

Persian Press Watch

Cooperation

RESALAT: Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei recently urged officials to cooperate and focus on the development track. This followed media reports in the past few days indicating differences of opinion among high-ranking officials belonging to the right-wing party. Differences between President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Majlis Speaker Gholamali Haddad Adel on the notification of three laws were described by the public as a row that contrasts with the people's interests. The executive and legislative branches of power are expected to help resolve the people's problems. Discussing differences among the officialdom in the media has neither political nor moral outcome. Hence, it's better to keep them out of the media spotlight. As the leader reiterated in his meeting with exemplary workers last Wednesday, officials should uphold cooperation in the national interest.

Proposals

DONYA-YE EQTESAD: The newly-appointed caretaker of the Economy Ministry has proposed three solutions to financial problems and overpricing. Hossein Samsami said the new package of policies proposed by the Central Bank of Iran should be supported. Secondly, efforts should be concentrated on implementing policies concerning Article 44 of the constitution, which underlines privatizing key economic entities affiliated to the government. And thirdly, the lending rates of banks should be determined on the basis of the inflation rate. These statements are based on expert studies and acceptable from the economic viewpoint. However, implementing such policies requires a great deal of effort, cooperation and strong determination. The solutions proposed by Samsami are, in fact, too late and imply locking the stable door after the horse has bolted.

Consolidating Power

IRAN: The eighth round of parliament elections finally ended with the runoff held on Friday. Similar to the first round, conservatives won the majority and further consolidated their influence in the next legislature. The right wing which is loyal to the principles of the 1979 Islamic Revolution was the big winner in the race for the 290-seat chamber with nearly 70 percent of the votes. The media should be commended for their role in encouraging the high voter turnout in the two rounds. However, sections of the media affiliated to the leftists fared poorly because they got involved in a negative campaign against the government of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad—a move seen as "political charlatanism". Apart from domestic media, some foreign media also launched a campaign against the government by publicizing a doctored report on some "confrontation" between US navy ships and Iranian boats in the Persian Gulf. Tehran strongly rejected any such incident.



IAEA Visit Routine Affair



Compiled by Davood Baqeri

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 the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

In a press briefing in Tehran, Foreign Ministry Spokesman Mohammad Ali Hosseini rejected statements by IAEA diplomats in Vienna that the aim of the visit of the IAEA delegation headed by chief inspector Olli Heinonen would be to discuss alleged weaponization studies.

"We have already clarified our stance on the allegations, and talks with the IAEA would therefore only be within the framework of the IAEA and NPT," he said.

Iran responded to the six outstanding issues raised by the IAEA and given its assessment of the alleged studies to the agency.

IAEA Deputy Director General Olli Heinonen was in Tehran earlier this week on a routine visit, but some western press reports claimed that the talks were solely focused on the new allegations.

» Azeri More Unacceptable

Hosseini also expressed fury after what it said was the deadly shooting by Azeri border guards of two Iranian men returning to Iran after illegally crossing the border.

"The way the Azeri forces dealt with the two young Iranians is denounced and unacceptable," he said.

The spokesman added that the Iranian border authorities were looking into the matter.

The commander of the Iranian border police in Parsabad in Ardebil province, Colonel Mohammad Ali Taheri, said the Azeri border guards shot and killed two

Iranian men on Wednesday.

"Mojtaba Kohandel and Keyvan Ebrahimi, both 20, were shot and killed on Wednesday while returning to Iran after illegally crossing the border," Taheri was quoted as saying by Fars News Agency.

"A judiciary and border police delegation has headed to Azerbaijan to investigate the matter," he said. It was not made clear why the men were crossing the border.

Hosseini also demanded that Azerbaijan release a Russian shipment of nuclear equipment that it blocked at its border with Iran almost three weeks ago.

The shipment is intended for the nuclear power plant that the Russians have helped build in the southern Iranian port city of Bushehr.

» Ready to Help

Hosseini voiced Iran's readiness to help Syria and Saudi Arabia resolve their dispute.

"Iran has always tried to help strengthen relations between regional states," he said.

As for the Syria-Saudi Arabia dispute related to Lebanese issues, the spokesman said Iran was prepared "to take steps not as a mediator but as a country that is a friend to both (Arab) states".

Commenting on the possibility of Syria's talks with the Zionist regime over the Golan Heights, the spokesman said Syria has announced that "indirect talks" were underway between the two sides.

"The Golan Heights are occupied and must be returned to Syria with no preconditions," he said.

Hosseini added that Tehran would be pleased with the liberation of the occupied lands and believes the liberation of Golan Heights from Israeli grip would result from Syria's resistance.

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.

The talks are expected to focus on Iran's nuclear program and latest developments concerning the nuclear power plant at Bushehr in southern Iran.

Moscow is cooperating with Tehran on building the light-water reactor.

The two sides are also expected to discuss last month's blockade of a cargo of Russian heat insulators destined for the Bushehr plant, which has not yet been released from the Republic of Azerbaijan's Customs Department.

Iran's Foreign Ministry Spokesman Mohammad Ali Hosseini said on Sunday Iran is in constant contact with Azeri officials and the Iranian Embassy in Baku to enable the urgent release of the cargo.

"All international regulations were respected with regard to the cargo dispatch and the Azeri had no reason to halt the cargo," he said.

Lankan Envoy:

Ahmadinejad's Visit Crucial

Sri Lankan Ambassador in Tehran, Muhammad Muhammad Zahir, said the upcoming visit to Colombo of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad will open a new chapter in cooperation between the two countries.

Talking to IRNA on Sunday, Zahir said the Sri Lankan government and nation attach great importance to Ahmadinejad's visit.

Ahmadinejad is to start a three-nation regional tour on Monday, which will take him to Pakistan, Sri Lanka and India.

While in Colombo, President Ahmadinejad will discuss promotion of bilateral and regional cooperation with Sri Lankan officials.

Several documents are expected to be signed by Iranian and Sri Lankan officials on bilateral cooperation.

The Iranian president is also expected to inspect a number of projects that are being carried out jointly by the experts of the two countries.

On Tehran-Colombo trade and economic relations, Zahir said the two countries enjoy amicable and longstanding economic ties.

Referring to cultural and historical commonalities between the two nations, he said Colombo is eager to boost bilateral ties with all countries, particularly Iran.

"Sri Lanka has been purchasing about 70 percent of crude oil from Iran in the past three decades," he said, adding that his country's annual exports to Iran including leather, tea, ceramics, rubber and agricultural products stood at \$75 million.

As to the implementation of several development projects by Iranian companies in Sri Lanka, the envoy said President Ahmadinejad will inaugurate several joint ventures during his visit.

Second Announcement



National Iranian Oil Company

IN THE NAME OF GOD

Tender No: FBS-8600190-FB/FAB

(Wire Line Equipment)

Iranian Offshore Oil Company (IOOC) intends to buy above-mentioned materials. Applicants may refer to site www.iooc.co.ir or the below-mentioned address: No. 38, 6th Floor, Room No. 6-12, Touraj Street, Vali-e-Asr Ave. Chamran/Mo-darres Crossroads, Tehran, Iran.

Postal Code: 19395, P.O. Box: 5591, Procurement and Materials, Foreign Purchasing Department.

Contact:
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