

Rafsanjani warns about attempts to create divisions among officials

Tehran Times Political Desk
TEHRAN — Expediency Council Chairman Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani has warned that a certain grouping in the country is attempting to create divisions among senior Iranian officials.

A suspicious faction views the friendship among senior officials as an obstacle to achieving its goals, Rafsanjani stated in a meeting with Assembly of Experts members in Tehran on Tuesday.

Rafsanjani is also the chairman of the Assembly of Experts.

Commenting on the post-election incidents, he said he has held talks with the country's officials in his efforts to restore peace in society.

He stated that the root causes of the post-election unrest and other problems the country is facing should be identified and addressed in a logical manner.

He also said the young generation accepts logical explanations and the Islamic establishment is able to weather various challenges.

Ali-Ahmadi, Bazrpash, Zabihi nominated for ministerial posts

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TEHRAN — Alireza Ali-Ahmadi, Mehrdad Bazrpash, and Ali Zabihi are the most likely nominees for the education, welfare, and energy ministerial posts respectively.

Mehr news agency has learnt that Ali-Ahmadi is the most probable nominee for the education ministry. He was the education minister during the previous administration as well.

President's previous nominee for the education ministry was Sousan Keshavarz but she could not get approval from the Majlis.

Former SAIPA Group's managing director Mehrdad Bazrpash will be most likely candidate for the post of the welfare and social security minister.

For the energy ministry former presidential advisor Ali Zabihi is Ahmadinejad's most probable choice. Former head of the Physical Education Organization, Mohammad Aliabadi did not manage to get the confidence vote of the Majlis for this post.

'Military strikes cannot halt Iran's nuclear program'

The director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran (AEOI) says Iran's defensive readiness is at such a level that Israel will never be able to attack the Islamic Republic's nuclear installations.

Asked about the Israeli threats against Iran's nuclear program, Ali-Akbar Salehi ruled out the possibility of any attack on Iran's nuclear facilities.

"We have taken all the necessary defensive precautions, including air defenses, and we hold regular maneuvers at the nuclear sites. So I assure the great Iranian nation that the installations will not be attacked," the Fars news agency quoted Salehi as saying on Tuesday.

However, Iran will still take any threat seriously, he stressed.

(Source: Press TV)

Mottaki meets Finnish, Japanese foreign ministers

Tehran Times Political Desk

TEHRAN — Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki met with his Finnish counterpart Alexander Stubb in New York on Tuesday.

Mottaki pointed to the nuclear package Iran presented to the 5+1 group (the United States, Britain, France, China, Russia, and Germany) and called for collective measures to deal with the issues addressed in the package.

Tehran has offered to hold comprehensive, all-encompassing, and constructive negotiations on a range of security issues, including global nuclear disarmament.

Mottaki said Iran is ready to play a more active role in the global nuclear disarmament movement just as it has made serious efforts in the worldwide campaign to eradicate chemical weapons.

"But unfortunately, certain Western media outlets depict a flawed or false image of



MOTTAKI



STUBB



OKADA

Iran's internal developments, which causes misunderstandings," he noted.

All countries' national laws must be respected, he added.

Elsewhere in his remarks, he said Iran-European Union relations over the past four years should be reviewed and the EU should formulate more independent policies in order to improve ties with Iran.

Stubb expressed hope that the talks

between Iran and the 5+1 group in October would yield positive results.

Mottaki, who is currently in New York to attend the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly, also held talks with Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada.

He reiterated Tehran's refusal to discuss the country's legal rights over its nuclear program and urged the U.S. to work for a compromise, AFP quoted a Japanese official

Commander stresses importance of bolstering defensive power

TEHRAN (FNA) — An Iranian Army top commander on Wednesday highlighted the importance of strengthening the country's defensive power.

"If we increase our defense power, we will be able to portray Iran as a more independent, more important and more honorable country in the international arena," Brigadier General Mohammad Hossein Dadras said.

The commander added that those countries which enjoy more scientific capabilities are the powerful nations of the world, and noted, "Countries which possess power and strength can stand on their own feet, and this fact proves the importance of scientific capabilities in area of (military) defense."

A few months ago Iran started production of 30 important military tools and equipment, including electronic, telecommunication and radar devices.

Former Defense Minister Brigadier General Mostafa



Mohammad Najjar stated during an inaugural ceremony held in Tehran in May for the launch of operation of the production lines of the said devices, "These new production lines and products are related to electronic warfare, anti-electronic warfare, radar and sonar systems, air and sea cruising and positioning, electro optical and laser systems and different advanced and thermal night goggles, military communication and simulators."

At the time Najjar reiterated that Iran has produced advanced electronic warfare and anti-electronic warfare and radar systems, including information gathering, wiretapping, orientation, spotting and positioning systems which operate in different (radio) bands, process different kinds of information and have the capability to identify enemy data, spot enemy transmitters and confuse or paralyze them.

Iran swine flu cases pass 400

Iranian health officials have detected nine new confirmed cases of swine flu in the past week, bringing the country's total toll to 400.

Head of the Iranian Health Ministry's Center for Disease Control Mohammad-Mehdi Gouya told ISNA that the number of individuals who have contracted the A/H1N1 flu virus in Iran is considerably less than that reported in neighboring countries.

Gouya said that nine new patients had tested positive for the new flu virus in the past week, adding that the virus has claimed no new lives.

He stressed that all treated cases had been discharged from hospital in good health.

Gouya added that the Iranian Ministry of Health and Medical



Education is aiming to establish new measures to contain the epidemic in the flu season, which coincides with the start of school.

He reported that special teams had been trained to tackle the spread of the virus in schools.

The head of the Iranian Health Ministry's Center for Disease Control urged parents particularly those who have preschoolers to teach their kids to follow precautionary measures such as frequently washing their hands.

Gouya also advised parents to visit a physician as soon as their child presents flu-like symptoms such as fever, cough and sore throat, adding that these children should rest at home and avoid public areas until they are healthy again.

(Source: Press TV)

Iran to train Iraq's Red Crescent volunteers

TEHRAN (FNA) — Tehran on Wednesday sealed an agreement with Baghdad to train Iraq's Red Crescent volunteers and managers.

The agreement was concluded in a meeting between the visiting head of Iraq's Red Crescent Society, Yasin al-Mamouri, and head of the Volunteers Organization of Iran's Red Crescent Society Shahabodin Mohammadi Araqi here in Tehran today.

According to the agreement, 25 managers and volunteers from Iraq's Red Crescent Society will travel to Tehran to attend training courses in the Iranian capital in the near future.

Mamouri, heading a high-ranking delegation, arrived



in Iran on Monday on a weeklong visit to the Muslim neighboring country.

The visit is aimed at using the Iranian Red Crescent's capabilities

and signing a number of memoranda of understanding (MoU) on mutual cooperation.

Reminding common religious features of Iran and Iraq, Araqi said, "We hope to display our joint activities and cooperation in the form of regional programs."

Mamouri, for his part, viewed the activities carried out by the Volunteers Organization of Iran's Red Crescent Society as a role model for other countries, and voiced his organization's willingness to use Iran's experiences in this regard.

Iran is an opportunity, Ahmadinejad tells Obama

(Contd. from p. 1)

Ahmadinejad said he regrets the deaths of protesters in the violence that followed his country's June 12 presidential elections, but denied that his government had any role in the killings.

Ahmadinejad said those who died were "not at fault." He instead said the responsibility lies with Iranian opposition politicians and with "European and American politicians" who he said fueled the violence.

"We believe what they did was very wrong," he said.

"It is all very regrettable," Ahmadinejad said, adding that he has directed Iran's judicial system to investigate each death. "The government has no role in these events."

Ahmadinejad muted his remarks on the Holocaust, an event he has frequently questioned as a matter of historical fact. As recently as last Friday, Ahmadinejad questioned whether the Holocaust was "a real event" and said it was used by Jews to trick the West into backing the creation of Israel.

Ahmadinejad said he is not interested in debating historical details. Instead, he said he wants to focus on what he calls the wrong done to Palestinians who lost their land when Israel was formed.

Ahmadinejad said the Holocaust is used as a pretext for the repression of Palestinians. He grouped the deaths of Jews during World War II with those of millions of others who died.

Ahmadinejad repeated his nation's interest in cooperating to help stabilize Afghanistan and help Iraq, but blamed the United States for having created chaos in the war-torn country on Iran's eastern border.

"The occupying forces or the groups that have sent in the military to these two states, if indeed their policy has led to further instability, what do they want us to do?" Ahmadinejad said. "What exactly can we do for a car that has decided to speed up and basically crash down the hill? I don't see exactly what we can do under that scenario."

as saying on Tuesday.

"Iranian people respect dialogue, but we are not willing to hold negotiations on our rights," Mottaki said, according to the official, who spoke to reporters on condition of anonymity.

"While President (Barack) Obama calls for change in his slogan, I hope he can prove it not just through words but also through actions. It's time for us to nail down such actions," he added.

Washington has warned that Iran, which Western nations fear is secretly developing nuclear weapons under the guise of its civilian nuclear power program, will face further sanctions if it shies away from talks.

Tehran denies the charge and maintains its nuclear program is totally peaceful.

During the meeting, Mottaki said his country could work with Japan, the only nation to be hit by atomic bombs, to "bring an end to nuclear weapons," the official said.

"Iran does not have any desire to have nuclear weapons at all," Mottaki told Okada. "The era of nuclear weapons is over."

While underlining the traditionally friendly ties between Japan and Iran, Okada voiced "regret" at Tehran's failure to allay suspicions over its nuclear program and urged the Islamic Republic to return to the negotiations.



Iran criticizes France's reaction to Leader's remarks

Tehran has condemned the position French authorities have taken towards Ayatollah Khamenei's objection to the destructive role Israel plays in the region.

"These comments run contrary to the realities of Palestine, the world and the region. They are a reflection of France's biased, uncaring, and hateful support for the occupying Israeli regime and its crimes," Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Hassan Qashqavi said on Tuesday.

"This extremist approach is in clear contrast with France's long-established stance on the Palestinian issue and its realities... in practice this approach is in contrast with the outlook of the considerate French people," he added.

Qashqavi also said that Tel Aviv was humiliating Paris and proving its Middle East strategy ineffective by ignoring the French government's apparent efforts to stop illegal settlement building on Palestinian land.

The spokesman added that French officials were accusing Iranian authorities of intolerance while rights of various minority and migrants were violated in their own country.

"The French government's lack of attention to civil rights and unions has created numerous problems for the country. These problems suddenly turn into protests and escalate into riots," he said.

Qashqavi's comments came after a French Foreign Ministry spokeswoman attacked a recent speech by the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei and called his words 'profoundly shocking'.

"These declarations are profoundly shocking and we firmly condemn them... (they) reflect the intolerance of the current leaders of Iran," Christine Fages told reporters.

"They unfortunately can be added to a long list of hateful declarations by (Iranian President) Mahmoud Ahmadinejad... It is a sad day for the Iranian people, who we know do not share this attitude," she added.

Delivering a sermon on Sunday, the Muslim Eid al-Fitr holiday, Ayatollah Khamenei had described Friday's al-Qods Day rallies as 'a loud and clear shout against the cancer of Zionism'.

The Leader warned of the 'conspiracies of the arrogant powers' to weaken al-Qods Day among Muslims, adding that the Qods day rallies proved once again that the Islamic Umma (community) does not accept tyranny.

Ayatollah Khamenei's remarks came as a UN fact-finding mission called for Israel's prosecution at the International Criminal Court over 'war crimes and crimes against humanity' committed during its 2008-2009 operation in the Gaza Strip.

The UN team, which was led by the former South African Jewish Supreme Court Judge Richard Goldstone, said that International Criminal Court must proceed with the prosecution, unless Tel Aviv opens fully independent probes into its war crimes.

(Source: Press TV)