

# Eid Felicitations

**TEHRAN, Nov. 14--**President Mohammad Khatami felicitated Muslim leaders and nations here Friday in a message on the occasion of Eid ul-Fitr, which marks the end of the fasting month of Ramadan.

The president expressed hope that the past month of Ramadan had brought the world's Muslims closer. He also wished them increased progress and prosperity.

Eid ul-Fitr, the culmination of the fasting month of Ramadan, varies in each Muslim state depending on the sighting of the new moon, which marks the start

of the new lunar month.

Meanwhile, Tehran's Armenian prelate on Saturday congratulated the Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei on the auspicious occasion.

Archbishop Sibhev Sarkisyan also said in his message that he prays to God to lead Iran toward development, peace and humanitarian feelings.

Tehran's Prelacy Council also sent messages of congratulation to President Mohammad Khatami and senior officials on the occasion.

## Qom Condolences Over Arafat's Death

**QOM, Nov. 14--** Association of Instructors of Qom Theological School expressed condolences to the Palestinian nation on the death of President of Palestinian Authority (PNA) Yasser Arafat.

"We express our condolences to the Muslim world, to the strong nation of Palestine, to those striving to liberate Palestinian territories and the Holy Qods on the death of Abu Ammar, his excellency Yasser

Arafat," said a statement from the Theological Center, IRNA reported.

"Mr. Arafat fought for the liberation of Palestine for half a century, he suffered the worst physical and psychological pressures as the leader of the Palestinian nation and he never laid down his arm," the Qom Seminary said.

Arafat reached an agreement with the Quartet—the United Nations, United States, the European Union and Russia—to establish the state of Palestine by the year 2005.

"He never ignored the prestige and dignity of the Palestinian nation in his diplomatic talks. He fought hard to save the state of Palestine," it said.

The association hoped that the new Palestinian leaders would reinforce national solidarity and, God willing, serve the lofty goals of Yasser Arafat and the martyrs for liberating Palestine from Israeli occupation.

## Persian Press Watch

### Arafat's Path

**IRAN:** Although the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, was laid to rest, his efforts with regard to establishment of the state of Palestine will be continued by his successors. Arafat did not have the opportunity to see the results of his many years of struggles against the occupying regime of Israel. Can post-Arafat era turn into a nightmare for Palestinians? The Palestinian nightmare started three years ago after the Israeli Army surrounded Arafat's residence in Ramallah. Arafat was an icon for the Palestinian people in terms of political power and traditions. He was the last remainder of a generation of idealistic Arab leaders.

### Main Factions

**MARDOMSALARI:** Although the leftist and rightist factions were first formed in the Second Majlis and then they each attained an independent identity outside the parliament, the people of Iran were unaware about the presence of these two main political factions during 1983-1997. In other words, people thought that the Islamic system was unified and that there were no two different political viewpoints. It was in May 1997 and during the presidential electoral campaigns that the citizens of the republic realized that there were two factions present on the political scene. Although the conservatives have seemingly agreed on the issue that they must nominate one candidate for the upcoming presidential race, reformers are still at odds over the same issue. It seems that if reformers nominated one candidate, they could garner more votes.

### Decrepit Cars

**SOBH-E EQTESAD:** Issue of replacing dilapidated cars with new ones has become a heated topic nowadays. Traffic congestion, high gas consumption and air pollution are the main problems caused by outdated cars. All experts agree that if old cars are removed from the transportation fleet, it is both environmental-friendly and cost-effective. It is environmental-friendly because new cars emit less pollutant gases. Meanwhile, it is cost-effective because gas consumption would be reduced significantly. The best method for assigning decrepit cars to the junkyard is to grant low-interest loans to their owners so that they could purchase new vehicles.

### Perspective

## Unfazed by Nuke Sops

**From Page 1**

Of course, Iran can still avoid sanctions, if China or Russia vetoes such a resolution. But what happens behind closed doors at UN headquarters in New York is anybody's guess. Knowing Washington's hard line policy, it cannot be ruled out that the US will not use its carrot and stick approach to influence the other veto powers.

In any case, Iran has to be prepared for any outcome at the November 25 meeting of the IAEA. If things go Iran's way, then it's fine. Otherwise, the nation has to be prepared for possible sanctions, if the case goes to the Security Council.

Let's presume that the issue does go that far and ultimately sanctions are imposed. No doubt there will be repercussions on all fronts and the big powers will also be at a great disadvantage. Firstly, it will give Iran further moral right to continue its nuclear research. Freed from all shackles, the enrichment program may even go a step further and perhaps, the ultimate in nuclear technology. And no power will be able to hold Tehran back even if it resorts to clandestine dealings. Thus the very purpose of the powers that are blocking Iran now will be lost.

Therefore, logically, it would be far reasonable to take Iran on board and gracefully accept its nuclear progress than push the country into violating the rules of the NPT, which could very well be the outcome of UN sanctions.

Secondly, Iran will also suffer a blow, as there could well be disruptions in its major exports. But in the process several of Iran's trade partners, particularly in Europe, stand to lose heavily. At the moment, a large chunk of Iran's massive revenues from oil sales go towards the purchase of consumer and capital goods from abroad. As a 70 million-consumer market, which imports even items that can be locally manufactured, Iran's business partners will have to put on hold lucrative transactions with the Islamic Republic.

In a way sanctions, which are not new to Iran, the US embargo already exists - could also be a blessing in disguise. They will give an impetus to local industries and production and boost the labor market. Every year thousands of young people enter the work force but as there is acute unemployment in the country they remain idle manpower. If sanctions can provide the necessary economic stimulus, it may yet prove a boon to the nation.

## IRGC: Universities Need Reforms

**TEHRAN, Nov. 14--**Iranian universities need serious reforms at the managerial levels, an official of the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps said Saturday.



Masoud Jazayeri

Referring to recent violent incidents at the University of Science and Technology in Tehran, Brigadier General Masoud Jazayeri added that many attempts have been made in the past several years to reduce the presence of pious and revolutionary forces in universities, IRNA reported.

"This scenario is closely linked to the management of universities," he added.

Jazayeri noted that although all plots against universities were not completely successful, their negative influences on universities cannot be undermined either. "Of course, some university managers have greatly contributed to neutralizing the cultural onslaught launched against universities. However, some sectors of the universities need reform," he noted. Jazayeri denounced any attempt to create chaos in universities.

"If no transparency is made with regard to the recent unrest of University of Science and Technology, similar incidents will certainly take place in future," he said. Following the unrest of November 2 to protest against a roundtable attended by prominent political activists, namely Mostafa Tajzadeh and Ebrahim Yazdi, the university's chancellor was beaten and taken hostage.

However, upon a request by President Mohammad Khatami, Dr. Mohammad Taqi Salehi withdrew his resignation and returned to the university.

## Iranian Hezbollah Launches Election HQ

**TEHRAN, Nov. 14--**Spokesman of Iran's Hezbollah Party said an election headquarters has been launched by his group for the upcoming presidential election.

Mojtaba Bigdeli also told IRNA that Mohammad Javad Feyz

will head the election headquarters. He asserted that in the first phase, members of task teams of nine major Iranian cities were appointed and they also began work on launching the headquarters.

"Tehran, Mashhad, Qom, Isfahan, Bandar

Abbas, Tabriz, Shiraz, Ahvaz and Karaj are included in this phase," he added.

Commenting on the possibility of introducing a candidate for the next presidential election, Bigdeli said some people have talked about the candidacy of

the secretary-general of Iran's Hezbollah Party and others.

"The Central Council of Iran's Hezbollah Party is presently profiling different candidates. It will make the final announcement within the next 10 days," he said.

## IAEA Inspectors Arrive

**VIENNA, Austria, Nov. 14--**A team of the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) inspectors arrived in Tehran and promptly started work late on Saturday, an IAEA spokesperson announced.

Mohamed ElBaradei acknowledging that inspectors found no evidence to show Tehran diverted resources or materials to a weapons program.

Diplomats said Saturday the IAEA has delayed until Monday the release of a report on Iran's nuclear program, which Tehran says is aimed at power generation.

The postponement was the second in a week to give Iran and the Europeans more time to reach an agreement, which they say could spare a potential showdown.

The report will sum up IAEA's investigation of Iran's nuclear program since February 2003 of the agency's 35-nation board to decide the nature of Iran's activities.

The United States alleges that Tehran's nuclear program is a front for an atomic weapons program, and wants the world to refer Iran to the UN Security Council for possible sanctions. But the EU trio of Germany, France and Britain pursue a different line, trying to strike a deal with Iran to suspend all uranium enrichment activities against a package of economic incentives.

Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said Saturday negotiations with the European Union over the nuclear deal are in their final stages.

Iranian officials reportedly handed their reply late Thursday on the proposed deal to the three countries and the EU foreign policy chief, Javier Solana.

"We did our utmost to cooperate with the agency and build the needed confidence. Iran can take no further measures," Kharrazi said.

The Iranian foreign minister said "the time is ripe to shelve Iran's case".

## Economic Woes Linked...

### From Page 1

Ghanimifard said Iranian products do not have a good market overseas mainly because of the country's poor political relations with other countries.

A member of Iranian Society of Exporters and an economist, Hossein Vakili, declared that certain sanctions are practically invisible.

"Legally speaking, we are authorized to gain access to certain technological advances, but powerful countries block this access by making different interpretations and in an unofficial manner," he said. He said states that can establish good political bonds with other countries are also successful economically.

The economist opined that the root-

cause of Iranian economic problems is the way its political ties with the outside world are regulated.

He said diplomatic missions should make efforts to improve Iran's global status.

"Currently, we have established economic bonds with other countries through third parties which mostly benefit them," he said.

Vakili also believed that Iranian exporters are not successful in the international markets due to political reasons.

"We should not pursue policies in an intermittent manner. We should try to establish sound bonds with European states, which control over half of the global market," he said.

## Muslims Warned of...

### From Page 1

"The Intelligence Ministry, thanks to its enormous experience, is now able to fight an intelligence battle against the most powerful security establishments of the world. And we believe we can win most of those battles," he said.

The minister cited some of his ministry's achievements, including helping Iran steer clear from some of the major showdowns, similar to what has befallen Iraq and Afghanistan.

"If the Islamic Republic had not acted wisely, the crisis which occurred in Iraq and Afghanistan could have unfolded in our country," he said.

Younesi then recounted some of the Intelligence Ministry's operations

against the terrorist Mujahideen Khalq Organization which has been involved in many criminal campaigns against Iran over the past 25 years, targeting many officials and civilians.

## Arafat Could Have...

### From Page 1

"It is a deeply held, very logical conviction. The Israelis have tried to get rid of Yasser Arafat since (Prime Minister Ariel) Sharon came to power."

"She pointed out that 'still today, there has been no diagnosis. The doctors have only confirmed what they saw, the symptoms. Medical tests cannot reveal everything.'"

But she said there was "absolutely no question" of asking for another medical communiqué.

"The file has been handed over to his family and we respect French law" on patient confidentiality, she said, but added "I won't tell you what we will ask his wife."

Under French law, medical details are only communicated to relatives, who can decide whether to make them public. Nasser Al-Qidwa, Arafat's nephew and Palestinian representative at the United Nations, told a Turkish newspaper Saturday that poisoning "is our biggest suspicion."

"If it were a normal death, it would have been possible to put a diagnosis so far," he told the daily Vatan.

Arafat's personal physician, Ashraf Al-Kurdi, has called for an inquiry.

## Syria to Attend Meeting on Iraq



**DAMASCUS, Syria, Nov. 14--**Syrian Interior Minister Major General Ghazi Kan'an will take part in the meeting of the interior ministers of Iraq's neighboring countries to be held in Tehran, it was reported here Saturday.

Iran's Ambassador to Damascus Mohammad

Reza Baqeri submitted to Kan'an an invitation from his Iranian counterpart Abdolvahed Mousavi Lari to attend the meeting, IRNA reported.

The two-day meeting of the interior ministers of Iraq's neighboring states is scheduled in Tehran from November 30 to December 2, 2004.

In his meeting with the Syrian minister, Baqeri referred to the disturbed and insecure situation in Iraq which have inflicted damage on the region, the neighboring countries in particular. He stressed the need for the collaboration of the global community to end the critical situation in Iraq.