



Flower-Plant Export Earns \$60m

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SNSC Secretary Calls for Unity Among Iraqi Groups

Thousands Protest Against Hollande

ISAC Winners Named



League Title For Esteghlal

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UN: Terrorists Using Chemical Weapons in Syria

Testimony from victims of the Syrian conflict suggests terrorists in Syria have used the nerve agent sarin, according to a leading United Nations investigator.

Carla del Ponte told Swiss TV there were "strong, concrete suspicions but not yet incontrovertible proof".

However, she said her panel had not yet seen evidence of government forces using chemical weapons.

Syria has recently come under growing Western pressure over the alleged use of such weapons.

Del Ponte, who serves on the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Syria, said in an interview with Swiss-Italian TV: "Our investigators have been in neighboring countries interviewing victims, doctors and field hospitals."

"According to their report of last week, which I have seen, there are strong, concrete suspicions but not yet incontrovertible proof of the use of sarin gas, from the way the victims were treated."

Del Ponte, a former Swiss attorney-general and prosecutor with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia said further investigation was needed. She gave no details of when or where sarin may have been used.

Her commission was established in August 2011 to examine alleged violations of human rights in the Syrian conflict since March 2011.

It is due to issue its latest report to the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva in June.

09

Bomb Blasts in Baghdad Kill 11

At least 11 people were killed in three bomb explosions in the Iraqi capital Baghdad on Monday, medics and police said.

Two car bombs exploded near police checkpoints at the entrance to the Shiite district of Hussainiyya in the north of the city, killing one policeman and seven civilians.

A third bomb near a restaurant frequented by police killed three civilians in the southern district of Doura, medics and police said.

The attack came a day after nine people were killed in series of explosions in and around Baghdad, one targeting an Internet cafe. Businesses and public spaces are favorite targets for militants trying to large numbers of civilian casualties.

The attacks came amid heightened sectarian tension following a clashes between security forces and Sunni demonstrators in northern Iraq, protesting what they consider to be their second-class treatment by the government. Government investigators say the April 23 incident left 40 people dead, while a spate of follow-up attacks and battles has killed well over 200 more.

The bloodshed has raised fears that the country could be heading for a new wave of sectarian fighting like that which nearly pushed it to the brink of civil war in the middle of the last decade.

09

28 Dead in Bangladesh Protests

At least 28 people died in street battles between Bangladesh police and tens of thousands of protesters, officials in Dhaka say.

In some of the fiercest violence to rock the capital since independence four decades ago, hundreds more people were reported to have been injured on Monday as riot police broke up a mass rally near a key commercial district.

Hundreds of bankers, insurance officials and stock traders had to sleep in their offices as the sound of gunfire echoed around the Motijheel Commercial Area through much of the night.

Witnesses said shops were torched while trees had been torn down and thousands of rocks littered the ground.

Police said they now had the situation under control in the city center but further violence had broken out in other parts of Dhaka. The main Islamist group behind the protests said the death toll was much higher.

Police said they used sound grenades, water cannon, tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse at least 70,000 protesters who were camped at Motijheel as part of a push for a new blasphemy law.

"We were forced to act after they unlawfully continued their gathering at Motijheel."

10

Rls8.5 Trillion Allocated To Mines, Agriculture

Translated by Katayoon Dashti

A credit worth 8.5 trillion rials was allocated to the mining and agricultural sectors of West Azarbaijan province, announced First Vice President Mohammad Reza Rahimi.

Speaking on the sidelines of the fourth round of presidential visit to this northwestern province on Sunday, Rahimi said this shows the attention of the government and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to the potentials of West Azarbaijan, IRNA reported. He added that of this budget, 4.5 trillion rials have been earmarked for agricultural projects.

04

First Announcement

Iran State Printing House Company (Public Joint Stock)

Republishing Tender Notice for Purchasing White Sheet and Roll Watermark Paper

see page 6



Enemies Seek to Fuel Enmity Among Muslims

Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei has stressed that the enemies are seeking to fan the flames of hostility between the Shiite and Sunni Muslims by desecrating a holy shrine in Syria.

Addressing a gathering of Iranian officials in charge of holding the June 14 presidential on Monday, Ayatollah Khamenei called for continued condemnation of desecration of the holy shrine of the ancient Muslim figure Hujr ibn Adi, a companion of the Prophet Mohammad (PBUH).

The foreign-backed militants in Syria attacked the mausoleum and exhumed the grave of Hujr in suburb of Adra in Syria's capital, Damascus, and took his remains to an unknown location. The Al-Qaeda affiliated Al-Nusra Front has claimed responsibility for the destruction of the shrine.

The Leader hailed the Shiite community for its response to

the incident, saying they showed that they are not deceived by the enemy plots. He also praised the Sunni brothers who condemned the incident. Ayatollah Khamenei further warned that such sacrilegious acts could spread if Muslim scholars and political figures fail to condemn them.

"Muslims, especially elites and scientific, political and religious figures in the Muslim world should fulfill their duty towards this evil mindset and prevent the spread of sedition [between Muslims]."

International organizations and individuals and politicians who make hue and cry for destruction of historical monuments have kept mum on the blasphemy, said the Leader.

Ayatollah Khamenei said that enemies of the Muslims should know that such conspiracies can not harm the unity of world Muslims.

02

Tehran Promoting Cycling

Tehran will increase cycling routes to ease traffic congestion and encourage people to exercise more. Announcing this, Jafar Tashakkori Hashemi...

07

Iran Designs Dental Implant Router

An Iranian researcher has built a router that makes dental implants simpler and less risky. "An implant is one of the best methods to replace the lost..."

08

Registration for Presidential Election Begins

The official registration of hopefuls for Iran's 11th presidential election begins on May 7, the country's Elections Headquarters has announced.

According to the announcement on Monday, presidential hopefuls can sign up for the race on May 7-11 at the Interior Ministry, IRNA reported.

The Iranian Constitution stipulates that presidential candidates must be religious or political figures, be Iranian in origin, have Iranian citizenship, have resourcefulness and managerial skills, have no criminal record, be trustworthy and pious, and have firm belief in the fundamental principles of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the country's official religion.

More than 20 political figures have so far shown interest in running for president in the June 14 election.

The president of Iran is elected for a four-year term in a national election, and the Guardian Council vets the candidates for their qualifications.

Interior Ministry also registered candidates for municipal council elections scheduled for June.

Also City and Village Council elections are held nationwide every four years.

The councils are responsible for electing mayors of the cities and villages across the country. Unlike in parliamentary and presidential contests, the candidates are not vetted by the Guardian Council.

The next presidential election and the next city and village councils elections will be held on June 14, simultaneously for the first time.

Iran's Caspian Sea Share Almost Equals Russia's

President's Advisor for Caspian Sea Affairs Mohammad Mahdi Akhondzadeh says Iran's share of the sea is not less than that of Russia if not bigger.

Talking to IRNA on Monday, he referred to the recent meeting of the five Caspian Sea littoral countries to



determine the sea's legal regime and said the contracts signed between Iran and the former Soviet Union in 1921 and 1940 are still valid.

He said the two documents will be in place until they are replaced by new ones.

02

Anti-Poverty Summit Planned

The Philippines is the venue for the 2013 Partnerships Against Poverty Summit later this year.

The Microcredit Summit Campaign, a project of Results Educational Fund planned in partnership with the Microfinance Council of the Philippines, announced that the summit is scheduled for Oct. 9-11, Arab New wrote.

Partnerships Against Poverty is the slogan set by the Microcredit Campaign for the Philippines summit, representing a well-established principle in the strategy of the Arab Gulf Program for Development (AGFUND).

With support from the Central Bank of Philippines, this will be the 16th summit organized by the campaign, and some 1,100 participants from around the world will convene at the Philippines International Convention Center in Manila.

The 2013 Microcredit Summit will focus on Partnerships against Poverty: Finance, Government, Business, and Civil Society.

> Summit Agenda

Participants will review some of the most advanced and successful examples of public-private partnerships (PPP) in the field of microfinance.

The summit will gather parties that can work together to elevate these programs to a large scale, including government regulators, microfinance practitioners, product design experts, providers of support services and heads of multinational banks.

05

Malaysia's Long-Governing Coalition Wins National Elections

Malaysia's long-governing coalition won national elections with a weakened majority to extend its unbroken, 56-year rule, fending off the strongest opposition it has ever faced but exposing vulnerabilities in the process.

The Election Commission reported that Prime Minister Najib Razak's National Front coalition captured 133 of Malaysia's 222 parliamentary seats Sunday, down slightly from the 135 it held before Parliament was dissolved, AP reported.

Opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim's three-party alliance seized the remaining 89 seats. It even edged the National Front in the popular vote by more than 200,000 at least 10.5 million ballots cast, according to several initial independent estimates. Opposition activists have long complained of gerrymandering.

It was the National Front's 13th consecutive victory in general elections since independence from Britain in 1957. It faced its most unified challenge ever from an opposition that hoped to capitalize on allegations of arrogance, abuse of public funds and racial discrimination against the government. Najib urged all Malaysians to accept his coalition's victory. "We have to show to the world that we are a mature democracy," he said.

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