

# NEWS ON IRAN

No. 29 National Council of Resistance of Iran - Foreign Affairs Committee February 13, 1995

## DOMESTIC

### Protests, strikes

Voice of Mojahed, February 12 - Truck drivers and owners in Isfahan have staged a strike to protest high cost of tires and poor economic conditions. Some 400 drivers and owners staged a strike and refused to carry their loads. The regime tried to persuade the strikers to end their protest by offering them some rice and cooking oil, but the strikers rejected the offer.

Voice of Mojahed, Feb. 11 - Employees at Isfahan's technical university staged a protest for wage increases. They hanged a long petition signed by all employees, threatening to stage a strike if their demands are not met.

Voice of Mojahed, Feb. 11 - Medical students in Hamedan university staged a sit-in in front of the office of the university president to protest exam procedures and their grade marks. Fearing more militant actions by the students, university officials agreed to their demands.

Voice of Mojahed, Feb. 11 - In Kazeroon, southern Iran, education department employees of Kehesht township held a sit-in to protest wage cuts. When the authorities failed to intimidate the protesters, they promised to address their grievances.

Voice of Mojahed, Feb. 10 - In Qazvin, northwest of Tehran, two agents attempting to arrest a young girl were confronted by bystanders and badly beaten. They fled the scene afterwards.

### Suppression

*Ressalat*, Feb. 9 - Commander of the Bassij resistance force said we did not take up the matter of maintaining security in athletic events seriously. We must encourage the Bassijis to attend athletic events because we cannot ignore the fans. The hezbollahis should not disregard the matter and make their presence felt in athletic events.

*Abrar*, Feb. 7 - The Friday prayer leader of Ahwaz, southeast, attended ceremonies to open the city's security zone number one and the 13th police precinct. He said that more efforts should be undertaken to build such centers to increase security.

*Kayhan*, Feb. 6 - The Interior Minister called on the state security forces to exercise firmness in dealing with those disrupting calm in society. The commander of the force, heads of ideological and political offices, director general of the detectives' department and commanders of Tehran security regions met Ali Mohammad Besharati who stressed the need to increase night patrols.

*Iran Zamin*, Feb. 9 - IRNA reported that the state security forces have arrested 50,000 people in Iran this year. It

said the arrests were drug-related. Independent sources have reported widely that the Tehran regime arrests political activists under the pretext of drug-smuggling.

### Factional Feuding

Reuters, Feb. 13 - The daily *Jahan-e Islam* was banned for publishing the views of a reader likening unnamed officials to "Dear Napoleon", a comical television character from before the 1979 revolution, who saw England as the root of all evil in Iran. A speech by Khamenei attacking the West for organizing a "hysterical propaganda campaign against Iran was printed next to the opinion column.

### High prices

*Salam*, Feb. 7 - Despite government promises to stem spiraling prices, cost of basic staples continues to rise in the past two months. Prices of meat, poultry, eggs and grains have increased by 1,500, 1,100, 1,000, and 300 rials a kilo, respectively. Prices of poultry, meat, vegetables and citrus products have gone up by 41, 47 and 100%. Household goods rose by 30% in the past two months. A domestically-assembled television set that sold for 1,150,000 rials two months ago, is now 1,380,000 rials. A Japanese-made meat grinder 255,000 rials then, now sells for 320,000 rials. Imported household products have risen by some 300,000 rials.

### Steel industry losses

AFP, Feb. 7 - Iran's parliament deputies say that the country's steel industry lost \$5.2 bn. in the last six years. The state-media quotes them as blaming the losses on insufficient production, saturation of the domestic market and low level of exports.

### Medicine in crisis

Voice of Mojahed, Feb. 11 - According to normal standards, for Iran, a country of 60 million, there has to be one doctor, three nurses, two obstetricians and four hospital beds for every 1,000 people. That means Iran needs 60,000 doctors, 180,000 nurses, 120,000 obstetricians and 240,000 beds. Official figures show there are only 18,000 physicians, 9,400 nurses and 2,833 obstetricians. There is also a shortage of 4,515 dentists.

### Kidneys for sale

*Iran Zamin*, Feb. 9 - Iran's ministry of health has set up a special center to buy kidneys from destitute people. Many teenagers and others who can't make ends meet go to these centers to sell one of their kidneys. A young couple had decided to sell one kidney each to payoff their heavy debts. A 54-year-old civil worker said he wants to sell his kidney to help his daughter get married.

### Children in distress

*Salam*, Jan. 31 - A review of the status of students in the southern Fars province shows that 22% suffer from psychological problems, 17% have educational

difficulties, 17% have traumatic disorders, 15% have behavioral problems, 6% have moral and sexual problems and 7% have physical problems.

#### How about a seminar?

*Jahan-e Islam*, Feb. 12 - We have had seminars on water, wind, dirt and tar. Why don't we hold a seminar on the emergence of the sector involved in embezzlement and money laundering? It does not matter that like the previous ones, this seminar will also prove useless.

#### Rescinding the fatwa!

Israeli radio, Feb. 9 - Khamenei's office moderated his fatwa banning Coke and Pepsi, saying that the edict did not include the two soft drinks.

### FOREIGN

#### Replacing Iran regime

AP, Feb. 8 - The eventual forced replacement of Iran's Islamic regime is the only long-term U.S. strategy that makes sense, House Speaker Newt Gingrich (R.Ga) said. Speaking to a conference of military and intelligence officers, Gingrich said the U.S. should pursue an overall strategy that "...ultimately is designed to force the replacement of the current regime in Iran."

### FEATURE

*For this week's feature, we chose a number of reports on rallies to mark the anniversary of the mullahs' rule on February 11. Considering that the clerics did their utmost to mobilize for the event, such non-participation and apathy reflects the public's overwhelming opposition to and rejection of the regime in its entirety.*

**Tehran** - At 7:00 am, security forces took control of the streets leading to the Azadi square. Around 8:00 am, hundreds of buses unloaded their passengers, including several thousand soldiers, at the start of the streets leading to the square. The buses were parked along the both sides of the route on Azadi street to make it appear packed with people. Scores of buses had brought prisoners from Evin and other Tehran prisons. Many more people were bussed from neighboring cities, including 20 buses from Varamin, 15 from Damavand, and a number from Karaj. They were organized in different formations and many had loud speakers and pre-painted placards demonstrating the participation of various social sectors. The largest block were government employees and civil servants. A 10-meter distance separated each formation to make the march look longer. It was clear they had rehearsed before.

**Isfahan**, center - The procession began at 8:30 am. The regime's operatives and the entire military personnel and their commanders, including the air force, took part in the march. The crowd was chanting "Khamenei is the Imam, the leader of the world's Shiites."

**Kashan**, center - About 17,000 marched for about two hours. Most were military personnel and clergy. Early in the morning, buses arrived in front of offices, schools and in villages to take the people to the site of the rally.

**Ardakan** (Yazd), center - About 8,000, consisting mainly of the Bassij, soldiers, women, students and civil servants took part in the event. The rally ended at 11:00 am with a resolution condemning the United States.

**Mashad**, northeast - The rally in this city of two million was delayed for a half hour because of a small crowd. Participants included civil servants, government employees, students and security forces. In the days prior, officials issued memorandums, making attendance mandatory, warning the students that non-participation will cost them in grade marks. Employees were also ordered to show up or risk losing their privileges.

**Shiraz**, south - The demonstration by several thousand people began at 7:30 am. Most were members of the police, the military and the Bassij. Government employees, factory workers, elementary and high school students and their teachers were bussed in.

**Rasht**, north - The demonstration began by about 7,000 at 10:00 am. Most wore military uniforms. Virtually all were members of the Guards Corps, the Bassij and the armed forces since ordinary residents did not take part in the rally. Most stores remained open and few paid any attention to the ceremonies.

**Gorgan**, north - The event started at 8:30 am and ended around noon with speech by the province's governor. Most participants were villagers and people from the suburbs of Gorgan brought by the regime. Most left before the speech by the governor.

**Babol**, north - At about 8:00 am, 4,000 people, including members from the Guards Corps Karbala division, security forces and students began to march. Shop owners defied orders to close down their shops.

**Tabriz**, northwest - The march in this provincial capital of some 1.2 million began at 9:00 am and ended around 1:00 pm. Less than 10,000 people, consisting of Bassijis, Guards, soldiers and students and several hundred government employees, showed up. The mood was very deem and bystanders were taunting those marching. The city's bazaar was operating normally. Only the stores along the route were closed.

**Orumieh**, northwest - The rally started at 10:00 am and lasted only an hour. Only 5,000 out of nearly 350,000 residents showed up. Most were Bassijis, the Guards corps and the military personnel. All stores were open and people minded their own business.

**Qazvin**, west - The procession began around 9:00 am from the city's main square and ended at the main mosque. Families of the war victims, soldiers and personnel from the 16th armored division were brought

to the rally. Many residents from nearby villages were also bussed to the city. Upon arriving at the mosque to hear the Friday prayer leader, they saw a burning placard hanging from the mosque's main entrance.

**Zanjan**, west - The rally commenced at 9:30 am. Most of the crowd were Bassijis, the Guards Corps and security forces. The city's bazaar was open and conducting business as usual. Few paid much attention.

**Khorramabad**, west - The march in this city of 250,000 began at 9:00 am, involving 7,000, from the Bassij, the Guards Corps, students, civil servants and laborers. Passersby paid little attention to the march, doing their shopping as most stores remained open.

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