

IRANIAN DOMESTIC MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

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DOMESTIC HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS

(State-facilitated media Source: Fars News Agency website, Tehran, in Persian 0615 GMT, 17 July 2011)

- According to Fars news agency, the head of the presidential office, Esfandiyar Rahim-Masha'i, Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance Seyyed Mohammad Hoseyni and the executive director of the Islamic Republic News Agency [IRNA], Ali Akbar Javanfekr, who are members of the board of trustees at the Iran cultural and press enterprise, fired the executive director of the enterprise and director of Iran newspaper, Kaveh Eshtehardi, and all seven members of the board of directors, which also included four government members, on 22 Farvardin [11 April].
- After this dismissal was announced in a message to Eshtehardi, his name as director was deleted from the 25 Farvardin 1390 [15 April 2011] edition of the newspaper and all affairs were handed over to Javanfekr, the acting director of the enterprise.
- Article 14 of the press law clearly says that if the director passes away, resigns, the charter holder is obliged to introduce another person, who has the necessary qualification, to the Islamic Guidance Ministry in at least three months, otherwise, "the publication of the newspaper will be prevented".
- According to this law, the publication of Iran newspaper is illegal from yesterday 25 Tir (three months after the deletion of the name of its director) and its continuation is an offence. However, the press supervisory body, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, the judiciary force and other institutions have not expressed their views on this issue.

JOURNALISTIC FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

(State-facilitated media source: ISNA website, Tehran, in Persian 0427 GMT, 17 July 2011)

- In response to the news reports concerning First Vice-President [Mohammad-Reza Rahimi], the Centre of Communication, Information and Publicity of [Iran] Presidents Office has issued a denial and called upon owners of those media outlets that criticize and oppose the government to observe divine virtues and ethical and professional values.
- According ISNA, the statement says: "Unfortunately, some of the media outlets and news websites have been publishing false news despite the Supreme Leader's instructions to avoid controversies in the country's public domain; this time, they have published yet another false news regarding first vice-president. The Centre for Communication, Information and Publicity of President's office rejects the news report and calls upon those media outlets, which oppose and criticize the government, to observe divine virtues and ethical and professional values and it reserves the rights to pursue the issue legally."

- The statement further elaborates: "Some of the media outlets have been taking advantage of the government's patience and insist on leveling false accusations against the government officials by publishing shallow and unworthy news by using ambiguous sources like 'it is being said', 'an informed source'; apparently their objective in publishing such reports is only to slow down the pace of government's services, but such moves do not affect process of serving the people and implementation of justice and progress in the country."

(State-facilitated media source: Fars News Agency website, Tehran, in Persian 1923 GMT, 15 July 2011)

- Chief of General Command Headquarters of the Armed Forces Maj-Gen Dr Seyyed Hasan Firuzabadi has said that modern media can pave the grounds and can promote the Mahdaviyat culture, Fars reported.
- Speaking at the closing ceremony of seventh International Conference on Doctrine of Mahdaviyat (belief in reappearance of 12th Shi'i Imam, Mahdi), in Tehran on 15 July, Firuzabadi said: "Today the West claims that the technology that is rooted in the West, can only promote the Western culture but this is not the case and modern media technology can be used for correct transfer of Islamic and religious culture."
- He added: "All divine religions and philosophies are waiting for a savior who can save humanity from oppression and tyranny and help them reach freedom, justice and God."
- He further said: "Every move or resistance, which takes place in any part of the world, against oppression and tyranny, injustice and arrogance, is a movement towards the belief of the savior."

(State-facilitated media Source: Mehr news agency, Tehran, in Persian 0945 GMT, 14 July 2011)

- An Iranian cleric, Mohsen Gharavian, alleged that "a deviant current" tries to undermine the guardianship of the supreme jurisconsult, Mehr reported on 14 July.
- In an interview with Mehr, Hojjat ol-Eslam Gharavian who is a lecturer at Qom's Theological Seminary said: "A deviant current tries to undermine the guardianship of the supreme jurisconsult [Ayatollah Ali Khamene'i's] and the concept of the sources of emulation."
- The conservative cleric touched on the elements that harm "the culture of belief in the return of the Imam of the Age [Imam Mahdi, the 12th Shi'i Imam]" and said: "One of these elements is the deviant current that tries to undermine the concept of the guardianship of the supreme jurisconsult."
- Gharavian continued: "Claiming that people can communicate with the Imam of the Age, the deviant current is trying to cut off the ties between the people and the clerics, the guardianship of the supreme jurisconsult, and the concept of the sources of emulation. This idea is extremely harmful to people, and the young generation specifically."

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS

(State-facilitated media Source: Islamic Republic News Agency, Tehran, in Persian 0445 GMT, 16 July 2011)

- A high-ranking Iranian judicial official has said that the appointment of the UN Human Rights Rapporteur for Iran (Ahmed Shaheed) is "illegal", the Islamic Republic News Agency reported on 16 July.
- In an interview with IRNA, the chairman of the Judiciary's Human Rights HQ, Mohammad Javad Larijani, considered such appointment "a unilateral action, without any legal basis and of no logical sense".
- Larijani said: "If they want to send Human Rights Rapporteur to Iran, they must take a similar measure for other countries."
- He then described the action "illegal" and added: "The Islamic Republic has no problem with the specific person who has been appointed as the Human Rights Rapporteur for Iran; however, the appointment of a rights rapporteur is not acceptable and we will not accept it."
- "Those countries, that claim a rights rapporteur should visit Iran, must first allow a rights rapporteur to visit the Guantanamo and Abu Ghraib prisons, as well as the prisons of the Zionist regime; Iran would then willingly welcome them [human rights rapporteurs]."

(State-facilitated media Source: Fars News Agency website, Tehran, in Persian 1131 GMT, 15 July 2011)

- An Iranian military official has accused opposition leaders of cooperating with foreign powers and Israel, warning that the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) will "cut off any hand that raises a revolt against the revolution".
- Speaking in an interview with Fars news agency, Gen Seyyed Mas'ud Jazayeri, deputy chief of staff of all armed forces for culture and defence propaganda, praised the Guards Corps' contribution to the country's security and defence, military supplies, production and scientific progress, saying that the IRGC will continue to defend the great values of the revolution.
- "The Guards Corps and Basij are regarded as the investment and soft power of the Islamic Revolution, and therefore, it is not easy to find a real reason for hostility against the Guards Corps," Fars quoted him as saying.