

General Mohammad Ali Jaafari Is Revolutionary Guards New C-in-C

Contributed by Administrator
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First of Sept. (IPS) In the most important changes at Iranian Armed Forces, Ayatollah Ali Khameneh, the Leader and supreme Commander of all Iranian Armed Forces named on Saturday first of September General Mohammad Ali Jaafari as the new Commander in chief of the Revolutionary Guards, in place of General Yahya Rahim Safavi, according to Iranian news agencies.

No reason was given for the very important change at the highest level of the 250.000 strong Guards, but some informed sources said Rahim Safavi might have been changed because of his relative "mildness" compared to some other hard line officer, including General Jaafari.

The new Revolutionary Guards Commander is among the high ranking officers who, immediately after the student uprising of August 1999, wrote an open letter to the ten Iranian president, Hojjatoleslam Mohamd Khatami, warning him that "we feel the situation become dangerous, if you don't act firm action, we think that we could not tolerate anymore".

The unprecedented move was said by highly informed sources to have been "inspired and authorized" by Mr. Khameneh, who had also directed the Guards and all other suppression forces to "crush" the uprising.

Head of the Pasdaran's (Revolutionary Guards) Strategic Centre he created two years ago on proposition of the Leader, Jaafari, -- promoted as four stars General by Mr. Khameneh, -- was Commander of the Guard's Land Forces.

Foreign Affairs Ministry official spokesman Mohammad Ali Hosseini said in his weekly press briefing that there was no special reason for the changes at the top of the Pasdaran, describing it as "a routine change in personnel which is usual over time".

"The changes and decrees the leader issues come at regular intervals and then a decision is made on the successor," he told reporters.

Referring to Safavi's new post, Hosseini added: "The leader's decree for General Rahim Safavi shows his success". Genral Rahim Safavi, appointed as the Leader's Special Adviser for Armed Forces Affairs had been placed at the command of the Revolutionary Guards almost ten years ago, on 10 September 1997, in place of Mohsen Reza, who became Secretary of the Expediency Council, under the chairmanship of Ayatollah Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

The change takes place at a time that Western powers, mostly the United States and France are increasing their pressures on Iran over Tehran's controversial nuclear programmes. ENDS RAHIM SAFAVI REPLACED 1908

By Safa Haeri, IRAN PRESS SERVICE, Posted Sunday, September 2, 2007

http://www.iran-press-service.com/cgi-bin/moxiebin/bm_tools.cgi?print=728;s=11_10;site=1

-----DEBKAFfile Exclusive: Major shakeup in elite Revolutionary Guards executed by supreme ruler Ayatollah Ali Khamenei Sept 1 takes Iran a step closer to war September 2, 2007, 11:19 PM (GMT+02:00) Supreme ruler Ali Khamenei and new Revolutionary Guards chief Gen. Jaafari review IRGC Shihab missiles In a special decree, Khamenei suddenly sacked Gen. Rahim Safavi and appointed Gen. Mohammad-Ali (Aziz) Jaafari, commander of missile forces, in his place as Revolutionary Guards chief. Safavi was kicked upstairs as special security adviser to supreme ruler. DEBKAFfile's Iranian sources disclose: Two years ago, Khamenei entrusted Jaafari, then commander of the corps' ground forces, with charting a war strategy for the IRGC, the bulwark of the regime, to meet a foreign attack on Iran. His formal task was to set up the corps' "center for strategy," which would be given "unlimited national resources in case of a foreign military confrontation. The new center was mandated to "draw up the new strategy and the necessary changes to ensure rapid an efficient transformation of the country's civilian infrastructure and resources to military footing under the control of the IRGC." Our sources that Khamenei has now assigned his most trusted adviser in the elite corps with taking supreme command of the IRGC and carrying out the strategy he developed. This appointment takes Iran a step closer to armed conflict. DEBKAFfile's sources note that the Revolutionary Guards bear responsibility for Iran's national nuclear and missile programs. Last month, Washington indicated its intention to designate the IRGC as a global terrorist organization.