

Business and Politics in the Muslim World

Weekly Report on Iran

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Summary

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Prodi: Italy Not After U.S. in Iran's N-Case

Former Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi yesterday insisted on his country's independent stance on Iran's nuclear program, saying Italy is not a school boy obeying his teacher.

Ahmadinejad: IAEA Inspectors Flouted Law

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors acted against their regulations by contributing to “unreal” reports.

Iran Military Acquires Anti-Stealth Tech

An Iranian commander says the country's military has mastered the know-how to produce stealth-aircraft detection systems.

Motahari: Majlis an Obstacle in Way to Despotism

Conservative Legislator, Ali Motahari, criticized president's recent remarks over the supremacy of the executive branch and said Majlis and the supreme leader are bulwark against despotism and tyranny.

Ahmadinejad to Nullify Hegemonic Equations

Deputy Foreign Minister in Science and Research Affairs Mohammad-Baqer Khorramshad said yesterday President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's speech in New York will annul the hegemonic system and equations.

MP: Majlis to Scrutinize Implementation of 20-Year Perspective Plan

A Member of the Majlis Presiding body, Hassan Ghafouri-Fard, said here yesterday that the Majlis is determined to scrutinize the implementation of the 20-Year Outlook Plan from October 1 and suggested that Majlis should set a deadline for that.

Rafsanjani: Logical Criticism Is a Must for Development

Chairman of the Expediency Council, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, said here yesterday that logical criticism on the principles is a must to the benefit of the country's development.

Rezaee: Iran Now a "Global Player"

Secretary of the Expediency Council, Mohsen Rezaee, said here yesterday that Iran has become a global power after 20 years since the sacred defense.

Iran, Syria Presidents Discuss Latest Regional, World Issues

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his Syrian counterpart Bashar al-Assad reviewed the most important regional and international developments here yesterday.

Carter: Iran Rescue Effort Should Have Worked

Former President Jimmy Carter felt his efforts to rescue U.S. diplomats held hostage by Iran should have worked but were thwarted by a "strange series of mishaps," and the mission's failure played a major role in his 1980 re-election defeat, the Georgia Democrat writes in a new book assembled from diary entries.

Armenia Enjoys Perfect Communication With Iran

Iran is a very significant neighbor of us and we've perfect relations with that country, President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan told Ukrainian "Profile" magazine talking about Armenia's ties with Iran.

IAEA Adopts No Resolution on Iran

The Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has ended its meeting without adopting a resolution on Iran, the Islamic Republic's envoy to the nuclear watchdog says.

Iran Sends 150 Tons of Aid to Pakistan

Sistan and Balouchestan Prov. (IRNA) - The relief provided by the Iranian people was sent from the provincial capital city of Zahedan in the southeastern Iranian province of Sistan and Balouchestan to Pakistani cities, a local official said yesterday.

Supreme Leader Unveils Enemies Plots to Separate Nation From Islam

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei said on Thursday that recognition of enemies plans and methods to confront the Islamic system is vital.

Rafsanjani: Iran Can Thwart Sanctions by Hard Work

A senior Iranian official says the West has been piling up pressure on the Islamic Republic with toughest ever sanctions, urging hard work to overcome the pressure.

Economic news

Tehran Stock Exchange Tops World Markets

Iran ranked first in the world's stock markets recording 65.5 percent growth since the beginning of the current Christian year, it was reported yesterday.

Iran Denies Arresting 7 U.S. Troops

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) rejects rumors of seven U.S. troops being detained on the border of southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan.

Iran Gain 90% Self-Sufficiency in Mining Equipment

A senior mining official said Iran has already achieved over 90 percent self-sufficiency in producing mining equipment.

Iran, Malawi Sign Agreement on Cooperation in Industry, Mines

The Iranian and Malawian ministers yesterday signed an agreement on cooperation in industrial and mines sector.

Tehran to Host ECO Experts Meeting

The second Economic Cooperation Organization High Level Expert Group Meeting on Energy will be held on September 20-21 in Tehran.

Qatar to Import Iran's CNG Equipment

Qatar is interested in importing Iran-made equipment of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) to expand its CNG refueling stations, head of Iran Transportation and Fuel Management Headquarters said.

SP Daily Output Up

Some 221 million cubic meters of gas is produced per day in South Pars field's phases, in Assaluyeh, Bushehr province, said managing director of South Pars Gas Company (SPGC).

Lebanon Asks Iran to Cooperate in Tech, Engineering Fields

Lebanese telecommunications minister asked Iranian companies to cooperate in his country's technical and engineering fields.

Iran Stops Gasoline Purchase Orders

Iran has halted placing orders for gasoline purchase from abroad as it has begun increasing its domestic production, Oil Minister Masoud Mirkazemi says.

Sanctions Against Iran Could Hit UAE PC Market

After a healthy run in the second quarter, the local PC market could be in for an indifferent second half brought on by the sanctions against Iran.

Italian Province Keen to Boost Trade Ties with Iran

Italy's Puglia province expressed willingness to boost economic and trade relations with Iran due to the latter's significant role in the Middle-East.

Iran, Turkey Sign 6 MoUs

Iran and Turkey signed six memoranda of understanding (MoU) on Thursday. Iran's First Vice President Mohammad-Reza Rahimi on Iran's behalf and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Teyyip Erdogan on Turkey's behalf signed the agreements.

Tehran, Yerevan Determined to Upgrade Economic Cooperation

Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said yesterday that the Islamic Republic of Iran and Armenia are determined to enhance level of political, economic and cultural cooperation.

Bushehr Power Plant to Produce 400 Megawatts Electricity Initially

head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Ali-Akbar Salehi said on Wednesday that by mid December Bushehr power plant will generate 400 megawatts electricity, 40 percent of its nominal capacity.

Iran, Mauritania Discuss Bilateral Relations

Minister of Foreign Affairs Manouchehr Mottaki in a meeting with Mauritanian Minister of Rural Development Brahim Ould Mbarek described Iran-Mauritania relations as "important."

Ahmadinejad: Iran-Sudan Ties Brotherly and Strategic

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad called Iran-Sudan relations deep, brotherly, and strategic, adding that Iran will defend rights of Sudanese nation and government everywhere.

Iran-Sri Lanka Trade Exchange Hits \$1b

Trade exchange between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Sri Lanka is more than one billion dollars, Commerce Minister Mehdi Ghazanfari announced yesterday.

Social news

Mowlavi Foundation to Honor Iran's Nazeri

The International Rumi (Mowlavi) Foundation is set to honor Iranian vocalist Shahram Nazeri during an international congress in Konya, Turkey.

Iran Starts Mass Production of MS Drug

A well-known Iranian company started mass production of a third Iran-made Multiple Sclerosis (MS) medication in a ceremony on Saturday.

Iran Exports MS Drug to Syria, Armenia

The Iranian Health Ministry announced yesterday that the country has started exporting its recently produced MS drugs to some foreign states, including Syria and Armenia.

Commander: Jundollah Responsible for Hostage-Taking

A senior commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said on Saturday that the armed men who took six people hostage in Iran's southeastern province of Sistan and Balouchestan several days ago were remnants of the Jundollah terrorist group.

5 Hostages Released, 1 Martyred

Sistan-Balouchestan Prov. (IRNA) - The deputy governor of the southeastern Iranian province of Sistan-Balouchestan said here yesterday the five of six air-force soldiers taken hostage were released and one of them was martyred.

Tehran Hosts Iran NGV 2010

The Third International Exhibition and Conference on CNG and Related Industries, IRAN NGV 2010, opened yesterday in Olympic Hotel's conference hall in Tehran with the participation of 120 domestic and foreign companies.

Iran Allocates \$100m More Aid to Pakistan

Iran has allocated an extra \$100 million aid to Pakistan, a neighboring country which has suffered 40 to 50 billion dollar in flood damages.

Detailed News

Politico strategic news

Prodi: Italy Not After U.S. in Iran's N-Case

Former Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi yesterday insisted on his country's independent stance on Iran's nuclear program, saying Italy is not a school boy obeying his teacher.

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"Italy does not follow up the United States on Iran's nuclear energy program. We are not like a school boy who goes after his teacher," Fars news agency quoted Prodi as saying at a meeting on the financial crisis in Europe here yesterday.

The former premier highlighted the overall importance of the European Union (EU), saying, "It can play a leading role in presenting diplomatic solutions (to international issues)."

He pointed to relations between Iran and the EU regardless of sanctions imposed on Tehran and said despite assumptions about EU's determination over following U.S. backed sanctions, "You should not think that the European Union is a superman because it has its own problems."

Prodi urged European countries to make efforts to establish justice in the international community, saying great progress has been achieved over the past 10 years but major steps should be taken in the future.

He also named Greece as the weakest country in Europe in fighting financial crisis.

Prodi reiterated that world is now totally different from what it was ten years ago and the international order has shifted from unilateralism to polarism.

He urged Iran to understand the world developments and play its role by more international interactions as it is expected from it.

He also rejected the assumption of his return to the politics and said he is too old to come back.

On the materializing international justice, he confessed that if he confirms it, he is telling a lie. But he emphasized that moving towards international justice needs international engagement and dialogue.

Ahmadinejad: IAEA Inspectors Flouted Law

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors acted against their regulations by contributing to "unreal" reports.

"If an [IAEA] inspector violates his duties, the agency's Articles of Association allow for the termination of his inspections," IRIB quoted President Ahmadinejad as saying in an interview with ABC News, which was aired on Sunday.

The Iranian chief executive made the comments in reference to Iran's decision to change the list of IAEA inspectors and demand replacements for two of the inspectors who presented "false" details of the Islamic Republic's nuclear activities.

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President Ahmadinejad further explained that the IAEA has not adhered to its guidelines concerning Iran's nuclear case and resorted to 'generalizations' and 'undocumented' talks.

He also pointed out that the case of inspectors has further politicized Iran's nuclear program and undermined the UN atomic agency's credibility.

The Iranian chief executive, however, underlined that despite the IAEA conduct, Tehran will continue to respect the UN body's guidelines.

He also criticized the agency's inspection standards for different countries and said, "Many countries including the U.S. have non-peaceful nuclear activities but no reports ever come out concerning their operations."

Asked about the case of an Iranian woman convicted of adultery and murder, Ahmadinejad slammed Western media for what he called false reports and noted Sakineh Ashtiani had never been handed a stoning sentence and that her case is currently being reviewed by the Iranian Judiciary.

The Iranian president also demanded that the U.S. free a number of Iranians "illegally arrested and detained" in America and some other countries at Washington's request.

According to Iranian media, at least eight Iranians are held in U.S. detention over indeterminate charges.

He also criticized the U.S. for its claims of upholding human rights while killing hundreds of thousands of people in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The U.S. television network carried out the interview with President Ahmadinejad upon his arrival in the United States for the 65th United Nations General Assembly session in New York City.

Iran Military Acquires Anti-Stealth Tech

An Iranian commander says the country's military has mastered the know-how to produce stealth-aircraft detection systems.

"With our present technology to produce radars with different ranges, we can definitely detect enemies' stealth warplanes," Mehr news agency reported Brig. Gen. Mohammad Hassan Mansourian, a deputy commander at Khatam Al-Anbiya Anti-Aircraft Artillery Base, as saying yesterday.

According to General Mansourian, Iran's determination to develop domestic anti-aircraft systems came about after eight years of imposed war with the executed Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein.

The Iranian general further pointed out that such military accomplishments have been achieved despite years of U.S.-engineered sanctions on the Islamic Republic.

He also lauded the joint efforts between Iran's Army and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) to protect the sovereignty of Iran and guard the country against foreign threats.

General Mansourian made a reference to the country's competence in producing defense equipment and said Iran's armed forces are 'fully' capable of staving off threats against the territorial integrity of the Islamic Republic.

Motahari: Majlis an Obstacle in Way to Despotism

Conservative Legislator, Ali Motahari, criticized president's recent remarks over the supremacy of the executive branch and said Majlis and the supreme leader are bulwark against despotism and tyranny.

“Imam Khomeini (R) was very well aware of the fact that power corrupts and it tends to create sense of despotism and tyranny. There should be a body like Majlis which has the power to stand against the government and curb the probable despotic moves in the government,” he told Mehr news agency.

He said “Imam believed that the Majlis must be powerful enough to stop the despotic moves. In the Islamic republic there are two bodies which can water down the tyrannical trends. Such are Majlis and the supreme leader. If these two bodies are diluted, the way for the despotism will be paved.”

Asked what kind of action Majlis will take against the president remark he said “Majlis should be able to fulfill its obligations and vindicate the rights of the people wherever it feels there is a deviation in the implementation of the laws.”

Ahmadinejad to Nullify Hegemonic Equations

Deputy Foreign Minister in Science and Research Affairs Mohammad-Baqer Khorramshad said yesterday President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's speech in New York will annul the hegemonic system and equations.

Talking to IRNA while referring to the UN General Assembly underway in New York, Khorramshad said the assembly would be an ample opportunity for Iran to criticize the present unfair international system.

He further said public diplomacy and arrogance are two important issues that the Islamic Republic of Iran will talk about in the assembly.

The U.S. has been trying to prevent the Iranian voice from being heard worldwide, Khorramshad said, however Iran's voice has been the most sonorous one in the global communities.

President Ahmadinejad arrived in New York early on Sunday to attend the 2010 United Nations General Assembly.

MP: Majlis to Scrutinize Implementation of 20-Year Perspective Plan

A Member of the Majlis Presiding body, Hassan Ghafouri-Fard, said here yesterday that the Majlis is determined to scrutinize the implementation of the 20-Year Outlook Plan from October 1 and suggested that Majlis should set a deadline for that.

“The supreme leader’s emphasis on execution of the 20 year Perspective Plan has made the member of the parliament more serious about the implementation of the plan by the government,” he told Mehr news agency.

“According to the plan the economy should touch 8% growth. But we have not reached that level and it is not acceptable,” he said.

Rafsanjani: Logical Criticism Is a Must for Development

Chairman of the Expediency Council, Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, said here yesterday that logical criticism on the principles is a must to the benefit of the country’s development.

In a meeting with the members of Islamic Association of Students Gorgan, he said “by avoiding radicalism and taking fair stand , criticism based on the principle is a must for the country’s development.” ISNA quoted him as saying.

Pointing to Iran’s 20-year-perspective plan, he said “according to the plan, Iran has to rank first in technology and science among 28 countries of the region” and added “achieving such goal needs precise policy-making and national endeavor.”

He went on to say, “those students who have free thoughts can build the country in the upcoming decades.”

Rezaee: Iran Now a “Global Player”

Secretary of the Expediency Council, Mohsen Rezaee, said here yesterday that Iran has become a global power after 20 years since the sacred defense.

“Today the third phase of confrontation between the U.S. and Iran has just started. The West, led by the U.S., waged a war on Iran after the advent of the Islamic Republic. This was the first phase of confrontation” he said, adding “the second phase of the

confrontation was to curb the Islamic Revolution but failed to do so because by that time, the message of the Revolution was well globalized.”

He added, “after the second phase, Iran started playing his role in the region as an independent country and the Americans failed to stop Iran from becoming a global player” and said, “they wanted to colonialize Iran and to block Islamic Revolution from expansion in the world. But the revolution paved the way for emergence of new wave of movement in Lebanon and Palestine.”

He went on to say “today the situation is calm and we can easily overcome the sanctions. The sanctions and the threats both are opportunities for the country and today a new era of development has begun in the country.”

Iran, Syria Presidents Discuss Latest Regional, World Issues

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and his Syrian counterpart Bashar al-Assad reviewed the most important regional and international developments here yesterday.

The two presidents exchanged views on mutual relations as well.

Pointing to the deep brotherly ties existing between the two countries, President Ahmadinejad said expansion of relations and further proximity between Tehran and Damascus would be to the benefit of both regional and international peace and security.

Turning to the situation in Palestine and Gaza, Ahmadinejad said Iran believed turning to people’s votes was the only solution to the issue of Palestine.

He stressed that true representatives of the Palestinian nation should be present in any kind of talks and negotiations on the issue.

He said Iran welcomed expansion of ties and cooperation with Syria in all possible areas.

During the meeting, the two presidents stressed the need for further exchange of views between Iranian and Syrian officials on regional and Islamic world developments.

Al-Assad said his country regarded expansion of ties with Iran not only to the benefit of Syria but the whole region.

He stressed that close cooperation between Iran and Syria would help strengthen brotherly relations within the Islamic world and would undoubtedly benefit regional nations and all Muslims.

Carter: Iran Rescue Effort Should Have Worked

Former President Jimmy Carter felt his efforts to rescue U.S. diplomats held hostage by Iran should have worked but were thwarted by a "strange series of mishaps," and the

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mission's failure played a major role in his 1980 re-election defeat, the Georgia Democrat writes in a new book assembled from diary entries.

The Associated Press purchased a copy of the book, "White House Diary," on Friday, ahead of its release Monday.

In it, he criticizes several presidents, including fellow Democrats Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, for not bringing sufficient pressure on Israel to stop building settlements on the West Bank. He writes that construction was "especially rapid" during Clinton's administration and he believes Obama has "backed away" from his initial commitment to a settlement freeze.

The book highlights Carter's difficulties in working with then-House Speaker Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill, chronicles his failure to get much of his agenda through Congress and expresses the bitterness he felt toward political rival Sen. Edward M. Kennedy.

But it also shows his pride in helping to bring peace between Egypt and Israel with the Camp David accords and other foreign-policy and domestic accomplishments. The diary entries show he felt at the time that he had "a firm grip on my presidential duties" and a clear sense of what he wanted to do.

Carter, 85, said that nearly every day of his presidency, he dictated his thoughts and observations and turned the tapes over to his secretary, Susan Clough, who typed and put them in a binder. Thirty years later, he condensed and annotated the diary with recent reflections. The book was published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

He described his difficult relationship with O'Neill, saying the most unpleasant experience of his presidency was a breakfast at which O'Neill was "extremely abusive" toward him and others in the room. Carter had a rocky relationship with the House speaker throughout his term.

Carter also reveals his thoughts at the time about Kennedy, D-Mass., his 1980 rival for the Democratic presidential nomination. He writes that he first learned Kennedy would challenge him when briefed in early 1978 by then-Sen. Joe Biden of Delaware, now vice president. He also praises Biden as his "most effective supporter" in the 1976 presidential campaign.

After a 1979 meeting with Kennedy that included a discussion of health care, Carter wrote that it was almost impossible to understand what the senator was talking about but it was obvious their approaches differed. Carter also discussed his differences with Kennedy over health care in an interview with CBS' "60 Minutes" to be shown Sunday.

Of Kennedy's failed nomination challenge, Carter wrote in June 1980, ahead of the Democratic National Convention in New York City, that the Kennedy group had been uncooperative in drafting the Democratic Party platform and clearly wanted a confrontation.

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On Election Day, Nov. 4, 1980, as he saw his re-election hopes slipping away, Carter had bitter thoughts about the Kennedy challenge. He said Kennedy's attacks for eight months hurt him, and he had to spend much time trying to recruit back natural Democratic constituencies, such as Jews, Hispanics, blacks, the poor and labor.

In observations newly added to the diary, Carter wrote that his own polling found that potential general election support for Kennedy was weak and he was uncertain whether Kennedy's real goal was to win or just to stop him from being re-elected.

But Carter mostly blamed his election loss on his failure to win the release of U.S. hostages held captive in Iran.

A day before losing the election, he observed that his pollster, Pat Caddell, was finding "massive slippage" in his support as people realized the hostages were not coming home. Undecided voters were moving almost entirely to Ronald Reagan.

Fifty-two American diplomats and military officials were held captive for more than a year by a group of Islamist students who supported the Iranian revolution. The hostages were released on Jan. 20, 1981, just minutes after Reagan was sworn in as president.

In the spring of 1980, Carter ordered a helicopter rescue attempt — one that ended disastrously and left an indelible scar on his presidency. Two of the eight helicopters developed problems on the way to a remote desert landing spot and had to turn back; a third had a hydraulic problem after landing. Carter canceled the mission but during the withdrawal, a helicopter collided with a C-130 transport plane, resulting in eight deaths.

Carter called it "a strange series of mishaps, almost completely unpredictable" and insisted the rescue operation should have worked because the men were well trained, planning was careful and no Iranian alarm was raised until at least two hours after U.S. crews had left Iran.

Armenia Enjoys Perfect Communication With Iran

Iran is a very significant neighbor of us and we've perfect relations with that country, President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan told Ukrainian "Profile" magazine talking about Armenia's ties with Iran.

"We hold our communication with the foreign world through Georgia and Iran. In 1990th when the situation was tensed in Georgia, we would have our products by 4-5 times higher if we didn't have the Iranian roads," President said.

Besides, Iran is a country rich with energy and Armenian side has a very pleasant communication with Iran in those fields.

“Iran has a balanced approach towards the Karabakh issue. You know that in the scopes of Islamic conference, Azerbaijan makes attempts to demonstrate that conflict as a religious one. In this case it’s perfectly denied since Armenia has good ties with Iran,” President said.

President underscored a few other economic and humanitarian fields of cooperation with Iran.

IAEA Adopts No Resolution on Iran

The Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has ended its meeting without adopting a resolution on Iran, the Islamic Republic's envoy to the nuclear watchdog says.

The board members adopted no resolution on Iran during their five-day meeting which drew to a close on Friday, Ali-Asghar Soltanieh told IRNA.

"In the meeting, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) member states issued a very important and historic statement, highlighting the need for the IAEA Secretariat and Director General to revise the process of issuing reports and adopt a professional and unbiased approach," he added.

During the event, it was also stressed that the agency has a responsibility toward issues concerning IAEA members, Soltanieh said.

He said lengthy discussions about Israel's nuclear threat were among the highlights of the five-day meeting, indicating that Tel Aviv's atomic threat remains a cause for concern despite US and Western support for Israel.

"The Zionist regime's representative and his few supporters were not able to respond to the NAM member states' rightful objections and only brought up Iran's nuclear issue... to derail the discussion, but failed to do so," the Iranian envoy said.

Soltanieh stressed that Iran, as an IAEA member state, will continue to work closely with the nuclear watchdog and hopes the agency will get back on track and act in line with its 'Articles of Association.'

Iran Sends 150 Tons of Aid to Pakistan

Sistan and Balouchestan Prov. (IRNA) - The relief provided by the Iranian people was sent from the provincial capital city of Zahedan in the southeastern Iranian province of Sistan and Balouchestan to Pakistani cities, a local official said yesterday.

Governor of Sistan and Balouchestan province Ali-Mohammad Azad told IRNA the supplies, worth 330,000 dollars, were forwarded to Pakistan through rail ways.

Azad added the Islamic Republic of Iran and other Muslim nations worldwide make efforts to send humanitarian aid to Pakistani cities hit by the devastating flood on June 30.

Supreme Leader Unveils Enemies Plots to Separate Nation From Islam

Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei said on Thursday that recognition of enemies plans and methods to confront the Islamic system is vital.

The Supreme Leader made the remarks in a meeting with members of Assembly of Experts.

The Supreme leader said that the enemies have focused on separating nation from Islamic system and weaken the religious beliefs of the nation, the youth in particular.

Ayatollah Khamenei said that the nation is the main supporter of the Islamic system, adding enemies mull to undermine the nation's confidence in their government.

The Supreme Leader cited presence of the nation at the scene as the main reason behind Islamic Republic victory.

The Supreme Leader said that the victories scored by the Islamic Republic of Iran has embarrassed the global arrogance and that passing several resolutions at the United Nations Security Council under unfounded allegations indicated that the adversaries are in weak position vis-a-vis Iran.

Ayatollah Khamenei said that the global arrogance has adopted proactive approach in campaign against the Islamic Republic of Iran, so that it actively follows anti-Iran methodology, but, they fail to focus on a specific objective, because of desperation.

The Supreme Leader said that the western countries have lost their status due to the resurrection in the Islamic countries.

'Several countries in the region which are allies of the western governments have resorted to revisionism to thwart the impacts of the Islamic resurrection, but, they will get nowhere except for acknowledging the social movement inspired by Islam,' the Supreme Leader said.

Elsewhere in his speech, the Supreme Leader pointed to desecration of Holy Quran in the United States as another sign of desperation and the fact that the adversaries are getting away from logic and ethics when they see they are losing ground in the cultural and social domains.

Rafsanjani: Iran Can Thwart Sanctions by Hard Work

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A senior Iranian official says the West has been piling up pressure on the Islamic Republic with toughest ever sanctions, urging hard work to overcome the pressure.

"During the past 30 years, we had a war and military threats but we have never seen the [global] arrogance... plan such a calculated assault against us," Chairman of Iran's Assembly of Experts Ayatollah Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani said in the 8th meeting of the assembly yesterday.

The senior Iranian official said that Iran was facing harshest ever sanctions but added that it could avoid them if "it utilizes all its political and scientific capacities."

Ayatollah Rafsanjani also criticized the recent report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), saying it offered nothing new but unjustly accused Iran of not cooperating since it did not allow certain IAEA inspectors to visit its nuclear facilities.

He further pointed out that the nuclear issue was a pretext for the West to pile up pressure on the Islamic Republic.

Economic news

Tehran Stock Exchange Tops World Markets

- Iran ranked first in the world's stock markets recording 65.5 percent growth since the beginning of the current Christian year, it was reported yesterday.

Iran's money market website reported that Turkey and Sweden were respectively the second and third world stock markets recording respectively some 20.89 and 13.69 percent growth during the same period.

Meanwhile, the stock markets of Spain and Italy stood nearly at the end of the list registering some 11.32 and 11.74 percent decrease respectively.

The Shanghai Stock Exchange had the worst record among its international counterparts recording some 20.70 percent decrease in the said period.

Iran Denies Arresting 7 U.S. Troops

Iran's Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) rejects rumors of seven U.S. troops being detained on the border of southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchestan.

"Seven American troops were detained by Iranian guards in a southeastern province of the country ... Two Iranians accompanying the troops were also arrested," Reuters reported earlier on Sunday.

IRGC has rejected the reports as unfounded and says no U.S. troops have been arrested.

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The report came as Iran released one of the three American spies, Sarah Shourd, on Tuesday after more than 13 months in detention over health conditions.

Shourd, 32, was arrested along with Shane Michael Bauer and Joshua Felix Fattal, both 27, in July 2009 after illegally crossing the border into Iran from the mountains of Iraq's Kurdistan region.

The three were charged with espionage after Tehran Prosecutor Abbas Jafari Dolatabadi found "compelling evidence" that the three US citizens had been cooperating with U.S. intelligence agencies.

Iran Gain 90% Self-Sufficiency in Mining Equipment

A senior mining official said Iran has already achieved over 90 percent self-sufficiency in producing mining equipment.

Head of the executive board of Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization (IMIDRO) Hassan Polarak said necessary arrangements were also made to produce the rest of the needed equipment in domestic industrial units.

He said the production of the needed equipment will start soon.

The official stressed that sanction had no longer a meaning for Iran because the Islamic Republic has overcome different kinds of sanctions in the past three decades.

Polarak went on to say that Iran faces no problem presently to supply its needed mining and industrial equipment and machineries.

He further noted that necessary measures have also been taken to eliminate any psychological effect of the sanctions on mining sector.

Iran, Malawi Sign Agreement on Cooperation in Industry, Mines

The Iranian and Malawian ministers yesterday signed an agreement on cooperation in industrial and mines sector.

The agreement was signed by Iran's Minister of Industries and Mines Ali-Akbar Mehrabian and the Malawian Minister of National Resources and Energy Grey Malunga.

The signing ceremony was held in the context of the first Iran-Africa Forum held in Tehran on September 14-15 which focused on the issues of economic cooperation between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the African states.

Tehran to Host ECO Experts Meeting

The second Economic Cooperation Organization High Level Expert Group Meeting on Energy will be held on September 20-21 in Tehran.

Iran's Tavanir Company will host the meeting.

Several Experts from Turkey, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan will attend the two-day meeting.

Homayoun Haeri, Managing Director of Tavanir Company, said the participants will review ECO's existing cooperation plan on oil and energy.

They will also discuss cooperation in using modern and renewable energy resources.

Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) is an intergovernmental regional organization established in 1985 by Iran, Pakistan and Turkey for the purpose of promoting economic, technical and cultural cooperation among the member states.

In 1992, Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan joined the organization.

ECO is considered as the second regional cooperation organization in the world which covers more than 350 million people.

Qatar to Import Iran's CNG Equipment

Qatar is interested in importing Iran-made equipment of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) to expand its CNG refueling stations, head of Iran Transportation and Fuel Management Headquarters said.

"Some neighboring countries such as Qatar are eager to use Iran's expertise in CNG-powered public transportation vehicles and expansion of CNG refueling stations," Mohammad Rouyanian told reporters on the sidelines of the third International Exhibition and Conference on CNG, IRAN NGV 2010.

Rouyanian predicted that Iran is to become an exporter of CNG kits and cylinders by the end of the current Iranian year (ending March 20, 2011).

"Some CNG equipment is being exported to European countries as well," he further explained.

He went on to say that the number of CNG refueling stations in Iran has increased significantly over the past few years.

Weekly report on Iran

He added that some 400 more CNG refueling stations will be set up by the end of the year to reduce gasoline consumption in the country.

"Daily gasoline consumption in Iran has fallen 38 to 40 million liters during the past three years standing at 60 to 62 million liters per day."

In related news Hamed Houri-Jafari, an Iranian Petroleum Ministry official said yesterday that the number of Natural Gas Vehicles (NGVs) on Iran's roads has reached 2 million, ranking the country second out of five states with the highest number.

NGV is an alternative fuel vehicle that uses CNG or Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as a clean alternative to other automobile fuels.

Two million out of 11 million vehicles in the country's roads are using the alternative fuel, he added.

The sale of CNG-powered cars is also rising in Iran due to the low price of natural gas in the gas and oil-rich country.

He further pointed out that the number of gas-fueled cars in Iran placed the country second in the world after Pakistan.

The Iranian government hopes the switch to dual-fuel will provide relief for motorists affected by gasoline rationing, as there are no limits on the supply of CNG. Dual-fuel cars can run on CNG or gasoline.

According to Houri-Jafari, there are more than 11.5 million NGVs in the world and the number could reach to 65 million by 2020.

Worldwide, there were 11.4 million NGVs by 2009, led by Pakistan with 2.3 million, Argentina with 1.8 million, Iran with 1.7 million, Brazil with 1.6 million and India with 935,000 vehicles.

SP Daily Output Up

Some 221 million cubic meters of gas is produced per day in South Pars field's phases, in Assaluyeh, Bushehr province, said managing director of South Pars Gas Company (SPGC).

Ali-Akbar Shabanpour said of this amount, 174 million cubic meters of sweet gas is injected to the nationwide pipeline.

Meanwhile, 320,000 barrels of gas condensates produced in these phases are exported to different countries including Japan, China, UAE and South Korea.

The price of gas condensates equals crude oil price.

About 5,000 people currently work at the 10 phases of South Pars gas field.

Lebanon Asks Iran to Cooperate in Tech, Engineering Fields

Lebanese telecommunications minister asked Iranian companies to cooperate in his country's technical and engineering fields.

During a meeting with Iranian ambassador to Lebanon Ghazanfar Roknabadi, Charbel Nahhas also emphasized on expansion of ties with Iran in telecommunications and fiber optics.

Appreciating Iran's achievements in various economic and industrial fields, the Lebanese minister also urged for further cooperation of Iran in different projects implementing in his country.

The two sides also emphasized realization of the agreements already signed between the two countries.

At the meeting, Roknabadi delivered an invitation by Iran's information and communications technology minister to the Lebanese counterpart to visit Iran.

In the recent years, Iran and Lebanon have taken steps to enhance economic cooperation in certain sectors. The two countries' trade volume has continued to expand -- increasing from 78.4 million dollars in 2006 to 180 million dollars in 2009.

According to the 2009 figures, roughly 85 million dollars -- some 47 percent of the total - - consists of the Lebanese exports to the Islamic republic.

Representatives of Iran and Lebanon signed a memorandum of understanding in June 2010, agreeing to continue holding committee meetings to examine economic ties every four months.

Iran Stops Gasoline Purchase Orders

Iran has halted placing orders for gasoline purchase from abroad as it has begun increasing its domestic production, Oil Minister Masoud Mirkazemi says.

Mirkazemi said that Iran will soon increase its gasoline output by one million liters per day, Mehr News Agency reported.

He said Iran began gasoline production in six of its petrochemical units one month ago.

Weekly report on Iran

"We have not placed an order for the purchase of gasoline for one month. The country's current gasoline production has increased to 66.5 million liters per day from the previous 44 million liters per day," Mirkazemi added.

He underlined that the Iranian government is not concerned about a shortage of gasoline.

The minister says gasoline imports are simply to boost the country's strategic reserves.

The UN Security Council imposed a fourth round of sanctions on Iran over its nuclear program in June.

Sanctions Against Iran Could Hit UAE PC Market

After a healthy run in the second quarter, the local PC market could be in for an indifferent second half brought on by the sanctions against Iran.

"The big question mark in the minds of the retailers is the trade between UAE and Iran," said Omar Shihab, research manager for PCs and systems at IDC Middle East and Africa.

"If the UAE brings sanctions into effect, then re-exports of PCs from the UAE, which stand at around 35 per cent, are going to take a big hit."

"The extended summer season has definitely impacted the third quarter. Customers are very cautious post-crisis and lack extended credit. So retailers got aggressive on sales to clear their stocks by offering promotions."

"And with all the talks of the U.S. entering into a second recession, customers are cautious and the signs are not that good."

PC shipments in the third quarter, after a minor revision, are expected to be 1.35 million units, a gain of 10 percent compared with 1.23 million for the corresponding period last year. Their combined value would be \$1.06 billion, up from \$992.12 million last year.

Desktop shipments are expected to rise 16.51 per cent to 221,870 units from 190,428 units in the same period last year. Growth in notebook shipments would be a more marginal 7.77 per cent to 168,789 units compared to the 156,619 units in the third quarter of 2009.

Meanwhile, in the second quarter, continuing demand for portable PCs ensured a robust round of growth.

Shipments of PCs across all forms stood at 1.24 million units, more than 22 percent over the 1.01 million units in the second quarter of last year.

Value-wise, it was up 11 percent to \$944.90 million from \$848.27 million.

"The second quarter performance was a continuation of the strong first quarter with strong demand coming from home consumers coupled with the new Intel chips and Microsoft Windows 7 operating system," Shihab said.

Notebooks recorded the fastest growth, with shipments touching a 25 percent year-on-year increase to 868,995 units from 694,968 units.

"Consumers' demand for portables remained very strong, driven by an extensive product offering, while intense competition between the players maintained price points at very aggressive levels," Shihab added.

The UAE was the biggest market for notebooks with 378,548 units, an increase of 50 per cent year-on-year, followed by Qatar with 38,221 units, Saudi Arabia with 385,702, Bahrain (14,181) and Oman (12,263). Kuwait registered a negative growth of 6 per cent to total 40,080 units.

Desktops contributed around 17.67 percent of total PC sales, while notebooks made up an overwhelming 70.11 percent and the rest were accounted for by netbooks.

Desktops registered 18.62 per cent year-on-year growth to 219,073 units from 184,671 units, with a 10.83 per cent increase in market value to \$149.19 million.

In desktops, Saudi Arabia was the leader with 100,483 units and a 31 per cent gain, followed by Oman (10,281 units), Kuwait (19,411 units), and the UAE (74,195). Bahrain and Qatar turned negative with drops of 21 and 9 per cent respectively to total 3,925 and 10,778 units.

In netbooks, Bahrain was the leader with 4,630 units, registering a year-on-year growth of 49 per cent.

Oman came second with 3,912 units, and was followed by Saudi Arabia (58,726) and the UAE (66,931).

Kuwait was down 12 percent to 7,097 units, as did Qatar, down by 5 percent to 10,261 units.

Netbooks are yet to capture the popular imagination in the Persian Gulf.

Total netbook shipments in the second quarter stood at 151,557 units, a gain of 14.29 percent, though in value terms it came to less than 1 per cent to \$59.77 million (Dh219 million).

Italian Province Keen to Boost Trade Ties with Iran

Weekly report on Iran

Italy's Puglia province expressed willingness to boost economic and trade relations with Iran due to the latter's significant role in the Middle-East.

The announcement came during a visit to Bari, the provincial capital city of Puglia, by Tehran's Ambassador to Rome Seyed Mohammad Ali Hosseini.

Hosseini travelled to the city in a bid to visit Edil Levante Abitare Exhibitio.

Edil Levante Abitare is an international exhibition of materials, equipment and systems for housing Industry. The event is being organized by Fiera del Levante.

For nine days, from September 11 to 19, the trade show will showcase all the latest products for housing industry under a single roof.

Governor of Bari Carlo Schilardi told the Iranian diplomat that the Italian province is ready to expand and develop economic ties with Tehran, and proposed that a meeting be held between Iranian and Italian businessmen and industry owners.

Schilardi also described technological exchanges in agricultural, railway and road construction as the most important fields for mutual cooperation between the two sides.

The Iranian envoy, for his part, said that Iranian and Italian economies can play a complementary role for each other, and pointed out that Iran is a proper market for the Italian companies.

Hosseini also expressed Iran's preparedness to hold an exclusive exhibition of Iranian goods and products in the port city of Bari.

Puglia, also known as Apulia, is located between the Adriatic Sea, the Apennines, and the Gulf of Taranto.

There are chemical and petrochemical industries in Bari and iron and steel plants in Taranto. The capital of Puglia is Bari.

Iran, Turkey Sign 6 MoUs

Iran and Turkey signed six memoranda of understanding (MoU) on Thursday.

Iran's First Vice President Mohammad-Reza Rahimi on Iran's behalf and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Teyyip Erdogan on Turkey's behalf signed the agreements.

Reopening two new border routes including Razi-Kapipoy and Maku-Bil Oju borders, exchanging cultural issues and cooperation in customs, transportation, industries, trade and education were among the main topics of the MoUs.

Also the two sides will also seek more investments under the mutually signed protocols and will issue a joint declaration, highlighting the ways of boosting bilateral relations.

Rahimi arrived in Turkey on Wednesday for a two-day official visit and meeting with senior Turkish officials.

Tehran, Yerevan Determined to Upgrade Economic Cooperation

Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki said yesterday that the Islamic Republic of Iran and Armenia are determined to enhance level of political, economic and cultural cooperation.

Mottaki made the remarks in a joint press conference with his Armenian counterpart Eduard Nalbandian in Tehran.

He said that Iran-Armenia Joint Economic Commission has been held for several times and Tehran is scheduled to host its ninth round.

Mottaki said that the Iranian and Armenian high ranking officials regularly consult on mutual, regional and international developments.

'Iran has implemented several infrastructural projects in transport and energy sectors in Armenia.'

He said that the two sides have identical stand on global developments and that Tehran and Yerevan always back each other at international organizations.

Mottaki went on to say that Iranian nuclear program is under full supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency and no part is hidden from the UN nuclear agency.

He said that Iranian nuclear program is transparent and it is the most transparent file at the IAEA.

Much to our regret, such a transparent dossier has been geared in political games by some very specific countries who always lodge repeated allegations against Iran, he said.

IAEA in all its reports has underlined non-diversion of Iran's nuclear program from civilian path, he said.

On the IAEA proposal on fuel swap with the western suppliers to provide 20 percent fuel for Tehran medical research reactor, Mottaki said that the Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to deliver 3.5 percent enriched uranium in return for 20 percent fuel.

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The Armenian foreign minister, for his part, expressed satisfaction over his visit to Iran and said the two countries have similar stand on regional and international issues and seek to further deepen bilateral ties.

Iran and Armenia are currently involved in implementing various development projects in energy and transport sectors, he said.

The Armenian foreign minister said that he is scheduled to meet with the Iranian president and will deliver him a message from Armenian president.

Bushehr Power Plant to Produce 400 Megawatts Electricity Initially

Head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran Ali-Akbar Salehi said on Wednesday that by mid December Bushehr power plant will generate 400 megawatts electricity, 40 percent of its nominal capacity.

Salehi told IRNA that fuel will be loaded into Bushehr power plant in October.

He said the work of fuel transfer into Bushehr reactor's building started on August 21 in presence of Iran's AEOI Chief and Russia's nuclear agency chief Sergei Kiriyenko.

Salehi said that heart of the reactor has been washed now and 10 to 15 virtual fuel facilities enter and then leave heart of the reactor in order for fuel loading process test.

In case the tests prove positive, said Salehi, adding, 'we will start injecting fuel into heart of the reactor by October.'

He noted that there are two storage houses for fresh fuels as well as storage houses or pools for the spent fuels in the main building of the reactor.

He added that by early October the 60 fuel complexes will get out of the fresh fuel store houses for fuel loading at heart of the reactor.

Concurrently, he said, 60 other fuel facilities will be put in store houses of fresh fuels so that 163 fuel facilities will be re-loaded with fuel gradually in the store house.

It will take about 20 to 25 days to re-load the fuel, he said

Iran, Mauritania Discuss Bilateral Relations

Minister of Foreign Affairs Manouchehr Mottaki in a meeting with Mauritanian Minister of Rural Development Brahim Ould Mbarek described Iran-Mauritania relations as "important."

Weekly report on Iran

The meeting was held yesterday on the sidelines of the two-day first Iran-Africa Forum starting work in Tehran on September 14.

The Iranian minister called for a framework to be set up for bilateral cooperation and implementation of mutual agreements.

For his part, the Mauritanian minister pointed to the recent travel of the country's president to Tehran that opened a new chapter in the two sides' relations.

Mbarek further said his country is determined to expand cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran in various fields including economy, transportation and energy.

He also called for making use of Iranian experiences in all fields by his country.

Ahmadinejad: Iran-Sudan Ties Brotherly and Strategic

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad called Iran-Sudan relations deep, brotherly, and strategic, adding that Iran will defend rights of Sudanese nation and government everywhere.

On the sidelines of Iran-Africa Forum, President Ahmadinejad received Sudanese Foreign Minister Ahmed Ali Karti and told him that Iran condemns colonial views of hegemonic powers in Sudan and believes that former colonialists are still following the same aims of the past with claims on human rights.

He said that hegemonic system will never want to see any powerful and big country in the world, so, with different methods, they confront independent and freedom seeking nations.

The Sudanese senior diplomat, for his part, called Iran-Sudan ties excellent and added that there is expectation that the bilateral ties promote more and more and include economic and trade grounds, too.

Appreciating Iran for holding Iran-Africa Forum, the Sudanese official said that the meeting can take big steps toward increasing cooperation between Iran and African states.

Karti said that Sudan praises Iran's noticeable progress in different scientific and industrial grounds, adding that Sudan defends Iran's right on using peaceful nuclear technology and is proud that Iran is achieving new scientific goals and is resisting against west prattling.

Iran-Sri Lanka Trade Exchange Hits \$1b

Weekly report on Iran

Trade exchange between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Sri Lanka is more than one billion dollars, Commerce Minister Mehdi Ghazanfari announced yesterday.

"Iranian contractors have recently signed a dam-building agreement with the Sri Lankan side worth 400 million dollars," Ghazanfari said.

He also said Iranian companies will implement a huge project of providing electricity for 1,000 villages in Sri Lanka.

Referring to the Sri Lankan government's request for purchasing liquid gas from Iran, Ghazanfari said, "This issue will be discussed in Iran-Sri Lanka joint economic commission's meetings and in case of final agreement, Sri Lankan side would meet their need."

It is scheduled that several agreements on customs, education, researches and health will be signed in the ninth session of Iran-Sri Lanka Joint Economic Commission.

Social news

Mowlavi Foundation to Honor Iran's Nazeri

The International Rumi (Mowlavi) Foundation is set to honor Iranian vocalist Shahram Nazeri during an international congress in Konya, Turkey.

Director of the foundation and the 22nd-generation granddaughter of the Sufi poet Esin Celebi hailed Nazeri and invited him to take part in the upcoming International Mowlavi Congress.

"Maestro Nazeri has been holding concerts for four years inviting the people of the world to peace, Mowlavi's ultimate goal," Celebi told ISNA.

Known as the 'Persian Nightingale,' Nazeri has been granted the Asia Society's prestigious Lifetime Cultural Heritage Award and the 2007 French Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres for promoting traditional Persian music.

Mowlavi experts from all around the globe will participate in Konya's International Mowlavi Congress in late November 2010.

Iran is also slated to hold an international congress on the semantic relationship between the poetry of Hafez and Mowlavi.

Iranian and international experts will gather to discuss works of the two world-renowned literary figures in October and November 2010 in the cities of Shiraz and Khoy respectively.

Iran Starts Mass Production of MS Drug

A well-known Iranian company started mass production of a third Iran-made Multiple Sclerosis (MS) medication in a ceremony on Saturday.

Addressing a ceremony held to mark the launch of operation of the production line of interferon beta 1, generically known as Ziferon, Iranian Health Minister Marzieh Vahid Dastgerdi said that the move would make Iran independent of importing MS drugs.

Iran imported over 650,000 doses of interferon beta 1 annually.

The minister further underlined that the Iran-made drug is safe and as effective as its foreign rivals.

Ziferon, mainly injected subcutaneously, has antiviral and immunomodulating properties. The drug is mainly used in the management of multiple sclerosis, although its mode of action is unclear.

Iran has also introduced two other home-made MS drugs, namely Resigene (interferon beta 1a) and Cinnovex, in the last few years.

The Center for Pharmaceutical Products has already produced five biotechnological drugs, making Ziferon the sixth medication produced by the company.

Iran Exports MS Drug to Syria, Armenia

The Iranian Health Ministry announced yesterday that the country has started exporting its recently produced MS drugs to some foreign states, including Syria and Armenia.

"The Iran-made MS drug which was produced four years ago has now been approved in the international scientific circles and entered the export arena," Director-General of the Iranian Health Ministry for Medication Mohammad Reza Shanehsaz told FNA, adding that the drug is currently exported to Syria and Armenia.

Shanehsaz also announced that other countries have also demanded to import Iran-made MS drugs as well as other Iranian medications.

Due to the high quality of Iran-made medicines and their cost-effectiveness, the country will be turned into one of the most important exporters of medicines in the region, he added.

Iran introduced two home-made MS drugs, namely Resigene (interferon beta 1a) and Cinnovex, in the last few years.

Commander: Jundollah Responsible for Hostage-Taking

A senior commander of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) said on Saturday that the armed men who took six people hostage in Iran's southeastern province of Sistan and Balouchestan several days ago were remnants of the Jundollah terrorist group.

"Several armed robbers, who seemed to be the remnants of the Rigi's terrorist and criminal group (Jundollah), stopped a bus on Chabahar-Zahedan road on Thursday to extort and intimidate the public and sow discord among the people," IRGC Ground Force Commander Brigadier General Mohammad Pakpour said.

The Sunni and Shiite populated Sistan and Balouchestan province in southeastern Iran has been the scene of several terrorist attacks by the Jundollah terrorist group, headed by Abdolmalek Rigi.

As regards IRGC's role in the rescue operation, Pakpour stated that forces of the IRGC Ground Force's Qods Base freed the hostages, including five soldiers and a bank employee, after complicated intelligence operations and a successful ambush.

5 Hostages Released, 1 Martyred

Sistan-Balouchestan Prov. (IRNA) - The deputy governor of the southeastern Iranian province of Sistan-Balouchestan said here yesterday the five of six air-force soldiers taken hostage were released and one of them was martyred.

The deputy governor for the security affairs, Jalal Sayyah, told IRNA that the forces of the Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps (IRGC) did so in a successful operation.

The six-member group were kept hostage last Thursday during an ambush in the province.

During the IRGC operation, three of the thugs were killed, Sayyah said, adding that the head of that group is seemingly among the dead.

The IRGC action took place within a mopping-up operation in the southeastern region of the country, the deputy said.

Tehran Hosts Iran NGV 2010

The Third International Exhibition and Conference on CNG and Related Industries, IRAN NGV 2010, opened yesterday in Olympic Hotel's conference hall in Tehran with the participation of 120 domestic and foreign companies.

Asia Pacific Natural Gas Vehicles Association (ANGVA), International Association for Natural Gas Vehicles (IANGV), Iran's CNG Industries Associations Institute, private and state sectors companies and organizations have attended this three-day event.

Drawing a roadmap for CNG industry, representing recent technical and technological achievements in CNG industry, development of the infrastructures for CNG consumption in transportation sector, technical and safety standards in CNG industry, Iran and global CNG market and expansion of private sector's investment in this industry are among the main topics to be discussed in the conference.

Meanwhile a specialized CNG exhibition is being held on the sidelines of the conference in order to pave the ground for more interaction among the entrepreneurs, producers and suppliers of the CNG devices and equipment.

Turkey, South Korea, Malaysia, China, Argentina, Brazil, Pakistan, India and Germany are among the countries attending the event.

The conference and the related exhibition are organized by the ministries of petroleum, industries and mines, defense, fuel and transportation management headquarters, car makers and some domestic and foreign associations.

According to the statistics given by International Association for Natural Gas Vehicles (IANGV), there are currently about 10 million natural gas vehicles traveling in the world, showing that the use of natural gas in transportation sector has globally increased.

At present, Iran by investing more than 3 billion dollars is considered as one of the pioneer countries in the field of natural gas vehicles. More than 6.3 million cubic meters of natural gas are consumed by the country's vehicles per day.

Burning Shows Global Inclination for Qoran

A senior lawmaker, Mohammad Ghafouri-Rad, said here yesterday that the reason behind burning Qoran is due to an increase inclination towards Qoran.

“The global imperialism is fearful of an increased inclination towards Qoran and knows that the Islamic thought which is inspired from the Qoran will expand justice across the globe. That is what the global imperialism is afraid of,” he was quoted by Fars as saying.

“The filthy act of some people in America and its government stillness indicates America's weakness which stupidly tries to stand before a global ideology.” He said.

He also said “today the intellectuals protest against the burning of even a problematic novel” and added “their act will produce a reverse result as the Qoran has been one of the best selling in America during the past 10 years. This has clear message regarding the people inclination towards the source of truth.”

9 Drug Rings Smashed

Iranian anti-drug police squads have clamped down on 9 major drug rings and busted their members in Iran's northern province of Ardabil in recent months, a provincial police chief announced yesterday.

Weekly report on Iran

"During the first five months of the current (Iranian) year (started on March 21) nine rings involved in drug procurement, trafficking and dealing activities have been disbanded," Commander of Ardebil's Anti-Drug Police Yousef Bandalizadeh told FNA.

The commander stated that the police have also discovered and seized 180 kg of different types of narcotics during the same period.

According to Bandalizadeh, the seizures included 75 kg of opium, 80 kg of heroin and crack (condensed heroin) and 25 kg of hashish.

The commander further announced that during the said period, his forces have arrested 1,800 drug dealers and handed them over to the judiciary officials.

Iran Allocates \$100m More Aid to Pakistan

Iran has allocated an extra \$100 million aid to Pakistan, a neighboring country which has suffered 40 to 50 billion dollar in flood damages.

Following the Supreme Leader's call on Friday for an immediate humanitarian assistance to Pakistan by Muslim countries, the government decided to allocate that sum of money to the flood-hit country, First Vice President Mohammad-Reza Rahimi told reporters.

Ayatollah Khamenei has described the flood disaster in Pakistan as the "most urgent" issue of the Islamic world.

Rahimi added that the government has assigned all executive bodies to contribute aid to the flood-ridden country.

According to Iranian Interior Minister Mostafa Mohammad- Najjar, so far, Iran has dispatched 8 cargoes, weighting 500 tons altogether, to Pakistan and the volume will soon reach 1,000 tons.

The latest official figures show the flooding, which is the worst-ever natural disaster to hit Pakistan, has affected some 21 million people and killed over 1,760 others.