

TEHRAN - Iran swimming team snatched three medals in Croatia competitions on Thursday.

Iran bagged one gold, one silver and one bronze. Iranian swimmers -- Saeid Aashtiani, Mohammad Bidarian and Pasha Vahdati -- won gold, silver and bronze medals respectively.

Iranian five-member swimming team is preparing to participate in the World Swimming Competitions to be held in Italy on July 23-Oct 5.

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President stresses promotion of cooperation in region

TEHRAN - Iran's President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said further promotion and expansion of cooperation among the regional countries was to the interest of the nations and Islamic world at large.

The president made the remarks on Saturday when he received visiting Omani Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs Yusuf bin Alawi, IRNA reported.

He also said Iran would pursue its old strategic policy of expanding ties with the regional nations, and the neighboring ones in particular, with a renewed strength and zeal.

President Ahmadinejad further voiced Iran's readiness to deepen and consolidate ties with Oman in different areas and expressed happiness over the growing trend of warm and exemplary relations between the two countries. The Omani minister congratulated President Ahmadinejad over his re-election which, he said, promised even more growth in Iran's relations with the regional countries.

He said his country was keen to increase ties with Iran in all possible areas.

Meanwhile, Foreign



Minister Manouchehr Mottaki, speaking at a joint press conference with the Omani minister said that Tehran was preparing another package of proposals on major political, security and international issues.

Mottaki responded to a question said that Iran had "clear stands" about various developments.

"We are preparing a new package of proposals which would be considered as the basis for Tehran's negotiations on major regional and international developments," stressed the FM.

He made the remarks commenting on the final declaration of the recent summit of the eight major industrial states (G8) in the Italian city of L'Aquila which ended on Friday.

Mottaki said "Iran has received no new messages from the G8 summit."

The Omani Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs Yusuf bin Alawi also expressed satisfaction with the Tehran-Muscat amicable ties. He added the Iran-Oman bilateral relations are at the highest level.

Bin Alawi reiterated that

his current visit is taking place within the framework of the continued consultations between the two sides.

He stressed that Iran and Oman support establishment of stability in the entire region as well as throughout the globe.

Alawi also said that the Omani Sultan Qaboos is due to visit Iran in the near future. He added that the upcoming visit to the Islamic Republic of the Omani sultan would pave the way for further expansion of all-out cooperation between the two friendly countries.

Iran's FM, OIC Chief discuss ongoing China events

TEHRAN - Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki and Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, on Thursday discussed China developments and the killing or injury of a large number of Muslims there.

In a phone call, Mottaki and Ihsanoglu voiced concern on the ongoing conditions in China and highlighted the need for holding contacts with Chinese officials as a way of support for rights of Muslims in the country, IRNA reported.

Mottaki is also to hold talks with his Chinese counterpart Yang Jiechi on the situation in Uighur region of China.

Chinese forces attacked on Uighur

workers in a dormitory of a toy factory in China's southern Guangdong province, killing two people and injuring 118.

Chinese police arrested 1,434 Uighurs two days after killing 156 dead and wounding more than 1,000 since Uighurs started the protests in the capital Urumqi.

East Turkistan has 8 million Uighurs and historical records show that the Uighurs have a history of more than 4000 years.

Uighur Turks living in Turkey staged protests in Istanbul and called on the international community to take action to stop Chinese government. Protestors also said death toll was more than an-

nounced by Chinese officials.

In a separate phone conversation, Mottaki and his Turkish counterpart, Ahmet Davutoglu, discussed China developments, strongly condemning killing of Egyptian Marwa Sheribin in Germany.

They said the killing of Mrs. Sheribin is a sign of West's disrespect for rights of minorities, especially Muslims, calling on German officials to follow up the case and fully punish the culprit(s).

The 32-year-old pregnant Egyptian woman, Mrs. Sheribin, dubbed the "headscarf martyr", was stabbed to death by a German man in Dresden courtroom east of Germany on July 1, last week as her young son watched.

Iran condemns murder of veiled Egyptian lady in Germany

TEHRAN - Iran's Foreign Ministry spokesman Hassan Qashqavi condemned the stabbing to death of a veiled Egyptian lady in a German court.

He said the terrorist act of the German racist elements in martyring Mrs Marwa Sheribini at a German courtroom was a savage move which stood against all human ethics and moral codes, reported IRNA.

He said Iran strongly condemned the terrorist act.

Outlining the vivid cases of breaches of human rights and violation of human values in countries boasting for advocating human rights, he said the savage killing which took place before the very eyes of police and in such a courtroom only revealed the depth of insecurity and hatred the immigrants and religious minorities were facing in Germany. He believed the horrendous incident was in no way justifiable in the eyes of world public opinion.

Marwa was stabbed to death in a courtroom in Germany by a 28-year-old German from Russian origin who had repeatedly insulted the young woman for wearing hijab in past. Marwa's husband and her baby daughter were at the courtroom as well when the stabbing occurred.

Qashqavi further blamed the double-standard and negligence of the human rights in western countries for the growth of racist attitudes and disrespectful behavior towards immigrants and the people from religious minorities in particular.

President Ahmadinejad: Sincere services to people, key to conquering all peaks

TEHRAN - President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said that rendering sincere services to people was the key to conquering all peaks of national aspirations.

The president made the remark while speaking in session of the High Housing Council which was also attended by governors general from all provinces, IRNA reported.

He said pure love for the people, sympathizing with them and serving them were the elements which would help consolidate the Islamic Revolution and its humanitarian goals.

He also said serving people would undermine the basis of hegemonic system.

Ahmadinejad said that he believes in non-stop and round-the-clock efforts to serve the people and that such an approach was the factor for driving 40 million of voters to the polling stations on June 12 presidential election.

Iran, Pakistan discuss issues of mutual interest

TEHRAN - Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister, Mehdi Akhundzadeh, called on Pakistani Foreign Minister, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, at the Foreign Office and had discussions on global, regional and key bilateral issues of mutual interest, the Foreign Office said.

The Foreign Minister said that the present democratic government attached high importance to improving relations with Iran, the foreign office spokesman said, quoted by IRNA.

He added that the gas pipeline project manifested the resolve of the two countries to cooperate more closely and now the two sides need to expedite this project. Emphasizing the need to deepen regional cooperation, Akhundzadeh said that the Afghanistan-Iran-Pakistan Trilateral process has witnessed a good momentum which needs to be maintained.

The Foreign Minister agreed that follow-up action was required to consolidate the gains made in the last Summit.

Akhundzadeh also briefed the Foreign Minister on Iran's recent Presidential elections. Foreign Minister Qureshi responded that Pakistan wished to see peace and stability in Iran, our brotherly and neighbor country.

Tabriz to host int'l confab on hydroelectric power plants



TEHRAN - An international seminar on attracting investment in the field of setting small-size generators and hydroelectric power plants in East Azarbaijan province will be held in Tabriz in May 2010, Concurrent with the Power Industry Day.

Domestic and foreign investors will attend the event to review the grounds for cooperation, IRNA reported.

Hydropower, hydraulic power or water power is the power that is derived from the force or energy of moving water, which may be harnessed for useful purposes.

Prior to the widespread availability of commercial electric power, hydropower was used for irrigation, and operation of various machines such as watermills, textile machines, sawmills, dock cranes, and domestic lifts.

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Iran calls on Chinese to enter into multi-billion-dollar energy deals

TEHRAN - Iran is calling on China to get involved in deals in several huge oil projects worth more than \$42.8 billion in a bid to boost its crude refining capacity and expand bilateral economic relations.

The projects touted by Tehran comprise upgrades and expansions of refineries, construction of seven new ones and building a 1,640-kilometer oil pipeline from Neka on the Caspian Sea in

the north to Jask on the Gulf of Oman in the south, the Chinese South Post Morning daily reported.

The bulk of the investment - \$30 billion - being sought by the National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company was for the seven new refineries in the west of the country, the daily further said.

The Iranian government is offering sweeteners to attract investment for its projects,

such as a 5 percent discount on the price of crude fed to the refineries, an eight-year tax exemption, and free and unlimited transfer by foreign investors of their profits from the projects.

The most attractive component is that foreign investors will be entitled to raise their equity holding by up to 80 percent in all the new refinery projects and even higher for existing refineries that will be privatized.

China is actively hitting the international market for commodities such as copper, iron ore and oil to feed the country's roaring economic growth and better preserve the value of its \$2 trillion foreign exchange reserves against the volatility of major world currencies, the daily added.

National Iranian Oil Refining and Distribution Company Managing Director Nouredin Shahnazadeh

said in a conference in Beijing on Tuesday on Iran's oil refining industry, "They will come to Iran to get in touch with us and invest in the oil refining sector," adding, "We are also ready to invest by building new refineries in China."

On the sidelines of the conference, Shahnazadeh inked an MOU with China's Sinopec Corp. for the development of Iran's Abadan and Hormoz refineries, SHANA reported on Friday.

German, Italian ambassadors summoned over Sheribin killing

TEHRAN - German ambassador to Tehran, Herbert Honsowitz, was summoned to Foreign Ministry on Friday to be informed of Iran's protest at the killing of Egyptian Muslim woman Marwa Sheribin in Germany last week. Director General of the West Europe Affairs Department at Foreign Ministry in the meeting voiced Iran's outrage against the "inhuman" killing of the Muslim woman, IRNA reported.

The Iranian official referred to German government's failure to show swift reaction against the heinous crime and recalled the country's responsibility to guarantee rights and security of minorities and Muslim citizens living in the German territory.

He said the crime in Dresden courtroom east of Germany is another example of spread of Islamophobia in the West.

He criticized selective approach towards human rights and the boycott of the news coverage of Seribin's martyrdom. The 32-year-old pregnant Egyptian woman, Mrs. Sheribin, dubbed the "headscarf martyr", was stabbed to death by a German man in Dresden courtroom east of Germany on July 1, last week as her young son watched.

Meanwhile, Italy's Ambassador to Tehran, Alberto Bradanini, was summoned to Foreign Ministry on Friday to

be informed of Iran's protest at silence of the so-called advocates of democracy and human rights against merciless killing of Egyptian Muslim woman Marwa Sheribini in Germany.

Director General of the West Europe Affairs Department at Foreign Ministry told Bradanini that attitude of the West, especially the G8 members, to the killing of Mrs.

Sheribini sets outstanding example of the West's dubious approach towards such issues as human rights and rights of minorities, especially those of Muslims in Europe. Italy chairs the G8 annual session from July 8-10.

He said that European states create new restrictions for Muslims every day under the pretext of fighting extremism.

The Iranian official also condemned use of force by Italian police to suppress demonstrators and opponents of the G8 session, calling on Rome to act on international commitments.

Iran volleyball team to hold training camp in Europe

TEHRAN - Iran's volleyball team will hold two training camps in Bulgaria and Serbia in preparation for the 2010 FIVB Men's World Championship qualification matches in Japan.

Iran is scheduled to play South Korea, Kazakhstan and Japan in the Japanese city of

Komaki from August 28 to 30 to book a berth in the World Championship. The top two teams from each pool will qualify for the event. Australia, China, Thailand and India are in the other Asian pool.

Iran will travel to Bulgaria on July 17 to hold a training camp in Samokov, near Sofia. The Persians will play four friendlies with Bulgarian teams.

Iran will also travel by bus to Belgrade to play four Serbian teams, said Amir Khoshkhabar, Iran's volleyball team supervisor.

Iran's women Kabaddi team to depart to Italy

TEHRAN - Iran's National Women Kabaddi Team is to leave for Italy to take part in an international tournament there.

Announcing this, head of Kabaddi Federation, Mohammad Reza Maqsoodlou told IRNA on Saturday that the competition will begin on August 20 and will continue for a week.

He further noted that the team is currently holding a camp in Gorgan, Golestan

province.

Stating that Asia Kabaddi competitions will begin in Malaysia on September 25, Maqsoodlou added that the contests will be held in two men's and women's categories and Iran will take part in both of them.

Kabaddi is a team sporting event originating from India. Two teams occupy opposite halves of a field and take turns sending a "raider" into the other half, in order to win points

"Twenty" warmly welcomed at Karlovy Vary festival

TEHRAN - The Iranian drama "Twenty" was warmly welcomed by audiences at the Karlovy Vary International Film Festival, the film's director Abdolreza Kahani told MNA on Friday.

"Fortunately the audiences were impressed by the comic as well as tragic scenes of the film. They sensed that the calm atmosphere of some of the film's scenes conveyed the characters' innermost feelings," he added.

The film "Twenty" was screened on Sunday in the competition section of the festival which was followed by a question and answer panel attended by Kahani, actress Mahtab Karamati and film editor Shima Monfared.

During the panel, reporters asked about different issues including the process film-making in Iran, film shooting in a limited location and the relationships between the characters of the film.



audience appreciated the presence of actress Mahtab Karamati during the question and answer panel after the film's screening.

"They called Karamati, who was heavily made up in the film, a very talented actress who played her role so realistically, as did the other actors in the film," he added.

Starring Parviz Parastui and Mahtab Karamati, "Twenty" focuses on a once-popular reception hall now reduced to catering to the fu-

neral business, whose workers are struggling to preserve it. Parviz Parastui, Mahtab Karamati, Alireza Khamseh, Habib Rezaei, Mehran Ahmadi and Fereshteh Sadre Orafi are among the cast of the film.

Khamseh and Karamati won the Best Supporting Actor Crystal Simorgh and the Best Supporting Actress Crystal Simorgh for their roles in "Twenty" at the 27th Fajr International Film Festival in 2009.

Int'l trade fair kicks off in Orumieh

TEHRAN - Seventeen foreign companies plus 88 domestic firms have taken part in the 8th international trade fair in the Iranian northwestern city of Orumieh.

Turkey, Spain, Switzerland, China, Italy, India, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Canada, and Britain are the foreign participants in the 5-day event which kicked off on Friday, IRIB reported.

Home appliances, shoes and bags, furniture, agriculture and animal-based products, cosmetics, textiles, construction material, foodstuff, cooling and heating systems, and automotive-related parts are among the major items presented in the fair.