

Dear Sirs

I am writing in response to the article in The Economist 25th February 2023 issue, Middle East & Africa section titled 'Could his kingdom come?' Online title 'The son of Iran's last Shah bids to regain the throne', I would like to make the following observations.

Reza Pahlavi has never called himself Prince, or King in the last 40 years in exile but he has quite rightly said he cannot stop others who believe in the monarchy from calling him by his title. Therefore, your quote "I'll leave it up to you to call me whatever you want," Reza Pahlavi says now modestly, is misleading the reader by implying that he has now and very recently changed his tune.

Reza Pahlavi, believes in the democratic will of the people and he has always maintained this message. He has remained true to his word in fighting against the religious fundamentalist dictatorship of IRI from exile against all odds for 4 decades.

A posse of leading lights in the protest movement you say! The Iranians and the Iranian diaspora, as well as their allies have called this movement a revolution as it calls for the removal of the theocratic dictatorship in its entirety. The first woman led revolution of its kind sparked by the death of a young woman Mahsa Jina Amini in the hands of the brutal morality police. Therefore, using the word posse belittles the sacrifice of so many who have fought so bravely and lost their lives for their basic human rights.

You have said his father called himself by the title Shahanshah Aryamehr and gone on to mis-translate Aryameher giving it racist connotations. You are also starting your article by judging Reza Pahlavi by his father's titles as if he had any choice in his father's titles as a young boy.

You have quoted his young supporter saying "He's our new Cyrus" and go on to explain, referring to the Persian emperor of 2500 years ago. Perhaps you could have explained differently, referring to Cyrus the great, the biblical Cyrus who freed the slaves in Babylon, established racial equality and declared that all people were free to practice their own religion, wrote the first charted of human rights which has been translated to all 6 official languages of the united nations, and it's provisions parallel the first four article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

You have ignored the reason millions are shouting his name in Iran, his grandfather's name, Reza Shah the great, who was the first king of the Pahlavi's dynasty, and modernised Iran in a mere 16 years. His son Mohammed Reza Shah continued the modernisation and advancement of Iran in his reign. Can it be true that after 44 years of theocratic dictatorship of the Mullah's regime, the people of Iran have recognised the patriotic service of the Pahlavi's to their country? To the stability and peace in the middle east and the rest of the world?

'We wronged him when we expelled him says one student. We must repay the debt to his son.'

We meet and chat on various social media outlets with young people inside and outside of Iran frequently and we often come across the word 'Madyoon' when it comes to discussions on the Pahlavi dynasty, which in context means recognition of their service or good deeds, however the author has perhaps deliberately, translated this literally as owing or repaying a debt to the Pahlavi family. The young people conducting this revolution that we speak to do not feel that they are to blame or owe any debts for what happened in 1979 as they were not even born when Mohamad Reza Shah left Iran for cancer treatment in 1979!

You go on to say that his own dedication has been questioned. During a wave of riots against the Ayatollah in 2019 when protesters chanted his name, he apparently remained aloof on a scuba

diving holiday in the Caribbean you say. Reza Pahlavi was in fact very active on the media requesting that the IRGC shows restraint to minimise loss of life and harm to the protestors. How can you criticise anyone if they are on vacation when a revolt against a dictatorship takes shape and pours out onto the streets in less than 12 hours?

'There's a huge demand for the monarchy says a former aide. If he was up to the job, the Islamic republic would not have lasted.' With this sentence all the blame for the Islamic republic's 44 years of atrocities has been swiftly shifted to the shoulders of Reza Pahlavi who was merely 20 years old when he was exiled, for not being up to the job! This oversimplification indicates the author lacks an in-depth understanding of the Islamic revolution and the events in Iran.

At the bottom of the article, a picture of Mr Reza Pahlavi, with subtitle Shah lala! This caption can be interpreted as an insult and is below the standard expected from your organisation.

We found this article misleading, full of false information, and bias. We are very concerned at the total disregard for professionalism in reporting, lack of factual content and the irresponsible nature of this article.

The Iranians people brave death, arrest, torture and rape daily to fight this brutal dictatorship that only knows brutality! The opposition groups have united under the leadership of Reza Pahlavi to help the plight of the Iranian people suffering at the hands of this murderous regime. No easy task with constant attempts of terror on the lives of journalist and activists abroad by the regime in Tehran.

The world's democracies need to recognise how the Islamic dictatorship in Iran has failed to implement Human Rights with a history of brutality cracking down on the voices of freedom.

It is an enigma that democracies preach human rights and equality and yet trades with a dictatorship that murders and rapes children with impunity prolonging their suffering.

The security of the whole world is at risk so long as this regime with their Islamic terrorist ideology remains in power crushing the revolution of Iranian people with brutality.

It is time to write responsible and representative articles.

I would invite the authors and the economist editors for comment as soon as possible.

I would also like to request the cancellation of my subscription as I have lost faith in the credibility of your magazine. (Optional)

Yours sincerely

Name

Email (optional)