Persian or Farsi?

FARSI (which is originally PARSI) is the native name of our language and PERSIAN is its English equivalent; as the native name of German language is 'Deutsch', but "we never" use 'Deutsch' in place of 'German' in English; or native term of Greek Language is 'Ellinika' and always in English we say 'Greek' language, not 'Ellinika' language.

If you notice the title of dictionaries that have been written by several great Persian scholars (e.g.. Prof. Moein, Prof. Aryanpour, Prof. Baateni, etc.) the title of all of them is "ENGLISH-PERSIAN DICTIONARY" not "ENGLISH-FARSI DICTIONARY". Meanwhile the official institution "Farhangestan" (the Academy of Persian language and literature, in Tehran) in an announcement has rejected the use of the name 'Farsi' instead of 'Persian' in English.

According to Dr. Hossein Sameie (visiting linguistics professor of Emory University in Atlanta), "PERSIAN, alongside the name of a language, may be used, as an adjective, for the other aspects of our history and culture. For example, we can speak about 'Persian Literature', 'Persian Gulf', 'Persian Carpet', 'Persian Food'; this way, 'Persian' may be a common concept and function as a link between all aspects of Iranian [Persian] life, including language. 'Farsi' does not have such a characteristic…"

The Verdict of the Persian Academy:

The Language of the nation of Iran [Persia] in English is called "Persian" [or in other European languages: Persane, Persisch, Persa, Persiska, etc.] and is known worldwide as PERSIAN. Recently some Iranians [Persians] have been trying to use "Farsi" instead of Persian, the trend which has also been followed by some non-Iranians. This has occurred to the extent that it has raised the question "Which is the correct word, in English, for the language of Iran's people, Persian or Farsi?!..."

This question was put to the official institution FARHANGESTAN (Persian Language and Literature Academy in Tehran) by the Commerce Department for Australia, at Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In their 34th meeting on 7th of December 1992, the Persian Academy unanimously passed the resolution that this language must be called PERSIAN and the reasons given were:

1- PERSIAN has been used in a variety of publications including cultural, scientific and diplomatic documents for centuries and, therefore, it connotes a very significant historical and cultural meaning. Hence, changing PERSIAN to FARSI is to negate this established important precedence.

2- Changing PERSIAN to FARSI may give the impression that it is a new language, and this may well be the intention of some Farsi users.

3- It may also give the impression that FARSI is a dialect of some parts of Iran and not the predominant (official) language of this country.

4- Fortunately, FARSI has never been used in any research paper or university document in any Western language, and the proposal of its usage will create doubt and ambiguity about the name of the official language of our country.

Nowruz

(The proper spelling of the Iranian New Year)

Upon the recommendation of Professor Ehsan Yarshater and other prominent scholars, most Iranian societies and foundations outside Iran, Iranian Cultural Heritage Organization (Tehran), Cultural Research Bureau (Tehran), and upon the approval of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and cultural Organization (UNESCO), and most importantly, for the consistency within the International Iranian Community, we should all write the name of the Iranian New Year with this spelling:

Nowruz

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Defusing Iran . . .

minded Mohammad Khatami was elected president - just as Iran was developing an independent press, and just before a reformist parliament was elected in 2000. The reformists supported the nuclear program but wanted it to be fully transparent and in compliance with Iran's international obligations. These were reassuring signs that it would not get out of control.

But instead of backing Iran's fledgling democratic movement, which would have led to nuclear transparency, the U.S. undercut it by demonizing Iran.

While Khatami proposed people-to-people dialogue between Americans and Iranians, Washington chose to block Iranian scholars, artists and authors from visiting the U.S. Although Khatami helped the U.S. in Afghanistan, President Bush designated Iran a member of the "axis of evil."

By 2003, when it became clear that Khatami's reforms had stalled, the world started paying closer attention to Iran's nuclear program. So, what had demonizing Iran achieved?

The U.S. will not solve the nuclear problem by threatening military strikes or by dragging Iran before the U.N. Security Council. Although a vast majority of Iranians despise the country's hard-liners and wish for their downfall, they also support its nuclear program because it has become a source of pride for an old nation with a glorious history.

A military attack would only inflame nationalist sentiments. Iran is not Iraq. Given Iranians' fierce nationalism and the Shiites' tradition of martyrdom, any military move would provoke a response that would engulf the entire region, resulting in countless deaths and a ruined economy not only for the region but for the world.

Imposing U.N. sanctions on Iran would also be counterproductive, prompting Tehran to leave the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and its "additional protocol." Is the world ready to live with such prospects?

So, what can the West do? Western nations should help the U.N. appoint a special human rights monitor for Iran. It would remind the General Assembly of Iran's human rights record annually, and strongly condemn it if the record keeps deteriorating. Contrary to the general perception, Iran's clerics are sensitive to outside criticism.

The World Bank should stop providing Iran with loans and, instead, work with nongovernmental organizations and the private sector to strengthen civil society. The West should support Iran's human-rights and democracy advocates, nominate jailed leaders for international awards and keep the cause in the public eye. Western nations should downgrade diplomatic relations if Iran continues violating basic human rights.

Iran is at least six to 10 years away from a nuclear bomb, by most estimates. The crisis is not even a crisis. There is ample time for political reform before Iran ever develops the bomb. Meanwhile, the West should permit Iran a limited uranium enrichment program (as allowed under the nonproliferation treaty) under strict safeguards by the International Atomic Energy Agency - but only when Tehran undertakes meaningful reforms, including freeing political prisoners and holding free and fair elections.

Lastly, the U.S. and Iran should enter direct negotiations. It is simply absurd for the U.S. and the most important nation in the Middle East not to communicate directly. The Bush administration should not be seduced by exile groups with no support in Iran. Developing democracy is an internal affair.

Democracy, in the end, will provide the ultimate safeguard against nuclear disaster, because a truly democratic Iran, backed by a majority of Iranians, would feel secure enough not to pursue dangerous military adventures.

Book says CIA gave nuke trigger plans to Tehran

Iran Times: A new book by a reporter for the New York Times asserts that the CIA gave Iran the blueprints for a nuclear warhead six years ago and that one year ago it sent the names of its agents in Iran by mistake to an Iranian who turned out to be a double agent.

The allegations of massive bungles by the CIA in the book, "State of War" by James Risen, have stunned readers. But they have also come under challenge from the CIA and some analysts.

The book's final chapter is devoted entirely to two CIA dealings with Iran.

In the first, Risen says a female employee of the CIA was preparing to transmit a coded message to an Iranian agent in 2004. But she goofed. She sent "information to one Iranian agent meant for an entire spy network; the data could be used to identify virtually every spy the CIA had inside Iran."

Furthermore, the person who received the message in error was actually a double agent who promptly turned the transmission over to Iranian intelligence. That enabled Iran "to 'roll up' the CIA's agent network throughout Iran," Risen wrote. He said "several" spies were quickly jailed and the CIA was left "virtually blind in Iran, unable to provide any significant intelligence."

But Tim Russert of NBC's Meet The Press says people in the U.S. intelligence community told him that while the first part of the report was right, that a message was sent to the wrong person, a double agent, the rest of the story reported by Risen "is just dead wrong, that there are not any CIA agents in prison, there was no roll up."

Interviewed by Russert, Risen backed off his story. "They don't deny that this huge mistake happened," risen said. "What they say is that the damage wasn't as severe as I say it was. That's possible. It's assessment since I first head about it. I guess there's a question of whether all of them were rolled up or not."

CNN also reported that a damage assessment done last summer found "no evidence" that even a solitary spy had been arrested as a result of the error in transmission. CNN said it was told the message contained no names of any agents in Iran but did contain some information that might have helped Iranian intelligence figure out who some of the agents were. But since a year had passed with none of those agents arrested, it appeared Iranian intelligence had not figured out who any were.

The second story in Risen's chapter on Iran describes in vivid detail how the CIA recruited a Soviet defector in 2000, during the Clinton Administration, to deliver to Iran the technical designs for a TBA 480 high voltage block the triggering mechanism for a Soviet nuclear weapon.

The CIA had made some changes in the design so that it was unworkable. They hoped to lead Iran down the garden path by fooling technicians into working from the fake blueprints, causing them to waste much time and money on a distraction.

But Risen says the Russian defector took one look at the blue prints and saw they were wrong. Risen said the Iranians would undoubtedly recognize the error as well. He did not explain why he thought Iranian technicians who had not built a weapons trigger should see an error just because a Russian who spent his career working on nuclear weapons would see it.

But Risen went further. He said the Russian told the Iranians in writing that the blueprints contained an error. Risen said the Russian wrote a note in English that he attached to the blueprints before he dropped then in the mail-box at the Iranian mission to the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna with an offer to help Iran build a trigger for payment.

Risen reported that Russian later gave the CIA a copy of that letter. Risen quotes it in full. He says one part tells the Iranians the blueprints are fake. "What is the purpose of my offer? If you try to create a similar device, you will need to ask some practical questions. NO problem. You will get answers but I expect to be paid for that. Now just take your time for professional study of enclosed documentation."

Risen then wrote: "The Russian was thus warning the Iranians as carefully as he could that there was a flaw somewhere in the nuclear blueprints. His cover letter may have convinced the Iranians to be wary of the blueprints." Risen's use of "may" shows this to be a tentative assumption.

Risen does not explain how he reaches the conclusion that, that paragraph gives away the plot to Iran. He also doesn't explain why the Russian would give a copy of that letter to the CIA if he thought he was giving the plot away.

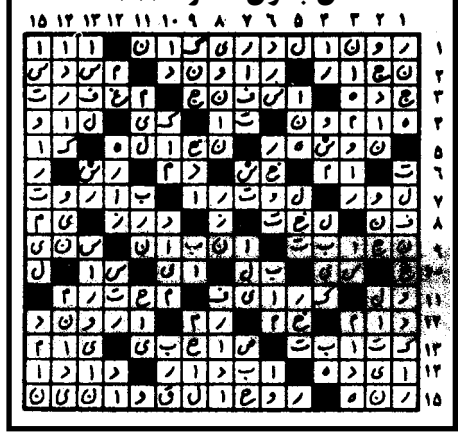
Risen concludes that the scheme "may have been one of the most reckless operations in the modern history of the CIA, one that may have helped put nuclear weapons in Iran's hand." He used two "mays" in that single sentence.

Challenged by Russert, Risen said, "It's possible we actually aided the Iranian nuclear program." But it was clear that the conclusion that Iran was helped not hindered was a mere speculative conclusion by Risen. He does not quote anyone in the know as saying Iran figured out the flaw and was able to use the good parts of the blueprints, although he quotes an unnamed CIA case officer as saying he worried Iran might figure out the flaw and thus benefit from the blueprints.

Russert bored into Risen, arguing that if Iran didn't know the blueprint was fake before, it knows that now that Risen has written about it. "Aren't you tipping the Iranians? Russert asked.

Risen said, "I don't think so. This operation took place six years ago."

The Los Angeles Times said The New York Times had the story about the blueprints more than a year ago and refused to publish it after being contacted by then CIA chief George Tenet. The concern was apparently that the story would help Iran if the speculation that Iran knew of the flaw was in error.

A CIA statement on the book was harsh. "Setting aside whether what he wrote is accurate or inaccurate," the CIA said, "it demonstrates an unfathomable and sad disregard for U.S. national security and those who take life-threatening risks to ensure it."

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