

Larijani to attend Syria APA conference today

Tehran Times Political Desk
TEHRAN — Heading a high-ranking parliamentary delegation, Majlis Speaker Ali Larijani will arrive in Syria today to attend the 5th plenary session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA).

Representatives from 41 Asian countries will attend the four-day conference entitled "The Role of the Asian Parliaments in Achieving Security, Stabilization and Peace in the Middle East Region".

The conference will address several issues including support for the Palestinian people, declaration of friendship, the realization of health justice in Asia, challenges caused by globalization, campaign against corruption, the increase of cooperation among Asian parliaments and governments, information and communication technology, the effects of global economic crisis on the economies of the APA member states, energy conditions, massive tree planting, respect for cultural diversity, and campaign against poverty and terrorism.

Seventeen international organizations and institutions will attend the conference as observers.

Iran finishes 4th in Asia with 20 golds

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 Altogether, 9,700 athletes from 45 countries vied in 42 various sports making the Guangzhou games the largest event in the history of the Asian Games.

A total of 12,600 drug tests were carried out with just two violations; one by Uzbek wrestler Jakhongir Muminov and the other Uzbek judoka Shokir Muminov.

Badminton men's singles gold medalist Lin Dan was voted as Most Valuable Player (MVP).

Iranian gold medalists at the Asian Games are as follows:

- Athletics:**
Sajad Moradi- Men's 800 meters
- Ehsan Haddadi- Men's Discus Throw
- Canoe/Kayak Sprint:**
Ahmadreza Talebian- Men's Kayak Single 1000 meters
- Karate:**
Jasem Vishkaei- Men's -84kg
Zabiollah Poursheyb- Men's +84kg
- Rowing:**
Mohsen Shadi- Lightweight Men's Single Sculls
- Taekwondo:**
Mohammad Bagheri Motamed- Men's -68kg
Alireza Nasr Azadani- Men's -74kg
Yousef Karami- Men's -87kg
- Weightlifting:**
Behdad Salimi- Men's +105kg
- Wrestling:**
Omid Noruzi- Men's Greco-Roman 60kg
Saeid Abdvali- Men's Greco-Roman 66kg
Taleb Nematpour- Men's Greco-Roman 84kg
Babak Ghorbani- Men's Greco-Roman 96kg
Sadeqh Gudarzi- Men's Free-style 74kg
Jamal Mirzaei- Men's Free-style 84kg
Reza Yazdani- Men's 96kg
- Wushu:**
Mohsen Mohammad-Seifi- Men's Sanshou 60kg
Khadijeh Azadpour- Women's Sanshou 60kg
Hamid-Reza Gholipour- Men's Sanshou 75kg

Iran possesses over 35 kilos of 20% enriched uranium

Tehran Times Political Desk
TEHRAN — A senior nuclear official announced on Saturday that Iran has produced over 35 kilograms of uranium enriched to the purity level of 20 percent.

Every month, over three kilograms of uranium enriched to 20 percent is produced in the country, Ali Akbar Salehi, director of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran, told ISNA news agency.

He added the Islamic Republic is also able to produce 5 kilograms of uranium enriched to 20 percent per month, but it is not necessary at this time.

He also expressed hope that a domestically-produced fuel will be loaded into the core of the Tehran nuclear research reactor by late summer next year.

The reactor produces radioisotopes for cancer treatment.



He went on to say that a workshop has been set up in Iran for teaching how to use radioactive materials in diagnosing heart diseases.

This is the first time such a workshop has been held in Iran, he said, adding the current one is being run in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

He went on to say that the AEOI can produce radioisotope if the Tehran nuclear research reactor is provided with enough fuel.

Since Iran faced problems with supplying fuel to the reactor, radioisotope is produced every other week but there is nothing to be worried about, he explained.

However, he said Iran has bought some radioisotope from Russia, which will be shipped to the country in the next few weeks.

Basijis should be standard-bearers of moderation: Rafsanjani

Tehran Times Political Desk
TEHRAN — Expediency Council Chairman Ayatollah Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani has said that the Basij volunteer forces should be standard-bearers of moderation and avoid extremism.

"The Basij, like its founder (late Imam Khomeini), should be the standard-bearer of moderation in cultural and social affairs," Rafsanjani said in a letter

released on Friday on the anniversary of the establishment of the Basij organization in 1979 on the order of Imam Khomeini.

As a great national asset the Basij should not carry out extremist actions under the influence of "political brouhahas" and should not be "polluted" by the political groups that are trying to take advantage of the Basij to achieve their political goals, he noted.

Rafsanjani added this people-based organization should only try to serve the interests of Islam, Iran, and the Islamic system and fight against those who are acting against Iran and Islam.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Rafsanjani praised the role of Basijis in defending the country during the imposed war (1980-88 Iran-Iraq war) and supporting the Islamic system and government since the victory of the Islamic Revolution.

Ahmadinejad insists subsidy reform will improve living standards

Tehran Times Political Desk
TEHRAN — President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has once again reassured people that they will be better-off with the implementation of the subsidy reform plan, emphasizing that the so-called overhaul of the economy will not have serious repercussions.

"The administration has planned in a way that the implementation of the law will improve the living standards of the low-income families and they will not face any (economic) pressure," Ahmadinejad said on Saturday in a meeting with taxi and bus drivers working in the public transport sector.

Experts have expressed concern that the elimination of fuel subsidies may result in a sharp rise in bus, train, air and cab fares, which in turn can lead to a hike in the prices of various goods and services. But, government officials say the fares will be raised only by 10% after the beginning of the main stage of the plan.

The president said drivers are the real supporters of the



who think they are someone."

The subsidy reform plan envisages a cutting of subsidies on fuel, electricity, and certain goods over the course of five years. The administration has decided to pay cash subsidies for an undecided period of time to compensate low-income families for the inflationary repercussions of the plan. The initial stage of the plan started last month as the administration paid cash payments into the bank accounts of people. The government has announced the main stage of the plan will go into force during the Iranian calendar month of Azar which began on November 22.

administration in enforcing the subsidy reform plan.

"The administration is determined to give people their entitlements through implementation of the subsidy reform plan so that people themselves can decide how to spend (the subsidies)" Ahmadinejad said.

Elsewhere in his remarks, Ahmadinejad praised drivers for being hard-working and modest. "I prefer a strand of drivers' hair to those people

Tehran advises Aboul Gheit to mind violation of Egypt's rights by Israel

Tehran Times Political Desk
TEHRAN — An informed source at the Iranian Foreign Ministry has advised the Egyptian foreign minister to abandon pursuing the interests of ill-wishers in the region and instead take care of his country's rights which are being repeatedly violated by the Zionist regime of Israel.

On Friday, the Qatari newspaper Al-Sharq quoted Egyptian Foreign Minister Abul Gheit as saying that "Iranian interventions in the internal affairs of the (Persian) Gulf must not be allowed. We

say to our brothers in Iran... Iraq must be left alone and Lebanon must be left alone. And Iran should not intrude in Bahrain in any way."

"I advise Mr. Aboul Gheit, that instead of pursuing the interest of ill-wishers and their colonial plots to sow discord among Islamic states, to pay more attention to the unity of the Islamic world and to guard Egypt's security and rights in its periphery which are repeatedly being violated by the Zionist regime," he said.

The Iranian official said the Egyptian foreign minister's remarks were intended

to divert attention from the violation of the Egyptian people's basic rights.

The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, added the Persian Gulf states are powerful enough to take care of their security and interests and it is only the Persian Gulf countries which are qualified to comment on regional issues.

Tehran-Cairo ties have been severed since 1980 following the Islamic Revolution in Iran and Egypt's recognition of Israel. The two countries have since only maintained interest sections in each other's capitals.

Iranian MPs criticize EU's call for US to remove MKO from terrorist list

Tehran Times Political Desk
TEHRAN — A number of Iranian MPs have criticized the European Union's request that the United States remove the Mojahedin Khalq Organization from its list of terrorist groups.

On Thursday, the European Parliament issued a declaration urging Washington to remove the MKO from its list of foreign terrorist organizations.

The European Union took the MKO off its black list in 2009.

The MKO is a terrorist group

Talking to reporters on Saturday, MP Kazem Jalali said, "The MKO is a terrorist organization and the Europeans themselves acknowledge this."

"The MKO itself has admitted that it has killed 4800 people, including ordinary people as well as officials of the Islamic Republic. This organization has planted bombs in several areas. If this group is not a terrorist one, what else can it be labeled as?"

"The West is facing a paradox about the issue of terrorism and the reason is that certain Western countries define everything according to their national interests," stated Jalali, who is also the rapporteur of the Majlis National Security and Foreign Policy Committee.



TARAQQI JALALI FALAHATPISHEH

West using MKO as a tool

Majlis Foreign Policy Committee Chairman Heshmatollah Falahatpisheh told the Mehr News Agency on Saturday that Europe and the U.S. are using the MKO as a tool.

But such measures will improve Iran's ability to negotiate in the international arena since they illustrate the double standards the United States and Europe apply toward terrorism, he added.

West is main source of terrorism

MP Karim Qudusi told MNA that the EU's move shows that the West is the main source of terrorism.

MP Hamid-Reza Taraqqi of the Islamic Coalition Party called on the Iranian government to make serious efforts to convince the Iraqi government to extradite the MKO members before the group is delisted, MNA reported on Saturday.

The MKO, listed as a terrorist organization by much of the international community, began a campaign of assassinations and bombings in Iran shortly after the victory of the Islamic Revolution in 1979.

The group moved to Iraq in the early 1980s and fought Iran from there until the United States invaded the country in March 2003.



Persian Press Review

This column features excerpts from editorials, commentaries, and news articles of the leading Iranian newspapers.

Saturday's headlines

- JAM-E JAM:** Air pollution in Tehran worsens
- JAVAN:** Economic crisis engulfs Europe
- KHORASAN:** Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan sign agreement on fight against narcotic drugs
- KHORASAN:** Ahmadinejad says with a comprehensive implementation of subsidy reform plan cash subsidy payments will increase much higher
- TAFAHOM:** State offices in Tehran are closed earlier on Saturday and Sunday due to air pollution
- TAFAHOM:** The consumption of dairy products reduce harmful side effects of air pollution
- JAM-E JAM:** All export duties and taxations will be removed according to the 5-year development plan
- JAVAN:** Chinese shoddy exports flooding Iran's markets
- JAHAN SANAT:** Minister of labor and social affairs says he has no information about the government's 'comprehensive plan' to resolve unemployment
- HEMAYAT:** Amano says Iran's atomic activities are peaceful
- QODS:** 100 NAM states support Iran's nuclear activities
- KAYHAN:** Erdogan says if Israel attacks, we will stand alongside Lebanon
- HAMSHAHRI:** North Korea warns about war on the Korean peninsula

Leading articles

AFARINESH in an editorial has analyzed the recent Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) meeting in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. The editorialist says during its 10-year life, the organization has gone through many ups and downs. Even though the aim behind the establishment of the organization was to settle border disputes between the Central Asian republics and China, it gradually set economic, security and strategic goals for itself. Regional analysts believe the organization is intended to safeguard the geopolitical interests of Russia and China in Eurasia. The writer says Iran has participated in the SCO meetings since 2005 as an observer and has expressed its wish to become a full member; however, China and Russia, by adopting new regulations for accepting new members actually halted attempts by Tehran to join the bloc. This came in the light of closer relationship between Moscow and Washington over the last year and power interactions between China, Russia and the U.S.

EBTEKAR says state offices and schools remained closed on Wednesday as air pollution reached its peak in Tehran. The responsible authorities should have understood by now that declaration of holiday is not the solution. The holiday on Wednesday stopped traffic to a great extent but it did not reduce air pollution in the capital. A few years ago, a ten-year plan announced to cope with air pollution in Tehran by the Department of Environment. But still no organization shoulder the responsibility to tackle the issue and their sole responsibility is restricted to advise old people, children and patients remain at home during the smog. Overpopulation, geographical location and excessive car driving are blamed for increase in air pollution in Tehran. Meanwhile, economists say holidays cost about \$130 million a day, because of the loss of business. Health experts also regret thousands of deaths a year caused by heart attacks due to air pollution.

'Iran Air hijacker linked to counter-revolutionary groups'

Tehran Times Political Desk
TEHRAN — The Islamic Revolution Guards Corps has issued a statement saying a man who tried to hijack an Iran Air passenger plane en route to Syria on Friday night had connections with counter-revolutionary groups. The suspect tried to create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation by saying that there was a bomb on board the flight, but no explosives were found and he was later arrested by security agents. After the incident, the Airbus plane landed safely in Damascus. An official from Iran Air told the Fars news agency that the man has psychological problems. The Iranian Intelligence Ministry and the IRGC are investigating the case.