



Tightening capital rules could increase risk-taking  
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## Iran asks UN to determine fate of 4 nationals abducted in 1982

**Tehran Times Political Desk**  
**TEHRAN** — National Prosecutor General Qorban-Ali Dorri Najafabadi has called on United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to take measures to determine the fate of four Iranian nationals who have been held by the Zionist regime for 27 years.

He made the remarks at a ceremony in Tehran on Saturday that was held to mark the 27th anniversary of the kidnapping incident.

Four Iranian nationals, chargé d'affaires Mohsen Mousavi, military attaché of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ahmad Motevasellian, Taqi Rastegar Moqaddam, a diplomat from the embassy, and Kazem Akhavan, a reporter and photographer from the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), were captured by a Phalangist militia while traveling to southern Lebanon in 1982, then handed over to the Zionist regime and transferred to a prison in occupied Palestine.

Dorri Najafabadi urged the UN to act in a more serious and impartial manner, saying that an international fact-finding committee could play an important role in this regard.

The Israelis are definitely responsible for the kidnapping and therefore they must explain why they kidnapped the Iranian nationals even though they had diplomatic immunity and also explain what has happened to them, he added.

Dorri Najafabadi also said that diplomatic immunity has been internationally recognized and if it is ignored, the security of diplomats will be undermined.

## Over \$5b to be invested in production units



Exemplary manufacturers receive awards from President Ahmadinejad. (IRNA/ Seyyed Mohsen Sajjadi)

**Tehran Times Political Desk**  
**TEHRAN** — President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad announced on Saturday that the administration will invest over \$5 billion in production units.

Increasing national production requires some resources, which should be provided, Ahmadinejad said at the Mining and Industry Conference in Tehran.

There are some obstacles hindering efforts to increase national production but the administration is trying to remove these impediments, he added.

The president also suggested that merging the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance with the Ministry of Industries and Mines would be a good way to boost production.

"We can create a more focused and

purposeful management (system) for production and promote the advancement of the nation by combining these two ministries," he said.

Ahmadinejad noted that despite the sanctions imposed on the nation, Iran has had acceptable economic growth over the past five years.

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## Total can cooperate with CNPC in South Pars: NIOC director

**Tehran Times Economic Desk**  
**TEHRAN** — National Iranian Oil Company's Managing Director Seyfollah Jashnsaz said the French Total can continue its presence in the South Pars gas field project through cooperation with the Chinese National Petroleum Corporation.

"If Total is willing they can take part in the downstream sector of the South Pars phase 11 development project," Jashnsaz said, the Mehr News Agency reported.

Total has a memorandum of understanding with NIOC to develop phase 11, but the project was overshadowed by haggling over contract terms.

NIOC has accused Total of delays and said it had given the Paris-based company an ultimatum six months ago to finalize work before Tehran moved forward with another partner.

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## Why Sarah Palin quit

**WASHINGTON (TIME)** — In bowing out as Governor of Alaska, Sarah Palin harkened back to her high school basketball days -- although there was no sign of the "Barracuda," as she was nicknamed for her ability to cut through the opposing team's offenses.

In a hastily called press conference on the eve of a three-day holiday, Palin presented herself as a point guard exhausted by the "full court press from the national level."

The 2008 Republican vice-presidential nominee explained how the metaphorical point guard should respond. "She drives through a full court press, protecting the ball, keeping her head up because she needs to keep her eye on the basket, and she knows exactly when to pass the ball so that the team can win," Palin said. "And I know when it's time to pass the ball for victory." Or take a timeout, as the case may be.

Palin's stunning announcement raised more questions than it answered: Is she bowing out of public life? Is there a more nefarious reason for her resignation after only two-and-a-half years in office -- yet another G.O.P. scandal in the offing? Or is the woman who tops most G.O.P. 2012 shortlists to challenge Barack Obama stepping down to get a head start on her next presidential campaign? Palin took no questions after her unscripted, rambling address, and her comments seemed to hint both ways: that she's "passing the ball" of elected office, and that she plans on working for all Americans, not just Alaskans.

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## Incoming IAEA chief promises 'utmost' to end Iran standoff

**VIENNA (AFP)** — The UN atomic watchdog's incoming chief Yukiya Amano promised Friday to do his "utmost" to resolve a long-running nuclear standoff with Iran after governors formally gave their nod of approval to his appointment.

As the organization in charge of nuclear safeguards, the task of the International Atomic Energy Agency's director general was to make sure that member countries stuck to their commitments under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Amano told journalists.

"What is expected of the director general and the agency is to implement these safeguards agreements in a professional and impartial



Incoming director general of the IAEA, Japan's Yukiya Amano, is seen after his election in Vienna, Austria Thursday, July 2, 2009. The present head, Mohamed ElBaradei, is scheduled to end his term in November. (AP/Hans Punz)

manner. And I will do my utmost" to do so, he said.

"I would like to reflect the interests of all the regions, all the countries and all the groups," the Japanese diplomat said.

Asked what his priorities as agency head would be, Amano said there was no number one priority, but that technical cooperation, peaceful use of nuclear technology, non-proliferation, the assurance of nuclear fuel were all key issues facing the IAEA.

The agency's current chief, Egyptian-born Mohamed ElBaradei, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005 for his work at the IAEA, is stepping down at the end of November after 12 years in office.

## Two U.S. soldiers killed in complex Afghan attack

**KABUL (Reuters)** — Two U.S. soldiers were killed when their base in southeast Afghanistan came under attack on Saturday, the U.S. military said, two days after a major operation against the Taliban was launched in the south.

The attack included an attempted suicide truck bombing of the base in the Zirok district of southeastern Paktika province, local officials said. As many as 30 Taliban insurgents might have been killed when troops called in air strikes, they said.

It came after thousands of U.S. Marines launched a major offensive in southern Helmand province, a Taliban stronghold and major opium poppy producing area, on Thursday, the first big operation of U.S. President Barack Obama's new regional strategy to defeat the Taliban and stabilize Afghanistan.

The Marines and other forces have so far met little resistance and there have been no reports of big reprisal attacks by the Taliban or its allies since Operation Khanjar, or Strike of the Sword, began in Helmand.

Another seven U.S. soldiers and two Afghan troops were wounded in Saturday's attack on the combat outpost near Zirok, Lieutenant Commander Christine Sidenstricker said.

"It was a complex attack that started with small-arms and indirect fire on the post, then an improvised explosive device went off," Sidenstricker said.

"Air strikes were called in some time after," she said.

## Malaysia makes changes in race-based policies



Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak speaks in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Tuesday, June 30, 2009. (AP/Mark Baker)

**KUALA LUMPUR (AP)** — The economic downturn is allowing Malaysia's leader to chip away at an affirmative action program for Malay Muslims that has been considered virtually untouchable in the past.

Soon after taking office in April, Prime Minister Najib Razak scrapped a requirement for 30 percent Malay ownership of companies in certain service industries. This week, he cut the ownership requirement to 12.5 percent for companies that want to list on the stock exchange.

Najib, who is Malay, has also promised to award more government scholarships next year based on academic excellence, rather than racial quotas.

The moves are carefully calculated to avoid angering Malay voters. They touch only a few of the benefits given to Malays, who make up nearly 60 percent of the country's 28 million people. Still, even these changes would have been unthinkable not long ago.

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## UN chief outlines Myanmar vision in rare speech

**YANGON (AFP)** — UN chief Ban Ki-moon gave a rare public speech on Saturday outlining his vision for a democratic Myanmar, just hours after the ruling junta refused to let him meet opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

Ban told an audience of diplomats, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations that the military regime must free the pro-democracy icon and introduce other reforms for the good of the country's people.

"I am here today to say: Myanmar, you are not alone. We want to work with you for a united, peaceful, prosperous, democratic and modern Myanmar," Ban said at the Drug Elimination Museum in the commercial hub Yangon.

"We want to help you rise from poverty ... work with you so that your country can take its place as a respected and responsible member of the international community," the secretary general said.

"But let me emphasize: neither peace nor development can thrive without democracy and respect for human rights. Myanmar is no exception."

Junta chief Than Shwe earlier Saturday refused to let Ban visit Aung San Suu Kyi, who is in prison facing trial over an incident in which an American man swam uninvited to her lakeside house in May.

Ban earlier described Than Shwe's snub as "deeply disappointing" and said in his speech that all political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi, "should be released without delay."

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## "Mucking out" British politics

**By Stuart Littlewood**  
The expenses scandal engulfing British members of Parliament is nothing compared to the fact that supporters of Israel are embedded at all levels in the fabric of British political life and at the heart of the government, including at the core of the security establishment.

UK politicians are currently reeling from a public lashing for fiddling their expenses big-time. Such is their arrogance that many, when confronted with their crimes, don't see that they have done anything wrong.

The guilty ones who step down will be further enriched with a lavish resettlement allowance and a big pension pot.

To appease voters' anger, Parliament and government are now promising anti-sleaze reforms. They are calling on the impressive-sounding Committee on Standards in Public Life to investigate and make recommendations. Conservative leader David Cameron, who has expectations of becoming the next British prime minister, talks of purging his party of its cheats and racketeers.

But swindling the taxpayer over MPs' expenses is nothing compared to other corruption that's rife in Westminster. It is said that becoming a Friend of Israel is a necessary stepping-stone to high office. As a result, supporters of that foreign power are embedded at all levels in the fabric of British political life and at the heart of the government.

(Contd. on P. 15)