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 opposition accused Ahmadinejad’s government of orchestrating a widespread 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.

See 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 cameras, 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.

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 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 just last Tuesday.

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 concerns that the increase of Tech students coming and going from campus at all hours is a major drawback for a community that is known for being so pedestrian-friendly.

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, SCA hopes to add taxi services for students traveling to Home Park by taxi.

“Twelve robberies involving Tech students since February is twelve too many,” said Jim Ferig, 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 report 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.

**Focus**

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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 upcoming season.

We have 15 members, Balla said. “We have practice three times a week. On Tuesdays and Fridays [practice is] open for all types of participants. We have 15 members, Balla said. “We have practice three times a week. On Tuesdays and Fridays [practice is] open for all types of participants. We have 15 members,” Balla said.

As the season has been improving even further with the help of new members and fresh talent, the team is looking forward to the upcoming season.

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 steady growth in membership and skill. 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. His mom emailed about her son, asking how to become 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.

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

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