

# NEWS ON IRAN

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## DOMESTIC

### **New Iranian Year**

A sample report from Tehran, Mar. 22 - One can't see the happy impression of the New Year in anyone's face. This year, the mullahs made everyone suffer so much that one can hardly see anyone dressed up in new clothes [as is the Iranian New Year tradition.] As Rafsanjani had already announced, every one expected the prices to rise 30% with the beginning of the New Year. The prices, however, were terribly high even before the end of the year. Most people fled Tehran under the pretext of vacation trips. The truth was that nobody afforded to pay for the sweets and fruits to receive any guests. Even brothers do not go to visit one another. Even neighbors don't go to visit one another. They just don't want to embarrass one another.

### **Four Kurds Assassinated**

Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran, Paris, Mar. 18 - Another four KDPI members were assassinated by the mullahs' terrorists. The victims were Faramarz Keshvari, 17, Ottoman Rahimi, Taher Azizi, and Hassan Ebrahimzadeh. Four members were also wounded in the attack and are presently hospitalized.

## FOREIGN

### **Europe divided on relations with Iran**

*The Guardian*, Mar. 23 - As the US urges censure of Tehran, some EU members want to abandon the "critical dialogue" mechanism. Sharp divisions are emerging within the European Union about how to deal with Iran as the United States urges tougher action against Tehran's support for Islamist terrorism in the Middle East...

The US and Britain insist that Iran is closely linked to Islamic Jihad and Hamas, the Palestinian groups linked to the bombings- though sensitivity about intelligence sources and methods means nothing has been made public...

Diplomats say that smaller members such as Denmark, Luxembourg and Finland favour abandoning the [critical] dialogue if it fails to produce changes in Iranian behaviour. France and Italy want to maintain it.

So does Germany - Iran's largest trading partner - despite issuing an arrest warrant last week for Ali Fallahian, Iran's intelligence minister, in connection with the murders of four exiled Kurds in Berlin in 1992...

Washington hopes to narrow the transatlantic gap after the display of solidarity at last week's "summit of peacemakers" in the Egyptian resort of Sharm al-Sheikh.

"The Iranians are trying to drive wedges between us and the Europeans," a US source said. "We don't think the differences are that great. We think the critical dialogue

is the carrot. Iran just takes the carrot and eats it. Unless you have a stick you are not going to get anywhere..."

### **Bill Focuses on Energy Trade**

Dow Jones, Mar. 21 - A key U.S. House committee passed legislation sanctioning foreign energy trade or investment with Iran or Libya.

All members of the House Committee on International Relations present for the vote approved the bill...

The House bill -which must still pass two other House committees- allows the president to sanction foreign companies that export to Iran or Libya "any goods or technology on a United Nations- approved list of key petroleum technology items." This trade provision was deleted from the Senate bill before the Senate legislation passed last December...

In another difference from the Senate bill, the House measure forces the president to choose two sanctions from a list of five to be placed on a sanctioned company or person...

The House bill includes a fifth and tougher option for the president; a prohibition on imports from and exports to the sanctioned entity.

### **Khamenei says Iran will not change Middle East policy**

AFP, Mar. 23 - Ali Khamenei said his country will not submit to the pressures of the West and will not surrender its opposition to the Middle East Peace Process. The Iranian television quoted Khamenei's speech in Mashhad as saying, "Iran is not a country which could be forced into changing its positions by pressure and intimidation."

### **Tehran intimidates Germany**

AFP, Mar. 18 - IRNA news agency reported that the Iranian council of ministers Monday stipulated that the German Prosecutor's arrest warrant against the Iranian Intelligence Minister Ali Fallahian "contradicted the international norms..." The Iranian council of ministers warned against the consequences of such "an irrational behavior"... and called on Germany to "realize the dangers and risks involved in this impudent and unjustifiable action."

AFP, Mar. 18 - Dozens of Islamic fundamentalists, who were all members of the Helpers of Hezbollah, gathered in front of the German Embassy in Tehran and said that Iran "would never submit to the World Arrogance" and that "if the arrest warrant is not canceled by the German Judiciary, the Hezbollah will be put on alert, throughout the world." In a provocative act, the demonstrators carried the photographs of the former hostages of the U.S. embassy in Tehran who were taken hostage in the wake of the 1979 Islamic revolution.

AFP, Mar. 22 - Iran threatened that if Germany refuses to revoke the arrest warrant against its Intelligence Minister, it can also act through the judiciary to put under surveillance "top western officials." Yazdi, the Iranian chief justice announced that Iran has "many files against the United States and Europe who have inflicted much damage on our country before the revolution and the shah's fall." He continued, "We can easily suit these top officials who were friends of the shah and are still serving in their posts."

### **Export of terrorism and fundamentalism**

*Al-Ordon* weekly, Mar. 18 - The meeting recently between Dr. Awaz Kalifat, the [Jordanian] Interior Minister, and the Iranian vice-President addressed two main issues: First the problem of Iran's relations with some organizations tied to terrorism. Second was the continued meddling of the Iranian diplomats in the internal affairs of Jordan. It is said that the Interior Minister has submitted an official letter to the Iranian official on the continued intervention by some Iranian diplomats in some regions, especially against the Israeli tourists.

*As-Sharq Al-Awsat*, Mar. 19 - Official sources in the Turkish Ministry of Interior said a pro-Iran Turkish organization is possibly responsible for the assassination of at least 30 famous Turkish personalities...

The sources say that this is one out of a number of groups who are trained in Iran... Dozens have also been trained in the camps of the Revolutionary Guards Corps in Lebanon. In the past two years, 14 explosions took place in Turkey which were attributed to the Hezbollah. Also the kidnappings of eight Iranian exiles and their secret delivery to Iran are attributed to the Hezbollah... Ilmaz has announced that he is very determined against Tehran... He canceled the trip to Turkey of Gholam-Hussein Bolandian, the Iranian deputy Minister of Interior. This meant a halt to the work of the joint security committee...

## **FEATURE**

### **Maryam Rajavi: The Courage to Fight**

*Prunija Pawize*, Mar. 17 - The Iranian women are stoned and flogged in public. The fundamentalists have been able to create more than 70 forms of torture to mistreat even pregnant women in the prisons. This reactionary outlook is exported to other countries and is accompanied with terrorism. Maryam Rajavi says it is against Islam, because there are but a few verses in the Quran which point to the physical differences between the two sexes and their duties... The Mojahedin believe in the dynamism of Islam, a religion which respects freedom, democracy and growth, and believes in the equality of the sexes, holding them both responsible towards the growth of their society.

Their movement is a political alternative and beyond: a social alternative. This truth is evident in the presence of

women at all levels of their movement, even in the leadership... Their constitution guarantees political, ideological, social and professional freedom of choice, free of discrimination. We have all turned into the fans of Maryam because she is fighting with the women's worst enemy, that is gender discrimination which survives on terror and intimidation.

Gemini News, Britain, Mar. 22 - Maryam Rajavi is a woman preaching liberation and reform to a Muslim world dominated by backward-looking male chauvinists....

If the National Council of resistance (NCR), the movement she commands, overthrows the regime of the Islamic fundamentalist mullahs and takes power in Iran, Rajavi will become a major force of change in the Muslim world...

Maryam Rajavi combines religious devotion with progressive thinking... She stands for a separation of Church and State and complete equality between religions and sects. She promotes "total equality" between men and women, the devolution of power and responsibility from men to women, and even positive discrimination in favour of women, "to compensate for their retardation..."

By taking this line she becomes the most revolutionary of today's Muslim thinkers, and the most controversial. She has put her reforms into practice in the Mujahedin, where the entire 12-member leadership council is female, and the NCR, where half the posts are held by women. The process of handing over responsibility to women, which began in 1984, has, she says, created "a revolution in our thinking and transformed our value system."

"It was a painful process both for men, who were reluctant to shed their positions of responsibility, and for women, who were reluctant to assume responsibility."

Mujahedin members proudly proclaim that the experiment has worked: men are relieved of the pressure of full responsibility they once felt, and women have become equals in all spheres. Rajavi believes women's liberation must precede national liberation and that the equality of women in the liberation struggle is "the best guarantee of democracy" in the future.

*Aktuel Perspektiv*, Norwegian Labor Party's weekly publication, Mar. 16 - [Mrs. Rajavi said] there are no verdicts or orders in the Quran which prevents women from occupying top positions in the leadership of the society. This is said by a political leader, who is herself a devoted Muslim woman...

Maryam Rajavi said the international community has yet to take fundamentalism seriously, thinking this is an internal problem for Muslims. But it is not so. Fundamentalism is dangerously on the offensive throughout the world. She mentioned the example of Algeria: The misogynist hatred we see in Iran forms the dynamics of fundamentalism. If we do not rise up against the fundamentalist suppression of women, it will destroy all the achievements of the civilized world.