



## ISA hosts remembrance ceremony for protesters in Iran

Photo by Adebola Adedire/Student Publications

Students gathered at the Campanile on last Tuesday to honor the victims of the violence currently taking place in Iran.

**By Vijai Narayanan**  
Senior Staff Writer

The Iranian Student Association (ISA) hosted a remembrance ceremony on June 30th to honor victims of recent violence in Iran.

The event, which was held at the Campanile, highlighted issues facing Iranian society today, as well as the problems faced by members of the Iranian-American community at Tech.

"We really wanted not only to educate the community about what is going on in Iran but to also bring together the Iranian-American community so that they could share their concerns about what is going on in Iran," said Melissa Parham, second-year CHBE and president of ISA.

In recent weeks, violence has rocked the capital of Iran, Tehran, due to disputed results of the country's presidential election.

In the days leading up to the election, the main opposition leader Mir Hossein Mousavi emerged as a strong contender against the incumbent, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. After the

election, the opposition accused Ahmadinejad's government of orchestrating a wide-scale fraud and stealing the election away.

The Supreme Leader of Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei, has come out in support of Mr. Ahmadinejad. However, other members of the clerical establishment have expressed doubt about the legitimacy of the election, suggesting a strong fissure between the otherwise united government.

As a result, the streets of Tehran have erupted with protests, which were attended mainly by students, young people and women.

Seen as a serious threat to the Islamic Republic since its founding in 1979, the government has harshly clamped down on dissidents, making use of the pro-government Basij militia and more recently, the Revolutionary Guard. As a result, many protestors were injured and some killed.

Due to a ban on foreign media in Iran, traditional news outlets have turned to social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter for information. The Iranian government has

blamed western media for inciting the riots.

Parham stressed that Tech's ISA does not have any political or religious affiliation but instead held the remembrance ceremony as an appeal to end the violence in Iran.

"The latest events have moved every Iranian, all over the world. The taboo has been broken about speaking out against the government's injustices. Although we cannot be directly involved with the change movement, events like this really help the community come together," said Mr. Abel, a member of the local Atlanta community and an Iranian-American.

The remembrance ceremony began with a reading of a Tehran professor's personal account of the protests, intended to humanize the protestors and understand what it would be like to protest in that political climate.

The event also included a candlelight vigil for the victims of the recent violence in Iran as well as the airing of songs in Farsi and a recitation of the Iranian national anthem.

Organizers also handed out green arm-bands, similar to those worn by the protestors, in an effort to show solidarity for their cause.

"I was really motivated by what I saw on TV and the web, and I was concerned about how students from Iran would cope," said Rev. Chris Hannum, who attended the event to learn how to support Iranian-American students at Tech who seek him for help.

Other attendees had a more personal connection to the events in Iran.

"I am half Persian, and I wanted to pay respects to my family in Iran," said Daryoush Vaqar, fourth-year ME.

The delicate nature of the political and social climate in Iran was highlighted by the fact that many attendees of the ISA event did not want to be filmed or provide their names to reporters and event cameramen, fearing that it may have unintended consequences.

"The one positive that has come out of the violence in Iran is that the Iranian people are more united and together in a way that they weren't before," Parham said.



Photo by Dean Liao/Student Publications

Above: Sasan Tarassoli (left) and Behrouz Mostafavi (right) hold up signs and candles at the Iran Ceremony.

Right: Students place the Iranian flag on the Campanile. Right (above): Students light candles in the Campanile. Right (below): The last candle is lit, spelling out the word "Iran".



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## Students voice concern over off-campus safety

**By Kate Comstock**  
Contributing Writer

Due to the recent spike in crime in the Home Park area, many students are concerned that if they move off campus simply to cut costs, they will incur another expense in risking their safety.

To address concerns about crime in and around campus, students met in a town hall style meeting Wednesday in the Student Center with representatives from the Atlanta Police Department (APD), the Georgia Tech Police Department (GTPD), Atlanta City Council and the Institute's Office of the President.

The representatives emphasized the importance of working together to create a safe environment for everyone and that the situation is very important to everyone present.

"I am [scared to walk home] now, actually. After the Hampton Street thing I ride my bike now," said Home Park resident Chet Sanders, fifth-year EE, in reference to the armed robbery that took place June 23.

Officers at the meeting stressed that the reason Tech students were victims of crime in Home Park had more to do with the time they were out on the streets of Home Park.

The robberies generally occur between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m., and officers assured that in any area of Midtown it would not be wise to walk alone or in pairs during those hours.

The officers strongly recommended that students wishing to walk to campus at night should take the Stingerette, because many of the robberies occur while the victim is on foot and the thieves are in a car.

"Our students are targeted because they are out. But they're not targeted [because they're Tech students], that's just not true," said Chief Melissa Crocker of GTPD.

Students and Home Park residents expressed concern that the inability to walk to and from campus at all hours is a major drawback for a community that is known for being so pedestrian friendly to students.

In response to students' need to travel during these hours, the Institute now offers Stingerette services in Home Park for the summer. By the fall, SGA hopes to secure a flat rate for students traveling to Home Park by taxi.

"Twelve robberies involving Tech students since February is twelve too many," said Jim Fetig, associate vice president of Marketing and Communication for the Institute, "but we realize that the situation [in Home Park] has changed, and it's going to take the cooperation of the neighborhood."

Representation from the Home Park Community Improvement Association was also present at the meeting.

The group is interested in enlisting the help of Tech students who live in the area to help form a neighborhood watch group that can report any suspicious activity.

The officers agreed that one of the strongest defenses the Home Park community has lies in creating a strong support system that is proactive and reports any suspicious activity.

"Get to know your community. From a policing standpoint, we depend on you guys just as much as you depend on us. If all of you know your community to [the point] where you know who's coming in and out of your community and can give us the information when someone is suspicious, it goes a lot further [than when something has already happened]," said Crime Prevention Officer Ian Mayberry of GTPD.

Officer Mayberry also added that if anyone sees what he or she believes is suspicious activity, they should call 911 immediately.



# Table tennis team achieves national recognition

By Yameen Huq  
Contributing Writer

The player leaps to counter the fury of his opponent, knocking volley after volley right back at him. The opponent responds with equal ferocity, breaking through his defenses, getting in just the right position, releasing an unstoppable force in order to ensure victory.

Table tennis is a sport requiring the utmost concentration, precision and effort. Tech's own table tennis team is a prime example of this level of effort and commitment. Having already achieved national-level status and recognition, Tech's table tennis team plans on progressing even further in the uphill journey against other nationally-ranked teams. The girls' team in particular has done well, scoring in the top four at the national level. The matches at the national level typically involve four single players and a doubles match. Victory is decided on a best of five scale.

"We just started about two and a half years ago. We are ranked number 15 in the country," said Paul Balla, third-year AE and team vice president.

The team has been improving ever since they entered the competitive circuit through a combination of skill and determination.

"We have practice three times a week. [On] Tuesdays and Fridays [practice is] open for all types of members," Balla said.

"Thursdays are for people who want to become more serious in the sport. We have 15 members on the competitive team," said Abishek Kumar, ME graduate student and team president.

The team has finished first in Georgia for the last two years and plans on going to the nationals in Rochester, Minn. this year.

"We finished first in the regional tournament again. We beat every other team including Georgia and Georgia State," said Kumar.

The national tournament is not the only place where this team faces off against opponents. They have several tournaments throughout the semester and plan on having even more tournaments in the semesters to come.

The team itself has a long history. It started as a casual club founded by Mark Peterson, ME '08, the team's first president.

The team has since experienced a turn towards competition as well as a changing guard of presidents. Aaron Scott, ME '08, a former president of the organization, designed a mechanical engineering project that shot balls using gravity for people to use as practice.

Kumar himself has been play-

ing since 10th grade for fun.

"I got serious with it just recently. I came to Georgia Tech, but in my first two years there was no real club, but there were good players. In my third year I met with Aneec, a third-year ME and one of the best players in Lebanon. I also met with Mark Peterson, the president," said Kumar.

"We got an inactive club off the ground. At first, Peterson was only interested in recreational play, but we made sure he was interested in competing with other teams," Kumar said.

"I transferred here a year ago from Gainesville State College. I played there recreationally. I wanted to join a team and so I met Aaron Scott, and he really got me involved in this club," Balla said.

The team hopes to become an even greater club, and climb above their top-15 ranking from

last year.

"This year we hope to finish in the top 10. If it becomes a varsity sport, while I don't think it's possible, we could have a lot more members and scholarships for people. Anyone can get involved, but to join the [competitive] team you have to pass tryouts and be in the top ten or fifteen. To go to nationals you have to be on the A-team," Kumar said.

Several of the team's members are graduating this year, so the current members are really hoping to recruit some fresh, talented faces.

"We actually have a new person coming next year with 10 years of table tennis experience. His mom emailed about her son, asking how the team here is. So people really do know that we are the best in Georgia and one of the best teams around," Balla said.



Photo courtesy of the GT Table Tennis Association

The table tennis team placed first in Georgia for the last two years and is ranked 15th in the country.

## Safety

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Officer Mayberry suggested that other ways to try and stay safe in the community are trimming back bushes to eliminate potential hiding spots and adding lights to the outside of homes.

Chief Cochran of the APD assured meeting attendants that the recent criminal acts are "on their front burner and they would like to put the [suspects] in jail."

She also assured them that the Atlanta Police Department is working hard to locate the responsible individuals but cannot release all of the information at this time.

They are planning to construct road blocks in hopes of finding individuals in the area that have outstanding warrants and are participating in illegal behavior.

She would not comment on any plans to place undercover officers in the area as part of a sting operation.

The Home Park area is patrolled by the APD in conjunction with the Tech Police Department.

The Georgia State Troopers also offered to start patrolling the area to create a stronger law enforcement presence in the area.

Residents in Home Park should call the APD to receive the fastest help, but GTPD often accompanies them to the calls and assists in backup when necessary.

The meeting was organized by the College Democrats at Tech and comes on the heels of President G.P. "Bud" Peterson's June 23 press conference with the Atlanta Police Department to announce the arrests of three suspects in relation to the May 4 shooting of a former Tech student at Tivoli Tenside.

When prompted as to why the crime in the area has escalated, Chief Crocker said that there has actually been a decrease in the amount of crime in Midtown and at Tech.

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