



BRITISH-IRANIAN BUSINESS NEWS



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BRITISH-IRANIAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

January 2006, Volume 6 No.1

Business Journal

British-Iranians lead the way in Britain's labour market

The toughest and most challenging year

Chancellor Gordon Brown, presenting his Pre-Budget report in December 2005.



Low GDP growth, at 1.7%, had negative effects on the economy. However, the following good news should motivate and spur us into the New Year with positive zeal. Statistics published by the BBC in 2005 show that the British-Iranian community in the UK now has the greatest proportion of high-earners of all immigrant groups but one. The success of the British-Iranian community is all the more impressive when one takes a closer look at the statistics. Almost 25% of British-Iranians settled in the UK are high earners (defined as people earning more than £750 per week).

A larger proportion of British-Iranians are high earners than of Canadians, Australians, Americans, Indians, Spaniards, Germans, French, Polish, Chinese, or Turks living in the UK – to name a few of the 45 other communities listed in the report.

(The largest immigrant group were the British-Indians, with a population of 466,416; the smallest group was those 1,236 British residents born in Luxembourg.)

In fact, the figure for British-Iranians is well above the national average for the British Isles: 6.98% of the combined population of the UK and the Republic of Ireland are classed as high earners.

Why is this surprising?

Background facts

Despite the following obstacles, British-Iranians almost came out on top.

▫ Apart from British-Iranians, the top 20 immigrant communities with the highest earners either have Anglo-Saxon cultures or historical links with the Commonwealth or they are European.

▫ Iran has never been a colony of Britain, nor of any other European country. Arguably, Iranian cultural ties with Britain have not been as deep as with France.

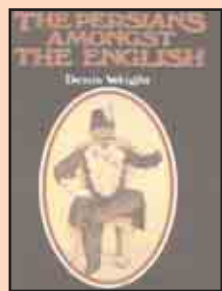
▫ Persian is not a language that shares the Latin alphabet. The language barrier is more significant for Iranians than for many other immigrant groups.

▫ The emigration of Iranians to Britain, to form a community of the sort of size we see today, is a relatively recent phenomenon. The success story is a recent one, compared with other communities who have had some sort of base in Britain for 50 years or more.

Statistics taken from BBC Online, based on research done by a leading think-tank – the Institute for Public Policy Research – and by the Sheffield University Social and Spatial Inequalities Research Group.



EDITORIAL



The Persians amongst the English, the 1970s

The history of Iranians in Britain is complex, driven by the community's turbulent history. When historian and former Ambassador Sir Denis Wright wrote The Persians amongst the English in 1984, he was giving an account of those relatively few Persians

who first came among the English as students, diplomats, refugees and reigning monarchs.

In the 1960s and 1970s, he wrote, more and more adults, enriched by the rapid spread of oil money, [are] arriving like migrant birds in their hundreds by jet each spring and summer; showing little interest in the English or curiosity about the culture of their new surroundings, they preferred to shop, spend and gamble, often generating bad publicity for themselves.

The Persians amongst the English, 2005

The cataclysmic events of 1979 that led to the Islamic Revolution made thousands of refugees seek asylum amongst the English. Twenty-six years later, it is a pleasure to report that today a new dynamic generation of British-Iranians have grown up in the UK. Many have entered the mainstream, occupy important positions in society, and have achieved great prominence among the British, as demonstrated by this BBC report.

The very purpose of BIBA has long been to recognise and record the achievements of the British-Iranian community, to help us all establish more fruitful relationships within Britain. This month's good news confirms that our approach is the right one. We can use this as a platform on which we can build, towards achieving the goals of BIBA. So, in this special issue of our business journal, BIBA will consider the context of this success, discuss why it happened, and suggest the way forward to even greater triumphs. BIBA seeks to promote British-Iranians that have until recently been unknown whilst striving quietly at the heart of one of the world's greatest democracies and economies. Perhaps this is our answer to history.

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BORN ABROAD

An immigration map of Britain

DESTINATION UK
In Depth

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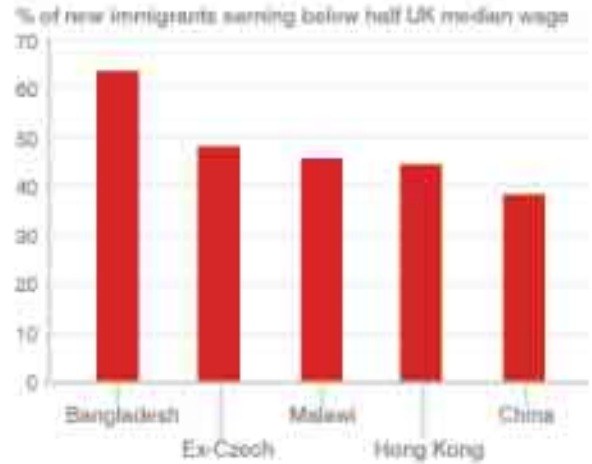
How different immigrant groups perform

Economic success comes down to factors including skills, the labour landscape, employment law and even racism. Some migration is not primarily for economic reasons, such as refugees and students.

What is clear is that there is a wide disparity in performance between and within nationalities. For instance, Bangladesh-born people can be said to do really badly. But this has a lot to do with the jobs they tend to come to, and there are improvements over time.

Crucially, we can see new migrants in poorly paid jobs - indicating how demand for cheap labour plays a key role in migration economics.

Low-earning new immigrants



In the table below, **low earners** are people earning less than £149.20 a week (half the UK median wage), **high earners** are people earning more than £750 a week.

Click column titles to sort table by that column.

Immigrants' economic performance

| Sort by: | NEW IMMIGRANTS (%) | | | SETTLED IMMIGRANTS (%) | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------|--------------|------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | Employed | Low earners | High earners | Employed | Low earners | High earners |
| Country of birth | | | | | | |
| New Zealand | 93.56 | 5.97 | 25.37 | 81.52 | 15.07 | 27.40 |
| Iran | 31.71 | 33.33 | 12.12 | 76.09 | 12.9 | 24.19 |
| Sri Lanka | 60.08 | 28.44 | 1.83 | 79.6 | 10 | 22.50 |
| South Africa | 81.52 | 10.28 | 13.61 | 75.79 | 15.09 | 18.40 |
| Netherlands | 75.91 | 6.56 | 31.15 | 76.4 | 23.64 | 18.18 |
| Uganda | 47.03 | n/a | n/a | 74.94 | 7.6 | 16.66 |
| USA | 68.08 | 7.78 | 40.56 | 76.05 | 18.07 | 16.27 |
| Malaysia | 58.22 | 36.84 | 7.89 | 83.95 | 7.32 | 16.26 |
| Canada | 82.76 | 16.9 | 15.49 | 78.12 | 13.25 | 15.89 |
| Zimbabwe | 73.17 | 16.95 | 4.52 | 81.09 | 6.33 | 15.19 |
| Nigeria | 61.15 | 18.48 | 13.04 | 72.93 | 14.17 | 15.00 |
| Australia | 90.57 | 6.76 | 27.03 | 81.92 | 11.98 | 14.37 |
| Malawi | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 25 | 12.50 |
| Kenya | 60.95 | 19.61 | 5.88 | 77.06 | 12.81 | 11.14 |
| Zambia | 62.33 | n/a | n/a | 80.41 | 14.47 | 10.53 |
| France | 72.46 | 8 | 14.29 | 71.66 | 24.73 | 9.68 |
| India | 65.98 | 16.43 | 18.13 | 62.85 | 15.9 | 7.88 |
| Spain | 71.22 | 15.05 | 2.15 | 71.48 | 23.44 | 7.81 |
| Germany | 68.8 | 20.48 | 13.25 | 75.46 | 21 | 7.55 |
| Poland | 70.6 | 23.64 | 1.82 | 66 | 31.71 | 7.32 |
| British Isles* | 73.49 | 21.08 | 6.98 | 73.49 | 21.08 | 6.98 |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------|
| Pakistan | 44.02 | 35.4 | 3.73 | 43.87 | 23.02 | 6.75 |
| Hong Kong | 46.6 | 44.44 | 8.33 | 74.13 | 24.48 | 6.29 |
| Portugal | 70.68 | 13.39 | 2.68 | 68.57 | 14 | 6.00 |
| Ghana | 63.7 | 17.19 | 3.13 | 69.51 | 15.04 | 5.31 |
| Italy | 73.42 | 13.27 | 13.27 | 72.06 | 22.56 | 4.51 |
| Jamaica | 54.41 | 29.79 | 0 | 65.21 | 12.84 | 4.28 |
| Bangladesh | 42.75 | 63.33 | 2.22 | 40.01 | 39.02 | 4.27 |
| Turkey | 41.61 | 31.94 | 2.78 | 48.11 | 26.67 | 3.33 |
| Philippines | 85.4 | 12.8 | 0.61 | 77.91 | 15.38 | 1.28 |
| Trinidad | n/a | 7.14 | 7.14 | n/a | 15.38 | 0.00 |
| West Indies | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 14.75 | 0.00 |
| Algeria | 46.48 | n/a | n/a | 59.96 | n/a | n/a |
| Angola | 30.07 | n/a | n/a | 81.17 | n/a | n/a |
| Belgium | 75.81 | 20 | 16.67 | 76.93 | n/a | n/a |
| Brazil | 57.38 | n/a | n/a | 80.7 | n/a | n/a |
| Bulgaria | 82.58 | n/a | n/a | 70.63 | n/a | n/a |
| China | 35.81 | 38.16 | 3.95 | 58.58 | n/a | n/a |
| Colombia | 49.96 | n/a | n/a | 66.48 | n/a | n/a |
| Cyprus | 35.44 | n/a | n/a | 60.93 | n/a | n/a |
| Denmark | 65.26 | n/a | n/a | 86.2 | n/a | n/a |
| Egypt | 55.98 | n/a | n/a | 70.33 | n/a | n/a |
| Ethiopia | 32.28 | n/a | n/a | 64.44 | n/a | n/a |
| Ex-Czechoslovakia | 72.99 | 47.92 | n/a | 71.55 | n/a | n/a |
| Ex-USSR | 54.67 | 29.3 | 6.4 | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Ex-Yugoslavia | 35.32 | 21.82 | 5.45 | 64.2 | n/a | n/a |
| Finland | 75.83 | 10.81 | 13.51 | 74.01 | n/a | n/a |
| Greece | 49.81 | 17.5 | 7.5 | 72.52 | n/a | n/a |
| Iraq | 37.98 | 26.32 | 7.89 | 77.71 | n/a | n/a |
| Japan | 47.06 | 17.39 | 23.91 | 63.15 | n/a | n/a |
| Korea | 35.39 | n/a | n/a | 34.56 | n/a | n/a |
| Lebanon | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a |
| Mauritius | 75.2 | n/a | n/a | 69.34 | n/a | n/a |
| Norway | 62.76 | n/a | n/a | 77.46 | n/a | n/a |
| Somalia | 12.17 | n/a | n/a | 38.02 | n/a | n/a |
| Sweden | 69.55 | 4.55 | 31.82 | 67.88 | n/a | n/a |

***British Isles figures:** New and settled immigrant status does not apply, but figures displayed like this for easy comparison

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A Divided Society now Maturing

Those of the Iranian mindset may understandably be particularly surprised at their success story. One need hardly mention the deep political divisions through Iranian society, the variety of different groups and interests represented in the political unrest since 1978-9, and the consequences of the events of 1979. Many members of a proud nation had suddenly become homeless. A large number of these people started a new life in Britain.

With the conspiracy theory as the community's staple diet, there were profound differences in how British-Iranians viewed themselves culturally. However, with the passage of time, a community at conflict with itself has matured into an

industrious community; secularism and integration have now become a must rather than an if.

Pride, hard work and talent may have brought British-Iranians this far; just imagine how much more successful we could have been if we all pulled together more. British-Iranians need to leave behind the divisions and fragmentation of the past, and work together to build a better future for all of us.

We look forward to receiving your comments and suggestions.



Babak Emamian
BIBA Chairman and
BIBN Editor

Reaching out to the other 75%

We must reach out to the other 75%. What most people need is direction and leadership. British-Iranian business leaders can offer effective leadership to the rest of the community in more than one way.

We need to adopt the right role models. If some set a good example, others can follow in their footsteps. BIBA is encouraging the sharing of ideas, not just with other successful business leaders, but also with the wider society. The leaders of the community should seek to motivate others, so as to bring more people into the big tent.

The more strong people we have in the community, the more we can all contribute to British society, and the more we will be accepted by British society.

Finally, in our opinion, helping others is simply our moral duty, as God intended.

The British-Iranian Business Association (BIBA) promotes British-Iranian businessmen and women in the UK. The British-Iranian Business News is the trade journal of the association. BIBA is an independent organisation.

EDITORIAL TEAM

Ahmad Vahdat, BIBA Press Officer, has an extensive track record in journalism and, together with his wife Homa, runs Satrap Publishing.



Peter Arash Taheri, BIBN Assistant Editor, is now a Law student, having graduated from Oxford University, where he read Philosophy, Politics and Economics.



The role of British-Iranian Women in their community's success

There can be little doubt that much of the success discussed in this issue is thanks to the ever-greater advances of British-Iranian women in the labour market.

There are two main reasons to consider as to why British-Iranian women are advancing even more quickly than the men. The first concerns women's willingness to engage in PR, marketing and good application of their resources. The second concerns the women's resourcefulness in not pricing themselves out of the labour market, which pays off in the long-run.

About one hundred years ago, 50% of the British workforce was employed in agriculture, 30% in manufacturing and 20% in the service industry. In 1999, only 3% worked in agriculture, 18% worked in manufacturing and 79% were in the service industry. Obviously, there has

been a major shift towards the service industry.

The culture of manufacturing and agriculture was dominated by machismo and hierarchy. However, the service industry has always been led by PR. Due to the family structure, women tend to become better at PR than men. Most men dismissed PR as feminine and did not work hard at perfecting it.

However, strong PR is now a prerequisite for success in a marketplace where almost 80% of all occupations are in the service sector. PR is essential for fields such as marketing, sales, research, client-support and even personal management. It is not good enough just to be good at PR; you have to be exceptionally good at it. Over the last 30 years, businessmen have begun to embrace it.

Secondly, a dominant trend in the modern labour market has been the trend towards flexible and dynamic working practices. Women have been more inclined to take relatively low-paid work, such as work as a temp, in order to



get their feet on the first rung of the career ladder. However, pride has often held back the men, who hold out for a more highly-remunerated job, and lose out in the long-run. By entering the labour market more quickly, the women advance earlier, and end up earning higher. In short, women don't price themselves out of the labour market. Men from non-western cultures have been particularly slow to catch up with the realities of the modern economy. The British-Iranian man needs to adapt to today's realities and learn from the women.

Reasons for the Success & What BIBA Has Contributed



BIBA is in a strong position to advise on what makes a successful British-Iranian. BIBA has worked hard to promote and nurture the success of British-Iranian professionals. Through its 113 Business meetings and seminars, 48 TV Programmes, and numerous publications since 1994, BIBA sought to share the secrets of the success of influential figures with British-Iranian professionals.

We believe that we have identified the three major obstacles to success for British-Iranians.

- 1) The Crisis of Application
- 2) The Crisis of Identity
- 3) The Crisis of Integration & The Closed Society Mentality

However, obstacles are also opportunities, if one can overcome them. We are confident that the reasons for the success of this 25% of British-Iranians are that they have succeeded in overcoming these three barriers.

1. Overcoming the Crisis of Application

British-Iranians are fortunate, as they have easy access to:

- 1) Education,
- 2) Capital,
- 3) Resources,
- 4) Opportunities, and
- 5) Information.

However, many struggle to apply the skills and resources they already possess in the modern workplace. This is what we call the crisis of application.

We see this as being a result of:

- 1) Lack of ambition for continuous progress,
- 2) Too much emphasis on short-term planning, and
- 3) The following of the wrong role models.

Addressing these oversights will go a long way towards further success.

2. Overcoming the Crisis of Identity

Much of Europe is today in the grip of deep-rooted Identity Crises. The February 28, 2005 issue of *Time Magazine*, in which Europe's Identity Crisis is the cover story, is just one example of the widespread global discussion over today's deep problems within multicultural societies, and how they should be addressed.



While others still struggle with the issue, BIBA foresaw the problem and came up with a strategy to address it 12 years ago. For us, it is no longer a problem.

Different groups of first-generation Iranian immigrants tried to deal with this problem in different ways. There were some who said we want nothing to do with our Iranian identity; we are now totally British. There were others who asked: How could we possibly be British? But BIBA challenged both of these groups: There is no reason why we cannot be both. So BIBA coined the term British-Iranian.

Prominent Iranians in Britain, such as Omid Djallili – to name one example from the world of entertainment – now insist on being referred to as British-Iranian. This has helped bring the phrase into common usage. BIBA offers our community a plausible identity to which we can relate, and of which we can all be proud.

Yet only now are the government and other British institutions beginning to consider this important re-branding exercise. Identity should not be an obstacle. We are capable of progress. There need be no conflict between holding the Iranian identity and the British identity. We are capable of learning from our hosts' culture and adapting so as to benefit from the most beneficial characteristics of both cultures. This process will make us not only successful in the labour market, it will make us more well-rounded and mean that we will have more to contribute to British society.

3. Overcoming the Crisis of Integration & the Closed Society Mentality



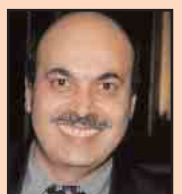
Successful British-Iranians don't feel any crisis of integration – they just get on with it.

However, for some, this has been more of a barrier. Issues of identity may breed a reluctance for some to engage fully in mainstream British society, and a preference for retreating into the comfortable and familiar. It is crucial to avoid what we call the Closed Society Mentality. Racial or ethnic segregation is wrong and must be avoided, whether it is imposed from above or enforced by the immigrants themselves out of reluctance or fear.

However, it is increasingly the case that those who want to communicate with the whole world must be able to interact fluently in the Anglo-Saxon culture. It is not just a question of being able to speak English; to be well-versed in any language, you need to have an understanding of the culture. The Anglo-Saxon culture is now the culture of business, the predominant culture of the world of technology. Being able to communicate using the Anglo-Saxon culture is a must, not an if.

Overcoming the crisis of integration means realising that learning how to communicate and behave as the British do is not to sell your own culture. Iranian pride has always been a strength; but we need to put it to one side when it holds us back. The modern world demands that we progress, and add to our cultural heritage.

This month we celebrate the success of some British-Iranians in managing to become integral members of British society, making valuable contributions to its well-being, to the benefit of themselves and the wider society. BIBA exemplifies the notion that minorities have the ability to integrate into the mainstream British culture, not only through the world of Arts, but also through business and technology.



The Role of the Immigrant Community in Entrepreneurial Activity

Schumpeter, the celebrated Austrian economist, articulated long ago the central role of the entrepreneurs in the introduction of new products, new sources of supply, new methods and new forms of organisation.

While the innovative role of the entrepreneur to promote economic development is widely acknowledged, the role of immigrants as entrepreneurs in their host country has not received due recognition in Europe. The old continent, with its own indigenous population and strong traditions, has been less inclined to acknowledge the entrepreneurial role of immigrants, despite ample evidence of such activities in continental Europe in at least the last forty years. Of course, the same does not apply in North America, which has been largely populated by immigrants. Recognition of the central role of immigrants in



promoting economic development, by undertaking initiatives and taking risks, is interweaved with popular culture in the USA and Canada.

However, the role of immigrants in promoting economic development is by no means confined to European immigrants who settled on the American continent or in Australia and New Zealand. Indian, Lebanese and Chinese immigrants have been historically well-known for their business activities in several African, Latin American and Asian countries, as well as in Europe and the USA.

The role of Iranian entrepreneurs in their host countries is a more recent phenomenon; and the pace of their development has been remarkably fast in both the USA and Europe. BIBA is the confirmation of this fact.

People who emigrate are by definition risk takers, since they dare to reside in a country that is initially alien to them. Furthermore, they are barred from entry into certain professional fields that are open to natives. Immigrants are not usually allowed to enter the political establishments or the civil service. Nor are they often able to enter those industries that require in-depth insight into the indigenous culture, such as entertainment. Entrepreneurial activity is one field that is open to them and in which they can flourish.

Science and Technology Matter – The Secret of British-Iranians Success?

Whether it is by design or accident, most British-Iranians have been successful in fields that draw on Mathematics and Science, whether it be academia, accountancy, architecture, IT, banking analysis, engineering, electronics, telecommunications or the pharmaceutical industry. Maths and Science represent the future, as they feed directly into the development of new technology, essential for success in business and investment.



Only 10% of life is what happens to you, the other 90% is how you react to it.

The Jewish Diaspora has been part of mankind's history over the last couple of millennia; whereas the Iranian Diaspora (scattering) is a new phenomenon. One could only presume that each has experienced similar emotions and tragedies in their ventures. Ironically, out of their miseries and upheavals, Diasporas have contributed to a better understanding of mankind by removing boundaries. In doing so, they have proved that man's capabilities are far greater than his understanding of them.

Babak Emamian, Chairman of the British-Iranian Business Association

Celebrations

by Babak Eramian

The essence of any civilisation is captured in its celebrations.

How and what we celebrate says a lot about us, whether we are British, French, American or Iranian.

As Iranians, we have this great tendency to look to the past for things to celebrate. We tend to celebrate the dead or ancient times more than the present, while hardly giving any recognition to the present. This is not to say that there is anything wrong with recognising the past; in fact, we can learn a lot from the past. However, it is the actions and the people of the present that determine the path to the future.

Nowadays, the present is hardly celebrated unless it is politically motivated. There are very few occasions when as a community we celebrate the success of Iranian scientists, industrialists or professionals. As this month BIBA celebrates the talent and hard work of British-Iranians, which has led to our remarkable success in terms of high earning, we should ask ourselves why we have been reluctant to celebrate the present.

Some may say that it is because Iranians don't have great scientists, industrialists or professionals. Over the last 12 years, BIBA has proven that this is not the case. The good

As the British-Iranian community continues to go from strength to strength, it has more causes for celebration

news this month confirms again that we have been right all along. Others may say that, in general, Iranians are jealous and prefer not to promote successful talents. BIBA again is proof that this need not be the case either. Had it not been for Iranians helping us, BIBA would not have been able to operate so efficiently. Every day we get phone calls, emails and faxes telling us about new Iranian success stories in the UK and worldwide. So the only explanation that remains is that we simply have not taken seriously the idea that we should celebrate the present success of members of our community.

In the UK, celebrating achievement remains an important part of British culture. Every year, the Queen's Honours lists pay official, national tribute to the role models of British society. These are followed by many other awards ceremonies from the scientific and academic institutions to institutions within industry and the stock market. The celebrations come in different formats from high school graduation to the highest honours in the land, from start-up businesses to major corporations.

At BIBA, this has been our purpose for the last 12 years. We have tried to offer hope and motivation to the community by celebrating the success of British-Iranian scientists, industrialists, experts and professionals, and at the same time offering them as role models for the future, by learning from them. Now is a good time to reflect on this once more, and to encourage the community to share more, as British-Iranians continue to go from strength to strength.

Of course, BIBA can only play a small role in this change of attitude. This cause requires effort from all of our various institutions, including the media, schools and of course within the family. So let us, as a community, make our celebrations more relevant and purposeful. Let's celebrate the present and future even more than the past.



The Challenges Ahead for our Business Leaders

The coming years will bring new challenges to people working in Britain. In order to continue our success, we need to keep one eye on potential future developments and to engage in long-term planning so that we remain ahead of the competition.

The reality of today is that we live in what is essentially a deflationary economy. No, that was not a misprint! Over the last 10 years, essential consumer goods, the core of the economy, such as food, clothes and footwear, have undergone a 40% price deflation. The source of inflation in the economy taken as a whole has been mainly energy price rises and indirect taxation, such as council taxes, road taxes, airport taxes, etc.

In the next ten years, we should also expect manpower deflation – deflation in the labour market, in the form of outsourcing – mainly to China and India. There is cheaper labour in markets that are increasingly opening up as China and India bring greater competition. Greater competition means that the price of labour – i.e., wages – will fall in Britain; and, as the clever Chinese and clever Indians undercut the price of our labour, service-sector jobs will leave the British market and head towards where the prices are lowest. (In a very similar way to what has already happened to our manufacturing industry.) This is simply a result of the natural forces of life; it is nothing more than the natural logic of the market. We are already seeing, most noticeably in the telecommunications and banking industries, a considerable



trend towards outsourcing of jobs, even by British firms, to take advantage of the imbalances in the global economy. We are already experiencing the effects of what will undoubtedly be one of the main 21st Century challenges: the forces of globalisation. We could just accept that the British labour market will therefore suffer in the short-term, until the spare capacity of job markets abroad reduces to the point that a new equilibrium position is reached. But there is another way. We could act so as to not lose our advantage. The way forward is innovation.

Innovation is the Magic

We must use the market to our advantage. We can stay ahead of the competition by adding value to the products and services that we already offer. What does this mean in practice?

Innovation is the magic. Innovation has long been part of the secret of British success. Britain has long been a leader in this respect, from its world-class universities and its pioneering role in academic and scientific research to the creation of various sports. But now others abroad are catching on. Even BIBA's advocacy of this virtue represents this traditionally British strength being taken up by people of non-British origin! People in Britain now need to take innovation to a higher level. And British-Iranians need to be at the forefront of moves towards Britain's New Knowledge Economy. This means not just a focus on service industries, sales & marketing and PR. It means a commitment to research and development; it means working with the academic community even more closely.



The Key to Innovation is Sharing Ideas and Teamwork

As a community, we will be the most effective and successful innovators if we learn how to share ideas effectively and how to work as a team. For example, the teamwork and sharing of ideas between British and American scientists meant that the project to map the human genome was completed 15 years earlier than would otherwise have been possible. This led to huge gains for the West's pharmaceutical industries.

Taking innovation to a higher level means engaging even further with the fundamentals required for successful innovation. The changes needed in our society are profound, reaching right into the education system. We need to train those who pass through our education system to be more skilled at sharing ideas and teamwork. For example, in our schools today, there is an ever-increasing emphasis on the acquisition of IT skills. We are nurturing a new generation of children who are already accomplished Internet users. Of course, the entire benefit of the Internet is that it is a global forum for the sharing and passing on of ideas and information.

Therefore, to maintain the success of British-Iranians, and to put ourselves even further ahead in the future, we must become better at the skills of teamwork and sharing ideas. If a community shares and co-operates, everyone benefits. If no-one shares and no-one engages in teamwork, everyone is left behind. We face a simple choice. Reform or die.

BRITISH-IRANIAN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

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Designed and printed by Satrap Publishing, 271 King Street, London W6 9LZ. Tel: 020 8748 9397 www.satrap.co.uk