

The following is a translation of the "Radio Farda" Persian program, which was broadcast via satellite on August 16, 2007 at 1730 UTC.

TRANSLATION BEGINS HERE

[Female announcer]

The best music and the latest news: Radio Farda.

[Male announcer]

Radio Farda's News.

[Host Mahdieh Javid]

It is 9:00 PM. Hello. Welcome to Radio Farda's evening news magazine. In the next half hour, my colleagues and I, Mahdieh Javid, will be with you in this news magazine presenting a series of news about the highlights of the developments in Iran and the world.

First we will take a brief look at the news highlights up to this hour from my colleague, Hooman Saisan.

[Hooman Saisan]

Hello. According to the latest news, the earthquake in Peru has so far resulted in 400 casualties. In this earthquake, which was estimated to be 7 9/10 on the scale...10...7 9/10 degrees on the Richter scale, thousands of others were also injured.

The office workers threw themselves to the streets from high office buildings in Lima, the capital of Peru, during two consecutive waves, each lasting for 20 seconds, and nine after-shocks.

The annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization concluded its session with the attendance of the leaders of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan on Thursday morning in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan.

The leaders present in this summit promised to expand their regional gas and oil industries by closer cooperation with each other and to increase their efforts to fight terrorism. In this meeting, the Islamic Republic, India, Pakistan and Mongolia were also present as observers, and Afghanistan and the Republic of Turkmenistan were guests.

According to Thursday's statistics, the number of those killed by the floods in Southeast Asia has reached 2600. Flooding in Nepal, India

and Bangladesh in this month has been the result of seasonal rains and the melting of snow in the last part of the month of July. This flood has caused nearly \$1 billion in damages and the spread of infectious diseases.

The Pakistani army says 10 Islamist militia and four Pakistani soldiers have been killed during a clash near the border of Afghanistan. These clashes occurred following the attack of the militia on the Pakistani military convoys in the southern province of Waziristan.

[Host Mahdiah Javid]

With thanks to Hooman Saisan who brought you a summary of the news headlines. And now a glimpse at what you will hear on the evening news magazine:

- The Islamic Republic's reaction to the consideration of including the name of the "Sepah Pasdaran", or the Islamic Revolution's Guards Corps, on the list of terrorist organizations. We will talk with several experts in this area.
- The decision of the United Nations to expand its' activities in Iraq was welcomed by international organizations.
- And other reports

On Thursday, the Islamic Republic of Iran called the US-based opinion of adding the name of the Pasdaran Corps to the list of the terrorist organizations, as US propaganda and condemned this action. A report came on Wednesday that the US intends to consider adding the name of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to the list of terrorist organizations.

Farin Asemi has a look at the reflection of this news in the press and the Iranian media and the reaction of the Islamic Republic to this news.

[Farin Asemi]

An official of the foreign ministry of the Islamic Republic told the IRNA news agency that these types of news are in the framework of US psychological propaganda and promotion against Iran, and do not hold credibility.

Meanwhile Gholam-Hosseini Gheidparvar, senior commander of the Pasdaran Corps in the Fars province, said in an interview with the IRNA

news agency, "When the enemies of the Islamic Republic call this regime terrorist, it is an honor for Iran and a indication of the enemy's anger."

According to the French News Agency, the US is looking to cut off of the financial flow of these forces. It accuses the Pasdaran Corps of creating insecurity in Iraq and making bombs and arms for the militia of this country in order to kill the American soldiers. The Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps is also the center for political decision making in Iran.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iran's President, is a former officer of the Corps and has promoted a great number of former Corps' officers to the level of ministers in his cabinet.

Yahya Rahim Safavi, the head commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps issued a warning on Wednesday that the Pasdaran Corps forces have the length and the width of the Persian Gulf under watch. He added in a conversation with the international satellite network, Jaam-e Jam, that Iran is equipped with surface-to-sea missiles that can cover the length and width of the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman.

Meanwhile, Yadollah Javani, the head of the Revolutionary Guard's political bureau, told Jaam-e Jam newspaper in reaction to the possibility of placing the name of the Pasdaran Corps on the list of the terrorist organizations, that the "Pasdaran Corps is not only going to be in a non-ineffective [effective] position, but it will forcefully pursue its growing process in an active position."

According to the French news agency, the intention of the US government's consideration for adding the name of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to the list of the terrorist organizations is still not officially announced.

At the same time, the Associated Press news agency writes, "The US, by this action, intends to send a message to countries that have business transactions with Iran and to say that the US is serious in its efforts to isolate Iran because of the nuclear plans of this country."

Iran has been on the list of countries that sponsor terrorism by the US for two decades. At the present time there are approximately 42 organizations, including the al-Qaeda terrorist network, that are on the US State Department's list of the terrorist organizations. Washington believes that the Quds Force, associated with the Islamic Revolutionary

Guard Corps, is responsible for providing arms to Iraq's Shiite militia and the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Although Iran denies the charges of any involvement in the clashes in Iraq, it believes that the presence of the American forces in this country is the greatest obstacle in creating security and stability in Iraq.

[Host Mahdiah Javid]

This was a report by Farin Asemi.

Maryam Ahmadi has a conversation with Mohsen Sazgara regarding whether the statements of Mr. Rahim Safavi are unofficial responses towards the possible US action of putting the Pasdaran Corps on the list of terrorist groups,

[Guest Mohsen Sazgara]

It does not seem that what Mr. Rahim Safavi has stated about the capability of the Corps would be the actual official response of the Iranian authorities to the news that was announced yesterday; placing the Pasdaran Corps in the position of a terrorist organization by the US. The reason for that, quite predictably, is that the governments' widespread policy would be to bypass it for the time being, censor it later domestically, then send a notification from the security council to all of the media saying "Do not 'work' this news". In fact, they do not want the people to find out and realize that, at any rate, the Corps may be brought under US pressure, and as a terrorist organization at that.

But, what Mr. Rahim Safavi presented, although indirectly, can be assessed as a reaction against the unofficial declaration made in the US to portray the Corps as terrorists.

Accordingly, the respected commander of the Pasdaran Corps in Iran has tried to boast about the fighting capability of the Corps to the Americans; its' 125,000 Corps members, and some missile capability, which of course is borrowed from China, Russia and North Korea. Some of it is produced in Iran, with reliance on the missile defense system that the Russians are building for Iran in exchange for billions of dollars, and which is targeted to be ready in 2008; if it does not have the fate of the Bushehr power plant. By relying on the Basij Force, with the exaggerated numbers that Mr. Safavi has mentioned, they have in fact bragged about the army and military forces to the US.

[Maryam Ahmadi]

But, is Mr. Rahim Safavi's assessment of the Corps' defense capability correct, considering the possible danger it is facing?

[Guest Mohsen Sazgara]

We do not have a strategic balance with the US in any way. The hellish force of the US army is in such a way that it can instantly go into war with China, Russia and the entire European Union and succeed in all three wars.

We do not have the power to compete in arms with many smaller countries; let alone the US. In that same region, the Turkish army has 500,000 armed forces, and it may be much stronger than ours; also many of the countries in the region have recently purchased modern and advanced arms.

It is not at all in our interest to threaten in this way. According to the wise saying of prime minister Farahani, who said to Abbas Mirza during the Qajar period, in a message sent to Fath Ali Shah, that a country with 3,500,000 in taxes ...tomans ...3,500,000 tomans in taxes per year, meaning Iran, will not go into war with a country that has 350,000,000 tomans in yearly taxes, meaning Russia of those days.

Unfortunately, Fath Ali Shah, being under pressure from the sages and thinking like a commoner and perceiving things as being simple, became entangled in two wars with the Russians and brought us those sufferings and shameful agreements.

Now the same advise goes not to Mr. Rahim Safavi, but to his superior, Mr. Khamenei; that a country whose total gross national production is \$200 billion, or with the exaggerated numbers of the state, at the most \$400 billion per year, does not entangle itself with an unsightly monster such as the US, which has a yearly national gross product of \$14,000 billion [14 Trillion].

Our foundational weakness is in our economic region; the weak capability that the country has. If the sanctions against Iran continue as they are, and the Corps is added to the list of terrorist organizations, additional sanctions can be made. If they lay a finger on Iran's oil exports, which is very easy for them, they can stop and control the ships in the Persian Gulf. If Iran is bullied, it will retreat. All our economic structure will fall apart with a single shake because this is a country that is totally dependent on income from petroleum. Even now, the two very lightweight resolutions that the UN Security Council has imposed has

had strongly destructive effects on the economy of Iran, and has brought billions of dollars of financial loss to our country.

[Host Mahdieh Javid]

You were listening to the voice of Mohsen Sazgara with Maryam Ahmadi from Radio Farda.

[Music]

[Female announcer]

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

[Host Mahdieh Javid]

The discharge of the two ministers of Petroleum and Mines and Industries by the president of the Islamic Republic, is still the focus of speculation in political and economic circles. Hesam Mahdavi has asked two questions of Dr. Shahin Fatemi, head of the College of Economy and Commerce in the University of Paris.

[Hesam Mahdavi]

Dr. Fatemi, as you are aware, Mr. Ahmadinejad has changed four ministers during two years; namely Cooperative, Welfare, Mines and Industries, and Petroleum as well as the heads of the management institution and social security, and has made decisions such as the dissolution of the Money and Credit Council. What is your understanding and analysis of these economic behaviors of the President of the Islamic Republic?

[Guest Dr. Shahin Fatemi]

Mr. Ahmadinejad was elected by vows and promises to the Iranian nation, a commitment that was never carried out, to put cash in the hands of the people. He has been defeated in his policy up until now. With the changes and development that we see today, it is going to be definitely even more. He has dissolved many high councils; he will do other things. He is going in the same direction that Chavez followed in Venezuela. He has learned his lesson from him. He wants to have all the economical rudders in his own hands, and to actualize the same populist or "pro common people" policy of Chavez in order to be elected again.

We have to look at everything in this direction: he is positioning himself for re-election. He thinks that by destroying these administrative institutions that have a very long history in Iran, he can control

everything, and like Chavez, he can distribute money among the low income people to buy their votes and be elected again.

[Hesam Mahdavi]

What cost has this direction that you believe Mr. Ahmadinejad is pursuing, in order to repossess power, had for the economy of Iran?

[Guest Dr. Shahin Fatemi]

The economy of Iran has never been in such a mess during the past 28 years. After the revolution, when they did not know what they were doing, foreign exchange reserves still existed and the wheels of the country were turning. Many experts were still holding their positions, but they have all been destroyed by his behavior. He has removed all the people who gained experience during the presidential terms of Rafsanjani and Khatami, even though they were previously unknowledgeable about administrative matters.

Predictions about the result are that during the next two years the rate of inflation will exceed 17%, and joblessness will exceed 15%. The economic growth that was supposed to be 7% has presently reached 4.5%, and according to the prediction of the World Bank and *Economy* publication, it is probable that during the next two to three years it may come to 3.5%. In other words, according to the confession of the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs of this system, 1,200,000 new jobs should be generated each year in Iran in order for unemployment to remain at the same rate as it is now, but they cannot generate more than 600,000 jobs.

Therefore the economic future of Iran is quite bleak, but that does not make any difference to Mr. Ahmadinejad. Because of his unmethodical expenses, cash flow in Iran has grown by more than 40%, but he thinks that he will have the opportunity to be reelected in one and a half to two years, and then let anything happen.

He has stepped on to this path with complete lack of caution, and as I mentioned, the economy of Iran has never been in danger to this degree during the last 28 years.

[Host Mahdieh Javid]

Dr. Shahin Fatemi, the head of the College of Economy and Commerce of the University of Paris in a conversation with Hesam Mahdavi from Radio Farda.

Following the escalation of social pressure and worsening of the economic situation in Iran, willingness to leave the country in search of better opportunities beyond the borders has increased in the citizens. In spite of warnings from experts in social pragmatism and even representatives of the Islamic Consultative Council about its severe consequences, this is a subject that Mr. Ahmadinejad does not show any interest in taking seriously. Arash Irani has a report in on this subject:

[Arash Irani]

The willingness of the Iranian citizens, especially young people, to emigrate from the country has increased. During recent years, especially from the onset of Ahmadinejad's government, and the increasing difficulty in Iran's social and economic conditions, people's eagerness to leave the country and find better opportunities on the other side of the borders, has increased.

The willingness to emigrate is seen more among the educated forces and those who have capital; so much that this movement towards neighboring countries, especially those bordering the Persian Gulf, has led to their economic and cultural progress.

The voice of the Islamic Republic pointed a while ago to the widespread Iranian citizens' emigration to the United Arab Emirates.

[Female announcer]

At the present, more than 6,500 companies and 10,000 Iranian university students are present in Dubai, and more than 1,400 Iranians have also invested in the Dubai stock market. It has been capitals from this group that revitalized the financial markets of Dubai and Abu Dhabi in 2005, and brought about growth and rise in their index.

[Arash Irani]

But in this midst, the lack of attention paid by Islamic Republic statesmen to the element of emigration of expert forces abroad is a matter that has faced the criticism of the Iranian society.

Mohammad Reza Mir Tajoddini, Deputy Speaker of the Cultural Committee of the Islamic Consultative Assembly, says in the face of criticism against the widespread emigration of educated forces and experts from the country, "Unfortunately, the emigration of the country's experts is on the rise and the Ministry of Sciences must explain this trend. The Minister of Sciences must present an explanation for the

reasons of the continuation of this process; the reasons for the rise of emigrations and the fleeing of brains from the country.

In continuation, he has added, "The departure and emigration of each Iranian expert, means the departure of part of the valuable capital of the country that will be irreplaceable."

Meanwhile Mr. Ahmadinejad, the president, mentioned some time ago, while amongst the Iranian businessmen residing in Dubai, that he does not believe in such a thing as the fleeing of brains, because in his opinion progress in the countries of the Emirates and Iran are not different from one another.

Arash Irani, Tehran.

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[Host Mahdiah Javid]

The Shiite and Kurdish leaders formed a coalition on Thursday to sponsor Nouri al-Malaki's government. But the Sunni leaders have not participated in this coalition. We will hear more details in a report prepared by Mania Mansour:

[Mania Mansour]

The Shiite and Kurdish leaders in Iraq formed a coalition on Thursday in order to sponsor Nouri al-Malaki, this country's prime minister. But the Sunni leaders did not participate in this coalition. Nouri al-Malaki is facing a political crisis because of the sanction of the government by the leaders of the Sunni parties. Six Sunni ministers of the government of Mr. al-Malaki have removed themselves from his government because of his denial of their requests.

The new coalition includes the two principal Kurdish parties in the government and the Aldaveh party, the assembly's and Mr. Maliki's largest Shiite Islamist party.

But the Iraqi assembly's only large Sunni party did not participate in this coalition.

Ryan Crocker, the US ambassador in Iraq said, "The coalition will not be able to solve the country's problems." Ryan Crocker mentioned to Reuters news agency that, "Iraq is facing great problems, because the all the party leaders, Shiites, Sunnis and the Kurds, should get together and the problems must be solved by them. This is a coalition of the Shiites and Kurds." He added, "In my opinion, this coalition cannot definitely resolve the principal issues by itself."

The talks about the formation of a coalition started last year with the Islamist Sunni party, but because of their request for more power about security issues it faced defeat.

The request for the departure of foreign forces in the current month was brought up by the three parties, including the Islamist party. After declaring a new sanction, Jalal Talabani, the (Kurdish) President of Iraq announced, "The doors are open for all the parties for the purpose of unity."

The coalition agreement has been signed by Jalal Talabani, Nouri al-Malaki, Masoud Barazani, the leader of the autonomous Kurdish region of Iraq, and Adel Abdul Mahdi, the president's Shiite counsel. Nouri al-Malaki said, "The goal of this agreement is to remove Iraq from a political dead-end." But in this three-page agreement there are no details as to how the coalition intends to help the government.

[Host Mahdieh Javid]

Mania Mansour was reporting.

According to reports, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Iraq, international and non-government domestic institutions and organizations, have welcomed the security councils' new resolution to expand UN activities in Iraq.

In relation to this, Amnesty International had objected to the bill for the draft of a resolution last week in which attention had not been given to the problems related to the human rights issues. Elaheh Hicks reports:

[Elaheh Hicks]

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs in Iraq says, "A group of international and domestic non-government organizations have welcomed the new resolution of the security council to increase the responsibilities of the UN in Iraq."

Last week, Irene Khan, Amnesty International's Secretary General, headquartered in Britain, along with several other international institutions and the publication of a declaration, said, "The primary draft of the resolution of the UN Security Council has remained quiet in connection with the issues related to the daily violations of human rights in Iraq."

This draft was later reviewed and the new resolution was approved last week with the majority votes of the members of the UN Security Council. There will be more focus on such issues including those related to human rights, humanitarian aids, protection of the rights of the non-military citizens, and also the promotion of progress in the security situation of the personnel of the humanitarian affairs organizations.

Cedric Turlan, the Information and Communications Officer of the NGO Coordination Committee in Iraq says, "We welcome the increase of attention in the new resolution of the UN Security Council to the human crises and disasters in Iraq, and also towards the needs of the crisis-stricken people of Iraq."

The Security Council's resolution will make it possible for the UN office in Iraq, UNAMI, to provide assistance and necessary suggestions to the government and the people of Iraq, as well as to help them in the path of establishing agreements and national peace-making and the establishment of dialogue among the country's different political groups.

Because of the increase of violence and lack of security in the recent months, the activities of the humanitarian organizations in Iraq had faced great difficulties and some of the non-government organizations had had to leave the country.

Lynn Pasco, the undersecretary-general for the political affairs of Ban Ki-moon, the UN Secretary General says, "the UN office personnel of the UNAMI in Baghdad will increase from 65 to 95 in two months' time."

In spite of the fact that the explosion of the UN office in Baghdad limited the territory of activities of this organization, the office of the UN in Iraq has so far been very active in organizing and assisting with the establishment of the elections, the bill of the draft of the country's constitution, and the formation of government organizations and institutions in Iraq.

[Host Mahdieh Javid]

That was Elaheh Hicks.

Ahmet Necdet Sezer, the President of Turkey, whose term has almost come to its end, has refused to choose a new cabinet, saying that it is better for his soon-to-be-elected successor to approve the new cabinet. Maryam Ahmadi reports:

[Maryam Ahmadi]

Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Turkey's prime minister, said in a news conference on Thursday, "This action was very surprising for me. The president, without even looking at the list of cabinet members, said that it is better for the new president to approve the new cabinet." Mr. Erdogan said, "In my opinion, this is a positive encounter."

Turkey's parliament will have a meeting on Monday to determine the successor of Ahmet Necdet Sezer by a series of votes. Ahmet Necdet Sezer who, prior to becoming the president, was a secular judge, would often have differences of opinion with the government of Erdogan, which has Islamic roots, over different matters during his presidency.

It is supposed that Abdullah Gul, Turkey's minister of foreign affairs, and candidate for the governing Justice and Development Party for president, will win the presidential elections. The Justice and Development Party, which is the adjusted form of a currently illegal Islamic movement, allotted the majority of the parliamentary seats to itself for the second round of the five-year term in the recent elections.

Recep Tayyip Erdogan had asked Ahmet Necdet Sezer on Wednesday not to reject the new cabinet. He had said, "I have chosen those who have won in the elections. I also know who is appropriate for which tasks."

Mr. Necdet Sezer, has often rejected the appointment of those who had strong Islamic tendencies, or the laws that in his opinion were in conflict with the secular system in Turkey.

Mr. Erdogan has not disclosed much information regarding the approval of those in the new cabinet and has only said that he intends to increase the numbers of the members of cabinet from 22 to 24 people.

The newspapers of Turkey have predicted widespread reconstruction in the present cabinet. After the new president has chosen the new cabinet, Mr. Erdogan will announce his government's program in the

parliament to receive votes of confidence. The introduction of Abdullah Gul as the candidate for presidency and the abstaining of the opposition in participating in the parliament's voting to elect the president, forced the prime minister of Turkey to hold public elections before the appointed time this past April.

[Host Mahdieh Javid]
Maryam Ahmadi was reporting.

This was the evening news magazine of Radio Farda. As we end the program, we will have a brief look at news highlights for Iran and the world.

The Iraqi Ministry of Interior says that the number of those killed in the fearsome explosions on Tuesday in the northwestern region of Sinjar has reached 400 so far. According to the statement of the Ministry of Interior of Iraq, close to two tons of explosives were used in the suicide operations in Mosul.

The annual summit of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization that was held with the attendance of the leaders of Russia, China, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, concluded its work on Thursday morning in Bishkek, the capital of Kyrgyzstan.

The leaders attending this summit promised to develop the petroleum and gas industries of the area through closer cooperation with each other. In this summit, the Islamic Republic of Iran, India, Pakistan, and Mongolia attended as observers and Afghanistan and the Republic of Turkmenistan as guests.

And finally, the statistics reported on Thursday of the casualties in the flooding in south Asia has reached more than 2600.

And at this time the evening news magazine ...[The audio is cut off here]

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