

IRANIAN DOMESTIC MEDIA MONITORING REPORT

18 – 23 JULY 2011

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DOMESTIC HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS

(Privately-Facilitated Media Source: Press TV website, Tehran, in English 1825 GMT, 23 July 2011)

- Iran has identified and arrested one of the high-profile figures actively engaged in illegal foreign currency transactions in the Persian Gulf region, reports say. The suspect, who had strong links with the so-called "deviant current," had infiltrated the country's Central Bank under the pretence of exchanging state-provided currency in the Persian Gulf region, Fars New Agency reported.
- He had allegedly bribed some of the officials in charge of regulating Iran's currency market in a bid to obtain massive sums of money, which resulted in serious fluctuations in the country's financial market. "H.M.K" was expelled from the CBI after his real intentions were revealed.

(Privately-Facilitated Media Source: ISNA website, Tehran, in Persian 0534 GMT, 23 July 2011)

- Iran's Deputy Commander of the Police forces General Amad Reza Radan has said that "the security situation of the country is not critical".
- In an interview with the Iranian Students News Agency, ISNA, Radan commented on the recent cases of violence in the country and said: "The recent events, including the incident of Khomeynishar [where a group of men reportedly attacked a family party and raped women] are sad. Given the firmness of the judicial system and the fact that the perpetrators have been arrested, people will soon see that the perpetrators will be duly punished."
- He alleged that: "There has been no increase in the number of violent offences in recent years and there has been a decrease in the number of certain offences including hostage taking. This indicates that both the judiciary and the police have done their job quite well."

(Privately-Facilitated Media Source: Mehr news agency, Tehran, in Persian 0815 GMT, 22 July 2011)

- Ayatollah Makarem-Shirazi, a Shi'i source of emulation, has harshly criticized juridical bodies for their inefficiency in dealing with criminals and demanded that judiciary officials perform their activities based on methods of Amir al-Mo'menin [First Shi'i imam], Mehr News Agency reported on 22 July.
- "The main problem of the Judiciary is that it follows the methods of the Western pernicious judiciary system," Ayatollah Makarem-Shirazi said, addressing a gathering of Muslims in Qods Razavi on 21 July. "With such a mechanism, we can never establish safety in the country and deal with criminals and hooligans, especially as their activities are organized by enemies," Ayatollah Makarem-Shirazi added.

(Privately-Facilitated Media Source: Mehr news agency, Tehran, in English 1630 GMT, 19 July 2011)

- Asadollah Badamchian has said that certain close allies of President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad are trying to eliminate the Islamic Coalition Party from the country's political scene. On the parliamentary election in March 2012, the deputy head of the Islamic Coalition Party said that the reformists are preparing themselves to take part in election campaigns and seeking to form an alliance with deviationists.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

(Privately-Facilitated Media Source: Keyhan website, Tehran, in Persian 21 July 2011)

- Information obtained by Keyhan said that the Managing-Director of Fars news agency Hamidreza Moqaddam-Far will leave his position for Seyyed Nezamodin Musavi. Speculations about Moqaddam-Far suggest that he will either be posted at the IRGC [Islamic Revolution Guard Corps] cultural department and assume the responsibilities of this office or become a candidate in the forthcoming Majlis election in either from Tehran or Kashan constituencies. During his term as the manager at Fars news agency, Moqaddam-Far initiated widespread changes in this news agency and elevated its status within the field of media in terms of quantity and quality.
- Seyyed Nezamodin Musavi, who is currently the Javan newspaper's managing-director, will be appointed as the new managing-director of Fars news agency in a few days time.

(Privately-Facilitated Media Source: Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty website, Washington, D.C., in English 20 July 2011)

- A prominent Iranian journalist has been ordered to report to Tehran's Evin prison to serve a sentence handed down to him last year by Tehran's Revolutionary Court, RFE/RL's Radio Farda reports.
- In December, Mashallah Shamsolvaezin was sentenced to 16 months in prison on charges including "spreading propaganda against the Islamic republic regime" and insulting President Mahmud Ahmadinezhad.
- Shamsolvaezin, the spokesman for the Committee to Defend Press Freedom, told RFE/RL on July 19 he had been given three days to appear at the prosecutor's office at Evin prison.
- This is the fifth time Shamsolvaezin, who is also the deputy head of the Iranian Journalists Association, has been sentenced for his professional activities.
- He was detained in December 2009 during the post-presidential-election crackdown and released on bail in February 2010.

(Privately-Facilitated Media Source: Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran Network 1, Tehran, in Persian 1726 GMT, 20 Jul 2011)

- Iranian leader Ayatollah Ali Khamene'i has said that some books are harmful and should not be made available to the public. Addressing a gathering of librarians and officials in charge of cultural institutes in Tehran on 20 July, Khamene'i said: "Some books are harmful. Those who are in charge of the book sector cannot rely on the idea that we will leave them free to choose and let any harmful books come into the reading market, in the same manner that the relevant officials do not let toxic and dangerous medicines and drugs become available to everyone easily and without any conditions."

(Privately-Facilitated Media Source: Iranian Labour News Agency (ILNA), Tehran, in Persian 1504 GMT, 20 July 2011)

- The Public Relations and Press and Information Department of Iran's Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance urged local journalists to avoid communicating with "spiteful" news networks, ILNA reported on 20 July.
- The department issued a statement condemning the "media war" being conducted by the West against Iran and called on local journalists and news agencies to avoid communicating with and assisting media networks linked to "hegemonic powers".

- The statement says: "Taking into consideration the inappropriate modus operandi and incorrect positions adopted by hostile networks like BBC Persian and VOA [Voice of America] and their coverage of false news and publication of incorrect analyses on Iran's development aimed at distorting reality in Iran and damaging Iran's Islamic system, it would be appropriate for local journalists and news agencies to strictly avoid having any communication with or [giving] interviews to the above mentioned networks".

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS

(Privately-Facilitated Media Source: Press TV website, Tehran, in English 1525 GMT, 22 July 2011)

- An Iranian lawmaker has criticized certain Arab countries and international organizations for their silence towards the Israeli crimes committed against Palestinians.
- Reza Akrami expressed astonishment over the indifference of certain Arab governments towards the inhumane behavior of the Israeli regime in intercepting the Gaza-bound Freedom Flotilla II carrying food and medical supplies for Gazans.
- "Although the Muslim countries of the region are well-aware that Freedom Flotilla II was carrying food and medical supplies for Gazans, what is the reason for their silence vis- -vis inhumane behavior of the Israeli regime," the lawmaker added.
- Recalling the defeat of Israel in the 33-day war against Lebanon's Hezbollah in 2006 (July 12-August 14), Akrami noted that the "Zionists" are being weakened day by day.
- "Lebanon's Hezbollah movement showed that the Zionist regime of Israel is powerless and it is heading towards its destruction," he added.

(Privately-Facilitated Media Source: Mehr news agency, Tehran, in Persian 1006 GMT, 22 July 2011)

- Ayatollah Seyyed Ahmad Khatami, a member of the Assembly of Experts and this week's Friday prayer leader, during the Friday prayer sermons said: "Murder has become an institutionalized norm for people in Britain", Mehr reported.
- Talking about the phone hacking scandal in the UK and the death of the scandal's whistleblower, Khatami said: "It seems that murder has become an institutionalized norm for British people". He then added: "The recent British scandal with regard to phone hacking has shown that they [the UK] only boast about citizens' rights; the strange thing is the death of the whistleblower."
- He noted: "These [incidents] are nails in the coffin of Western Liberal Democracy, which [shows] that the West neither respects people's rights nor do they respect their own citizens."

(Privately-Facilitated Media Source: Tabnak news website, in Persian 0421 GMT, 21 July 2011)

- Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Ramin Mehmanparast has said that sending a special human rights reporter to Iran is a "political and illegal move", Tabnak reported.
- He confirmed that "Iran will not allow entry of this reporter under any conditions."
- In an interview with the Young Journalists Club, Mehmanparast said: "Unfortunately, the issue of human rights has become a political puppet for certain Western countries, which themselves have serious problems related to human right and have been accused many a times of human rights violations."
- He further said: "Sending of a special human rights reporter to Iran is aimed at putting political pressure on the Iranian nation but the Islamic Republic will defend and support the rights of its nation with all its might and power."