



IRAN'S ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE REVOLUTION: ISLAM AS A SOURCE AND STIMULANT OF KNOWLEDGE

By: Kevin Barrett; An American Islamologist

Iran's progress in science and technology since 1979 has shocked Western observers, many of whom falsely imagined that an Islamically-

based society would be run by obscurantists. In reality, Iran's religious establishment, trained in a formidable system of seminaries, may be the most

highly educated group of national "Platonic guardians" in the world. In fact, Islamic Iran may be the only country left on earth ruled by people who

revere classical education! So, it really shouldn't surprise anyone that Iran's university system has prospered since 1979, that educational levels (especially among women) have risen sharply, and that Iranian scientists and engineers have repeatedly achieved breakthroughs enabling their country to forge ahead economically and technologically despite the never-ending regime of draconian sanctions.

Among developing countries, Iran ranks near the top in terms of its Human Development Index (HDI). According to the United Nations Human Development Program, Iran's HDI grew nearly 40% during the three decades since 1990—one of the best records of any country, and a near-miracle given the brutal sanctions.

During that period, life expectancy rose by more than 12 years, years of schooling by six years, and per capita income by 60%. Clearly, the Western attempt to crush the morale of the Iranian people by condemning them to extreme poverty and backwardness has failed utterly.

Iranian medicine has contributed to the sharp rise in life expectancy. Iran revolutionized its healthcare system during the 1990s and succeeded in providing affordable healthcare to more than 90% of its rural population. Western sanctions, though responsible for much death and suffering, inadvertently forced Iran to learn to produce the vast majority of its own medical supplies, not only saving an estimat-

ed \$750 million per year but also making itself a major competitor on the world market. Today, Iran manufactures more than 97% of its own drugs and has become a leader in medical biotechnology.

Across many fields, Iranian science has reached globally competitive levels. Examples include space and aviation, chemistry, computer science, biotechnology and medical science, physics and materials science, nuclear science, and nanotechnology. Amazingly, given the draconian sanctions, the US National Science Foundation has, in recent years, ranked Iran first globally in scientific and technological growth.

According to The Times Higher Education, Iran's science and technology output grew 340,000 percent from 1970 to 2008 to account for over 1% of the world's total output, putting Iran far ahead of all developing countries except China, India, and Brazil. Since 2008 Iran's growth in science and technology production has continued at an impressive rate of between 10% and 25% per year according to various metrics (far ahead of world averages) with its nuclear sciences sector advancing by a stunning 8400% compared to the world rate of 34%.

Some of Iran's biggest breakthroughs have come in rocketry and space science. Thanks to the Iranian Space Agency ISA the Islamic Republic of Iran became one of the world's 11 orbital-launch-capable countries in 2009. Today, the expendable satellite launch vehicle (SLV) Zul-

janah is taking payloads of 200 kg into a 500 km orbit, while close behind it the forthcoming Souroush SLV will soon be taking payloads of 8-15 tons into space.

By developing an independent capability in rocketry and space science, Iran has bolstered its ability to deter foreign aggression. The Iranian military, despite its relatively low expenditures, has managed to assemble an impressive array of defensive rockets that could inflict unacceptable levels of damage on Israeli military installations and cities and/or US ships and bases in the region if the Anglo-Zionist Empire ever followed through on its endless threats to launch a major attack on Iran. Thanks to the work of Iranian scientists and strategists, Iran has achieved a defensive stalemate despite spending only a tiny fraction of the money the Empire lavishes on its aggression-addled military.

The Islamic Republic's progress in the above fields, and many more, gives the lie to Islamophobic propaganda equating secularism with knowledge and religion with ignorance. When future historians look back at the seemingly surprising successes of the Islamic Republic since its birth in 1979, they may do so from a new philosophical perspective that acknowledges religion as a source and stimulant of knowledge, rather than as an atavistic relic of an obscurantist European past.

(Source: Muslim Mirror; Journal of Truth)