

Police chief caught naked

IranTimes: The police chief of Tehran province, Reza Zarei, has been quietly removed from his post and arrested after he was found nude in a Tehran brothel with six naked prostitutes. The Tehran press has reported nothing of the arrest and removal. The news was carried by the Gooya and Farda news websites. The Farda website, which has no connection with Radio Farda, is reported to be close to Tehran Mayor Mohammad-Baqer Qalibaf, a former national chief of police. The discovery of Zarei and his romp with prostitutes reportedly took place early last month, before the expose of New York's Gov. Eliot Spitzer's similar rendezvous with hookers. Zarei is a professional police officer who commanded the provincial police in Bushehr and Gilan provinces before coming to Tehran province in 2004. While he was in charge of all police work in the province, he has gotten most attention in the past year for operating the Tehran portion of the national



crackdown on poorly-clad women. The Gooya website said Mahmud Hashemi-Shahrudi, the chairman of the Judiciary, personally ordered the raid on the brothel that exposed Zarei's extracurricular activities. At the Iran Times deadline, the regime had said nothing about Zarei, but Judiciary spokesman Ali-Reza Jamshidi said a high-ranking police officer, whom he did not name, had been arrested, released on bail and put under investigation.

Youth abandoning Iran from frustration, not lust for West

IranTimes: by Grace Nasri

A recent poll of Iranian youth has found that many of Iran's brightest young scholars "feel they have no future in Iran," and are emigrating in pursuit of economic opportunities elsewhere. The poll indicated that young people were being "pushed" out of Iran by the lack of economic opportunities rather than "pulled" out by the lure of a fascinating Western world. Mianeh, an independent web-based news outlet about Iran run by the Institute for War and Peace Reporting in the U.K., reported on the poll but did not say who conducted it or how many people were interviewed. Mianeh reported the study found many Iranian youth see emigration as the only way to escape economic and social problems plaguing their country. Many respondents said there are limited opportunities to pursue their goals in Iran and only a small fraction said they believed they would be able to pursue a career that interested them if they stayed. Respondents said it's not just the widespread unemployment, the rising inflation rates, the difficulty of getting married or high property prices, but that doors have been closed to them by previous generations. In recent decades, Iran has watched large percentages of its educated youth leave their country for more developed countries in search of jobs, economic opportunities and social freedom. The recent poll found the rate of young people seeking to emigrate seems to be increasing. Eight out of 10 young Iranians surveyed expressed an interest in leaving their home country for more developed countries like the United States, Canada, Australia and the United



Arab Emirates. (The UAE has the advantages of being easy to get into for Iranians, of hosting a large Iranian population, of having a free enterprise economy, and of being close so that frequent visits home are possible.) In past generations, young adults were willing to tolerate a lack of opportunity, economic problems or social repression because they believed conditions would eventually progress, but in recent years that hope has faded, Mianeh said. Many blame the government of President Ahmadi-nejad for focusing its time and resources on religious and nuclear issues while allegedly ignoring the myriad of social problems such as unemployment, the lack of social security and inadequate housing. Large percentages of the youth population have also come to feel their personal lives have become increasingly constrained, as they said the regime is increasingly extending its control over new areas of their lives such as music, style of dress and even sports. Many said they feel disconnected from their government.

Maryam Firouz is dead at 95

IranTimes: Maryam Farman Farmaian, the communist princess and wife of the long time leader of the Tudeh party, has died at the age of 95. Better known as Maryam Firouz, she was born a Qajar princess into the Farman Farmaian family that was the cream of Persian society. As she grew up. She was attracted to communism, much to the dismay of her family. She denounced her famous family name as aristocratic and adopted her grandfather's surname of Firouz. In 1949 in Moscow, she married Nouredin Kianouri, who was for decades the leader of the Tudeh (Masses) communist party. Maryam founded and led the women's section of the party. When the Shah cracked down on the Tudeh, they were forced into exile in Eastern Europe and returned to Iran only after the 1979 revolution. But the new regime turned on the Tudeh in 1983 and Kianouri spent years in prison. He died in November 1999



at the age of 84. Maryam was the daughter of Prince Abdol Hossain Mirza Farmanfarma and a cousin of the late Prime Minister Mohammed Mossadegh.

Judge says stingy hubby must en-rose miffed wife



An Iranian court ordered a man to buy his wife 124,000 red roses after she demanded her dowry from her "very stingy" husband. The woman, identified publicly only as Hengameh, said,

"Shortly after marriage I realized that Shahin was very cheap. He even refused to pay for my coffee if we went to a café or restaurant." The Etemad daily reported, "After 10 years of marriage, Hengameh had decided to claim her dowry of 124,000 red roses to punish her very stingy husband." Shahin told the court he could only afford to buy five roses a day, blaming his wife's complaint on "her billionaire friends who had put such ideas in her head." The court seized Shahin's apartment, worth 600 million rials (\$65,000 dollars), and will return it only after he has made good on the entire dowry of 124,000 roses. A long-stemmed rose in Tehran costs about 20,000 rials (\$2), so the whole dowry would come to about a quarter million dollars—unless Shahin gets it wholesale. Under Iranian law, a woman can claim her dowry or mahr—a pledge by the husband at the time of marriage—at any time during their marriage or upon divorce.

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Bush Blunders...

that Bush made his own mis-statement of fact. "One thing," Bush told Radio Farda, "is to reiterate my belief that the Iranians should have a civilian nuclear power program. It's their right to have it. The problem is that the [Iranian] government cannot be trusted to enrich uranium because, one, they've hidden programs in the past and they may be hiding one now, who knows? And, secondly, they've declared they want to have a nuclear weapon to destroy people—some—in the Middle East." The mis-statement overrode everything else he said in the interviews. His theme was probably lost. "We have differences with the government [of Iran], but we honor the people and we want the people to live in a free society," he said to VOA in pursuing his theme. "My message is: please don't be discouraged by the slogans that say America doesn't like you, because we do and we respect you." In the VOA interview, Bush repeated the factual misstatement about what Iran claims for its nuclear program, indicating that he had not simply made a slip of the tongue in speaking to Radio Farda. Bush began by saying the government of Iran was inept. "I'm not surprised that the leaders would blame the United States for the problems they, themselves, have created.... "The people of Iran must understand that the conditions exist in large part because of either mismanagement by the government or isolation because of the government's decisions on for-

eign policy matters—such as announcing that they want to destroy countries with a nuclear weapon. It is irresponsible remarks like that which cause great credibility loss with the Iranian government." When the mis-statements came to light, the White House did not try to claim that Bush had correctly quoted Iran. Instead, it tried to explain Bush's comments as "shorthand." Gordon Johndroe, Bush's national security spokesman, said, "The president short-handed his answer." But some reporters didn't understand the president's error. For example, The Washington Post reported that Bush had erred by saying the opposite of what the U.S. National Security Estimate of December had concluded—that Iran had halted nuclear weaponization work in 2003. Iranian blogger Hooman Majd, writing in the Huffington Post, was incredulous that Bush would make such a speech to curry favor with Iranians. "What exactly are the Iranian people supposed to think?" Majd asked. "That Mr. Bush is an idiot? That he's a liar? Maybe they're thinking, 'Oh my gosh, it's worse than we thought. Could he actually bomb the crap out of us because he actually believes his own nonsense?' If the idea was to get the Iranian people on your (or our) side, if the idea was to convince them that their government is acting foolishly and dangerously, then you just scored a big fat zero." While Iran consistently says that Islam bars Muslims from having nuclear weapons, it has never criticized Pakistan, the one Muslim-majority state with nuclear weapons, for building them. It has, however, vehemently condemned Israel and the United States.

Use it, or Lose it

Martin Groder, MD

The longer you neglect your talents and special skills that were developed over the years, the harder it is to restore them and the less likely you will be able to bring them back to their old levels of excellence.

Once you have reached the point of no return, you probably won't even make the effort. The deterioration of our abilities occurs due to disuse, and this law applies equally to both your mental and physical abilities to chess as well as to tennis.

Why we lose it

Much of the decline in strength and stamina that we blame on age is actually due to the disuse cycle. Slow down, and it gets harder to pick up the pace again, so the natural tendency is to slow down even more. Activities as diverse as shooting pool, playing the piano, speaking a foreign language or responding sexually are coordinated by complex interactions of nerve cells in the brain. When you practice, these neurons actually grow microscopic filaments to connect to one another. It's a process known as arborization. When you stop practicing, these connections wither away. Every time you learn new skills or master fresh areas of knowledge, neurons secrete growth hormones that foster arborization, thus stimulating their own growth and the growth of their neighbors.

Brain Drain

Part of the brain is devoted to learning, striving to meet challenges and dealing with frustration, while another part takes care of establishing habits and routines. Let one part atrophy, and its functions are taken over by the areas that are used more. When you stop challenging yourself and expanding your skills, that part of your brain goes quiet and brain activity shifts to its humdrum mode. The more you let yourself become stodgy and fail to challenge yourself, the harder it is to reactivate that part of your brain. Motivation is often a major victim of this process. Once you let your skills decay, it's

harder to feel excited.

Example: Playing piano poorly, or not seeing results from exercising, isn't very rewarding, so you are tempted to let the activity slide altogether rather than make the effort to correct the situation or merely stay at a level that matches your abilities.

A little practice

Finding the time to maintain skills in the midst of our busy lives may seem an elusive goal. But it's important to remember that in mid-life or beyond, you get the most benefit from fist small effort. By practicing your skills, even just a little each week, you will be able to exercise the capacities that are important to you. Practicing many of your skills just a little bit is more important than concentrating on just one or two. How much practice is enough?

There is no universal rule, but when it comes to physical exercise, a workout every other day for 20 to 40 minutes appears to be enough to keep you in shape, and healthy. In music, too, it appears that a half-hour to one hour of practice every other day will maintain a significant level of skill. So using what you don't want to lose at least two to three times every week for a half-hour to an hour is a good minimum for which to strive.

Make practice count

To ensure the time you devote to maintaining your skills is well spent, take yourself, your talents and your strengths seriously enough to optimize the conditions for fruitful practice. Here's how to do it...

***Use the right equipment.** If you are walking to maintain fitness, get good walking shoes. Want to hone your piano-playing skills? Get the piano tuned. It will make the experience more rewarding and increase the odds you will keep doing it.

***Make practice enjoyable.** Some people like to walk, run or bike alone, while others need to feel the support of fellow strives in a gym or health club. Ask yourself what works best for you.

Example: Will sharing your essays with others motivate you to keep writing? Join a workshop or organize a writer's group on your own.

Find your level of practice and stick with it. Some people want to keep their skills sharp in a relaxed way, without strain, as an enjoyable leisure pursuit. Others prize the exhilaration of feeling themselves tested and stretched. Let your personal preference guide you in choosing whether you practice your skills for fun or find challenging opponents who will force you to stretch.

***Know your limits.** A big mistake many people make when practicing is falling into "pro"



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