

## Canada student can't recall killing

IranTimes: An Iranian-born University of British Columbia law student accused of fatally stabbing a friend multiple times testified last month that he has no recollection of the 2006 murder. Despite signing an admission of fact earlier this month that he caused the death of Joshua Goos, 27, Sasan Ansari, 29, testified October 7 that he had no memory of causing the fatal stab wounds. Goos's body was found outside the Hollyburn Country Club in West Vancouver May 23, 2006; he had been stabbed 30 times and bled to death. Ansari recalled how when he was arrested by police later that day, he thought it was for a traffic violation. "I figured I had ran a stop sign," he told a B.C. Supreme Court jury. "I asked what was going on." The accused testified that when the officer explained he was being arrested for the murder of Goos, he began to cry. Ansari told the court he had no memory of killing Goos. "It's not there," he said, referring to any memory of the fatal event. On the day of his arrest, police showed Ansari surveillance footage from the country club, which showed him getting out of Goos's Jeep Cherokee and chasing the victim. "They showed me the chase scene. When they showed me that, that's not what I remember.... It wasn't in my mind. It was surreal," Ansari said, adding, "I didn't remember the chase at all and I was confused." But Ansari admitted that after spending a night in custody, some memories of the events leading up to Goos's death did return. He recalled meeting Goos the night of May 22, 2006, at

the country club to discuss a \$90,000 one-year, interest-free loan Goos had made to Ansari the previous summer. Ansari said Goos, who was a wellheeled friend from Sentinel secondary school, had offered Ansari the money so that Ansari wouldn't have to work while attending law school. He had reportedly borrowed the money from his father to loan to Ansari. But according to Ansari, in January 2006 Goos began demanding the immediate return of almost three times the original loan. Ansari, who owned an apartment near UBC where he lived with his boyfriend, testified he had enough cash to cover the \$90,000 debt, which he offered to return to Goos. But according to Ansari, who at the time was involved in a deal to sell sugar to Iran from Brazil, Goos demanded a repayment of \$250,000. He said he had told Goos—who was not an investor in the deal—that he expected the commodities deal to go through, which would have earned Ansari a considerable profit. He allegedly told Goos that if he wanted a repayment of \$250,000, he would have to wait until the sugar deal went through. Ansari said he had put the money in his boyfriend's account so it wasn't mixed in with Ansari's own money. The accused said he also put another \$40,000 in another bank account. Ansari said when he met Goos at the country club, Goos explained he had arranged to trade B.C. marijuana for cocaine when he lived in the Los Angeles area. According to Ansari, he didn't know until then that Goos had been involved



in dealing drugs. He said they later drove to a nearby Tim Hortons—a Canadian fast food chain—in Goos's Jeep, then returned around midnight to Hollyburn Country Club where Ansari's Mercedes was parked. It was then, according to Ansari, that Goos began screaming, "I'll kill your brothers.... I'm going to kill you and your f—ing boyfriend." He didn't explain, however, why Goos had allegedly threatened him so suddenly. Ansari said Goos, seemingly in slow motion, then pulled a knife out. "I could see the blade of the knife coming at me," he recalled. "I grabbed his wrist and reached for the knife with my hand.... The next thing I remember is waking up at my brother's house." Ansari testified that he went about his day doing normal things, including running errands related to redecorating his apartment. At one point that day, he said, he noticed he didn't have his wallet and phoned Goos's cellphone, leaving a message that said:

"Hey bro, I think I left my wallet in your car. Can you check for it...." But prosecutors also pointed out other questions related to Ansari's finances. Under cross-examination by prosecutor Greg Weber, Ansari had trouble explaining why he listed his income as \$110,000 on an application to open a new bank account in 2004. Ansari admitted it was a lie, saying he was making \$16 an hour as a bouncer at a nightclub in Vancouver, where he was paid about \$600 every two weeks. But he added that he would make between \$500 and \$2,000 a night on "tips" as bribes to get in the club. Weber pointed out that Ansari had also lied about his employment; he had listed his occupation as manager on the bank application. "Door management," Ansari explained. "You didn't tell them you were a bouncer?" Weber asked. Ansari answered in the negative. Weber showed the accused a slip for January 9, 2006, when Ansari deposited \$6,400 in \$20 bills. Ansari could not explain that deposit or a similarly large cash deposit a few weeks later. "These are huge wads of \$20 bills and you can't tell us where the money is coming from?" the prosecutor asked. "I'm going to suggest to you that you weren't getting these kinds of tips," Weber said. "What actually was your business?" "If you're trying to suggest it was from an illegal source, I would not have put it in a bank account," Ansari replied, estimating he made about \$80,000 a year. On October 10, the day after he failed to explain the large cash deposits, Ansari testified that the money was part of a loan repayment from a friend who ran a beauty parlor at a local mall. But Ansari did not name the friend or the beauty parlor.

## Iran Khodro designs car just for women

IranTimes: Iran's largest car manufacturer last month unveiled a car specifically designed for women, with an assortment of colors, electronic parking sensors and a special jack making it easier to change a flat tire. Iran Khodro's new car design, which is part of its "Samand" line, will be especially geared toward women. For example, its exterior will be painted in softer, "feminine" colors, the car manufacturer announced, an alarm system will be installed to warn drivers of flat tires and automatic transmission, navigation and entertainment systems will be added to enhance the driving experience. The Fars news agency quoted the managing director of Iran Khodro's order unit, Vahid Najafi, as saying the large increase in the number of women drivers and car owners prompted the new design. "Women's necessities are different from men's," Najafi said. "For example, a woman goes shopping, takes children to school—so this car is going to have some visual distinctions that will separate it from other cars. It will be more beautiful," he said, adding, "Cheerful and attractive colors will be used—for example red. A series of decoration pieces will be added to the interior, on the dashboard, for example." But in its joint venture with French car manufacturer Peugeot, Iran Khodro was not as optimistic. The Iranian car manufacturer accused France of "inappropriate policies," which he said were hampering production of Peugeots in Iran. France is Iran's biggest trading partner in the auto industry but "surprisingly, in financial matters their treatment of us is like one with a country of few bilateral ties," Manuchehr Manteghi, Iran Khodro's chief, told Agence France Presse. In July, Iran Khodro celebrated its 20th year of cooperation with Peugeot—whose models it manufactures under license. Last year, seven different Peugeot models accounted for 64 percent of the 542,000 passenger cars and pickups produced by Iran Khodro. In addition to joint ventures with Peugeot, Iran Khodro and Saipa—the country's second-largest car



manufacturer—produced the Logan in a joint venture with French car manufacturer Renault. Despite strong links between the Iranian and French car manufactures, Manteghi pointed out issues between the two companies in light of declining political relations between the two governments. "The first problem we have with Peugeot and Renault is basically France's policies," Manteghi said. Since President Nicolas Sarkozy's election in 2007, France has toughened its stance toward Iran. "Given they seem to be moving in line with U.S. politics, they are [significantly] harming our trade level, which has been built up with much mutual energy and effort," Manteghi said, quickly adding that sanctions and other various measures would not damage the company. "Sanctions may increase costs, but they cannot stop us in terms of technology," he said. "With our sites in Tehran, Khorasan and abroad, we will achieve a production capacity of one million cars per year in about 18 months," Manteghi said. Iran Khodro continues to hold a 60 percent share of the domestic market. The firm is now focusing on foreign markets with a view to becoming Asia's Number Four.

## State using ploy to keep Baha'is out of colleges

IranTimes: Baha'i students in Iran continue to face barriers to higher education as the Iranian academic year got underway. Although publicly Tehran maintains its Baha'i citizens are free to attend university, recent reports suggest an old policy of preventing Baha'is from obtaining higher education persist. The Baha'i World News Service said Baha'i students applying for admittance to universities this fall have reported their entrance examination results were frozen and their files listed as "incomplete" on the website of the national testing organization—even for those who said they had successfully completed all the requirements. Baha'is who had successfully enrolled in universities in previous years now reported being expelled, while those who turned to the courts have had their cases rejected. In a ruling last April in the Court of Administrative Justice, a Baha'i student who filed a grievance against the national Education Measurement and Evaluation Organization (EMEO) had his case dismissed. "In light of the fact that the [EMEO] does not recognize the plaintiff as having fulfilled the requirements, the plaintiff's case has no merit and is thus dismissed," the court ruled. In response to the continued discrimination against Baha'i students in Iran, Bani Dugal—the principal representative of the Baha'i International

Community to the United Nations—said, "As has been the case for the last four years, the Iranian government continues to use a series of devious ploys to prevent young Iranian Baha'is from receiving higher education." "The effect of the government's policies is to close the doors of universities to Baha'is, despite Iran's supposed commitment to international laws upholding the right to education," said Dugal. Last year and this year the principal method by which authorities are preventing Baha'is from enrolling is reportedly by blocking their examination results and simply declaring their files "incomplete." When Baha'i students reportedly tried to log on to the national university examination website to view their exam results, many complained the webpage that appeared read: "Error—incomplete file." The webpage to which they were automatically directed had a URL ending with the words "error\_bah"—which some believed was a reference to the fact that their files were declared in "error" because they were Baha'is. During the 2007-2008 academic year, of the more than 1,000 Baha'i students who satisfactorily completed the entrance examination, nearly 800 were excluded because of "incomplete files," the Baha'i World News Service said.

## Hejab is good for your health

Dropping the chador can be dangerous to your health. New research findings in Iran link the use of hejab to a decreased rate of skin cancer among women. Speaking at the opening ceremony of a skin cancer prevention seminar at Shahr-e Kord Medical University, Chancellor Masud Maleki of the Khorasan Razavi Medical College said recent research has shown that the use of hejab helps reduce skin cancer among women. He added that the hejab provides a physical barrier to help prevent the sun's ultraviolet rays from reaching the head and neck. "More than one million Americans

contract BCC [basal cell carcinoma] skin cancer every year and the elderly are more prone to catch the disease," he said, adding that BCC is the most common form of skin cancer in Iran. But going against the regime's ideological grain, Maleki said lipstick also protects women from cancer of the lips. Maleki also listed farmers, cattle-breeders and fishermen as highly susceptible to BCC. "Men should wear hats in order to prevent their vulnerability," he said, attributing changes in the ozone layer and exposure to sunlight for long hours as the most important causes leading to BCC.

## Iranians love Internet even though it's very slow

IranTimes: Iranians complain that slow Internet speeds in their country are a result of Tehran's attempt to censor and limit access to information. With about 15 percent of the population connected to the Internet, Iran has one of the largest populations of web users in the Middle East. Like many young professionals in Tehran, Mohammad—who only gave his first name—said he belongs to a new generation of Iranians who cannot imagine their personal and professional lives without the Internet. Mohammad, 27, is a sales and advertising executive who said he uses the Internet at work—to sell his company's products—and at home—to stay in touch with

friends, meet new people, and keep up with current news. But Mohammad, who cited slow speeds as a major concern of Iranians who are increasingly plugging into the Internet at home, complained that the length of time it takes to open many websites is extremely frustrating and deters many people from logging on. "It becomes extremely annoying, especially when you want to download a photo. Downloading video takes ages, and sometimes it's simply impossible to open and watch a video on the Internet," Mohammad told Radio Farda. Many complain that the government's restriction of high speed connections for private, home use is part of

Tehran's effort to censor information, and point to the fact that only businesses are allowed to have high-speed Internet connections. Omid Habibi-nia, a Swissbased communications expert, told Radio Farda that oftentimes the Internet connection is only 1 percent as fast as the average speed in the United States or Europe. "Computers and the Internet—including services such as e-faxes and e-mails—have become increasingly popular in workplaces, where people use them for communication, searches and storing data. The age of using paper and paperwork has passed," he said. Iranian authorities acknowledge the problem, but place the blame on the country's Internet service providers. Iranian Communication and Information Technology

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