

The following is a translation of the "Radio Farda" Persian program which was broadcasted via satellite on July 2, 2007 at 1500 UTC.

TRANSLATION BEGINS HERE

[Female Announcer]

The best music and latest news. Radio Farda.

[Music]

[Male Announcer]

Radio Farda News.

[Female Announcer]

The American embassy in Cypress reported that the body of one of its employees has been found.

[Music]

[Female Announcer]

Iran and Venezuela announced a joint venture to build a Methanol producing plant in Bushehr province.

[Music]

[Female Announcer]

British police announced the arrest of two more suspects.

[Mariam Mazuri]

Greetings to Radio Farda listeners. Good evening. Today is Monday the 11th of Tir 1386 or July 2, 2007. It's 6:30 p.m., Tehran time.

You are listening to Radio Farda's evening magazine. I am Mariam Mazuri. Along with my colleagues, we will spend the next 60 minutes with you and will bring you the latest news, reports and discussions about Iran and the world.

Before we turn the page, my co-worker Muhammad Zarghami will present a summary of the day's news.

[Muhammad Zarghami]

The United States Embassy in Cypress confirmed the discovery of the body of one of its employees on this island. The victim, Thomas Mooney, was a military attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Cypress and had been missing for four days. According to the U.S. Ambassador in Cypress, investigations are underway to determine the cause of this individual's death.

Hugo Chavez, the Venezuelan President, and his Iranian counterpart, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, today, on their trip to Bushehr province, oversaw the start of the construction of a methanol plant that is a joint economic venture between the two countries.

During the ceremony marking the start of construction, Chavez and Ahmadinejad vowed to stand up to all their common adversaries. The investment in the city of Assaluyeh as a result of this project for producing Methanol, is estimated to be \$700 million. Both Presidents also signed cooperation agreements in areas such as the oil industry, energy production, construction, trade and commerce, agriculture, and health.

As Britain remains under a state of heightened security, the British police reported the arrest of two individuals suspected of terrorist activities. According to British police, these individuals are suspected of planning terrorist explosions using three separate automobiles in London and Glasgow. British police had earlier arrested five people in connection with the explosions on Friday and Saturday. According to British police none of these five are British. At least one of the five is a physician.

Another is hospitalized as a result of the critical nature of the injuries sustained in the explosion. This individual's life was saved, after he crashed a car containing explosives into the Glasgow airport terminal. But he sustained extensive burns as a result of one of the explosions in Glasgow. The Saturday explosion in Glasgow airport occurred a day after the discovery of two vehicles packed with explosives in Central London. Gordon Brown, the British Prime Minister said that al-Qaeda elements are connected to these terrorist activities in London and in Glasgow.

The U.S. military has accused the Islamic Republic of Iran of using Lebanese Hezbollah paramilitary forces in Iraq to train Shiite insurgents to conduct terrorist activities inside Iraq.

[Mariam Mazuri]

That was Muhammad Zarghami with an overview of today's news from Iran and the world.

Here's what we will hear during the continuation of tonight's program.

[Music]

According to the U.S. Military, Iranian leaders knew about the military operation that, six months ago, killed five American soldiers in Iraq.

[Music]

A 'powerful explosives' specialist linked to Hezbollah in Lebanon and to the Iranian Qods Army has been arrested in Basra.

[Music]

The unofficial meeting between the Presidents of America and Russia at George Bush's seaside home continues.

[Music]

The Director of the 'Consortium of Oil, Gas, and Petrochemical Product Exporters' discusses the readiness to purchase and import gasoline from foreign markets.

[Music]

How has gasoline rationing affected daily life in Iran? We will hear feedback from some Iranian citizens.

[Music]

The leader of the Green party in Germany criticized Ahmadinejad's government's economic policies and cited the decision to ration gasoline as the latest example of its wrong-headedness.

[Music]

[Mariam Mazuri]

All this, more news and a repeat broadcast of our youth program is ahead on tonight's Radio Farda magazine.

The U.S. military has said that Iranian leaders knew about the military operations that took place last January in Iraq and that led to the death of five American soldiers.

Additionally, according to U.S. Military officials in Iraq, a 'powerful explosives' specialist with links to Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Iranian Qods Army, was arrested in the city of Basra.

Nousha Boghrati reports.

[Niusha Boghrati]

General Kevin Bergner, a U.S. military spokesman, identified the suspect arrested in Basra as Ali Mousa Daqduq, and said that he was arrested on the 20th of March, 2007. The man pretended to be deaf and mute at the time of his arrest, and could not be identified for weeks.

According to the U.S. military spokesman in Iraq, this Hezbollah member has been active in the group for the past 24 years and is an active operative of Iran's Qods Army in Iraq. Once the suspect started to talk, according to the military, they learned he has been instrumental in leading operations against American forces in Iraq. He is accused of having trained Shiite insurgents in Southern Iraq, having attacked allied forces and of having played an active role in the murder of five U.S. soldiers last January in Karbala.

In a news conference in Bagdad General Bergner said:

[Voice of Gen. Bergner-English]

Qods forces along with the Hezbollah instructors train approximately 20 to 60 individuals...

[Translation]

Qods forces along with the Hezbollah instructors train approximately 20 to 60 individuals and send them to Iraq to join insurgent groups. Their training involves building explosives such as hand grenades, rockets, IEDs, collecting intelligence, sniper as well as kidnapping operations.

[Niush Boghrati]

The American General added that Mr. Daqdub served as a contact between the Iranians and the independent Shiite group led by Ghaisal Khazali, Muqtada al-Sadr's former spokesman. General Bergner added that the Khazali group, last January, attacked a government building in Karbala and that Iranians had a hand in this attack.

According to news agency reports, Moussa Daqdub, is considered one of the Hezbollah's top operatives and his specialty is in roadside explosive devices.

Hassan Hashemian, an expert in the regional conflicts, from Tehran, discusses the history of such accusations.

[Hassan Hashemian]

Similar accusations have been made by America against Iran in the past. The Americans accused Lebanese Hezbollah of aiding Shiites who oppose the American presence in Iraq,

[Niusha Boghrati]

But U.S. accusations this time are substantially different from past accusations.

[Hassan Hashemian]

This time the Americans have evidence such as names and photographs. They published Ali Mousa Daqdub's photo and detailed his past involvement with Hezbollah, the Iranian Qods Army, and pointed to him as the person in charge of training insurgency groups against Americans in Iraq. This is a new way of accusing Iran, accompanied as it is by documentation.

[Niusha Boghrati]

According to Hassan Hashemian, proving these accusations, will, however, not be so simple for America.

[Hassan Hashemian]

Americans have a long way to go to prove these accusations, because Iran will claim that these individuals acted based on their own personal beliefs and on the fact that they oppose America and the invasion of an Islamic country by the United States, and that their opposition is what led them to Iraq to train insurgents.

[Niussha Boghrati]

American officials have been accusing the Islamic Republic for months, especially, the Qods Army, an arm of Iran's Pasdaran Army, of supplying Shiite insurgents in Iraq with weapons and powerful explosives. Tehran, which has close ties with some of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's political partners, consistently denies these accusations and claims it only plays a constructive role in Iraq.

[Mariam Mazuri]

Iranian leaders knew about military operations six months ago that killed five American soldiers in Iraq.

You heard Niussha Boghrati reporting.

Today the American and Russian Presidents met, unofficially, at President Bush's vacation home for discussions. Although, it is said that Iran will certainly be discussed, knowledgeable sources do not expect that an official agreement will be reached on Iran.

Now, Fariba Mavedat.

[Fariba Mavedat]

Yesterday, Sunday, U.S. and Russian leaders held unofficial talks for two hours, at Mr. Bush's vacation home. The Russian Foreign Minister characterized this meeting as very friendly.

"But both sides," said one Mr. Putin's advisor, "avoided addressing any specific issues." However, according to the Russian Foreign Minister both leaders are aware that they should not allow next year's presidential

elections, in their respective countries, to affect the relationship between their two nations in the coming year.

Despite the friendly tenor of the meetings as seen in gestures, such as Mr. Putin giving a bouquet of flowers to Laura Bush, Mr. Bush's wife, both leaders have been blasting each other's policy in recent weeks.

Mr. Bush criticized the conditions of democracy in Russia and Mr. Putin's confrontations with Europe and America, and Mr. Putin, while criticizing what he called America's expansionist goals in the world, denounced America's plans for a Missile Defense System (MDS) in Europe.

According to Dr. Jalili, of the Geneva-based Center for Strategic Studies, "It seems the only thing these two countries agree on in the most approximative of terms is the issue of Iran's enrichment activities."

[Dr. Jalili]

There are several policy disagreements between Washington and Moscow. But knowledgeable sources appear to believe that if there is any common grounds between the two nations, it may be on the issue of Iran's nuclear activities, which may lead to greater understanding between Russia and America. As you know, Russia has voted with the Security Council on the two previous resolutions condemning Iran, but it has always tried hard to maintain the pressure against Iran at a minimum. It does appear that currently one of the things that may help bring Moscow and Washington closer is Iran's nuclear issue. In such an event, there could be greater mutual cooperation between the two nations. This would certainly have an effect at the Security Council level and on the next Resolution against Iran, which is currently being prepared.

[Fariba Mavedat]

Nonetheless, last Friday, the Kremlin spokesperson told reporters, "If America positions its MDS in the Czech Republic, this can only be interpreted as an act against Russia, as there is no logical other explanation." But the U.S. leadership has insisted that the construction of the MDS is for the defense against potential attacks by rogue nations such as Iran.

Based on the French news agency reporting on the same matter, the Bush-Putin agenda might well contain discussions on Iran and North Korea's current nuclear activities.

The New York Times reported last Friday that the U.S. will ask Russia and other members of the Security Council to consider inspection of Iran's commercial imports and exports which might contain weapons for insurgents as well as raw material for its illegal nuclear activities. A spokesman for the Security Council said that these Iran-related matters will likely be discussed between Putin and Bush.

[Mariam Mazuri]

The meeting between Presidents Bush and Putin at the Bush's seaside family compound. A report by Fariba Mavedat.

In Iran, concurrent with gasoline rationing, Hamid Hosseini, the Director of the Consortium of Oil, Gas, and Petrochemical Product Exporters, said he is in talks and is ready to purchase gasoline from world markets for import. Because of the political nature of oil, reliable sources believe, it is unlikely that the government will approve such a plan by the private sector.

An interview by Mahin Gorji with Feridoun Khavand an economist in Tehran

[Mahin Gorji]

A week after gasoline rationing went into effect in Iran, Ali Reza Tahmasbi, the Minister of Industry and Natural Resources, spoke of the difficulties facing industrial workers. Mr. Tahmasbi said that Industrial workers, who often must commute long distances to work, are experiencing hardships.

According to experts, the Iranian government, concurrent with the tightening noose created by international pressures, is forced into rationing a commodity for which, in the previous year, it spent more than \$7.5 billion of the nation's foreign exchange reserves.

Even though the Iranian government claims its decision to ration gasoline was in response to the Senate's order, and was also a conservation measure. In an interview, Feridoun Khavand, an economist, told Radio Farda that, considering Iran's political circumstances, the government had no other choice but to impose rationing.

[Feridoun Khavand]

This decision was made, mainly, under pressure from external sources. The fact that western countries, particularly, the United States, had decided to use gasoline as a lever to pressure Iran meant the Islamic Republic had no choice but to resort to rationing gasoline to prevent a reduction in its consumption and import.

[Mahin Gorji]

Along with rationing, Hamid Hosseini, the Director of the 'Consortium of Oil, Gas, and Petrochemical Product Exporters', announced that the Consortium is ready to purchase and import gasoline from world markets. Mr. Hosseini says that the Consortium would purchase gasoline at 510-520 Tomans per liter and sell to consumers, with a 5% profit, at 550 Tomans per liter.

The Consortium of Petrochemical Product Exporters views this proposal as consistent under Section 44 of the Constitution that gives the private sector such authority. It is believed, however, that because gasoline is a highly political commodity, the government will not agree with this proposal by the private sector. Because of the fluctuating price of the finished product, the likelihood is high that private sector gasoline would ultimately be brought to market at a much higher price.

Although the participation of the private sector in gasoline imports, appears effective as an idea to Mr. Khavand, given the fact that foreign companies are under a trade ban with Iranian companies, are such proposals possible in practice?

Mr. Khavand's response to my question is as follows:

[Feridoun Khavand]

Yes, you are right. If the private sector were to play a role in importing and selling gas, while Iran's foreign policy issues continue this way, and economic sanctions continue, naturally, private sector companies in Iran too, will be subjected to the same punishments. So, the private sector's entry into this area can have positive results, but only if favorable conditions come to exist in other areas of Iran's domestic and international policy. Under current conditions, as you yourself stated, even if the private sector were to play a major role in importing and producing gas, foreign

policy issues and trade sanctions are in place and these companies would suffer from the same consequences.

[Mahin Gorji]

The rationing plans that went into effect last Tuesday, the 5th of Tir, allow for three liters of gasoline per day for noncommercial vehicle, and four liters for taxis.

[Mariam Mazuri]

The rationing of gasoline, a consequence of international trade restrictions with Iran, was a voluntary measure imposed by the Islamic Republic.

You heard Mahin Gorji speaking to Feridoun Khavand, an economist.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's government's recent decision to ration gasoline has had an immediate effect on people's daily life. Experts say that the implementation of this plan has also had an effect on Iran's closed and mainly government-controlled economy. There have been intense reactions from Iranians.

Mohammad Zarghami gets the reactions of a few Iranian citizens.

[Muhammad Zarghami]

Once again the strong odor of gasoline is rising from the Iranian economy. Last winter, too, this traditional shock in Iran rocked the crisis-prone Iranian economy. But this time with the approval of the Islamic Republic's Majles (Senate), Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's government, has implemented rationing, though in the Islamic Republic's lexicon the preferred term is *portioning*.

In any case, the portioning of this product is not new and dates back 14 years. Perhaps this is why its implementation by the leader of the Islamic Republic has drawn the public's attention and anger.

Shirin is one of those who are angry and who believe that her own and her family's future, living as they do in a small rental apartment in West Tehran, has been directly affected by this rationing.

[Shirin]

My monthly salary is 120 000 Tomans, working in a pre-school. My husband makes about 200 000 Tomans. Our rent is 300 000 Tomans. Our monthly expenses are about 120 000 Tomans. In your opinion, can we afford to pay our child's expenses? At least, my husband used to, after his workday at his job, he worked as a cab driver [to supplement our income]. But now, he has to ride the subway to work. The family car is parked at home.

[Mariam Mazuri]

The start of gasoline *portioning* was accompanied by angry responses from the public who expected their cars, to run out of gas any time over the next few hours. They ignored the representatives who had ratified such a measure, and blamed Ahmadinejad's government for its wrong-headed domestic and international policies.

Mohammad, a resident of Arak, speaks of the people's reaction.

[Mohammad]

Our people are well aware that we are an oil-rich country and, therefore, should be able to use our resources and build petrochemical refineries, to convert our oil to gasoline and become self-sufficient. Instead of talking about nuclear activities why don't we produce gasoline and avoid such difficulties. They should budget the money currently spent on nuclear energy towards gasoline and then people won't have these difficulties. People absolutely hold the government responsible for the current problems.

[Mariam Mazuri]

Rationing gasoline has brought on sudden fluctuations in the price of gold and in the foreign currency markets. Basic necessities have become scarce in the marketplace. The price of dairy products has increased by 10-20%, Private transportation costs saw a tremendous increase. Alongside a reduction in street traffic and an increase in the use of public transportation vehicles—which are not numerous—the consequences will also affect cultural centers. Although Ahmadinejad has claimed that the price increases have nothing to do with gasoline rationing, people feel differently.

[Shirin, a Tehran resident]

Potatoes and onions are priced at 900 tomans per kilo. If you ask "How come?" they say, "it's because of the price of gas." We don't have that kind

of savings. How far is three liters a day going to take us in a sprawling city like Tehran? I have to go from Poonak to Mahzaran. My husband has to go from Poonak to Baazar.

[Muhammad Zarghami]

Mr. Ahmadinejad, yesterday, apologized to the people for the hardships and the inconvenience they have to endure during the rationing period.

While defending the rationing, he cited statistics that 85% of people consume less than the rationed amount and asked the remaining 15% to cut back on the use of their automobiles or convert them to run on natural gas. Mohammad predicts an uncertain future for people.

[Mohammad, a Tehran resident]

Another problem is the management of the rationing which they've handed over to the people and people have started to foolishly use up the reserves. 20 or so days to deal with a crisis where everyone's rations are exhausted and if the government does not come up with an alternate plan we will witness some new unrest in the country.

[Muhammad Zarghami]

Iman while criticizing this plan as impractical for smaller cities that lack basic public service amenities, sees some benefits to rationing for the capital.

[Iman]

Rationing can have several beneficial consequences. First, it can reduce the Iranian economy's dependence on gasoline. Second, it can have a significant positive effect on Tehran's pollution levels and on the environment. Consider the fact that Tehran was practically shut down due to pollution for a week. If the government really manages to improve public transportation, Tehran will be able to rely on that and traffic management will no longer be a major problem.

[Mohammad Zarghami]

Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the leader of the Islamic Republic, in defense of rationing, pointing to the 40,000 billion toman government subsidy, said, "If this staggering figure could gradually be reduced, it could be spent on what matters to people's lives, such as job creation, various kinds of investment, the building and improving of schools and roads."

Ruhollah who is a supporter of this plan points out its various benefits

[Ruhollah]

I think this is a good thing and that in the long run it can benefit Iranian society, provided Iranian people can see tangible and visible results of the savings made by not using all this gasoline in their daily lives. It is worth noting that because, we as Iranians have little in terms of public recreation, for many of us going out in the car has become synonymous with family recreation. In the absence of this practice, what can take the place of this form of recreation? If we answer this question, people may very well not oppose gas rationing.

[Muhammad Zarghami]

Rationing or *portioning*, is introduced at a time when economic experts speak of inflation with a stench of gasoline emanating from it like never before.

[Mariam Mazuri]

That was Mohammad Zarghami reporting and speaking with a few Tehran residents on rationing and its effect on their daily lives.

Meanwhile, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has said that “A similar plan to the rationing of gasoline could be implemented in the use of electricity.”

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad’s government’s last two years’ report card, human rights issues and the question of nuclear development are among the matters discussed by Ms. Claudia Roth, the leader of Germany’s Green Party, in an interview with our colleague in Germany.

Ms. Roth believes that Ahmadinejad’s government’s economic policies have not been effective and that rationing gasoline is only the latest example of such policies.

Additional thoughts from the leader of the Green Party in a discussion with our reporter Shahram Miryan.

[Shahram Merian]

Our first question to Ms. Claudia Roth was about the conflict over Iran's nuclear activities. She points out that the international community and Iran's neighbors are worried about Iran's nuclear activities and she reminds us that from its inception, Iran's nuclear program was always mired in stealth and that the international community has, for years, faced a problematic situation. She rejects the notion of military plans to attack Iran, and states that were this to happen it would be one of the most irresponsible and counterproductive responses. She adds that common ground must be reached about the question of uranium in Iran.

[Claudia Roth]
[Speaking in German]

[Shahram Merian]
In the continuation of this conversation, the leader of the Green Party asks the Iranian government to respond actively and to productively address concerns regarding its nuclear activities in order to avoid international isolation.

Ms. Claudia Roth, then expressed her support for economic sanctions against Iran. In reply to the Iranian President's comments two days ago, stating that U.N. sanctions against his country have not been effective, she said, "Ahmadinejad's economic policies have not been effective, nor have they been positive." She reminds us that the President has not kept his promises and that rationing is one of *his* decisions. She states that this policy has elicited a strong reaction from people who, while setting fire to gas stations, banks, and stores, also shouted anti-Ahmadinejad slogans.

The head of Germany's Green Party called Iran's domestic economic policy tragic. She added, "It's as if Ahmadinejad is attempting to divert people's attention from real issues"

[Claudia Roth]
[Speaking in German]

[Shahram Merian]
Radio Farda also asked Ms. Claudia Roth to comment on Ahmadinejad's leadership in the past two years. She said all the President's promises had not come to materialize and he had succeeded in isolating Iran internationally to an ever greater extent.

What is more, his saber-rattling against foreign nations was aimed at impressing the Iranian people with his power. Iran's overall situation has deteriorated. Furthermore, he is part of a government that consistently violates human rights.

The leader of the Green Party stressed that human rights in Iran have worsened and expressed horror as she referred to a recent report by Amnesty international that stated 71 pre-pubescent adolescents are on death row.

*[Ms. Claudia Roth]
[Speaking in German]*

[Sharam Merian]
Ms. Claudia Roth spoke of the continued crackdown on journalists, women, students, intellectuals and religious minorities inside Iran. She also recalled the arrest of Ayatollah Boroujerdi who is awaiting trial because of his differing interpretation of the Koran.

In this segment of her interview with Radio Farda, she also mentioned the government's crack-down on Dervishes [an ascetic Sufi, generally living a life of hermetic poverty and spirituality].

She labeled Iran's detention of four Iranian-Americans as hostage-taking that was aimed at forcing Americans to release the five Iranians arrested in Iraq.

*[Ms. Claudia Roth]
[Speaking in German]*

[Shahram Merian]
Ms. Claudia Roth, the leader of Germany's Green Party concluded her remarks by saying that any agenda for future negotiations with Iran about its nuclear activities should also include the question of human rights. Shahram Merian, Radio Farda.

[Music]

[Male Announcer]

This is Radio Farda.

[Mariam Mazuri]

It is now 7 p.m. in Tehran. Before we continue with our evening program, Muhammad Zarghami will review the day's news.

[Muhammad Zarghami]

Hugo Chavez, the Venezuelan President and his Iranian counterpart, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, today, Monday, on their trip to Bushehr Province, oversaw the start of the construction of a methanol plant that is a joint economic venture between the two countries.

During the ceremony marking the start of construction, Chavez and Ahmadinejad vowed to stand up to all their common adversaries.

The United States Embassy in Cypress confirmed the discovery of the body of one of its employees on this island. The victim, Thomas Mooney, was a military attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Cypress and had been missing for four days. According to the U.S. Ambassador in Cypress, investigations are underway to determine the cause of this individual's death.

As Britain remained in a state of heightened security, British police has reported arresting two individuals suspected of terrorist activities. According to British police, these individuals were suspected of terrorist explosions using three separate automobiles in London and Glasgow.

The U.S. military has accused the Islamic Republic of Iran of using the Lebanese Hezbollah paramilitary forces in Iraq to train Iraqi Shiites insurgents for terrorist activities.

The U.S. military believes Iran's activities in Iraq are aimed at exploiting the conditions in destabilized Iraq. The U.S. military pointed to the arrest of a high-ranking member of Hezbollah in Lebanon as evidence of its claim. Ali Moussa Daqduq had been active within Hezbollah for the past 24 years, and was arrested four months ago in Southern Iraq.

World Health Organization experts estimate that in the last century nearly one billion people have died of tobacco-related diseases. According to the World Health Organization, this warning is issued as governments in poor

and wealthy countries, are taking preventive measures. Douglas Ketcher one of the directors of the World Health Organization said that smoking and chewing-tobacco use kills about 5.5 million people world-wide each year.

The Independent Human Rights Commission in Afghanistan asked that allied forces limit their combat operation to military targets only. According to a report by the Independent Human Rights Commission stationed in Afghanistan, more civilians have been killed in military operations than were killed to date by Taliban paramilitary fighters.

Nader Naderi, a spokesman for the Commission, told Reuters that Allied forces, led by the United States and NATO, must discontinue air attacks and increase their ground forces in Afghanistan.

Following extensive flooding in Pakistan, that left one million people homeless, the leaders of that nation asked the world community for humanitarian assistance. Flooding in southwestern Pakistan, caused by torrential rain and hurricanes, has killed 100 people. Unofficial reports estimate the number of Pakistan's dead is probably much higher.

[Mariam Mazuri]

That was a look at the most important news from Iran and the world with Muhammad Zarghami

As we continue with our evening program on Radio Farda, we have a report about Iran.

As the elections for the Senate draw near, second-guessing and conjectures are becoming commonplace. Many observers believe that in these elections the supporters of Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani will reach out to moderates in order to defeat the Fundamentalists.

Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the head of the Council for Guidance and Social Governance, last Sunday, said, "Anything that reduces people's participation in elections, especially if there is a political agenda at play, will be an unforgivable injustice."

Behruz Karuni had a conversation with Mohammad Sadegh Javadi Hesar, a member of the Central Committee of the National Integrity and Accountability Party.

[Behruz Karuni]

Mohammad Sadegh Javadi Hessar, a member of the Central Committee of the National Integrity and Accountability Party, in an interview with Radio Farda, said Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani's principal fear is shared by most moderate groups and other peaceful groups and social reformers.

[Sadegh Javadi Hessar]

The experience of past elections, in particular, the past two presidential elections... Of course, even in the past we have had these concerns... But in the 5th or 7th Majles (Administration) and, especially in the last presidential election, this problem has stood out and is more sharply defined than ever before in public's eye. In any case, these events have worried a considerable section of society, especially those who are concerned about the integrity of the political process in the Republic and those who believe the Islamic Republic's greatest asset to be the people's support of it. While the people back the Islamic Republic, the government both enjoys international legitimacy and also domestic and foreign policies will be more successful.

[Behruz Karuni]

Mr. Javadi Hessar believes that any factor that diminishes broad social participation in affairs such as the election undermines the integrity of the Republic. This could leave the Islamic Republic vulnerable.

[Javadi Hessar]

Those, like Mr. Hashemi, who worry about this issue, are quick to say that if illegal acts and unnecessary arrests, and supra-legal activities result in the absence of or reduction of people's participation in the political process and in other areas of society, this would be unforgivable.

This uneasiness is felt by all moderate groups. A segment of moderates within the Integrity and Accountability party have met with Mr. Rafsanjani and exchanged opinions and concerns. and in the end have had a meeting of minds, in planning to act, on the one hand, with authority in the next elections in the Majles and, on the other hand, to prevent any abuse of power and lack of respect for the law.

[Behruz Karuni]

The member of the National Integrity and Accountability Party went on to say that moderates and social and political critics have no resource other than the backing of the people. Therefore, the only thing left for them is to continue to encourage people to participate in the political process. In addition moderates and critics should hold those in charge of the election responsible for holding up the laws of elections.

[Mr. Javadi Hesar]

If people become more familiar with their rights, reformists will be strengthened. The more informed people are, when entering the election phase, the better it is for the moderates and reformers. The opposite is also true. Absence of participation by moderates in the process will embolden the fundamentalists to circumvent the law and abuse their power.

[Behruz Karuni]

Mohammad Saadeq Javadi Hesar says fundamentalists will likely not allow for fair elections in the Eighth Majles (Administration). They will do whatever it takes to make sure their agenda is pushed through.

[Mariam Mazuri]

You heard a report by Behruz Karuni and his conversation with Mohammad Sadeq Javadi Hesar, a member of the Central Committee of the National Integrity and Accountability Party.

At this time, we will present Radio Farda's Youth Program. This program looks back at a chapter of the work of the late singer, Mahasti.

[Female announcer]

A Fresh Look

[Music]

[Female announcer]

A Fresh Look.

[Male Announcer]

Greetings to all who have saved this hour for our program Fresh Look. I am Mohammad Zarghami, your host, on one of the earliest evenings this summer of 1386.

I want to take you tonight, with a fresh look, to the heart of past memories. Our program may be a bit on the sad side but it is full of nostalgia and memories.

[Voice of the late singer, Mahasti]

[Host Zarghami]

The singer of hearts has passed away. We have been hearing this sentence repeatedly over the past few days, or we have repeated it to our friends: that Mahasti, whose songs gave us hope, even as bombs fell during the bitter days of the war, is finally at one with the earth. On Friday, with many of her friends and fans present, she was laid to rest in a Westwood cemetery in Los Angeles.

[Mahasti singing]

[Host Zarghami]

Mahasti was 61 years old at the time of her death. She started her singing career five years before her late sister, Hayedeh, in the *Golha ye Rangarang* program accompanied by violinist Parviz Yahaghy, and Javad Maroofy.

Tonight we take a fresh look at her artistic accomplishments.

[Mahasti singing]

[Host Zarghami]

Eftekhar Ghadobala who borrowed her name from Mahasti Ganjavi, the lady of *Chakameh Sara'i* [balladeering and reciting of poetry], had the opportunity to work with consummate songwriters of her day, such as Parviz Yahaghy, Homayoon Khorram and Ali Tajvidi.

The songwriter and arranger, Nasser Cheshm Azar, looks back at Mahasti's career.

[Nasser Cheshm Azar]

Mahasti began her work by singing classical Persian songs. One could say that Ms. Mahasti's work can be divided into three stages. The first was when she sang classic Persian melodies, or sang with the *Golhaa* program. Then, she entered a phase of singing more populist melodies, with songs

by Mr. Jahanbakhsh Pazooky such as *Bacheh nasho ey del, etc.* accompanied by traditional Persian orchestras. In the third phase she was singing Iranian popular music with a more modern musical accompaniment. This is when my collaboration with Mahasti began where I was involved with composing some melodies as well as arranging Mr. Pazooky's work.

[Mahasti singing]

[Host Zarghami]

When she sang, *Raaze Khelghat* (Secret of Creation) whose music was composed by Anoushirvan Rohani and whose lyrics were written by Rahim Moeini Kermanshahi, Mahasti quickly captured the title of the year's most exciting singer.

A song that started with "Dear God, I have a question," and which sold over 150,000 copies in a short period. In light of the fact that Mahasti worked in a variety of musical genres can we consider her a singer with a style all her own?

Aref, one of our popular Iranian singers, and a close colleague of Mahasti's explains in greater detail.

[Aref]

Her singing voice, with its own characteristics, was exceptional. It was distinguished by her collaborations with masters of classical Persian music, like Tajvidi, Parviz Yahaghy, Badiyi, whose styles were well-known and different than mine or Googoosh's or Viguen's. We sang pop songs. But they sang popular songs in a classical modality.

[Mahasti singing]

[Host Zarghami]

We heard Aref's comments about Mahasti. Even in the realm of pop music, Mahasti never abandoned, traditional and classical music and was always keeping an eye on it. This is evident in the body of her work. Was this Mahasti's own choice, or the result of suggestions by lyricists and musicians?

Nasser Cheshm Azar who worked closely with the artist, addresses this question.

[Nasser Cheshm Azar]

About my own collaboration with Mahasti, I have to express my fondness for the tone and timber of her voice and style of her performance. Because she had sung some of Mr. Pazooki's arrangements, I could see she demonstrated total control and adaptive talent in singing new harmonies built on Mr. Pazooki's Persian melodies.

[Host Zarghami]

Five years after Mahasti began working in the Iranian National Radio and Television, her older sister, Hayedeh, began her singing career. She stepped directly in her sister's footsteps. It is not clear whether they were friends or fierce competitors. Nobody knows. The main thing was that fans compared their voice and their work and sometimes judged their singing styles. It seemed that the younger sister lived in the shadow of her older sister.

Aref who did a duo with Hayedeh called 'Negaham kon', completely denies these rumors.

[Aref]

This is not so. What is certain, is that Ms. Mahasti, God rest her soul, was a trailblazer and gained earlier fame and popularity than Ms. Hayedeh. If only because she began earlier and gained fame and celebrity status. Hayedeh's impressive singing voice, the very high caliber of her voice box was an exception. But Ms. Mahasti's voice was very velvety and delicate. This was basically the difference between the two voices. So, sometimes because of Ms. Hayedeh's incredible voice, she stood out.

[Hayedeh singing]

[Host Zarghami]

Perhaps some people will always think that Hayedeh was a step ahead of her sister. But we will ask one of her music composers, Nasser Cheshm Azar about Mahasti's weaknesses and what was special about the singer of 'Hearts.'

[Nasser Cheshm Azar]

Many of our singers have a slight problem with the

tempo and with singing off-key and sounding pitchy. This may be because for our traditional singers melodies were performed in unison, so they were less likely to stray from the beat or melody. But in modern pop music the problem presented a challenge to the singer who had to sing on harmonies and chords and in modern music the melody is not necessarily repeated by a soloist either instrumentally or vocally.

The uniqueness of her singing, for me, who had the privilege of working with her on several projects, was in the warmth and smoothness of her voice. I never choose my singers for the range of their voice. I am more interested in singer's ability to articulate and deliver the poetry of the song along with the melody. I'm interested in them unearthing the warmth of the poetry and with the command they have. Fortunately on the few projects I worked on with Mahasti, I was satisfied with her delivery of a song. If there were any shortcomings they were mine. Her work did not need any improvement.

[Host Zarghami]

Each of us definitely has memories of one or more of Mahasti's songs. But which one of Mahasti's songs does Aref hum to himself?

[Aref]

I like the song "Oonke Delam Ra Bordeh, Khodaya"

[Aref sings the Mahasti song]

[Then, Mahasti singing]

[Host Zarghami]

Yes. The first song by the Singer of Hearts, with lyrics by Bijan Taraghy, put to the music by Parviz Yahaghy and arranged by Javad Marroofi.

We also asked Nasser Cheshm Azar to reflect on his past and share with us one of his unforgettable memories of Mahasti.

[Nasser Cheshm Azar]

The first work that I offered to Ms. Mahasti, may she rest in peace, was 'Ghamguin-o-Tanha Moondam.' Ms. Mahasti was fond of the song, which was about the city of Esfahan and was set in the Homayoon key [a reference to traditional music keys] and the lyrics were written by Mrs. Shahin Hanaei. On the day of recording the music Ms. Sahar, Ms.

Mahasti's daughter was going to school in England and was on vacation in Tehran and was present in the studio. As her mother was singing, I looked at Sahar and noticed she looked sad. I asked her "Sahar dear, why are you sad? This is an upbeat song." She said "There's something in this song that's sad, but which at the same time makes me want to have fun." I asked, "What is that thing? Can you name it?" She said "No, but..." I said it was probably the Homayoon key that contained some sadness.

[Mahasti singing]

[Host Zarghami]

Up until her last days, Mahasti always believed that her last album would be a return to her old style. After 35 albums and three lifetimes she is no longer with us. What images remains of her?

Nasser Cheshm Azar reviews the three periods in her artistic life in order to leave us with an image of this well-loved singer.

[Nasser Cheshm Azar]

The first period was brilliant and diamond-like. Going back to the 40's, whether the mid-40's or the late-40's. During the second period of her career, she started singing more populist melodies.

She sang in bands with simple arrangements. She would still be considered successful. The last period of her artistic life which began after the Revolution, unfortunately, perhaps due to the quality of the artistic environment in exile, we cannot really place an emphasis on the work of this third period.

[Host Zarghami]

Mehdi Akhavan Saaless [an Iranian poet] writes:

"Like two tiny doors, we face each other.

Aware of each other's every exchange.

One day, greetings and chatter and laughter,

The next day, a rendezvous in the hereafter.

My heart now is tired and sad.

Because one little door has shut.

No moon magic, No spell of affection.

Cursed be the journey, for it alone is the source of this.

We conclude our conversation with this poem and with a sad and bitter reflection from Aref.

[Aref]

The only thing I wanted to recall is that we artists, including Mahasti, our only hope in this long period of exile.... I spent time in England, as did Ms. Mahasti, and Ms. Hayedeh. Then we spent a long period in America and now, for the last four years I have been living in Dubai. This is not our homeland. We live in exile, we're wanderers, strangers on foreign land. Our only wish is to someday return to Iran. Ms. Mahasti had this wish and always remembered Iran and always spoke of Iran. Sadly, she did not live long enough to have her dreams of returning home, realized. This is the part that is bitter.

[Mahasti Singing]

[Mariam Mazuri]

Mohammad Zarghami in the Fresh Look segment, reflecting on life and accomplishments of the late singer Mahasti.

Now our next report.

The announcement of the death of the wife Chris Benoit, the famous Canadian-born wrestler in America, which was reported in Wikipedia before the press and police were aware of it, raised the suspicion of the authorities.

For more information here's a report by Arash Alborzi.

[Music]

[Arash Alborzi]

Wikipedia, the multilingual internet encyclopedia, is an open source that people voluntarily contribute to, or whose content they can edit. But, a few days ago, in an entry about the death of Chris Benoit's wife, the Canadian-born wrestler, looked mysterious. In fact, hours before the press or police had any information, an anonymous contributor had announced the death of Benoit's wife.

[Music]

[Arash Alborzy]

The entry reports that due to his wife's death, Chris Benoit, would be unable to participate in an event and a substitute was selected to fill in for him.

A few hours after the publication of this report in Wikipedia, police found the body of Chris Benoit, his wife, and his baby at the wrestler's residence, and became suspicious of the anonymous Wikipedia writer's role in relation to the death of these three individuals.

The writer told the police that the whole thing had been a coincidence and a misunderstanding. He said he published rumors regarding the death of Benoit's wife based on hearsay.

The Canadian-born athlete Chris Benoit first killed his wife and child, and then hung himself. Police have not yet determined a motive.

[Music]

[Mariam Mazuri]

News of the death of Chris Benoit, the famous Canadian wrestler was reported on Wikipedia before police and the press had any knowledge of it.

That was a report by Arash Alborzi.

Now it is the turn of our listeners who are sport fans.

Fareborz Gharebsari, Radio Farda's reporter, has a summary of the world's latest sports news.

[Music]

[Male Announcer]

The world of sports.

[Music]

[Fareborz Gharebsari]

Iran's national soccer team, in last-minute preparations to announce the final 23 players of the team ahead of the upcoming Asian Games, participated in a friendly game against the Jamaican Soccer Team at Azadi Stadium in Tehran.

This is the Iranian team's last practice game as it prepares to participate in World Cup competitions. The day after tomorrow, Wednesday, Iran's soccer team caravan will head to Malaysia for the Asia Cup games.

[Music]

Iran's national boxing team, in full form, will participate in the World Boxing Competition in the United States. Based on reports from IRNA (Islamic Republic News Agency) fighters of the world's boxing teams and Olympic hopefuls will meet in the latter part of the month of Mehr (October) this year in Chicago. Iran's Boxing Federation has invited 21 of its top boxers to the preparatory camp for participation in these team games.

[Music]

Ali Daei, the former captain of Iran's soccer team, yesterday, joined the world's All-Star team for an exhibition game in Hong Kong. Based on a report by the Mehr New Agency, Daei along with Nakata he entered the soccer stadium to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Hong Kong's joining China. Christian Carenboise, Brian Mc Bride, Stephan Chakiosad, and Michael Skane were other members of the All-Star team that played the Chinese, Hong Kong team. The All-Star team was defeated 2-0 by the host team. The All-Star team was coached by Gerald Bouvier the famous French coach.

[Music]

The 'Under 20' World Soccer Championship Games got underway last night in Canada with five matches. In group 'A' Chile 3-0 overwhelmed the defense of its host, Canada. In the 'B' group Jordan and Zambia tied at 1-1; Spain and Uruguay tied at 2-2; and in 'F' Japan overcame Scotland 3-1; and Nigeria edged out Costa Rica 1-0.

[Music]

The National soccer teams of Oman and the United Arab Emirates defeated Saudi Arabia and North Korea in friendly games. According to news agencies as the Asian World Cup Games approach, national teams, on this continent, are honing their skills by participating in these friendly preparatory games.

Last night after ninety minutes, Oman and Saudi Arabia, tied at 1-1 and went into overtime and Oman defeated Saudi Arabia 3-1 with penalty kicks.

In another game, the United Arab Emirates team overcame North Korea's defense with a score of 1-0.

Fariborz Ghareeb, Radio Farda.

[Music]

[Host Mariam Mazuri]

We are approaching the end of our evening magazine program for today, Monday, the 11th of Tir (July 2, 2007). Thank you for being with us tonight. I am Mariam Mazuri, wishing you pleasant days.

TRANSLATION ENDS HERE