

Dear Mr. Ensor,

I am forwarding the unresolved complaint I had sent Mrs. Derakhshesh on March 14th, 2014.

In addition, I would like to discuss this matter as a taxpayer and understand why informing the public about [well-documented](#) corruption [cases](#) related to certain families connected to the Islamic Republic of Iran is so sensitive that the Editor-in-Chief of VOA Persian would order a presenter to stop asking more questions, cutting off a guest on live TV.

On Friday March 14th, after I was cut off from one of the live shows of VOA Persian, and a number of my good friends at Brookings and other organizations close to the State Department, have asked if I had informed you of what had happened through VOA Persian's "Last Page" live show, where I appeared as a guest, and nearly two thirds into the live broadcasting of the show, the microphone was removed from me and I was asked to leave the spot.

I am an investigative journalist and editor-in-chief of Khodnevis.org. In that capacity, I have been researching and investigating corruption, financial wrongdoings and money laundering in mega-contracts signed between IRI and foreign companies. As a result of my previous investigations and inspections, I am also acting as a witness in a civil case against Mr. Mehdi Hashemi in Canada and have explored matters related to corruption and misconduct related to the son of Iran's former president.

I was invited by Mr. Mehdi Falahati to be on his Friday talk show to discuss about Abbas Yazdanpanah Yazdi, a partner and associate of Mehdi Hashemi Bahremani (Rafsanjani).

All this happened while the other guest was speaking via skype and I was about to share more information (the results of Khodnevis's investigations since 2010) regarding Mr. Mehdi Hashemi Rafsanjani and his associate Mr. Abbas YazdanPanah Yazdi with VOA's live viewers concerning direct involvements of these individuals in one of the most indecent oil & gas contracts of the century between Islamic Republic of Iran (IRI) and United Arab Emirate (UAE), known as "Crescent Contract".

Mr. Yazdi was allegedly abducted on June 25th of last year from his office building in Dubai and transferred to undisclosed location in Iran. Since then, there are also numerous reports that he may have been killed during or after the abduction.

Mr. Falahati was instructed not to ask any further questions from me. Immediately after that, he alerted me on a note that he had been directed to stop asking more questions.

After that, the cameraman in charge of the studio approached me and dismantled the installed microphone from my jacket and asked me to leave the spot.

I later learned that studio crew members acted upon an order made by VOA Editor-in-Chief Mr. Mohammad Manzarpour.

I've been also told that Mr. Manzarpour, in justifying his conduct, claimed that he was not aware of my presence on that show, otherwise he would not let me on the program had he prior knowledge of my attendance.

Adding insult to the injury, along with thousands of VOA viewers, I also noted that the video recording of the live show did not appear on VOA Persian's website, as it was supposed to be uploaded on official Website of VOA almost immediately. A note appeared on the show's facebook account announcing that due to "technical difficulties", "VOA is unable to post Friday March 14th program" on its webpage and the facebook account.

Three days after the show, on Monday March 17th, after an array of comments questioning the "technical difficulties" declaration by VOA had been posted on many Facebook pages, all of sudden, VOA viewers were informed that problem had been solved and the entire March 14th program appeared on all VOA FB pages and

official websites.

After 72 hours of denial and resorting to unsubstantiated excuse, the entire uncompleted program finally found its way back to VOA FB pages.

In the last 2 weeks, I have been told that Mr. Manzarpour has wanted to settle this misunderstanding by inviting me to talk about a cartoon generating website that have created, so I would not feel bad about what had happened on Mr. Falahati's show. I believe that this is the worst way to settle a professional misconduct.

As a journalist residing in the DC area, and a taxpayer, I felt compelled to bring this matter to your attention.

I have no doubt you had known about this issue, but this not only wastes American taxpayers' dollars in the service of an infamous corrupt family of Iran, but also highly tarnishes the respectful and unbiased reputation of Voice of America as one of US government main tool in safeguarding freedom of speech and free flow of information.

Should you need any further information regarding this incident, please feel free to contact me.

Best regards,

Nikahang Kowsar

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Nikahang Kowsar** <editor@khodnevis.org>

Date: Fri, Mar 14, 2014 at 4:17 PM

Subject: Complaint on the action of the Editor-in-Chief

To: ssieg@voanews.com

Dear Mrs. Derakhshash

Today, I was a guest of Mr. Falahati's live show "Safhe-ye Akhar". I had been invited on Monday and had a few conversations on the subject of the program that involved the fate of Abbas Yazdanpanah Yazdi. Everything was on schedule until the midst of the show, where Mr. Falahati was informed that I had to leave the studio.

I was invited, so as far as I'm concerned, this is very unprofessional. I'm banned from live TV; it's news to me.

I called Mr. Falahati and I was told that since many refer to me as the person publishing the "tapes" of Mehdi Hashemi Rafsanjani, and also the witness in the legal case against Mr. Rafsanjani in Canada, and a lot of arguments and marginal talks about me, I was not supposed to be invited at the first place.

First, I have not done anything illegal and have played by the Canadian code of ethics, handing the recordings to the court, based on the request of Mr. Mehdi Hashemi's lawyer in the much anticipated civil case.

Second, as per Mr. Falahati, he had emailed the Editor-in-Chief, informing him of the quests of Today's show.

I understand that Mr. Manzarpour had not checked his mailbox on time, but I also understand that cutting me off like this is hurtful, irresponsible and unprofessional.

I would like to receive an explanation on this issue. I reserve my right to make this public and consider talking to the Board of Governors of your organization and beyond.

I was banned as a journalist in Iran, and being banned in the "Land of the Free" again, is totally new to me.

Regards,

Nikahang Kowsar