

Detained Journalists, Activists Get Bail

TEHRAN, Nov. 10--Head of Tehran Islamic Revolution's Court-Branch 26 ordered Wednesday the release of jailed members of the National-Religious Group, Hoda Saber, Taqi Rahmani and Reza Aljani, on hefty bail.

Lawyer of one of the prisoners, Gholamali Riahi, told ISNA that the court has considered a 500-million-rial bail for each prisoner.

Meanwhile, the lawyer of online journalists said his clients will be freed on bail in the coming days.

Nemat Ahmadi told ISNA that families of jailed journalists are putting up bail money for the freedom of jailed journalists.

"If bail money is ready on time, Mehdi Derayati, Masoud Qoreishi and Asghar Vatanikhah will be freed on bail," he added.

In the meantime, head of



Reza Aljani



Hoda Saber



Taqi Rahmani

Mehrabad Airport's Islamic Revolution and Public Preliminary Court told ISNA that Hanif Mazrouei, son of veteran journalist, Rajabali

Mazrouei, will also be freed on a 150-million-rial bail. Jafar Saberi-Zafarqandi noted that the detained journalists will be freed

within the next two days. Mazrouei noted that he does not think his son will be freed in the next few days due to deficiencies of the administrative system.

Bam Landscape Unchanged

TEHRAN, Nov. 10--Bam, in Kerman province, is in ruins even after almost a year since a massive earthquake leveled the city.

Speaking during a meeting with the leader's advisor, Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri, Bam Mayor Ali Baqerzadeh said late on Tuesday that despite a lapse of 10 months since the devastating quake, the city's reconstruction has not picked up, IRNA reported.

"The slow reconstruction pace of Bam is mostly due to inadequate disbursement of funds," he

said, adding that rebuilding the city is not only vital for the local residents, but also for promoting the system's domestic and international image.

The 6.4-magnitude quake almost destroyed the entire city and claimed more than 26,000 lives.

Based on a government ratification in January, urban development projects were to be commissioned to the municipality at an initial outlay of 180 billion rials.

"The ratification has not yet been put into effect," he said.

Haddad Condemns University Violence

TEHRAN, Nov. 10--Speaker Gholamali Haddad-Adel here late on Tuesday denounced those responsible for the incident at the Science and Technology University and condemned sacrilege

to its sanctity. Talking to reporters on the sidelines of his meeting with artists and writers, Haddad-Adel said Intelligence Minister Ali Younesi and Minister of Science, Research and Technology Jafar Tofigi have been informed of the parliament's concerns regarding the incident, IRNA reported.

"During the meeting with ministers, members of the fact-finding committee were also present and handed over a report to the ministers on their 20-hour preliminary investigation of the incident," he said. Condemning the rogue

elements, the speaker said ministers have been urged to make a thorough investigation of the incident.

"The causes, and not the effects, should be confronted. We must be able to eradicate the causes creating turmoil and misuse," he said.

Haddad-Adel further said that such incidents at universities would halt progress and development in the country, adding that universities are in dire need of tranquility more than anything else.

A group of hardline students, opposed to a question-answer session addressed by former foreign minister, Ebrahim Yazdi, and former deputy interior minister, Mostafa Tajzadeh, at the university on November 2, assaulted the university's Chancellor Mohammad Taqi Salehi and took him hostage for three hours.

Persian Press Watch

Warning

SHARQ: The main dilemma with the prevailing micro and macro political, social and economic problems is that no one dares to apply the existing formulas to different situations. Iranian nation is presently dealing with a large number of domestic and international problems. Hence, experts should focus on how to tackle these problems. One great outcome of the 1979 Islamic Revolution is that a new generation of technocrats has emerged. A group of these technocrats has recently issued a warning, regretting to see political factions repeat the same mistakes time and again.

Chaotic

ETEMAD: Conservatives are acting against all the norms, as the Ninth Presidential Election is approaching. Conservatives actually shifted their political behavior during the Seventh Majlis Race. Prior to this, the general policy of conservatives was to keep calm a few weeks before the start of electoral races. However, ultimately conservatives completely changed their policy by creating a chaotic political atmosphere and disqualifying a large number of reformist candidates during the vetting procedure. The recent incident of University of Science and Technology shows that the conservative faction is firmly pursuing a chaotic political atmosphere before the Ninth Presidential Election, slated for May 13, 2005.

Perspective

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"We are willing to give them a grace period for a few months to prevent the occurrence of lawlessness and chaos...but after that they will have to pay attention to the masses," said the veteran Islamist leader.

He explained that Arafat's autocratic style, which was tolerated for psychological and objective reasons, would not be accepted or tolerated from the new Palestinian leadership.

"They will have to be answerable to the people, and this can only be put into effect through free and fair elections."

Hamas, while careful to display national responsibility, is nonetheless worried that the "new leadership" might slip back to the Oslo path and find itself once again, "on American and Israeli lips."

This, argue Hamas leaders, would translate almost automatically, into a showdown with Hamas, since "fighting terror," e.g. cracking down on the Islamic opposition, would be the sin qua non for any conceivable revival of an Oslo-style peace process, including the American-backed "roadmap".

Hamas is unlikely to allow the new leadership to evolve into another "Oslo gang" as the erstwhile Oslo-time leadership was often dubbed by the Islamists.

Notwithstanding, Hamas is likely to find itself in a somewhat advantageous position vis-a-vis the Palestinian leadership once Arafat becomes history. With Arafat and his galvanizing effect gone for ever, the evolving Palestinian leadership would be less able and probably less inclined to confront Hamas head-on since an impetuous and reckless measure as such would portray the leadership as working in cahoots with the Israelis against Palestinian interests.

There is no doubt that even the appearance of collaborating with the Israelis or Americans, against Hamas is the last thing the new post-Arafat leadership would want to see. This at best would be a certificate of bad conduct, and at worst a political suicide.

Eventually, the new Palestinian leadership would have to maneuver very carefully and very wisely between the Palestinian "main street" where the Hamas presence is conspicuous and an international community making nearly impossible demands on an untested and unselected leadership that should be struggling to obtain acceptance and support from the Palestinian masses.

Under the conditions, elections may be the solution, which all Palestinian factions accept. The vote would not only sort out things between the PA and the Islamist camp, but also enable the people to punish through the ballot boxes those elements, especially within Fatah, who are deemed corrupt.

Interestingly, the legion of corrupt elements couldn't have survived and thrived that long without Arafat for whom they always acted as sycophantic and obedient cronies and hangers-on in return for tolerating their financial and occasionally moral indulgences.

In the final analysis, what worked under Arafat is unlikely to work under Abu Mazen, Ahmed Qurai' or any other post-Arafat leader, elected or otherwise.

Besides the Israeli occupation, this undoubtedly is going to be the ultimate challenge not only for the new leader(s), but the Palestinian masses as well.

Restoration of Iraq Security Crucial

TEHRAN, Nov. 10--President Mohammad Khatami here Tuesday said establishment of peace, stability and security in Iraq are stressed not only by Iran, but also by other members of the international community.

In a meeting with Iraq's Minister of State for Provinces Wael Abdul Al-Latif, Khatami said Iraq should regain its lost status in the region with due regard to its rich resources and talents through the establishment of a broad-based government, IRNA reported.

"We regard security and progress in Iraq as our own security and hope the Iraqi nation would have the say in running their own country," he said.

Maintaining that the

Jan. elections in Iraq would settle several problems, the president said. "We seek the withdrawal of foreigners from Iraq and condemn any interference in the country's internal affairs which would be an insult to its people."

He expressed hope all Iraqi groups could unite and obediently follow the guidelines set by the religious scholars, particularly Ayatollah Ali Sistani, saying this would eliminate lawlessness in the country and prepare the ground for understanding and unity among all Iraqis.

Khatami called on Iraq's neighboring states to prevent acts that would exacerbate lawlessness in the country.

The Iraqi minister of state submitted a written message from Iraqi Prime Minister Iyad Allawi to President Khatami and urged greater cooperation in various fields.

Al-Latif said peace and stability in the Middle East, and referred to Iran's contribution in this regard as effective and constructive.

In related news, Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi expressed deep concerns over the intensification of crisis in the Iraqi city of Fallujah in a meeting with Al-Latif here Tuesday.

Kharrazi said Iran is demanding restoration of security in Iraq.

Also on Tuesday, Khatami met with mem-

bers of the Islamic Association of Tehran University and Medical Sciences University of Tehran and underlined the need for strengthening pillars of democracy in the society.

As to the importance of universities in the arena of country's political activities, Khatami said lack of attention to the key role being played by universities, their status as well as the weakness of the intellectual currents are major causes hindering political activities in universities.

US Sanctions Extended

WASHINGTON, Nov. 10--US President George W. Bush on Tuesday extended for one year a range of financial sanctions first imposed on Iran in November 1979, the White House announced in a statement.

"Our relations with Iran have not

yet returned to normal," Bush said in a letter to the US House of Representatives, AFP reported.

The original sanctions, imposed by then-president Jimmy Carter, froze assets of Iran's government following the November 1979 takeover of the US embassy in Tehran.

Press Release "Germany in the UN" Exhibit Planned

On September 18, 1973, the then two German states became full members of the United Nations after lengthy and difficult negotiations. Since October 3, 1990, reunited Germany is represented in the United Nations as 'Germany'.

Since January 1, 2003, for the fourth time (1977/78, 1987/88, 1995/96, 2003/04), Germany has been a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council in February 2003 and again in April 2004.

The German Embassy shows the exhibition "Germany in the United Nations" from 17th to 24th November 2004 in Tehran's "Melal Cultural Center", on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of German UN membership.

The 25 signboards give an overview over the United Nations' system. The exhibition shows Germany's road towards becoming a full member of the United Nations and highlights its various contributions to the work of the family of UN organizations. Human rights, peacekeeping, poverty eradication, women's and children's rights, global environmental protection and disaster prevention are only some of the subjects that the exhibition takes a closer look at.

Opening of the exhibition: On Wednesday, November 17, 2004, from 17-20 hours in Tehran's "Melal Cultural Center", Sadr Expressway, Pirouz Sq., Qeytariyeh, Qeytariyeh Park.

German Embassy - Tehran

Iran, Morocco Underscore Unity

TEHRAN, Nov. 10--Judiciary Chief Ayatollah Mahmoud Hashemi Shahroudi here Tuesday urged unity among Muslim nations and governments to counter the fraudulent moves of enemies.

He made remark during his meeting with Moroccan ambassador to Tehran, Abdelaziz Beniss, IRNA reported.

"Iran and Morocco should join efforts to strengthen the position of Islamic states in light of the current situation," he said.

The judiciary chief also said the enemies of Islam have realized that the ultimate objective of Muslims is to return to the golden era of Islamic rule, adding that as a result they have plotted all kinds of conspiracies to thwart the spread of Islamic culture.

"Islamic countries should do their

utmost to defend Islamic dignity and neutralize the negative propaganda being waged against Muslims," he said.

He urged Muslim governments to use the resources of the Muslim world to preserve unity.

Urging consolidation of ties between the two countries, he called on their officials to boost efforts to raise the status of Muslim countries in the global arena.

The Moroccan ambassador, for his part, expressed his country's readiness to expand ties with Tehran, saying Morocco has always favored strengthening of ties with Muslim countries.

Ghazi said there were no obstacles to expansion of Iran-Morocco ties, particularly in the legal and judicial fields.

Over 4 Tons of Drugs Seized

AHVAZ, Khuzestan, Nov. 10--Police in this southwestern province have seized 4,386 kilos of various drugs since the start of the current Iranian year (March 20), a provincial anti-drug official said here Wednesday.

Gholam Mohammadian added that the amount of seized drugs, mainly opium and hashish, showed a 400-percent rise compared with the corresponding figure in the previous year, IRNA reported.

Police also arrested 23

bandits and 10,871 drug traffickers in the province over the same period.

Meanwhile, Police seized 630 kilograms of opium stashed in a car moving toward Qalatouyeh checkpoint in Darab, a town in Fars province, Tuesday.

Talking to IRNA on Wednesday, Deputy Police Chief Mohammad Ali Tabatabaei said his men were forced to attack the smugglers, who tried to escape under cover of fire. "The bandits left

behind their car as one of them was injured," he added.

Tabatabaei said his office is studying the documents left in the car to find the identity of the drug traffickers.

In the country's relentless anti-drug campaign, more than 3,350 police forces have lost their lives in the last 25 years.

The government has allocated 300 billion rials for preventive measures, treatment and promotion of non-governmental institutions active in the campaign.