

## Elham: Majlis Confidence Vote Not Needed

The government spokesman said on Monday the Cabinet does not need to get the Majlis vote of confidence after the recent replacement of interior minister.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of the induction



Gholamhossein Elham

ceremony for the new Interior Minister Mehdi Hashemi, Gholamhossein Elham said according to the law if half the Cabinet is reshuffled, the government needs to get a new vote of confidence from the parliament, IRNA reported.

"The Cabinet has 21 members," he said.

Earlier, the Guardians Council said if half the cabinet is reshuffled, the ministers should get the Majlis vote of confidence.

GC Spokesman Abbasali Kadkhodaei told reporters in Tehran that according to Article 136 of Iran's Constitution, the government needs to get the Majlis 'yes' vote again if half of the Cabinet is changed.

He expressed hope that such an event does not occur.

Kadkhodaei's comments followed Elham's announcement that President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad will replace two ministers, including Economy Minister Davoud Danesh-Jafari and Interior Minister Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi.

Since coming to power in 2005, Ahmadinejad has changed some of his ministers, including those for oil, education and industry as well as the country's central bank governor.

## Musharraf for Closer Cooperation



➤ Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf (r) in talks with Secretary of the Guardians Council Ayatollah Ahmad Jannati in Islamabad on Monday.

Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf urged greater cooperation between Iran's Guardians Council and Pakistan's Council of Islamic Ideology to reach out to the downtrodden Muslims and bring about a positive change in their lives.

Talking to a delegation led by Ayatollah Jannati, secretary of Guardians Council, on Monday, the president called for further strengthening relations in view of the geographical, historical and cultural affinities between the two countries, APP reported.

Musharraf stressed the need for adopting a conciliatory approach, rather than a confrontational one, as it was vital for peace

in the region.

The Iranian official said it has a special relationship with the Iranian legislative body, expressing his appreciation over the smooth transition to complete democracy and the transparent conduct of general elections.

He said Iran believes in having close ties with Pakistan and desired further strengthening of bilateral relations.

Appreciating the reconciliation efforts in Pakistan, Jannati said those who wanted to destabilize the country were against Islam and lauded President Musharraf's positive approach.

## Hashemi Best Choice For Interior Minister

Former Interior Minister Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi said under the present circumstances Mehdi Hashemi is the best choice for the post of interior minister because he has a good grip on the ministry's affairs.

According to Mehr News Agency, Pour-Mohammadi, who was talking to reporters on the sidelines of his farewell ceremony on Monday, said, "We are all duty-bound to support the government, because the president is the choice of the nation and we must respect the public view. We must leave political rivalries to the time of presidential election. At present all political factions must stand united."

Pour-Mohammadi noted that he was always accountable to the people during his tenure.

"I believe all administrators should be accountable (to the people)," he said.

Upon a decree issued by the president, Hashemi replaces Pour-Mohammadi.

## Lebanese Talks...

From Page 1

The Iranian package was last week sent by Motaki to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and a copy of it to the foreign ministers of the five permanent member-states of the UN Security Council. Another copy was sent to Solana.

Hosseini also noted that the latest round of negotiations between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency has been "fruitful".

"The recent visit to Tehran of the IAEA team was successful and had a fruitful outcome," he said.

An IAEA technical delegation, headed by Herman Nackaerts, director for regional department of Safeguards Operation, arrived in Tehran on May 12, 2008.

➤ Support for Lebanon

The spokesman added that his country would support all efforts to bring the Lebanese political parties closer and forge national reconciliation.

Hosseini was commenting on the meeting of leaders of Lebanese political parties in Doha, Qatar.

The Lebanese political leaders gathered in the Arab state since Friday to find a solution for the protracted political crisis in Lebanon.

Describing the meeting sponsored by the Arab League as a "positive step forward", Hosseini said, "The progressing trend can be positive and constructive, if the foreigners' meddling does not derail the process."

## Perspective

### Bush's Egypt Visit

From Page 1

The Egyptian officialdom believes that the Zionist regime is the source of instability and escalating clashes in the occupied Palestinian territories and calls for the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

Though it has signed a peace accord with Israel, Egypt considers Israel's refusal to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a blatant threat to the security of the volatile region. Interestingly, recent surveys reveal that Egyptians still consider the Zionist regime as their number one enemy and maintain that Israeli intelligence service is responsible for the internal rift between Muslims and Christians.

It should not be doubted that in addition to discussing regional developments, Mubarak and Bush also discussed Iran's peaceful nuclear program. Bush claims that Iran interferes in Iraq's internal affairs and renders military support to Hezbollah in Lebanon, describing Iran as a serious regional threat.

This is while Egypt considers peaceful nuclear activities as Iran's legitimate right. Although the two countries do not have diplomatic ties, Iran and Egypt were the first countries to propose the plan for a Middle East free of nuclear weapons in 1982 and they still support the plan in the United Nations.

### Second Announcement

Islamic Republic of Iran



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## Ahmadinejad: No Barriers for Boosting Eritrea Ties

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said the visit of his Eritrean counterpart, Isaias Afewerki, marks a huge step for boosting bilateral relations.

"The two countries face no barriers for expanding bilateral cooperation," the president was quoted as saying by IRNA.

Ahmadinejad, who was speaking to reporters after his meeting with Afewerki on Monday, said Eritrea is familiar to Iranians who remember the nation's long years of resistance for achieving liberty and freedom.

The chief executive said, "We had constructive talks regarding bilateral ties and joint investments in the fields of agriculture, industry and energy as well as regional and international collaboration."

Ahmadinejad emphasized that Iran and Eritrea have common stances vis-à-vis regional and global issues, and also on ways of withstanding the hegemonic policies of arrogant world powers.

"The two countries defend each other's rights and also the rights of other independent countries in international forums," he said. Afewerki, for his part, recalled that it was his first visit to Iran.

"The history of bilateral bonds dates back to decades and we hold common views on certain issues," he said.

The Eritrean president also said that his tour of Iran provides a good opportunity for fortifying economic and trade cooperation at the regional and global levels, which can help ensure regional peace and stability.

## Iran's Role in Iraq Appreciated

UN Secretary-General's special representative for Iraq, Staffan de Mistura, praised Iran's significant role in Iraq on Monday.

The UN envoy made the remark in a meeting with Iran's Ambassador in Baghdad Hassan Kazemi Qomi.

Spokesman of Iran's Embassy to Baghdad, Manouchehr Taslimi, told IRNA that the UN envoy lauded Iran's support for Iraq's democratically-elected government.

"The UN envoy also called on Iran to render more support for the Iraqi democratic government and help bring the Iraqi political groups closer," he said.

Taslimi pointed out that the two sides also reviewed issues of mutual interests along with current developments in Iraq.