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Iran for neutrals' meet on schedule

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NEW DELHI, Aug. 16.

Iran is still keen that the 7th non-aligned summit should be held as scheduled in September but will not insist if the likely host - India, wants new dates. Hojratul Islam Ali Akbar Ahassemi Rafsanjani, president of the Iranian Majlis said here today.

Addressing a press conference, the Iranian leader, considered second to Ayatollah Khomeini, said it would be appropriate to have the conference of the non-aligned heads of Government as scheduled but in view of the change in venue, if India needed time and wanted new dates, Iran would not insist upon the schedule. "Naturally it has the right to ask for time", he said.

Mr. Rafsanjani reiterated his country's opposition to the Iraqi proposal to hold the non-aligned Foreign Ministers' meeting at Baghdad on September 2 to finalise the new venue of the 7th summit, originally scheduled to be held in Baghdad. He said the reason for Iraq's insistence of holding the Foreign Ministers' meeting was to canvass support for hosting the 8th summit there. Besides Iran, Mr. Rafsanjani declared Syria and Libya and some other countries would not attend the Foreign Ministers' meeting if it was held in Baghdad. This would weaken the non-aligned movement. Baghdad was not a safe place to hold any type of conference, he said.

Replying to a question, the Iranian leader however, said that his country did not want Iraq's expulsion from the non-aligned movement. "We want to maintain the unity of the movement".

Asked how long would his country continue its war with Iraq, Mr. Rafsanjani said Iran would be satisfied if the ruling Arab Baath Party in Iraq was thrown out of power. Iran would consider it was repression for the war which was started by Iraq, he said.

The Iranian leader said that the United States and some other super powers wanted to continue the situation of no peace, no war to sell weapons. "This war is not going to end by negotiations and we will, therefore, end it by force", Mr. Rafsanjani said. He, however, re-

frained from mentioning Soviet Union in this context but later said Iran was not getting arms from the Soviet Union.

He said Iran did not want any super power domination in the Gulf area and wanted the countries of the region to be completely free.

Replying to a question, Mr. Rafsanjani denied Iran had confiscated the wealth and property of Indians who had been forced to leave the country. He said his Government was responsible for the property of all people in Iran. Foreigners and non-foreigners, anyone who had claims and could prove ownership, his claims would be considered and property restored.

The Iranian leader denied his Government was persecuting the Baha'is. This was also a misleading propaganda by the West. Some of the Baha'is who were found to be traitors and agents of the Shah's regime and officials of his secret force Savak had been executed like many other non-Baha'is traitors. Those Baha'is who were not traitors or agents of the past regime continued to live in the country and work in hospitals, universities and other places. Mr. Rafsanjani claimed.

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