

**IRANIAN DOMESTIC MEDIA MONITORING REPORT
SEPTEMBER 5th-SEPTEMBER 12th
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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- Newspapers and blogs that publish articles criticizing the regime continue to be under threat.
- Reformists are becoming more openly critical of the hate-charged rhetoric the conservatives have used to define the reformists as “enemies.”
- Iran has enhanced its strategic depth by advancing its nuclear program with assistance from Russia.



Conservative Power: Ayatollah Khamenei (left) and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.
Source: <http://www.mizozo.com/world/05/2011/12/ahmadinejad-too-liberal-for-ayatollahs.html>

PRESS FREEDOM

Iranian Labour News Agency (ILNA): part of the Workers’ House Labour Union, associated with the reformists, in Persian, September 12, Kermanshah

- Hojjat-ol-Eslam Mohammad Aftabi, Director-General of the Islamic Culture and Guidance Ministry Department in Kermanshah has censured the province’s new blogs for publishing blasphemous accusations against government officials.
- The Director-General suggested that the blogs are neither being constructively critical nor protecting Muslim honour, but that rather these blogs are hurting Kermanshah’s image.
- Hojjat-ol-Eslam Mohammad Aftabi urged Iranians not to believe anything that the blogs report.

Mardom-Salari: Privately-owned, associated with the reformist camp, in Persian, September 11, 2011, Tehran

- Shahrvan-e Emruz, an Iranian newspaper that was banned last week, was published and circulated on September 10, 2011.
- State authorities collected all circulated copies of the newspapers.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Fars News Agency: Privately-owned, conservative news agency affiliated with the Revolutionary Guards, in Persian, September 12, 2011, Tehran

- A funeral was held for Rear Admiral Seyyed Hoseyn Mula'i, a commander of the Iranian navy forces.
- This report repeatedly calls Hoseyn Mula'i a "martyr" because he was killed on a mission in the Sistan-Baluchestan Province. He was buried in the martyrs' cemetery in northern Iran beside the Shrine of Mohammad.
- The report identifies the people who killed the officer as "enemies of the system."

News Story Analysis

This article's galvanizing tone highlights the honour bestowed upon anyone who becomes a martyr, stating that Admiral Mula'i "tasted the sweet nectar of martyrdom during a clash." The use of the word martyr is significant due to the fact that those who supposedly murdered this individual are identified as "enemies" and thus the polar opposite of the martyr's unselfish goodness. Dividing people into martyrs and enemies in the media nurtures societal divisions.

Islamic Republic of Iran News Network: State-owned T.V. news channel, in Persian, September 11th, 2011, Tehran

- Three members of the Kurdish Komala (Kurdish political party) were killed in clashes with Iranian intelligence officers.
- Iranian Intelligence Minister Hojjat ol-Eslam Heydar Moslehi defined the Kurdish Komala as a terrorist group interested in "harming the Islamic Revolution."

HATE PROPAGANDA

Iranian Labour News (ILNA): part of the Workers' House Labour Union, associated with the reformists, in Persian, September 12 2011, Tehran

- In an interview with ILNA, MP Seyyed Reza Akrami criticized the tone and stances adopted by Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati, secretary of the Guardian Council, regarding the upcoming parliamentary elections.
- Akrami criticized the Ayatollah for using the Tehran Friday prayers as an opportunity to inappropriately stress "the country's old and new wounds and intentionally or unintentionally block people's participation" in the elections. He added, "The Guardian Council must act on the basis of the law and not create ballyhoo six months before the elections and create a harmful atmosphere...we must not use discord-creating literature at an important venue such as the Tehran Friday prayers."

- He also criticized the relationship between the current conservative government and the clerics.

Iranian Labour News (ILNA): part of the Workers' House Labour Union, associated with the reformists, in Persian, September 11, 2011, Tehran

- Reformist politician Rasul Montajabnia criticized the current government for branding the reformist camp as “the opposition” because such rhetoric suggests that the reformists are not a valid part of the regime.
- Montajabnia warned that if the minimum conditions of the reformists for participating in the elections are not met, the reformists “will opt to remain silent.”



2009 post-election protests. Source: <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/top-stories/2009/06/16/how-the-election-was-fixed-115875-21444505/>

Keyhan-Editorial: Conservative newspaper linked with the Supreme Leader, in Persian, September 11, 2011, Tehran

- Author Mehdi Mohammadi suggests that the “enemies” (i.e. the reformist camp) are testing the political atmosphere in Iran to determine whether it can rally the kind of political support it had during the 2009 post-election protests.

OTHER

Mardomak: in Persian, September 12, 2011, Tehran

- Mahmud Ahmadinezhad rebuked former British Prime Minister Tony Blair's call for "regime change" in Iran.
- In an interview with *The Times* Ahmadinezhad said, "Whether I exist or not, you take your dreams to the grave and you are done and all going to hell."
- At a music festival Ahmadinezhad described Britain as "evil."

Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran: in Uzbek, September 11, 2011

- The head of the Palestinian Islamic Council in Lebanon has said that the Islamic Revolution in Iran of 1979 inspired some of the Islamic awakenings across the Arab world.

Check out last week's News Story Analysis on the use of the term "Islamic Awakening" to describe the revolutions occurring across the Middle East.

News Story Analysis

This week, the Iranian media fervently covered the inauguration of the Bushehr nuclear plant in Iran, which was developed with Russian assistance. The deepening partnership between Iran and Russia enhances Iran's strategic depth in the region and on an international level; if Western governments want to thwart the development of a more advanced Iranian nuclear program, they will have to not only deal with Iran but increasingly, Western governments will have to negotiate with Russia.