

**IRANIAN DOMESTIC MEDIA MONITORING REPORT
AUGUST 29th-SEPTEMBER 5th
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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Privately-owned media sources affiliated with the conservative regime in Iran are reporting on the hate-filled rhetoric conservative political officials are using to describe the political reformists.
- The open political space for participatory media has notably narrowed this week as two reformist papers were banned.
- Tensions between the Free Life Party of Kurdistan (PJAK) and the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps resulted in a violent raid in North-Western Iran led by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, which left many PJAK members dead. The Kurdish Regional Government announced that it would ask PJAK to leave Iran in order to start ceasefire talks between the Kurdish Regional Government and the IRGC.

HATE PROPAGANDA

Mehr News Agency: Privately-owned, conservative news agency, affiliated with Islamic Propagation Organization, in English, September 5, 2011, Tehran

- Assembly of Experts Chairman Ayatollah Mohammad Reza Mahdavi-Kani accused “the enemy” (i.e. the reformist camp) of intentionally inciting conflict among senior conservative officials.
- Ayatollah Mohammad Reza Mahdavi-Kani urged conservative officials to remain united and form alliances in order to thwart “the enemy’s attempts” at fuelling conflict among conservatives, especially in the lead up to the parliamentary elections scheduled for March 2012.

Fars News Agency: Privately-owned, conservative news agency affiliated with the Revolutionary Guards, in Persian, September 5, 2011, Tehran

- Deputy Minister of Intelligence for Security Affairs Razavi has said that both the domestic and international “enemies” of the Islamic Republic of Iran who have tried to overthrow the regime have been monitored and deterred by the efforts of the security forces, the Ministry of Intelligence, the Judiciary, the police, and the National Security Council.
- The Deputy Minister specifically referred to the protests following the 2009 election. He noted, “these movements were aimed at dealing a blow and overthrowing the Islamic state.”

PRESS FREEDOM

Mehr News Agency: Privately-owned, conservative news agency affiliated with Islamic Propagation Organization, in Persian, September 5, 2011, Tehran

- The Press Supervisory Board banned the reformist weekly, *Shahrvand-e Emruz* for violating Iran's Press Law Article Six, which forbids print media to publish anything that may violate Islamic principles, codes, and public rights.
- The issue has been referred to court.

Islamic Republic News Agency: State-owned, in English, September 5, 2011, Tehran

- The Public Relations of Tehran General and Revolutionary Courts Judiciary Body announced on September 5, 2011 that *Ruzegar* daily will be banned for a period of two months
- The charges issued by the Tehran General and Revolutionary Courts Prosecutor against the newspaper include "propagation against the system" and "publication of country's secret issues," both of which are considered criminal acts according to the Islamic Republic of Iran Media Law.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Mehr News Agency: Privately-owned, conservative news agency, affiliated with the Islamic Propagation Organisation, in Persian, September 5, 2011, Tehran

- Judiciary spokesman Gholamhoseyn Mohseni-Ezhe'i announced that prisoners who were granted clemency by Supreme Leader Ayatollah Khamenei have repented and signed written commitments not to engage in illegal political activities.
- The majority of these prisoners were imprisoned for participating in the 2009 post-election protests.
- Mohseni-Ezhe'i issued a warning against any individuals planning to "create a tense situation" in the lead up to the parliamentary election, noting that the Judiciary will take serious action against offenders.

Mehr News Agency: Privately-owned, conservative news agency, affiliated with the Islamic Propagation Organisation, in Persian, September 5, 2011, Tehran

- Mehdi Karrubi and Mirhoseyn Musavi, leaders of the Iranian opposition movement, have been under house arrest for the past seven months.
- The spokesman for the Judiciary, Gholam Hoseyn Mohseni-Ezhe'i said at a press conference on September 5th that it was advisable for "certain individuals to be limited," suggesting that for the time being, it is advisable for those associated with the opposition to limit their political and social activities.

Islamic Republic of Iran News Network: State-owned T.V. news channel, in Persian, September 5, 2011, Tehran

- 30 members of the PJAK (Free Life Party of Kurdistan) Kurdish rebel group were killed and 40 wounded by the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) in West Azarbayjan Province
- IRGC announced that such operations will continue "until the country is totally free from counter-revolutions, criminals, and terrorists."

Fars News Agency: Privately-owned, conservative news agency affiliated with the Revolutionary Guards, in Persian, September 5, 2011, Tehran

- The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps has announced that it rejects the PJAK's ceasefire offer.
- Colonel Hamid Ahmadi, spokesperson for the IRGC, noted that the IRGC would talk to the Kurdish authorities only if the PJAK leaves Iran.
- The Kurdish Regional Government announced that the PJAK forces will leave Iran. The IRGC has yet to respond to this overture.

Hrana: Human Rights website, in Persian
September 4, 2011, Tehran

- Several political activists were arrested in North-Western Iran by intelligence forces on August 31st, 2011.
- Dozens of protestors were arrested on September 3rd in Tabriz and Orumiyeh.
- Security and judiciary officials have not commented on the arrests.
- Two groups of people detained during last week's protests, numbering 70 and 120, respectively, have been released from Orumiyeh's central prison, and from the Intelligence Ministry's and Law Enforcement Force's detention centres.

OTHER

Islamic Republic of Iran News Network: State-owned T.V. news channel, in Persian, September 4th 2011, Tehran

- The first international conference on the "Islamic Awakening" will be held in Tehran from September 17th to 18th, bringing together over 700 professionals, from Iran and abroad, to discuss the ideas behind the "Islamic Awakening" and its consequences on the region.

News-Story Analysis: State-owned media has started advertising the "Islamic Awakening" conference, scheduled for the beginning of September. This event is perhaps an attempt by the regime to reframe the spread of revolutions against authoritarian governments in the Arab world as an Islamic revolution. This event is significant considering the upcoming parliamentary elections in March 2012; the current regime is still anxious over the 2009 post-election protests led by the reformist Green Movement. The protestors demonstrated against what they believed to be a fraudulent election that brought President Ahmadinejad to power again. By couching the current upheaval in the region as an "Islamic Awakening," the regime may be trying to position Iran as a state that has already gone through the essential revolution and become the ideal Islamic state and thus in no need of future domestic political turmoil.