

The following is a translation of the VOA TV Persian program "Late Edition," which was broadcasted via satellite on July 7th, 2007.

TRANSLATION BEGINS HERE

[Host Behnood Mokri]

I am inviting all the listeners of VOA wherever they are to stay with me and my colleagues for the next hour for this edition of Late Edition.

[Introductory Music]

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Tonight on Late Edition:

- Widespread protest of Venezuelan students against President Hugo Chavez's recent actions and the threat to freedom of expression in Venezuela.
- Expansion of digital media and the world of the entertainment business in the 21st century
- A look to Live Earth Concert [Music in the background]

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the Late Edition program. Tonight also we have tried to gather a variety of interesting shows for you; I hope you enjoy watching and listening to it. But first we will look into the world's most important news.

[Background music and VOA logo]

I will start with the first news of the night. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice has called Iran a dangerous state and with more dangerous policies. Condoleezza Rice on Friday in a television interview said while Washington is committed to a diplomatic solution, Iran should know that there are elements in US foreign policy that justify coercion. She said with Iran becoming increasingly dangerous, the United States and its allies are discussing new sanctions to further curb Tehran's access to the international financial system. The US Secretary of State said that despite two UN Security Council resolutions, Iran continues to pursue technologies that could lead to nuclear weapons.

On the other hand a French Newswire reported that Ali Asghar Soltaniyeh, Islamic Republic's representative at the International Atomic Energy Agency, has said that Tehran expects that the UN will postpone its new sanctions resolution while there are ongoing negotiations.

Iranian diplomats visited for the first time on Saturday the five Iranians that had been arrested by American forces in northern Iraq. According to US military officials, these five individuals were abetting the insurgents in northern Iraq. Tehran says they are diplomats and has asked for their release. The Iraqi foreign ministry stated in a statement they are optimistic that this gesture will help reduce the tension on both sides and may lead to dialogue between the US and Iran.

Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri Al-Maliki has asked the insurgents loyal to Muqtada al-Sadr to put their arms down. He asked the Shiite leaders of the Sadr movement on Saturday to show their sincerity about what they say to the Iraqi people with regard to bringing peace by standing strong against those who carry weapons.

Iraqi police reported earlier that more than one hundred people were killed when a truck exploded at a crowded market in the northern part of the country. According to the officials, dozens of houses and businesses were destroyed in this suicide bombing attack at Emril, a small village populated mostly by Turkmen Shiites. This explosion also injured more than 250 people.

On Friday in a car bomb explosion in a small Kurdish village, at least 22 people were killed and 17 others were injured. Police said they believe a suicide bomber was responsible for this attack. These attacks are happening while some senior Republican lawmakers in the US have called for a new policy on the Iraq war.

Meanwhile, the US military reported that six more US soldiers and an Iraqi interpreter died in recent days and added that six more soldiers were injured. In other news, the British defense ministry spokesman said that a British soldier has died in Basra; he offered no further details about it.

The President of Pakistan has asked a group of agitators who are surrounded in a mosque in Islamabad to either surrender or accept the risk of getting killed. Pervez Musharraf said this on Saturday as the confrontation between government security forces and a militant cleric at

the Red Mosque entered its sixth day. There are reports of new shootings and gunfire. Abdul Rashid Ghazi, the imam of this mosque, still defies the government call for unconditional surrender; he says that he and his followers prefer martyrdom to surrender. At the same time the government has rejected the imam's condition to exit Islamabad and end this confrontation. Officials say that over 1,000 people including children and women are inside the mosque. A senior Pakistani source said that 50 to 60 insurgents have taken control of the mosque and have threatened to kill anyone who tries to escape. This Pakistani official said that the government is hoping to avoid a bloody assault on the mosque. Ghazi on Saturday said that the government has killed over 70 students at the mosque. The government says this number is incorrect and calls the number of dead closer to 19.

Pakistani officials say in an air raid operation in the northwestern part of the country over the past three days, at least 25 civilians have been killed. A police source in Konar province said that in these attacks about 25 civilians and 20 insurgents have been killed. Local residents believe the numbers are higher than this. Eyewitnesses say in the first attack on a house Thursday night, at least 10 people died. According to the eyewitnesses, 25 more people died on Friday while attending the funeral of the victims of the first attack.

A spokesman for the International Security Assistance Force confirmed the attacks; however he called the reports about civilian casualties inaccurate.

In other news, four Canadian soldiers who serve with NATO forces were injured in a suicide bombing. A Canadian commander on Saturday said that these four soldiers were attacked while their vehicle was passing through a region in the Kandahar province.

An Iraqi doctor, who had been arrested in last week's failed bombing attacks on London and Glasgow, appeared in a court in London on Monday. The police on Friday accused Bilal Abdullah, 27, of conspiracy to place and detonate a bomb. Abdullah is one of the two men who drove a burning Jeep into the terminal at Glasgow Airport and they were arrested on the spot. He is one of the eight doctors who were arrested after the attacks.

Abdullah's presence in the court coincides with the second anniversary of the suicide attacks on the transportation facilities in London on the 7th of July 2005. In that incident 52 people along with the four suicide bombers were killed and more than 700 people were injured. Prime Minister Gordon Brown along with other senior officials Saturday morning laid some flowers at the grounds of Kings Cross railway station in London, commemorating the victims of that incident.

In Indian Kashmir, a group of angry Muslim protestors clashed with the police. These clashes happened one day after a young Muslim was killed by Indian security forces during protests against human rights violations. To calm down the situation in Srinagar, the summer capital of Kashmir, the officials called for backup security forces. The protests turned violent when protesters threw stones at the security forces. The police resorted to firing tear gas on the crowd in order to disperse a crowd of more than 700 people near the main city mosque.

At least two people were injured in the first bull-running game of the season at the San Fermin Festival in the city of Pamplona in northern Spain. During this nine day festival, fun lovers from around the world, often after hours of drinking, race the bulls through the narrow streets of the city to the place where the bulls fight each other. Runners sometime become the target of bull horns and get injured. Since 1924 till today, at least 13 people have lost their lives during these races. Hundreds of animal rights supporters marched in Pamplona, protesting what they called cruelty to animals.

[Background music and the words First Word appear on the screen]

[Host Behnood Mokri]

While the international media's attention is on Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's trips around the world, widespread protests by students in that country and their opinions about that government's policies, especially in reference to violations of freedom of speech and expression, have attracted freedom lovers around the world. Let's watch a report on this.

[Reporter]

Although the students here were busy for weeks with protests to restore freedom of speech, they are now busy with their final exams. For most of these students, the closing down of RCTV is not the only result of their

protests. They are worried about the future of freedom of speech in their country. Chavez's government has shut down RCTV network for instigating revolt against the government.

Ana Cristina Granton, a political science student, says, "As students we have the right to protest the current political situation here. I wish to choose whatever profession I like after graduation and I do not want to be discriminated against for political reasons. This country will be ours some day after our parents."

Granton indicated that these differences might put them in trouble with the government and in the future maybe it will make it difficult to find jobs. "They look at us as a serious danger because we criticize the government and express our demands clearly."

In the higher education circles, there is a variety of opinion on the issue; there are many who consider the support for RCTV a mistake and a useless thing to do. Lenin Sasa says the movement speaks up for special interest groups and supports the rich; it can not truly and fairly represent a majority seeking social rights and justice.

The polls show that the closing down of RCTV has brought public protests, including from some socialists who were among the protestors. Marcos Polio, a student of communication sciences who considers himself an independent Marxist, says, "The government this year promised a new socialism for the new century and through this promise started controlling the mass media. But this is against the principles of democracy; we believe in freedom of speech and expression. In the universities they should not teach one particular system because at the universities every opinion and ideology should be freely [expressed].

Political experts believe that students have always been in the forefront of civil uprisings. Professor Fernando Falcon, a political science teacher, says, "These kids are not trying to change the President; they are not even trying to change the government's policies on the national and international level; their only demands are social freedoms and young people naturally stand firm behind these beliefs."

There is no doubt Mr. Chavez has upset the vast majority of the professional and educated class in the country; however, what is not

predictable is the reaction to Mr. Chavez's decision to be the President of the country until the year 2030.

[Background Music]

[Host Behnood Mokri]

We continue our Late Edition program with you dear friends; and now we have our interview segment. In this part of the program we will talk to Ms. Parto Nouri Ala, a writer, poet, and literary critic. We will ask for her opinion on the recent events in reference to women's rights in Iran.

Ms. Nouri Ala, greetings to you and we are happy to have you with us.

[Parto Nouri Ala]

Greetings to you Mr. Mokri, and greetings to all your viewers and listeners.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

[to the control room]

I don't have her voice. Very well, until the technical difficulty is resolved, we will talk a little about.... Very well, it seems our technical difficulty is resolved. Ms. Nouri Ala...

[Parto Nouri Ala]

Am I not on line now?

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Yes. We can hear you and are glad to be with you. How are you doing?

[Parto Nouri Ala]

Thank you, Mr. Mokri.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Ms. Nouri Ala! We hear in the news and in the media that the Islamic Republic's officials and authorities on different occasions, Women's Day or Mother's Day, talk a lot about the role of women and their place in society and also they talk about the significance of focusing on their rights in the country.

However, we see things are different in reality. The persecution of women continues. Laws restricting women are everywhere and women's rights

activists are imprisoned and their sentences have become more severe. What is your opinion on all of this? Why do they talk the talk but not walk the walk? How do you view these anti-women laws in the current situation?

[Parto Nouri Ala]

You see Mr. Mokri, the issue of those who implement anti-women laws or in reality apply Islamic Sharia laws, this is nothing new in our history. These anti-women views arise from a male-chauvinistic system; from a system that considers women inferior to men and men the legal guardians of women. Recently as you are aware, women's rights movements inside Iran have grown tremendously.

They have changed their ways now; instead of remaining behind closed doors, they have come out in the open. On the anniversary of 22 Khordad 1385 [June 12, 2006] when a peaceful gathering of women was violently quashed forcefully by the government, even women in the military were used to batter these women.

So these women activists decided to come out from behind closed doors and go amongst the people and talk to them and learn from them and teach them about their rights.

But the government tries to put down these peaceful gatherings. The One Million Signatures campaign, which is merely a transparent movement, is not seeking to overthrow anything or to shed any blood. It only states that since the government of Iran is a member of an international convention (Geneva Convention) and one of the principles of this convention is elimination of any type of discrimination, therefore the discriminatory laws against women need to be abolished too.

But, as we witness, besides physical punishments, imprisonment, and all these other painful consequences against the activist women there, recently Mr. Khamenei has overtly worn his sword [Persian proverb: wears one sword over his clothes and two hidden under his clothes], as they say. And what is painful is that in a speech to a gathering of women from universities, the Elmiyeh Seminary, and the Research Committee, which I have no idea what that is, he told them that they should fight hard against feminist activities and feminist ideology.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Then it brings up this question. Since these men have a certain interpretation of women's role and place in society, as you pointed out. So, in your opinion what are the boundaries of their interpretation? Is the role of women as they see it?

[Parto Nouri Ala]

You see, if we look back to exactly 100 years ago, during the monarchy, and of course before that we did not have things like justice, equality, fairness, and terms like those, but it was during the monarchy that these words became common knowledge, people started to understand these terms and use them. It was then that libertarians and those who supported monarchy were demanding equality, justice, and freedom.

But if we look at history closely, we can see that women did not have any positive achievements; even in the first Majlis [first session of the Parliament] where 51 articles of the Constitution were ratified, and were indeed quite valuable. But there were no rights considered for women, especially with regard to getting elected and having the right to vote.

The same thing happened in the second Majlis.

So, what Mr. Khamenei says today is just a different way of saying the same thing. So, if during the constitutional revolt they had the guts to boldly put women in the same category as murderers and criminals and idiots who do not have the right to choose, to vote, and to be voted for, Mr. Khamenei is expressing the same sentiments in Mullah-speak.

Mind you, at the beginning of the revolution when a large number of women participated in different aspects of the revolution, the Islamic regime noticed that they would need this large segment of citizens for their votes.

So contrary to the Islamic laws that women do not have the right to vote, they gave women the right to vote.

But they took away some of their other rights such the right to become a judge, the right to bear witness, etc.

If we have time I would like to read some of Mr. Khamenei's statements on these topics and we could see what disparities exist at their core.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Please! We'd be delighted. There is time, certainly.

[Parto Nouri Ala]

You see, Mr. Khamenei says, “The responsibility for the well being of the society and the country falls on all citizens both men and women.” Well, this is a very logical and sensible statement; women and men should participate in the progress of society.

But they do not say this, that in a society in which the marriage age for girls has been reduced to 9 years old, how can this little girl who becomes a spouse and a mother at the same time, fulfill her responsibility to the social welfare of her society?

Let’s assume that she was able to raise her children and manage her home and even have time to go to school and have a career. But she needs her husband’s permission to go to school and to go to work. So she does not have any rights of her own.

Following up his statement that men and women have the same responsibility for the well being of society, Mr. Khamenei inserts a “but” in there and says: “But the most important responsibility and role of a woman is to promote the role of a wife and motherhood in a family.”

And he puts it this way that it is a part of human nature, the nature of a woman to be a mother and a wife. Mr. Khamenei expresses the principles of a male-chauvinistic system in very polished language. He further describes this spousal and motherhood role for women as pivotal for society’s well being and growth, furthering the progress of mankind as a whole.

I really don’t know. I would like to ask Mr. Khamenei and those who think like him how it is possible that the progress of mankind and the well being of society can lie in the hands of a woman or a mother who does not have the right to control her own life.

If this mother wants to travel, if this mother wants to sell property, if this mother wants to go to school or if she wants to go to work, for all this she needs to get permission from her man; then how can she have an active role in the family and in the society and become a role model for her children?

Of course I believe she can be a role model, but as such: to teach her daughters to accept being controlled by a man and take whatever she is

told and be put down, and to teach her sons to be controlling and talk down to and put down their women.

Mr. Khamenei has said in his speeches that in no other time has Iran had more women as researchers, scientists, intellectuals, literaries, artists, and activists in various political and social arenas.

It is interesting that Mr. Khamenei gives all the credit to the Islamic Republic for women's progress and activities under the most repressive conditions.

At the same time he also says it is because of...

[No sound for a few seconds]

I would like to draw Mr. Khamenei's attention to this point that if we have quite a large number of superior women in today's Iran, take a look at our prisons and see how many of these activist, political, intellectual, and educated women and female lawyers are in prison.

As we speak, a woman named Ms. Alieh Eghdamdoost, just for the crime of participating in a peaceful assembly of women on 22 Khordad 1385 [June 12, 2006], has been sentenced to four years and three months in jail and 20 lashes of the whip. This is the Islamic society that Mr. Khamenei talks about – the society that can not tolerate participation of women in peaceful gatherings.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Ms. Nouri Ala, you have such great points and they are so interesting that I do not want to cut you off and I am listening; but do you think we can go through all the points you have there?

[Parto Nouri Ala]

Alright, then I will tie it up and pass on some of my other statements, but the last point Mr. Khamenei makes here is that he says of course we understand that men in some families use force and are cruel to women, so we advise and guide them not to do that.

Mr. Khamenei! Isn't it better that you change the discriminatory laws against women instead of dishing advice to men who may not listen to your advice? That you don't allow any man to raise his hand against his wife?

That a woman may retain her own freedom and be in control of herself as a human being?

My last words are to those women who act against other women, who fight their own kind. Mr. Khamenei spoke in a gathering of such women. In my opinion the women who accept the views of Mr. Khamenei and like minded people, in fact since Islam has kept them under the protection of men, as easily as they let men take care of their affairs and take their freedoms away, so do they lay any blame for any mishap on the men.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Ms. Nouri Ala! Thank you for the points you made. You reviewed Mr. Khamenei's statements in detail, which as a matter of fact are the opinions of many other officials of the Islamic Republic as well. But I want to know about this "ism" that they talk a lot about and criticize: feminism. They consider this an imported term from the West. What is it about this term, feminism, that has attracted many authorities there and they try to label it as a Western phenomenon and it also has terrified them so much?

[Parto Nouri Ala]

Well, this term feminism that has scared people, like the term communism and even in the US people have called it a synonym to communism and are afraid of it, it is made up of two English words: "feminine" or "womanhood" and "-ism" which is a suffix and is added to define "adherence to a thought or a theory."

So feminism in the Farsi language has been translated as a belief in womanhood or nobility of women and such things.

But feminism today is a word that is being used in all parts of the world. However, Mr. Khamenei and his like minded friends are trying to put the label feminist on those women who are demanding their rights and are activists, so that they can make those women look like Western women in the views of the public and then they portray Western women as tools of marketing where their half naked bodies are used to sell goods and thus label those activist women like the loose Western women who are feminists.

But I would like to bring to the attention of Mr. Khamenei and his cronies that in the Western world where the term feminism began, actually these feminist women were the first people to struggle against these imperialistic regimes that wanted to sustain capitalism and exploit women's bodies to

sell goods - and nowadays they use men's bodies too. They are the ones that fought back the hardest. Perhaps the only group that fought against the exploiting of women's bodies to sell products was these Western feminists.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Ms Nouri Ala! Maybe we have a minute and half left, but I would like to ask you this one last question. This campaign to collect one million signatures has been going on for a while now. And many of those who believe in women's rights and whether they are seculars or some with their Islamic suffix attached to them and with their differences between them.

But they are standing together in support of women's equal rights under some special conditions. How do you see the future of this movement with all the arrests and persecutions of these activist women? Do you think this will stop Iranian women who are after their equal rights and their freedom?

[Parto Nouri Ala]

Never. I do not think that anyone can ever stop a popular movement. Maybe he can suppress it temporarily, or seemingly put it out. But there is a fire - the embers - under the ashes. I do not think it is possible to ever take a step backward with the knowledge that Iranian women of today have.

Every door that Mr. Khamenei and the likes of him close, the women will open another door.

I would like to ask Mr. Khamenei if today's Iran has raised such intelligent women, if Iran's current situation has raised such women, and if the Islamic Republic has raised them, then what does a "[gender] quota" plan in universities mean?

If Mr. Khamenei wants Iranian women to make progress and move forward, then why when there were more women in the universities than men, do they immediately come up with a [gender] quota for universities?

These women's movements in Iran and especially their struggle to inform the vast majority of the population of their rights will never regress.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Ms. Nouri Ala, thank you very much for appearing in our program and I am sure our viewers and listeners benefited tremendously from your words and thoughts. I wish you a very good day and night in Los Angeles.

[Parto Nouri Ala]

Thank you Mr. Mokri and thanks for inviting me.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Thank you and we will continue Late Edition.

[Parto Nouri Ala]

Goodbye.

[Background music and VOA logo]

[The words Hygiene and Health appear on the screen]

[Host Behnood Mokri]

We continue our Late Edition program and now we'll talk to my good friend and long time colleague of this program, Dr. Vahid Behravan, about prevention and health. Greetings Vahid!

[Vahid Behravan]

Greetings to you dear Behnood! We will talk about two diseases and they are both nervous system illnesses. They are related to cells and neurons. For both these diseases so far no specific causes have been found, no main factor that might cause these diseases. And also unfortunately for both of these diseases, there has not been any particular cure yet. Well, for both these diseases, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's, the best situation is be if they are diagnosed as soon as possible and are at early stages and the symptoms are discovered early, so treatment can start early. In the case of Alzheimer's, which is the most common of the two, it causes mental deterioration, it makes an individual have memory loss, it reduces an individual's mental sharpness. This disease is very common in the US. Five million people have Alzheimer's in this country. It is a disease that mostly starts after age 65. Of course, it is possible for it to start sooner too, but mostly after age 65 and now with the population in the US and the world getting older, this disease increases in number.

Well, as I said earlier, so far there is no specific cure for it, so the best thing would be, with the many medicines available today that could slow down the progress of this disease, to diagnose the disease early on.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

How can it be diagnosed? Are there special conditions that indicate that one has Alzheimer's?

[Vahid Behravan]

There are many symptoms. It starts with memory loss or a slowdown in remembering things. Sometimes it is confusion in an individual's judgment. It is possible for him/her to lose track of the time or place, and even at times not to recognize his loved ones.

These are the general symptoms and this has been noticed in past studies. Of course this is our main topic - that people with Alzheimer's will have difficulty in distinguishing smells too. But for the first time in this research they have studied healthy people to see if they have difficulty in distinguishing various smells, so they studied them for a longer period. In this research they evaluated 600 people between the ages of 54 and 100, some of them very old, and they gave these people 12 different scents to be named.

These were the scents of onion, pepper, chocolate, rose, banana, pineapple, soap, paint thinner, gasoline, and smoke.

They were asked to distinguish those scents and they were given some selected scents and they were read to them.

Twenty-five percent of them only missed one or fewer. Half of them named nine or more correctly and the other twenty-five percent got 8 or fewer right. They studied these people for five years. They tested them mentally during this period to check their mental alertness. One third of them had minor memory problems, and at the end they figured this out. And this connection is interesting: that those individuals that could not name four or more of these scents – and I have to add that smelling cells are related to mental cells – they were fifty percent or more likely to have memory problems.

And also these individuals had a greater chance of getting Alzheimer's disease. So this could lead to early diagnosis in those types of people.

Of course if our viewers and listeners have problems with differentiating scents, they should not panic, because there could be many other reasons for it, anything from a simple nasal polyp to sinusitis – sinus infection – could lead one to lose part or all of his sense of smell. So, these symptoms are a recent find and...

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Well, these other symptoms you mentioned earlier such as forgetting a name or not remembering a place, these are the things we all face once in a while, so should we not worry that we have Alzheimer's?

[Vahid Behravan]

No, this should just alert people that one might forget his personal hygiene issues or have difficulty remembering his financial and bank account numbers, which will slowly lead to difficulty with simple arithmetic, counting numbers and such, so then that could lead to one's behavior.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Well, we have about two minutes, so maybe you want to talk about Parkinson's disease also, and the new enzyme that has been discovered.

[Vahid Behravan]

Yes, that's correct. On Parkinson's, it has similar symptoms as Alzheimer's and the cause of it is not clear and it does not have any specific cure. But there are medicines and there is even some equipment that works on the brain and could stimulate it. Parkinson's starts when 80 percent of special brain cells that excrete a substance called dopamine, die for some reason. But now some kinds of enzymes have been found in mice. They have been tested and if they are destroyed with some special poison, 80 percent of those specific cells will be destroyed and those mice will display symptoms of Parkinson's disease.

So now they have discovered this new enzyme called PRX2 which is turned off by those cells. The function of this enzyme is to produce energy in cells called mitochondria which function like the generator of the cell, so when that is turned off, it stops working.

So now that chain of reactions brought on by an injection or some other penetration of the special poison into the cell, causing it to shut down, a

way has been found to re-activate the enzyme and in fact reverse this chain reaction.

And it has been noticed that when the process is reversed, those symptoms in the mice improve. Parkinson's symptoms in humans are generally mild shaking, slowing of movements, sometimes loss of balance and stiffness of muscles. Mostly these start after the age of 60 and the numbers are increasing for this disease too.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Probably the most famous person with this disease, of course like you I follow sports a lot, was Mohammad Ali Clay, the boxer whose images we see and he looks fine.

[Vahid Behravan]

Absolutely. He is fully active and these people can have completely normal lives.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

He is lucid and participates in functions and his life goes on.

[Vahid Behravan]

Absolutely. If it is controlled early on, it will not disrupt life. If he learns how to deal with that slowness of movement and the other issues, then he can live a normal life.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Thank you dear Vahid! I wish you a good day. We will continue with our program. Stay with us.

[Background Music and the words "A Glance Around the World" appear and then scenes of a variety of events in different parts of the world]

[A Frenchman says: "Now, all the women and girls want to wear vintage dresses from the past" as images of vintage dresses are displayed; Running with the bulls; etc.]

[VOA logo]

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Now we have a report from our colleague Behnam Nateghi about a series of concerts called Live Earth that has been organized with the help of former US Vice President, Mr. Al Gore, who has become a global environmental activist. 50 international groups and entertainers including Madonna, the group called the Police, Red Hot Chili Peppers, and Fall Out Boy have participated in this. Behnam, these concerts started 12 hours ago and are still going on.

[Behnam Nateghi]

That's right. Today is the 7th day of the 7th month of the year 2007, which is 7/7/7 and for those who believe in the divinity of numbers and numerology, then it is a lucky day and for this reason Al Gore and his friends have organized these concerts. They have selected this date for the concerts and it has become the largest charity concert ever organized.

As you said, these concerts started in Sydney, Australia with the sounds of the didjeridu, the traditional instrument of the aboriginal people of that country. They then moved on to Tokyo, Japan. They continued on in Shanghai with the participation of international artists. And in a few hours they will continue in New York, or rather, nearby at the huge Giants Stadium in the state of New Jersey, which will be the largest and most important of these concerts with the participation of groups such as the Police and the Fall Out Boys, which will be after [the] London [show] that we will be showing you part of.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Well, it is not really clear if these groups and entertainers actually are performing these concerts to inform the public of the issue of global warming or to promote their own upcoming tours and concerts.

[Behnam Nateghi]

Maybe both. [Laughing.]

[Host Behnood Mokri]

I guess we will see if they could sell two million tickets and reach their first goal or not. Now we will go and watch this report including live videos of these entertainers; some words from experts in this field and then we will be back here with Behnam and see what the media has written about these concerts.

[Reporter]

From Brazil to Antarctica at the South Pole, from Shanghai to New York, the world stage was set for rock music to warm the world and caution the world about the warming of the earth.

The founder of these concerts, Mr. Al Gore, calls it an exceptional opportunity to get the world's attention on the subject.

He has prepared a 7-point pledge that he is hopeful that majority of those who attend these concerts will sign.

Two of these concerts' activists in London say the goal is not to collect lots of money, but to increase people's awareness.

The concert organizers are optimistic that their message will stay with the people long after they have finished listening to the music.

Metallica, the Police, and Kanye West are among the entertainers that will perform at the Giants stadium near New York City later on today.

The first concert for Live Earth was started by a group of scientist singers at the South Pole with the goal of not only highlighting the global warming that they see near them. They also wanted to encourage young people to become scientists.

The traditional sound of didgeridu music was the starting point of the concerts in Australia in which some of the world's top entertainers were participating. After Sydney, it was Tokyo's turn. Thousands of people had lined up to watch local and international entertainers. In Tokyo Al Gore personally appeared on the stage using the latest technology. Mr. Gore says holographic technology has allowed him to virtually appear in person in front of the people in Tokyo and welcome them.

In Shanghai, China, thousands of people attended these concerts. Most of the performers there were top local musicians and groups which played pop music and traditional Chinese music as well as classical Chinese music under the star-studded sky of Shanghai.

This Chinese fan speaking in Mandarin says [looking at the English poster at the wall] Shanghai is not only for foreigners and if these people wanted to attract Chinese people's attention, it would have been better to put some Chinese posters rather than those English posters.

This is the view of the huge Wimbledon stadium in London which has 150,000 seats after renovations and it is supposed to sell tickets for \$100 per seat. The main event in London will be a performance by Madonna. But before her a few other top entertainers appeared on the stage. Among them we could mention the group Black Eyed Peas, which is practicing here.

Mr. Ashok Sinha, director of an organization called Stop Climate Chaos and one of the environmental activists, says of course any large programs like this will emit huge carbonic waste too. But for this Saturday's concerts, we have tried to use bio-diesel fuel and most of the material used here was generally recyclable material.

Mr. Kevin Wall, co-sponsor of these concerts with Al Gore, says the goal is to get 2 billion people around the world to talk about the issue. They will act on it, buy green goods, and vote green: world awareness and a change in world attitude. This will be the beginning of 3-5 year program to draw the world's attention to the reduction of greenhouse gases by 90 percent by the year 2050.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Thank you for the report. Who was this last woman performing?

[Behnam Nateghi]

Of course, it was Rihanna. We had a report on her before.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Okay. Well, it appears that Al Gore's and his friends' efforts with all this music and hubbub will have some effect on people.

[Behnam Nateghi]

Well, these concerts will help Mr. Gore in his possible goal of campaigning and participating in the next presidential elections of the United States. Even though this may be considered a personal agenda and the voters in the country may not accept it. Also, Mr. Gore has said that he will not participate in the elections.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Of course you can not ignore the publicity he gets from all this.

[Behnam Nateghi]

Of course the goal of Live Earth concerts is to get millions or as they said billions of viewers around the world, [to increase] their awareness about reduction of carbon dioxide CO₂ by 90 percent by the year 2050, meaning 43 years from now, and get people's support behind it.

The British newspaper *Daily Telegraph* asked its readers in a poll whether organizing rock concerts around the world is the right way to save the earth, and whether gases produced by the heavy traveling of all these pop stars around the world and then their millions of fans getting to those concerts will not reduce the benefits of the goals of these concerts. Also, a scientist has calculated the amount of gas usage by every human being. He is Mr. John Buckley, who has started a website called <http://www.carbonfootprint.com>. He has calculated that these Live Earth concerts and the comings and goings involved in them have sent tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

He has added that this lady, Madonna herself, who will be performing in London as one of the major performers of these concerts - and by the way we could not get a clip of her concert for you here or maybe she is performing now - but she herself is one the major producers of carbon dioxide.

In her latest tour called the Confession Tour, she had more than 100 singers, musicians, and support personnel with her, traveling around the world by private airplane to 56 different cities in the past four months, so just Madonna herself had produced 440 tons of carbon dioxide.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Absolutely. I guess that Farsi saying applies here, "Whoever has a bigger roof has more snow." But this thing that you said, carbon footprint, does this refer to the use of gasoline and other fuel used?

[Behnam Nateghi]

That is correct. Also, the use of electricity and other sources of energy. But the carbon footprint like this has been mentioned in its website www.carbonfootprint.com. It calculates the amount of gases emitted from all human activities and it is called a carbon footprint which is energy used directly or indirectly.

That also divides it into two types: primary and secondary. Primary are the gases that are produced by individuals themselves, and secondary are the waste that they have thrown away.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Well, the issue is that they have to travel and the fans have to go and watch the concerts, they have to use their cars or trains; so what is the solution here?

[Behnam Nateghi]

Well, some of these oppositions want to create a problem; but a solution that Mr. Buckley, this environmental scientist, has proposed is that Madonna and the others instead of going to Wimbledon and giving a concert to 150,000 people who then in return have to come to the stadium to watch them, they should broadcast their concerts through the internet and people could stay home and watch them from home. He says if they want to help the environment then they should perform via the internet.

However, Mr. Wall, the producer of these Live Earth concerts that we saw some clips of here, and Mr. Gore's co-sponsor, said that there have been some precautions taken by using recyclable materials.

So these concerts would not have much negative effects on the earth. And with the message that they are sending to billions of people, they could say in the long term they will hopefully reduce so much carbon dioxide usage that the amount created in these concerts will be minuscule.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

This was really interesting. It is like spending money to make money. Live Earth produces some gas so that it can reduce the production of gas and apparently to increase awareness about carbon dioxide issues requires producing some too. Well, OK, we will wait and see what other reports we will get, as you said these programs are still continuing. I think maybe we will show some other parts later.

[Behnam Nateghi]

Another point that had been left, the organizer of Live Aid and Live 8 which this Live Earth copied, Mr. Bob Geldof, criticized these concerts but said he hopes they will be successful. However, if their goal was to increase people's awareness, we are aware of it and it will not help.

Some others also criticized these concerts and said they do not have any clear goals.

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Thank you Behnam. We will continue with Late Edition.

[Background Music and email address for Late Edition appears on the screen.]

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Tonight we have chosen a song by Ms. Mahvash Azhir that we will broadcast for you. It is called Arezu [Desire]. The lyrics are by contemporary poet Forough Farrokhzad.

[The music video begins.]

I wish I were a scent of a mysterious plant on the banks of a river.....

[Host Behnood Mokri]

Yes, with listening to and watching this song as I had mentioned earlier whose lyrics were by famous poet Forough Farrokhzad, we have reached the end of Late Edition. I thank you very much for staying with me and my colleagues up until now. I hope that you all enjoy our program. Or I should correct myself: I hope you liked our program, and I thank all my colleagues who helped me bring you this program.

Now we will go to our other studio where my colleague Vafa Mostaghim will bring you the News Talk program. My good friend Vafa, greetings to you!

TRANSLATION ENDS HERE