly killed at least 20 people and wounded many others.

Media reports say local authorities blamed "a terrorist group" for Thursday's attack on the Shia house of worship in Zahedan, located some 1,600 kilometers southeast of the capital, Tehran, near Pakistan and Afghanistan, a press release issued by the UN Information Center (UNIC) said here on Sunday.

"He extends his heartfelt condolences to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the families of the victims of this despicable act" his spokesperson said in a statement.

IRIB channel 4 director to conduct debates among presidential candidates

Reza Pourhossein, the director of IRIB channel 4, is tasked to conduct televised debates between presidential challengers which will start on Tuesday. Reza Pourhossein is also a faculty member of Tehran University who holds a PhD in psychology. The order came from the IRIB chief Ezzatollah Zargami.

In his letter released on Sunday, Zargami has stated the televised debates, the first to be held between presidential candidates in Iran, will create an appropriate atmosphere for selecting the most qualified candidate. Zargami also said the scheduled debates will provide a golden opportunity for the promotion of "free thought".

Karroubi names Najafi as MPO director

Reformist presidential contender Mahdi Karroubi announced in Ferdowsi University in Mashhad on Sunday that he has appointed Mohammad-Ali Najafi as director of the Management and Planning Organization (MPO) in his likely future cabinet.

Like Mir-Hossein Mousavi, Karroubi has insisted that he will immediately restore the Management and Planning Organization dissolved under the current administration.

Najafi had served as the MPO director in the Khatami administration and education minister in the Rafsanjani administration.

Karroubi also said that he has appointed Mohammad-Reza Abasifar as presidential advisor for legal and parliamentary affairs. Abasifar was a member of the Guardian Council and the chairman of the Administrative Justice Court.

Karroubi, a former Majlis speaker, vowed to name some other members of his cabinet, among them women, next week.

The appointments fall within an analysis that naming key members of the cabinet shows each candidate's plans which in effect would affect potential voters' decision.

Ahmadinejad's victory will benefit nation

MP Hamid-Reza Haji-Babaii stated on Saturday that it will be in the "interest of the system and the nation" if Ahmadinejad is reelected president.

Talking to Ahmadinejad's supporters in Hamedan, Haji-Babaii said that if the people vote for the current administration, the "wheels of economy" will be strengthened.

"I don't want any person to vote for Ahmadinejad, I just want to vote for whatever that is right," he noted.

Mehr-Alizadeh wants debates among candidates' representatives

Mohsen Mehr-Alizadeh who ran unsuccessfully for president in 2005 stated on Sunday that holding debates between the candidate's representatives is very important in shaping the potential voters' mind about candidates.

"Holding such debates between candidates' representatives are definitely positive" and let the realities to be clarified, Mehr-Alizadeh, the director of Physical Education Organization in the Khatami administration, told the MNA.

He added that debates can cast light on the capability of each candidate's team without any prejudice. He also noted a massive turnout in the election will be a national glory and shows the system's legitimacy.

Mousavi will choose competent managers

MP Reza Akrami stated on Sunday that presidential hopeful Mir-Hossein Mousavi will choose competent and experienced managers if he wins the race.

Talking to the MNA, he said that Mousavi's commitment to law and his intention to appoint "competent and famous managers" in managerial posts were the reasons that made him to back Mousavi.

He asked media, especially the national TV, to increase the public awareness about the importance of the election.

Not enough time for debates between candidates' allies

Mohammad-Hossein Soufi stated on Sunday that not enough time left to arrange debates between the candidates' representatives.

He said TV campaigns should be approved by the Interior Ministry election headquarters and there is no time for examining the issue.

However, the IRIB deputy director said in comparison to the past, this time candidates have more time for TV campaigns. Each candidate has been given 32:30 hours to introduce himself and his plans in both radio and television program, he told the MNA.

Majlis National Power faction backs no candidate

MP Mohammad-Reza Dastgheib stated the Majlis National Power faction will not back any candidate. He said his faction will issue an election statement to announce its decision and call for huge massive voters' turnout.

CONDOLENCES

Dear Mr. Abbas Hoojat Ansari
 We would like to express our heartfelt condolences on the sad death of your beloved sister and niece. We wish you forbearance and pray God to rest the departed souls in eternal peace.

Tehran Times Advertising Department