

Mullahs' meddling targets Iraq's elections

Iraq accuses Iranian Embassy of killing agents



AFP, Oct. 14, Baghdad - Iraq's national intelligence chief Mohammed al-Shahwani has accused Iran's Baghdad embassy of masterminding an assassination campaign that has seen 18 intelligence agents killed since mid-

September.

Shahwani told AFP a series of raids on three Iranian "safe houses" in Baghdad on September 29 had uncovered a treasure trove of documents linking Iran to plots to kill members of the intelligence service and using the Badr former militia of the Supreme Council for the Islamic Revolution in Iraq's (SCIRI) as its tool...

Since mid-September, 18 Iraqi intelligence agents have been killed in Iraq, 10 of them by the Badr organization on orders from Iran and the rest by Al-Qaeda-linked foreign militant Abu Mussab al-Zarqawi, Shahwani charged.

"Badr and Zarqawi have assassinated 18 of my men," Shahwani said from his heavily-guarded villa in central Baghdad.

Shahwani confirmed that two of his intelligence agents were beheaded by Zarqawi's Unity and Holy War group, as seen in a video released by the fighters on Wednesday.

The intelligence chief said he suspected Tehran was funding Zarqawi, but lacked conclusive proof.

Prime Minister Iyad Allawi's government has escalated its rhetoric against Iran in recent days, accusing the neighboring Islamic republic of running a campaign of sabotage in Iraq.

But Shahwani's claims of huge caches of documents seized in the September raids are the most explicit charges to date against Iran and the first time an Iraqi party has been publicly named as Tehran's proxy.

Shahwani said that during the raids, "Documents were obtained ... (showing) the Iranian regime ... is seeking to embroil some of the SCIRI members in subversive acts to exacerbate Iraq's wounds and dominate it."

The intelligence director said the documents showed Iran had a 45-million-dollar budget for sowing chaos in Iraq and had recruited members of Badr and a subsidiary party, Hezbollah, to kill Iraqi intelligence agents.

"A document (showed) that Iran allocated a budget to Badr Corps, totalling 45 million dollars.

"Among the objectives of this budget is to back the formation of a security service grouping several directorates to carry out a set of subversive acts including ... physical liquidation."

Shahwani flipped through folders of charts and writing in Farsi that he said his agents were still sifting through.

He claimed his intelligence service had obtained the names and addresses of Badr members working directly for Iran....

Shahwani says that four Iraqis who were arrested following a botched assassination attempt on an Iraqi intelligence officer in September belonged to the Hezbollah of Iraq party and had confessed to being on the payroll of Iran's intelligence service

Hezbollah is part of the SCIRI alliance of Shiite parties.

The intelligence chief took out dossiers and glossy photos of 27 members of Iran's embassy in Iraq and accused them of masterminding Iranian covert operations. "We will ask them to leave the country," Shahwani said.

Shahwani also claimed that Iranian spies had held meetings at Iraqi politician Ahmed Chalabi's Baghdad home since May when the one-time Pentagon favorite's house was raided by Iraqi police and US forces, saying that Chalabi was suspected by the Americans of leaking intelligence to Iran.



Head of Iraq intel: Tehran spends millions of dollars for armed groups, media in Iraq

Az-Zaman daily, Oct. 13 - The head of Iraq's Intelligence accused

several Iraqi parties and political groups of working to sabotage the intelligence agency and exterminate its personnel. He explained that the intelligence agency "faces many challenges, up to the point of assassination of intelligence personnel. Calls by these parties and groups have led to death and injury of many intelligence officers and staff at the hands of operatives of these parties."

Major General Muhammad Abdollah Al-Shahwani did not name the parties and groups he accused and only noted that they are represented in the interim government. He said, "The intelligence agency deployed a series of measures to gather information to identify those behind the assassination of its personnel, and discovered very important documents and video tapes that will be made public in time."

In an exclusive interview with Az-Zaman daily, Shahwani said, "These information and documents were analyzed and when we investigated the suspicious buildings, residences and places where the documents had been found, we strangely realized that many of the documents were about the work of the intelligence agency. It had gone so far that some parties were launching investigations into the legality of the work of the intelligence agency, because, according to the documents, the activity of Iraq's intelligence agency is a threat to Iran's plans. In addition, some documents indicated Iran's enormous interferences in Iraqi affairs."

Major General Shahwani said the most outstanding documents obtained are "the transcripts of meetings held at the residence of a party leader where certain Iranian agencies had issued orders to some persons, revealing the role this politician would play in the next stage." He added, "One document verifies Iran's role in the founding of a company in Iraq that produces TV programs. It has allocated \$79,882 to the company that is run by an Iranian named Jafar Pishqadam. Moreover, Iran funds five radio stations and a number of local newspapers in Baghdad. It provides the needs, resources and money, and an Iranian real estate owner oversees their activities."

Shahwani stressed that this is "severe violation of Iraq's sovereignty and a bad precedent, especially because these press institutions work without official consent." The head of Iraq's intelligence agency also said, "The documents also reveal that these institutions gathered sensitive information and passed them on to the intelligence of the Iranian Guards Corps."

Shahwani disclosed another document that had been obtained by Iraq's intelligence. "This document proves that Iran has allocated 45 million dollars to armed groups of Iraqi parties, which it employs to serve its own plans and objectives. These same parties and groups have control over parts of Iraq. They assassinate and physically eliminate members of the Iraqi security agencies, and have created a security structure that is made up of several departments to carry out sabotage operations."

The Washington Times

Iran plots Ramadan infiltration in Iraq

Washington Times, Oct. 12, Paris - A

top Iranian dissident living in Paris says up to 800 clerics and theology students from Iran are in the process of infiltrating cities in neighboring Iraq in time for the Islamic holy month of Ramadan, which begins Friday. Ayatollah Jalal Ganje'i, a prominent critic of the Iranian regime, said in an interview with The Washington Times that the influx is part of continuing efforts by Tehran's power brokers to exploit the crisis in Iraq in order to set up a sister fundamentalist Islamic republic. The religious leaders, dispatched by the Islamic Propaganda Organization, plan to use the holy month to propagate militant Islamic views, he said, with the goal of strengthening Iraqi political groups whose philosophy and aims coincide with those of Iran's theocratic regime. The cleric said the religious leaders will take their message into Kut, Nasariyah, Amarra, Najaf, Basra and Baghdad, joining a massive network of other Iranian agents already in Iraq, many in armed underground cells. "I expect the violence to increase, and this will also set the stage for further meddling in upcoming Iraqi elections," said Ayatollah Ganje'i, who is affiliated with the National Council of Resistance, a State Department-designated terrorist group. Also known as the People's Mujahideen Organization of Iran, the group was the first to reveal details of Iran's nuclear activities.



"Iran is hoping to use the January elections to bring its own Islamic fundamentalists to power," the cleric said. He did not specify which leaders Tehran was working with in Iraq.



Tehran agents running for Iraqi elections

Al-Mashreq daily, Oct. 11 – Some people have succeeded in bringing in thousands of non-Iraqi foreigners into Najaf and Karbala a year after the downfall of the regime.

A group that was a member of the former Governing Council and is in the current interim government and controls birth registration agencies has issued thousands of official Iraqi papers to turn Iranians, who have illegally entered Iraq, into Iraqis!

He said, "Don't be surprised if I tell you Iranians will participate in elections and Iraqis will watch! I protested to his oversimplification of the sensitive Iraqi issue of elections, but he said, "Parties and groups that Iran has shaped in its political and intelligence circles have succeeded in attracting thousands of Iranians and granting them forged Iraqi papers so that they could actively take part in the first democratic elections in Iraq!"



Dragging a neighbor into anarchy

National Post, Oct. 7 - U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell recently

told the International Herald Tribune that "Iran is providing support for the insurgency in Iraq." He added, however, that "the extent of its influence over insurgent forces is not clear." But it is very clear to Iraqis themselves -- including Iraq's Defence Minister, Hazem Shaalan....

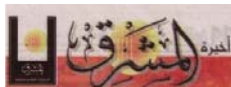
Iran is largely a nation of Shiite Muslims. The same religious group constitutes a majority of Iraq's citizens, and so Shiites will likely get their way when expected elections are held next year. Moreover, the most influential and organized Iraqi Shiite parties are deeply influenced by Iran, ideologically as well as politically...

Iraqi media have recently reported that a truckload containing 1,800 82-mm mortar rounds, three mortar launchers, 250 Katyusha rockets and large quantities of explosives was seized in transit from Iran to Iraq. Iranian independent opposition sources say 4,000 Shiite clerics from Iran have been sent to Iraq since the fall of Saddam's regime.

Why is Iran stirring up Iraq's guerrilla war when it might just as easily profit from a smooth transition to democracy?

The answer lies in Iran's domestic affairs: If Iran, a dictatorship, were to permit a truly democratic political structure to take root next door, it would only provide encouragement to the millions of young Iranians who have been militating for similar reforms back home...

In the long run, promoting stability in Iraq will require democratization in Iran -- for Tehran's theocrats will never accept a democracy on their western border. Until that day, the United States and other Western nations should hold Tehran to account for the violence and chaos it is deliberately fomenting. It is bad enough that 70 million Iranians must live under tyranny. Iraq's population must not be allowed to suffer the same fate.



Iraqi judges accuse Iran of spreading drugs in Iraq

Al-Mashreq daily, Oct. 13, Amman – Dr. Madhat Mahmoud, president of Iraq's Judicial Council said in a judicial conference in Jordan that Iran currently brings

large amounts of various drugs into through its paid agents to realize its political and social goals inside Iraq. He added that drugs are also brought in by some Iranians who enter Iraq to visit the holy sites to the point that narcotics have become a thriving trade in this disorderly security situation.

He noted that Iran wants to use drugs to create groups for it to employ when needed. Dr. Madhat Mahmoud says a number of drugs sellers, criminals and thieves have been turned over to the relevant courts and they have emphasized their relations with Iran. The head of Iraq's judiciary called for examination of Iran's interferences in Iraq those aim to maintain chaos and insecurity, in an international conference.



Tehran's inhuman hand in Iraq revealed in women's seminar

Al-Ahali weekly, Oct. 13 – The Ministry of Women's Affairs held a national seminar for Iraqi women for the first time ever early this week with the slogan "With us for building Iraq's future."

In this two-day seminar, I spoke with a woman who said how terrorists took her sister hostage for several days for “working in an Iraqi company that collaborates with the heathens”. She explained how terrorists tortured her physically and mentally under the name of Islam. The evil terrorists had taken her to Falluja and tortured her. Another woman from Basra told me how Iranians control public places and impose their ways in the attire, cosmetics and lifestyle of the people, especially women. But the people of Basra oppose this dark ideological invasion that has come from the east. However, a group that is materially and morally backed by Iran scares the residents with the force of terrorism and weapons under the cover of religion.



Multi-National Forces step up control on Iran border

Al-Mashreq daily, Oct. 13 – Multi-National Forces announced yesterday that the Iran-Iraq border now enjoys high security after a part of the border guard were equipped with 44 extra vehicles last month. An MNF statement said these vehicles were bought to boost the ability of border forces. An official of border security in Shorta region said the vehicles help in controlling more regions and there will be more patrols.



Iranian Intel - Tehran harboring bin Laden

2 officials say they've seen terrorist under care of Revolutionary Guard

World Net Daily, Oct. 8 - Iran's cleric leaders are harboring Osama bin Laden, according to two Iranian intelligence officials cited in a new book. The sources say they have seen the al-Qaida terrorist leader alive and well, although he no longer resembles the picture on FBI wanted posters.

Author Richard Minter writes in "Shadow War: The Untold Story of How Bush Is Winning the War on Terror" that bin Laden "has trimmed his beard to fit the more traditional look of a Shi'ite cleric and he seemed to have put on weight, according to intelligence officials."

The sources say bin Laden is constantly on the move, "shuttling from Iranian safe houses controlled by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard to areas of Afghanistan controlled by the Iranian-backed warlord Gulbuddin Hekmatyar."

"Choopan," one of the sources, gives three reasons why Tehran would give safe haven to bin Laden, risking the wrath of the West. "First, the Iranians believe they can keep bin Laden's presence a secret and plausibly deny it if publicly accused," Minter writes. "Second, the mullahs are feeling increasingly threatened by the War on Terror." The mullahs, Choopan says, fear a counter-revolution and see bin Laden's fighters as tools they can use to ensure the failure of these young democracies in Iraq and Afghanistan and the survival of mullah-dominated Iran. Finally, they share enemies, including many Arab leaders, the United States and the rest of the Western world."

The book, launched earlier this week by Regnery, publisher of "Unfit for Command," already is No. 2 on the Amazon.com list.



Tehran infiltrates Iraq through Qods Force

Al-Shabed Al-Mostaqel, Oct. 12 – Informed press sources revealed Iran's extensive infiltration from along the border with Iraq. They said that forces of Iran's Revolutionary Guards interfere in Iraq's internal affairs through the Qods Corps.

Iraq accuses Iran of sabotaging its intelligence

Xinhua, Oct. 13, Baghdad -- A senior Iraqi intelligence official has accused Iran and some political parties of cooperating in an attempt to work against Iraqi new intelligence forces, local newspaper Azzaman reported Wednesday.

Lieutenant Colonel Mohamed Abdullah al Shahwani, head of the Iraqi intelligence, said in an interview with the newspaper published on Wednesday that "the Iraqi intelligence is facing a lot of challenges that reached the degree of unannounced call to eliminate its members and killing them by some of the parties." But he didn't give the names of the parties. He pointed out that such calls caused the killing and the injury of a large number of intelligence officers. He emphasized that they have evidence and documents that would be presented in time, and that the information and the documents were analyzed to help them in searching some suspicious places and headquarters.

Al Shahwani revealed that Iran is financing TV and radio channels, as well as allocating 45 million US dollars for armed groups in Iraq, which it hired to serve the Iranian policies in Iraq and to carry out the assassination or acts of sabotaged by Iranians.

Hazim Al Shaalan, the Iraqi defense minister, has accused Iran several times of interfering in the internal affairs of Iraq, and standing behind many of the explosions and acts of sabotage in Iraq.

Tehran backs suicide operations in Iraq – ING spokesman



Al-Mashreq daily, Oct. 12, Baghdad – A spokesman for the Iraqi National Guard said 73 Afghans who had illegally entered Iraq were arrested yesterday. Captain Forat Al-Tamimi, Iraqi National Guard spokesman in southern Iraq said, “Afghans were arrested in Al-Amara who had entered illegally from Iran, which often allows foreign armed agents to cross over and is behind suicide operations. They were handed over to the police because we believe there are terrorists among them.”

The Interim Iraqi Government tries to monitor border passages to bring under control the security situation that is increasingly in disorder as elections approach. These efforts, however, are neutralized by neighboring countries that facilitate entry of armed individuals into Iraq.



Senior Iraqi sheik elaborates on Iranian meddling in Iraq

Al-Safeer semi-weekly, Oct. 11 – On the interferences of the neighboring governments which undermine Iraq's security, Sheikh Hussein Shaalan Al-Zobeidi, president of the Central Council of Iraqi Shiekh and Tribe Leaders, told *Al-Safeer*, “Iran’s rulers are the one who interfere the most in Iraq’s affairs. The Iraqi government clearly announced through the Defense Minister and the Interior Minister that the Iranian regime carries out acts of sabotage against Iraq and deploys various methods including through hired agents, dispatching teams of saboteurs, or meddling in Iraq’s politics.

“We believe that the reason for all these interferences is because the borders are completely open. Iraqi officials announced that they have arrested Iranian and Iraqi gangs recruited by Iran’s Intelligence Ministry to carry out murder, explosion, looting and plunder and create religious conflicts and some of them in the south have even called for separation from Iraq. This is an old Iranian plot that the Iraqi people are familiar with. We say the statements of the Iraqi officials are one hundred percent right.

“Our analysis is that Iran is going through a political chaos and it has accounts to settle with Iraqi and American parties. Therefore, it has turned Iraq into a place for settling its accounts with all its enemies. As a matter of fact, stability and security of Iraq is tantamount to the termination of the rule of Iran's rulers. For this reason, they work to destabilize Iraq and preserve their own grab on power.

“Previously, we thought that it was the former (Iraqi) regime that made aggressions on Iran and began the war. But today, who is attacking Iran to instigate such interferences in our affairs? Another reason is that the former regime retreated from Iranian territory and returned to the pre-war international borders. At that time, the People's Mojahedin fought Iraq alongside the Iranian Army. However, when Iraq returned to the (international) borders, they felt that the war was no longer legitimate and they abandoned the fight. The Iranian regime fought and dispersed them and inflicted all kinds of torture and murder on them. “We are convinced that the PMOI is a humanitarian organization that believes in peace, stability and benevolence. We know that the PMOI has experienced much hardship under the Shah and is facing much suffering under the mullahs. We say that the PMOI is an organization representing the pain and suffering of the Iranian people and the future belongs to it...”



Iraq deports 147 Iranians from border province

Associated Press, Oct. 13, Kut - Iraqi officials have deported 147 Iranians from the eastern border province of Wasit, police said Wednesday.

Police spokesman Othaman Kadhim said the deportees _ including three women and one child _ had illegally entered Iraq from neighboring Iran. No other details were available.



Hundreds of Iranians jailed in Iraq

Reuters, Oct. 11, Tebran - Iraq today released 130 Iranians arrested for crossing the border illegally, but another 270 remain behind bars, Iran's top diplomat in Baghdad told state television.

Washington and some officials in Iraq's interim government have accused Iran of meddling in Iraq's affairs and allowing weapons and fighters to cross their long border.

138 including Iranians arrested in Iraq

Al-Iraqiya TV, Oct. 11 – The Iraqi National Guard arrested 138 Iranians and Afghans in Al-Amara and Naseriya who had illegally crossed the border into Iraq.

Sinai massacre – an Iranian-Hizballah-al Qaeda Co-production

DEBKA File, Exclusive Report, Oct. 8 - On the morning after a terrorist bombing rampage at three idyllic Sinai desert resorts – with two dozen known dead and scores still missing – the first clues have been found to the identities of the hands behind the massacre and their targets. DEBKAFile's intelligence and counter-terror sources report that the explosives used to tear away the entire frontage of the Taba Hilton and hit the Nueiba oasis campside further south on the Red Sea coast were of Iranian manufacture; the same make as the bombs used in the 1996 Khobar Towers blast and the 2003 Istanbul attacks.



Tehran backs Pakistan's terrorists

Al-Jazeera TV, Oct. 7 – The number of victims of an explosion against a Sunni gathering in Moltan, Pakistan, rose to 50. Some pointed their fingers directly at Shiites and Iran.

A witness: Today's incident was the most severe terrorist incident that Pakistan has witnessed. Pakistani Shiites are responsible for it. They carry out their attacks on Iran's order and with that country's financial backing.

Extremist groups, sponsoring states debate on new terrorist attacks on the West

International Strategic Studies Association, Oct. 12, by Jason Fuchs of Global Information System (GIS), U.S. -- A variety of sources have confirmed that the Iranian and Syrian governments, plus major Islamist groups, are continuing to debate whether to proceed with a major new terrorist attack in the West, and specifically the US, before the US elections on November 2, 2004.

GIS sources reported that the Islamist movement was engaged in intense strategic discussions about a new "spectacular" offensive against Western, specifically US targets. Critically, GIS sources added that these discussions involved the Islamist-Jihadist movement's chief state sponsors, including Iran and Syria. On the question of the proposed forthcoming Islamist offensive, GIS sources detailed: "[Government officials in] Damascus and Tehran, and [Islamist leaders in] Islamabad are in on the debate and are having major input."....

While Washington had secured significant victories in both Iraq and Afghanistan, Tehran and its Islamist allies appeared cognizant that they had entered a critical period during which they apparently believed they retained the ability to affect the US November 2004 election and, potentially, reshape the strategic playing field of the region by decisively striking out against the US and the West.

The question remained as to how the Islamist-Jihadist movement would decide to act on this perceived capability and whether the West would confront the state sponsors of the planned offensive before it was too late.

Tehran's behavior merits world's firm action



Iran's past behavior merits Security Council referral

The Washington Times, Oct. 13 - The Bush administration said yesterday it is open to European incentives for Iran to suspend its uranium enrichment — a key to producing nuclear weapons — but it will not offer any U.S. benefits to Tehran.

Britain, Germany and France are to present a benefits package at a meeting of officials from the Group of Eight leading industrialized countries at the State Department on Friday, spokesman Richard Boucher told reporters.

"We'll hear what they've put together. We'll hear them out and talk together with them about how to move Iran into compliance" with the requirements of the U.N. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Boucher said. The discussions on a package of incentives are a last-ditch effort to persuade

Iran to abandon its uranium-enrichment activities before a crucial November meeting of the IAEA board of governors, U.S. and foreign diplomats said.

If Tehran does not comply, it most likely will be referred to the U.N. Security Council, which could impose sanctions. "What we are doing now is to examine how to get Iran to meet [the IAEA] requirements," he said. At the same time, he said, the United States will continue to insist that the matter be referred to the Security Council, even if Tehran accepts the European offer.

"It's past behavior merits referral" to the council, Mr. Boucher said...

Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said yesterday that the EU cannot force Iran to give up its right to enrich uranium.

"It is wrong for them to think they can, through negotiations, force Iran to stop enrichment," he told a conference in Tehran. "Iran will never give up its right to enrichment."



G8 to mull solution to nuclear impasse with Iran

CNN network, Oct. 13, Washington - The Bush administration says it will host a meeting of G8 diplomats this week in Washington in a bid to resolve a nuclear impasse with Iran.

At the meeting, to be held on Friday, European officials told CNN they would offer Tehran "bigger sticks and bigger carrots." They expect to present a package of possible incentives to Iran as an inducement in exchange for abandoning its nuclear ambitions...

U.S. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher said Tuesday the meeting would focus on how to bring Iran into compliance with the requirements of the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog, as well as how the Security Council might take up the issue should it be referred to them.



US favor Security Council referral following next IAEA meeting - Armitage

Reuters, Oct. 13, Tokyo - Iran should be "brought to account" on its nuclear program, but Washington is open to ideas other than taking it to the U.N. Security Council for sanctions, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage said Wednesday...

"The Iranians ... have made a decision apparently to hide, to continue to hide their program and indeed, in addition to that, they have made some very scurrilous statements publicly," Armitage told a news conference in Tokyo.

"We hold the view that Iran needs to be brought to account and we would like to move to the U.N. Security Council after the November (IAEA) board of governors' meeting," Armitage said.

"But we're open to all ideas that people have because one thing has become clear and that is that we all share -- the G8 (Group of Eight) -- the same end, the desire, and that is that Iran should be free of nuclear weapons and be transparent and let the international community have sufficient confidence that that is the case," he added.



EU will not tolerate nuclear armed Iran

Radio Farda, Oct. 12 - EU foreign ministers announced that they would not tolerate Iran getting equipped with nuclear weapons and called for international efforts with cooperation from Russia and the US to prevent this possibility. The EU ministers in Luxemburg assigned EU head of foreign affairs Javier Solana to prepare an encouraging and penalizing proposal for Iran.



U.S. in talks with Europeans on a nuclear deal with Iran

New York Times, Oct. 12, Washington - The Bush administration is holding talks with its European allies on a possible package of economic incentives for Iran, including access to imported nuclear fuel, in return for suspension of uranium enrichment activities that are suspected to be part of a nuclear arms program, European and American diplomats said Monday.

The diplomats said that while the administration had not endorsed any incentives for Iran, it was not discouraging Britain, France and Germany from assembling a package that the administration would consider after the American presidential election on Nov. 2, for likely presentation to Tehran later in the month...

But the discussions with the Europeans are also said to include specifics on what sanctions would be sought if Iran turns down any incentives presented by the Europeans, the European and American diplomats said.



Russia urges Iran to heed IAEA's demands

Daily Times, Oct. 11, Tehran - Russia urged Iran on Sunday to heed the UN nuclear watchdog's call for it to suspend sensitive nuclear work that could be used to make atomic bomb material. Iran, in turn, said it was ready to give whatever assurances were required to show that it will not use nuclear technology to make atomic weapons.

"As (Russian President Vladimir) Putin has suggested before, it is better if Iran listens to the agency's call. This is better for everyone," (Lavrov) told a joint news conference in Tehran with Kharrazi.

The United States wants Iran's case to be sent to the United Nations Security Council for possible sanctions if Iran has not complied with IAEA demands by the time of the UN watchdog's next meeting in late November. Iran last week said it had converted several tonnes of raw uranium to prepare it for enrichment. "Nuclear technology, including enriching uranium, is Iran's right and Iran will never abandon its right," Kharrazi said. "But at the same time Iran is ready to review all the proposals with which it can assure the international community that Iran's nuclear programme has no military purposes."

Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said that Moscow was opposed to seeing Iran referred to the UN Security Council over its nuclear programme. "To start thinking of any scenario which is not constructive to our point of view is premature and could be counter-productive," Lavrov said.

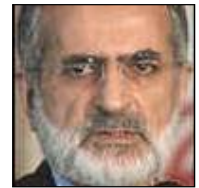


Iran cannot be forced to stop enrichment through negotiations – Kharrazi

Reuters, Oct. 13 - Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharrazi said Tuesday that the EU could not force Tehran to give up its right to enrich uranium, dealing a blow to Europe's efforts to halt the process.

"It is wrong for them (the EU) to think they can, through negotiations, force Iran to stop enrichment," Kharrazi said.

Iran says its nuclear program is for electricity generation and says it wants to master the full fuel cycle, including enrichment, so that it does not have to rely on imported fuel.



Mullahs would welcome Kerry Camp proposal-Official

Reuters, Oct. 9, Tehran - Iran would welcome a proposal by U.S. presidential candidate Senator John Kerry's running mate for a "great bargain" to solve the dispute over Tehran's nuclear program, a senior Iranian official said on Saturday.

Vice presidential candidate Senator John Edwards has said that Kerry, a Democrat, would be willing to supply Iran with nuclear fuel for power generation if Tehran abandons its own fuel-making capability - if Iran did not accept this offer, it would confirm Iran wanted to make an atom bomb.

Iran earlier rejected the proposal, saying it would be "irrational" for Iran to jeopardize what it says is its purely civilian nuclear program by relying on supplies from abroad.

But in an apparent policy shift, Hossein Mousavian, head of the foreign policy committee at Iran's Supreme National Security Council, said Iran would review the proposal.

"Iran welcomes any constructive proposal from any American candidate," Mousavian told Reuters in an interview. "We are willing to consider constructive proposals from Americans," he added.



An emboldened Iran refuses to give up sensitive fuel cycle work

Agence France Presse, Oct. 12, Tehran - Iran's Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi called on the European Union Tuesday to come up with proposals that could solve a stand-off between Tehran and the UN's nuclear watchdog, but repeated a refusal to give up sensitive fuel cycle work.

"The Europeans have not respected their commitment, and it is time that they took a step and presented proposals that respect our legitimate right to use civilian nuclear technology and that provide the necessary assurances that we will not seek to build an atomic bomb," he was quoted as saying by the student news agency ISNA. But he added that "it is wrong to think that they can, through negotiations,

oblige Iran to give up its right to uranium enrichment." Trust is reciprocal and can only be there if it is mutual, Kharazi said.



Tehran's new combat doctrine relies on deep-strike capability

World Net Daily, Oct. 9 - Iran has introduced what officials termed a new combat doctrine meant to repel any attack by Israel or the United States, reports Geostrategy-Direct, the global intelligence news service.

Officials have termed the doctrine "asymmetric warfare" and said it was aimed at countering a threat from a much larger and more powerful adversary. They said the combat doctrine seeks to identify and exploit Iranian military advantages in any war with a foreign power.

The new doctrine was demonstrated during the Ashura-5 military exercise in September...

IRGC commander Gen. Yahya Rahim-Safavi said Iran developed the concept of asymmetric warfare based on the assessment that Teheran's greatest threats came from Israel and the United States. Teheran has sought to deter these two countries by demonstrating Iran's deep-strike capability, he said.

"They know full well that if they start an onslaught against us, we will not be confined to our land borders and that we will attack them outside the boundaries of our land borders."



Conservatives in Iran battle spread of foreign investment

The New York Times, Oct. 10, Tehran - Iran's hard-line politicians who came to power in February are spearheading a drive to stop economic liberalization, just as they are cracking down on social and political freedoms. In August, Parliament passed a bill that gave it the right to order the government to cancel government contracts with two Turkish companies, forcing the moderate president, Mohammad Khatami, to cancel an official trip to Turkey.

"From now on the government will not be able to negotiate with any foreign investor because they will tell the government that it does not have the necessary authority," said Abdullah Ramezanzadeh, the government spokesman. He said the moves by the hard-liners were aimed at paralyzing the government and shutting it out of international affairs...

Rahim Ostkui, an opposition economist, said Parliament's measures would damage economic development and production. "We should expect production to drop, unemployment, poverty and corruption to increase with these policies," he said.

Violations of Human Rights in Iran



Table turned around: Iran accuses EU states of violating human rights

Agence France Presse (AFP), Oct. 13, Tehran - Iran has accused the European Union countries of committing "blatant human rights violations" in a response to fresh EU criticism of the Islamic republic's own record, press reports said Wednesday.

"The issue of violating the rights of Muslims, as well as other discriminatory laws regarding minorities, worries the Islamic republic of Iran," foreign ministry spokesman Hamid Reza Asefi was quoted as saying. "Regarding the blatant human rights violations in Europe, (Iran) expects European countries to take positive actions towards improving human rights."

A meeting of EU foreign ministers on Monday resulted in a statement saying the bloc remained "deeply concerned (that) serious violations of human rights are continuing to occur in Iran."

The statement also said there has been "little overall progress" since a human rights dialogue between the EU and Iran began in December 2002.

The EU also voiced concern that "the situation with regard to the exercise of key civil rights and political freedoms such as freedom of expression has deteriorated since the parliamentary elections of February this year."...

But Asefi said the EU declaration was based on "incorrect and inaccurate information", and accused the Europeans of not understanding "the realities of the Iranian society."



AI: Imminent execution of a woman

Amnesty International, Oct. 8 - Fatemeh Haghighat-Pajouh has reportedly been sentenced to death for the murder of her husband, who allegedly tried to rape her 15 year old daughter. She is reportedly at risk of imminent execution.



Tehran forced to postpone death decree for woman

Radio Farda, Oct. 11 - Following the international community's protest to the execution of Fatemeh Haghighat Pajouh, the Iranian judiciary was forced to step back and postpone her death decree.



Crackdown on Internet journalists in Iran

Reuters, Oct. 13, Tehran -- Iranian authorities have arrested at least six Internet journalists and bloggers in recent days, colleagues and relatives say, in a further blow to limited press freedoms in the Islamic state.

News-based Internet sites and online journals known as Weblogs have flourished in Iran where the disproportionately youthful population often turns to the Internet for information and entertainment. The hardline judiciary's muzzling of print media through the closure of some 100 publications in the last four years also meant the Internet became a haven for liberal journalists seeking a place to write.

Journalists and relatives named the six arrested journalists and Webloggers as Shahram Rafizadeh, Babak Ghafouri-Azar, Rouzbeh Amir-Ebrahimi, Hanif Mazroui, Omid Memarian and Mostafa Derayati.

"We do not know where they are being held. We heard they have been kept in solitary confinement," said a relative of one of the detainees, who asked not to be named.