

The following is a translation of the VOA TV Persian program "News and Views," which was broadcasted via satellite on July 4, 2007.

TRANSLATION BEGINS HERE

[Opening theme song]

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]  
Tonight on News and Views:

Freedom of Alan Johnston, the BBC reporter, after 114 days of captivity.

[Alan Johnston clip spoken in English]

Surrender of hundreds of occupiers of the Red Mosque, in Pakistan, to the country's security forces.

And, the examination of the link between the neutralized terror operations in London and Glasgow.

[Music ends]

Greetings. Welcome to News and Views by the Voice of America in Washington. Tonight's broadcast is for Wednesday, July 4, 2007, or 13th of Tir, 1386. This is Setareh Derakhshesh, coming to you from the newsroom, bringing you headlines about other news in the world.

The plane carrying the bodies of seven Spanish tourists who were killed in a suicide car bombing attack in Yemen, along with five wounded, arrived in Madrid. The suicide car bomb attack had taken place on Monday near the Queen of Sheba temple in Yemen.

The German foreign ministry has announced that a German citizen who has been missing since June 28 may have been kidnapped in Afghanistan. It was unclear why the missing man was in Afghanistan.

Police in the south of Nigeria say that gunmen have abducted five foreign nationals working in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta. This abduction took place one day after the rebels announced the end of their one-month ceasefire.

Russia's First Deputy Prime Minister, Sergei Ivanov, says Russia will do what is necessary to defend itself if Washington rejects the Kremlin's offer for a missile-defense plan for Europe.

Election officials in East Timor say that none of the political parties which took part in last Saturday's parliamentary election managed to win the outright majority needed. 14 political parties competed for 65 seats in the parliament of that newly-independent country.

And finally, today President Bush spoke at an Independence Day event before military personnel of the National Guard in the state of West Virginia during celebrations for the Fourth of July, Independence Day. He said in regard to the war on terrorism, "Victory in this struggle will require more patience, more courage, and more sacrifice."

[Video clip of President Bush's speech in English]

Thanking military leaders and the members of the American armed forces, President Bush said, "You are the successors of those men who fought for liberty. And we celebrate the US Independence Day with a sense of freedom. We need your help today even more because we are facing a dangerous enemy. This is a radical enemy who continues its fight against us using its ideology. This enemy views the dark side of the world and believes that whoever opposes its ideology and religion must be destroyed."

Continuing his speech, President Bush added, "We removed a regime that gave sanctuary and support to al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Today 25 million Afghans have been liberated from the shackles of the Taliban and are fighting the enemy. We removed a cruel dictator who pursued the production of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. This was the regime that was helping Palestinian radicals. Today we are helping the young Iraqi government so they can make progress toward national reconciliation. For this reason, we sent reinforcements to clear their capital city of the insurgents and bring it under control. Today our enemies in Iraq are the same people who attacked our soil on September 11, 2001. Therefore, we, for ourselves and the people of the world, must be victorious in Iraq."

The President of the United States said, “We will remain in Iraq until there is stability in that country, because leaving prematurely is wrong. It is not in the interest of America. I will not do such a thing.”

[Music]

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

In the news from around the world, Alan Johnston, the BBC reporter, was freed by his captors in the Gaza Strip after 114 days of captivity. He said, “Freedom is the most extraordinary thing.” A few hours ago, he participated in a news conference. After thanking all the media, groups, and individuals who had worked for his release during his captivity, he told the reporters about his ordeal during the time of his confinement.

[Video clip begins]

[Male reporter]

The release of Alan Johnston, the BBC reporter, took place after the promises which had recently been made by the militant group Hamas after taking over all of Gaza. According to an Associated Press report, frequent delays by the kidnappers in freeing Mr. Johnston finally led to clashes between the two groups Hamas and the Army of Islam in Gaza City yesterday. During these clashes, one Palestinian civilian was killed. After his release, Mr. Johnston spoke to reporters at the house of Ismail Haniyeh, the deposed Palestinian Prime Minister:

[Video clip of Alan Johnston]

[Male reporter]

“The past 16 weeks have been the worst time of my life. I felt that I was buried alive.” Mr. Johnston added that during that time he dreamed about being free several times, but sensed that a solution was on the way when Hamas took over the control of the Gaza Strip last month. Ismail Haniyeh, the leader of Hamas who still considers himself to be the Prime Minister of the Palestinian government, expressed happiness for the release of the BBC reporter and said:

[Video clip of Ismail Haniyeh]

[Male reporter]

“It was clear from day one that Alan Johnston’s kidnapping would turn into a problem for all the Palestinian people and all the free people around the world.”

Meanwhile, Mahmoud Abbas, Palestinian President, who was in a meeting with Danish Foreign Minister Per Stig Moeller, expressed his happiness for the release of the BBC reporter and said:

[Video clip of Mahmoud Abbas]

[Male reporter]

“His captivity was something painful, harmful, and unacceptable in our laws and traditions. We congratulate his family, the British media, and also the government of Great Britain on this freedom.”

Mr. Johnston headed for Jerusalem accompanied by British officials after this meeting. After entering Israel, he described the days of his captivity for the reporters.

He then met at the British Consulate in Jerusalem with Richard Makepeace, the British Consul-General, and Simon Wilson, the BBC Bureau Chief in Jerusalem.

Mr. Wilson says that the freed reporter does not intend to visit Great Britain. He is scheduled to attend a press conference towards the end of the day.

[Video clip of Mr. Johnston’s parents]

The news of the release of the BBC reporter was met with elation in Scotland by his parents, Graham and Margaret Johnston. His father said that he had a short telephone conversation with his son.

Gordon Brown, British Prime Minister, said in today’s session of the parliament:

[Video clip of Gordon Brown]

“The whole country will welcome the news that Alan Johnston, a fearless journalist whose voice was silenced for too long, is now free.” Mr. Brown

also thanked all those who helped with diplomatic negotiations, among other things, and securing the freedom of Mr. Johnston.

After welcoming the news of the BBC reporter's release, Mark Regev, spokesman for Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said in Jerusalem, "We understand the difficult situation that his family and friends have been in, and we hope that Gilad Shalit, the Israeli soldier who was abducted by Hamas over a year ago, will be freed soon."

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

In Pakistan, a high-ranking member of that country says that the religious leader of the Red Mosque was captured while trying to escape the mosque wearing women's clothing. In continuation of the tension between the radical religious students and Pakistan's security forces in Islamabad, a group of protesters who were mainly women and young girls left the Red Mosque before noon.

According to the officials, more than 1000 persons are holed up in the mosque. Clashes in this mosque between the armed religious students and security forces left 11 people dead. Here is a report about these latest developments:

[Male reporter]

With tightening of the siege of the Red Mosque in Islamabad, more than 340 religious students—mainly women and young girls—surrendered to the security forces. This is despite the fact their religious leaders and militant followers still remain at the mosque.

Khalid Pervez, the top security official in the Pakistani capital, has said that although the 11:00 deadline to end the siege by the religious students has passed, the security forces are not planning to attack the Red Mosque for the time being.

Khalid Pervez added that the government will pay a 5,000 rupee (\$83.00) reward to those who decide to leave the mosque and return to their homes. Meanwhile, Abdul Rashid Ghazi, one of the siege leaders, has said that the people in the mosque were not aware of a government deadline, and he expressed his willingness to enter into discussion with government officials. Abdul Rashid Ghazi claims that 20 religious students were killed during the deadly clash with the security forces of Pakistan yesterday. This is while

the Pakistani security officials described the casualties of last Tuesday's clashes in Islamabad to be only nine people. According to reports, more than 150 were also injured during those clashes. A curfew has been declared for the area surrounding the Red Mosque, and the police and commando units have blocked the streets leading to the mosque.

The recent bloody clashes in Islamabad have heightened the crisis. Parviz Mosharaf, Pakistani President, has to face tensions caused by the militants on the border with Afghanistan on one hand and the dismissal of Pakistan's Supreme Court Judge on the other hand.

Some accuse Pakistan's security agencies of encouraging the crisis in order to justify military rule in the country. The increasing power of opposition throughout Pakistan has raised doubt about whether another five-year term would be forthcoming for Pervez Musharraf, an ally of the US, who came into power after a coup in 1999.

Meanwhile, President Musharraf's inability in the face of religious radicals has damaged his reputation as someone who can be depended upon in the fight against radicalism.

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

News and Views is broadcast by the Voice of America from Washington.

Reporters Without Borders has condemned the murder of two Iraqi TV reporters who worked for a Sunni-controlled station in that country.

The two reporters were abducted in Baghdad in June. Their dead bodies were discovered at the morgue a short time later. This TV station, named Baghdad Television, is owned by the Sunni Islamic Party of Iraq and, according to Reporters Without Borders, had been attacked three months before, during which two staffers at the station had been killed.

Here is a report about these developments:

[Female reporter]

The organization named Reporters Without Borders asked the Iraqi government to protect journalists against such attacks. Meanwhile, violence and bombings continue in Baghdad.

A car bomb exploded at an open market in the Al-Shaab neighborhood of Baghdad on Tuesday night. The explosion left 18 people dead, 35 people injured, and heavy damage to the surrounding buildings.

The injured from that explosion were immediately transferred to Imam Ali Hospital in Sadr City. This open market, belonging to bird sellers, was located at a mainly-Shiite part of northern Baghdad, and has frequently been attacked by Sunni bombers.

This morning, the mourning survivors of those who were killed went to Imam Ali Hospital to obtain the bodies of their loved ones for burial.

[Anchorwoman Setareh Derakhshesh]

Continuing with world news, British officials are studying the possibility of a connection between the two terrorist operations which took place in London and Glasgow in northern Great Britain in recent days.

In connection with these two events so far eight people, all physicians, have been arrested. One of the suspects, who has been living in Australia and is an Indian citizen, was captured while trying to return to his country from an airport in Australia.

Nader Vakili has prepared a report about these developments. Please take a look.

[Nader Vakili]

A judge in Australia allowed the police to extend the arrest of an Indian physician who was taken into custody in connection with terrorist activities in London and Scotland for another 48 hours.

Meanwhile a high-ranking British justice official prepared to travel to Australia to interrogate the suspect in that country. On the other hand, Australian officials released another Indian physician who had been temporarily placed under arrest for questioning, saying that he had nothing to do with the recent terrorist activities.

Australian officials say that, based on the information they received from British officials, the 27-year-old Mohamed Haneef was arrested on Monday

at Brisbane International Airport in Australia while traveling to India via Malaysia.

The extension of the suspect's arrest time falls under the anti-terrorism laws which permit the suspect to remain in custody as long as a judge finds it necessary to do so. John Howard, Australian Prime Minister, said about this matter:

[Video clip of John Howard]

“A chief inspector from the British Metropolitan Police is on his way to Australia to help the Australian officials with questioning and interrogation of the suspect.”

The Australian Prime Minister added that no specific charge has been brought up against the arrested individual, and until then, the presumption of his innocence must be respected.

Mohamed Haneef is one of the eight people who have been arrested in connection with the conspiracy of the recent London terrorist attack last Friday, and the intentional crashing of an exploding car at Glasgow International Airport.

All of the arrested individuals have been working or studying as physicians or medical students. Meanwhile, the family of the Indian physician arrested in Australia says that he is innocent, and he had been on his way to India to visit his newborn child.

Qurat-ul-ain, Haneef's mother, said in the southern Indian city of Bangalore:

[Video clip of Qurat-ul-ain]

“I am ready to give up my life for my child. But he is not the type to do anything like this.” Meanwhile a British news organization broadcast the recorded voice of someone who seemed to be talking in connection with the events at Glasgow airport. The British Broadcasting Corporation, BBC, has also reported that the person who was burned severely during the attack on Glasgow airport is named Khalid Ahmed, and is also a physician.



In a separate development, the British police arrested two suspects under the anti-terrorist laws in the city of Blackburn, in the northeastern part of Britain. Although the police have not given reporters specific information about this matter, the two arrested individuals were carrying the same type of metal pipes used in the recent bombing in Britain.

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

Meanwhile, the British police in Glasgow are investigating an attack on a newspaper stand selling Asian publications. Evidently a car sped into an Asian newspaper shop and then caught on fire—or was set on fire intentionally—which caused large amounts of damage.

While Glasgow is tense after the neutralized terrorist attacks in that city's airport and also in London, police are investigating whether or not the attack was carried out on racial grounds.

Reviewing the condition in Iraq, the government of the Kurdistan region of Iraq announced that it has not had the time to review the law about oil revenue sharing recently ratified by the Iraqi parliament.

In a statement issued by the government of Iraq-Kurdistan, hope was expressed that the text ratified by the Iraqi parliament was not such that it could not be accepted by the Kurds. If that were the case, their basic rights would be violated. The draft of the new law is a revised version of what was passed by the Iraqi parliament. At the time, some groups rejected the ratified document, and the subsequent discussions led to the current text. The details of the new law have not been revealed. The US government considers the passing of this law, which has been worked on for a long time, to be a major step in the road to Iraq's national reconciliation.

Iraq ranks third in the world when it comes to oil reserves, but most of its reserves are located in the Shiite south and the Kurdish north. The Sunni central region of the country holds very little of this supply.

In another development, a car bomb explosion in the Shiite section of Baghdad left 18 people dead and 35 people injured. And in other news, the US Army has announced that the insurgents injured two pilots on Monday by firing at their helicopter, but other military helicopters rescued them from the remains of their aircraft.

[Music]

A human rights group in the US has published a major report about Iraq-Kurdistan. This report includes instances of violations of human rights standards in prisons by the security services of Iraq-Kurdistan.

A Kurdistan government official called this report one-sided and biased. Nazi Biglari, our international correspondent, has created a report based on an interview with an Iraq-Kurdistan official and an analyst with Human Rights Watch.

In order to listen to that, we are going to go directly to our studio in New York.

Greetings to you.

[Nazi Biglari]

Hello Setareh. The organization Human Rights Watch tells of systematic violations of human rights and torture of prisoners by Iraq-Kurdistan security forces in a 58-page report.

Ayub Nuri, an Iraq analyst at Human Rights Watch, told Voice of America, "Due to the presence of radical Islamic groups in Iraq and in northern Iraq in the Kurdistan region since 1992, Kurdish security forces, who are called Asayish, have been acting independently. They answer to no one."

[Audio Clip of Ayub Nuri]

[Nazi Biglari]

They are not a part of KRG or the Kurdistan Regional Government, and that is one of the reasons for Human Rights Watch's concerns. Both main political parties of Kurdistan, the Kurdistan Democratic Party, led by Massood Barzani, and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, affiliated with Jalal Talabani, have their own security forces that operate outside the control of the government of Kurdistan. The two parties formally unified in July 2006, but still maintain separate detention facilities.

[Nazi Biglari]

According to Ayub Nuri of Human Rights Watch, the reason for direct operations of Iraq-Kurdistan security forces is that neither of the two major

Kurdish political parties has any interest in sharing security information with the other.

However, Dr. Mohammed Ihsan, Minister of Extra Regional Affairs and former Minister of Human Rights in Iraq-Kurdistan, denies this matter.

In a phone interview with Voice of America from Irbil, he said that with all the respect he has for all human rights groups, especially Human Rights Watch, he believes that the published report is biased and one-sided.

[Audio Clip OF Dr. Mohammed Ihsan]

[Nazi Biglari]

This report is not accurate. It seems that it has been prepared in a one-sided manner. It goes without saying that we are facing a great security struggle against terrorism and terrorist groups in Kurdistan today; from al-Qaeda to followers of Saddam Hussein and the Baathists.

But this should not result in thinking that there is torture in Kurdistan, and human rights are being trampled.

[Nazi Biglari]

Dr. Mohammed Ihsan also told Voice of America that Human Rights Watch like some other human rights groups is suffering from anti-American sentiments. To create this report, they have spoken with those who are against the democratic process in Iraqi-Kurdistan.

Mr. Ayub Nuri of Human Rights Watch told Voice of America that Iraqi officials especially President Massood Barzani have promised to form an independent committee to address the condition of jails and prisons in Iraq-Kurdistan.

Dr. Mohammed Ihsan also told Voice of America that since 1992 the Kurdistan region of Iraq has come to an agreement with the International Committee of the Red Cross to allow them to visit the jails and prisons in Iraq-Kurdistan any time they want.

Back to you, Setareh.

[Anchorwoman Setareh Derakhshesh]

Who are these people who have been arrested?

[Nazi Biglari]

According to the report by Human Rights Watch, and based on what Mr. Ayub Nuri has told us, most of the people held in Kurdish region prisons are Kurds who have cooperated with radical Islamic groups such as Ansar al-Islam or Ansar al-Sunnah or al-Qaeda.

However, there are some who have had no connection with any of these groups and simply have been imprisoned without adherence to any type of due process. Based on Iraq's laws, those arrested have to be interrogated in less than 24 hours, and their charges must be announced.

Back to you, Setareh.

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

With thanks to Nazi Biglari, this was a direct report from New York.

[Music]

The US and Russia are going to decrease their arsenals. Condoleezza Rice, US Secretary of State, and her Russian counterpart, Sergei Lavrov, published a joint statement about that matter yesterday in Washington.

According to the statement, both sides are planning to drop the level of their strategic weapons to the lowest level in consideration of their mutual treaties and obligations towards their allies. The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or START, which was signed in 1991 between US and Russia will expire in 2009.

Robert Joseph, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, and Russian Federation Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak announced yesterday that negotiations for a similar new treaty were in progress.

Gita Arian has a report in this area. Hello Gita.

[Gita Arian]

Hello to you Ms. Derakhshesh.

We reported yesterday that the United States and Russia vowed on Monday to pursue further cuts in their strategic nuclear arsenals and to take new steps to limit weapons proliferation. At a press appearance here with Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Kislyak, US Nuclear Nonproliferation envoy Robert Joseph said talks on the shape of a post-START arms accord are under way but are only at an early stage.

They said expansion of nuclear power around the world is inevitable, given the soaring demand for energy, but that it should be conducted in a way that strengthens the international nuclear nonproliferation regime.

The common initiative by Russia and the US will expand some existing international plans, and foresees a vast role for the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The common initiative by both countries covers the goal of sharing the US atomic plan, Russia's initiative for the creation of international centers of nuclear fuel, and the creation of a mechanism for providing nuclear fuel which is presently being discussed in Vienna by IAEA.

Based on the latest agreement between the US and Russia, there will be cooperation with other interested parties on development of modern reactors, financial assistance, and help in managing the used fuel to be given to the countries interested in obtaining sources of nuclear energy.

Officials of both countries insisted that the goal of this initiative is to devise a method of common international access to nuclear energy to remove the need of individual countries to enrich their own nuclear fuel. That is, to remove any possibility of a country turning nuclear energy into a nuclear weapon.

The Russian official had submitted the draft of this initiative to last year's G8 summit in St. Petersburg, Russia. He said that all countries in the summit agreed that access to atomic energy was inevitable. Additionally, a precise and dependable system needs to be created.

Mr. Joseph and Mr. Kislyak also believed that the common initiative by the two countries would benefit not only the developing countries who are seeking nuclear energy, but also those countries that have made some progress in utilizing nuclear energy.

In this extraordinary joint press conference, Mr. Kislyak was asked about the Bushehr power plant in Iran. He called the Bushehr project a good example of Russia's cooperation with other countries. He added that the Bushehr power plant for Iran should serve as an example for other nuclear activities of the Islamic Republic [of Iran].

Back to you Ms. Derakhshesh.

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

There was talk by Iranian officials recently that the construction of the power plant would be completed by September. Of course we have had conflicting reports on this subject, and it would rely on Russia for its nuclear fuel.

Did Mr. Kislyak say anything in that regard? Has he confirmed this claim?

[Gita Arian]

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister, Mr. Kislyak, dismissed an Iranian claim this week that the plant will be completed and fueled within two months as overly ambitious. He added that the project needed more time since there are technical and financial matters that would have to be resolved.

“So the issue of sending fuel to Iran is not something that we'll have to resolve tomorrow.”

Agence France Presse has quoted the head of the Russian atomic energy agency as saying that the cause of the delay has been missed payments and transportation holdup of required parts from third-party countries to Bushehr by the Islamic Republic.

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

What about the sanctions? With respect to the sanctions imposed against Iran, the President of Iran said the other day that the sanctions had not had any effect. However, their Oil Minister has said that banking sanctions have negatively impacted various projects in that sector.

[Gita Arian]

Yes, both claims could be accurate. The US Secretary of Treasury has said, “Perhaps Iran is abusing some of the existing banking rules.”

Considering the sanctions against Iran, that country has been asking its banking creditors to omit the name of the requesting country, meaning Iran, from their forms. Thus the financial institution receiving these funds would remain in the dark, and the financial sanction is violated in practice.

Currently there is a plan being worked on that some information used in the system of communication between banks, called "SWIFT", is going to become mandatory, e.g. the name of the originating country.

However the Deputy Secretary of the Treasury has said that such a plan will not become effective until 2008.

Back to you Ms. Derakhshesh.

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]  
Thank you, Gita Arian, for your report tonight.

[Music]

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]  
Please note that starting Friday night, July 6, 2007, 15th of Tir, 1386, one hour will be added to News and Views.

From now on, News and Views will be broadcast for two hours beginning at 11:30 a.m. Washington time, 7:00 p.m. Tehran time. It will contain the latest news about Iran and the world, various cultural programs, the economy, sports, health, women's issues, and analysis of the news.

[Music]

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

We will continue this section of News and Views with a review of some other news headlines.

The plane carrying the bodies of seven Spanish tourists who were killed in a suicide car bombing attack in Yemen, along with five wounded, arrived in Madrid. The suicide car bomb attack had taken place on Monday near the Queen of Sheba temple in Yemen.

The German foreign ministry has announced that a German citizen who has been missing since June 28 may have been kidnapped in Afghanistan. It was unclear why the missing man was in Afghanistan.

Police in the south of Nigeria say that gunmen have abducted five foreign nationals working in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta. This abduction took place one day after the rebels announced the end of their one-month ceasefire.

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Election officials in East Timor say that none of the political parties which took part in last Saturday's parliamentary election managed to win the outright majority needed. 14 political parties competed for 65 seats in the parliament of that newly-independent country.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees says that the government of Brazil has accepted to house nearly 100 Palestinian refugees who had fled that country or Jordan since the start of the Iraq war in 2003. Now, I would like to draw your attention to a few news items about Iran.

The cost of utilities will increase in Tehran, starting with the second half of the month of Tir. This will be in addition to the increase in the price of natural gas. According to the spokesperson for the National Gas Company, the price of natural gas will increase progressively for subscribers. Those who use too much could be paying up to three times more than what is normally charged.

An earthquake measuring 5.1 on the Richter scale jolted the city of Behabad in the central province of Yazd this morning. There are no reports of any casualties or damage to property caused by the quake.

The bestseller romance novels will be taken out of circulation from the public libraries of the Isfahan province. The senior manager in charge of Isfahan's Office of Culture and Islamic Guidance called these books harmful at the General Assembly of that province and estimated their number to be 107 volumes.



Mr. Hosseini says that the review of the libraries has shown that the interest of young people in reading is more geared towards works of fiction and novels. He added that, unfortunately, the existing books do not deserve to be presented in the framework of the Islamic Republic. Other pieces of war literature will become available to readers to replace such books.

The person in charge of Public Relations and International Affairs for the libraries of the country has expressed no knowledge of any books being taken out of circulation.

More news about Iran: The *Hammihan* newspaper, which had been absent for seven years by order of the District 1083 judge of the General Public Court of Tehran, had resumed its activities two months ago. However, after publishing 43 issues it was placed under arrest by the General Prosecutor of Tehran once more.

Saeed Mortazavi, in a letter to the Minister of Guidance, described the reasons for closing down this newspaper as being faults in the previous legal proceedings pertaining to this case.

Meanwhile, the director of the Iranian Labor News Agency, ILNA, resigned from his position yesterday. This resignation was due to increased pressure on the news agency. Siovasht Saodatiyon has prepared a report about this subject.

[Siovasht Saodatiyon]

Because of the cancellation of the *Mosharekat* newspaper's license, the repeat ban on the *Hammihan* newspaper, and increased pressure on ILNA news agency, newspaper publishing activists in Iran are concerned about the new wave of suppression of independent newspapers in Iran.

The *Hammihan* newspaper was banned permanently yesterday after having resumed publication for two months after its original ban. Reza Khojasteh-Rahimi, newspaper reporter and a member of the editorial board of the *Hammihan* newspaper, spoke to Voice of America:

[Mr. Khojasteh-Rahimi]

Yesterday was the [unintelligible] of the newspaper publishing forces when the messenger from the General Prosecutor of Tehran came to the paper's office and announced the ban on the newspaper. Judge Mortazavi, General Prosecutor of Tehran, who has a long history of opposing reformist newspapers, felt that the legal proceedings related to this case were not up to par. The General Prosecutor has brought up charges against the legal proceedings of the original court ending the ban of the paper.

The general gist of Mr. Mortazavi's letter is that Mr. Karbaschi should have been present. But his attorney was present instead, making removal of the ban illegal. In a different paragraph of the letter he referred to the reason for the ban, and persisted that the newspaper is still continuing with the mischief that got it into trouble in the first place. Of course, he has not made any direct comments about the nature of these crimes.

Based on the additional information that we received today, there was an objection from the judge who had originally authorized removal of the ban on *Hammihan*. He has announced that he stands by his ruling to lift the ban on *Hammihan* newspaper.

[Siovasht Saodatiyon]

Meanwhile, yesterday the director of ILNA resigned from his position after the increase of pressure on this news agency. We read, in an open letter by Masoud Heydari, the director of this news agency, that in order to avoid further damage to ILNA he decided to resign from his post.

Mashaallah Shamsolvaezin, spokesman of the Tehran-based Association for Defense of Freedom of the Press, expressed grave concern about the new wave of crackdowns on independent press in Iran.

[Mr. Shamsolvaezin]

The news received by the Association for Defense of Freedom of the Press led to a special meeting by the members of this association. We have four developments on our hands which took place suddenly: One is the cancellation of *Mosharekat* newspaper's license; one is the ban of the weekly *Voice of the People of Kurdistan*; another is the closure of *Hammihan* newspaper; and finally is the cessation of activity by ILNA due to too much political pressure. That news agency was relatively more

democratic than other news agencies in the country. It seems as if it is going to have the same fate as the student news agency, ISNA.

Consequently I believe that, according to the information we have, a group consisting of four individuals has taken over dealing with the newspapers. Sometimes that group closes down newspapers using the archaic laws established after the 1953 coup, and other times it uses political methods to pressure the papers into shutting down.

This is while Iran launched Press TV just yesterday, promising the people around the world that they would receive a variety of alternative news. How is it that the same government is depriving its own citizens from having and gaining access to alternative news and a variety of different information offered by the free press?

This policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran is very worrying, and its responsibility lies squarely on the shoulders of the high-ranking officials of the regime. The Association for Defense of Freedom of the Press has asked the highest-ranking official in the country to save Iran from the situation it is in by intervening in this incident and issuing a decree to stop the execution of these orders.

[Siovash Saodatiyon]

Based on the report by Etemad Melli, the staff at ILNA have voluntarily stopped their activities at that news agency for a week. They have not broadcast any news since Tuesday night from that agency.

[Music]

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

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The ramifications resulting from the former White House top administration aide's exemption by President Bush still continue. This is taking place while an influential member of the Congress is planning to conduct a hearing to deal with this matter.

John Conyers, the Democratic Representative and head of the powerful House Judiciary Committee, says the committee will meet to review the possibility of the misuse of presidential powers in offering exemption.

President Bush, using the rights given to him by the US Constitution, nullified the 30-month jail term issued against Lewis Libby on Monday. Libby, Vice President Dick Cheney's former chief of staff, was sentenced to jail in March for lying before the grand jury. He was accused of revealing the true identity of Valerie Plame, who was an undercover CIA agent.

Mr. Bush said he took action because Libby's prison term was excessive. Nonetheless, Libby still has to pay a \$250,000 fine, and he will remain on probation for two years. Tony Snow, White House Spokesman, said on Tuesday that Mr. Libby's punishment is still severe enough to affect his career deeply.

Libby is the only person who has been accused in connection to Ms. Plame's case. At the same time, he is the highest-ranking official who has been criminally charged and convicted since what was known as the Iran-Contra affair in the 1980s.

In other US news, today, July 4, is Independence Day in the US. There will be celebrations across the country today. 231 years ago, on July 4, the American nation declared its independence from Great Britain. Along with special ceremonies across the country, especially in Washington, DC, the historical text of the Declaration of Independence will be recited for the public again.

Usually around the Fourth of July, airports and train stations are filled with commuters who are traveling for the Independence Day holiday. This year, the presence of security forces, police, and the National Guard, armed with automatic weapons, was increased around public transportation places such as train stations and airports.

This is mainly as the result of the botched attacks by terrorists in Great Britain. These precautions have increased the sense of safety among the travelers and those who are participating in various public celebrations on this day.

And now, a different kind of news.

Today a museum that registered and saved the historic events related to immigration by millions of European people to America, Canada, South

America, and Australia along with their pictorial accounts, opened up in Germany. The immigration of over 50 million Europeans in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century first began from Great Britain, Ireland, and the Scandinavian countries. Then the desire to leave Europe for places with a nicer climate expanded to German-speaking countries and finally to Eastern Europe.

Nader Vakili has a report on this topic.

[Nader Vakili]

A museum honoring the memories of the migration of millions of European citizens to various corners of the world which began in early 19<sup>th</sup> century opened in Germany. This museum, which is located in BallinStadt, a suburb of Hamburg, presented historic artifacts such as the first airplanes, and the details of their historical accounts of these immigrants' voyage, to the public for viewing.

This project was announced in 2003, and its budget was secured by the committee that was established solely for this purpose.

Between 1815 and 1930, 50 million Europeans left the continent for America, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Australia, and other countries. Albert Ballin, the youngest child of a Jewish trader's family in Hamburg, began construction of the BallinStadt museum when he was only 17 years old.

This 17-year-old young man has described the story of the immigration and voyages of all these people in simple language.

Emigration from Europe, in addition to its impact on the history of that continent, played an important role in the history and formation of the United States of America, which was the destination of many of those people.

The desire to emigrate from Europe first appeared in early 19<sup>th</sup> century and began from Great Britain, Ireland, and the Scandinavian countries. Then the desire to leave Europe for the West and Australia approached its peak in 1854, 1872, and 1881. It did not take long for the wave of immigration to penetrate the Eastern European countries.

Helga Jass's mother migrated to New York in 1930 from BallinStadt, Germany.

[Clip of Albert Ballin]

[Nader Vakili]

She thought she would find a better future in America, and that is what happened. While suffering from seasickness, she fell in love with a man who had tried to help her. One year after that, Helga's mother married that man in New York, and they both decided to return to Germany.

In the last years of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the port of Hamburg had turned into a refuge for emigrants planning to travel to various corners of the world. 22,000 Jews lived in Hamburg in the 1920s, but anti-Semitism gradually decreased their number, and in 1941 the number dropped to 7,500.

In October of the same year, deportation of Jews to concentration camps began. In May of 1945, and after the liberation of Hamburg, only 647 Jews lived in the city. Historians estimate that over 10,000 Jews managed to legally escape Nazi Germany while approximately the same number were ejected from their homes to be killed by Hitler's soldiers.

Although the efforts of German-Jewish immigrants to leave the country were hampered by red tape and various laws and rules, over 3,000 Jews were able to leave Germany for the United States via the port of Hamburg in April of 1939.

[Music]

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

American automobile manufacturers are going to be given access to the internal market of China.

Today Chrysler Corporation managed to come to an agreement with the largest Chinese automobile manufacturing company to build cars in China. Based on this agreement, manufacturing of small cars for internal use and for export to the US will take place in China.

[Male Announcer]

Chrysler Group head Tom LaSorda says:

[Video clip of Tom LaSorda]

[Male Announcer]

“The Chrysler Group has a long-term commitment to China. We are committed to continued offering of world-class vehicles to the domestic market. And as of today, we are committed to building vehicles here for export.”

Chery CEO and Chairman Yin Tongyao said Chery has little experience in international business and has much to learn from a big and experienced company like Chrysler.

On Thursday, July 4, Chrysler Automotive Group signed a new contract with Chery Corporation, the largest automobile manufacturing company in China. Based on that contract, small vehicles will be built in China for the purpose of export to the US.

This is the first such contract by a US automotive company with China. These two companies are planning to export their first products to Latin America and Eastern Europe. After a two or three year period, they are planning to find their way to the Western European and US markets.

Tom LaSorda, Chrysler Chairman, says at the contract signing ceremony:

[Video clip of Tom LaSorda]

[Male Announcer]

“And as of today, we are committed to building vehicles here for export.” This agreement is part of the efforts by Chrysler to decrease the cost of manufacturing cars and to compete in the world market.

Chery, the largest Chinese automaker, managed to manufacture 350,000 cars last year. The company was established in 1997. China is the second-largest growing market for purchase of automobiles. It has attracted the interest of US automakers to cooperate with China’s domestic automakers.

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

Ali Emadi has compiled tonight’s sports news. I would like to draw your attention to that report.

[Ali Emadi]

Peru, who is the winner of two Copa America soccer championships, reached a sensitive 2-2 draw against Bolivia last night at the Metropolitano stadium in Merida, Venezuela. This team, who played the last part of the second half with ten players, went on to the next round as the top team, thanks to two goals by Claudio Pizarro.

After their match ended in a goal-less draw, Venezuela and Uruguay joined the top 10 teams of the Copa America competition. It is worth mentioning that the reason these two teams made it to the next stage is that the top two teams of each group, along with the best two third-place teams among all groups, will go through to the next round.

The Old Continent teams continue preparation for competition in the Asian Cup that begins in a few days and which is being hosted by the four nations of Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

The South Korean team, which took the championship home twice in 1956 and 1960, is hoping to reach that goal once again after 47 years. Pim Verbeek, the Dutch coach of the South Korean team, notes the absence of such stars as Park Ji-Sung and Lee Young-Pyo, and hopes to beat teams such as Saudi Arabia, Australia, and Iran.

Continuing with the news, the old rivals of the Korean team, the players of the Iranian national team arrived in the Malaysian capital to prepare themselves for their first match against Uzbekistan next week. It is worth noting that after many disagreements between the Iranian Football Federation and the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA), the charter of that country's federation was approved by FIFA after several modifications.

FIFA is hoping that what it calls interference by that country's government and other unrelated organizations which had caused the suspension of the Iranian Football Federation will be resolved now that the changes have been made to the charter, and that the country's football management crisis may be over now.

[Auto racing clip]



From the Formula 1 British Grand Prix, Kimi Raikkonen with the Ferrari team, who climbed to the podium last Sunday as the first-place driver, is trying once more to put the leader Lewis Hamilton behind him in this competition. He has never won first place in Silverstone and, while wishing for success in this race, speaks of the sharp turns of this racing ground.

The Ferrari team is in second place behind the McLaren-Mercedes team leaders by only five points.

[Drum music]

In the Wimbledon Championships, Lleyton Hewitt, the 2002 Australian champion of this tournament, beat the Argentine Guillermo Canas by a score of 3-1.

In other singles matches, the Russian player Nikolay Davydendo, overcame Monfils in a match that was delayed by rain. Juan Carlos Ferraro, the Spanish champion of the 2002 French Open, must face the winning Roger Federer after beating Janko Tipsarevic.

[Video clip of Wimbledon]

The women's singles competition resulted in the elimination of Amelie Mauresmo, last year's champion. The French tennis player lost the match in three sets yesterday against the young Nicole Pietrangeli of the Czech Republic. However, her countrywoman Marion Bartoli managed to defeat the third-seeded Jelena Jankovic of Serbia with a score of two sets to one.

In yesterday's other match, Ana Ivanovic eliminated Nadia Petrova of Russia in three sets in a difficult match. As one of the top eight players going through to the next round, she will have to face Nicole Pietrangeli.

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

Here is Kaveh Adib with some short news stories from around the world.

[Kaveh Adib]

In Ghana, leaders of 30 African nations concluded the three-day African Union summit. European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso, who is going through his last days as the President, attended the African Union gathering and reminded the African countries that Europe and Africa

must start closer cooperation. Mr. Barroso addressed the African Union leaders in regard to their plan to create a central government as such, "You need to have a dream similar to that of the European Union. A dream that came through for Europe, and it can come true for Africa too."

On the other hand, Ghana's President, who was the host of the gathering, announced that the African Union would soon create an exploratory committee whose responsibility would be to rapidly find a way to establish the central government of Africa.

In Columbia, hundreds of people in Bogotá remembered 11 lawmakers of the country who were murdered last month by the rebel group FARC by holding ceremonies in the city's central square. The participants in these ceremonies, a large portion of whom consisted of the relatives of the dead, lighted thousands of candles in Plaza Bolivar and prayed for the souls of those lost.

The President of Columbia, Alvaro Uribe, had also previously condemned the criminal activities of the FARC, or the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia. However, FARC leaders released a statement saying that those 11 lawmakers were actually killed when the Colombian Army attacked one of the group's hideouts, and their death had not been intentional.

In Romania, officials have begun taking samples from the waters of the Danube River and conducting serious tests. This is in reaction to the water pollution of the Serbian river Timok, whose final destination is the Danube River. Yesterday the Serbian officials announced that over 20 tons of fish have died in the Timok River due to water pollution. According to Serbian officials the source of this pollution is waste from the factories which are located on the banks of the Timok River.

The Nature Preservation Organization of Romania is continuously in the process of testing water samples from the Danube River using its mobile laboratories.

In Belgium, European Union executives called an emergency meeting to confront the annual loss of 500 million euros for wine producers. According to Marian Fischer, EU's official in charge of Agriculture and Rural Development, wine imports to the member countries of the Union has increased 10% annually since 1996. Therefore the middle-tier wine makers

have faced many problems including insufficient sales. She added, “The European Union is planning to help these producers by devising new aid packages to prevent their total bankruptcy.” More than half a billion euros worth of surplus European wine is sent to factories annually to be converted into industrial-grade alcohol.

And finally, the organizers of the New Seven Wonders of the World competition have announced that they have received over 80 million votes only a few days before the conclusion of this competition. Among the more than 200 countries who have participated in this competition, 21 countries have reached the final stage. A new set of Seven Wonders of the World will soon be introduced to people around the world. This competition was established in 1999, or eight years ago, by a Swiss adventurer. He believed that of the original Seven Wonders of the World only the Egyptian Pyramids have remained, and the world needed new Wonders. It is worth noting that the Pyramids of Egypt are also present among the new list of the Seven Wonders of the World.

[Music]

Now we come to the section called Your Voice.

Kouros has written about the hardships imposed by the Islamic Republic in an email:

“I witnessed the severe beating of a youngster by government agents because he was listening to music on his Walkman. It took place on Shahabad Avenue in Tehran. Only God knows what they are doing in the name of Islam to political prisoners. So much for Islamic justice.”

Payman, a 17-year-old teenager from Isfahan, recounts the bravery of an Iranian woman clashing with the police on a street in that city. He writes:

“On Nazar Avenue in Isfahan, female police guards were trying to arrest a woman for not having proper Islamic covering. But that liberated woman surprised the guards by shouting the slogan ‘We only want our freedom.’ They had to release her for fear of public reaction and were forced to retreat from the area.”

Referring to the adage “Blood is thicker than water,” Behzad has written to us in an email that:

“Mr. Ahmadinejad, it has been four months since I applied for an emergency loan as mandated by law. I have not received anything yet. How come you swiftly give donations to the Hamas terrorists or the Communist Fidel Castro? Which one of us is more in need?”

With thanks for all the views you send us, we have received emails from Akbar from Tehran, Saeed from Yasooj, Jalil from Zanjan, Daneshi from Sardasht, Gholam from Shiraz, Omid and Kayvan from Ghazvin, along with many others. We are grateful to all of them.

[Music]

[Male Announcer]

News and Views takes you to the scene of events, and captures significant responses.

[Music]

[Male Announcer]

Learning about your opinions will better assist us in carrying out our reporting responsibility. Send your opinions to our email address at [newsandviews@voanews.com](mailto:newsandviews@voanews.com).

[Host Setareh Derakhshesh]

As previously mentioned in tonight’s program, starting Friday night, the night after tomorrow night, July 6, 2007, 15th of Tir 1386, one hour will be added to News and Views.

News and Views will be broadcast from then on for two hours beginning at 11:30 a.m. Washington time, 7:00 p.m. Tehran time. It will contain the latest news about Iran and the world, various cultural programs, the economy, sports, health, women’s issues, and analysis of the news.

At this time, I would like to invite you to listen to a few short pieces of news.

Yuriko Koike, Japan's new Defense Minister, after being announced in her new position, said that she would work towards strengthening her country's military ties with...[interrupted]

TRANSLATION ENDS HERE