

The following is a translation of the "Radio Farda" Persian program which was broadcasted via satellite on July 3, 2007 at 1500 UTC.

TRANSLATION BEGINS HERE

[Music Introduction]

[Female Announcer]

The best songs, the latest news, Radio Farda.

[Music]

The Czech Republic determined the site location for the US anti-missile radar base.

Terminal 4 at Heathrow airport in London was evacuated today after some suspicious luggage was reported.

Last night an unexploded mortar shell was discovered near a gas station in Tehran's Ghasem Abad.

[Shirin Famili]

The time is 18:30.

Hello to our dear listeners. Thank you for being with us on this warm summer day for the evening edition of Radio Farda magazine. Today is Tuesday, the 12th of Tir, 1386, and the 3rd of July 2007. I'm your host, Shirin Famili, and in the next hour we'll be hearing news highlights from Iran and around the world. But first, a summary of the latest news up to this hour from my colleague Niusha Boghrati.

[Niusha Boghrati]

Good afternoon to our listeners at Radio Farda Evening Magazine. The government of the Czech Republic announced today its decision to set up a US anti-missile radar base near the town of Misov, 90 kilometers southwest of Prague. Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek stated, "The Czech Security Council has approved this location from a technological standpoint and has given its consent for the project." The mayor of Misov Village, however, states that "Residents of this village are against the installment of a radar base in their town." Prague had not disclosed the

planned site location in advance, and the Czech parliament will vote on the issue in 2008.

Based on reports of suspicious luggage at London's Heathrow Airport, the airport's Terminal Four was evacuated today. International newscasters quote eyewitnesses as saying that all passengers had to evacuate the building after a state of emergency was declared. The Heathrow evacuation came after recent foiled attacks of car bombs discovered in London and Glasgow had led to a high terrorism alert level in Britain. Meanwhile, interrogation was underway today by the British police of eight suspects arrested in London and Scotland in connection with the failed terrorist activity. At least three of these eight suspects are physicians. John Howard, the prime minister of Australia, revealed that one of the suspects is an Indian medical doctor living in Australia and has been arrested in accordance with that country's counter-terrorism laws.

And now some news from Iran. According to reports, last night a mortar shell that failed to explode was found near a gas station in Tehran's Ghasem-Abad district. Colonel Mehdi Ahmadi, head NAJA spokesman, told Fars News Agency that "Officials were present on site to take the empty shell into custody as soon as the incident was reported by gas station workers." According to one of these workers, a municipal employee had discovered the shell while on duty.

Following the implementation of the petrol rationing plan on Tir 6th, protestors set five gas stations on fire in Tehran.

According to a statement issued by the Reporters Without Borders organization, three more Iranian journalists were arrested. These detainees are Mohammad-Sadegh Kaboudvand, Saeed Matinpour, and Mohammad Hassan Fallahieh. The last of these arrests took place yesterday. And now back to Ms. Famili.

[Shirin Famili]

With thanks to Niusha Boghrati for that summary report, we continue Radio Farda magazine's evening news hour.

[Music]

[Shirin Famili]

The Foreign Policy Chief of the European Union has stated that Iran is most likely linked to the Hamas military takeover of Gaza.

Results of the meeting between American and Russian heads of state.

The ongoing gasoline crisis in Iran and debate over increase in airplane ticket fares.

A female student of the Women's Rights movement sentenced to 34 months in jail and 10 lashes.

We begin our evening edition with international headlines related to Iran.

Javier Solana, Foreign Policy Chief of the European Union, said on Monday that Iran could possibly be behind the Hamas military takeover of Gaza [and also behind] the recent attacks on the Lebanese army and on European peacekeepers in Lebanon. Keyvan Hosseini has more details.

[Keyvan Hosseini]

According to Reuters News Agency, Javier Solana, who has led recent efforts to bring Iran back to the negotiating table over its nuclear program, stopped short of blaming Tehran outright, but said the incidents could not be treated separately.

He said in a press conference on the Middle East hosted by European Parliament Socialist Group on Monday: "What happened in Gaza cannot be seen separately from what happened in Lebanon."

"There are new groups in the Palestinian camps," Solana said. "And the fact that UNIFIL has been attacked for the first time cannot be taken separately."

The Foreign Policy Chief of the European Union said that while the car bomb attack that killed six Spanish members of the U.N. Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) on June 24 was carried out by "forces we don't know," he added that "It would be naive not to see this as part of a global approach."

"All this is connected," Solana said. "It didn't happen by accident or miracle; it was probably planned."

"It would be difficult to understand without seeing other important regional players behind it," he added, referring to "other forces" in Iran and Syria.

He also said the meeting of Western and Arab Middle East mediators with Israeli and Palestinian leaders would probably now happen in 10 to 15 days at Cairo in mid-July. This meeting has been postponed several times. According to Mr. Solana, it was important to provide a new political impetus to the peace process, not just financial and humanitarian aid to the Palestinian government.

Solana also said that in the long run it would be necessary to have an international peacekeeping presence in the West Bank and Gaza, but this is not an immediate priority.

[Shirin Famili]

That was Keyvan Hosseini reporting. And now [we have some] international news.

US President George Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin's 24-hour summit on the Atlantic coast Monday seems to have yielded its pre-set objectives. The American and Russian leaders met for informal negotiations at the Bush family's New England estate in Maine, and while laughing and fishing discussed controversial issues such as the planned US missile shield. Nima Tamadon reports.

[Nima Tamadon]

George Bush and Vladimir Putin, after their fishing trip at the Maine summit, acknowledged that their teamwork resulted in catching a 76cm-long fish, but they decided to let the catch go free. But to these heads of state the bigger catch, or rather the more important achievement, was that they had the chance to surpass their differences and prove to each other and to the world that they are ready for mutual support and cooperation.

[Voice Clip – President Bush]

"You know, through the course of our relationship there have been times when we've agreed on issues and there's been times when we haven't agreed on issues ... But one thing I've found about Vladimir Putin is that he is consistent, transparent, honest, and is an easy man to discuss our opportunities and problems with."

[Nima Tamadon]

These words, spoken at an informal meeting in Kennebunkport, came at time when differences between Washington and Moscow had escalated to a point that some would have called it enmity, especially in instances such as when Bush accused Russian officials of “destroying democratic reforms,” or when Putin criticized the U.S. administration for “unilateral” policies. Nevertheless, in Kennebunkport the leaders of the US and Russia emphasized their common points of cooperation – including Iran’s nuclear activities – and in Bush’s words, “Russia shares U.S. concerns about Iran’s nuclear program.”

Vladimir Putin and George Bush also discussed US plans for installing a missile defense shield on European soil. Mr. Putin, who weeks before in a surprise proposal for installing this defense system in the Republic of Azerbaijan, this time went even further than his previous proposal.

[Voice Clip – President Putin]

“OK then, let's modernize the radar, or, if that's too hard, build a new one, either in Azerbaijan or in southern Russia.”

[Nima Tamadon]

The Russian president also suggested that negotiations about US plans for a missile defense shield can expand to include other European nations, albeit as a common effort between Russia and NATO. On his part, George Bush emphasized that the main parts of the defense system must remain in Poland and the Czech Republic, but he acknowledged that his Russian counterpart’s proposal as an important strategic act. James Collins, former US ambassador to Russia, considers the Putin proposal as a positive sign.

[Voice Clip – James Collins]

“But what all of this really suggests to me is that the Russians have made the point that ‘we want to talk about missile defense and how it's going to develop for Europe.’ And George Bush here has basically said that the proposal is interesting and must be analyzed. What it seems to me did come out of this is a sort of commitment to a much expanded dialogue, to include the Europeans now.”

[Nima Tamadon]

Even if Vladimir Putin's proposals on the defense issue do not go through, analysts maintain that the fact of US and Russian leaders coming to the table as friends is a good event. Michael McFaul, an expert on Russia at the Hoover Institute, says that if we are to believe them, they say that their personal relationship is going well. All that is clear is that whatever the level of friendship may be, it has had but minor effect on the issues at hand.

[Voice Clip – Michael McFaul]

“The US and Russian leaders, after their talks, are now engaged with one another. George Bush is preparing himself for Wednesday, the Fourth of July, the American Independence Day, while Vladimir Putin is off to Guatemala in hopes that Russia will be chosen to host the 2014 Winter Olympics.”

[Shirin Famili]

As we've just heard, following his meeting with his American counterpart, President Putin flew to Guatemala to attend the International Olympic Committee (IOC) conference for the 2014 Winter Olympic bid. According to Russia's presidential advisor, Mr. Putin will negotiate with IOC members in the tight race for his country becoming the next Games host. Mani Kasravi, Radio Farda correspondent in Moscow, reports on this story.

[Mani Kasravi]

Russia's president arrived today at Guatemala City airport, south of the capital, where he was met by Guatemalan Foreign Minister Gert Rosenthal. Mr. Putin made the trip with the purpose of winning the 2014 Winter Olympic Games for the Russian city of Sochi. The IOC will meet today to select a host city from among the bidding cities of Salzburg in Austria, Pyeongchang in South Korea, or the Black Sea resort of Sochi in Russia. Austrian Chancellor Alfred Gusenbauer and South Korean President Roh Moo-Hyun had arrived in Guatemala earlier.

According to Guatemalan dignitaries, Mr. Putin's meeting today with Oscar Berger, president of the Republic of Guatemala, will include negotiations on two-way issues. Upon arrival, the Russian president in a brief interview pledged spending 12 billion dollars on the resort city of Sochi if it is selected as the 2014 host. He asserted that Sochi's climate conditions and its sports structure render it a suitable location for Winter Games.

Russian newspapers wrote that Russia's most serious rival is Austria, whose nomination for the bid withstood its recent doping scandal. Some time ago, the IOC banned the coach and several members of the Austrian national ski team from the Turin Olympics.

Mani Kasravi, Moscow.

[Shirin Famili]

Dear listeners, you are tuned to Radio Farda Evening Magazine. We now turn to domestic news in Iran.

Following the introduction of the Petrol Ration Plan throughout Iran, and the failure to announce rates for gasoline not subject to the ration limit, members of the High Council of Aviation met yesterday, on Monday, but did not manage to issue a directive on fare increases for air travel. Analysts predict that the airfare hike, which will be determined by the cut off of subsidies for aviation fuel, will cause problems for consumers and damage the airline industry. Fariborz Soroush reports from Tehran.

[Fariborz Soroush]

The High Council of Aviation, meeting yesterday, which was to set airfare price hikes with regard to budgeting regulations for the current year, ended their meeting inconclusively, and the decision was delayed to a future date. Since the government had announced that it would cut off subsidies on air transportation fuel, the Aviation Council held this meeting in order to set new rates accordingly. However, since the market price of gasoline had not yet been announced by the government, the Council members were unable to reach a decision and delayed their meeting to a date to be determined later, once gas prices become known.

Moreover, if airfare rates are to be based on free-market gas rates, that will soon fuel an economic crisis. Ali Akhbar Aghai, head of the Majlis Development Commission, told ISNA in an interview: "The total cut off of aviation fuel subsidies, though foreseen in our 1386 budget regulations, if implemented would cause various problems."

Aghai has a less extreme approach, and suggested a more reasonable 20% increase in airfare rates. He has, moreover, requested such modification in the annual budget. Meanwhile, yesterday, in face of the last few days' dramatic inflation in all sectors of the economy due to gasoline

rationing, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, in a directive issued to the Ministry of Industry and Mines and the Ministry of Welfare and Social Security, requested firm action against companies who have hiked prices on their goods and services. The president, in letters to Mesri and Tahmasbi, ministers of Welfare & Social Security and Industry & Mines respectively, announced the basis of pricing policy to be on the “authorized charts” or on the legislative bill of Esfand 1375 [February 1996].

Nevertheless, in recent days soaring prices are seen not only in transportation, but in all economic sectors, a clear consequence of the sudden shock of gas rationing.

[Shirin Famili]

Meanwhile, President Ahmadinejad, in the inauguration ceremony of Delvari Dam in Bushehr, proposed to the Ministry of Energy (MOE) to use the example of gasoline rationing as a model for power conservation.

Jamshid Asadi, an expert on domestic economy, in an interview with Mahin Gorji, testifies that Mr. Ahmadinejad’s new idea for conserving energy is not impossible.

[Mahin Gorji]

Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, in the inauguration of the Delvari hydroelectric dam in Bushehr, referring to the gasoline rationing plan, said: “This type of conservation could also be applied to power consumption.”

Mr. Ahmadinejad, who has come under harsh criticism from analysts and university professors lately due to his radical policy making in economic issues, has said that for every 100-watt lamp per day, 2000 megawatts could be saved, amounting to the power generation of two Bushehr-size nuclear power plants.

Some believe that Mr. Ahmadinejad has proposed such an idea to the Energy Ministry in pursuit of his own ends in attaining nuclear power.

Paris-based economic analyst Jamshid Asadi, in a transparent critique of Ahmadinejad’s administrative policy, condemns the president of Iran for pushing erroneous strategies that have effectively turned Iran’s present economy into the previous wartime economy.

[Jamshid Asadi]

This derives from Mr. Ahmadinejad’s total disregard of the most basic principles of economy, which is a cause for serious concern. Even the

letters that were sent to him by prominent Iranian analysts were ignored by the president. The economy that he is pursuing is one that has no regard for the private sector or for people's needs: an "approbative economy" that is similar to his policies on the political front. Instead of allowing supply and demand and free competition to shape the market, he issues decrees. And unfortunately, during Mr. Ahmadinejad's presidency when the country is in a state of peace, the country's economy resembles the time of war, that is to say an economy controlled by rationing and coupons. These are hallmarks of wartime economics, while our nation has been at peace since the year 1988 to the present. In effect, it is little less than that of an in-your-face military war.

The proposal for rationing electricity comes at a time when, according to observers, the Ministry of Energy has already put into practice penalties for over-consumption. A university professor reports that the ministry, by charging a penalty fee equal to half of the consumer's electric bill, is currently practicing a novel way [of pricing], tantamount to rationing.

Here the question of how viable Mr. Ahmadinejad's idea for rationing electricity can be is a question that merits expert analysis within the next days. However, even as a prelude, leading to possible electricity rationing directives from the President's cabinet, the idea has been denied by state spokesman Gholam-Hossein Elham. Mr. Elham today in a press conference stated that plans for electricity rationing have not been mentioned in the cabinet meeting.

[Mahin Gorji]

But Mr. Asadi maintains that Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, having the required powers at hand, can easily implement such a plan and quell all expressions of dissent.

[Jamshid Asadi]

The proposal is completely practicable, especially if the Revolutionary Guard and other law enforcement bodies who are in Mr. Ahmadinejad's service act as they did in arresting anyone who opposes the rationing. There is nothing that he is not capable of, considering that he is strongly backed by the disciplinary forces.

[Mahin Gorji]

Jamshid Asadi and other economic analysts note that prior to putting the gas ration plan into action, Mr. Ahmadinejad's administration had repeatedly dismissed the notion publicly.

[Music]

[Shirin Famili]

Ongoing persecution means court summons and heavy sentencing for participants of the Women's Rights movement.

Delaram Ali, a university student and social activist involved in women's and student issues, and one of the members of the "one million signatures" campaign for edifying the discriminatory constitutional rights of women in Iran, was tried at Tehran's Revolutionary Court Division 15 and sentenced to two years and 10 months jail, plus 10 whiplashes.

Her crime, as far as the warrant reads, was attending a peaceful rally on Khordad 22nd, 1385, at Haft-e-Tir Square in Tehran, and petitioning for the "one million signatures" required to bring a women's rights bill up to legislation.

Shirin Ebadi, professor of law and winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, who is one of Delaram Ali's defense lawyers, has told Radio Farda that in her client's case, and likewise for other participants in the 22 Khordad rally who have been charged with disrupting the "public peace," there is no definite individual plaintiff.

[Shirin Ebadi]

Unfortunately, Ms. Delaram Ali has received twenty-two months in jail and it is astonishing to think that a young female student, whose only desire is to have the same rights as her brother, could be treated in this manner. The women that have been profiled for attending the lawful, peaceful rally of 22 Khordad, or for volunteering to collect signatures in the "one million signatures" campaign, have been charged with threatening national security and disturbing public peace. I don't know what part of this matter [inaudible] as the accusation implicates the general public, there is no individual plaintiff in any of these cases. There was nobody lodging a complaint to the effect of having been disturbed by these actions.

[Shirin Famili]

In addition to allegations of disturbing public peace, in accordance with Islamic punitive law, Delaram Ali is also allegedly guilty of threatening national security. Shirin Ebadi, director of the Defenders of Human Rights organization, on this subject:

[Shirin Ebadi]

They claim that this act endangers national security. I ask this: if a woman says 'I do not wish to be a second wife' – does that endanger national security? If she says, 'I want to manage my finances which I myself earned' – will that cause the enemy to attack? This kind of rationale, in reality, means disregarding demands of women who for years and years have fought for equality of rights in Iran. I hope that in the appeal, this injustice will be compensated.

[Shirin Famili]

Delaram Ali was one of the 33 rally participants who was arrested on 22 Khordad in Haft-e-Tir Square when the police attacked the group. Although she, like most other detainees, were ultimately let go, their files continue to be processed and they are receiving heavy penalties.

[Music]

[Female Announcer]

You are listening to the evening edition of Radio Farda magazine.

[Shirin Famili]

Dear listeners, we continue our program with more news about the Human Rights situation in Iran.

The international newscasting agency "Reporters Without Borders" published a statement today on three Iranian journalists who have recently been arrested. We will hear the details from Farin Asemi.

[Farin Asemi]

"Reporters Without Borders" in a statement today wrote: Iran has the largest prison for journalists in the Middle East. It goes on to name three newly detained reporters. On 10 Tir, Mohammad Sadiq Kaboudvand, managing director of "Voice of the People of Kurdistan," a weekly newspaper shut down by the Cultural Ministry, was arrested by intelligence agents, and after searching his home and confiscating personal writings,

took this reporter to Evin prison. The reason for his arrest has not yet been disclosed, but since Shahrivar 1384 [September 2003], his appeal had been approved by the Kurdistan State Appeals Court.

Also, Saeed Matinpour, who writes for the weekly newspaper *Yarpagh* and local Azerbaijan media, has been in jail as of Khordad 5th. He was arrested in the state of Zanzan and is being held in with his wife at the solitary cell 209 while the reason for his arrest is still unclear.

Saeed Mohammadi, also known as Saeed Moghanlou, poet and writer for the Azari-language newspaper *Yarpagh* was arrested at Mehrabad airport on 1st Tir [while] returning from Baku. He had to leave his house property deed, equivalent of 100,000 US dollars as bail, and his passport was not returned to him. Once more, the reason for his arrest has not been announced.

Reporters Without Borders also mentioned Mohammad-Hassan Falahi, a television reporter of Al-Alam TV, Iran's Arabic-language governmental news channel, who has been held in prison since Azar 1385 [Nov 2004].

Reporters Without Borders also notes that three other reporters are still in prison: Kaveh Javanmard, arrested on 26 Azar in Sanandaj; Ali Farahbakhsh, economic analyst and writer for many reformist papers including *Yas-e-No*, *Shargh*, *Sarmayeh*, who was arrested on 6 Azar 1385 at the airport; and lastly, Aknan Hassanpour, reporter for the shut-down weekly *Asou* on 5 Bahman in Sanandaj. He resides in prison without any clear information on his situation. "Reporters Without Borders" has voiced its concerns about him.

[Shirin Famili]

"Reporters Without Borders" states that with six detained journalists, Iran is the biggest journalism prison in the Middle East. Reported by Farin Asemi.

[Music]

[Male Announcer]

This is Radio Farda.

[Shirin Famili]

You are listening to the evening edition of Radio Farda. We thank you for staying with us. Before continuing, we go to my colleague Niusha Boghrati for the latest headlines.

[Niusha Boghrati]

Hello again! The government of the Czech Republic announced today its decision to set up a US anti-missile radar base near the town of Misov, 90 kilometers southwest of Prague. Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek stated, "The Czech Security Council has approved this location from a technological standpoint and has given its consent for the project." The mayor of Misov, however, states that, "Residents of Misov are against the installment of a radar base in their town."

According to reports, Terminal 4 at Heathrow airport in London has been evacuated upon observing some suspicious luggage.

International news agencies, based on eyewitness accounts, have reported that all passengers had to evacuate Terminal 4.

At the same time, British police are busy interrogating the eight suspects who were connected to the recent unsuccessful terrorist operations in London and Scotland. At least three of the eight are doctors.

In other news, the Armenian Parliament failed to pass a law that would have put severe limitations on foreign news broadcasts, including the Armenian language section of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. This law, which had passed during its initial reading last Friday in Parliament, would have disallowed the re-broadcast of foreign reports on all government run TV and radio stations.

In other news, in Iran an unexploded mortar shell was discovered at the Ghassem Abad gas station in Tehran. Colonel Mehdi Ahmadi, head of NAJA's public information office in Tehran, after announcing this news, told the Fars news agency that officers had gone to the location and collected the mortar shell from the gas station attendants in order to disarm it.

According to Iranian and foreign news reports Delaram Ali, a social activist involved in women's and student issues and one of the members of the "one million signatures" campaign, who was charged for attending a peaceful rally on 22 Khordad at 7th of Tir square in Tehran, was sentenced

to two years and 10 months jail, plus 10 lashes. It is said that part of this sentence will be suspended.

According to a statement issued by “Reporters Without Borders,” three more Iranian reporters have been arrested. These three reporters are Mohammad Sadiq Kaboudvand, Said Matinpour, and Mohammad Hassan Falahiyeh. The last of these arrests occurred yesterday. [Back to you] Ms. Famili

[Shirin Famili]

We thank Niusha for bringing us up to date on the latest news, and we continue the nightly news with another report from Iran.

The Iranian press has reported that the Iranian Labor News Agency, ILNA, has been put under severe pressure to avoid reporting on labor and student protests. According to Mehr News Agency, the judiciary has even ordered the news agency’s site to be blocked.

At the same time, the board of directors of this non governmental news agency -- in an attempt to reduce these pressures – has accepted the resignation of Masoud Heydari, the managing director of ILNA.

Behrouz Karooni, talks to reporter Siamak Taheri about this matter:

[Behrouz Karooni]

Siamak Taheri, a reporter in Tehran, talks to Radio Farda concerning the pressure on media [by the government], especially on the Labor News Agency, ILNA, to avoid reporting on student protests, labor strikes, and other social issues

[Siamak Taheri]

As everyone knows, during the past one or two years, social problems with regard to workers, students, women, teachers, and the issues which different layers of society struggle with have become more acute. Their demands, too, have naturally increased.

The reason – in the first place -- is the severe economic pressure that exists on the society as a whole. These groups, which are referred to by officials as the most vulnerable class, are naturally under far more pressure.

[Behrouz Karooni]

Mr. Taheri points out that these vulnerable classes belong to the social stratum whose work has a large influence on the greater social condition of society.

[Siamak Taheri]

Their extreme dissatisfaction and the pressures of life result in responses that can cause officials to feel threatened, and that's why they think by controlling the news they may prevent the situation from spreading.

However, they are making a great mistake, the issues are the pressures of daily life; they have to be resolved, and the officials should make sure that the minimum requirements for these workers are met.

How can a worker with one or two children live with a salary of 150 or 160 thousand tomans [per month]? Even the rent for a single room in the outskirts of Tehran is more than this. Many of these people, who used to make a living using their cars as taxis, are now bound to stay home due to the gas situation. This will cause even more pressure.

[Behrouz Karooni]

The reporter then poses the following question: How was Iran's 120 billion dollar oil income spent last year? Even a single rial has not reached the working class, yet the people feel the inflation caused by it. Mr. Taheri says this situation will naturally trigger a reaction from the public, and not reporting it will not wipe away the real issue.

[Siamak Taheri]

Our labor and social protests occur spontaneously. They are not planned. And the real reason is pressure. When a worker isn't paid for four to five months, and when his kids are hungry and he has nothing at home, he might be able to hold on for a while but then he eventually is forced to take severe actions.

[Behrouz Karooni]

Siamak Taheri regrets that the leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran always sees hidden hands behind labor protests, and [he] holds such interpretation to be groundless. [He believes that] it is the daily pressures of life that are the real cause of such events.

[Shirin Famili]

The Iranian Labor News Agency: ILNA, is under severe pressure. A report from Behrouz Karooni.

The 24-hour English language news network, Iran Press TV, with the goal of reflecting international events, began broadcasting to the world on Monday July 2nd, from Saadat Abad square in Tehran.

[Music]

[Male Announcer]

Connect to today's world, with Radio Farda

[Music]

[Female Announcer]

Dear friends, this was beautiful music, "Ghashanghe" from Mansour's latest album; I know you liked this song. Stay with Radio Farda and you will hear songs by Siavash, Shahram Solati, and Kamron & Houman. But before doing that, we will hear a song by [inaudible] called "Could Your Heart Allow It?"

[Inaudible]

[Shirin Famili]

Reports from Iran indicate that Ibrahim Madadi, the Vice President of the Syndicate of Bus Workers of Tehran and Vicinity, was arrested on Tuesday in Tehran. Davoud Razavi, one of the directors of the Syndicate of Bus Workers of Tehran and Vicinity talked to Behrouz Karooni about this situation.

[Davoud Razavi]

[We are] Following up on the complaints which we had lodged in the Tehran Province Labor Offices about the layoffs that the assessment committee had suggested, and the fact that the majority of the cases had completed their arbitration court hearings but still after two to three months there had been no judgments on about thirty of those cases. Mr Ibrahim Madadi the vice president of the Syndicate of Bus Workers of Tehran and Vicinity had gone to the Tehran Labor Offices with Mr. Seyyed Reza

[INAUDIBLE] in order to follow up on the issue and see why these arbitration courts have not issued a judgment.

Apparently they were not able to get a response and were repeatedly told to wait for another twenty minutes. The police suddenly appear and arrest Mr. Madadi and inform him of the outstanding warrant for his arrest, and take him to the 109 Baharestan police station. At this moment, as I'm talking with you, he is still under arrest.

[Behrouz Karooni]

Mr Razavi points out that the vice president of the Syndicate of Bus Workers of Tehran and Vicinity has not yet been brought before a judge (though required by law). He further adds:

[Davoud Razavi]

According to what the officials in the police station have said, the arrest warrant had been issued by the magistrate and they had issued a roaming warrant. For a roaming warrant you need to go through a series of steps. That means you can't get a roaming warrant by a single visit. So we suspect that this had been planned earlier.

[Behrouz Karooni]

This member of the Syndicate of Bus Workers of Tehran and Vicinity, who suspects that the arrest of Ibrahim Madadi had been pre planned, says:

[Davoud Razavi]

Two weeks ago when Mr. Madadi had gone to the Tehran Province Labor Office, the security officers and guards had attacked Mr. Madadi, as per instructions of Mr. Mohammadi, assistant to Director General of the Tehran Province Labor Office.

Mr. Madadi then lodged a complaint at the police station, which forced Mr. Mohammadi to appear at the public prosecutor's office. Mr. Mohammadi was released after providing written assurances, and apparently after that time they had been planning to arrest Mr. Madadi when he appeared to follow-up on the original complaints; and he is still under arrest and no judge has seen him yet. He is told that he must be brought to the public prosecutor's office tomorrow.

[Shirin Famili]

Davoud Razavi, one of the directors of the Syndicate of Bus Workers of Tehran and Vicinity had this conversation with Radio Farda.

Today is the 19th anniversary of the shooting down of an Iranian passenger jetliner by an American warship, an event that caused the deaths of 290 people.

But do such events have any useful lessons for us today, save keeping alive bitter memories? My colleague Mehrdad Sepehri in his report talks to an expert from the Strategic Institute of Geneva about this issue.

[Mehrdad Sepehri]

The Iran-Iraq war – at the cost of 213,000 killed, 335,000 maimed, 40,000 prisoners of war and 1000 billion dollars for the nation of Iran -- was in its final days when the world press published a shocking report. At 10:24 am on the 12 of Tir 1367, an Airbus passenger plane on route from Bandar Abbas to Dubai with 290 passengers was hit by two missiles and fell into the 35 meter depths of the Persian Gulf.

Forty minutes before this incident the Vincennes, under the command of Captain Will Rogers, had engaged and destroyed two high speed boats belonging to Iranian Revolutionary Guards which had earlier fired on an American helicopter.

The USS Vincennes was returning from this engagement when its radars reported the take off of a plane similar to an Iranian F14. Captain Rogers, trusting the electronic radar, ordered the firing of 2 cruise missiles. But what remained in a few moments was the carcass of the Airbus flight 655 belonging to Iran Air, filled with Iranian, Yugoslav, Indian, and Arab passengers heading to Dubai.

Dr. Mohammad Reza Jalili, a strategist and a member of the Strategic Institute of Geneva believes the roots of such events lie in the years of tense atmosphere in the Persian Gulf.

[Mohammad Reza Jalili]

In an environment where nervousness, worrying, and conflict permeate, unexpected events can occur, which can turn into a human tragedy as in the case of the Iranian airliner at the end of the Iran-Iraq war.

The Persian Gulf region, if you recall, since 1980 until today, in the past 25 years, has seen three major wars. The Iran-Iraq war, the war for Kuwait, and the current Iraq war, and there are a lot disagreements between countries in the region, ideological differences, and lack of security in countries like Iraq. So the convergence of these events makes the situation more tense, and in this type of an environment accidents can occur at a higher rate than usual.

[Mehrdad Sepehri]

This expert warns that the tense environment is still present today and could lead to more tragic events in the future.

[Mohammad Reza Jalili]

It could get worse than this because these types of encounters can escalate and cause mistakes that could lead to war. Recently the commanders of American warships in the Persian Gulf mentioned that they have to be careful not to get into an accidental encounter that could lead to a major event.

[Mehrdad Sepehri]

But what could the people and the governments of the region and the world learn from such tragedies?

[Mohammad Reza Jalili]

In these tense situations all the nations that border this region have to be very careful so that such encounters and such tragedies do not occur, since they could endanger the peace in the region.

[Mehrdad Sepehri]

Today, close to two decades have passed since the downing of the airbus by two missiles fired from the Vincennes warship. The Persian Gulf is still inflamed and that could lead to new tragedies.

The Islamic Republic is being accused by the West of being involved in events in Lebanon and Palestine, and for actively arming terrorist groups in Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition the UN Security Council has been suspicious of the Islamic Republic's nuclear activities and has passed several resolutions in an attempt to stop them.

According to political observers, the presence of US warships in the Persian Gulf, and at the same time the harsh rhetoric delivered by the

President and the leader of the Islamic Republic, have raised the anxiety level among the residents of the region, and can at any moment lead to unforeseen accidents.

[Shirin Famili]

That was a report by Mehrdad Sepehri.

The United States, for the first time, accused the Islamic Republic of Iran of direct involvement in the deaths of American soldiers in Iraq. According to American military officials, the Islamic Republic, by using sophisticated methods and elements of Hezbollah militia, is playing a role in the instability of Iraq, and in January caused the deaths of five American soldiers in Karbala.

Nima Tamadon, in a report that we're about to hear, talks to two analysts about the matter.

[Nima Tamadon]

A proxy war. This phrase was used for the first time on Monday by Kevin Bergner, one of the commanders of the American army in Iraq. Mr. Bergner accused the Quds Force, the external arm of Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards, of using elements of Hezbollah from Lebanon to direct bombings in Iraq. According to him, Iran, by using proxies in Iraq, is at war with America.

Farbod Talai, an expert from the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London, tells Radio Farda that proxy wars are a well know tactic which America is completely aware of, since it has used it many times. According to Mr. Talai, Iran, too, has been using the same strategy for hitting American interests in the region, especially by supporting groups in Lebanon, Iraq or Afghanistan.

[Farbod Talai]

Americans will use the documents they have collected, but what makes them cautious about presenting these documents to the world press are the parallel political negotiations underway, which they hope will lead to a positive outcome.

It is yet to be seen if officials in the White House and the State Department are able to work with the generals in the Pentagon, and will they be able to agree to a common strategy.

But the high death rates in Iraq and the dangers they feel cause the generals to go ahead and publicize the evidence to news organizations, and we see them in the international arena.

[Nima Tamadon]

For proof of Iran's involvement the commander of the American forces in Iraq has relied on the confessions of a Lebanese Hezbollah operative named Ali Mussa Dakdouk, captured in Basra in March. Dakdouk had initially pretended to be deaf and unable to speak, but later confessed to directing operations against the coalition forces with help from the Quds Force.

A spokesman for the Hezbollah organization in Beirut had no comments regarding the accusations of the American commander.

Houshang Amir Ahmadi, a professor at Rutgers University in New Jersey, in a conversation with Radio Farda, believes that the new accusations against the Islamic Republic can be very dangerous.

[Houshang Amir Ahmadi]

I agree with the opinion of those who believe we are moving closer to war with Iran instead of peace. Unfortunately this is how it is. The forces that support war and conflict in this country, and in the region, have powerful voices. The forces for peace -- at least at this time -- do not have a great voice and don't have much power. And this report that Iran is using Hezbollah to wage a proxy war against America -- or long a distance war -- is a very dangerous statement because it has raised the level of conflict with America in a very serious way.

The Iranian government has to be very careful and should not underestimate this. I have said many times that the forces of war in US are very powerful; and unfortunately in Iran too, there are forces that prefer conflict with America.

[Nima Tamadon]

Kevin Bergner, one of the commanders of the American army in Iraq, said in his statements that the Quds Force was behind the attack six months ago in the city of Karbala, which caused the death of one American soldier and the capture of four more and whose dead bodies were later discovered.

According to this commander, the responsibility for that attack and some of the other attacks on US forces in Iraq is with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

A few hours after the report some analysts wondered if the statements by the US Commander were just for information, or could they be viewed as part of a plan for creating an environment to legitimize future military action against Iran.

Farbod Talai, an expert from the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London believes Iran has no choice but to use a proxy war in order to fight America. However, America, as a superpower, will not hesitate to wage a classic war against Iran, if it sees its interests are in danger.

[Farbod Talai]

My analysis is that Iran has room for playing these strategic games and America is not going to jump the gun and start a war against Iran. If America is presented with that option its entire political posture will change and we will have to say that the war between the State Department and Pentagon will have been won by the generals. They will claim that there is no political solution to Iran and the issues cannot be solved through diplomacy and we have no choice but to use the elements of war.

It appears that Iran knows this and it appears that it will use the proxy war to its maximum advantage. That means if you look at the deaths of American soldiers, you see that its monthly numbers are controlled by Iran. It is not the case that Iran is doing all it can to inflictive the maximum number of deaths. In fact the proxy war is being waged in a calculated way, and if these calculations are to change then definitely America has to change its tactics too.

[Shirin Famil]

That was a report from Nima Tamadon; and in the final minutes of our nightly report we will hear some sports news from Fariborz Gharibi.

[Music]

[Male Announcer]
The World of Sports.

[Fariborz Gharibi]
The 14th edition of the Asian Football Confederation cup will start next Sunday, 16th of Tir, simultaneously in four countries: Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and Vietnam.

Sixteen teams from the ancient continent in four groups of four teams each, will battle each other for the 14th Golden Cup. These games will continue until 7th of Mordad.

The national teams of Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Japan have each won this tournament three times.

Iran had captured the cup three consecutive times but in the last three decades it has not managed to reach the championship's final game.

According to many football experts Iran's current national team is one of the most powerful teams in the history of this country.

Iran's national team is in the 3rd group along side Malaysia, Uzbekistan, and China.

According to the schedule Iran's national team will play Uzbekistan, China, and Malaysia on 20, 24, and 27 of Tir respectively.

Australia's nation team, which joined the Asian Football Confederation last year, along with the national teams of China, Japan, Saudi Arabia, and South Korea are Iran's main opponents for capturing the Asian football cup.
Fariborz Gharibi, Radio Farda

[Shirin Famili]
We end our nightly report and...

TRANSLATION ENDS HERE