

Iran orders professor's death sentence lifted

Soraya Sarhaddi Nelson
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

TEHRAN — Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran's Supreme Leader, ordered the death sentence of a popular reformist history professor reversed on Sunday, amid escalating demonstrations against the verdict at universities around the Islamic Republic capital.

As supreme leader, Khamenei has the final say on all matters of state and religion, but as of Sunday night, the judiciary had not publicly responded to his order. The nation's chief jurist, Mahmud Hashemi-Sharudi, has requested a meeting with Khamenei to discuss the verdict against professor Hashem Aghajari, who was found guilty of apostasy, or abandoning Iran's Shiite Muslim faith.

Khamenei's order came in response to an appeal by a group of university professors, said Mehdi Karrubi, the speaker of the Majlis, the

Iranian parliament. The Supreme Leader has repeatedly called on Iran's judiciary to use caution in handing down death sentences "to avoid giving any pretext to either enemies or friendly critics for challenges" to the regime, state-run Iranian television reported on Sunday.

Besides ordering Aghajari's execution on Nov. 6, a hard-line judge handed the disabled Iran-Iraq war veteran an eight-year prison sentence and 74 lashes with a leather whip, and banned him from teaching for 10 years, all of which would remain in effect if the death sentence were rescinded.

Aghajari was prosecuted for a speech he gave in the western Iranian city of Hamadan in August, in which he said Shiite Muslims were not "monkeys" to blindly follow the teachings of senior clerics.

Karrubi on Sunday urged Aghajari to appeal his sentence "immediately" to end the issue, which the pro-

fessor until now has refused to do.

The death sentence has sparked a revival of a student-led movement for political and social reforms in the Islamic Republic. That movement has been dormant since 1999, when hardline militias crushed the previous wave of student uprisings, killing several protesters.

Students have become wiser since those days, learning to protest within the framework of Iranian law and not riot in the streets, said Saeed Razavifaghee, a Tabriz University philosophy professor and former editorial board member of the banned reformist newspaper, No-Ruz, or New Day.

He predicted that the pro-reform demonstrations on campuses that started 10 days ago would continue even if Aghajari's death sentence were rescinded.

© 2002, Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services.

Rising Israeli politician says negotiate or exit West Bank

Carol Rosenberg
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

HAIFA, Israel — Amran Mitzna, the mayor of Haifa and a contender to lead Israel's Labor Party, may be the most tone-deaf politician to enter Israeli politics in years. He recently told visiting American Jewish donors something they would rather not hear: If negotiations with the Palestinians fail, Israel should abandon the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Building Jewish settlements on what had been Arab land, pioneered by his own party after Israel's victorious 1967 Six-Day War with the Arabs, "was a mistake and we have to confess it was a mistake. It is a dream that we cannot have today," he said, while some in the audience groaned.

But if opinion polls are correct, the 57-year-old retired major general with the demeanor of a distracted college professor is likely to be the main opposition party's champion against Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's ruling right-wing

Likud Bloc.

Victory in the Jan. 28 national poll is a long shot, to be sure. Polls show that a Likud led by Sharon or Foreign Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is likely to win more seats in Israel's parliament, the Knesset.

But, for now, this soldier-turned-mayor who has never served in the Knesset is poised to win the left-of-center party leadership from another ex-general and veteran politician, former Defense Minister Benjamin Ben Eliezer, who until recently served with Sharon as a junior partner in Israel's National Unity Government.

Mitzna has been steadily climbing in popularity in the run-up to Tuesday's Labor Party primary, articulating a vision that has been around for decades but sounds subversive to some after two years of bloody Palestinian-Israeli warfare.

Faced with the longest wave of terrorist attacks in Israeli history, he says, "We must fight terrorism like there are no negotiations. And we must negotiate like there

is no terrorism."

If that means talking to Yasser Arafat while rescue workers are scraping up the remains of suicide bombings, Mitzna says he'll do it. If it means concluding that there is no hope for negotiations and that the only way to achieve "separation" is by removing Jewish settlers from the West Bank and Gaza, he says he'll do that, too.

© 2002, Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services.

UC system to check claims of applicants

Becky Bartindale
Knight Ridder Newspapers (KRT)

SAN JOSE, Calif. — Starting next year, the University of California system will begin spot-checking students' claims about their accomplishments and personal circumstances, an attempt to discourage them from embellishing or lying on their applications as competition for admission increases.

It's an effort to face concerns that some students may exaggerate their achievements or fabricate hardship stories because getting good grades and test scores is no longer enough to guarantee admission to the most popular University of California campuses. The verification program is believed to be the first such formal effort in the nation.

Students applying for admission in fall 2003 will be the first class to have their veracity routinely tested. Currently, individual campuses check high school grades after the senior year and any obviously suspicious statements. But beginning in January, an undetermined number of the system's freshman applicants will be

asked to provide support for claims about such things as activities outside the classroom, personal achievements and obstacles overcome.

David Barden, 18, a senior at California's Los Gatos High School who is in the thick of the college-application process, said he welcomes fact-checking. The pressure to get into a "good" school is intense, he said, and students might fudge the truth because they think they haven't done enough or think everyone else is doing it.

"It would just make people think twice about lying on their applications," he said. "It makes a more even playing field."

Although concern about student resume inflation is an issue nationally, the University of California may be the first system to take formal steps to root out the problem, said Judy Hingle, director of professional development for the National Association of College Admissions Counselors.

© 2002, San Jose Mercury News (San Jose, Calif.). Distributed by Knight Ridder/Tribune Information Services.



Auto Pros Inc.
LOCALLY OWNED

LUBE, OIL, FILTER, TIRE ROTATION

- Chassis Lube • New Oil Filter • Up to 5 Qts. 10W-30 Chevron Oil
- Clean Front Window • Vacuum Front Floor Boards

\$19⁹⁹

- No Appointment necessary
- Most cars & light trucks
- 3/4 or 1-ton & Extra Cab Trucks Additional

Chevron MOTOR OIL
FOUR IN THE PROTECTION

DOWNTOWN 1320 Willamette • 485-2356
2975 West 11th 344-0007 • OPEN Sundays 11-4

The World is in Your Hands


Meet with representatives from over 60 countries and students who have studied there!

Study Abroad Fair

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20TH

11am - 4pm
EMU FIR ROOM

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS
330 Oregon Hall 346-3207
<http://studyabroad.uoregon.edu>



emu master plan

charette

ERB MEMORIAL STUDENT UNION

You are cordially invited to participate in designing the future EMU.

This free-flowing forum with the EMU Master Plan architects is open to the entire campus community.

Please drop by at your convenience.

wednesday
nov. 20th
3-5pm
ben linder room
emu lower level

O UNIVERSITY OF OREGON