

# NEWS ON IRAN

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## DOMESTIC

### Second round of Majlis elections boycotted

*Iran Zamin*, Apr. 22 - The Iranian people overwhelmingly boycotted the second round of the mullahs' sham Majlis elections. NCR President Massoud Rajavi had earlier urged them not to vote in the election farce.

Reports indicate that many of the polling stations were deserted in Tehran, Tabriz, Mashad, Khorramabad, Babol, Doroud, Shiraz, Rasht, Ardebil, Ahwaz, Arak, Qazvin and Orumieh as only a few people went to vote.

Furious over the complete boycott, officials dispatched the Guards Corps and soldiers, dressed as civilians, to the polling stations to exaggerate the turn out.

In some locations, the regime had stationed between 15 to 20 agents from the Guards Corps and the State Security Forces to maintain control.

### Protests mar Majlis elections

NCR Statement, Apr. 19 - Thousands of residents in Tabriz, capital of East Azerbaijan province, staged a protest in the city's bazaar, chanting antigovernment slogans.

The action came after a candidate, Mohammad-Ali Chehregani, withdrew in protest to restrictions imposed by the regime during the second round of the Majlis election farce.

The Guards Corps and agents from the Ministry of Intelligence attacked the crowd, beating them with batons. The protesters clashed with the Guards, throwing molotov cocktails and stones at them. In the four-hour protest, at least 100 were arrested and taken to unknown locations. A significant number of people were also wounded.

### Residents, Guards clash in north Iran

*Iran Zamin*, Apr. 22 - On election day, residents clashed with the Pasdaran in the northern city of Qa'emshahr. Large groups of people were arrested or wounded. The atmosphere in the city is reported tense. Besides the Guards, at least 15 plain-clothed security agents are stationed at each polling station to maintain control.

### Seven killed, 12 wounded in crackdown

*Iran Zamin*, Apr. 22 - Following the announcement of election results in Lorestan province, western Iran, large groups of people in Iranshah township, near the city of Nahavand, staged a demonstration, to protest the sham elections and widespread rigging.

To thwart the spread of the protest, the Pasdaran (Guards Corps) intervened and opened fire on the demonstrators, killing at least seven and wounding 12.

Two of the dead were Aziz Bahrain and Seyyed Mirza Ghorbani. Six of the wounded were transferred to a hospital in Nahavand.

### Brick factory strike continues

*Iran Zamin*, Apr. 22 - Strike by workers at Aali brick factory near Isfahan continues.

Protesting the non-payment of their wages in the last six months, the workers have staged a sit-in in front of Isfahan's governor's office and the local branch of Department of labor and social affairs.

Workers began their strike on November 29 and resumed it on April 8, after factory owner failed to pay the overdue wages and bonuses.

### Guards attack private party

*Iran Zamin*, Apr. 22 - Revolutionary Guards attacked a party arranged to celebrate the educational achievements of two children in a family, and assaulted the guests.

Some 40 agents in seven patrol vehicles undertook the raid. They detained all the guests for one day without food and water.

The guests were released after paying heavy fines. The host was also fined 4.5 million rials.

### IRNA's staff, Majlis deputies warned

*Jomhouri Islami*, Apr. 18 - Ansar-e Hezbollah, led by Hossein Allah Karam and Haji Bakhshi, converged on the offices of IRNA, the official news agency, warning the agency's employees through loudspeakers that they will throw reporters and editors of IRNA and a number of Majlis deputies from the buildings of the agency and the Parliament for "their disregard for the revolution's values and supporting the liberals."

### State prosecutor general arrested

*Iran Zamin*, Apr. 22 - Former Bushehr's state prosecutor, Jowhari Moqadam, was arrested on the charge of bribery and corruption. The order for the arrest came from the Intelligence Ministry because he defied his superiors. Two of his assistants have also been arrested.

### Rushdie death edict reaffirmed

AFP, Apr. 21, - In a press conference in Tehran, Mohammad Yazdi, the Head of Iran's Judiciary said the fatwa against Salman Rushdie "will finally be carried out some day." The fatwa relates to all Muslims and will some day be implemented. Yazdi said "the Rushdie problem will only be resolved through implementing the fatwa." He added, "We cannot solve this problem thorough negotiations with or pressures by some Western countries."

Two days earlier, the Majlis speaker, Ali Akbar Nateq Nouri, reaffirmed his support for the fatwa and said "he regrets that Rushdie is still alive."

## FOREIGN

### **Rajavi to EU: Retract critical dialogue**

NCR Secretariat, Apr. 21 - On the eve of the EU foreign ministers' meeting in Luxembourg, NCR President Massoud Rajavi urged EU foreign ministers to retract the policy of critical dialogue and adopt a decisive approach by supporting trade sanctions and ending economic and political support for the inhuman regime ruling Iran.

He added: Years of negotiations with the clerics within the framework of placating policies, such as critical dialogue, have been futile, only emboldening them to continue and intensify domestic repression and export of terrorism and fundamentalism.

Rajavi added: Critical dialogue and leniency have never affected any change in the mullahs' enmity toward peace in the Middle East.

Thus, not only do placating policies run counter to the highest interests of the Iranian people but also are against regional and global peace, stability and tranquillity. They will bring this regime's international interlocutors nothing but disgrace and loss, NCR President stressed.

### **Mullahs' diplomats linked to killings**

AP, Apr. 22 - Suspected Islamic terrorists arrested for killing two Iranian dissidents claimed they received orders from Tehran's diplomats in Turkey.

It is the second such reported link this month, following a dispute between Turkey and Iran that ended with the withdrawal of four diplomats by each side.

The latest claim named at least one of the Iranians already removed, the Turkish daily *Milliyet* reported.

Three suspected terrorists, captured by police recently, were still under interrogation, *Milliyet* said. Three Iranians and three other Turks were also detained.

Zahra Rajabi, a leading figure in the main Iranian opposition group Mujahedeen Khalq, and a friend were found dead in their Istanbul apartment last February.

In the earlier diplomatic dispute, Turkey demanded the withdrawal of four Iranian diplomats implicated in the assassination of a secular writer by a suspected Turkish Islamic terrorist. The suspect allegedly told police that he received orders from the diplomats...

Iranian dissidents in Turkey, numbering a few hundred thousand, have blamed Iran's fundamentalist regime for the murders of 50 dissidents in recent years. Tehran denies involvement.

### **Turkey warns clerics over meddling**

Reuters, Apr. 19 - Turkey warned Iran on Friday not to support Islamist militant groups on its soil amid a war of words between the neighbors over charges of spying and backing for radical Moslem gunmen.

"Not interfering in each other's internal affairs... must be the definite basis for our cooperation," Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz told reporters before talks with visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati.

Anatolian news agency said Yilmaz had spoken strong words to Velayati on Tehran's alleged backing for the killers of secularist figures and Iranian exiles in Turkey.

"I think it's the first time in recent years that Iran has been warned so strongly and clearly on this issue," Anatolian quoted a Turkish official as saying.

### **US. regrets Russia-Iran nuclear deal**

Reuters, Apr. 20 - US. President Bill Clinton said on Saturday he regretted Moscow's decision to go ahead with a deal to sell nuclear reactors to Iran.

"Yes, (the sale) is a bad idea... We are against any sales to Iran for one simple reason -- we believe they are trying to develop a bomb, notwithstanding what they say," he told a news conference at the summit end...

Interfax news agency on Saturday quoted informed sources as saying Russia might train up to 700 Iranian technicians to run the Bushehr nuclear plant...

### **Civilian killings in Lebanon condemned**

NCR Secretariat, Apr. 18 - The National Council of Resistance condemns the slaughter of large groups of innocent people in Lebanon by Israel and the displacement of thousands of people. It calls for end to military attacks, especially against civilians, by both sides.

Only the fundamentalists ruling Iran benefit from such actions to export terrorism and maintain enmity toward peace in the region.

### **Khamenei urges further Hizbollah strikes**

Reuters, Apr. 19 - Iranian supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Friday called on pro-Iranian Hizbollah guerrillas in Lebanon to continue striking at Israel and he warned them against compromises.

"Honor in this world and the hereafter is for you to resist those who violate lives, property, religion and independence, and to strike blows against them until they come to regret their aggression," Khamenei said in a message to Hizbollah leader Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah.

"The slightest leniency towards the Zionists (Israel) will make them bolder and more brutal. This is the result of 50 years of experience by the neighbors of Palestine and the Palestinian people," Khamenei said.

"Today you are in the frontline of the defense of Islamic territories against aggressors. It is the religious duty of all world Moslems and all Islamic governments to defend Lebanon and to help the defenders of the its nation and government," Khamenei said.

### **Saudi clergyman challenges Tehran**

AP, Apr. 19 - In a challenge to Iran, Saudi Arabia's top Muslim clergyman ruled Friday that marches and demonstrations to denounce infidels during the annual pilgrimage to Mecca must be stopped.

The edict, or fatwa, by Sheik Abdul-Aziz bin Baz came just over a week before the pilgrimage, or hajj, is due to peak with more than 2 million Muslims from across the world gathering at the holy city of Mecca.

"Staging marches and demonstrations during the hajj season in Mecca or elsewhere to declare the disavowal of the infidels is a beda'a (baseless innovation) which gives rise to evil and wickedness," said Sheik Baz, Saudi Arabia's chief theologian.

**Pilgrims warned of firm response**

AP, Apr. 20 - Authorities will deal firmly with Iranian pilgrims if they stage rallies during the annual Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca that climaxes this week, Saudi Arabia's interior minister said Saturday.

"Iranian leaders know perfectly well that Saudi Arabia has never tolerated and will never tolerate such actions," Prince Nayef told a news conference near the holy city of Mecca.

The stern warning by Prince Nayef, a brother of King Fahd, came one day after Saudi Arabia's top theologian

ruled that staging rallies during the pilgrimage, or hajj, was heresy.

"We are not targeting the Iranians alone," said the Saudi interior minister, who is in charge of police and security.

"Anyone who tries to harm the security of the pilgrims will be dealt with firmly," he warned.