



### >> Gazans Protest

Hundreds of Palestinian women and children demonstrated in Gaza on Sunday, calling for an end to the blockade of the besieged territory.



### >> Police Chief Outlines Priorities

Nurturing the sense of security, helping build cultural values and spreading public awareness are among the priorities of the law enforcement forces this year, Iran's police chief said Sunday. See Page 10

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# IRAN DAILY



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## IAEA Visit Routine Affair



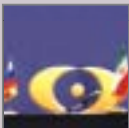
Iran on Sunday played down the return visit of inspectors from the UN nuclear watchdog to Tehran and said that the talks would

only be within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency and Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In a press briefing in Tehran, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Mohammad Ali Hosseini rejected...

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## Russian Security Adviser Expected



Russian National Security Adviser Valentin Sobolov, heading a delegation, is scheduled to arrive in Tehran on

Sunday for talks with Iranian officials. Sobolov is expected to meet on Monday with his Iranian counterpart Saeed Jalili and other high-ranking officials, ISNA reported.

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## North Sea Oil Pipeline Closed



A major North Sea pipeline supplying around 40 percent of Britain's oil and gas shut down Sunday as workers at a key oil refinery began a two-day

strike, energy giant BP announced.

The walkout began at 6:00am at the Grangemouth refinery, west of Edinburgh, as a convoy of tankers headed from Europe to keep Scotland moving throughout the industrial action, AFP reported.

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## Olympic Basketball Groups Selected



Lots were drawn in Beijing to determine the preliminary groupings for Olympic basketball tournament. Iran, Lithuania, Argentina, Russia,

Australia, and one qualifier to be determined in Greece from the Olympic qualifying tournament were drawn in Group A while China, Angola, Spain, USA, and two qualifiers from Olympic qualifying tournaments were selected to play in Group B.

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# Ahmadinejad Begins Regional Tour



President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad will visit Pakistan Monday morning on the first leg of his three-nation regional tour that would later take him to Sri Lanka and India.

Ahmadinejad would hold separate talks with his Pakistani counterpart Pervez Musharraf and the country's Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani, IRNA reported.

The president would leave Islamabad for Colombo on the second leg of his regional tour to discuss promotion of bilateral and regional ties, as well as cooperation with Sri Lankan officials.

During the visit to Colombo, several documents are expected to be signed by Iranian and Sri Lankan officials for promoting bilateral cooperation.

The Iranian president is also expected to inspect a number of joint ventures carried out by the experts of the two countries.

On the last leg of his three-nation tour, the president would arrive in New Delhi, India, on Tuesday afternoon.

During his daylong visit to India, President Ahmadinejad is expected to meet Indian counterpart Pratibha Patil and the country's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

Ahmadinejad's visits to India and Pakistan will also include talks on issues, including longstanding plans for a pipeline to supply Iranian gas to the two Asian states.

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## Perspective

### Building Asian Bonds

By Mohammad Nouri

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's visit to the subcontinent is yet another indication of Tehran's new and changing vision toward the strategic Asian region.

The visit can and should be seen in line with his foreign policy direction including the goal of cementing ties with the East and boost cooperation via regional treaties and organizations such as the Non-Aligned Movement.

Ahmadinejad will exchange views on a variety of topics during his regional tour of Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.

The long-delayed gas pipeline project which will transfer Iran's gas to India via Pakistan and joint investments in energy sectors, in particular the civilian use of nuclear energy will top his itinerary in the three neighboring capitals.

From the political prism the presidential visit will definitely have implications, especially in light of the fact that the US has done all it can to harm historically cordial ties between Iran and India.

Not surprisingly Ahmadinejad's talks in New Delhi and Islamabad at such a sensitive juncture have attracted a whole lot of attention among western governments and analysts. The interest and possibly concern can be understood on the premise that leaders of the three countries will discuss and decide on issues that will have a strong bearing on the economic and geopolitical future of one of the most sensitive parts of the world.

For instance, if the energy and other joint projects between Iran, Pakistan and India are implemented the field will be cleared for fundamental expansion in the key economic areas in the interest of the three nations and the region.

One proposed project to export natural gas to India and Pakistan alone is expected to cost upwards of seven billion dollars.



## Karzai Survives Assassination Bid

Automatic gunfire broke Saturday out at a ceremony marking the defeat of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, forcing dignitaries including Afghanistan's president to take cover.

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## Iraqi Tribunal to Try Tareq Aziz

Tareq Aziz, former deputy premier and the international face of the Iraqi Baathist regime under executed dictator Saddam, enters the dock on Tuesday over his alleged role in the execution of 42 Baghdad merchants in 1992.

Aziz and seven other henchmen of the deposed and hanged dictator, including "Chemical" Ali Hasan Al-Majid, are accused of executing the merchants after blaming them for hiking food prices when Iraq was under UN sanctions, Alalam.ir reported.

Iraqi prosecutors say the victims were arrested in Baghdad's wholesale markets and executed after a speedy trial in 1992.

They also claim that the former regime seized their money and property. The latest trial is the fourth to be conducted by the Iraqi High Tribunal (IHT) which was established to try former Saddam regime officials.

Aziz and Majid, who is already on death row after being convicted of genocide for overseeing the killings of Kurdish villagers in 1988, are the two most high-profile defendants in the new trial.

The other six are Watban Ibrahim Al-Hassan, half-brother of Saddam and former interior minister; Sabawi Ibrahim Al-Hassan, chief of public security from 1991 to 1995; Mizban Khudier Hadi, a member of the former Revolutionary Command Council; Saddam's secretary Abid Hamid Mahmud; Ahmed Hussein Khudier, a former finance minister; and ex-governor of the central bank Essam Rasheed Khuwaish.

The trial of Aziz, who surrendered to US troops in April 2003, will be presided over by Kurdish judge Rauf Rasheed Abdel Rahman, who sentenced Saddam to death in 2006 for his role in the killing of 148 Shiites in the town of Dujail after an assassination attempt against him in 1982.

Saddam was hanged on December 30, 2006. His cohorts Taha Yassin Ramadan, Barzan Ibrahim Al-Tikriti and Awad Ahmed al-Bandar met the same fate after being convicted for the Dujail killings.

Majid and two other former regime officials are on death row for the Kurdish killings during the so-called Anfal campaign in the final year of the eight-year Iraq-Iran war.

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